

The Daft Family:
A Very Sad Story

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by

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Introduction

Occasionally I encounter a surprise while researching a story to publish. This is one of those cases. Back when Whiteside County had rural schools there was a test every one of those 8th grade students had to take and pass to move on to high school. By today's standards it was a very difficult test and that is what I intended to show.

We had a copy of the 1935 test and that is the one I used; it was similar the 1937 test. We also had a workbook that one of the students used in taking that test in 1937. That workbook was used by Robert Daft and was donated to the PAHS. We put this test and the workbook together in a booklet, then wondered what ever happened to Robert, who attended the Woodward's Bluff rural school. In the original booklet we included Robert's entire workbook. In this article we used just a few pages to give you an idea of what his answers were like.

Using the Internet we were able to trace the history of this Daft family and, as the title states, found it very sad. Robert took the test the last week of April, but never made it to high school. He died the last week of June.



Loy Gyrick	Bobby Daft
Robert Schmitt	Vera Gyrick
Clyde Goppert	Aubrey Lancaster
Bernice Beebe	Pupils of Woodward's
Donald Lindahl	Bluff School - 1931-'32
Ernest Lou	Teacher - June Gibson
Lester Ballard	Pearson
Wendell Lancaster	
Marshall Brooks	
Opal Ballard	
Phyllis Weber	
Gilbert Zarr	
Clara Gyrick	

Robert Daft and his class at Woodard's Bluff School in 1931.
Unfortunately, we are not sure which one he is.

On April 27, 1935, the eighth grade students in Whiteside County had to take a test to complete the requirements for advancement to high school. Paul Ottens of Lyndon came across the test the other day and gave it to the paper. We thought you might want to see the types of questions they were asking kids back in those days. I wonder if the questions today are as practical?

So, here is the test as listed under the six categories. Good luck!

READING

1. Define - Fourscore, continent, nation, dedicate, endure, proper, struggle, orphan, cordage, peril.
2. Divide each word in the first question into syllables and mark the accent.
3. Tell who each of these is, by saying in what selection he is a character and giving enough about him to show that you know who he is - Ernest, Our youngest and our dearest, Ruksh, Michael, Annie Lee.
4. Write six or more lines you have memorized.
5. Write a story of Enoch's departure to sea, showing what led him to make the venture, Annie's pleading, and his persistence.
6. (a) Give the titles of five books you have read, and the name of the author of each.
- (b) Name the newspapers and magazines you read regularly.

ARITHMETIC

When you solve problems show all the work.

Use words enough to make your work clear.

1. (1) Find 72 per cent of 32.8. (2) 36 is what per cent of 400?. (3) 7848 is 36 per cent of what number?
2. A man borrowed \$750 on March 16, 1932, agreeing to pay simple interest at 5 per cent per annum. If he paid no interest till he settled the debt on January 1, 1935, what amount was due?
3. (1) Who levies the school tax of a district? Who computes the amount of tax each property owner should pay? Who collects the tax? Who holds the money till it is paid out?
- (2) If the assessed valuation of a man's property is \$6,900, and the rate of school tax is 72 cents on the hundred dollar valuation, how much school tax does he pay?
4. (1) Make a square to represent a section of land, on the scale of two inches to the mile. (Do this as accurately as you can without being supplied with a ruler). Divide it into quarters and show the Northwest quarter of the Southeast quarter.
- (2) How many acres are there in the part you marked?
- How many rods of fence would be required to enclose the piece thus marked?
5. (1) the square of 97. The cube of 15.
- (2) Find the square root of 6241.
6. A bin is 32 feet long, 8 feet wide and is filled with oats to a depth of 6 feet. How many bushels of oats are in the bin?
7. A round tank is 8 feet in diameter and two feet deep. How many barrels of water will it hold?
8. (1) What is the ratio of 9 to 27? Of 27 to 9?
- (2) If you earn \$22.50 in 15 days, what should you earn in 22 days? Solve by proportion.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

1. Make a sentence about Senatorial Districts. How many Senatorial districts are there in Illinois? How many state Senators are there? How many Representatives? In which Senatorial District do we live?
2. What is the law making body of Illinois called? Tell of the two houses. Who signs a bill before it goes to the Governor? When does a law take effect? Who levies the State Tax?
3. What is the length of term of the Governor of Illinois? Tell something about the Governor's message. Say what is meant by the Governor having the power to grant reprieves and pardons. What relation has the governor to the Militia, or what authority has he over the Militia?
4. Tell about the land being divided into townships. Who made the divisions? Why was the division made? What is the size of a township? Describe the township in which you live.
5. In what town do you live? Who is your Supervisor? When is the Town Meeting held? Tell one thing that may be done at the town meeting.

GRAMMAR

1. How many parts of speech are there?
Make a column for each part of speech. Write each word in the following sentence in the column to which it belongs.
The boys whom the teacher recommended were rewarded by Mr. Smith and me.
2. Parse the verbs in the sentence given in the first question.
3. Write that part of the conjugation of the verb **see** which is in the Indicative Mood and the Past Perfect Tense.
4. Write a sentence that contains each of these:
 - (1) A noun clause that is the subject of a sentence.
 - (2) An adjective clause. (3) An adverb clause.
 - (4) An adjective phrase. (5) An adverb phrase.
 - (6) A verb in the future tense.
5. Define preposition; conjunction; coordinate conjunction; subordinate conjunction; relative pronoun; conjunctive adverb.
6. Write the sentence --
Several boys whom I saw in the field were talking about the game.
 - (1) Classify the sentence.
 - (2) State the entire subject. The simple subject.
 - (3) State the entire subject. The simple predicate.
 - (4) Write the clause. Tell its construction or use.
 - (5) Write the phrase. Tell its construction or use.
 - (6) What part of speech is whom? How is it used?

HISTORY

1. In a sentence or two for each, tell what occurred in each of these years: 1803, 1807, 1820, 1832, 1846-48, 1873.
2. Say what each of these means in history: tariff, embargo, blockade, non-intercourse, nullification, secession.
3. Giving a sentence or two to each, tell what each of these did, giving the first Name of the man when you can: Whitney, Fulton, Bell, Howe, Deere, Eads, Ericsson, Wright.
4. Write a story about Dred Scott and the Dred Scott Decision. Why was this decision so important?
5. Give an account of the Merrimac and the Monitor. What importance is attached to this event?
6. (a) Tell about the Emancipation Proclamation, giving its date, and making clear what it did.

(b) What does the Thirteenth Amendment to the Consitution provide? Distinguish what the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment did.

7. What was the frontier? What was meant by the vanishing frontier? Is there any frontier now? Would a frontier be a good or a bad thing, if there were one now?

8. Thinking of the Spoils System, what was the early custom of the length of time a man apointed to public office would hold the office? Explain the Spoils System, telling who orginated the system.

What is the merit system? By this system, how is a person appointed to a public service position, and how long does he continue in the position?

GEOGRAPHY

1. Tell in what country each of these ranges of mountains is, and in what general direction the range extends. Andes, Apennines, Pyrencees, Alps, Himalaya.

2. (1) Name five peninsulas of Europe.

(2) Name five seas, gulfs, or bays of Asia.

3. (1) Describe the Rhine River.

(2) In what country is each of these rivers, and into what water does it flow? The Plata; the Thames; the Seine; the Elbe; the Ganges.

4. Tell in what country each of these cities is, and one thing for which it is noted. Make one sentence for each, or give the answer in a good form so it is easily read.

Rio De Janerio, Liverpool, The Hague, Brussels, Danzig, Paris, Geneva, Constantinople, Calcutta, Tokyo.

5. Write the name of each of these products and following on the same line the names of two countries noted for its production.

Coffee, tea, silk, rubber, coal.

IV

Monroe Doctrine - 1823.

Spain's colonies had rebelled one after another. Spain was not willing to let them go, but was too weak to hold them. Four kings of four European countries had formed what they called the Holy Alliance to help each other put down rebellions. The American people felt sorry for the South American colonies. The kings of these European countries had planned to send across the ocean fleets and armies, and set up Spain power in her South American colonies. The people of America ~~had~~ said if the kings of the European countries made war against the South American colonies we would join in the war England though the same about this as we did.

Meantime Russia was settling south of 54° 50' minutes just as if the American continent was open to colonization. It was plain Monroe must do something so he sent a message to the Kings of Europe, giving them something to think about:

(1) That the American continent is no longer open to colonization, a warning to Russia.

(2) That we did not interfere with the affairs of the European countries and did not intend to interfere.

(3) That if Europe interfered with the United States on this side of the water, there would be war, and that if Europe made war against the South American Colonies, we would join in the war. England thought the same as we did about this and so Russia promised not to colonize south of 54° 50' and the Holy Alliance was ruled out.

VII

After the civil War, there was lots of damage that had been done. Towns burned, property destroyed. Well, had to be rebuilt and it was called reconstruction. These seceded states gained their place in the Union by coming in without slaves.

The carpet baggers were people who carried all their possessions on belonging some a carpet are trading bag.

The Ku Klux was a society formed to drive the negro out of the south after he had been freed they dressed up as ghosts and tried to scare the negroes, it worked, but after a while the society was broken up.

President Hayes, in 1877, which affected reconstruction, he withdrew all the troops from the south.

VIII

Stephen Austin founded Texas.
Clara Barton founder of Red Cross in
America.

Alexander Graham Bell invented
the telephone in 1876.

John Deere made the first steel
plow in 1837.

Samuel Francis Smith wrote America.
Orville and Wilbur Wright invented
the airplane in 1903.

Legion Man Found Dead In Bed Here

Edgar Glenn Daft, 35 years old, post adjutant of the Duncan American Legion post, was found dead in his bed at the Adams room, 214 South First street, Tuesday morning. Death was caused by heart disease, according to the verdict of A. C. Midkiff, coroner.

Daft was an employe of the Duncan Eagle newspaper and stopped at the convention meeting here as he was returning to Duncan from a vacation spent at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Daft of Griswold, Iowa. He was a delegate from the Duncan post to the state convention here.

There was no evidence of foul play or drunkenness, the coroner and Bruce Potter, county attorney, said after an investigation. An examination of the dead man's stomach showed no traces of alcohol. His comrades declared Daft did not drink intoxicating liquor.

The body was found by hotel attendants who peeped over the transom when they received no response to their knocks. The coroner and county attorney were called and the door was forced. The body was lying in a natural position in the bed and the man's clothing was arranged neatly on a chair. His money was found in his pockets. Death occurred some time after midnight, examining physicians said.

The body was taken to the Belford funeral home pending word from the man's relatives. He

Robert Daft's father.



FORMER MANAGER OF PROPHETSTOWN ECHO DIES SEPT. 12

Word was received here Thursday of the death of Glenn Daft, which occurred Thursday at Ponca, Oklahoma, of heart trouble following several years illness.

Mr. Daft was formerly manager of the Prophetstown Echo in 1921 and 1922. Mrs. Ida Daft and her son Bobby of Prophetstown left Friday to attend the funeral which will be held at the home of Mr. Daft's parents at Grant, Iowa.

1929 09 13 from the *Sterling Gazette*.

1929 09 10 from the *Ponca City News*.

Ida Daft Married To Hugo Hecht in Dixon Ceremony

Prophetstown, April 20.—Mrs. Ida Daft and Hugo Hecht of Prophets-town were married Saturday afternoon in the Presbyterian manse in Dixon, the Rev. Hubert J. Doran officiating. There were no attendants. They went at once to visit in Kankakee and Minonk. In Minonk they visited the Hinkle family, formerly of Prophetstown.

Mrs. Hecht is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Bound of Prophets-town. Mr. Hecht is a son of Mr. and Mrs. M. H. Hecht of Rock Island. He has been employed in the Eclipse Lawnmower factory during the last five years. Two years ago he was made foreman of the machine shop.

1937 04 20

From the *Moline Dispatch*.

TOWN SADDENED BY DEATH SUNDAY OF ROBERT DAFT

Blood Transfusion Fails To Save Life Of Youth From Infection.

Robert Daft, 14, son of Mrs. Hugo Hecht of Prophetstown, died at 1:10 o'clock Sunday morning at the Sterling public hospital.

Bobby fell Tuesday evening while roller skating near the Prophetstown high school and fractured both bones in the left arm, the bones protruding through the flesh. Later infection developed in the injured arm, and he was taken to the hospital Friday morning, where he submitted to an operation on his arm. He was given a blood transfusion Friday evening. He rallied following the transfusion, and Saturday was holding his own, but began sinking Saturday evening and passed away at 1:10 Sunday morning. He was conscious until the end. The body was removed to the Helm and Helm mortuary in Prophetstown.

Funeral services will be held Tuesday afternoon at 1:30 at the late residence in Prophetstown and at 2 o'clock at the Methodist church. Rev. A. E. Simester will officiate. Burial will be in Riverside cemetery in Prophetstown. Robert Glenn Daft was born March 25, 1923, at Peru, Illinois, the son of Glenn and Ida Bound Daft. His father preceded him in death in September 1929. Bobby attended the Woodward's Bluff school, south of Prophetstown the entire eight years, and graduated from the eighth grade there last spring, ranking amongst the highest students of the county. He was a member of the Prophetstown Methodist Sunday school.

He is survived by his mother and step-father, Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Hecht, his maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. L. J. Bound of Prophetstown, his paternal grandfather, Edgar Daft of Griswold, IA., and a number of other relatives in this vicinity.

Bobby was a fine, gentlemanly little fellow, and was well liked by all who knew him. The bereaved relatives have the sincere sympathy of the entire community in their hour of sorrow.

Inquest Sunday Coroner C. M. Frye of Sterling conducted an inquest at 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon at the Helm and Helm funeral chapel in Prophetstown. Dr. I. Vandermyde of Prophetstown, the attending physician, told of being called Tuesday evening to attend the injured boy, and found a fracture of both bones in the left forearm, with the ulna protruding through the flesh, and considerable dirt in the wound. The arm was cleaned and the bones were set. Thursday morning the arm began to swell, and he was called to the house and loosened the splints. The swelling continued, and Thursday evening Dr. Vandermyde had consultation with Dr. C. G. Beard of Sterling. Friday morning Bobby was taken to the Sterling public hospital, where an operation was performed. The arm was opened and saprophytic infection had developed. The arm was drained, and Friday evening, a blood transfusion was given. He continued to grow worse and died Sunday morning from toxemia. The jury returned a verdict of death from toxemia, saprophytic infection of the left forearm. The members of the jury were: Amos Ott, foreman, W. S. Hurlbert, Albert Roberts, Oscar Pierson, H. B. Helm and W. S. Hossack.

From the *Sterling Daily Gazette*, Sterling, Illinois June 28, 1937 - pg. 6, col. 2.

FUNERAL CONDUCTED FROM M. E. CHURCH

Sunday School And Class Mates Act As Honorary Pallbearers

The Prophetstown Methodist church was filled with relatives and friends Tuesday afternoon for the funeral services of Robert Daft, 14, who died Sunday morning. Rev. A. E. Simester conducted the rites. Mrs. Raymond Matthews sang "Sometime We'll Understand" and "When They Ring Those Golden Bells For You and Me." Mrs. V. Olmstead was at the organ. Floral offerings of unusual beauty

attested the love and esteem of many friends and relatives. Those who assisted with flowers were Mr. and Mrs. C. Clementz, Mr. and Mrs. A. Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Frankenfield and Mrs. Cora Under.

The pupils of the Woodward's Bluffs school, where Bobby attended, and the teacher, Miss Irene Brooks, attended services in a body. The pupils formed two lines at the steps leading into the church, through which the casket bearers and honorary pallbearers passed, then the pupils and teachers followed into the church immediately behind. Burial was made in Riverside cemetery in this city. The active pallbearers were Darrell Peterson, Lloyd Wildman, Wayne Farrell, Paul Weber, Harley Richards and Max Beechel. Honorary Pallbearers Members of Bobby's Sunday school class and former school mates served as honorary pallbearers. They were Earl Brooks, Gilbert Zarr, Elmer Lancaster Jr., Richard McDougall, John Gentz and Charles Hodge.

Those from a distance who attended the services were: Atkinson, Mrs. Elmer Stauffer, Mrs. R. H. Dean; Gensero, Miss Shirley Heller, Mrs. Lee Kline and Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Heller; Brewster, Ohio, Mrs. E. S. Brugler; Griswold Iowa, Miss Ruth Daft, Guy Daft and son; Rock Island, Mr. and Mrs. Max Hecht, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Hecht and son; Morrison, Mrs. James Lathe, Mr. and Mrs. Sam James; Clinton, Ia., Mr. and Mrs. Harry Pray; Tampico, Mrs. Herbert Olmstead.

From the *Sterling Daily Gazette*, June 30, 1937 - Wednesday, pg. 7, col. 3.

