

A Brief Overview of the Dute Family and Homestead in Amherst

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Another early settlement that should be noted is that of Casper and Mary Dute. This early farmstead was located just up the road, on Cooper Foster Park Road to the east of the Shupe Homestead (or east of the N. Main Street and Cooper Foster Park Road intersection), on the south side of the road. An illustration in Williams' *History of Lorain County* (1879) depicts the farmstead as having many outbuildings. A few of those buildings, along with the original house, were still standing in the early 2000s. Today the structures are gone and the farm is residentially developed. The Hollstein family later acquired much of the original Dute Farm. The site of the two large farm barns is now home to the Quarry Lakes development on Cooper Foster Park Road, next to the Church of the Nazarene. The c.1843 house was adjacent to the barns, just to the west.

Casper Dute, an only child, was born to George and Ann Catherine Dute in Germany in 1827. They came to Black River in 1834, where they lived in a "rude" log cabin near the Lakeshore until 1843 when they moved southward, to what would become the Dute Homestead. Casper and Mary had fifteen children, fourteen of whom lived to adulthood. The house on the right in the engraving and two large barns on the left shown in Williams' engraving, were the last original structures standing. The author remembers the two large doors on the barn, which were not used in later years. The house also stood into the early 2000s along with the small outbuilding just behind it. The Homestead was noted as being, "one of the finest in the town" by Williams in the *History of Lorain County* book.





Above: Dute Homestead, showing original house and two large barns, which remained into the early 2000s.

Note Regarding the Dutes and Shupe's Mills

In a biographical sketch of Ephraim Towne, which appeared in the "History of Amherst Township," it states that Mr. Towne came to Amherst in 1828. He built a sawmill on the Little Beaver Creek [East Branch Beaver Creek] "which ran through this property, it being then a stream of considerable capacity at that early date." After about twenty years, the mill was accidentally burned and not rebuilt. It is said that he then purchased "the Shupe mills," employing a man to manage these. (Catharine Shupe had continued to operate the mills after her husband, Jacob's, death in 1832.) After attempting to sell the mills to a Mr. Snyder (c. 1851), he eventually gave them to his son, Jeremiah, "who eventually disposed of them to Mr. Dute, and were known as Dute's mills." Dute ran the mills for a time, and by 1874, it is known that the undershot waterwheel operation was augmented with a steam engine to power the operation. Both the saw and gristmills were located along side each other, like many mill operations at that time.