

The Huron River – Part III

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Water power was the key to settlements along the Huron River in the early 19th century. Initially sawmills were needed to produce building materials from the virgin forests near the river valley. Henry Snow built a sawmill in 1824 at Snow's Landing (later Rawsonville). Amarith Ravens added another in 1843. As the land was cleared and farming increased, grist or flour mills were built to process the grains. The last grist mill in this area was owned by Edwin Berrow. It was the victim of a summer flood that took out his dam in 1901.

Woods Creek in Lower Huron Metropark was the site of James Stewart's sawmill until the 1880s. His mill pond was a popular fishing spot for area children and a source of ice which farmers harvested each winter. From the Paw Paw Nature Trail a bit downstream, Abner Johnson built his sawmill in the 1830s. Parts of the dam are still evident today.

The Schultz brothers – Franz, Ferdinand, and Joseph, constructed a grist mill in 1886 near New Boston. Turbines moved the grinding stones for decades after a brief attempt with a water wheel. Electricity now provides the power as the Farmers Grain and Feed Mill continues to operate over a century later.