

Citizens – Henry Moritz

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*C1913 – Moritz House*

Henry Moritz was a very unassuming man. He was born in Uelzen, Germany on 7 March 1847, and immigrated to the United States sometime in 1868 at around the age of 21 years. He settled in Manhattan, New York, where he worked as a carpenter. It is there that he met and married Maria “Mary” Staudinger on 14 March 1869.

Maria was born in Munich, Bavaria, Germany on 26 January 1847. She came to the United States on 2 October 1868. Her younger brother Andrew came in the Spring of 1869. He owned and operated an ornamental glass studio and paint shop in New York. A younger sister Anne joined them in 1871.

In the early 1870’s Henry and Maria moved to Chicago, Illinois. They had two children, one of who died as an infant. Henry became a naturalized citizen on 3 November 1873. Records indicate that they made several trips back to Germany, at least once in 1875 and again in 1889, to visit family members who were still residing there.

They continued to live in Chicago until around 1902 when they came to Montague. It’s unknown as to what brought them to this area, but they bought a house on Second Street in the Maple Grove area. Henry worked as a carpenter and cabinetmaker.

In September 1906 Henry purchased the house and property of Gotlieb Schoen located on what was then Fourth Street in Maple Grove for the sum of \$225.

Henry died at his home in Maple Grove on 16 September 1918. He was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery. His wife Mary survived him as well as his 99-year-old mother who was still living in Germany.

Mary continued to live in the house in Maple Grove and would sometimes return to Chicago in the winter and stay with her niece Anna "Anita" Staudinger.

Anna "Anita" was the youngest of seven children born in Brooklyn, New York on 5 November 1886, to Mary's brother Andreas W. "Andrew" Staudinger and his wife Susanna "Susan" Schaefer. She had five brothers and a sister. Anita lost her mother Susan on 14 August 1895 at the age of 41. About a year and a half later, her father Andrew died 20 January 1897 at the age of 44.

At just 11 years old, Anita found herself living in Leake & Watts Orphanage in New York. She was still recorded as living in the orphanage according to the 1900 Census and probably remained there until she was about 18 years old.

In the 1910 census, Anita was found living in the Trowmart Inn for Women, a six-story hotel built specifically for young women working in shops and department stores, or apparel and millinery factories in New York City. The building was located in the Greenwich Village area of New York. Her occupation at the time was listed as a dressmaker. Sometime after that, she must have moved to Chicago to live closer to her uncle and aunt Henry & Mary Moritz.

While she was living in Chicago, Anita met Robert John Bedau of Chicago, and they were married there on 20 March 1912. During their marriage, they had four children: Anita Margaret (1913-1952), Richard "Dick" (1916-1976), Lorraine "Liz" (1918-1987) and David "Bud" (1923-2019).

The Robert Bedau family would come to Montague during the summers and stay with Mary Moritz. Sometimes Mary would spend time with them during the winter months in Chicago. Mary passed away at her home in Montague on 15 March 1923. She was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery with her husband.

Mary left the house and property to her niece Anita, and the family continued to use it as a summer residence. Over the years, they made changes and built additions to the house to accommodate them. By 1935, the Bedau family had moved from Chicago to Montague permanently and the last two children, Lorraine and David, graduated from Montague High School, in 1936 and 1941, respectively.

Anna "Anita" died on 6 Oct 1940. Her husband Robert died 20 November 1951. They are both buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.

The barn in the picture is long gone but the house remains although somewhat changed in appearance. Fourth Street where the house is located was eventually renamed Bedau Street, as they were the only people living on the street at the time. Some relatives of the Bedau family still reside in the White Lake area.