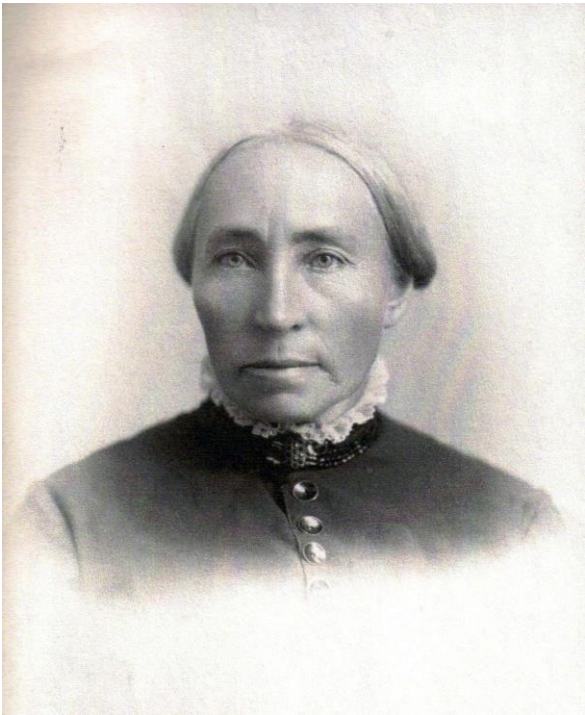




## GRANDMA MOLLY MORMANN

My grandmother was born Maria Schutz in Adrian Minnesota on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1883. Her father was John Schutz born in Germany in 1854. Her mother was Elizabeth (Lizzie) Reifenburger born in St. Anthony, Minnesota in 1862. My grandmother had 7 sisters and 7 brothers. Two sisters and a brother died shortly after birth. Her mother died of TB on December 31, 1905 when grandma was 21 years old. Being the oldest girl in the family, grandma assumed the awesome responsibility of raising her 5 sisters and 6 brothers. Grandma's father died in 1912, 7 years after her mother's death. With both parents gone, her older brother Nick supported the family with farming. She married Bernard Mormann on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1919.



Gertrude Schutz, mother of John Schutz, Grandma Mollies father.

An interesting pioneer story is of grandma's father's family, the family of John Schutz. John's father, Jacob, died at age 40 (1862) leaving John's mother, Gertrude, with 9 children (there were 3 others that died as babies). With the economic conditions in Germany and the requirement of men for service in the military, it was a very trying time for a widow with 9 children. In 1868 two of Gertrude's daughters moved to America with their married cousins as escorts. It became compelling to follow her daughters to America and on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1872 Gertrude left with all her remaining children except the oldest boy Anton who had been inducted into the military. When she arrived in New Jersey on May 25<sup>th</sup> she was astonished to be met by her son Anton. Unknown to Gertrude he had stowed away on the boat and came with them. Her family was soon all reunited in Ashton, Wisconsin where her daughters had gone. For the next 5 years the 6 boys would work out on farms as the family saved to buy their own farm. They had saved \$1900 when they heard that land was being opened in

southwest Minnesota for immigrants. In 1878 they moved to Adrian, Minnesota. The land was owned by the railroad and was being distributed by the local Catholic priest, Father Knauf. The farms were in 160-acre parcels. The priest had one room homes (basically just a shelter) built on each parcel of land. The land also had 5 acres of the land that was plowed the year before to kill the cutworms and have land suitable for a vegetable garden. The terms were \$6 per acre for \$960 total cost. It required a down payment of 10% plus one year's interest (7%). The remaining was to be paid in four payments over 4 years (1/4 each year) plus each year's interest. Gertrude made the payments and received the deed with full payment completed on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1883. The key to their success was the 6 boys. They worked for neighboring farmers as well as farmed the homestead. The family worked hard and saved their money. By 1885 they owned 6 parcels of land and each son had a farm of their own. By 1894 all the boys were married and raising families.



**The family of John and Lizzie Schutz in 1895. From the left: The father John, Henry, John Jr., Nick the oldest boy, the mother Lizzie (Elizabeth Reifenberger), Caroline, my grandma Mollie (circled) and Lizzies father Nicholas Reifenberger, and Lina. Missing children are Anna and not yet born Susan, Leo, Isadore, Martha, and Leonard. There were also two that died, Sena and Kattie within months of birth.**



**In 1879 grandma's father John met and immediately fell in love with a neighboring girl Elizabeth Reifenberger and they married on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1879. Four years later they had a daughter and named her Maria. Her brother, Nick always called her Mollie (after a calf born the same day as grandma) and the nickname stuck. Mollie, my grandmother, died on August 27, 1972 at age 89. She lived by Adrian, Minnesota her entire life.**

**Molly and Bernard Mormann wedding on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1919.**



**The family of Molly and Bernard Mormann in 1926. From the left: Alvin, Norbert, Grandpa Bernard, Gregor, Grandma Molly, and my mother Armella.**

**Grandma had awesome responsibilities from early on. When her parents died she raised her 11 brothers and sisters and then 4 of her own, for a total of 15 children. She accepted life's crosses gracefully, she never complained and I never saw her cry. She was generous. Everyone got a gift from grandma at Christmas. That was a very happy time for her. She was parental in every aspect. She was a pioneer, a survivor, really a truly great woman.**