

STEP INTO READING®

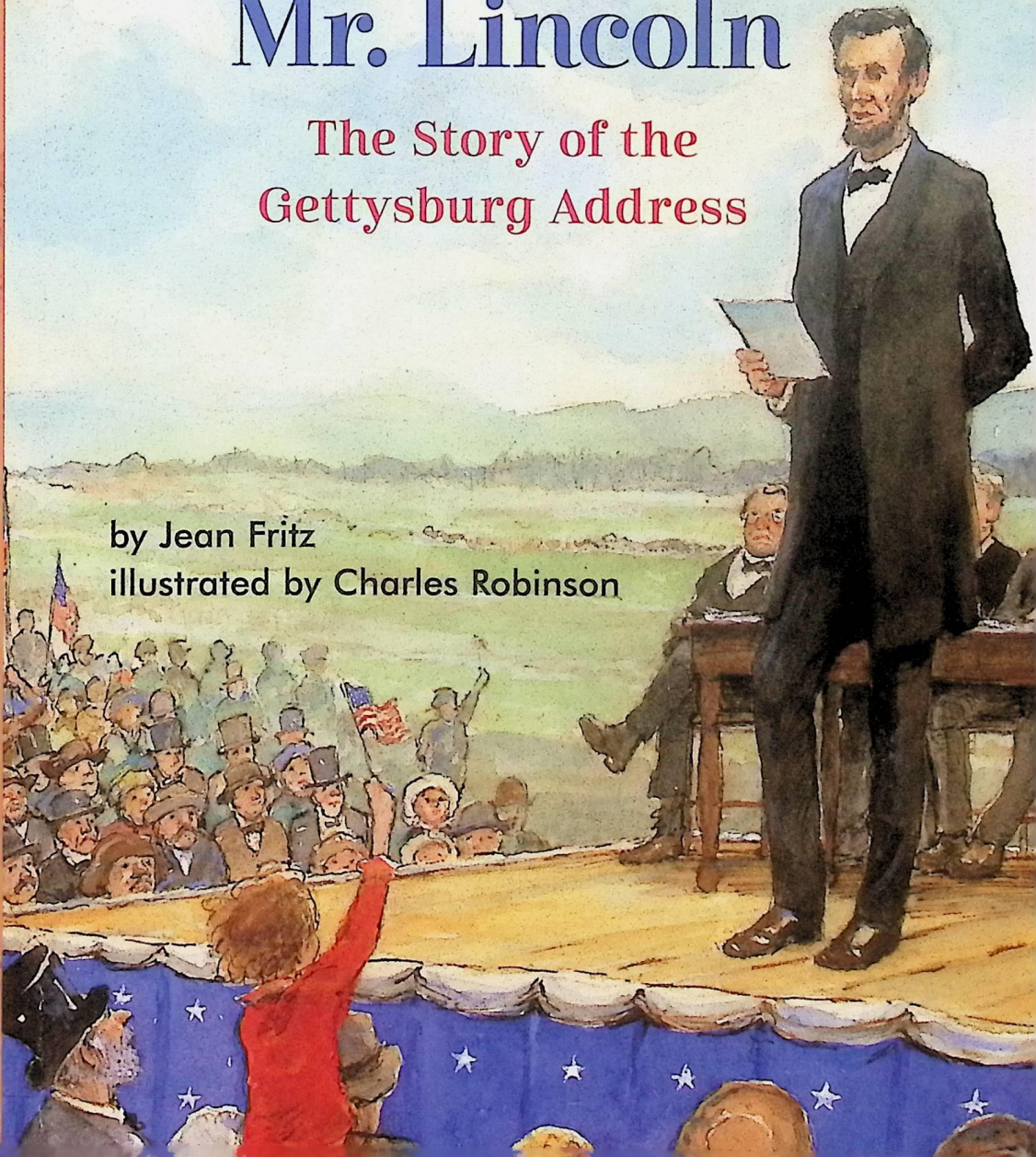
A HISTORY READER

# Just a Few Words, Mr. Lincoln

The Story of the  
Gettysburg Address

by Jean Fritz

illustrated by Charles Robinson



# AMERICA DURING THE CIVIL WAR





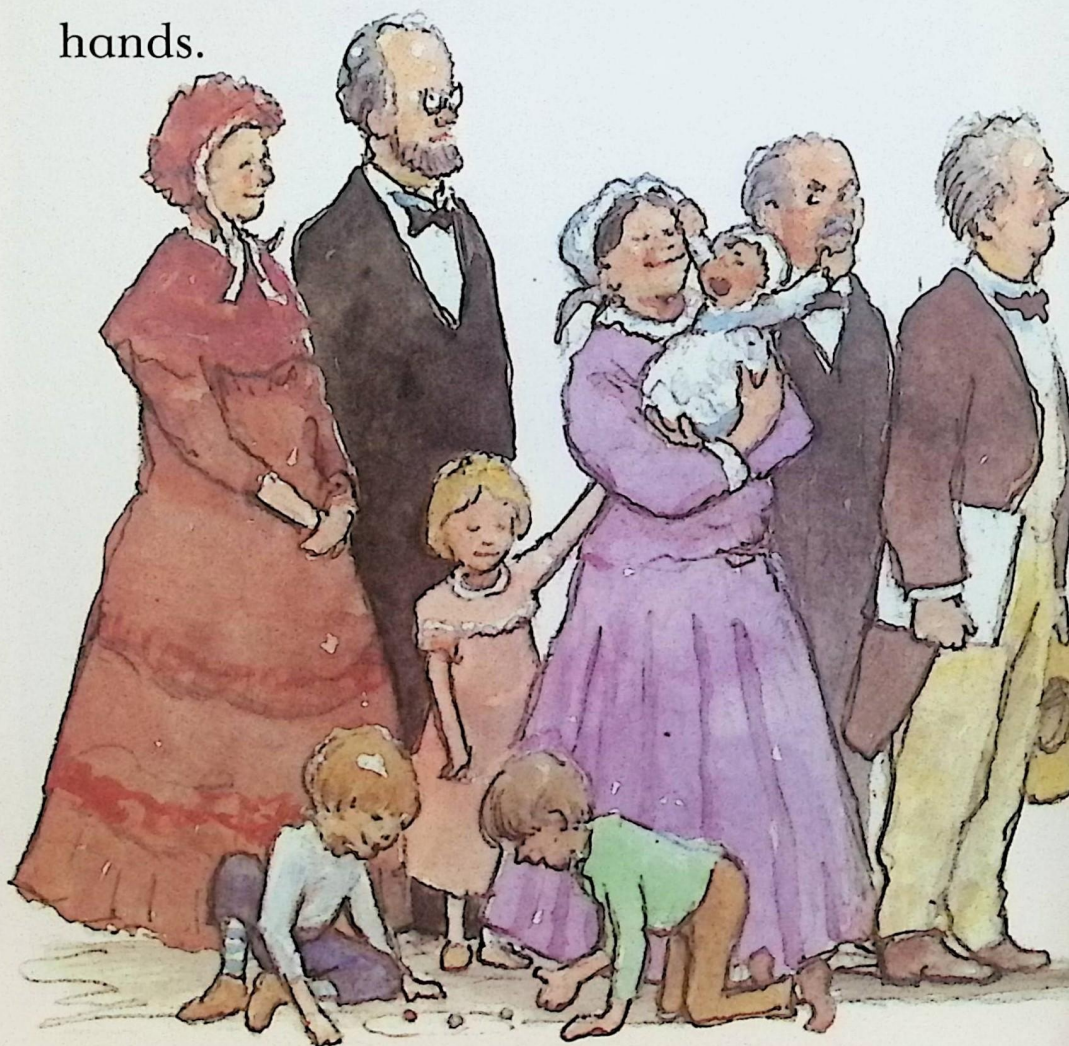
President Lincoln was one busy man.  
He had two big jobs.

He had to free the slaves.

And he had to win the war. The Civil War. It had begun in 1861—Americans against Americans. Some southern states had quit the Union. They wanted their own country, they said.

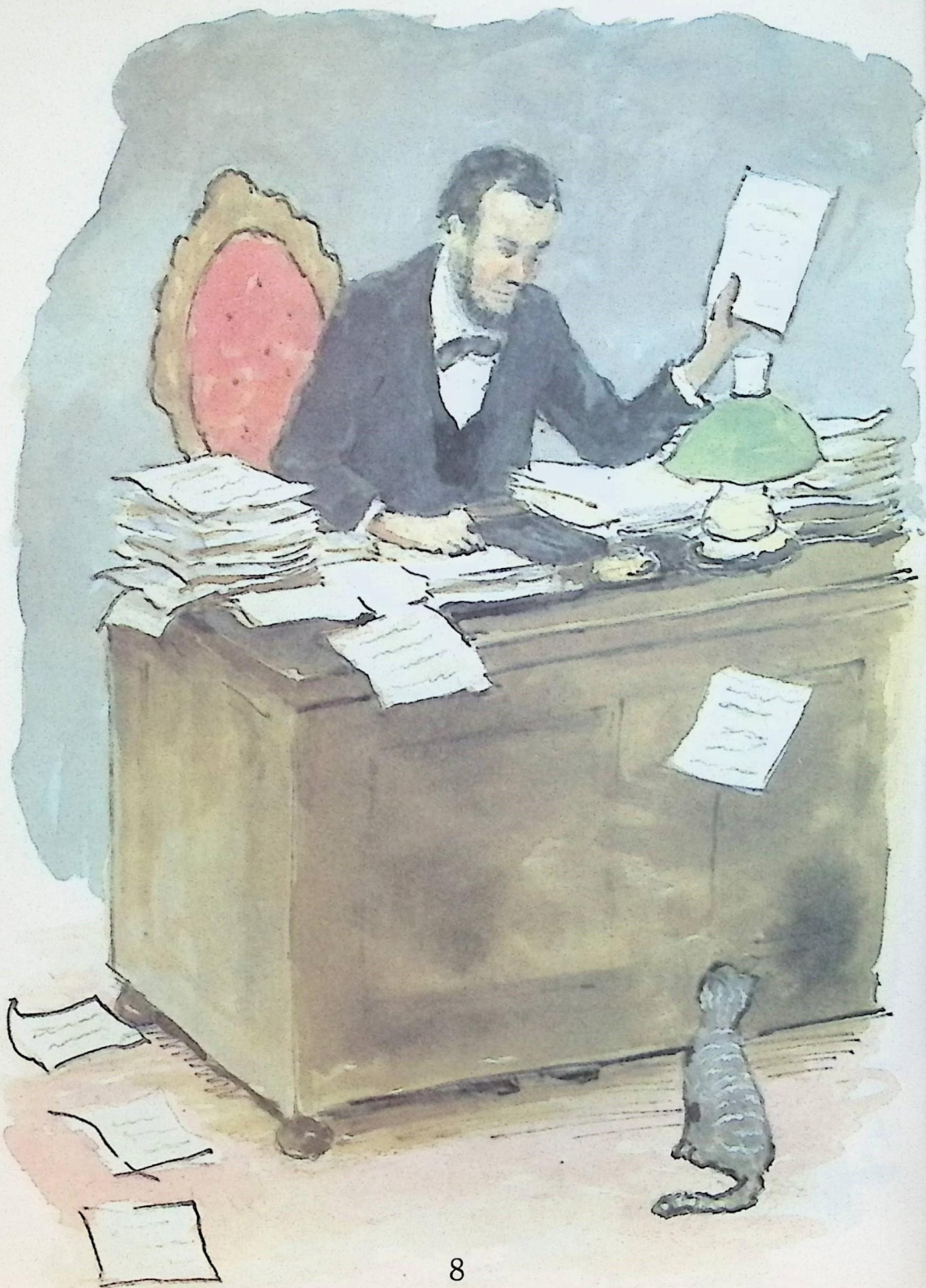
But Lincoln couldn't let them run off like that. This was the *United States*, wasn't it? That's the way it had started. That's the way it should be.

Besides these big jobs, the president had little jobs, too. He had to shake hands.

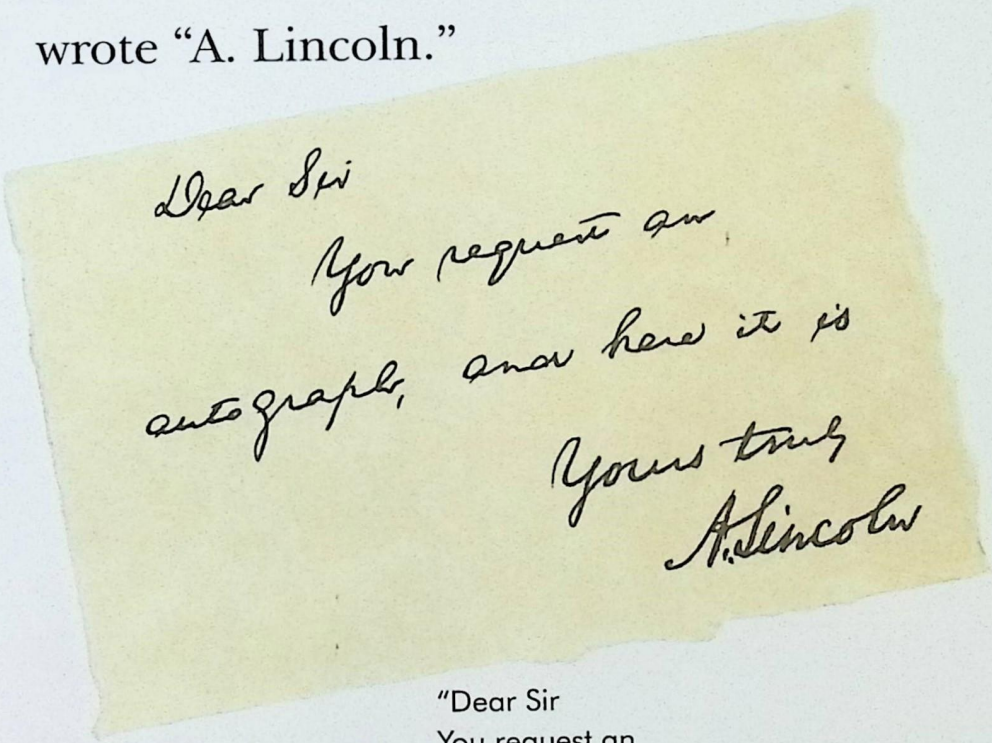


Everyone wanted to shake the president's hand. So he shook and shook and shook. Often his own hand was swollen afterward.



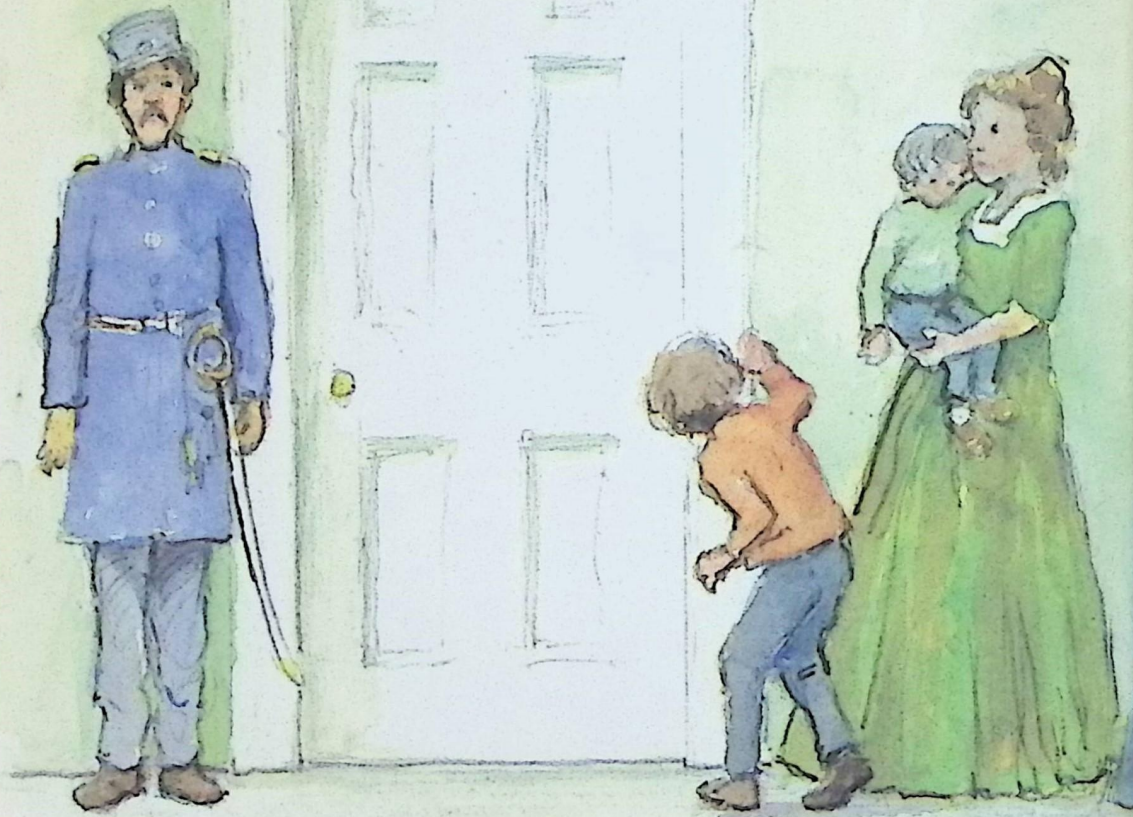


And he had to write letters. From all over the country, people wrote to him. Why didn't he do this? Why hadn't he done that? Some just wanted his autograph. He couldn't take time to write "Abraham Lincoln." So he just wrote "A. Lincoln."



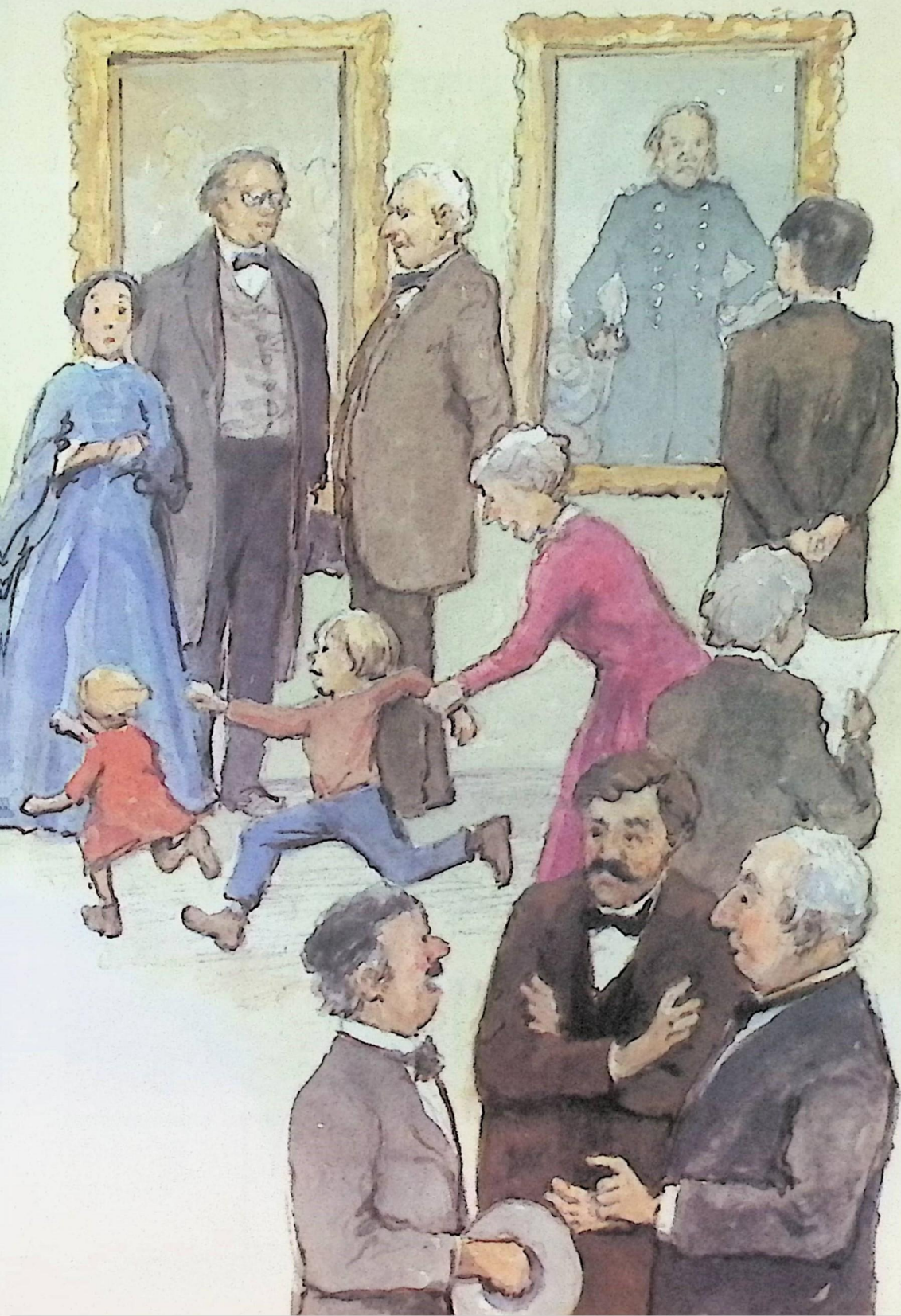
Dear Sir  
Your request an  
autograph, and here it is  
Yours truly  
A. Lincoln

"Dear Sir  
You request an  
autograph, and here it is  
Yours truly  
A. Lincoln"

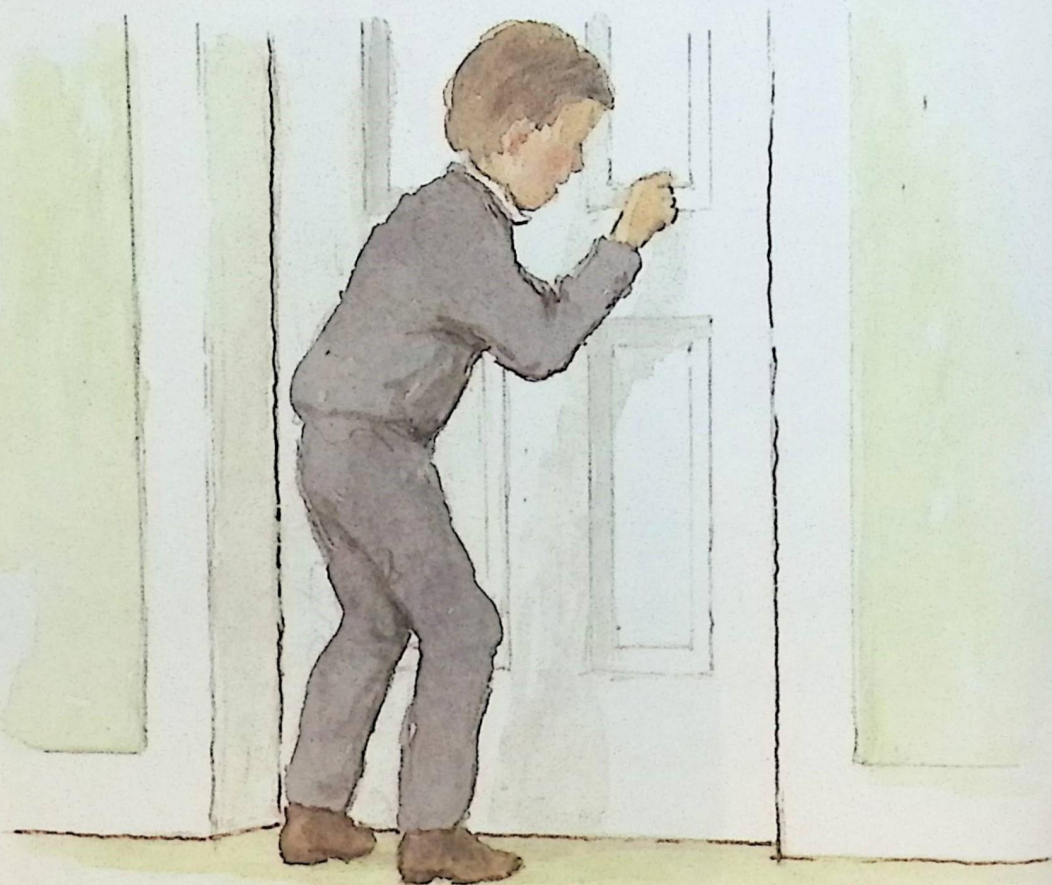


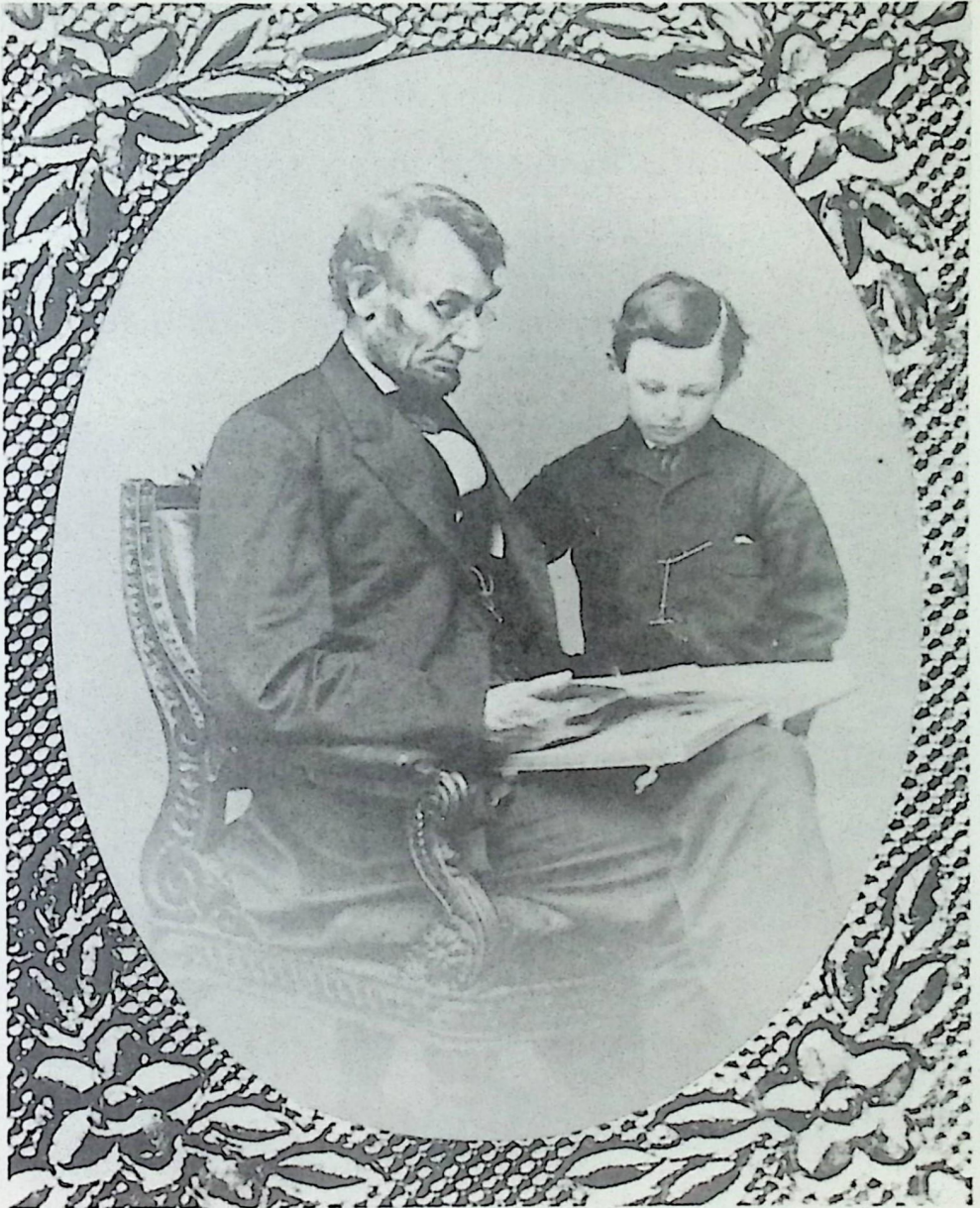
People even lined up outside his office to see him. They buzzed around his door like bees, he said. All had hard-luck stories. When he could, the president helped them. He hated to say no.





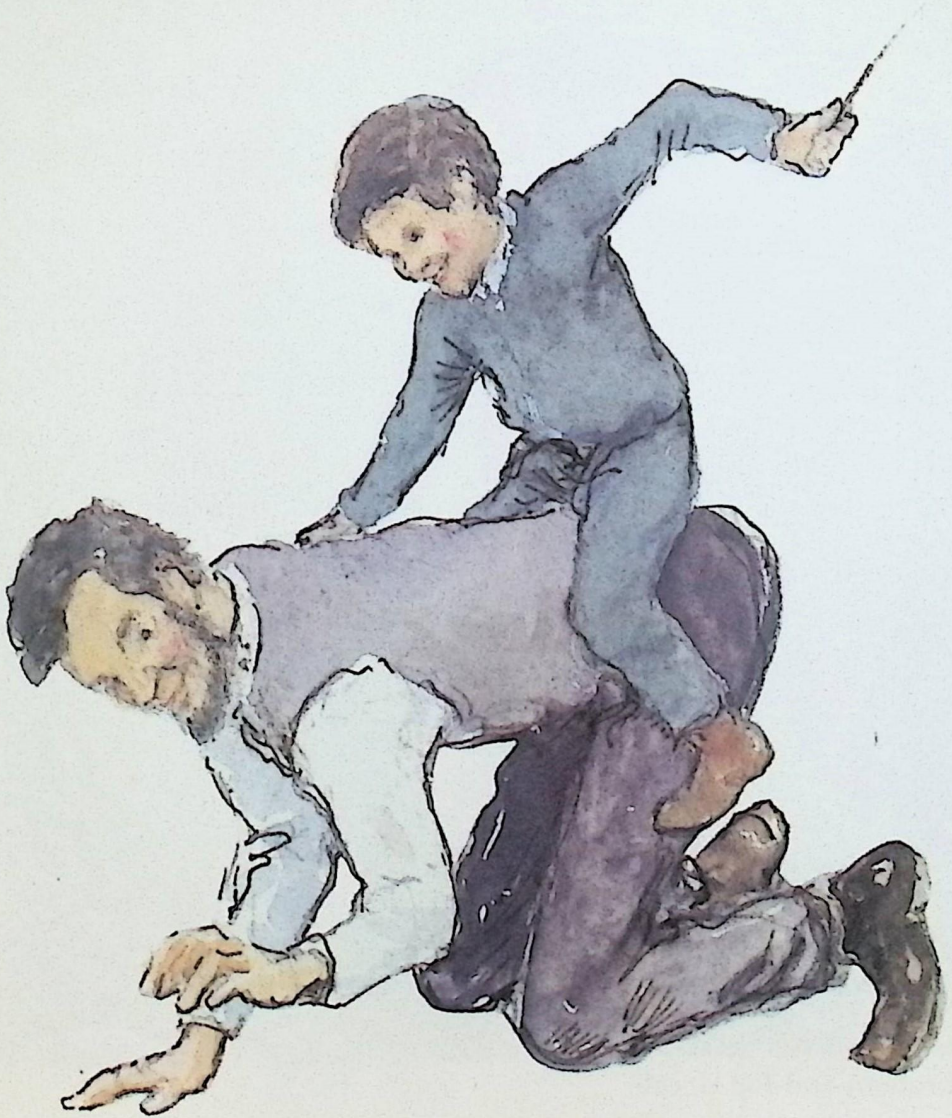
But sometimes there was a special knock on his door. Three light taps and two loud thumps. This wasn't a hard-luck story. This was the president's ten-year-old son, Tad. His real name was Thomas, but his nickname was Tad. Why? He was just like a tadpole, his father said. Wiggly.





Abraham and Tad Lincoln

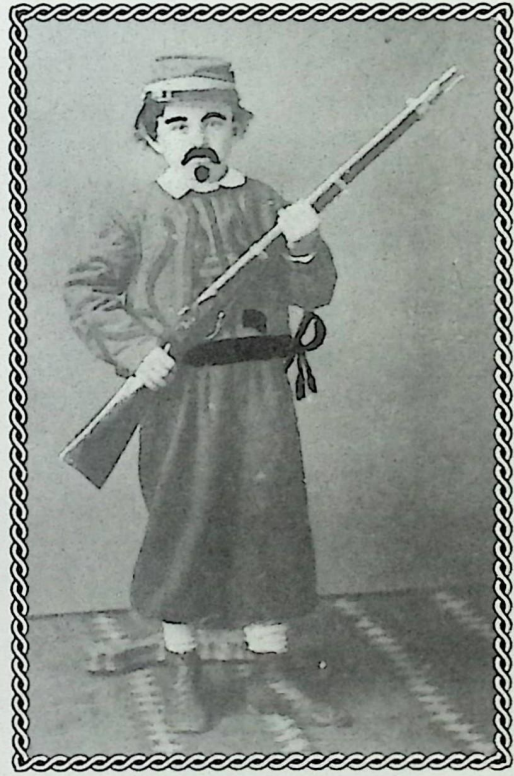
Tad and his father were best friends. Sometimes they played and roughhoused together before supper.



Sometimes Tad went with his father to visit the soldiers. He'd wear his own uniform, carry his own sword, and ride his own little gray horse. Sometimes he'd walk with his father to the War Department for the latest news.



Tad in his uniform



Tad drew a mustache on his picture so he'd look like a real general.

Often the news was bad. For the first two years of the war, everything went wrong.

The soldiers needed blankets. But the blankets they got turned out to be rotten.

They needed knapsacks. The knapsacks fell apart.



Worst of all, the South kept winning. Battle after battle. Lincoln said his generals had the “slows.” They didn’t move fast enough. Or hard enough. Or soon enough.





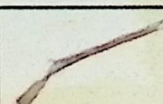
### CIVIL WAR BATTLE VICTORIES

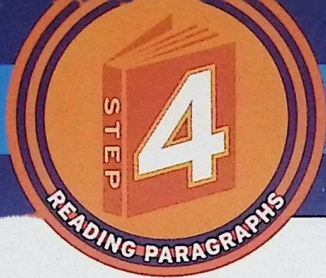


BATTLE

NORTH

SOUTH

1st Battle of Bull Run July 21, 1861		
2nd Battle of Bull Run August 27–30, 1862		
Battle of Antietam September 17, 1862		
Battle of Fredericksburg December 13, 1862		
Battle of Chancellorsville May 1–4, 1863		



# STEP INTO READING®

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln made a speech after the Battle of Gettysburg. Read all about his powerful words!



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