

## PAULY AND PAULY CHEESE COMPANY



(The Zachow Operation-circa 50's)  
(By Lorraine Hoefs Gentz)

Harold (Harry) Hoefs was a cheesemaker at the Gippfield Cheese Factory which at that time was owned by Gust Drage Sr. Some of the owners of this factory were Henry and Walden Mehlberg, Myron Radtke, and Rodger Krueger. It was located east of Bonduel. He was also a cheesemaker at Valley View Cheese Factory when Felix Pauly contacted him to come to Zachow to oversee the plant. The Valley Factory was later owned by Alfred Klosterman. This factory was located south of Bonduel.

Harry managed the Zachow warehouse and plant for 36 years. Pauly & Pauly Cheese Company was located next to the Chicago and North Western Railroad tracks in the village of Zachow, Shawano County. The Zachow Depot was located directly across the tracks from the cheese warehouse. Harry's son, Maynard Hoefs, started at the plant when he was sixteen and became manager when Harry retired.

In the early years, cheese was sent to the warehouse by train from Cecil, farmers brought in cheese by wagon and later it was trucked in. In what was called a "farmer factory" usually a designated farmer would bring in the cheese. If the cheesemaker brought in the cheese, it was usually later in the afternoon, after their cheese had been made.

The warehouse had an unloading platform, a paraffin tank, two weigh scales, a cooler for storing cheese and office space for paper work. Cheese was tested for moisture content and in later years they also tested for fat content in the cheese. The cooler was chilled by ice.

The ice for this cooler was taken from a large pond located on the Elmer Zernicke farm. It was secured in the winter and stored for year round use. It always seemed that a holiday type atmosphere began when the word came that the ice was hard enough to cut. Men, horses, and sleds were hired for the filling of the cooler. A pulley, skid and hoist were used to get the blocks of ice up in the cooler. A shout went up as the horses pulled so every one could back away in case the ice block slid off the hoist. The first cooler was small and it didn't take too long to fill. Sawdust came from the sawmill to insulate the ice so it would last until the cool fall months came. It was always a worry as to how long the ice would last over the summer.

Later the old cooler began to rot from all the moisture, so a newer, bigger ice cooler was built. I believe it was about 1937-1938, with the construction being done by Peter Kozicki and his sons. Then as new coolants were found, pipes were installed in both coolers and ammonia became the coolant. The new refrigeration system was stored in the basement of the building along with the heating plant.

The cheese was hauled into the warehouse by a cheese cart with two wheels, curved handles, and a sharp steel blade which was inserted under a stack of cheese. A stack of cheese usually contained 10 boxes of squares or daisies; a stack of cheddars contained four boxes. Cheese was made into shapes called twins, squares, daisies, double daisies, horns, midgets and cheddars, then in later years blocks and barrels. The cheese was hauled unparaffined into the cooler in summer to retard mold. In the winter months the incoming cheese was left on the warehouse floor in the work room. Every load of cheese was usually taken in the order received, to be cleaned, graded, stamped, paraffined, weighed and boxed. Every cheese grader had his own stamp with a number on it. This

number along with the date of manufacture was used to separate the cheese according to date. The number of the grader also told the state cheese inspector who had graded the cheese. The latter part of May and early June were flush weeks for milk production as farmers would release their cows into the lush green pastures. At that time, you could barely walk through the work area. Cheese was piled as high as humanly possible, and many overtime hours worked so that the cheese would be paraffined before it became moldy on the outside surface. If it did become moldy, it had to be scraped with a special knife and then brushed with a steel brush; this was time consuming and costly.



Crew from the 30's



Crew From 1954

Albert Kallies, Acey Boerger, Herb Kallies, Maynard Hoefs, Rueben Schmidt, Earl Krueger

Wooden cheese boxes manufactured by Seymour Woodenware, Suamico Box, and a Shawano box company supplied the boxes to the factory and to the warehouse. After being weighed, the cheese was placed in a wooden box which had a scaleboard (a very thin and smooth piece of wood) at the bottom of the box to prevent the paraffin from being scratched off the cheese by the rough wood box bottom. The scale boards came in bundles and were cut in the shape of a circle or square. The lot of cheese was then stamped with a lot number and grade of cheese, while the weight of each box was recorded with an adding machine. The adding machines were specially built for use in any part of the warehouse. The machine was attached to a 4-wheel waist high cart with a side board for papers. The weight was called off to the person at the adding machine in the following manner; 1 meant 21 pounds, 1-1 meant 21¼ pounds, 2-2 meant 22½ pounds, 2-3 meant 22¾ pounds-these are just a few samples of the calls. The adding machine recorded the total weight of the lot of cheese. There were three grades of cheese; state, junior, and under grade. If there were different grades of cheese in the lot, the weights were kept separate because of the difference in the price of the different grades. The weight sheets were then filled out in the office and sent to the main office at Manitowoc, WI. The check for the cheese was then sent to the cheesemaker or to the treasurer of the farmer factory. In the later years, the office was at the Pauly plant in Green Bay and run by a nephew, Ralph Pauly. Plugs of cheese were taken from each lot with a tool called a cheese tryer. Each lot of a different manufacture date was tested for its moisture content. This took up the major time of the secretary as each lot had to be tested.

When the coolers were changed over to coolants, an addition was put on the south side of the warehouse to house supplies for the cheesemakers: namely milk filter disks, milk cans (there were no milk parlors or holding tanks on the farms at the time), bandages, bags of salt, rennet, coloring, cheese hoops, cheese boxes, pipettes, and numerous glass items used at the that time. Later everything was changed to stainless steel because if glass breakage was found in cheese, the whole lot of cheese was destroyed.

The cheese was stored in the coolers, awaiting orders to be shipped out. Our orders to ship usually came via phone from Manitowoc. There were times when we would ship to our other plants to fill the orders they had. We would order the railroad car from the Zachow depot agent. The car would arrive iced in the summer. We had to request how many pounds of ice were needed if the cheese was to be shipped to the southern states. Most of the cheese from our plant was shipped to Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia. Sometimes an independent buyer would send a truck up for cheese and that was our introduction to the Afro-American. After a few trips up here, the drivers and the men in the warehouse became good friends, and the drivers would bring up grapefruit and oranges to sell to us. Tree-ripened fruit; it was delicious! In the early years, before the railroad cars were insulated, heaters were used in the cars so that the cheese would not freeze in the winter. Never thought that was the thing to do, but apparently there were no burned box cars.

My father (Harry Hoefs) would go out Monday mornings to visit as many of the cheesemakers as possible. The public relations were good for the company and also the cheesemaker. As a little girl, I liked to ride along because around 10:00 a.m. the cheese would already have been salted and cut into curds. There is nothing more delicious than fresh salted curds right out of the vat. Cheese was made into different shapes as the buyer's market dictated. Harry would call the maker and ask if he would change his make of cheese for another form of cheese. If the answer was yes, he would take out the necessary items for the change-over. Boxes were then sent out to their factory.

During World War II, the government purchased cheese for the troops. Sad to say, it was always a chore to work with the people who came to test the cheese. Seven copies of everything concerning this purchase had to be prepared.

### **SHIPPERS TO PAULY CHEESE COMPANY**

Cheesemaking was such a big business. However, the little cheese factories spotted throughout the countryside are now gone. Some of the cheesemakers were: Edgar Arndt, August Boettcher, Carl Luepke, Victor Malueg, Wm Malueg, Harold Buelow, A.H. Graf, W.B. Schroeder, Henry and Walden Mehlberg, Myron Radtke, Rodger Krueger, Otto Uecker, Alred Klosterman, Walter Klosterman, Alex Krause, Ed Zillmer, Tony Brunner, Wally Schreiber, Herb Mueller, Ervin Schreiber, Elmer Korth, The Reisners, Wallace Luepke, Earl Reisenberg, Eldred Beil, Fred Waelchli, Archie Uelman, Walter Rossow, Raaschs, Syl Streeblow, Clyde Andrews, Hilbert Wagner, Leo Banaczynski, Brezinskis, the Winters, Leo Zehren and Martin Boerst. Henry Vandervelden, Rudy Manthei and Eric Schettpelz were also some of the shippers to Pauly Cheese Co.

## HISTORY OF PAULY CHEESE COMPANY

I don't know how the Pauly Cheese Company got started but I do remember that Felix was the president and William was the vice-president. In later years, Ralph Pauly, a nephew, took over. In 1923 the name was changed from Pauly & Pauly Cheese Co. to Pauly Cheese Co.

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There always seemed to be a lot of competition between the buyers: Steinhardt, Schreibers of Green Bay, Armour, A & P, and Pauly.

Through the years, labor unions came into the warehouses and social security started. Cheese factories were closing, shipping by rail stopped and trucking took over.

Pauly Cheese Company was bought out by Swift & Company.

## THE CHEESE EXCHANGE

The Cheese Exchange always set the price to be paid on Friday and the price was broadcast over the radio at a certain time. Woe if there was static on the radio and the price would not be known until the next day as cheesemakers would hold their cheese if the price went down and shipped as quickly as possible if the market had gone up. A half cent increase meant a little more profit for the maker as their profit margin was very small in the '30s, '40s and '50s.

## THE EARLY DAYS



Harry Hoef-Second from left sitting, circa 30's