CHAPTER II.
Blue Mounds Settlements.

The Blue Mounds settlements included a vast territory of land about the “Mounds.” In colonization it ranked about sixth among the early Norwegian settlements of this country, and was widely known both in Europe and America. In the early territorial days “Smoky Mts.” as it was then known, was dotted off on maps of the Northwest Territory which was then a wilderness.

Blue Mounds in the Distance.

The first white settler traces back to Ebenizer Brigham who, in the year of 1826, ventured up from Galena in search of mineral lands. He was successful in finding rich lead ore deposits and
hundreds of tons of lead were mined and carted one hundred miles over the country to Milwaukee and Galena.

During the “Black Hawk Indian War” of 1832 the place became famous by the building of the “Mounds Fort” which was situated one mile south of the “Mounds” on the open prairie. The Fort consisted of a solid log house with a substantial stockade about it. Here the miners and settlers found protection together with the few heads of livestock they had, during the uprisings.

Map of Dane County Showing Churches

The Fort was never attacked by the Indians but four fatalities are reported. The Indians, lying in ambush succeeding in their fiendish thirst for blood, shot and scalped the soldiers and laborers who had wandered too far from the Fort. Here also two white girls were restored to civilization, the Indians having captured them and held them for ransom.
Along the dividing ridge from east to west runs the old military road where the four-horse stage coach would make its regular trips. The sight of these stage coaches caused more of an excitement at that time than the steam trains did later. Aside from the early mining operations there was very little settling for other vocational purposes.

Early Homes

Within the present boundaries of the town of Blue Mounds there were very few settlers at the time when Mr. Brigham and a few others brot about the organization of a town by an act of legislature, the eleventh of March 1848. It is reported that a lonely Norwegian, Iver Thorson, commonly called "Brekings Iver," lived for a short time in this neighborhood but his footprints have long ago been obliterated.
During the years of 1848-49-50 there was a large influx of Norwegian immigrants, some coming from the older settlements, but the majority coming directly from Norway. A list of these immigrants follows in the order they arrived and settled: Ole O. Barton, Peer Dusterud, Gulbran Elseberg, Lars Pederson Dusterud, Saebjörn P. Dusterud, Thore Maanum, Gullik Eveinsru, Gulbran O. Froge, Knudt Syvrud, Nils K. Syvrud, Ole Jelle, Bernt I. Lund, Andrias Stutelien, Helge Pisla, Ole Bole, Erik Engen, Arne E. Ruste, Ole A. Ruste, Knut A.

Perry’s First School House

Jordet, Thomas Anderson Jordet, Ole Tollerud, Syver Lien, Neri Dahlen, Tov Kittelson, Peder Johnson Klemoen, Iver Halsteinson Braaten, Christian O. Skogen, Ole Finhart, Erik Skogen, Anders Boe, Gulbran Rud, Inga Lund, Nels Brendene, Hans Hanson Hammerhagen, and possibly others whose names we have not found recorded.
Sixty Years of Perry Congregation

The town of Perry was named after Commodore Perry, the gallant young American officer who, in 1812, won fame and distinction in the naval battle of Lake Erie. The township was a part of the town of Primrose up to the year of 1854, when it was organized as an independent town and elected Anders Sanderson as chairman, and O. B. Daley as town clerk, town treasurer, justice of the peace, and superintendent of the schools. The first white people settled in the town in 1846, when John Brown moved in from the East, and the Keller Brothers arrived from Germany. The town had probably less than a dozen settlers when the first Vikings came in and started to take possession of her domains.

Among the first Norwegian settlers who arrived in the year 1848 we find the following names recorded: Ole O. Bakken (Hill), Lars Halvorson Langemyr, T. Thompson, Hans Johnson Dale, and Targe Targeson Tvedt. During the next three years the following arrived in the order named, some settling beyond the west boundary of the town, into the town of Ridgeway, Iowa County, but they always remained with the same church and settlement: Targe Targeson Hastvedt, Anders Sanderson, Halstein Haadem, Hellik Hellikson Forlie, Ole Jorgenson Hastvedt, Knudt Olsen Grimstvedt, Isaac Syftestad, Jacob Nordby, Fredrik Ellertson Goli, Nekolai Arneson Omland, Nels Grovem, Ole O. Granum, Halvor Halvorson Piperen, Tollef Syverson Anmarkrud, Knudt Oleson Hastvedt, Paul Kittelson, Gunner Paulson, Paul Syftestad, Lars Langemoen, John Grovem Gabriel Björnson, Ole Torgerson, Jul Haaverud, Erik K. Jorstad, Embrik Paulson (Halling), Ole Dalby, Ole A. Clifgard, Gulbran Renden, and Nils Gangset.
The first white settler in the town of Springdale was John Harlow, who later married a daughter of Jörgan Lee. He settled there in the year of 1845. The first Norwegian settlers arrived there during the following year; they were: Thore Thoreson Spaanum, John J. Berge, Tosten Thompson Rue, John Thompson Rue, Nils Grasdalen, Halvor Grasdalen, Ole Knudson Kvisterud, Knud Knudson Kvisterud. The town was organized in 1848; from then on the Norwegian influx was great. Among these first Norwegian settlers we name: Ole Lee, Aslak Lee, Gulbran Throndrud, Arne Hoff, Erik Skindrud, John Lund, Knudt Lund, Lever Lien, Ole Stensbolet, Hans Gute, John Sylland, Knudt Steenerson, Knudt Skredden, Kittil Luraas, Jörgen Lee, Thore Lee, Knudt Herbranson Nees, Ole Anderson, Iver Thorson Aase, Hendrik Skogen, Engebret Tortun, Erik Solve, and Harold Hoff.

In the town of Primrose we find the first Norwegian settler in the year of 1846 as being Christian Hendrickson. By the year of 1848 a large number of Norwegians had settled there. The following are named: Salve Jørgenson, Nels Evenson, Nels N. Skogen. In 1849 we find Hon. Gunolf Tollefson, Knudt Bowerson, Ole Tollefson, Kittil K. Melland, Peter Hasklerud, Halvor Luraas, Gunder Stamm, Elling Stamm, Ole Skuldt, Eli Pederson, H. Hustad Gunhus, and possibly others.
Sixty Years of Perry Congregation

The town of Vermont was politically a part of Blue Mounds until 1856 when its settlers perfected a local self-government. Among its first Norse settlers from 1849 and on we find Erik K. Sevre, Ole Brunsvold, Mikkil K. Blekkelien, Halvor Ruste, Arne Mikkelsen, Ole Grotodden, Halvor Bakkene, B. Nees, Arne Vasfaret, Harold Vasfaret, Christian Vestrom, Gul Kantum, Jørgen Haugen, Halstein Nordby, Harald Brager, Peter Brager, Ole Brager, Hans Tomptene, Mikkil L. Tolebraaten, Ole Bakken, Ole Langedragslien, Arne Haugen, Ole Tollefson, Anders Espelien, Gulbran Ingemoen, Ole O. Thorsrud, Thond Mikkelson, Anders Winden, Barsness, Amund Hillestad, Peter Moe, Einer Milleison, Hans Opsal, Iver Brennum, Knudt Hornet, Knudt Kjorstad, Jens Moen, Thomas K. Lee, Mrs. Thomas K. Lee (Syverud), Ole Syvrud, Gul Olson, Gilbert Halstein, Halstein G. Docken, Arne Steensrud, Anders Stensrud, Ole Flashaugen, Gulbran Docken, Aamund Hillestad, Anders S. Oberbo, Mr. Wilken, Store Lars, Ole Hagen, and P. C. Paulson.

CHAPTER III.

Pioneer Life 1846-54.

Having seen how the settlers scattered themselves thruout the various towns, it might not be amiss to try and lift the veil of the past and get a glimpse of some of the hardships that had to be gone thru in those earlier days.

What bothered the early settlers the least was their worldly possessions. The majority of them had a few clothes packed in a "drag-kiste," or had them tied in a "skaut." Very few had any

21

Compiled and Edited by C. O. Ruste 1915