

J Additional transcription practice for this and subsequent chapters is provided by recordings of the remainder of *The Story of Arthur the Rat*, begun in the previous chapter.

British speaker

American Speaker

His aunt Helen said to him, "Now look here. No one is going to care for you if you carry on like this. You have no more mind than a blade of grass."

One rainy day, the rats heard a great noise in the loft. The pine rafters were all rotten, so that the barn was rather unsafe. At last the joists gave way and fell to the ground. The walls shook and all the rats' hair stood on end with fear and horror. "This won't do," said the captain. "I'll send out scouts to search for a new home."

Within five hours the ten scouts came back and said, "We found a stone house where there is room and board for us all. There is a kindly horse named Nelly, a cow, a calf, and a garden with an elm tree." The rats crawled out of their little houses and stood on the floor in a long line. Just then the old one saw Arthur. "Stop," he ordered coarsely. "You are coming, of course?" "I'm not certain," said Arthur, undaunted. "The roof may not come down yet." "Well," said the angry old rat, "we can't wait for you to join us. Right about face. March!"

Arthur stood and watched them hurry away. "I think I'll go tomorrow," he said calmly to himself, but then he thought. "I don't know; it's so nice and snug here."

That night there was a big crash. In the morning some men—with some boys and girls—rode up and looked at the barn. One of them moved a board and saw a young rat, quite dead, half in and half out of his hole. Thus the shirker got his due.