

This is the way I found the forest preserve of Fullersburg some 80 years ago. More than 80 years ago as you go to North Madison St., near Spring Road, you could look to Salt Creek and see big white and pink water lilies -- right north of the bridle path bridge was this big patch of lilies. We used to fish there for pickerel and bass.

Shortly north of that we called a little strip going into the creek an island. On this side of the creek was farm land. I saw corn and wheat grow...which is now covered with trees and shrubbery. You can hardly get through. Further down as we called it "the turn" is known as Section D now. We could sit at this turn and see people with a horse and buggy on York Road. A little further on is the high bank which is still there. We used to meet there always. There wasn't a tree or shrub there at that time. It was known as the Graue Pasture.

Then we went around to what is known as Island # 3 and it was known as "White Bottom". Then coming along to where is now the refreshment stand...we used to call it Mrs. Tring's fishing place. A ways further was known as Henry Liefer's fishing place. Then, a ways further, was the Liederkrantz picnic place. Then the bend came on Spring Road -- we called it our swimming place.

Then on to about Washington Street we had a place known as Ruchty's Ice House. Now above the dam on the north side was a lily patch known to have 1000 lilies. Across from the tavern now there was the first ice house (later they built the one mentioned before on Washington Street). Ruchty delivered ice to Hinsdale, Western Springs, LaGrange, Elmhurst, Downers Grove and all along the C. B. & Q. We used to rent boats from Graue who used to own the mill. The Graue Mill is still known and part of the original building still stands. They ground all grain and made flour. Also had a cider press.

Then, coming back to what is entrance of Forest Preserve, was land owned by Domianus -- 5 acres both sides of Spring Road. Gates now on the property known as Forest Preserve. East of that which is now known as Island # 2 was land owned by Frank Meier. Going to what is the big parking lot was all underbrush. This was known as "rabbit heaven"

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Going back to the entrance of the small parking lot...that took us back to the gravel pit near Section D. From the gravel pit a small road led to where they hauled gravel -- a one-way drive. Up on the hill from the gravel pit road was where the C.C.C. camp was built. The hill is now all grown up with trees and brush but as the C.C.C. camp was built the men picked raspberries and black raspberries.

I cut the first road, a one-way drive -- took part of the gravel road which was always there...but belonged to Butler...but somewhat grown up -- and cut a one-way drive through shrubs and all the way to the gravel pit...and past where the boat house stands today. This was only a one-way drive.

There were eight of us boys always who played down there everyday -- cousins of mine -- Louis, Henry, Frank, Ernest, my two brothers John and Fred -- another cousin Charles Wendland and Henry Ross. We fished and went swimming every day. We never took water along to drink. There was always fresh water from springs.

I was hired by Edwin Dreck (?) for \$35.00 per month. Frank Ayres was Supervisor of Downers Grove Township and had charge of Fullersburg. He and Bill Blodgett of Downers Grove were there every week. They were very much in favor of making it a park, as it is today, but neither lived long enough to see it through.

The C.C.C. camp stood where the Boy Scouts now camp. The old dam was 2 feet higher than it is today. The Indian mounds are still there. We could have picked up bushels of Indian arrow heads at this place and all around it. I can show you places where Louis Schneider used to sleep under big oak trees. He was never educated and would act strangely at times so was called "Crazy Louie".