

The Legend of Johnny Appleseed



PART ONE

Johnny and his Apple Seeds

Johnny Appleseed was born near Boston in 1775. His real name was John Chapman.

When he was a child he played in the forest and in the fields. His best friends were animals. He loved all animals. He played with them and talked to them! His family was very religious Johnny's first book was the Bible, but he also liked Aesop's Fables. Johnny loved the tales about animals and their adventures.

When Johnny was a teenager he worked as a missionary with the Indians. He converted many Indians to Christianity. He taught them about the Bible. The Indians were his friends.

When he was 26 years old he had a vision. An angel appeared to him! The angel said, "Go and plant apple seeds across America. The settlers of the new frontier want good apples to eat."

Johnny was surprised but he was happy.

He was a kind person and he wanted to help others. He took a big sack and filled it with apple seeds. He carried this sack on his back. In one hand he carried the Bible, Aesop's Fables and other religious books. Now he was ready to cross the continent and plant America's favourite fruit: the apple.

Johnny was an unusual man. He was tall and thin. He had long hair and a beard. He never bought new clothes. He wore an old coffee sack and the old clothes people gave him. He didn't usually wear any shoes. He wore a saucepan on his head.

One of Johnny's friends said, "God bless you, Johnny. We are happy for you. You are similar to St. Francis of Assisi. He loved animals and lived a simple life."

Johnny said, "I want to plant apple seeds across America. Every American family will have apple trees with good apples to eat."

In 1800 Johnny began his long journey across America. At that time America was a very young country. The American continent was a wilderness. It was unexplored. There were no roads and few maps. This immense land was called the American frontier. Many settlers wanted to explore the frontier.

Johnny walked from Massachusetts to New York. From New York he walked to Pennsylvania.

Then he crossed Ohio, Indiana and a big part of the Midwest. Every day he moved west.

He travelled across America and planted apple seeds. He built fences around the fields and then continued his journey. Settlers travelled to the frontier and found the apple orchards.

They ate the delicious fruit: green, red and yellow apples. When the settlers found an apple orchard, they built a home there.

Other settlers dug up the apple trees and took them to new lands. Some of Johnny's trees travelled to the West Coast on the Pacific Ocean,

When Johnny found a family of settlers he visited their log cabin. He helped them with their work. He told the children stories and sang songs.

One day Johnny visited a family of settlers in the Midwest. This family loved books. He gave them a few pages from his books. "You can read them and give them to me when I return in a few months," he said. The family was very happy.

In this way, Johnny created the first library on the frontier. Many children learned to read thanks to Johnny and his library.

PART TWO

Johnny becomes a Legend

For many years Johnny walked thousands of miles across the frontier. He planted apple seeds, lent books, protected animals and made friends with settlers and Indians.

The Indians liked Johnny because he had no weapons and respected nature. Johnny learned to speak the languages of many tribes.

One summer morning many Indians arrived at a frontier village. The Indians wanted to destroy the village and kill the settlers. The settlers wanted to send a messenger to a military fort to ask for help. The fort was 30 miles away. It was very dangerous. There were enemy Indians everywhere.

Johnny wanted to save the lives of the settlers. He knew all the secret paths in the forest and in the mountains. He was not afraid.

He took the message to the fort. The soldiers at the fort got on their horses and went to defend the settlers.

A few years later, Johnny visited an Indian village. He heard the Indian chief say, "Many settlers live near the river. Tonight we will kill all of them."

That evening Johnny ran to the home of every settler and said, "The Indians will attack you tonight. Run away! Go and hide in the forest!" The settlers escaped to the forest and no one was killed.

Johnny loved all forms of human and animal life. He didn't eat meat because he didn't want to kill animals. He loved insects, too. He loved and respected every living thing. He was a very special person.

One autumn day, Johnny was near an apple orchard. He heard the cry of an animal. Behind a tree he found a deer.

"My poor friend!" said Johnny. "Don't be afraid!"

He examined the deer and said, "Your leg is injured. I can help you." The deer wasn't afraid.

Johnny stayed with the deer for many days and helped it.

"I'm happy you can walk again. Go and run in the forest, my little friend!"

During a snow storm, Johnny wanted to sleep inside a small cave. He saw a big family of racoons sleeping inside the cave. He did not want the racoons to go outside into the snow. So Johnny

slept outside in the cold!

For almost 50 years, Johnny Appleseed helped the American frontier to grow. His apple trees, his books, his generosity and his kindness made the frontier a happy place.

Johnny became a legend during his life. Everyone loved him. He was a true friend of the settlers, the Indians and the animals.

In America today, people remember him with admiration. When Americans eat an apple, they often think of Johnny Appleseed who made apple trees grow all over America.

- THE END -

Hope you have enjoyed the reading!

Come back to <http://english-e-reader.net/> to find more fascinating and exciting stories!