

### Emil Iede (The Sheepherder)

Emil Iede came to Groton around the year 1910. He drifted in and built himself a home out of materials that he found in the city dump. He made his home out of pieces of lumber, tin, cardboard and whatever else that he found that he could use to make a house. I am guessing that it was about 10 x 12 ft. in size. I am sure that he found an old stove of some kind that he put in one corner because he stayed here the year around. I do not know how he got the handle of being called a sheep herder. Maybe that was his background or maybe because he looked like what some body thought a sheep herder looked like that he was labeled a Sheep Herder.

As a boy I can remember him walking into town almost every day. I have seen him many times go down the allies in Groton. He usually stopped at the garbage barrels behind the restaurants. I have seen him in the summer time reach down and find a watermelon rind that was partly eaten and retrieve it and finish it off with flies just swarming around it and him. Some times 4 or 5 larger boys would pick on him by throwing stones at him until they got tired or some man would come by and tell them to quit it. I know that he would come into my Dad's drugstore and buy a can of canned heat. My Dad soon figured out that he was using it to get drunk on and he refused to sell him any. Some times he would walk into the pool hall and the boys would mix him up a concocted drink that would stop a horse but he would gulp it down and go home tipsy. I remember when Emil would walk by the livery barn, which was located where the present fire station is facing the West. Dr. Livingston, a Veterinarian stayed there with a helper called Ed Moore. Doc was quite a cut up and he would send Ed out to talk to the sheep herder, with instructions to keep him turning around and the idea was that Doc would shoot Emil in the seat when he was in the right position. On this particular day he would shoot Ed in the seat instead of Emil and Ed would keep pointing at Emils behind and turn him around again. He used a beebe gun. Emil lived in the dump grounds for maybe 15 or so years when he decided to move. He built another shack along the CNW R. R. tracks about 400 feet South of the Milwaukee tracks. The shack was similar to the one he had in the dump grounds. I dont know why he moved but if I were to guess the rats were so bad in his house that he couldnt stand it and decided to move.

He lived here in this location for maybe 10 or 12 years when he decided to move again. He next moved about a mile East of Groton's main Street on a piece of meadow and built a similar house but a little larger about 300 ft. South of the Milwaukee R. R. Tracks. He continued to walk to town quite regular either on the tracks or along them. I remember and this was in the days of the Steam Engines that the engineers would shoot steam out at him as he walked along the track. He would then pick up stones and throw them at the boys in the cab of the engine. Finally the engineer and fireman would throw some coal back at him. Now you must realize that the train was moving very slowly as they pulled out of Groton to the East as it is very much uphill. Emil then armed himself with a lot of stones and would throw them at the crew and they in turn would throw more coal back at him. This suited Emil fine as he would go back and pick up the coal to help heat his shack.

In Nov. of 1942 Emil was finally ran over by one of the trains. At his time there were double tracks here and there were 2 Hiawatha passenger trains. They came through Groton both at or near the same time every afternoon about 3 P. M. It is no doubt that one of these trains got Emil.

Emil, The Sheep herder, was a very colorful character in the City of Groton for many years. He was dressed in clothes that he picked up in the dump sometimes wearing 2 or 3 pairs of pants so that one would cover up the holes that the other one had. He would work once and awhile. Mr. Abe Oliver who lived a half a mile South of the golf course would hire him to shock some grain. Mrs. Oliver would not allow him in the house but would feed him out on the back steps.

Mr. Charles Adams was the man that took the pictures of Emil. He never wanted his picture taken but Charlie induced him, maybe by greasing his palm to allow him to take these wonderful pictures.