

## Transcribed Excerpts from “As I Remember” by Minnie London, 2003

### Excerpt 1

The Y.M.C.A. was a large three story structure built diagonally across from the company store. It was built expressly for the colored miners, and when they seemed reluctant to take advantage of the opportunity, the Supt. indicated that he would turn it over to the white people. Our people, after reconsideration, pledged cooperation and then a very efficient secretary in the person of L. E. Johnson was engaged.

The first floor of the building contained offices and recreation rooms. The second a spacious auditorium with stage and dressing rooms. The third floor was occupied by rooms for the many secret orders. To the north of the large building was a smaller building containing a swimming pool for the younger group with their own secretary.

The Langlois sisters, better known as the French Women, displayed moving pictures every night, which afforded a very enjoyable recreation for the miners and families. Road shows as well as moving pictures were featured in the auditorium. Among them East Lynne and the Count of Monte Cristo.

Among the many noted Negroes who entertained packed houses were Hallie Q. Brown, Booker T. Washington, Blind Boone and Roscoe Conklin Simmons.

I must not forget to relate to you about the roller skating rinks and the added recreation it afforded the younger folks, and I might add some older ones too. You ought to have seen how these boys and girls did skate! The jolting jitterbug of today was a mild comparison.

## **Excerpt 2**

About 1921 many of the pioneers were destined to be moved to another coal field as the mines at Buxton were just about worked out. The new camp was called Haydock, still in Monroe County about eighteen miles distant over hills and valleys. Fewer still were willing to follow up the unstable life of a miner and so many continued to go to various cities. The camp had already been populated by many white miners and their families, mainly from Illinois, thus there were less colored people and very few business ventures.