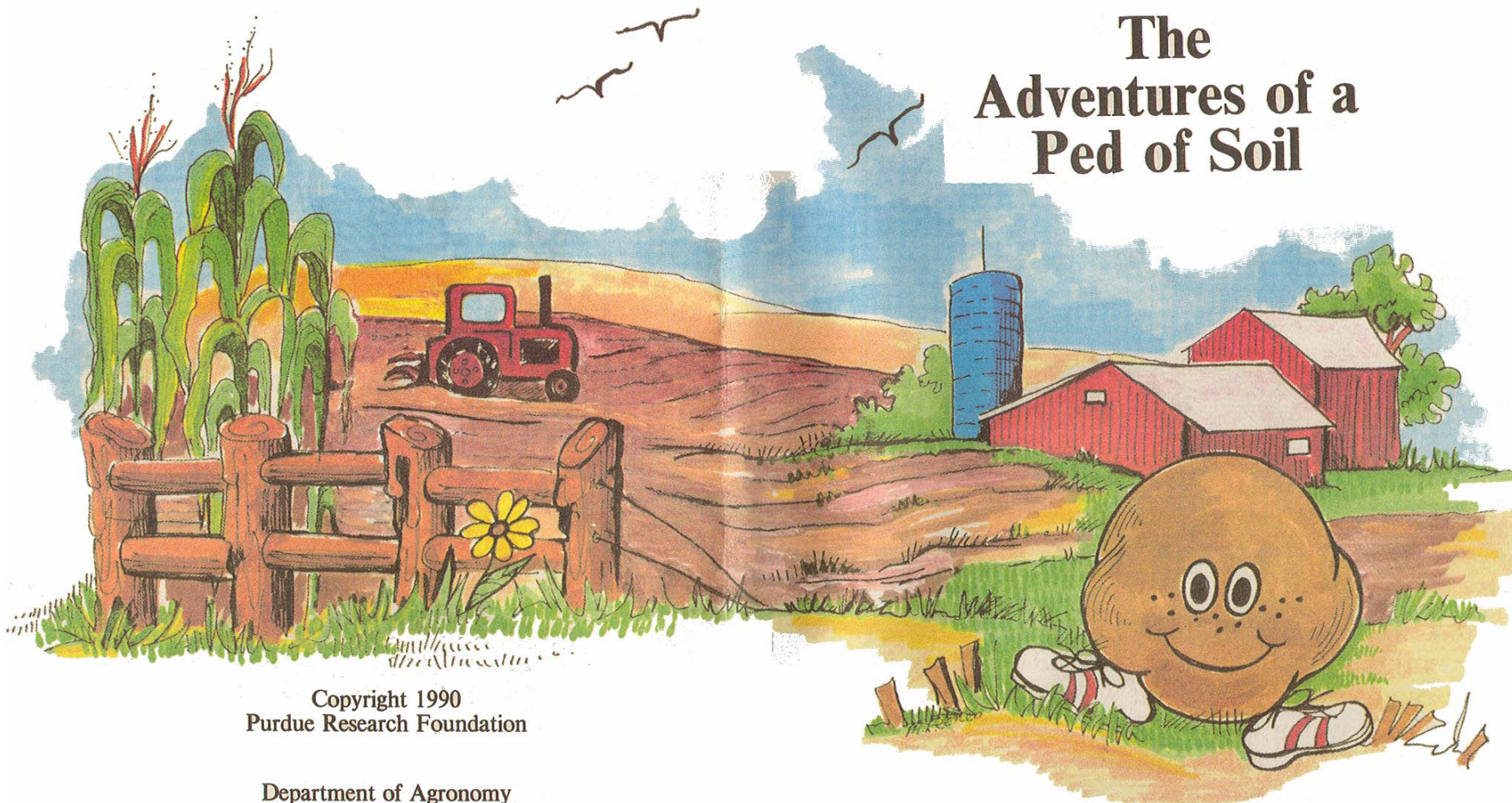


PETER PED

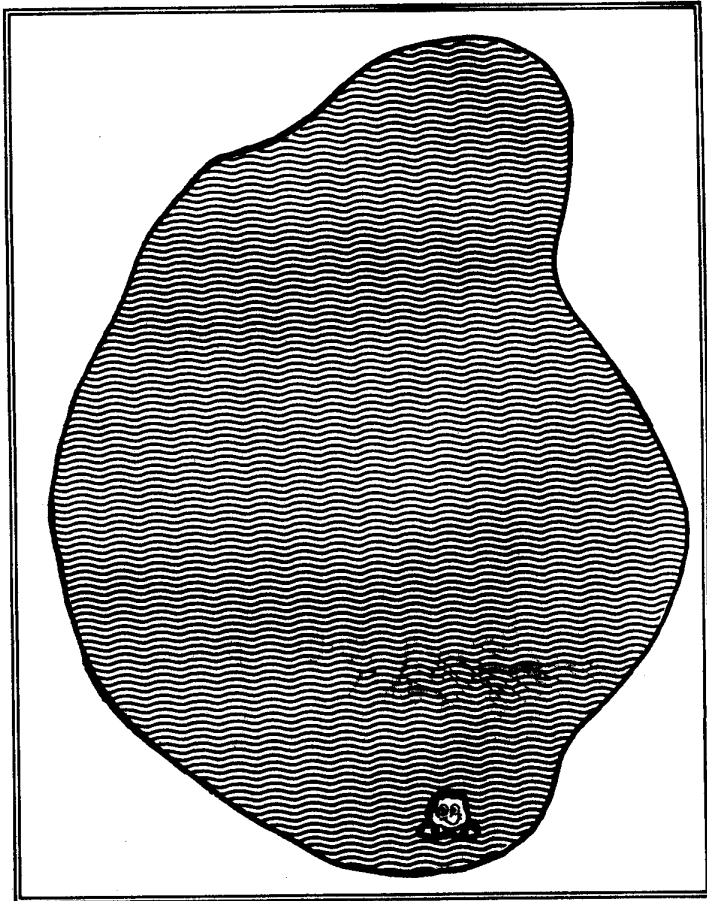
The Adventures of a Ped of Soil



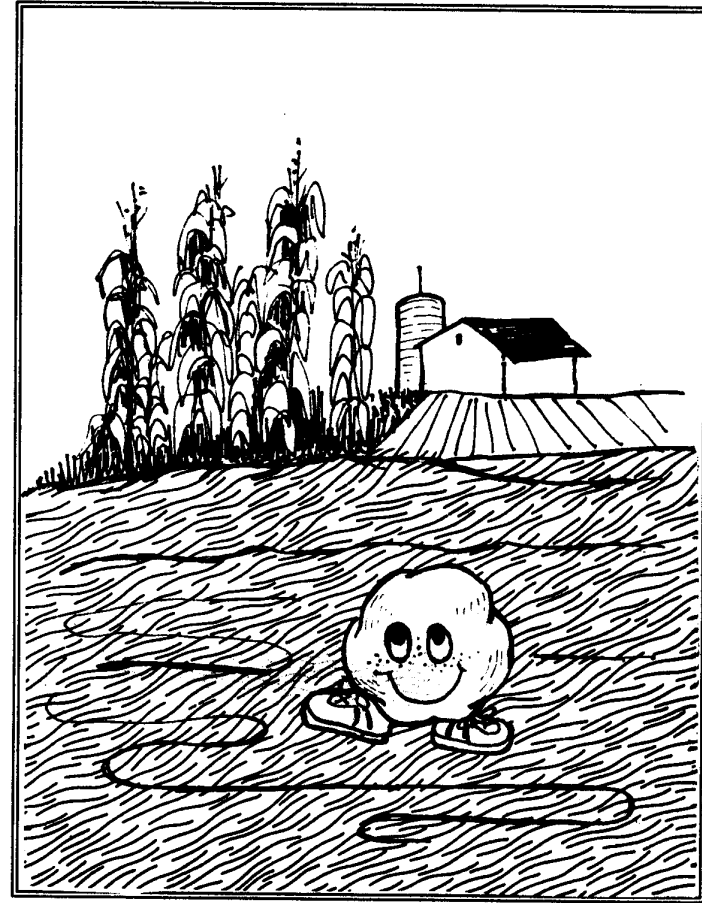
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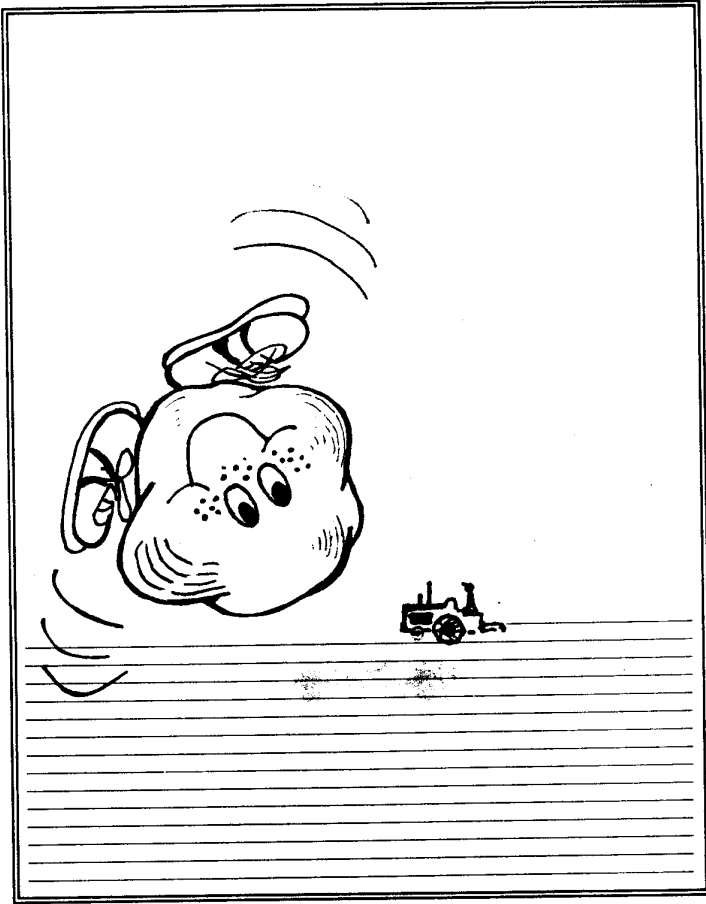
Written and Illustrated by Mary Lou Jones
Concept by Gary C. Steinhardt



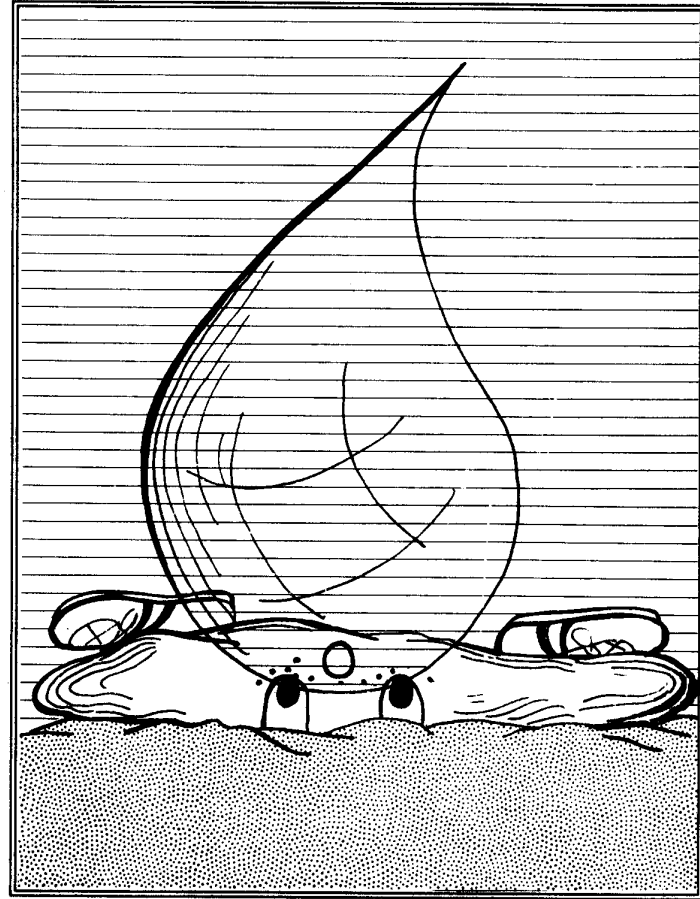
Imagine being small as a crumb. Imagine living in a place that seems as big as an ocean. That was Peter Ped. Peter was a "ped" of soil. A "ped" is a teeny, tiny crumb of soil.



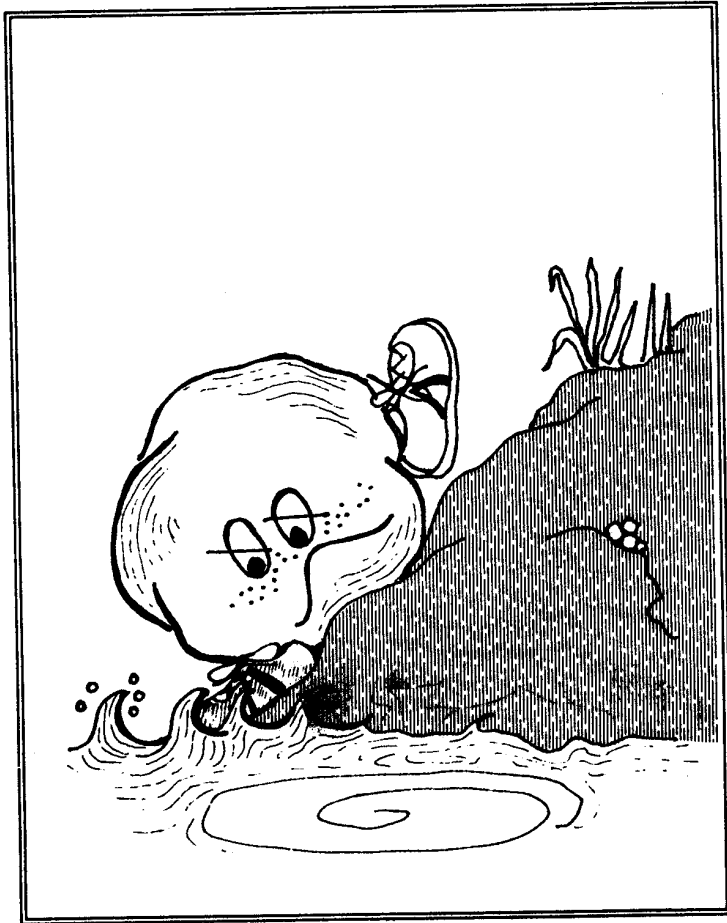
Peter was a young "ped" of soil. He lived with his family in Farmer Jones' field. It was a clean, smooth field.



One day a big tractor came to plow. As it rumbled past Peter Ped, he began to roll over and over. It was so much fun that Peter kept on turning somersaults until he was over on the other side of the field--a long, long ways from Mom and Dad, and his brothers and sisters, and aunts and uncles and grandparents and cousins.



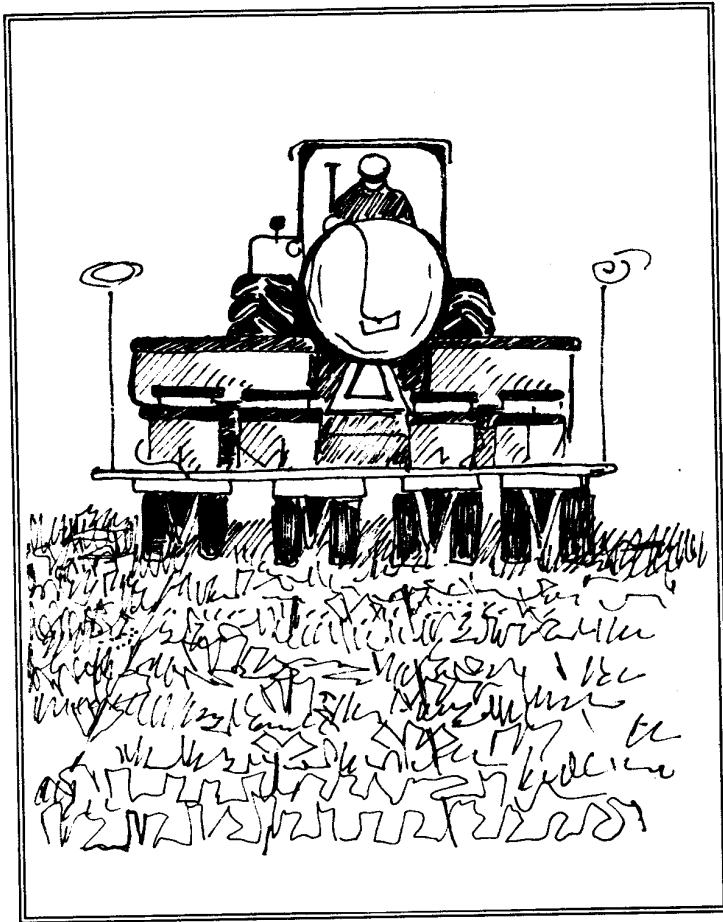
While in the midst of doing a headstand Peter was suddenly flattened by a big drop of rain. It started to rain very, very hard. Peter was frightened as the water swept him quickly downhill and into a stream. It was very scary.



Finally the storm stopped and Peter ended up on the side of a creek bank. He was very tired and his feet were wet. He wished he had never rolled away from his family. He missed his Mom and Dad, and even his brother, Paul, who used to roll on top of him and squash him--on purpose, of course.



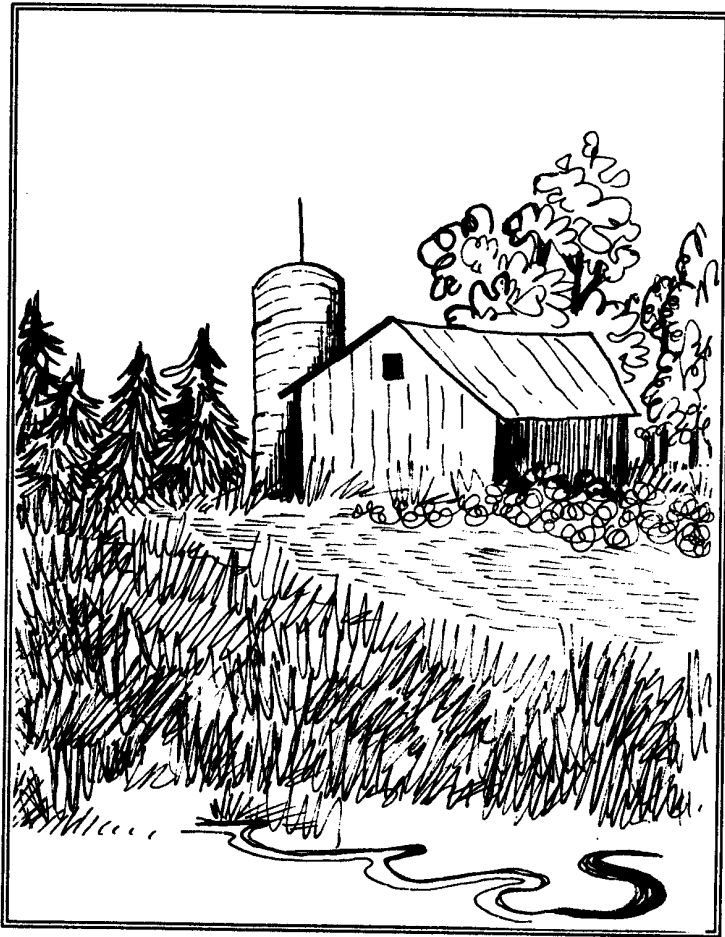
So much soil had been washed away by the storm that Farmer Jones became worried. He talked to people who knew how to protect soil.



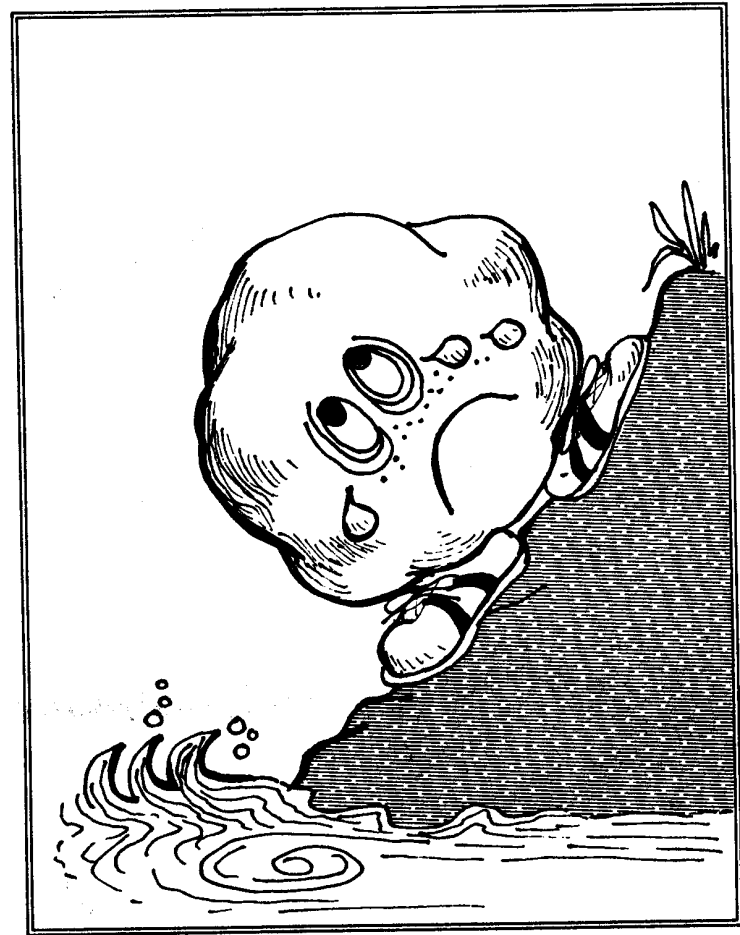
They told him how he could leave the stubble of the crops in the fields after harvesting; and, to plant the seed into the stalks and stubble. This helps protect the soil from being washed away by water or carried away by wind.



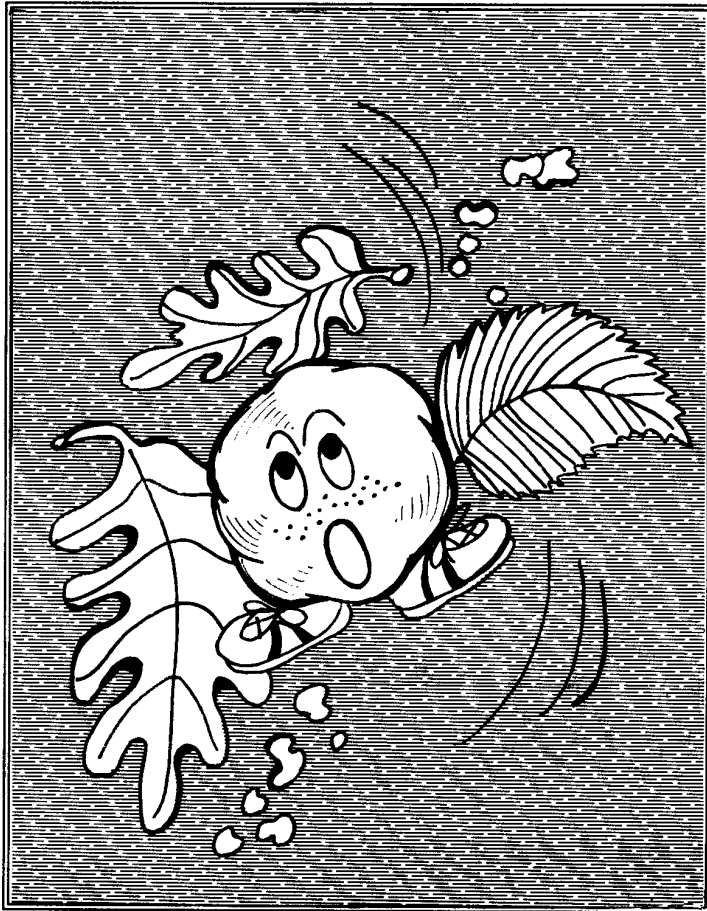
They showed him how to build a small mound of soil across the field to act like a dam and slow the water. These mounds also keep soil from washing away.



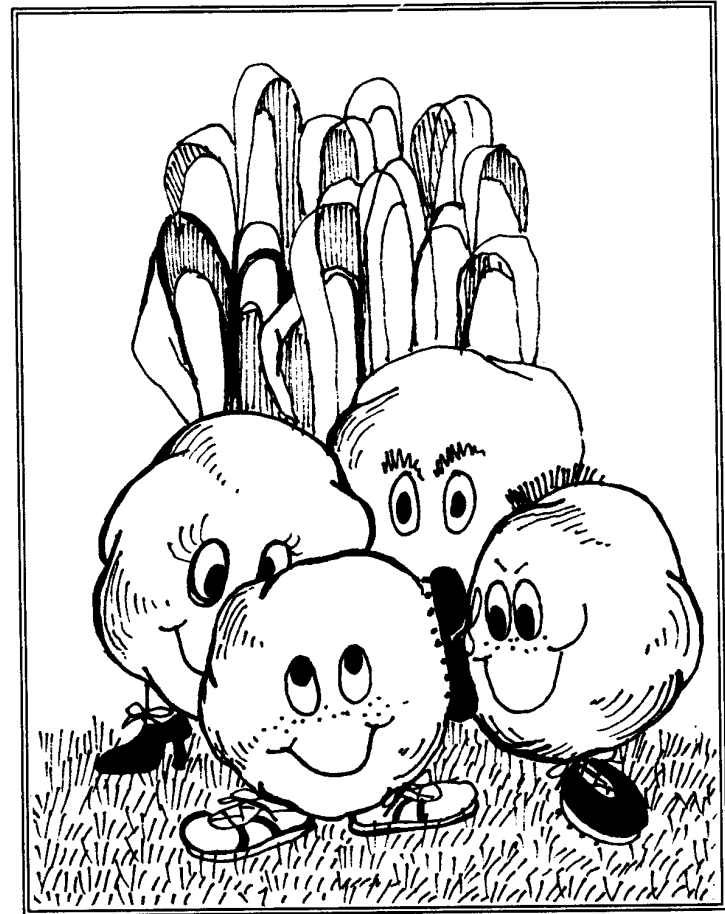
Farmer Jones learned he could plant certain crops like hay, wheat and grass. These plants along with trees and shrubs hold the soil in place with their roots.



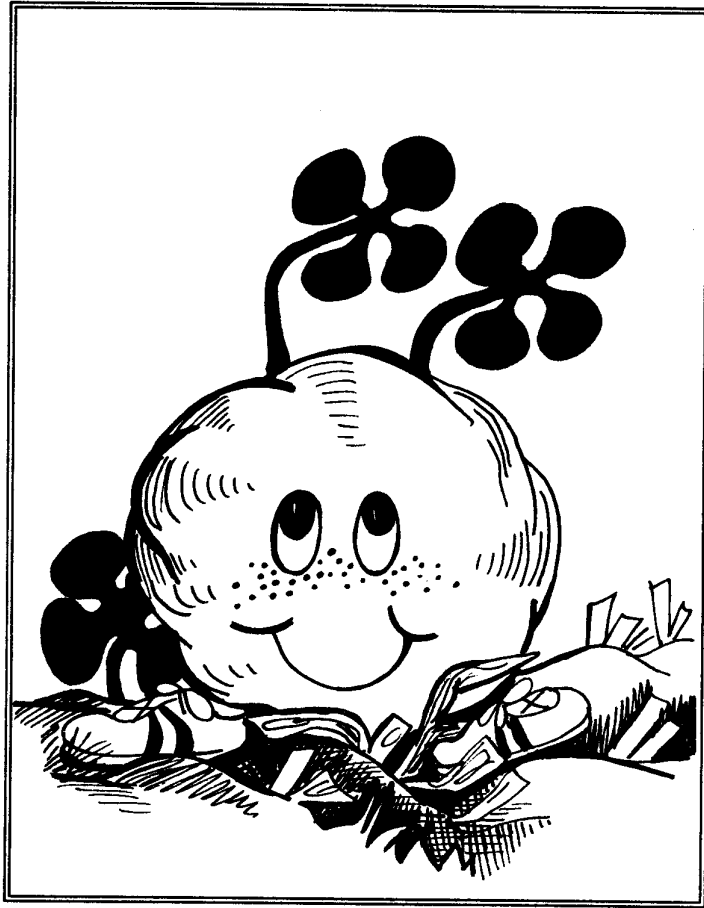
Peter Ped was stuck to the side of the creek bank for a long, long time. It did not rain again and he was very hot and thirsty, and sad and lonely. He started to cry. It seemed like forever.



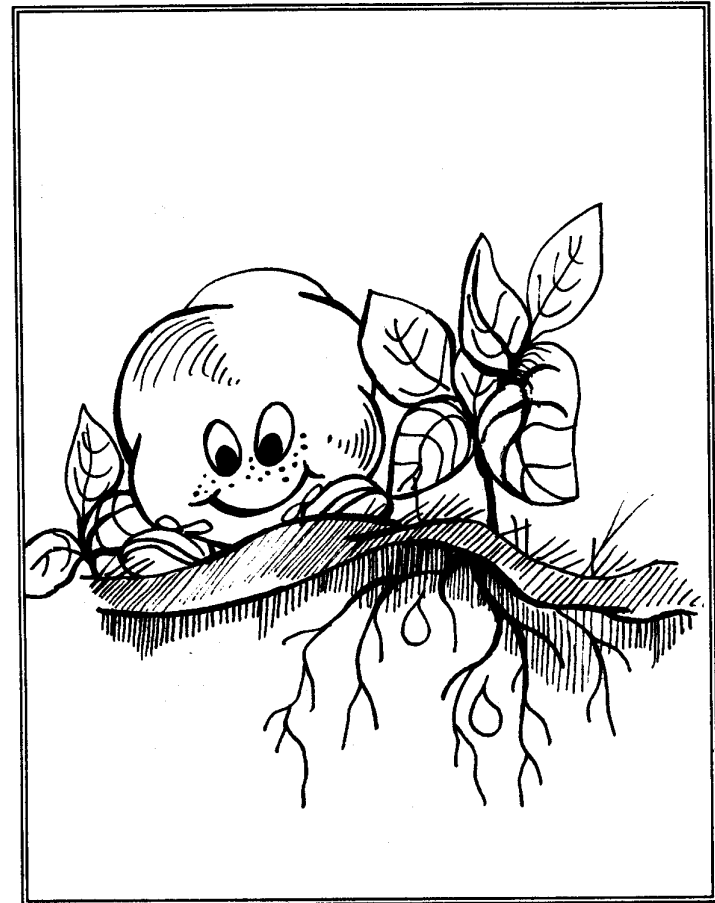
Suddenly one hot afternoon a big wind came from the west and blew everything up into the sky. It swirled leaves, branches, paper--and yes, Peter Ped, around and around.



Peter whirled and swirled and tumbled and spun until finally he crashed back down to earth with a big thud. Peter was back safe at last in Farmer Jones' field. His Mom gave him a big hug. His Dad gave him a big hug. His brother Paul gave him a big slap on the back.



The field looked very rough with mounds of soil, and rows covered with stubble. But, it looked very beautiful to Peter because he was home. Peter was very lucky, Once soil is lost from the land, it is usually gone forever.



Remember, plants depend upon the soil for their food and water. We depend upon plants to supply our food, clothing, and the oxygen we breathe. We must protect our soil, now and in the future!