



Everyday clothing

Many children lived on farms, in small towns, and on the frontier. It was difficult to buy or make fashionable clothes in these places. Even when fancy items were available, few people could afford to buy them. Most children wore simple clothing made of material that did not wear out easily. It was important to have clothes that lasted a long time because many children worked hard around the home or farm.

These farm children are wearing the styles of clothing that most children wore during the 1800s. Simple shirts, pants, and dresses were made to last. Straw hats protected the head and eyes from the sun.

Dresses for girls

Girls' dresses were often made of linen or wool. Sometimes linen and wool were woven together to make a sturdy fabric called **linsey-woolsey**. Skirts were loose and long and reached the ankles. A long apron, or **pinafore**, protected dresses from stains.

Boys' clothing

Boys wore long cotton shirts and woolen or linen pants. Some boys wore a simple jacket over their shirt and trousers. On the frontier, boys wore shirts, jackets, and breeches made of soft leather called **buckskin**. The settlers learned how to make buckskin clothing from the Native people.

The trouble with shoes

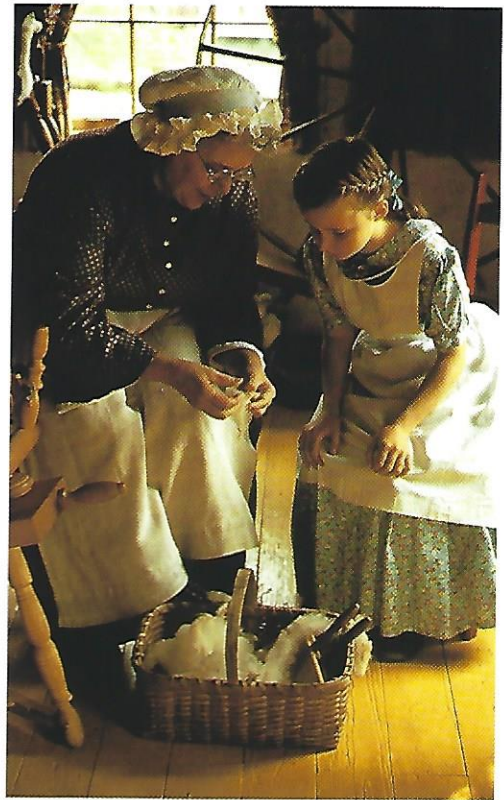
Although most children had a pair of shoes, parents often encouraged their children to go barefoot. New shoes were expensive, so one pair had to last a long time.

Traveling shoemakers went from settlement to settlement, making shoes for families. They made children's shoes big, so they would last several years. Shoes were seldom replaced before they were much too small.



Children preferred going barefoot to wearing their uncomfortable shoes!

Children who lived on the frontier wore home-made buckskin **moccasins**. Moccasins were light and comfortable, but only in dry weather. When it rained, moccasins became damp and clammy.



This girl is wearing a pinafore over her dress. She and her grandmother have carded some wool, which will be used to make her winter dress.

Farm children worked hard. Their everyday clothes were plain and comfortable.



Jonah's trousers

Nowadays, if we want new clothes, we go to the store and buy them. In settler times, getting something new to wear wasn't just a shopping trip—it was often a community project! Many people pitched in to help, as you will see in the story of Jonah's trousers.



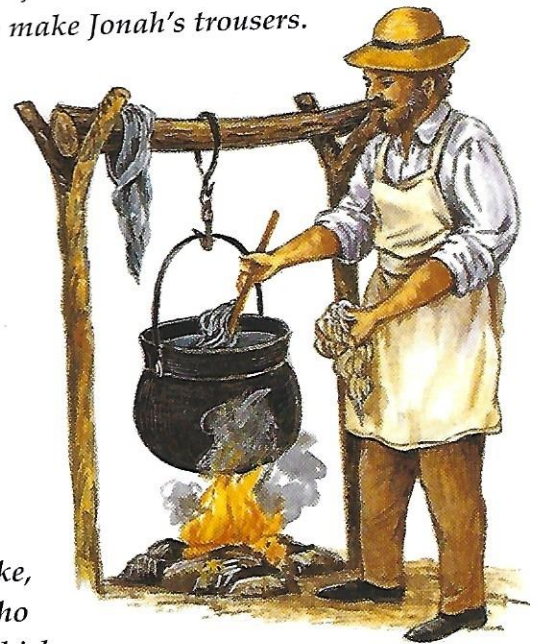
1. These are Jonah's trousers.



2. This is Jonah's mother, who cut and sewed the cloth to make Jonah's trousers.



3. This is Mrs. Harlowe, Jonah's neighbor, who wove the cloth, which Jonah's mother sewed to make Jonah's trousers.



4. This is Old Zeke, the farmhand, who dyed the yarn, which Mrs. Harlowe wove into cloth, which Jonah's mother sewed to make Jonah's trousers.



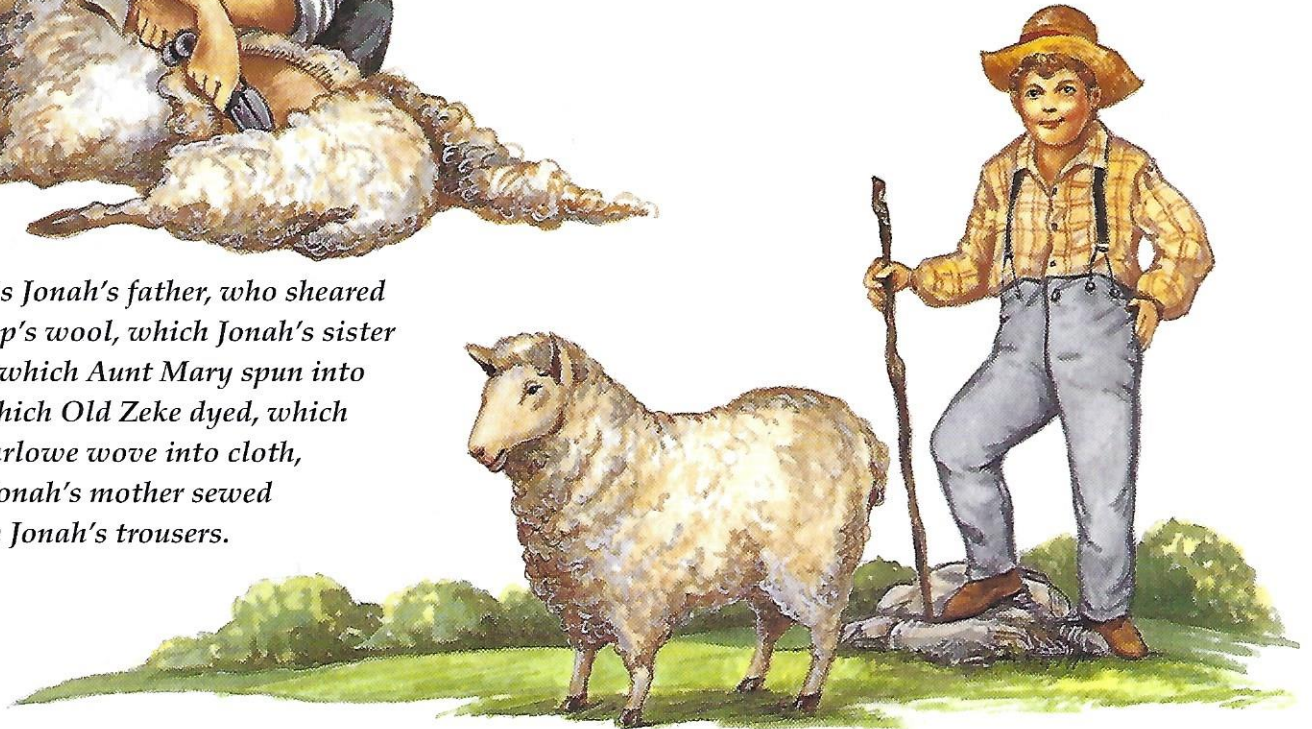
5. This is Aunt Mary, who spun the wool into yarn, which Old Zeke dyed, which Mrs. Harlowe wove into cloth, which Jonah's mother sewed to make Jonah's trousers.



6. This is Jonah's sister, who used carding paddles to fluff up the wool, which Aunt Mary spun into yarn, which Old Zeke dyed, which Mrs. Harlowe wove into cloth, which Jonah's mother sewed to make Jonah's trousers.



7. This is Jonah's father, who sheared the sheep's wool, which Jonah's sister carded, which Aunt Mary spun into yarn, which Old Zeke dyed, which Mrs. Harlowe wove into cloth, which Jonah's mother sewed to make Jonah's trousers.



8. This is Jonah, who guarded the sheep, which grew the wool, which Jonah's father sheared, which Jonah's sister carded, which Aunt Mary spun into yarn, which Old Zeke dyed, which Mrs. Harlowe wove into cloth, which Jonah's mother sewed to make Jonah's trousers.