

Mills -

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to the mills. The river found its source somewhere in Lindsay Township and found its way down through part of Eastnor Township to mingle with the waters of Lake Huron at Stokes Bay.

Other mills remembered were owned by Websters, who operated on the south side of the river. Jim Fletcher built a sawmill and shingle mill near the same location. Other small mills in the area were owned by Archie Cameron, Bill Stead, Sam Wyborn and Jack Boyle. In the early 1900's Thompson's mill was in operation. T. Y. Dealy, who had a store at Stokes Bay, also operated a mill. He sold his mill in 1912 to Nathan Doran who settled in Stokes Bay at that time.

Seymour Hawk operated a mill at Pike Bay, and later one at Pine Tree Harbour. Pedwells also had a mill at Pine Tree. From 1892 to '98 a mill was owned and operated by Jerry Siebert at Pine Tree Harbour. It must be remembered that many mills ran for perhaps one season only. Some were portable and were moved to their sites as the Peninsula big timber diminished.

The only mill at Stokes Bay now is a small mill owned by Earl McArthur, and is used to cut basket bottoms. Between Stokes Bay and Spry, a mill was owned and operated by Henry Wardrope, and later was bought by Glen Bowden.

Other mills listed were: In 1896 James Cluff had a sawmill at Mar as did A. Marshall; at Lion's Head, George Kort and R. J. Moore; at Hope Bay, Weaver and Lewis; at Pike Bay, Jacob Wolfley; at Spry, Richard Gawley; at Wiarnton, Thomas Gilpin, Jones Bros., George Kidd, Seaman and Newman, and W. Young; at Dyer's Bay, Davidson and Davidson, Horace Lymburner; at Purple Valley, J. H. Watchorne; at Colpoy's Bay, B. B. Miller.

In 1898 sawmills were listed for A. G. Seaman, Barrow Bay; H. C. Bietter and Co., Cape Croker; Davidson and Davidson Lumber, J. M. Tupper, Lake Charles; Robert Greenlees, Miller Lake; Lawrence Bros., Jacob Wolfley, Pike Bay; Johnson Bros., Spry; James Fletcher Sawmill, Lion's Head; Lumber Co. Ltd., Stokes Bay; Edward Brook, David Eidt, Linton and Hazard, at Red Bay; Carther and Moir, at Oliphant; Pickard and Brown, at Mar. No additional mills had been added to Wiarnton's list at this time.

The time of the mill gangs, the lumber jacks, and the sturdy pioneers of those days is becoming a dim memory in the minds of the old timers. But there was a time when great rafts of logs were brought down the river at Stokes Bay to the mills. The river drivers created a real stir of excitement in the small village as they invaded the local hotels to quench their thirst over the bar, exchange tall tales with friends, and maybe dance a lively buck-and-wing to the tune of some itinerant fiddler.

One must also take into consideration that memories grow dim with the passing years, and dates and places get mixed up with the march of time. We can only pass on what was told to us, and what we were able to verify by research.