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Moritz, Bernard J. (1869 -)

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Among Stearns County's native and pioneer sons we find Bernard J. Moritz, who was born January 16, 1869.

Bernard J. Moritz is a son of Joseph and Christine Moritz who were natives of Germany, and came to America over the Atlantic on a Sailboat, and settled in McHenry County, Illinois, in the early 1840's.

In 1869 Joseph Moritz and family decided to come to Minnesota and traveled west by ox team, the trip took several weeks. In the fall of 1869 Joseph Moritz built the first Hotel in Melrose Minnesota which he conducted for a number of years until the Indian outbreak in New Munich, then Joseph Moritz and family moved back to McHenry, Illinois, for a few years. When everything was quieted down the Moritz family started back to Minnesota. This second trip was made with horses, and took over a week before they arrived at Melrose, Minnesota. Bernard J. Moritz was raised in Melrose, Minnesota, and attended the public school there. Mr. C. L. Atwood was his first instructor. After completing the grade school Mr. Moritz worked on different odd jobs around on the farms in that locality for a few years, then he took a complete course in the Sauk Centre Business College.

In 1886 Bernard J. Moritz decided to travel West. He stopped in Montana, and worked in brick yards there and at various other odd jobs. He returned to Stearns County for a short visit and in the fall of 1890 Mr. Moritz again went West and traveled through several states and worked in Montana for J. D. Mathews for eight years. He returned to Stearns County in the year of 1898.

Bernard J. Moritz served as deputy Sheriff, under John Bernick, Sheriff of Stearns County. In 1906 Mr. Moritz was elected Sheriff of Stearns County for three terms of two years each. During Mr. Moritz's term in office as Sheriff of Stearns County he had an important duty to perform

MORITZ, BERNARD J.

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which was to arrest three notorious gunmen and robbers, who had robbed the Hiemanz and Reider Grocery store on Fifth Avenue South, shot and wounded Patrolman Becker of the Saint Cloud Police Force and escaped to Minneapolis, Minnesota. There Sheriff Moritz arrested them a few days later.

The Sheriff had the three men in the Stearns County jail awaiting trial in the fall term of court. One night, watchful Sheriff Moritz, heard a noise in one of the cells of the jail, and upon investigating he found that one of his prisoners had secured a piece of thin steel from an old trunk which was standing in the hallway and had sawed out one bar of the window guards so he could escape. However, he was not successful because Sheriff Moritz had too keen a hearing, and stopped the jail break, which was one of the first, although not successful, jail breaks in Stearns County.

In 1912 Bernard J. Moritz worked on the Saint Cloud Police Department for three years. Later he was employed by the Great Northern Railway Company in the freight department at Saint Cloud, where he worked for sixteen years until in 1931 when he retired.

Bernard J. Moritz was married on June 20, 1905 to Mary Fisher, daughter of George and Mary Fisher of Saint Cloud, Minnesota. The marriage took place in the Cathedral Church of Saint Cloud, and was performed by the Reverend Father Schaupt.

To Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Moritz were born three children, Florence Eileen, Margueretta Helen, and Catherine Moritz, all at home.

Interviewed: Bernard J. Moritz
623 Sixth Avenue North
Date: June 30, 1936
By: N. P. Kruchten

Publication Granted

FROM THE RECORDS IN THE STEARNS COUNTY COURT HOUSE

FOR THE BERNARD J. MORITZ BIOGRAPHY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>Father's Name</u>	<u>Age</u>
1. Florence Moritz	Apr. 7, 1907	St. Cloud	Bernard Moritz	37
2. Baby Moritz	Jan. 4, 1911	" "	" "	42
3. Baby Moritz	Oct. 21, 1908	" "	" "	38

<u>Mother's Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1. Mary E. Fischer	27	C	419	5	1st child
2. " " "	32	E	46	4	3rd Female
3. " " "	28	C	535	3	2nd Female

MARRIAGE RECORD BOOK S. PAGE 9618

Bernard J. Moritz and Mary Elizabeth Fischer

Married at St. Cloud, June 20, 1905

By: Rev. G. H. Goebel

Witnesses: Edward M. Smith and Frances M. Rensken