



Winter 2012

BRRRRRR...it's really cold outside as it is now winter in Avon. Luckily Abigail is all stocked up with food for the long winter and has cozy hay to sleep in. Abigail snuggles in her bed under the patchwork quilt she sewed from remnants she found in her scavenging travels.

So much to do! The holidays are approaching and she has to finish her handmade gifts for her family. For her brother Fenwick, she knitted a scarf from a long piece of wool yarn she 'borrowed' from the spinning wheel room of a nearby farm. For her little sister Rebecca, she made a rag doll out of scraps of fabric. For Mother, Abigail made a dainty handkerchief embroidered with the letter "S" for Sarah. Papa's gift was still in the making—she decided to gnaw a piece of wood to fashion a cane as he was having a bit of trouble walking at his age. Making this gift really made Abigail's teeth and jaw tired, but she loved her Papa so dearly, it was worth it.

Abigail's family lived a short distance away at the West Avon Congregational Church. They made their home under the pulpit. From this spot they could hear the beautiful choir singing to the music of the pipe organ and there was always ample food made by the Church ladies. It was now the Sunday before the Eve and Abigail pulled on her goulashes over her little woolen socks to keep her four paws warm in the snow. Then she put on her small woolen green coat, her scarf, and her best Sunday red velvet bonnet. Her plan was to hitch a ride to the church on the Thompson's wagon. She must have perfect timing to jump aboard at just the right time when the horses were given the "Yaaaaaaaah." Abigail hid under the edge of the horse blanket in the back of the wagon. She wanted to visit with her family for Sunday supper and hoped to bring home luscious homemade cookie crumbs in her little basket.

Once inside the Church, she had to be very cautious as not to be discovered by the Church people. The Church was filled to capacity with everyone standing and singing lovely carols. So crowded that Abigail feared getting stepped on. But how would she join her family in the pulpit? She had an idea. She ran along the wall's baseboard to the front of the Church where the pipe organ with its big pipes was being played. She stealthily climbed up one of the pipes and was going to hop from one to the other to get nearer the pulpit while the organist rested in between songs. But all of a sudden, the organist struck a resounding chord and the vibration made Abigail fall into the vent hole. Oh my gosh! Now what? On the very next song, the exuberant organist hit the expression pedal of the steam-powered pipe organ and POOF!!! -out popped Abigail with such force, she was like a rocket on the Fourth of July! Up, up, up she sailed tumbling tail over bonnet with all her petticoats for the whole congregation to see! Miraculously, Abigail landed on one of the Church's candelabras. She was unhurt, but perplexed as there was no safe way down from the ceiling. She noticed a small hole at the base of the candelabra and crawled up into the hole—up into the bell tower that is! What a strange place this was and cold. Abigail looked around and saw huge wooden beams supporting a huge brass bell with a rope around the bell wheel. Abigail did not know what to do. Suddenly, the bell began to sway and the clapper fell against the side of the bell as it was pulled. The sound was both beautiful and deafening. Poor Abigail! When the tolling stopped, Abigail felt so alone she began to sob loudly. Thankfully, as mice have quite large ears and excellent hearing, her Papa heard his daughter's cries. He climbed the rope to the bell tower and rescued Abigail who was overjoyed. Together they shimmied down the rope and joined their family in the pulpit and Abigail was safe in the arms of her family. She was truly blessed on that cold winter's day in snowy Avon.