

When the floods came

Historic floods on the Unstrut River

Floods are natural occurrences. Among other things, they can be caused by heavy rains or sudden snowmelt. People's ability to influence floods decreases as the size of the event and the area increase. This has also been confirmed by looking at historic floods of the Wipper River in the Sondershausen region. According to our sources, there have been multiple significant floods here in the past. Taking measures for flood control and flood prevention was and still is extremely important!



Flooding in the city of Sömmerda during the 1940s

Significant flooding of the Unstrut near Sömmerda between 1700 and 1950 (selection)

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| 1735 (May/June) | Water stays on the meadows and fields for a long time |
| 1752 (August) | Significant damages to the dikes |
| 1784 (February) | Sudden snowmelt and heavy ice drift cause significant losses; bridges are severely damaged |
| 1799 (February) | Snowmelt and heavy rainfall cause the Unstrut to overflow wide areas |
| 1816 (June/July) | After heavy rainfall, the meadows are flooded and the hay crops are a complete loss |
| 1871 (June/July) | Water is several cubits high on the fields; many farmers lose their entire crops |
| 1890 (November) | Enormous damages to dikes and bridges |
| 1909 (February) | Large-scale flooding in the towns, high losses |
| 1946 (February) | Snowmelt and rain cause the Unstrut to overflow; many of the local houses, barns and stalls are surrounded by water |
| 1947 (March) | Catastrophic damages due to ice drift and flooding; many bridges are destroyed |



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Flooded fields along the Unstrut in March 1947

Sources:
- Image 1: Sömmerda Town Archive
- Image 2: Sömmerda Town Archive
- Image 3: Thuringian Dam and Hydrological Archive in Tambach-Dietharz

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