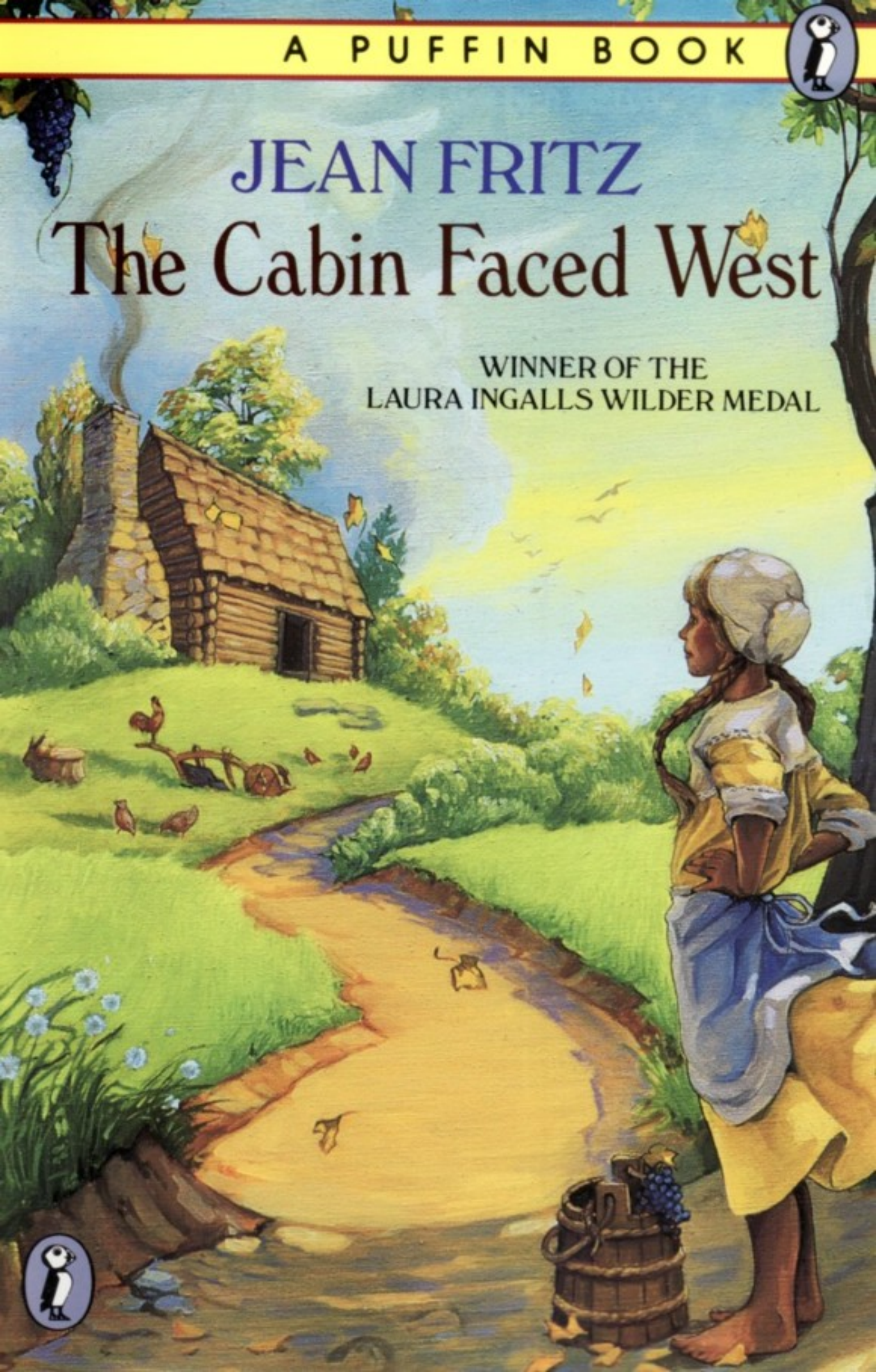


A PUFFIN BOOK



JEAN FRITZ
The Cabin Faced West

WINNER OF THE
LAURA INGALLS WILDER MEDAL





Chapter One

ANN HAMILTON swept the last of the day's dust out of the door into the sunset. Even the cabin faced west, Ann thought as she jerked the broom across the flat path the daylight made as it fell through the open doorway. It was the only place the daylight had a chance to come in. The cabin was solid logs all the way around without an-

other opening anywhere. Its back was turned squarely against the East just as her father had turned his back. Just as her older brothers, David and Daniel, had.

“We’ve cast our lot with the West,” her father had said as he stood in the doorway the day the cabin was completed. “And we won’t look back.”

That was the time Daniel and David had made the Rule. Ann supposed she must have been pouting because Daniel had looked straight at her when he had spoken.

“The first one who finds fault with the West,” he had said in that important voice he used more than ever since he had passed his eighteenth birthday, “will get . . .”

He had hesitated a moment and David had finished the sentence. “Will get a bucket of cold spring water on top of his head.” He had laughed as he pulled one of Ann’s brown braids. David was only a year younger than Daniel but Ann couldn’t imagine that he would ever sound as grown up. There was too much twinkle to David. Still, both the boys had taken the Rule seriously.

They were always trying to catch each other in a complaint and had discovered all kinds of ways to turn a sentence around at the last minute to mean something altogether different than it had started out to mean. Neither one had been caught yet.

As for Ann, she had made her mouth into a tight line when Daniel had started the Rule. She knew she had complained too much. All up and down the endless mountains to this lonely hill last spring, she had complained. But the day Daniel made the Rule she stopped. There was no use complaining now anyway. There didn't even seem to be much use talking. Her mother and father were always so busy, and the boys—well, you couldn't talk to boys.

That was another trouble. Every cabin from here to the nearest settlement was filled with nothing but boys and babies. There wasn't one girl anywhere near ten years old. Uncle John Hamilton and Aunt Mary who lived halfway down the hill on one side didn't have any children. And the new squatters who had just put up



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Where can Ann find a friend in the Pennsylvania wilderness?

Ann Hamilton was so lonely, she could hardly keep from crying. In all the cabins that lay between her home and the nearest settlement, there were only boys and babies. She longed for her cousin Margaret and her old school friends back in Gettysburg.

Her mother promised that when a special occasion arose they would take time off from their hardworking life and have a party. But special occasions didn't seem to happen — until one wonderful evening, when a stranger rode up the hill and stayed to supper. Then even Ann agreed there had never been a better party. And there was no place she'd rather be than on Hamilton Hill, helping to build the West.

“A satisfying story which conveys some of the loneliness, despair, and hardships of pioneer life.” —*ALA Booklist*

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