

# HISTORY OF ZACHOW

By Henry Dirks 4/30/1969

Credit for the birth of Zachow appropriately belongs to the late Fred Bramschreiber who in 1890 started a general store on a cross road about one mile north of the present location. His store also served as the post office which was named after his little daughter Nayda. The mail was shuttled between Nayda and Bonduel by the late Martin Zernicke and was picked up by the early settlers since there was no rural mail delivery. Nayda, the daughter of Mr. Bramschreiber is now Mrs. Nayda Stiede and lived at 304 W. Richmond Street, Shawano, Wisconsin.

In 1903, the C&NW Railway Co. extended their line from Green Bay to Eland Junction. The clearing of the right of way and the grading of the road bed went to a contractor by the name of Alf. Lynn, and all work was done with horses and man power. After train service was established, Mr. Bramschreiber moved his business near to the depot and thus, Netley, as it was then named, was carved on the farms of the late Martin Zernicke and Bernard Reinke.

The first cheese factory in the area located just west of Zachow in the SW corner of Highway F and Main Street, Zachow and was established in 1886 and owned and operator by the late Wallace Mills. The cheese as well as other farm produce from the area was hauled to Green Bay 25 miles distant by horse drawn wagons and as late as 1890 by oxen. Frequently, the two day trip was also made on foot carrying supplies on their backs.

In 1905, Martin Zernicke built a saw mill near the creek which was then an excellent trout stream, it is at the headwaters of the Pensukee River. The mill was operated by his son Elmer in later years and was destroyed by fire approximately 10 years ago. The steam engine which also furnished power for threshing grain was salvaged and sold for \$800 to a steam engine buff for much more than its original cost when new.

Things moved fast now considering the circumstances and it was about this time that an enterprising young businessman, the late W. C. Zachow, of Cecil entered the picture and for a price succeeded in permanently changing the town's name to Zachow.

Soon several other business places were established. A farm granary was established and later converted into the first blacksmith shop in 1980?? and operated by the late Wm. Marquardt who also doubled as the local tooth puller, unfortunately, it was said that he didn't always get the right tooth on the first attempt. Filling teeth was uncommon those days so they were pulled as soon as they showed excessive wear or the aching became unbearable.

Others among the first in Zachow were: Arndt's General Store, and Post Office, the late Robert and Otto Bohm's planing mill, the Brusewitz and Deering Hardware and Implement Store, and The Farmer's State Bank with the late Frank Bohm as it's traveling salesman featuring the "Happy Farmer" tractor in their display room, the Pauly and Pauly Cold Storage built in 1919 cooled with ice cut annually from the Martin Zernicke's pond. This company attained a peak production of over 185,000 pounds of cheese per week. It is presently owned by Swift and Company, The Radtke

Hardware Store built in 1907 owned and operated by Herman Radtke of Zachow until recent years.

The first auto in Zachow was owned by Ole Hanson in 1910. It was a buggy wheel type auto with solid tires and chain drive. The first garage was owned and operated by the late Dawson Cowden and now is know as the Albert Radtke Garage, Inc.

Zachow also had a combination hotel with 13 bedrooms, saloon, barbershop, dance hall, and living quarters for the owner. A large livery stable that furnished all the needs of a traveling salesman and an occasional visitor. This building was moved to the west side in 1934 and became John Mielke's blacksmith shop. The hotel was replaced by a beautiful home in 1941, built and occupied by the Henry Dirks family.

In 1907, the Cargil Elevators Inc. of Minneapolis built and operated a successful grain elevator for a number of years. The future of this business was to it's ups and downs. Farmer groups failed twice. After a bankruptcy, and another individual failure, Henry Dirks a former depot agent for the C&NW Railroad bought the closed place in 1935. It prospered again until his retirement in 1967. Unfortunately, within three years, the new owner also filed bankruptcy. A new owner took over and again prospered.

To supply variety and entertainment the late Nick Matz opened the first saloon in Zachow soon to be followed by four others. Whiskey was ten cents a glass and some in bulk in wooden kegs which was siphoned directly into bottles by the saloon keeper. Quite frequently, it was siphoned directly into the mouths of patrons if the bartender's attention could be diverted elsewhere.

The health needs were administered by the late Dr. Pfiffer whose office was located on the second floor of the present Gerhardt Klevesahl residence just west of the Albert Radtke home. His services were oft time supplement by the capable midwives--the late Mrs. Fred Deering, Mrs. Wm. Deering, and Mrs. John Busch, mother of Rev. John Busch of Bonduel. People in those days didn't request the services of doctor until they were very sick and all home remedies failed so most of his calls were in the homes at \$1.00 per house call. A complete bone setting job for Elmer Zernicke, who broke his leg when he was 12 years old, plus numerous house calls cost a total of \$35.00. Were those the good ol' days?

Zachow developed into a cattle, sugar beet, cheese, butter, and grain shipping center. It was also famous as a baseball town sporting a team second to none in Shawano County during the early twenties. Chief among the players being: John and Henry Radtke of Shawano, Herman Radtke of Zachow, Alfred Radtke of Mountain, Wisconsin, and the late Emil, Eddie and Bill Radtke all of Zachow, and the late Ervin, Art, and Leo Kobs of Advance.

Today, Zachow is a quiet, neat, little hamlet with a population of about 150, with 10 business places supplying the needs of a prosperous farming community.