DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY -– FORD MOTOR COMPANY – BRIEF CHRONOLOGY 1920-1951

[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

[NOTE: This chronology is not to be considered a completed document, but rather a working document. Many years between 1920 and 1951 are not accounted for at all at this time, as more research needs to be done. The boldface lines will hopefully make finding a specific topic easier. Items in italics are taken verbatim from the columns of The Iron Mountain Daily News/The Iron Mountain News with minor editing. These are not complete articles, but usually the lead paragraph and perhaps another paragraph or two in some instances. Dates in brackets are for clarification.]

June 1920 — Henry Ford purchases the **Michigan Land & Iron Company**, a large tract located in the Michigan's Upper Peninsula with a total acreage aggregating nearly 430,000, of which about 320,000 acres is in fee simple, the balance being the mineral right only.

7 July 1920 — *Henry Ford and son, Edsel, and Mr. Avery, general manager of the Ford Motor Co., of Detroit, were in the city this morning looking over a **prospective site for the location of a factory** to build bodies for Ford cars, and also a site for a big sawmill.* This is the first published mention of the Ford Plant project, published in Iron Mountain's *The Daily Tribune-Gazette*.

16 July 1920 — Official announcement is made that the Ford Motor Company has **decided upon Iron Mountain as the site** where the power house and sawmill will be constructed.

17 July 1920 — Ford engineers begin **laying out sites for the power house, sawmill and body plant**.

22 July 1920 — The decision to **build the Ford Plant on the southern part of Joseph Mongrain's farm** was officially announced.

3 August 1920 — The **first building construction work** on the Iron Mountain Ford Plant begins with concrete being poured for the foundations of the sawmill and power plant.

August 1920 — Sometime around the middle of the month the **Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company is organized** by the Ford Motor Company interests for the purpose of conducting the Iron Mountain sawmill and body plant, as well as the extensive Ford logging operations in the Upper Peninsula. The company is organized under the laws of Michigan with a capital stock of $2,000,000, with Henry Ford, president; Edward G. Kingsford, vice-president and assistant treasurer; Edsel Ford, treasurer; and C.B. Longley, secretary.

The Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company placed orders for the materials for **fifty modern dwelling houses to be erected in the Crystal Lake district** and ready for tenants in the course of a month or two. The

materials are now being framed at the factory in Lower Michigan and the residences can be erected in short order upon their arrival.

18 September 1920 Excavation for the **foundations of the office building** of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company, located just east of Stephenson Avenue on Brown Street.

28 October 1920 The **Imperial Mine**, located in Baraga County near Michigamme, will be opened and mined by the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company, the ore to be used in the production of Ford automobiles.

29 November 1920 The first **carload of logs for the Ford Plant sawmill** arrived at 3:00 p.m.

1 January 1921 The **operations at the Ford Plant are suspended** due to a recession.

1 April 1921 **Work at the Ford Plant resumes gradually.** The Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company office building on Brown Street is almost ready for occupancy.

13 April 1921 In the second issue of *The Iron Mountain Daily News*, it is announced that the sawmill will open about July 1. There are **approximately 6,000,000 feet of logs piled up in the yards** near the sawmill.

15 April 1921 **The Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company moves into the new office building on Brown Street.** It is a handsome edifice, two stories in height, of red mat *[sic – matte]* brick, trimmed in Bedford stone.

Ground is broken for the first dry kilns.

25 June 1921 ***Single men who have been employed at the Ford Plant will be released today, and their places will be filled by married men with dependents who were thrown out of employment by the shutdown of the Chapin Mine here.*** *Between twenty-five and thirty will be affected, according to E.G. Kingsford.*

12 July 1921 *In the presence of C.W. Avery, general manager of the Ford Motor Company, E.G. Kingsford, vice president of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company, and about 100 members of the Commercial and Rotary clubs**, the first logs were put through the new Ford sawmill** this afternoon. At 1:30, a long blast of the mill whistle announced the start of the huge band mill. A few minutes later, the spectators gathered on the platform to see the first log come up the chute from the hot pond. As it entered the mill building, it was "christened" by M.J. Fox with a cup of water.*

DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY -– FORD MOTOR COMPANY – BRIEF CHRONOLOGY 1920-1951

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22 July 1921 *Four freight cars, loaded with lumber, stood on the yard tracks at the Ford Plant today ready for spotting. They contribute the* ***first shipment to be made from the local mill****, and were expected to leave today. The lumber will be shipped to the dry kilns in Lower Michigan for curing, and then to the Ford factory at Highland Park.*

15 September 1921 ***Excavation and preliminary work for the new Ford body plant*** *will start immediately, following the award of the contract, according to word received today by the Michigan Iron, Land and Lumber Company.*

16 September 1921 ***Surveying the ground for the new Ford body plant*** *was begun today by L. Williamson and T.H. Schmitz, engineers of the Worden-Allen Company, of Chicago, who arrived on the St. Paul train this morning.*

26 September 1921 *"Business will get back to normal when the prices are cut!"*

This was the statement made today by ***Henry Ford****, auto king and powerful figure in the country's financial and industrial empire, who* ***is visiting Iron Mountain and looking over his extensive holdings here.*** *Ford arrived unannounced early this morning. He was accompanied by Mrs. Ford, their son, Edsel, and his wife, and C.W. Avery.*

15 October 1921 *Excavation was started yesterday [October 14] for a* ***sixty-foot addition to the first unit of the Ford body plant*** *now under construction.*

19 October 1921 ***For the first time the north side of the Ford sawmill was placed in operation Monday*** [October 17]*, with the purpose of limbering up the machinery and getting this side of the mill in smooth running order.*

3 December 1921 ***The largest day's cut of lumber ever recorded at the Ford sawmill was made Wednesday*** [November 30]***, when the total reached 52,000 feet.*** *The daily cut has averaged from 42,000 to 44,000 feet, under the direction of Matt Cunningham, in charge of the mill.*

10 December 1921 ***Both sides of the Ford sawmill were placed in operation at the beginning of work this morning****, on current furnished by the turbo-generator which has just been installed. The machine has carried the load perfectly, according to plant officials.*

20 January 1922 ***Exceeding all records so far, the cut made at the Ford sawmill today reached a total of 106,170 feet, not including ties.*** *The cut has been running from 100,000 to 102,000 feet daily.*

4 February 1922 ***A cut of 204,000 feet was attained at the Ford sawmill yesterday*** [February 3]***, working two shifts, or an average of 102,000 feet a shift.*** *In view of the fact that the night crew is just completing its first week, this*

is considered a remarkably good record, and is taken to presage a much heavier cut in the near future.

9 February 1922 *The plant of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company, now in course of erection in this city, will have a* ***capacity for manufacturing 750,000 bodies yearly*** *for the Ford Motor Company. This authorized estimate includes the bodies for 600,000 touring cars and 150,000 sedan bodies. In order to reach the estimated output it will be necessary for the Iron Mountain body plant to manufacture daily 360 complete sedan bodies and 1,300 bodies.*

13 February 1922 ***Exploratory work was begun today at the approximate site of the Ford Dam, which will be thrown across the Menominee River at a point tentatively set just above the pumping station.*** *The purpose of the exploration is to locate the depth and character of the bedrock which will determine the exact point at which the dam will be constructed.*

24 February 1922 ***Operation of the first body plant unit at the Ford mill here will start Monday*** *[February 27], according to instructions given by C.W. Avery, if some necessary equipment now in transit reaches the city in time to be installed by then.*

28 February 1922 ***Opening of the new body plant unit at the Ford sawmill was delayed by the non-arrival of material****, and could not take place yesterday, as scheduled.*

17 March 1922 ***The first shipment of parts from the new Ford body plant was made Wednesday*** [March 15] ***afternoon, according to an announcement yesterday, when a carload of front-door pillars for the touring car model was dispatched to the Detroit factory.*** *The exact number of pieces was not given, but the shipment included several thousand.*

21 March 1922 ***Shattering all records made so far, and even exceeding the mark set for daily production, the Ford sawmill placed itself on a new pinnacle over the weekend by making a total cut of 273,000 feet in sixteen hours, exclusive of box-boards.***

29 May 1922 ***Plans and specifications for 14 dry kilns, a body plant unit, and a 100-foot addition to the present body plant unit have been announced this morning by E.G. Kingsford, vice president of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company.***

31 May 1922 ***Construction of the Ford store at Woodward and Carpenter Avenues has been started by G.A. Gustafson, contractor.*** *A force of men is now at work excavating for the basement, which will be 51 by 115 feet and 7 feet high.*

Work on the foundation will begin next week. The building will be of brick construction, and will be one story high.

The total cost of erecting it will be $25,000.

17 June 1922 ***The contract for construction of 14 dry kilns and another complete body unit at the Ford Plant has been awarded to the Worden-Allen Company, of Chicago, the firm which erected the present units.***

Work will be started at once on the new units, which when completed will more than double the output of the plant.

29 June 1922 ***A serious log shortage will compel the shutdown of the Ford sawmill****, probably within a week, E.G. Kingsford, vice president of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company, announced today. The night shift will suspend work tonight, but the day force will continue until the few logs that are being received now have been cut into lumber.*

2 August 1922 ***G.A. Gustafson, Iron Mountain contractor, has been awarded the contract for the installation of the filtering plant site at the corner of Woodward Avenue and the road leading to the mill****, it was announced today.*

16 September 1922 ***The Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company plant, a subsidiary of the Ford Motor Company, Detroit, will totally suspend operations tonight as a result of the coal situation****, it was announced this noon by E.G. Kingsford, vice president of the concern.*

The shutdown is in accordance with Henry Ford's order closing down the big Detroit plant and all subsidiary plants until such a time as a supply of fuel is available at reasonable prices.

22 September 1922 *The Ford Plant* ***resumed operations after being shut down*** *at 1:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 17, as the problems related to shipping coal nationwide had been resolved.*

Announcement was made today at the offices of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company that the minimum wage at the Ford Plant had been increased to $6 per day. *The increase was effective September 1 and the men received the additional amount in their pay checks yesterday.*

27 September 1922 ***The newest addition to the Ford Plant will be a filing room and motor repair building****, construction of which will begin in the near future, according to a statement today by R.V. Dudley, an official of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company.*

11 November 1922 ***The "Ford Commissary," as the new merchandising establishment of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company will be known, will be***

opened for business Monday morning **[November 13]** ***at 8:30.*** *The business will be under the management of Richard E. Boll, who was engaged in business at Channing for many years.*

The store is located in a new brick building on South Carpenter Avenue. The building is 115 by 50 feet in size, has a full basement and is one story in height.

The store is stocked with staple and fancy groceries, men's and boy's working clothing, a complete line of shoes, and fresh and salt meats. The meat market occupies one-third of the floor space and is constructed along modern sanitary lines. A chemical refrigerating plant is provided and a "freezing" show-case is used for display. A feature of the market is an electric meat sawing machine.

In the basement are located the cooling rooms for the storage of fruits and vegetables. Another feature is a neatly furnished restroom for women and children. Business will be conducted on a strictly cash basis and the facilities of the store are open to the general public as well as the employees of the company.

17 February 1923 ***Beginning last night*** [February 16] ***at 11 o'clock the Ford sawmill went on an operating basis of three shifts a day.***

9 March 1923 ***The name of the company was recently changed from the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company to that of the Ford Motor Company, the subsidiary having been absorbed as a part of the parent plant at Detroit.*** *This policy, Mr. Kingsford explained, is being followed with regard to all the subsidiaries of the company.*

21 April 1923 ***Contracts for the construction of 32 additional dry kilns, a third body plant unit, extension to the two present body plants, and a maintenance building have been awarded by the Ford Motor Company to the Worden-Allen Company, of Chicago****, it was announced late this afternoon by E.G. Kingsford, chief of the company's Upper Peninsula operations.*

Construction work will begin as soon as possible, Mr. Kingsford said.

The dry kiln battery at present consists of 20 units and is regarded as the world's largest. The 32 new units will almost triple its size.

12 May 1923 ***The contract for the construction of the hydroelectric power plant on the Menominee River here has been awarded by the Ford Motor Company to Stone & Webster, Inc., of Boston, Mass., and work will begin immediately.*** *Materials for the structure are already being received, and, it is believed, the job will be completed within several months.*

26 June 1923 ***The chemical plant to be erected here by the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber Company will probably be the largest of its kind in the world****,*

according to a statement attributed to E.L. Pearce, of Lake Shore Engine Works at Marquette, who returned to Marquette today with the announcement that he had received a contract to furnish some of the materials for the new plant.

18 August 1923 ***Henry Ford and party arrived here from Escanaba at 1:15 o'clock this afternoon and will remain for a few days at the Ford Motor Company's private grounds at the Cowboy Lake grove, about a mile northwest of the Ford Plant.***

Included in the party are Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Edison, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey P. Firestone, Harvey P. Jr., Miss Bogue, a friend of the Firestones, Mr. E.G. Kingsford, of this city, and Mrs. E.G. Kingsford, who joined the party here at 2:30 o'clock this afternoon.

6 September 1923 ***A house building program experiment that, if successful, will be continued indefinitely, will be undertaken immediately here by the Ford Motor Company****, it was announced today by E.G. Kingsford, chief of the company's operations in the upper peninsula.*

The company will take charge of the work itself, awarding contracts only for individual jobs, such as plumbing and lighting, Mr. Kingsford said, and it is planned to start with from 25 to 50 homes.

These houses will be constructed outside the city limits just south of the Ford store on the street running west. They will be two stories in height and have from five to seven rooms, basement and furnace. Various styles of architecture will be employed in their design and the houses will be modern in every respect. Although the cost has not yet been determined, the houses have already been sold to employees of the company, Mr. Kingsford said.

29 October 1923 ***Woodward Avenue, part of the boundary line between the city and Breitung Township, is being extended*** *from the corner of Cleveland Avenue, Kingsford Heights, to the Ford Dam, the work being done by Clifford Bridges, contractor who was awarded the job by the Ford Motor Company.*

28 November 1923 ***New bunk houses which are being constructed by the Ford Company at the plant here will be ready for occupancy in a few weeks.*** *All the modern equipment of an up to date house will be found in the structures, which will be equipped with electric lights, steam heat and shower baths. The name bunk house is perhaps misleading in this instance as ordinarily bunk houses are thought of as the buildings of a lumber camp, where all the sleeping apparatus is in one room and double deckers are used. This, however, is not the kind of a building Mr. Ford is constructing for his employees. Instead of dormitories there will be separate rooms, each housing one or two cots. There are eight new houses under construction, one of which will be used as a mess hall. Employees of the company will*

be accommodated here at a nominal cost. Mr. E.G. Kingsford, of the Ford Company stated. The buildings will accommodate 200 men.

19 December 1923 ***Two mammoth smokestacks that reach into the sky 190 feet and appear like giant feelers on the giant steel skeleton of a spider whose body is only partly covered; that is the new Ford power house being built here.***

1 February 1924 ***Construction of three body plant units, or one equal in size to all three, will be the major feature of the Ford Motor Company's 1924 building program here****, according to an announcement late yesterday afternoon by E.G. Kingsford, head of the company's extensive operations in the upper peninsula.*

16 February 1924 ***Large numbers of men are being added daily to the payroll of the Ford Plant and the total number employed here now reached the high figure of approximately 3,500.*** *A comparatively short time ago it was but 3,000. The payroll of the plant now runs approximately a half million dollars a month which, coupled with the $70,000 monthly payroll of the Oliver Iron Mining Company and the $40,000 monthly payroll of the Von Platen-Fox Lumber Company, means an income of $610,000 per month from the city's three sustaining industries.*

3 April 1924 ***The Ford Hydro-Electric Power Company has been granted a charter as a Wisconsin public utility firm****, it was revealed at a hearing held yesterday [April 2] at Madison, Wis., before the state railroad commission on the application of the company to build and operate the dam now under construction here. The dam bridges the Menominee River, one part being located in Dickinson County and the other in Florence County, Wis.*

24 April 1924 ***It is now expected that the chemical unit of the Ford Motor company's plant here will go into production the middle of June.***

Work on the distillation building is well advanced. Practically all the equipment is installed and the principal work remaining to be done is the piping, which, it is said, can easily be completed before the prospective date for starting operations.

8 May 1924 *Following an investigation of more than two weeks, The News has bared what it believed to have been a* ***huge land sale plan*** *engineered by three Chicago "realtors", one of them a Negro, and which was* ***intended to ensnare hundreds, and possibly thousands, of unsuspecting Negro workers*** *through the middle west and east.*

10 May 1924 *In a formal and official statement given The News today, E.G. Kingsford, general manager of the Ford Motor Company in the Upper Peninsula, made a* ***categorical denial of all statements contained in the lurid***

advertisements of Smith, James and Russell, Chicago realtors, to the effect that the Ford Motor Company had in any way been a party to a colonization scheme *in which the Chicago firm was acting as selling agents for owners of lands located across the Menominee River from the Ford Plant here.*

16 May 1924 — *The Ford Motor Company will* ***start at once the construction of 100 houses in the Village of Kingsford****, according to a statement made late yesterday afternoon by E.G. Kingsford, general manager of the company in the Upper Peninsula. Whether or not any more houses than this will be built by the company depends upon the success of the present program and the demand for houses, Mr. Kingsford said.*

The houses will be located near those built last year by the company. The district is being improved, sidewalks being laid and streets graded. Water and electricity are also available and gas service will be if the village approves granting the Citizens' Gas Company a franchise at the election tomorrow.

24 May 1924 — ***Plans for moving the Ford Motor Company's offices from East Brown Street to the plant site have been completed and the work will be started tomorrow*** [May 25]*, it was announced today.*

Some time ago it was declared the East Brown Street building would be abandoned and a large office building erected at the plant site. Construction of the office building, however, has been held up and quarters for offices have been provided in the maintenance building.

5 June 1924 — ***Plans and specifications for a new Ford sawmill here have been prepared and submitted to contractors for bids****, it became known today. Ray V. Dudley, a Ford Company executive, said that the mill will be located between the present sawmill and the lumber transfer.*

The structure will be 76x260 feet as compared to the present mill, which is 120x240 feet. It will eliminate re-handling of lumber now necessary under the new Ford system of cutting the lumber green and drying the parts in the kilns.

20 June 1924 — **The Ford Dam's three generators began revolving at the rate of 120 turns per minute, supplying 11,000 horsepower to the Ford Plant, culminating two years of planning and construction.**

30 June 1924 — ***The Ford Dam and generating station is the largest power development on the Menominee River.*** *Its output is larger than that of the Peninsular Power Company's dam because it not only has the same water that is available at Twin Falls but, in addition, is the beneficiary of the volume supplied by the Pine River, which flows into the Menominee between the two stations. The Ford Hydro-electric Plant is drawing the attention of engineers all over the country. In it is incorporated the most*

modern conception of water power development and this is combined with a beauty of architecture and fittings that is perhaps unparalleled.

5 July 1924 *When at last the wheels begin to turn in the* ***huge chemical unit*** *of the Ford Motor Company Plant, now fast nearing completion, Iron Mountain will hold the attention of the industrial and chemical world. Then* ***for the first time science's newest method of carbonization will be used on an extensive scale****; and the Ford Motor Company will have taken a step that will probably mean its ultimate independence of outside markets so far as chemicals used in the manufacture of automobiles is concerned and may put the Ford Company into the field as a competitive seller of fuels and chemicals.*

The vast amount of waste wood from the body plants makes possible this step. Every scrap of wood – even sawdust will be utilized. After the wood has passed through the chemical plant and has been reduced to charcoal, this latter product probably will be offered on the market for fuel or used in the manufacture of steel.

Not only will every substance of which wood is composed be extracted and made valuable, but even the gases will not be wasted. Huge pipes, leading from the chemical unit back to the boiler room, will drain these off and bring them to the power house where they will be used as fuel.

1 August 1924 ***The big chemical unit at the Ford Motor Company plant here will go into operation in a few days, it was indicated today by R.V. Dudley, Ford executive.*** *The preliminary tests of the machinery and other equipment were started today. The work, however, was only in the nature of an experiment, or test, to determine whether all is in readiness for beginning operations.*

17 September 1924 ***Production is now well under way in the new sawmill just erected here by the Ford Motor Company.*** *The mill is operating three shifts, employing about 100 men per shift, and is rapidly attaining high production levels.*

27 September 1924 ***Operations have begun on a large scale at the huge wood distillation plant of the Ford Motor Company here.***

The great plant, largest and most complete of its kind and distinctly a salvage development, has a capacity of daily producing charcoal and chemical products to the value of more than $11,000 on the basis of present day prices, according to a statement given out by the Ford Company.

30 September 1924 ***The payroll of the Ford Motor Company here now contains the names of more than 5,200 persons, according to figures obtained today at the company's offices.*** *This is a new high peak and exceeds*

by several hundred the number employed up to a short time before the five-day operating schedule was put into effect.

8 October 1924 ***Iron Mountain today is producing about one-twentieth of the nation's supply of wood alcohol, according to W.T. Hall, a chemist employed by the Badger Company, of Boston, who was in charge of the equipping of the big Ford Motor Company chemical plant here.***

30 October 1924 ***The first fatality at the Iron Mountain plant of the Ford Motor Company occurred at 5:30 o'clock this morning when George Molendik, 25, was killed in a body plant accident.***

12 December 1924 ***Ten or 12 bunkhouses erected by the Ford Motor Company for the accommodation of workers who were unable to find living quarters were being torn down and removed today.***

The buildings were located near the filtration plant on the road running from the plant to Woodward Avenue. They were erected when the housing situation became extremely acute here and it was necessary to provide quarters for a number of men employed at the plant. The bunkhouses accommodated about 300 men but, it was stated, had not been occupied for some time.

2 February 1925 ***Discontinuance by the Ford Motor Company of what is known as contract medical practice was announced today.*** *The discontinuance is effective immediately, employees of the company no longer being assessed a certain sum each month for which they received medical attention whenever required for themselves and families.*

Although Ford employees will not be required to pay the regular fees for medical service as received, men who become ill or injured while at work will be cared for at company expense in a new Ford hospital which has been equipped here.

This ***hospital is located in one of the new Ford houses on Woodward Avenue****, the house being remodeled for this purpose.*

The hospital here is in charge of Dr. W.H. Alexander, who comes directly from the Henry Ford hospital in Detroit. At present it has five beds, in addition to an operating room and other departments.

12 February 1925 ***Construction work has been started at the Ford plant on a series of seven huge silos which will be used for the storage of the charcoal briquettes manufactured in the chemical plant***, according to an official statement late yesterday.

13 April 1925 ***The Ford Motor Company today inaugurated what is said to be the first commercial air line in the United States*** *when the "Maiden Dearborn," an all-metal monoplane, hopped off from Detroit for Hegewisch, Ill., near Chicago.*

The plane, of the "air" Pullman type, took off from the Ford airport, Dearborn, with a cargo of company mail and express for the Ford plant at Hegewisch, near Chicago.

They will have a terminus at St. Louis, Mo., another at St. Paul, Minn., where the new hydro-electric plant of the Ford Company will be in operation and a third will terminate in Iron Mountain.

16 April 1925 — ***Work on beautifying the park between Woodward and Hamilton Avenues has been started by the Ford Company in the Village of Kingsford****, a crew of men starting this morning.*

The park was donated by the Ford Company and will be one of the beauty spots of the village when work has been completed.

Shade trees are also being planted on Hamilton Avenue by the company while many of the residents are also busy with their own property, making necessary changes and planting lawns, shrubs and flowers.

23 April 1925 — *The Iron Mountain Ford Plant last night* [April 22] ***received the first mail routed via the new commercial airline*** *instituted a few days ago by the Ford Motor Company.*

4 May 1925 — ***Eight men were injured, none seriously, in a charcoal explosion at the Ford Plant*** *at 8:45 o'clock this morning, the accident occurring in the extreme end of the carbonization building of the chemical plant. In an investigation that followed, officials of the plant determined that the explosion was caused by sparks form a magnetic pulley that ignited an accumulation of charcoal dust.*

Seven of the eight men, all of whom were burned about the hands and face, suffered first degree burns. The eighth, Willis Keenan, was more seriously injured, his burns being described as of a second degree nature. Six of the men were taken care of at the Ford hospital where their wounds were treated and dressed. The other two, who were not so seriously burned, were treated at the first aid station at the plant.

6 May 1925 — ***The Ford Motor Company has offered to sell its abandoned office building on East Brown Street to the city for $25,000, according to a statement to members of the city council.***

The city desires to purchase the property because of claims that the present city hall is cramped for office space and additional quarters are needed.

13 May 1925 — ***The valuation of the Ford Plant has been increased by $1,913,000, according to figures given out here today by the state tax commission.***

The total valuation of the plant and 160 acres upon which it stands is now $4,000,000 as compared to $2,596,000 last year. The

personal property valuation was increased from $991,000 to $1,500,000.

These figures, however, do not take in the Ford Dam which is assessed at approximately $350,000, and the acreage which composes the balance of the plant site. Neither does it include the Ford Store.

22 May 1925 ***Interior decoration and furnishing of a few rooms on the second floor is all that remains to be done on the Ford Motor Company Clubhouse for visiting officials which is located on Woodward avenue in the Village of Kingsford.***

The lounging room is furnished with a number of highly upholstered easy chairs and settees. Equipment for the dining room is expected to arrive here soon. The clubhouse also has an up-to-date kitchen, the walls of which are brilliantly enameled in white.

The second floor will have rooms for Ford officials who are visiting the plant here. It is not definitely known when the clubhouse will be opened but it is thought that it will be in readiness the early part of next month.

29 May 1925 ***The premises surrounding the Ford Hydro-Electric Plant, located west of the Ford factory, has been transformed into a beautiful garden.***

Although the planting of trees and shrubbery has not yet been completed, the landscape work is practically finished and gives the electrical plant a wonderful setting.

The driveway leading to the main door at the plant is marked off with a concrete curb. The road makes a complete circle, with a heart design in the center. Hedges have been planted on each side of the driveway.

9 June 1925 *Battling a 40-mile gale which fanned the flames and carried burning embers through the air,* ***firemen from four different cities, cooperating with the Ford fire fighters, fought valiantly in the Ford Motor Company's storage yards*** *against almost overwhelming odds yesterday afternoon* [June 8] *and last evening and succeeded in saving the greater part of kiln dried chemical wood and a large supply of high grade sawmill timber and coal which for a time was threatened with destruction. No estimate of the loss could be obtained this afternoon, the check up of the Ford officials not being completed.*

The lumber storage yard is located about a half mile directly west of the Ford plant, which at no time was in any danger. Measures were taken, however, to prevent a spread of the fire in that direction.

26 June 1925 *The* ***Ford Motor Company Orchestra****, which has spent six months in the process of organizing and practice, will make its first public bow at a concert and dance to be held at the Kingsford High School building on the evening of Friday, June 26.*

The orchestra has a membership of about 25, all of whom have had previous training and experience. With almost 6,000 employees to select from it would appear natural that an excellent musical organization could be built up and that is what the sponsors of the orchestra promise.

18 July 1925 ***The Ford Motor Company Iron Mountain Branch is the safest woodworking plant in the country.***

15 August 1925 ***Joseph Oberthaler, of Norway, was crushed to death in a conveyor in the chemical plant of the Ford Motor Company at 2:15 this morning.***

Working in a small aperture, with no chance to escape, Mr. Oberthaler instantly realized his danger when, through some confusion in signals, the conveyor was put in motion. He screamed to stop the machinery but though the conveyor traveled only four feet before coming to a complete halt, it was sufficient to crush the life from its victim.

Mr. Oberthaler's body, caught about the abdomen and chest, was so tightly wedged that acetylene torches were required to burn away the jammed steel which held him fast.

19 August 1925 ***Joseph Oberthaler, of Norway, who lost his life at the Ford Plant early Saturday morning when his body was crushed by a conveyor, met his death in an accidental manner, according to a verdict returned last night*** [August 18] ***by a coroner's jury.***

18 September 1925 ***The state public utilities commission has authorized the Ford Hydro-Electric Company to do business in Michigan.***

9 October 1925 *The public's response to the new model Ford cars is reflected here in the* ***employment of more than 7,000 men in the Ford Plant****.*

This is an increase of approximately 1,300 men in the last six weeks and establishes a new high mark for the Iron Mountain division.

It is estimated that the Ford payroll in Iron Mountain is now approximately $1,000,000 a month.

12 November 1925 ***The Iron Mountain Plant of the Ford Motor Company is now listed as employing more men than any other division of the Ford Company with the exception of the Detroit area, according to figures received here.***

Of the plants outside the Detroit area, Iron Mountain shows the largest employment total. On its rolls are the names of 7,271 workers – a gain of 1,246 over the May total.

7 November 1927 ***Engineers of the Ford Motor Company, under the direction of Victor Perini, manager of the Iron Mountain plant, are nearing the completion of their part in a plan which, if approved by Henry Ford, will not only provide one of the most spacious and fully appointed***

airports to be found throughout the district, but it will solve for Iron Mountain, Kingsford and neighboring communities a problem which, in the past few months, has been demanding the serious consideration of community officials throughout the county.

21 September 1928 ***The first Ford airplane to visit Iron Mountain landed at the Ford Airport here at 11 o'clock this morning, carrying a party of officials and guests.***

14 December 1928 ***The Ford Airport, located near Cowboy Lake and now under lease to Adolph Nelson, will make an excellent landing field when work on it is fully completed, according to the report of William F. Centner, airport specialist, to the department of commerce at Washington D.C.***

23 November 1940 ***Activity on the recently-installed station-wagon assembly line at the Iron Mountain Ford Plant is described in an article appearing in the November issue of "Ford News," published at Detroit, and stressing innovations in the 1941 model.***

17 January 1942 ***From 350 to 400 men, of the approximately 800 who were given temporary lay-off holidays, will return to work at the Ford Plant here Monday*** [January 19]***, on receipt of orders from Detroit to proceed with the manufacture of station wagons "until further ordered" according to an official source today.***

16 July 1942 ***Asking three specific changes in management policy which, their leaders claim, were denied them by O.W. Johnson, Ford attorney, in a conference at 8 this morning, some 400 employees of the Ford Plant here "sat down" inside the gates this morning to await the outcome of negotiations, which were still pending at noon.***

There was no disorder. Most of the men sat quietly alongside the body plant, chatting in groups or eating their lunch. Others lay stretched on the grass. There was little to indicate anything unusual had occurred.

17 July 1942 ***About 300 day-shift employees of the Ford Plant here returned to work at 11:30 this morning following their half-hour recess for lunch, after three representatives of the International UAW, called here following yesterday's "sit-down" demonstration, and UAW local officials had conferred briefly with O.W. Johnson, Ford attorney, in the opening session of negotiations which were to be continued this afternoon.***

18 July 1942 ***"Certain recommendations" as to the future relationship between the management of the Ford Motor Company's Iron Mountain plant and UAW-CIO Local 952, growing out of conferences held yesterday between UAW International representatives and O.W. Johnson, Ford***

attorney, will be made at the Local's executive committee at a UAW mass meeting tonight, in the auditorium of the Iron Mountain Senior High School.

19 July 1942 ***A pledge to abide by the terms of a UAW-Ford Motor Company contract and the union constitution – both violated by an unauthorized work stoppage at the Ford Plant Thursday and Friday – was adopted unanimously Saturday evening by Local 952 members at a mass meeting held in the Iron Mountain High School auditorium.***

30 October 1942 ***The Ford Motor Company announced today it would manufacture gliders for the Army at one of its plants in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.***

21 June 1944 *Favored by fair weather, the C-45 Beechcraft, twin-engine cabin ship, carrying Henry Ford II, executive vice-president of the Ford Motor Company, and others of his party, to the* ***Army-Navy "E" award presentation*** *here at 3 this afternoon, arrived at 10 this morning at the county airport, after an uneventful three-hour trip from Dearborn, Mich.*

27 January 1946 *Because waste-wood from the company's own operation has not, for some time past, been produced in quantity enough to keep it going – and has been obtained, instead, at prohibitive cost in the open market – the* ***chemical plant of the Ford Motor Company here, in constant production since August, 1924, will be shut down next June****, Walter G. Nelson, superintendent, announces.*

Of the 132 men now employed in this department, 100 or more may be absorbed in the two body plants on a seniority basis, which may mean that some men now at work in the body plants may be released to make room for the older employees, Nelson added. About 2,150 men are now employed in all departments of the plant, compared with the wartime average of 3,500.

10 August 1951 ***Negotiations for the sale of Ford Motor Company's vast Iron Mountain property to a group of industrialists whose operations are expected to result in continued employment of a substantial part of the community's labor force are now under way, it was announced today by L.D. Crusoe, vice-president and general manager of the Ford Division.***

1 October 1951 ***Under negotiation for the past several weeks, sale of the Ford Motor Company's vast industrial property to a newly-organized corporation which will take possession late this year, was announced about 11 p.m., Saturday*** [September 29]***, in the office of the Lake Shore Engineering Company by L.D. Crusoe, vice-president and general manager of the company's Ford Division.***

DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY -– FORD MOTOR COMPANY – BRIEF CHRONOLOGY 1920-1951

[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

4 December 1951 ***Sale of the Iron Mountain Ford Plant to the newly-organized Kingsford Chemical Co., a Delaware corporation, was announced here today by the former owners, Martin D. Thomas and F.A. Flodin, Iron Mountain; William J. Grede, Milwaukee, and William B. Cudlip, of Detroit, associated with Arthur L. Grede; Harry Garland, Detroit, and A.C. Hoyle, Iron Mountain.***

17 December 1951 ***Official transfer of the property recently comprising the Iron Mountain Ford Plant to the newly-organized Kingsford Chemical Co. was scheduled to take place today in the new offices of the Company at the plant. Although no formal ceremony was planned, operations of the new organization were to begin, officially, at that hour.***

10 April 1952 ***Owen Pyle, executive vice-president of the Kingsford Chemical Co., since the new company took over the operation of the chemical area at the former Ford plant here, was named president of the organization, succeeding Martin Fenton, of Wilmington, Del., at a directors' meeting yesterday*** [April 9] ***in Wilmington, it was announced here today.***

8 September 1961 *Tonight at 9 o'clock, the Twin Cities of Iron Mountain and Kingsford will lose a 40-year-old alarm clock.*

Tonight, the old Ford plant whistle, which has been blowing six times a day since 1921, will sound its last blast.

The 9 o'clock blast which will last for about two minutes will be the death knell of the Kingsford Company, which is moving to Kentucky.

The old Ford "alarm clock" has been waking up residents of the Twin Cities at six each morning since 1921. This has been followed by a 7 o'clock whistle, starting time at the plant.

The next blast was at 11, lunchtime, followed by a 11:30 back to work whistle. At 3:30 has been the quitting time whistle.

The sixth has been the nine o'clock blast, supper time for the night shift.

The lay-off process of the 356 employees at the Kingsford Plant, which took over Ford operations in 1951, has been completed. Almost an even 300 have been given their notices and are without jobs. About 55 will remain at the plant for at least several months to take care of dismantling.