(Handwritten date: Feb. 21, 1935) (Left side of article blurred)

JOHN GERBER, 92, ?? PERSON ATTRIBUTES LONG LIFE TO "GOD WILLED IT SO"

Sick 6 Days in Life

   EDITORS NOTE:  Beginning with this issue, the Review will publish a weekly feature on the town's oldest people.  The first article today is about John Gerber, the town's oldest person.  A story will appear every Thursday.  Next Thursday interesting features in the life of ?? Gilliom will be published.

   In 92 long years, John Gerber, Berne's oldest living person, has ...only 6 days on account of sickness.  Those six days were consecutive ones too, spent in bed about 30 years ago, when he suffered a ?? appendicitis.  At no other time in his life has Mr. Gerber been confined to his bed. "I ?? rheumatism  and other ?? in my days, said Mr. Gerber Wednesday, but never were ?? to send me to bed."  Gerber is an interesting character.  ...at his home on West ??, where he lives with his daughter, Mrs. ?nnie ??, and his grandson, ??, Mr. Gerber gave a ?? on his life which ....  " I have been very fortunate...it so that I should.  When I was little I dreamed that I should ...ripe old age.  I do wish to live much longer, however ... ready to die.  I have lived longer than the average person, and have no regret in passing.  But I am still feeling fine and able to get around, and still take much interest in everyday happenings and current events.  I have always been more or less fortunate throughout my life.  I had one arm broken when I was a lad, but was never hurt otherwise.  In all my long years I have spent just six days in bed on account of sickness.  That was about 30 years ago when I had an attack of appendicitis.  I did not have an operation, however, and the attack passed.  I have never been sick in my life otherwise.  I never had pneumonia, just a slight attack of the flu once or twice and have not had a bad cold the last 20 years."

   This of course was all related in the Swiss dialect.  Mr. Gerber is unable to converse well in English.

   When we approached Mr. Gerber he was reading a newspaper.   With the aid of glasses, he can still read well and spends most of his time reading.  For a man of his age he can get around surprisingly well, and also spends some time listening to the radio.  His hearing is slightly impaired and he does not get the full benefit of radio programs.  He has not been laid up any this winter and appears to be feeling fine.  He is proud of the fact that he is Berne's oldest person.  It's been three years now that he has held this honor.  "Dad" Michaud was older than Mr. Gerber, but he passed away three years ago.

   Mr. Gerber believes that hard work most of his life, plenty of fresh air and regular habits have had much to do with his long life.  He spent much time in the open and helped to clear 120 acres of land.  He went to bed early and rose early.  He never used tobacco in his life, in any form, and indulged very little in liquor.  A little wine or beer now and then always tastes fine, he said, but he does not overdo it.

   Mr. Gerber comes from a family where old age ruled.  His father's mother was more than 100 years old when she died.  His half-sister, Mrs. Speicher here is 83 years old, his half-brother, David Gerber, at Decatur, is 72, and his step-mother died at the age of 87.  Mr. Gerber was born in Switzerland, Dec. 12, 1842 long before the Civil War started here.  He came to this community direct from Switzerland in 1853 and has lived in Wabash township many years, and moved to Berne in 1909 where he lived ever since.  His first wife died in 1874, and his second one 15 years ago.  Mr. Gerber clearly recalls that when he came here first, dense forests covered most of the community and deer and other wild animals abounded.  There were numerous swamps and they caused malaria and other fever.  Most of the big inventions have taken place since his birth, and he had seen a complete change in the was of living.  When he first came here there were no automobiles, trains, steamships, telephones, roads, airplanes or any kind of the present farm machinery.  Mr. Gerber told of the time when there was a dam in the Wabash river at Linn Grove, and the water used to run a saw and grist mill.  He stated that was very unhealthy as much of the water in the river and creeks never flowed away because of the dam, and all kinds of flies, insects and germs found a breeding place and many cases of fever and sickness resulted.

   Mr. Gerber clearly remembers the Civil War.  He was just to be drafted when the war closed.  He has lived through many presidential elections and has seen several depressions come and go.  He is of the opinion that this depression will give way to prosperity just life former ones did.

   "The world is moving very fast," Mr. Gerber said.  "Times change so fast that its hard for me to really realize what is going on.  I was uptown just two weeks ago and I find that I know very few people anymore.  Almost none of the younger ones.  One of these days I will be gone, but I will be ready when the end comes.  I have far outlived my Biblical allotment of three scores and ten."

   One of the surprising features of Mr. Gerber's life is that while he lived on a farm more than 50 years, he never spent any time hunting.  "I have never killed a rabbit, squirrel or bird in my life," he said.   And while he lived on the banks of the Wabash river 30 years, he never spent any time fishing.

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(Handwritten date:  Monday, Feb. 4, 1935)

CELEBRATE WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

   Mr. and Mrs. Albert Huser celebrated their twenty-eighth wedding anniversary Thursday evening with a get-together at the Albert Huser farm east of town.

   The evening was spent in a social manner and later refreshments of ice cream and cake were served.

   Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Schnepp, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Haines and family and Mr. and Mrs. Albert Huser and family.

**Adams County Historical Museum**

**1935 Scrapbook, image 74-76**

**Transcribed by Karin King**