

mother's arm. She carefully laid the baby on the bed and ran for the bucket to get some more water.

The summer days passed with only small harassments and nigger calls. John Hale open the Bible every night. Most of the memorized scriptures were repeated by each family member. Claude could read some words; he had learned quickly with only his few years in school. John Hale was the spiritual head of his family, and they obeyed as unto the Lord. After scriptures, the kerosene lamps burned, and eyes started to close. "We're together here, Fannie; things will be all right. Put the children to bed. There is still daylight, and I am going fishing. Come and sit on the bank with me." There was enough light, so she brought her patch work squares and sat in the quiet evening.

The schoolhouse stood on the hillside at the head of the canyon. Its flag of red, white and blue waved in the wind. Fannie did her best to piece decent clothes together for the first day of school. The days grew closer as September drew near. June, July and August had not been a quiet time for the striking coal miners. Trouble seethed under the surface. By late June a contract was broken, and the New Castle strike was broken by sending about 100 Franklin Negroes to operate the mine. By the end of June, New Castle and Franklin had excluded the Knights of Labor, while Black Diamond looked toward an end to its sympathy strike.

The breaking of the New Castle strike sparked a riot in Franklin. The train carrying the Negroes had been guarded by nine whites, and around 7:30 p.m. on June 28 it returned the guards to Franklin. Between Black Diamond and Franklin the guards, apparently drunk, fired on Sunday strollers along the track. As the train pulled into the town with shots still ringing in the air, the Negroes rushed to the edge of the drop-off overlooking the houses on the flat below. They were nervous because of the wounding of a black guard earlier in the day. The summer passed with labor

troubles, and the families prepared for the winter and the school year. They were sure no one would freeze or starve. Annie was shy sitting at her wooden desk, but she paid attention and gained the whole admiration of the class by winning the spelling bee.

The years in Franklin were years of learning to work the Franklin mines. The children grew tall, and John said, "smarter than he was." Some days were tough, and John Hale argued himself out of leaving. He didn't leave. "We will know", he said "When God moves us on."

Claude opened the screen door and shut it carefully behind him. A cat scurried under the house at the sound of the door with her breakfast prize of a newly found rat. There were plenty of rats, and some of them bigger than pussy cat. They liked to stay around the fodder for the mules, and they grew big and fat.

Today would be warm again. Claude kicked at his baseball bat that had been left out all night. Just another summer day he thought to play ball and fish. Summer would be over soon. Claude should have remembered the scripture his father had read the night before, "You do not know what a day may bring forth." He looked at the woodpile. He didn't have to carry much wood, only to kindle a fire for making oatmeal and flapjacks. It wasn't mama's day for washing. *Today was to be different.* John and Fannie let the children sleep while they spent time together. Then came the mine disaster. Men rushed to the house as John was coming out of the door. "There's been a terrible mine disaster!" The girls were awakened and hustled to the mouth of the slope with the rest of the people in town.

The alarm bell sounded for another disaster in Franklin on August 24, 1884. It shortened their stay. Soon John Hale would say, "God had told us to move on now."