

SPIN, SPUTTERS AND SPOUT

CHAPTER EIGHT by Kay Hively

Captain Bell invited Jacob's family to go with him on his boat. He said he would take them somewhere else to start a new life. Jacob's father shook his head. He said even though the danger was not yet over, his family would not leave.

"This is a good land. Things can spin, sputter and spout all they want, but I'm not leaving," Mr. Stark said. One day thousands of people would live here, Jacob's father said. And one day this land would be part of a new state.

The captain did not argue with his friend. He knew that Jacob's father would rebuild his farm and make a good life on the riverbank.

The men unloaded more supplies from the keelboat. Jacob's father took all the money from his leather pouch. But the captain took only half of it. He said a friend could not take it all.

Captain Bell said that many fur-bearing animals were still in the area. He promised to come back in February to buy furs. He said he would also bring seed for corn and cotton so the family could farm again.

Jacob's mother hugged Captain Bell and thanked him for coming to their rescue. Jacob's father shook the captain's hand and called him a good friend.

The captain shook Jacob's hand and told him to work hard to help his family. Then the captain patted Patches on his furry head and called him a great dog.

With a final good-bye, Captain Bell and his little boat were gone, off down the river to help others in need.

Jacob and his father worked the rest of the day hauling the new supplies up to the cabin site. Most of the time, the earth was still.

But once or twice the ground did buckle and crumble under their feet. Jacob wondered when the earthquake would ever end.

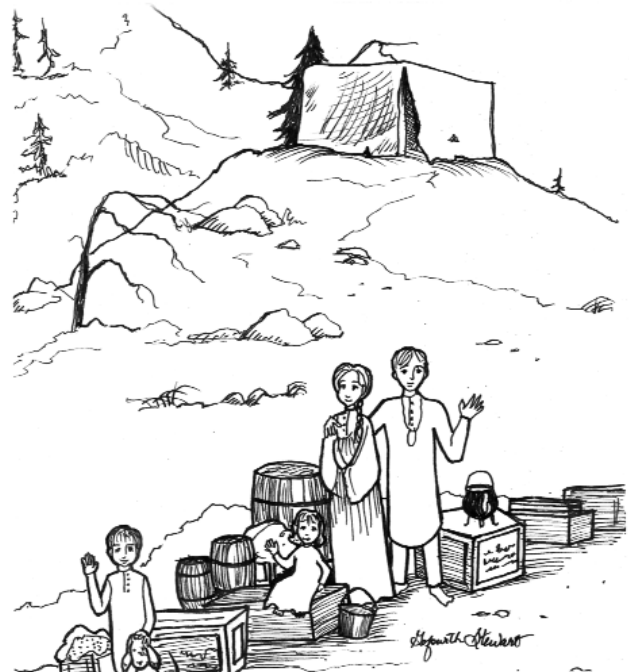
By nightfall, the supplies were safe at the little hut. Then the family huddled around the fire to eat and talk about their future.

Jacob's father said they would build a new cabin. It would be bigger and stronger than the first one. Tomorrow, he said, he would set traps. With the fur money, he would buy horses.

As Jacob's father spoke another big jolt rumbled over the hillside. Mr. Stark did not flinch. Jacob knew that his father would not give up no matter how much the earth shook. His father had said this was a good land.

But Jacob also decided that his father was a good man.

Jacob used to dream of riding on a boat to the big towns on the Mississippi River. Now his dream was to become a good man in a good land. That was now his dream, and he would work hard to make it come true.



CLASSROOM EXTENSIONS

Things to Think About and Do –

- A. When did Captain Bell say he would come back to see Jacob's family? What did he promise to do when he came back? What did he say he would bring?
- B. Jacob's dream changed. What was his first dream? What was his new dream? Do you think Jacob can fulfill his new dream? Write a paper, telling some of your dreams.

Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Produced in partnership with this newspaper and the Missouri Press Foundation with support from Verizon Foundation. Copyright 2002.