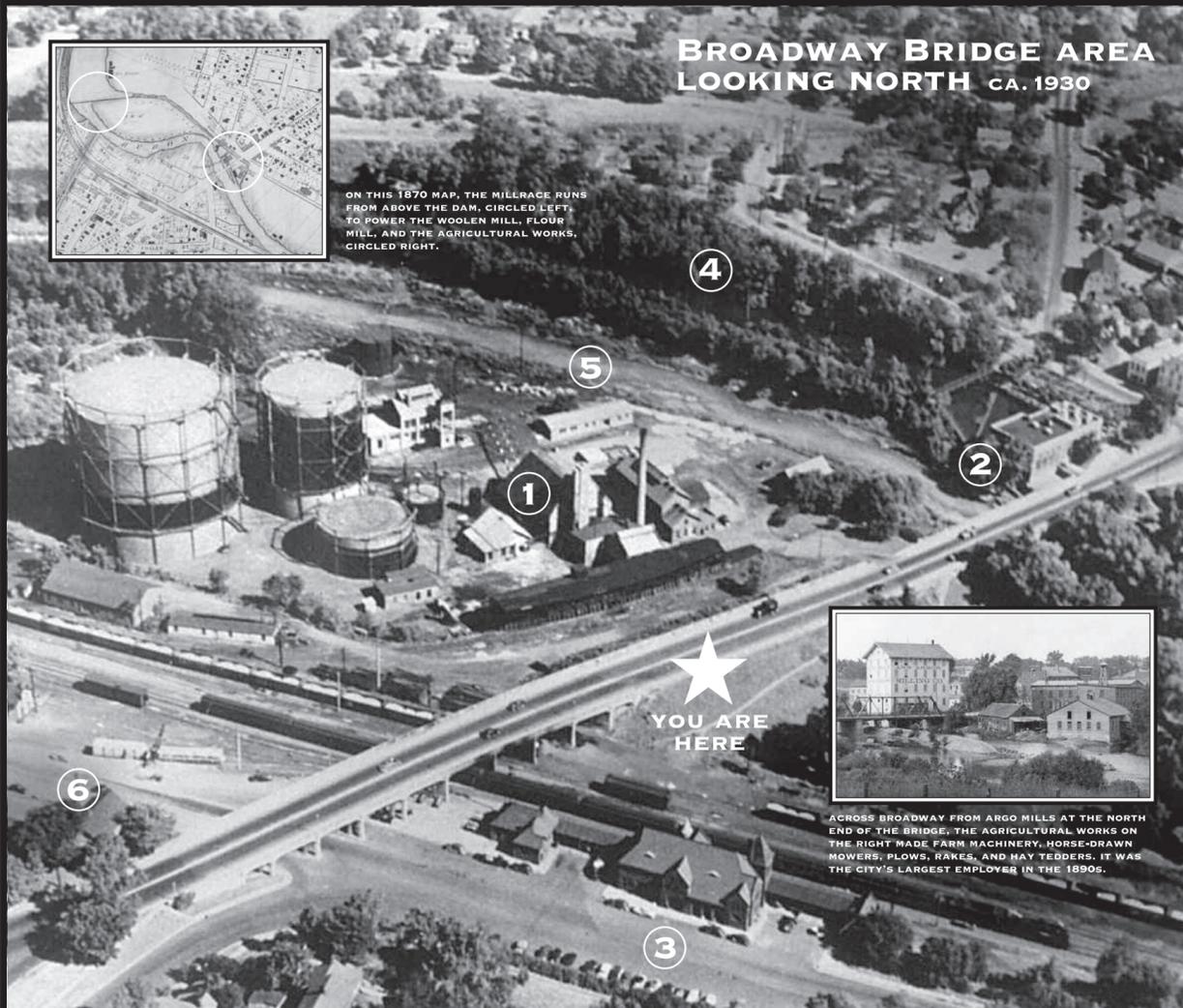




The Center of Power and Transportation



**BROADWAY BRIDGE AREA
LOOKING NORTH CA. 1930**



ON THIS 1870 MAP, THE MILLRACE RUNS FROM ABOVE THE DAM, CIRCLED LEFT, TO POWER THE WOOLLEN MILL, FLOUR MILL, AND THE AGRICULTURAL WORKS, CIRCLED RIGHT.



ACROSS BROADWAY FROM ARGO MILLS AT THE NORTH END OF THE BRIDGE, THE AGRICULTURAL WORKS ON THE RIGHT MADE FARM MACHINERY, HORSE-DRAWN MOWERS, PLOWS, RAKES, AND HAY TENDERS. IT WAS THE CITY'S LARGEST EMPLOYER IN THE 1890S.

Standing here in the 1930s, you would have seen the gas works in front of you (1) with its large storage tanks, as well as Edison's power station (2) at the end of the bridge. The railroad station (3) was behind you.

Early settlers and travelers arrived on foot, on horseback, or by stagecoach, following Indian trails that crossed the river where the bridge is today. Wagons carried supplies until the railroad reached Ann Arbor from Detroit in 1839.

Water was Ann Arbor's earliest source of power. By 1830 a dam upriver diverted water into the millrace (4), parallel to the river (5), to provide power for Lower Town's mills and later the Agricultural Works (see map above). In 1858, at a site south of the railroad tracks (6), the Ann Arbor Gas Light Company began using coal to make artificial gas for street lamps, home heating, lighting, and cooking. Gas stored in large tanks was distributed through five miles of pipe. The gas works moved to this larger site

north of the tracks in 1900, a few years after an explosion damaged the old works.

After the flour mill burned in 1904, its owners built a small hydroelectric power plant on the site (2). The next year the Edison Company acquired the dam and the power plant, which they later enlarged. In 1928 they built a warehouse across Broadway on the site of the former Agricultural Works. The gas company became part of Michigan Consolidated Gas in 1938 and merged with Edison into DTE Energy in 2002.

THE NEW MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILROAD DEPOT OPENED IN 1887. BOOSTERS DESCRIBED IT AS "THE FINEST ON THE LINE BETWEEN BUFFALO AND CHICAGO." MORE THAN A DOZEN TRAINS A DAY BROUGHT FREIGHT AS WELL AS CROWDS OF VISITORS, BUSINESSMEN, ENTERTAINERS, AND STUDENTS. IN 1969 THE PASSENGER DEPOT WAS CONVERTED INTO THE GANDY DANCER RESTAURANT.



photos courtesy of wystan stevens and the bentley historical library