

**Sam Rockenbach, 90,
Recalls First 'Long' Day at School**

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It was a beautiful day when Sam Rockenbach went off to school for the first time. Eighty-six years ago, even the four-year-olds were expected to stay all day in school. After the freedom of summer, confinement at a desk made the day a lifetime.

When he finally got home, he looked all around the house. It seemed like years since he had seen it, instead of a day. He turned to his mother in amazement. "Well", he said, "I see you still have the same old dog."

Sam was born on the Rockenbach's Sanders Road farm 90 years ago last Saturday, and went to Tripp School on Milwaukee Avenue. The area around here was so sparsely settled that he was taught to address envelopes using the meridian lines.

Wild pigs roamed in the woods around Sanders Road and the children were forbidden to go near, for the pigs were mean. But Sam was busy shooting rabbits for hasenpfeffer and pigeons for pigeon pie, and collecting arrowheads, which are now in the Lake County Museum.

Sam was a hot-shot pitcher on the local baseball team. He gets a chuckle from recalling that his home at 1022 Springfield Avenue, was built in the center field of the old baseball diamond. Sam liked many of the old Pittsburgh Pirates players, but his favorite team now is the Cubs.

After his father, George Rockenbach, moved to the Deerfield farm home at Central and Elm, Sam took a job as telegraph operator at the depot, which was just across the tracks where the lumber yard is now.

When the brickyards opened, offering better wages, Sam went there to work. When he retired, after 50 years, Sam was in charge of the machine shop.

In 1914 Sam married Emma Rose White, a widow with two children, Ben and Will. And in 1921 they moved into their home on Springfield Avenue. Sam has lived alone for five years now. He does his own cooking and laundry and keeps the house very neat, although, he says, no one can keep a house like a woman.

"There's one thing," Sam says, "I'd like to remind the town of. The first two teachers here were Jesse Wilmot and Minnie Cadwell. The town hasn't named anything after Minnie Cadwell - not a school, not a street, not a corner, not even a mudhole. Would be nice if they would."

Talking with Sam Rockenbach was so fascinating that the standard reporter question of 'to what do you attribute your longevity?' was never asked. Somehow it didn't seem important.