



Franklin Dora

Harrison Helen Helen Will Banzet Myra Banzet Edna
 Harold Arthur

IV 10. ELIAS GRAF b. 18 Feb 1853 d. 30 May 1947 wed 17 Jan 1879 Celia Hupach (sister of Helen Hupach Graf) b. 17 Jan 1857 d. 25 Jul 1934. Eli was a quiet, gentle man but held various civic offices and was an active farmer on 45th Road south of Somonauk. The January 1894 Reveille has the following news item: "Eli Graff is recovering from a peculiar affection. Two weeks since he had obstruction of the bowel, he had scarcely got relief from this when he was taken with acute inflammation of a projection of the bowel which had become engorged. This is the condition which L. J. Gage had while in New York and which was cured only by a timely operation. Mr. Graff is doing as well now as can be expected

and we hope soon to see him around again.”

The May 1895 newspaper reports that Eli Graf had built a conservatory on his house, no doubt a gift for his wife Celia who loved beautiful things and was a talented artist. She painted the picture of the Graf farm shown previously.

Eli and Celia were on this home farm until 1893 when they moved to her home Hupach farm. They were there until retiring to Somonauk. Some time after Celia died, Eli spent his last years at the Masonic Home in Sullivan, Illinois. He is pictured there at the age of 92.



VI 1. HERBERT MORRISON GRAF b. 1891 d. 1941 wed 15 Jun 1910 Vida F. Millace

b. 24 Sep 1886 d. 1937. Herbert was always teased by the Franklin Graf cousins. Once Harrison told him he could tie him up permanently, and of course, Herbert said he couldn't. Harrison took him to a distant orchard tree of considerable girth, had Herb sit on the ground straddling it, and tied his ankles together. Details of the rescue are lost in the mists of time.

On another occasion many of the Graf boys had been banished upstairs to go to sleep but were rough-housing instead. One of the Nebraska uncles came up and gave Herb a whack in the dark. Herb said indignantly, "It's me, Herbert!" and the uncle replied, "I know who it is. Go to sleep." much to the glee of the other cousins.

Herbert had a beautiful voice, all his relatives agree, and sang for local programs and then studied in Chicago. Dora reported that his voice teacher told him he could make a fortune for each of them if Herbert followed instructions; if he would stay out of the night air and wrap a white silk scarf around his throat. Herb said, "No, thanks." and went into light opera. Here is how he looked during this period.



Vida Millace was born in England and educated at the University of Berlin, and apparently trained in song and dance. She traveled across the Atlantic on the same liner with Lord and Lady Peale, so she told Dora, and she met Herbert because both were on the stage. The May 5, 1911 issue of the Reveille reads "Several from Somonauk are planning to attend the play, 'Red Mill' which will be presented at Aurora Monday evening. Herbert Graf, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eli Graf, will take part in the performance."

This is a very dry description compared to Dora's view of the event: "We were all going on the train and were very excited. Herb had the lead and Vida was in the chorus line. During much of the performance Aunt Celia covered her eyes, occasionally turning to Uncle Eli to ask about Vida and say that she hoped Vida wasn't kicking too high.

At one point Herb was singing 'Because You're You' and the villain was supposed to lock the heroine in the tower of the mill. Vida, who was jealous of the heroine, kept the villain talking backstage. The cue was missed and the heroine had to lock herself up while Herb sang on and on."

During the Depression Herb and Vida took over his father's farm, but he was not cut out to be a good farmer. He decided not to vaccinate his pigs and lost the whole herd. Vida got a government job to teach drama and she tried to get work as a waitress. Sadly, Herb found her dead in bed one day; It is said she died of asthma. Herb tried to sell insurance but developed diabetes and also died at a fairly young age.

2. AUGUSTY GRAF , died at nine months of age and is buried with her parents in the Lutheran cemetery south of Somonauk.

V 11. JOHN EDWARD GRAF b. 26 Apr 1854 d. ___ wed May Beal
John went to Nebraska at the same time as Franklin and David to farm one of the 80-acre plots their father had provided the brothers. However, after a few years he and May decided the land was better to the east and moved to Belle Plaine, Iowa. A Nebraska newspaper noted that Franklin Graf sold 160 acres in 1893¹ ; it is surmised that Frank may have made an earlier purchase of John's land when he moved to Iowa.

VI 1. PEARL GRAF
2. THERESA GRAF

Dora's parents gave her a trip to Iowa as a graduation present and she felt very independent traveling there by herself. Aunt May told her, "We'll get out the good dishes this first night you're a guest, and then after that you'll be part of the family and we'll use the regular place settings." She really enjoyed cousins Pearl and "Tee". She said they went to the store and bought cloth and made dresses to wear to a dance the same night.

Unfortunately, both Pearl and "Tee" died young. One of them was married, however, and when Marilyn and Ben were in Los Angeles in 1957, Harold Graf invited this husband to come meet "Dora's girl". The man, whose first name was Ray, enjoyed seeing a reminder of "the good old days" and said Marilyn resembled her mother.

V 12. WILHELMINA GRAF b. 2 Mar 1860 d. 6 Sep 1860 Dora said that Louisiana from the birth had felt that all was not right. The little sister's death was keenly felt by Mary Anne who said Wilhelmina was very intelligent. This infant, too, is buried in the Lutheran cemetery with her parents.

The photo below shows some of Samuel and Louisiana's family. Edna Sherman, who as a

¹ Beatrice Daily Sun July 1993

young girl in Somonauk knew everyone and played at the Hess home with Hazel Jones Anderson (she was raised by her grandmother Mary Hess) identified the picture as follows, "That one on the left is Cussie (Kossuth); then that's Eli next to him and then Mary Hess. I believe that's Frank on the right end and I don't know the other two."

I asked if one could be Mary's husband Paul and she said, "No." Since David was eight years older than John, the tall, younger man next to Mary is assumed to be John. Paul Graf says he had heard that John was "a good-sized man". This leaves the man next to him as possibly being David.

However, it is reasonable that Sam would be in the picture since he lived nearby in Sheridan, so this man could be Sam rather than David. When compared with the picture of Sam and Julia earlier in this history, a resemblance is noted.



At any rate, this is the history of the Graf family, with dates, lore, and reminiscence mixed with the actual story, as told by the material I have available- for your perusal, correction and addition.

Marilyn Suppes Rasmusen
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