

Early Cheese Factories

In the early days, with poor roads, and transportation facilities, a perishable product such as milk could not have been marketed in fluid form. The advent of the cheese factories located throughout the town, within easy driving distance from the farm, turned the farmer's eye toward the production of cheese. This turn of events took place in the 1880's and the following years. At one time there were eight cheese factories in the town. Now there are none. The history of Morrison, Wayside, Lark, and Stark factories are revealed in the history of these communities as follows.

The Riverside Cheese Factory was located in Section 26, was started by August Natzke and stayed in the Natzke family until its sale to Herman Wordell in 1910. Herman Schroeder purchased the place for his son Elmer in 1915 and in 1916 he became the owner. Elmer Schroeder operated the cheese factory for about 25 years until Art Johns purchased it in 1940. Shortly after, Mr. Johns built a new modern factory. It was later sold to Lowell John, and then closed in 1964.

The County Line Cheese Factory was located in Section 31. It was owned and operated by Arthur Woldt. The factory was built by Chas. Giese in 1892 and was operated by him until its sale to William Radder in 1902. In 1908 Theo. Sonnabend became the owner. He then sold it to Arthur H. Woldt in 1913, who operated it until 1958 when he retired. He used the building as a residence until his death in 1971. It was then sold to Wilmer Rahn for a residential home.

What was known as the Sunnyside Cheese Factory was started as a farmer's factory in 1904 under the name of Henry Klug and Co. The first patrons were: Henry Klug, S.J. Thompson, Henry Hansen, John

Dorcey, Charles Wendt, William Thiem, and Maurice Brennan. It was sold to Henry Sonnabend in 1906. Ben Krieser took it over in 1908. In 1913 Theo C. Sonnabend purchased it. In 1919 Carl R. and Walter Sonnabend assumed his partner's interest. In 1955 Mr. Sonnabend remodeled the factory. He then sold it to William Novak in 1958. Mr. Novak ran it until 1964 when he closed it because lack of room to expand. Patrons were transferred to Hebels Corner's Cheese Factory in Denmark, WI.

Umnus Cheese Factory, which was located on the west side of Section 7, has been used as a residence for many years. It was started as a farmer's factory sometime between 1880 and 1890. It was purchased by Herman Schroeder in 1903 and he built the present building in 1904. His son Elmer took over the operation in 1914. In 1915 he sold it to Nic Karls. John and William Kabot became proprietors in 1916. Later it was sold to Henry Umnus who in turn sold the business to Ed Klug. The factory was closed by Mr. Klug, and consolidated to his Morrison factory 1 and 1/2 miles away.

Morrison Cheese Factory was built on leased grounds in 1877 from Philip Falck. In 1888 this factory was sold to Dan Falck, who made cheese until it was sold to his brother Louis in 1892. Louis Falck sold the factory to Ben Krieser in 1915. Ed Klug bought it from Krieser in 1918 and operated it until its sale to the Morrison Co-op Dairy Assn. in 1955. It remained the Co-op until 1985 when it was then purchased by Jeff and Lynn Laack, and became a cheese converting, and cream cheese operation, which it remains today.