

IV 9. FRANKLIN GRAF b. 28 Dec 1851 d. 28 Jun 1934 Wed Helen Hupach b. 3 May 1855 d. 6 May 1914. Franklin was a handsome man with twinkly blue eyes and dark curly hair. He, like his brothers and sister, must have attended the country school up the road. It was a little, red school house about 80 rods south of the County Line Road on the south side of Somonauk. Franklin's daughter Dora remembered going to school there the first few years (until the large brick school in Somonauk was built).

Church services were held there also. Rev. Nathan Gould was an early minister.<sup>57</sup> Franklin's daughters said he had a good singing voice for trios and quartets for local programs. Dora remembered him going around the house humming "oom-pa-pas" under his breath. (Dora herself often sang snatches of song as she worked).

The girl Franklin married was a neighbor to the southwest and the marriage was on Groundhog's Day which is an ancient holy day in Germany, perhaps a traditional day for a wedding. Two daughters, Myra and Dora, were also married February 2, a good time of year for farmers' weddings, in good time for the planting season. The local traditional moving day is March 1 for any farmers taking up new quarters.

Her nephew Verne Hazeman remembers Aunt Helen as a "good-size woman, rather tall, rather light in coloring. During his boyhood she visited his family and stayed overnight there near Leland at the time of a funeral.

A copy of Franklin and Helen's 1875 wedding certificate appears below.

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<sup>57</sup> Op. Cit. Mary Graf Hess and the Beelman Book



When Franklin married Helen, they traveled to Nebraska to farm the 80 acres given them by his father. Though brothers David and John were also settling nearby, neighbors were few. Helen told that sometimes Indians would come riding up and gallop in circles around the house, then come to the door. She said if a housewife would give them a feather from her feather duster, they were pleased and would ride off. At times they would take a chicken or two.<sup>58</sup> Here is the wedding picture of Franklin and Helen showing the wedding suit that Samuel tailored.

<sup>58</sup> Op. Cit. Dora Suppes memory of conversation



Settlers in Nebraska had challenging work, but eventually, the country was settled. Franklin chaired the directors of the country school where the Graf children learned their ABCs. Nearby was the "Graf Woods" with its walnuts, hackberrys and oaks. An 1888 history reads that Franklin Graf has planted "a very fine orchard where may be found in season an abundance of apples, plums, cherries, etc. Within his home are found many marks of that inherent refinement and culture that make it the brightest and most attractive place to those whose privilege it is to be members of the family."<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Portrait & Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska, p. 281

Nephew David Bernard remembers his Uncle Franklin as seeming “the jolliest of the brothers and sister”. Daughter Dora remembered her mother teasing her father about not knowing how to speak good German; this seems likely since her parents came from Germany and his from Switzerland.

Daughter Edna told a story about her mother, almost ready to leave the house, when the china cupboard somehow became unbalanced enough to fall forward. With a moan she took off her hat and started to pick up broken dishes, but Frank told her to go on and that he would clean it up. Said Edna with gusto, “Now, that’s the kind of father we had!”

V 1. EDWARD ANDREW GRAF b. 25 Mar 1876 d. 13 Mar 1892 . Eddie, as he was known,<sup>60</sup> was born in the same year his grandfather Graf died. When this first-born of Franklin and Helen’s died at the age of 14, it must have been quite a blow. Frank however, was known as a self-possessed man; nephew David Bernard writes, “I can still see him smoking his pipe. He was quiet and unruffled as were most Grafts.”

Eddie had what is known today as appendicitis. Dr. Grabe, a well-known physician there in Beatrice for years, admonished the family not to give the sick boy anything to drink as this was the prescribed treatment in those days. Eddie was very thirsty, of course, and the squeaking of the windmill shaft kept reminding him of water. His family quickly dis-connected it to stop the noise. In the years after his death, Helen always regretted not giving him a drink. She greatly admired their lady doctor Grabe, though, and was a personal friend.<sup>61</sup> Incidentally, the David Graf family remembered that this doctor saved young Fordyce’s life when he had scarlet fever.<sup>62</sup>

Helen herself was known as “good” with sickness. She would walk across the fields to take freshly-made poultices or to help sick neighbors in other ways.

Going back to that year of 1876, the year of Eddie’s birth and Samuel’s death, when Samuel died, the newspaper reported that he had been unwell for abot a year and that “Doctors disagree as to his disease. It was probably dropsy.”<sup>63</sup>

The appraisalment of his personal estate included four horses, 30 head of cattle, four hogs, six dozen chickens, farm equipment including hedge knives and cider mill, 15 tons of hay and other items such as cider, potatoes and a barrel of salt. He left a life interest in this and his farm to his wife and \$200 each to his children. his grave is in the “German” cemetery south of Somonauk.

Pictures of Samuel and Louise-Anna in their later years appear below.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Op. Cit. Dora Graf Suppes

<sup>62</sup> Op. Cit. letter, Fordyce Graf

<sup>63</sup> Somonauk Reveille 22 Oct 1876





Verne Hazeman said admiringly, “Old Louise-Anna was about five feet six, blue-eyed, husky, with big arms. She looked like she’d worked!” He remembered her living with his family and sitting in her rocker. When she lived with son Frank’s family, Dora remembered her rocking, knitting lace and softly whistling to herself. One of her expressions was “Not worth a Continental”. Grandson Paul Graf says that “according to my mother, old Louise-Anna was always very stern”.

In 1848 Samuel had attended the Lincoln-Douglas debate in Ottawa, and he liked what Lincoln had to say. He would have voted for Lincoln, he said, but because he had four sons he did not want war.<sup>64</sup>

His daughter Mary described him to her niece Dora as quite a scholar but she did not believe that any of his children took after him in that way.

V 2. ALBERT GRAF b. 4 Feb 1878 d. 14 Feb 1878. A copy of a page from the family Bible appears below. It lists baby Albert as well as some of the other children of Helen and Franklin Graf.

<sup>64</sup> Dora Graf Suppes, remembered conversation

Albert Graf  
born Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> of 1878

Harrison Theodor Graf  
born Nov 15<sup>th</sup> 1884

Edna Lomena Graf  
Born Apr 3<sup>d</sup> 1888.

Dora Louisiana Graf  
Born Feb 18<sup>th</sup> 1891

Cather Franklin Graf  
Born Mar 18<sup>th</sup> 1893

V 3. MYRA LOUISA GRAF b. 6 Oct 1879 d. 23 Feb 1937 Wed 2 Feb 1901 Willis J. Banzet b. 1 Sep 1868 d. 23 Sep 1959 Nebrasks had a blizzard in 1888 known as the "School Children's Storm"<sup>65</sup>, and it could have spelled disaster for the Graf children.

<sup>65</sup> Country Journal, Feb 1988, p. 76

The teacher at Mount Olive country school saw that the snow was being driven in eye-blinding sheets, and she sent the children home. Myra put her two little brothers, Will and Harrison, behind her and, all holding hands, they started in what she hoped was the right direction. She put her free hand out before her, and they pushed through the storm. She knew they were approaching home, and as they were passing by the invisible goal, the tip of her little finger just brushed a corner of the house. By feeling along the wall they were able to find the door and the anxious embrace of their mother.<sup>66</sup>

This attractive picture of Myra was probably taken before she was married. Her father never cared for it and said it “made her look like a hussy”.<sup>67</sup>



<sup>66</sup> Helen Banzet Hotchkiss conversation with Myra Graf Banzet

<sup>67</sup> Dora Graf Suppes conversation with Marilyn Suppes Rasmusen

Myra and Will farmed on the west side of the State Road a mile south of Somonauk, but when brother Will and his wife suggested they partner in a sheep ranch in Idaho, they all decided to move West. They set up ranching and the women worked as hard as the men. Myra was out on the range one day with the chuck wagon taking the men their dinner. Suddenly, for no apparent reason, Myra felt something was wrong in Illinois and she started crying. They soon received the sad news that Helen, Myra's mother, had died at that very time. Sheep ranching turned out to be a risky business, and when it failed entirely, Myra and Will took the train back east.

They stopped to see the Nebraska relatives on the way. In visiting around Beatrice they found that work was available for Will and it seemed a pleasant place to live. They spent the rest of their lives there .

When Myra became very ill with cancer, she distributed her jewelry amongst the relatives. She sent sister Dora a necklace with a little amethyst pendant and a gold bracelet with two dangling hearts. She sent a round-robin letter to her brothers and sisters that speaks volumes of love and gratitude; she asked them not to feel too badly "as this time comes to us all and it always comes, just so we feel prepared". The letter included this poem:

Always live for those who love you,  
And the good that you can do,  
For the heaven that lives above you  
And awaits your spirit, too.

#### VI 1. LUCILLE FLORENCE BANZET b. 17 Sep 1907 d. 25 Oct 1907

Myra and Will adopted Lucille unbeknownst to Myra's mother Helen. The girls of the family decided to make a festivity out of it - a seemingly general trait in the Graf family. There was to be a sewing party at the Beelman sisters' in Somonauk, a fairly routine affair. Myra and her sisters arrived early and put little Lucille in a large basket, covering her slightly so that it looked like a batch of mending. When Helen arrived, someone suggested she check on that basket, and much to her surprise, she found the baby. This must have been the highlight of the party and the talk of the town. Unfortunately, Lucille did not live very long. Helen told Myra that, next time, she would go along and they would choose another little girl.

#### 2. HELEN LOUISE BANZET b. 6 Nov 1907 d. 10 Feb 1994 Wed Rex Hotchkiss about 1930. Second marriage about 1985 Robert Nixon b.20 Mar 1908 d. 1988.

When Helen Louise was also adopted, it called for a party. She at this point had not been named. A suggestion was made that everyone write down a preferred name and they would all be mixed in a container and one drawn out. This was put into action. Will was the winner of the draw with the name he had written - "Sweetheart". Thereafter, all her life the family called her Sweetheart.

Helen Louise grew up in Beatrice and graduated from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. She worked in an office at the State Capitol for years, before and after her marriage to Rex. She was a kind, generous cousin; Marilyn Rasmusen remembers that when she was little, Helen asked for measurements of her doll and periodically mailed intricately stitched tiny dresses and a wee coat with a fur collar.

She spent many years as a widow before marrying a second time.



VII 1. BERNE BANZET HOTCHKISS b. 23 Mar 1940 Wed 23 Nov 1959 Judi Ewing b. 10 Jan 1943. Divorced. Second Marriage Peggy Rohrbouck Knapp b. 15 Apr 1945

VIII 1. RICHARD BERNE HOTCHKISS TRAYLOR b. 1 Aug 1960 - name changed to Traylor when mother re-married.

2. BERNE DEAN HOTCHKISS b. Feb 1969
3. RHONDA KAY HOTCHKISS b. 1 Jul 1971
4. ROBERT LEE HOTCHKISS b. 25 Mar 1973

VII 2. DON WILL HOTCHKISS b. 16 Jun 1941 Wed Cheryl Neihardt b. 16 Jun 1941. Divorced.

- VIII 1. DONATA ELAINE HOTCHKISS b. 12 Mar 1962
2. DON DALE HOTCHKISS b. 2 Jul 1963
3. TERRY FROST HOTCHKISS b. 15 Mar 1966

V 4. WILLIAM PAUL GRAF b. 6 Jul 1881 d. 5 Jun 1958 Wed 1906 Amanda Amelia Hazeman b. 23 Feb 1878 d. 2 Dec 1971. Second marriage 1920 Pearl Weber b. 1889 d. 1946. Will, according to sister Dora, was the brightest of these Graf siblings. He worked for a railway company in Chicago before marrying. After he and Amanda had married and lived in Chicago a while, they decided to try sheep ranching in Idaho. This did not prove profitable, their marriage foundered and Will went to southern California. He eventually had a successful orange grove production there. After he died, the foreman of the grove told his sons that Will had spoken admiringly of his mother back in Illinois.

VI 1. WILLIAM PAUL GRAF JR. b. 10 Oct 1911 Wed Verna Joyce Lee b 17 Oct 1919 d. 20 Dec 1978. Paul, as he was called, was about six years old when his parents separated. His mother brought the two boys to Sandwich, Illinois and arranged for Paul to enroll in school. Paul remembers taking the train to Somonauk to visit Grandpa Graf. Uncle Harold met them at the station with a buggy. Aunt Do and Uncle Ed were at the gathering; after the other guests left, Paul asked his mother if Uncle Ed would bring Aunt Do back some time. When assured that he would, Paul says he stopped worrying but that his mother teased him about this compatibility.

Paul and Verna had a happy married life in Sandwich where Paul worked in Gamble's Hardware. He had worked at various jobs from an early age. Her heritage was Norwegian and Paul enjoyed her good Norwegian cooking. They also liked to go to dances.

Paul lost Verna to cancer, but he has carried on for many years, cooking healthily for himself and tending his garden. He often visits his son's and daughter's families in Minnesota and northern Illinois. His daughter's family always invites him to go along with them on annual camping trips; he spent many a night in a tent with a sleeping bag when he was well up into his eighties. This year when he is 94, he had to bow out of their trip to Alaska since he was recovering from the trials of a burst appendix but is slowly recovering energy.

He has always enjoyed family heritage and history. He has studied the ancestry, remembers the past and, at the age of 94, has a good "map" of the relatives in his head. He has an avid interest in the doings of his far-flung cousins.

Since he has spent most of his long, congenial life in Sandwich, he is well-known and knows well the history of the area. A picture of him and daughter Diane is below.



VII 1. GARY LYNN GRAF b. 1 May 1953. Wed 8 Dec 1978 Cathy Ann Dalzell b. 5 Jul 1955

Gary is a skilled tool and die maker and has worked for a major airline company in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area many years.

- VIII 1. AMANDA LEE GRAF b. 12 Dec 1980  
2. ASHLEY ANN GRAF b 8 Sep 1983  
3. ZACHARY SAMUEL b. 3 Apr 1985