Handwritten-July 11, 1925

ADAMS COUNTY PIONEER DIES

Mrs. Henry Ellenberger Expires At Home In Berne Friday Evening

            Berne, July 11.—Mrs. Henry Ellenberger, age 85, lifelong resident of Adams county, died suddenly at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Steiner, in Berne at 5:15 o’clock Friday evening.  Death was due to senility. Mrs. Ellenberger had been in her usual good health, apparently, until about 5:00 o’clock yesterday evening when she went to bed.  She died fifteen minutes later.

            (Missing) was born in French township, Adams county, January 10, 1840.  Her husband died two years ago last march. Since that time, Mrs. Ellenberger had been living with her son-in-law and daughter.  Mr. and Mrs. Ellenberger had resided in Berne for several years, preceding his death.

            Mrs. Ellenberger is survived by eight children,  Mrs. Christ Beer, of Monroe township,  Mrs. Fred Studler, of Linn Grove, Mrs. Caroline Schenbeck, Mrs. Steiner, Joel, Noah and Henry, all of Berne; and Mrs. John Liddy, of Fort Wayne; and three sisters, Mrs. David Augsburger, of Berne, Mrs. Christ Augsburger, of Hartford township and Miss Mary Baumgartner, of Anderson. Four children preceded Mrs. Ellenberger in death.

            Funeral services will be held from the First Mennonite church in Berne, sometime Monday afternoon, the exact hour not being chosen yet.  Burial will be made in the M. R. E. cemetery.

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Handwritten-1925

(Heading cut off)

            DOROTHY AND HAROLD BEITLER, CHJILDREN OF MR. AND MRS. BEITLER FATALLY BURNED WHILE AT PLAY IN THE HOG HOUSE ON FARM--MOTHER ???FOUND BUILDING ENVELOPED IN FLAMES--BODIES BURNED BEYOND RECOGNITION

            Berne, Indiana, July 3—Dorothy Beitler, age 5, and her brother, Harold, age 4, children of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Beitler, at their home southwest of Berne, were burned to death at ?? o’clock this morning.  The children had been playing on the farm all morning and had made a playhouse in an old hog house about one hundred feet from the house.

            They had taken straw from a nearby pile and had lined the inside of the playhouse, then they crawled inside and built a door out of straw. One of the children set fire to the straw, it is thought, and the little playhouse became a mass of flames.  The father, who is employed by a Berne Stone company, was not at home when the tragedy occurred and the mother was busy in the kitchen.

                                                       Mother Heard Screams

            The screams of the burning children caused the mother to run out of the house and the  playhouse was entirely in flames.  She was unable to get near the building and ran down the road to the home of John Hendricks. Mr. Hendricks hurried back and helped in quenching the blaze before it had damaged the straw stack or the barn. The straw stack had already begun to burn but the blaze was soon extinguished..

            The children were taken from the debris, lifeless and almost burned to a crisp. It is not known how the children obtained the matches, because Mrs. Beitler said that she never placed any matches where the little tots could reach them.

            It is thought that one of the children either found a match in the yard or that someone had slept in the hog house one night and had possibly left some matches there.  It is not known whether the children set fire to the building or whether one of them stepped on a match which caused the blaze.

                                                    Many Neighbors Gather

            The entire neighborhood, on hearing of the tragedy hurried to the Beitler home, first reports being to the effect that the children had been seriously burned, but assistance was of no avail because both bodies were taken from the debris lifeless.  It is not known whether the children became panicky or not, but it is thought that neither of them suffocated from the smoke, because they continued to scream for some time, and as the helpless mother hurried down the road for aid she could hear her children screaming and crying for their mother.

            The bodies were taken to Berne to an undertaking establishment.  Funeral arrangements have not been completed but it is thought that a double service will be held Sunday afternoon at the Reformed church west of Berne, and interment will take place at the Reformed cemetery near the church. Surviving Harold and Dorothy are the parents and five brothers and sisters, Erma, Luther, Paul, Andrew and Alfred.

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Handwritten-Fri. Dec. 21, 1945

PREBLE TELEPHONE OPERATOR IS DEAD

FUNERAL THIS AFTERNOON FOR MRS. BESS ANDREWS, 62

            Mrs. Bess Andrews, 62, for the past 17 years telephone operator at the Preble exchange died at 5:45 o’clock Wednesday morning at her home in that village after an illness of 16 weeks.

            She was born in Kirkland township November 1, 1883, the daughter of James and Victoria LeBrun-Steele.  She lived in Decatur for a number of years before moving to Preble.

            She was a member of the Beulah Chapel Methodist church.

            Surviving are one daughter, Miss Wilma Andrews, at home; four sisters, Miss Mary Steele of Preble, Mrs. Cora Pence of Kendallville, Mrs. Rose Welker of Decatur and Mrs. Celia Caton of Lagrange, and one brother, Earl Steele of Indianapolis.  Two brothers preceded her in death.

            Funeral services were held at 2 o’clock this afternoon at the Zwick funeral home, with the Rev. Homer Studebaker officiating.  Burial was in the Decatur cemetery.

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No Handwritten Date

Funeral Held for Portland Man Killed in Light Plant Accident

PORTLAND, Dec. 24.—Funeral services for Lee McKinley Burk, assistant engineer at the Portland Light and Power Plant, who was accidentally killed Saturday afternoon while at work, were held this afternoon at one o’clock a the Friends Church. The Rev. M. ??? officiated and burial was in the Buena Vista Cemetery, Randolph County.

            The accident occurred about 3 p.m. Saturday when Mr. Burk, who had been employed by the city for 18 years fell into a large coal hopper to a boiler and was sucked down into the feeder pipe by the moving coal. Harson Fifer, another employee, and Burk were engaged, at the time, in loosening coal with poles.  It is thought Burk lost his balance when he struck a spot with an air pocket.  Fifer attempted to get hold of him but could not keep his grip against the weight of the coal closing over Burk.  It was two hours before Burk could be extricated.  Dr. Donald E. Spahr, coroner, returned a verdict of death by suffocation.

            Survivors include the widow, Ethel; two daughters, Mrs. Wilma Ann Gayl, of Galion, O.; Lt. Ruth C. Burk, Army nurse stationed in Manila; two sons, Pvt. Robert D. Burk a marine serving in China, Joseph D. Burk, here; five sisters, two brothers, and a granddaughter.

Adams County Historical Museum

1945a Scrapbook, images 131-134

Transcribed by Janice Vasilovski