

Mrs. Louise Graf was born Louise Spinner on March 4, 1904 in her childhood home at Green River, Wyoming. Mrs. Graf traces her roots to her father's great-uncle, a German immigrant. Although his name is unknown, he went from a German settlement in Saint Louis into Civil War service. After being wounded and discharged, he came to South Pass City in search of gold. Unsuccessful, he journeyed south to Green River in 1868 during the construction of the transcontinental railroad and set up the town's first butcher shop along the northern banks of the river. Besides bringing a brother and sister from Saint Louis, Mrs. Graf's father was also an accomplice of his great-uncle to Green River.

Mrs. Graf's father arrived in 1890 just prior to statehood and opened a butcher shop of his

own. Mr. Karl Spinner, father of Mrs. Graf, returned to his former home in the Black Forest of Germany. In June of 1901, he brought his bride, the former Therese Weber, to Green River. Mrs. Graf remembers her parents with the fondest of memories. They were community-oriented type people who worked for what they had. Her father, a butcher by trade, worked twelve hours per day, seven days a week. Eight hour work-days were not law at this time.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of an interview with Mrs. Graf is her keen ability to recall past events back through her school years. Her favorite pastime as a schoolgirl was to go picnicking with friends on Expedition Island. "In those days", she recalls, "We had to make our own entertainment." Other activities included ice and roller skating, clubs, and movies at the local theatre.

Important events recalled by Mrs. Graf include her first automobile ride in 1910, the lynching of a Negro man in 1918, and a flu epidemic in 1918. To the best of her recollection, an automobile trip from Green River to Rock Springs took a full day round trip. She can also remember large ice jams on the river that involved chunks of the material 20' by 30' and as much as twelve inches thick. Floods were also common at the time. According to Mrs. Graf, what were known as 'Eastern blizzards' occurred at least twice a winter, bringing much colder temperatures and deeper snowfalls than we are accustomed to today.

As far as the townspeople were concerned, Mrs. Graf says that there was once a large influx of Negroes, prostitutes existed but were separated from the rest of the town, and the only churchpeople

were Episcopalian, Catholic, and Congregational until the Mormons came from Utah to fill in as 'scabs' or non-union labor during the many railroad strikes led by John Lewis. Also, women were not permitted in any of the plentiful bars around town.

Certain luxuries, according to Mrs. Graf, were hard to come by. Turkeys and hams were available only during certain holidays and oranges could be had only at Christmas time. She also recalls the days of the Great Depression when "folks around town just weren't living as high on the hog" and the awful plight of the Dust Bowl people who came to town during this time.

Because of her father's generous nature during this period, he lost a large amount of money in his butcher shop.

Mrs. Graf's great-uncle Karl Spinner constructed

the Sweetwater Brewery, now a historical monument. The brewery turned out beer worthy of a blue ribbon at the World's Fair in Saint Louis.

Mrs. Graf, an only child, began school at age six at the present site of the Masonic Temple in Green River. She continued her schooling here until the construction of the first Lincoln High School, where she completed her final two years of high school with a graduating class of six people in 1923. Mrs. Graf continued her education at the University of Wyoming in Laramie where she received an accounting degree in 1927.

She began work as an assistant cashier at the First State Bank of Green River and stayed at that job for four years.

She met her future husband in Arvada, Colorado. They dated for four years before

marrying in Green River on June 24, 1930.

Her husband, Mr. George Graf, was an electrician for various power companies until his retirement.

Probably Mrs. Graf's proudest accomplishment came in 1950. She was selected for jury duty for a murder trial in town as well as being selected as the jury foreman in the same case.

She was later to discover that she was the very first woman in United States court history to serve as a foreman of the jury.

She later served on other juries and was involved in a horse-stealing investigation.

Her and her husband's only child, Mary Louise was born on August 3, 1933 and now lives in Laguna Beach, California with her husband and no children.

Mr. Graf passed on in December of 1965.

Mrs. Graf is still very much involved in

her community, being a member of the state and county historical societies, Senior Citizens, Girl Scouts, and countless other clubs and organizations around Green River.

NAME: Mrs. Spinner Graf

PRESENT ADDRESS: 691 N. Railroad Ave. Green River, Wyo

1. Present profession or occupation: retired
2. Occupations followed in the past (give dates): Asst. Cashier at Bank
3. Date of birth: March 2, 1904 Place of birth: Green River, Wyo
4. Date of moving to Wyoming: lived here all my life.
5. Full name of parents (give mother's maiden name)
Karl Spinner Therese Weber
6. Names of brothers and sisters (and to whom married):

none

7. Schools attended (give dates):
Green River - graduated 1923
8. Places of residence in Wyoming (give dates):
Green River - 1927

9. Military service (dates, awards, area served, rank, etc.):

10. Political offices held (give dates):

11. Political affiliation: Republican

12. Religious affiliation: Catholic

13. Marriage (spouse's name, date and place of marriage): George J. Graf, June 24, 1930 - Green River, Wyo.

14. Children (names, dates of birth, grandchildren, etc.):
Daughter - Mary Louise - Aug. 3, 1933
No grand children.

15. List of clubs and societies of which you are a member:
- Charter member State Historical Society
 - " " County " "
 - Senior Citizens
 - Girl Scouts
 - Council of Catholic Women
 - Bridge Club
 - Euchre Club
 - Woman's Club