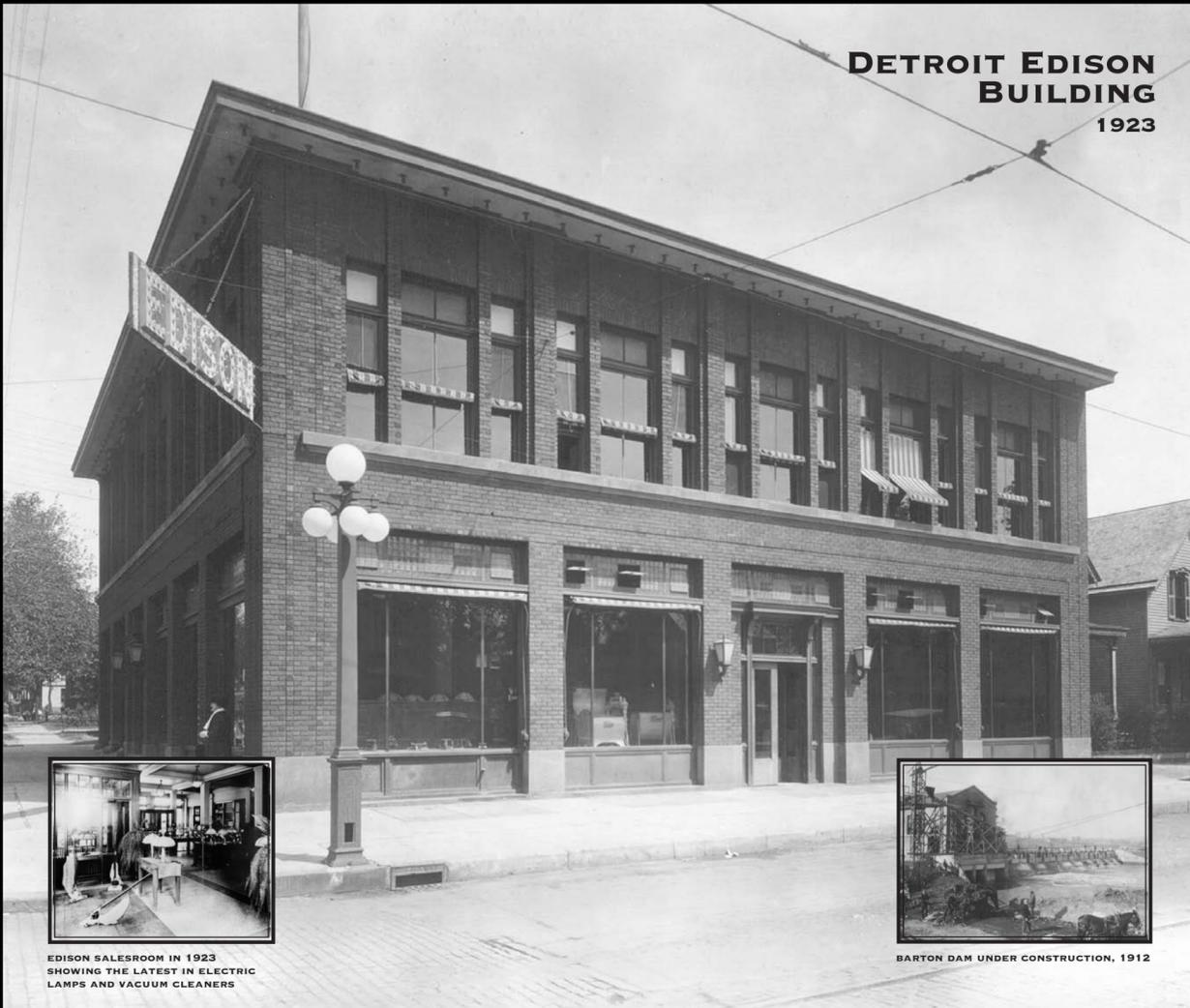




POWER AND TRANSPORTATION



DETROIT EDISON BUILDING
1923



EDISON SALESROOM IN 1923
SHOWING THE LATEST IN ELECTRIC
LAMPS AND VACUUM CLEANERS



BARTON DAM UNDER CONSTRUCTION, 1912

Detroit Edison sold electric home appliances in 1915 to 1983 in its showroom across the street. The earliest Ann Arbor homes were lit by fireplace flames and lard lamps. Oil, along with gas manufactured after 1858 from the burning of coal, lit most homes and streets until the arrival of electricity. Electric power came to Ann Arbor in 1884 when the Ann Arbor Van Depoele Light and Power Co. built a generating plant powered by coal-fired steam on Washington Street just west of the Ann Arbor Rail-road.

It provided safer, cleaner, and brighter power for 36 stores and residences and added 33 electric streetlights to the town's array of gas lampposts. For the next two decades, some areas continued to be lit by gas and many homes were equipped with both electric and gas lights in a combination fixture.

After 1886 dams along the Huron River generated hydropower. In 1905 the Detroit Edison Company started buying water rights, mills, land, and existing small water power plants along the river in order to

establish itself as the major supplier of electricity in Washtenaw County. Later it provided electric power for Ann Arbor's streetcars and interurbans. Barton Dam, built by Edison in 1912, was the first of six new hydroelectric dams. The power supplied was inadequate for the rapidly growing electricity needs of the area, so coal-powered plants elsewhere expanded to meet the demand. Edison's dams created ponds that provided recreation as well as a scenic area that became Barton Hills.

BY 1890 ANN ARBOR STREET RAILWAY CARS TRAVELED REGULARLY UP AND DOWN MAIN STREET, TURNING EAST AT WILLIAM TO THE UNIVERSITY. A PLAN TO USE HORSE-DRAWN CARS WAS SCRAPPED WHEN NEW TECHNOLOGY ALLOWED ANN ARBOR TO BE ONE OF THE FIRST TOWNS IN MICHIGAN WITH AN ELECTRIC STREETCAR LINE. IN 1891 MICHIGAN'S FIRST INTERURBAN RAILWAY LINE STARTED BETWEEN ANN ARBOR AND YPSILANTI. EARLY CARS WERE DRAWN BY A STEAM DUMMY, A SMALL STEAM ENGINE CLAD IN A STREETCAR BODY. THE LINE WAS ELECTRIFIED IN 1896, ENTERING TOWN ALONG PACKARD TO CONNECT WITH THE STREETCAR TRACKS. BY 1902 IT WAS EXTENDED EAST TO DETROIT AND WEST TO JACKSON.



INTERURBAN TRAIN
HAULED BY STEAM
DUMMY MOTOR CAR

