Chapter 11: The Moen School District

There were two country schools in the Moen School District: the Moen School, 24, and the Barber School, 2. The Moen School, down in the valley, is the older of the two. It was apparently established in the 1870s or 1880s to serve the farm families of the area depicted on the map in this chapter. This area was a "naturally occurring" neighborhood, arising out of topography, family linkages, and simple economic facts such as where different families took their milk. It ignores artificially imposed political boundaries and thus includes parts of both Iowa and Dane Counties.

The Iowa County School Superintendent created the Barber School District. It reflected political boundaries, regardless of how such boundaries split up "natural" neighborhoods. The Barber School served only Iowa County residents. It was created in 1924 when the Arneson School, located near Henry Arneson's Iowa County farm further west of the Iowa-Dane county line, became too crowded. That school district's population was spread out in such a way that just splitting the Arneson District into two parts and adding a new school on one end or the other of the old district did not create two viable school districts. So, Iowa County dissolved the Arneson District, formed two totally new districts, Meadow Grove and Barber, and built two new red brick school buildings. These districts included all of the old Arneson District, but -- so that they would have enough students in them to be practical to run -- also drew students from the districts which had surrounded the old Arneson District. For example, the children of the Helmer Grindler family at farm 1 in the Clay Hill-Spring Creek District were transferred from the Clay Hill School to Barber School. The new Barber School District included some, but not all, of the Iowa County farms in the Moen District. The majority of the Barber District is outside the Perry Parish, so is not covered in this book.

The Moen School did not close when the Barber School opened. Moen operated for about 30 more years. Most of the children attending the Moen School were between 8 and 12 years old.

Seventy-five years ago, when Myrtle (Espeseth) Anderson attended the Moen School, there was no well at the school. So at noon recess, two pupils would get water at a close neighbor's. By the time they got back to the school house, they sometimes had only a half pail of water.

During the winter, the students would ride their sleds and skis down the hill. No hill was too steep for them. During one February thaw, the water in the meadow got so high, that Myrtle remembers her father having to come for his children in the lumber wagon.

In the spring, the children often went fishing at the creek with cord for line, a cork, a willow twig for a pole, and a bent safety pin for a hook.

At Christmastime, the school held a program with a tree and a "Box Social". The girls would furnish the lunches in boxes and the boys would bid on them, each sharing their purchase with the girl who had prepared the box. They used to sell for $2-$3-$5.

In 1918, teacher Alva Wayne Leitch produced souvenir Christmas greeting booklets that had this picture of him on the front and the names of all the students inside.

In the spring, the girls gathered violets, a spring flower, for the teacher. The students had a picnic on the last day of school. Upon graduating from 8th grade, the students would go to Madison for their diplomas and a tour of the capital.

The Moen School closed in the 1950s with most of the remaining students transferering to the school in Daleyville.
1. Barber Cheese Factory
2. Barber School
   Converted to a private residence.

**Lester and Hilda (Doescher) Oimoen**
He was a native of the Moen School District, having been raised at farm 4 which he and Hilda took over after his parents. Lester and Hilda also lived next door to his home farm, at 5, for a while.
   Larry, Lana, Gary, David, Jeffrey

**David Oimoen**

3. **Olin and Alma (Komplien) Ruste**
He was also a native of this school district, from farm 5, which he and Alma took over after his parents.
   Vivian, Donald

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**Olin and Alma Ruste**

**Douglas and Helen Haroldson**
   Dale

**Joseph and Ione Handel**
They lived at 5 before moving here.

4. **Sever Severson**
   Ole
   Ole and Rachel (Thorhaug) Severson

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**Eddie, Irving, Anna, Luella, Arlene, Russell, Hazel, Roy, Bernadine and Burnett (twins)**

**Alvin and Clara Severson**

**Ludvig Lovrud**

**Simon Punsvick**

**Carl and Cornelia (Swenson) Oimoen**
   Lester, Doris, Kenneth

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**Carl and Cornelia Oimoen (seated) at their wedding, attended by Cornelia's sister, Alfa, and Carl's brother, Edwin.**

**Lester and Hilda (Doescher) Oimoen**
   Larry, Lana, Gary, David, Jeffrey

5. **Martin and Mathia (Arneson-Ruste) Loftsgordon**
Mathia was a daughter of Arne and Siri Ruste at farm 6. This farm, as farm 7 in this district and farm 10 in the Ruste School District, was probably originally part of that farm.
   Wallace

**Allan Arneson and Ingeborg (Slimsa) Ruste**
Allan, Mathia's brother, voted at the November 5, 1854, meeting organizing Perry Lutheran Church.
   Siri, Ingeborg, Anton, Gunhild, Edward, Antonette, Mathia, Lena
Marcus and Mary (Schertenlieb) Hefty
    Herman, Esther, Katherine, Edith

Christian (C.O.) and Betsy (Anderson) Ruste
C.O. was both Allan’s and Ingeborg’s nephew. C.O.’s father, Ole, and his uncle, Allan, had married sisters. In 1896, C.O. and Betsy took over Ole’s farm, 10 in the Ruste School District.
    Edwin, Anton, George, Olin, Anna, Viola, Luella, Victor

Olin and Alma (Komplien) Ruste
    Vivian, Donald

Oliver and Sena Aavang

Joseph and Iona Handel

Stanley and Emma (Leinherr) Thronson
    Glenn, Paul, Beverly

Lester and Hilda (Doescher) Oimoen
    Larry, Lana, Gary, David, Jeffrey

Don and Judy Granberg

6. Arne E. and Siri (Klevgaard) Ruste
Settled here in the 1840s. In the fall of 1851 Arne reputedly cut the first log for the first church in the Town of Perry (9 in the Daleyville School District, see Chapter 13). He died on April 12, 1852, and was buried in the first grave dug in the cemetery at that church.

Ole, Marit, Allan, Anne, Andrew (Anton), Ragnhild, Valina, Mathia, Siri, Gunhild, Christian

Ole should not be confused with his uncle Ole E. Ruste, the parochial school teacher. Ole Arneson was an adult by 1850 and very important in the Perry Settlement. He farmed land (10 in the Ruste School District) which lies immediately north of this place and may have orginally been part of this farm. Allan, who also farmed land (5 in this district) which was probably originally part of this place, and Ole Arenson married sisters. Anne and Mathia farmed what appear to be parts of this place, too (5 and 7 in this district). Siri was confirmed in the summer of 1852 at the first confirmation service in western Dane County. She did not live long after that, however. She died in August 1858, at the age of 20, and was the second person buried in the cemetery at the new stone church (47 in the Village of Daleyville). Christian, a Civil War volunteer, died in that war.

Anders Mikkelson and Siri (Klevgaard-Ruste)
    Bufugelein

Mattie and Oliver Espeseth with three of their five children: (L to R) Olga (standing), Amanda, and Nortie

Oliver and Mattie (Anderson) Espeseth
Mattie’s mother’s parents settled this farm. Mattie grew up next door at farm 7. Her sisters, Rosina and Sirena, also stayed in the district at 7 and 15 respectively.

    Olga, Amanda, Nortie, Myrtle, Reuben

Mattie and Oliver Espeseth with all five of their children

Reuben and Helene (Torgerson) Espeseth


7. Thomas and Anne (Arneson-Ruste) Anderson
Anne was a daughter of Arne and Siri Ruste at farm 6. As farm 5 in this district and farm 10 in the Ruste School District, this farm was probably originally a part of farm 6, broken off for Anne and her husband. After Anne's mother's death, Anne's daughter, Mattie, and her husband took over Anne's parents farm.
Sadie, Sirena, Marie, Anders, Arne, Annie, Gunhild, Helena, Mattie, Arne, Rosina, Gilbert

Gilbert and Rosina (Anderson) Gilbertson
Milo, Walter, Lila, Bernice, Alta

Henry and Elida (Berg) Anderson
Walter, Evelyn, Iola

Ole Gilbertson

Ole and Clara (Tofsrud) Lee
Marvin, Nora, Vern, Bernice, Arthur, Evelyn,

Vivian

Marvin and Inez (Wallencamp) Lee
LeRoy Underwood

Paul Underwood
Kari Underwood and Greg Hartman
Paul Underwood
Tore down house and replaced it with a new house on the same site in 1992-93.

8. Royce and Joanne Hendrickson
    Christy, Royce, Tandi, Joseph

Patty Nelson

9. John and Nettie (Lee) Fjelstad
    Silas, Merle, Gerald, Viola, Obert, Benford, Lulu

Silas and Irene (Johnson) Fjelstad

Fred and Sophie (Clifford) Thousand
    Pearl, Edna, Glenn

Joseph Nelson

Clifford and Idellis (Disch) Fjelstad
    Debra, Duane, Gregory, Jean, Julie, George, Gelaine, Shirley

Robert and Becky Wernerehl
    Nathan, Aaron

Carl Fredericks and Becky Rehl

10. Gilbert Gilbertson (Holmebek)
    Gilbert, Christine, Carrie, Lena, Emma, Annie, Mabel, Otto, Ole

Five of these children stayed within the school district. Gilbert lived at farm 7. Carrie resided at farm 13. Christine was across the way at 19. Mabel, Otto, and Ole lived together at farm 29.

Ole and Otto Gilbertson
The two brothers returned here after Mabel's marriage.

Ever and Gena (Severson) Broten
    Ardell, Elaine

Ardell Broten

Paul and Wanda Rachau
    Renee

11. Ole Nelson

12. Martin and Mary Michelson
Arne and Betsy (Guthaug) Anderson
Both were natives of this district. Arne had been born and raised at farm 7 and Betsy at farm 23. Tommy, Marie Thea, Martin, Clifford, Johnny, Lawrence, Ella

Gudwin and Clara (Guthaug) Christopher
Clara’s sister, Betsy, lived next door at 12. Laurine

Clifford and Alma (Holcomb) Anderson
Thus, he was Clara’s nephew. Walter

Glenn and Mary (Roach) Spaay
Sara, Pat, Leah, Corrine

16. Joseph and Betty Thompson
Raymond

Raymond and Ruth Thompson

17. Erick Russe
House has been razed, only the foundation remains.

18. Andrew Thorhaug

19. Nicholai and Christine (Gilbertson) Lund
Beulah, Mildred, Edna

20. Berit (Wold) Michelson
Ida

Throng and Mary Aslakson
Adolph, Matilda

ID west of Mt. Horeb) are said to be a photographer’s delight.

Betsy (Guthaug) Anderson and Tommy, Martin, Clifford, Johnny, and Lawrence Anderson
Mother and sons

Johnny and Janette (Komplin) Anderson
Janice, Lois, Carol, Kenneth
Buildings have been razed.

13. Theodore and Carrie (Gilbertson) Lund
Lloyd, Ida, Clara, Arthur, Obert, Marvin, Ruby, Viola

Peter and Bertha (Gonstad) Bergum
Alvin, Reuben, Daniel, Gladys, Donald

14. Barboa
She lived here alone in a little cottage. No trace of it remains.

15. Christ and Sirena (Anderson) Nelson
Sirena was a native of the Moen School District, having been born and raised at farm 7. John, Albert, Mollie

Anton and Lena (Disrud) Knudson
Minnie, Julia, Olin, Edwin, Alfred, Agnes, Melvin, Wallace, Alton
Olin died in WWI. Family moved to Town of Blue Mounds in the 1920s. Carvings of trolls in the front yard of present day Knudson descendents (on Hwy.

Four generations: (l to R) Adolph Thronson, Stanley Thronson holding his son Glenn, and Throng Aslakson.
Charley and Mathilda Newcomb
Richard, Bernice, Lesley

Moen Cheese Factory in the background
22. Moen Cheese Factory
Also known as North Perry Cheese Factory
Known Cheesemakers:

- Christ and Elsie (Albright) Blatter
  Stanley, Mabel, Elsie
- Alfred Urban
  Barbara, Willie, Martha, Rose
- Henry and Kathy Hoesly
  Henry, Katie
- John Richards
- Alvin Ranum
  Converted to a private residence.

- Edward and Violet Rock
  Kevin, Michael
- Douglas Anderson
  Lindsay

23. Hans and Maria (Edseth) Guthaug
  James, Christ, Hilda, Lena, Clara, Betsy

Hans and Maria Guthaug

James and Christ Guthaug
Brothers. Three of their sisters, Hilda, Betsy and Clara, also stayed in the Moen School District, here and at 12 and 15 respectively.

Lesley, Richard and Bernice Newcomb

Spencer and Renee Anderson
His parents lived at 21 when they were young. His mother now lives at farm 6, just west of here. Lenec, Dwight, Jenee

21. Anton and Nicholina Tofsrud
  Clara, Lena Odin, Tillie, Bertina

John Halvorson

Al Spani

Merton Gilbertson

Isaac and Marie (Jelle) Bjelde
  Kenneth

Joseph Earl and Myrtle (Espeseth) Anderson
  Ercell, Spencer, Douglas

Dan Atkins
Peter and Hilda (Guthaug) Larson  
Alice, Harold, Mae

Bert and Christine (Dahlby) Hanson  
Betty, Linda, Marianne

Robert and Beverly Paulson

24. Karl Family  
Built this new house

25. Ole Olson and Anne (Bergum) Bakken  
Arriving in 1848, they were the first Norwegians to settle permanently in the Town of Perry. The name "Bakken" is translated "hill". The farm included a spring, big enough to be noted on the 1873 plat map, and a quarry. In 1852, Ole was the clerk of the school board that organized a public, English language school in the then new log church (9 in the Daleville School District). He had to find a teacher who could pass muster before the Suorerintendent of Schools for what was then the Town of Springdale. He succeeded with Sigri Omland who taught 10 students that first summer.  
Ole (Hill), Tidman, Marit, Astrid, Thora, Erick, Thrand

Gulbrand and Ellen Thrandrud  
Came to Town of Perry from Green County, Town of York, in 1889.

E.A. and Sarah Thrandrud

Erik and Johanna (Larson) Moe  
Emma, Leonard

Jul and Augusta (Bonnerud-Johnson) Nelson  
Norman, Olin, Joseph, Gena, Alpha, Otto, Melvin and Morris (twins)

Reuben and Gena (Nelson) Grinder  
Robert, Nancy, Wayne  
The children changed the spelling of the name to "Grender".

Robert and Carol (Boley) Grinder  
Debra, Anita, Cynthia, James

Ernest and Marion (Roach) Grinder  
Steven, Susan

Steven and Carey (Collins) Grinder  
Gregory, Jamie, Sarah

26. Moen School  
Converted to a private residence.

Benhard and Rachel (Christianson) Brusveen  
Helen, Halvor, Bernice, Raymond, Mae, Shirley, Clinton, Marvin

Orville and Barbara Jacoby

27. John and Annie (Moen) Oimoen  
Elena, Rosena, Olaf, Edward (Eddy) and Edwin (twins), Carl, Oscar

The John and Annie Oimoen family c. 1900

Olaf and Jessie Oimoen

Edward (Eddy) and Mabel (Engen) Oimoen  
Mary Ann, Roger

Arthur and Gladys Swenson and family

Marvin Kelly and wife  
Jeff, Jack, Jerry, Julie

28. Bruckner family  
Bought a parcel of land from farm 27 in 1986 and built a new house.

29. Clara and Otto Sale  
Brother and sister.

Frank Heuser and wife  
Christine, Otto

Andrew Erickson

Julia and Edward Disrud  
Sister and brother moved here from their parent's home at 31.

Otto, Ole and Mabel Gilbertson  
Brothers and sister

Olin and Mabel (Gilbertson) Nelson  
Holmes Family

30. Charles Van Valkenbery and family  
Built this new house.
31. Nels and Louisa (Sutter) Disrud
   Sophie, Albert, Norman, Edward, Annie,
   Adolph, Julia, Otto, George, Nora, Eleanor,
   Gladys
   Nora (Disrud) Groth and family
   Leo and Betty Ryan and family
   Rodney and Jan Latham
   Carrie, Cindy, Connie

32. Mitch and Betsy Hagen
   Ross, Annue
   Jill Jonas and Susan Huntenburg

33. Tom and Emma Barton
   Oscar, Earl, Adeline, Myrtle
   Isaac and Marie Bjelde

   Harlan and Benjamin Barton
   Brothers

   Helmer and Olga (Oimoen) Grinder
   Albert, Ernest, Arlene, Ralph, Ethel

   Ralph and Lois (Stensrud) Grinder
   Karen, Katherine, Paul, Ellen, Peter

   Ralph and Marion Kahl Family

   Dennis and Cynthia (Grender) Kahl Family

34. Ole and Clara (Tofsrud) Lee (Bangslien)
   Marvin, Nora, Vern, Bernice, Arthur, Evelyn, Vivian

   Vern and Helen Lee

   James and Christy Holmes

   Orvin and Mabel (Lokken) Barton