



Ford Motor Company Manufacturing records collection  
Building Construction Department subgroup

**RAWSONVILLE POWER PLANT  
CONSTRUCTION RECORDS SERIES, 1930-1939  
Accession 1588**

**HISTORICAL NOTE**

Henry Ford pursued many divergent interests beyond automobile production throughout his life. His lifelong interest in harnessing water to provide power for industrial production and family farms led him to experiment with hydroelectric generation on his own Fair Lane estate beginning in 1915. Over the next 30 years, Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company built over seventy hydroelectric power plants around the world, half of which were located in southeastern Michigan. These power plants appealed to Henry Ford for two reasons. First, they provided employment opportunities for skilled labor in rural areas and second, they provided inexpensive electricity for Ford Motor Company's industrial production. The Rawsonville Power Plant on the Huron River, completed in June 1932, provided electrical power for Ford Motor Company's electrical components Plant in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The power plant produced 2,800-horse power from a 33-foot water head and generated 2,100 kilowatts from two Leffler turbines. The plant dam created the 1,200-acre Ford Lake with 4,000 acres of land surrounding it set aside for Ford employees to use for personal gardening and small-scale farming.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The series consists of 135 24" x 36" pencil and ink on linen architectural drawings of building floor plans, exterior and interior elevations and equipment lists used in the construction of the power plant. The drawings are organized sequentially and numbered 100 to 328. Sheet number 100 is an indexed List of drawings. The drawings were digitized in 2006 and digital versions are available on a CD ROM in box 4 of the accession

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CD ROM, Rawsonville Power Plant Construction Drawings, May 2006