

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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received DEC 29 1982  
date entered

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Ford Motor Plant

and/or common Mead Container Company Plant

## 2. Location

street & number 1400 Southwestern Parkway <sup>Pkwy.</sup> n/a not for publication

city, town Louisville n/a vicinity of congressional district

state Kentucky code 021 county Jefferson code 111

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u>na</u> district	<u>na</u> public	<u>xx</u> occupied	<u>na</u> agriculture <u>na</u> museum
<u>xx</u> building(s)	<u>xx</u> private	<u>na</u> unoccupied	<u>na</u> commercial <u>na</u> park
<u>na</u> structure	<u>na</u> both	<u>na</u> work in progress	<u>na</u> educational <u>na</u> private residence
<u>na</u> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>na</u> entertainment <u>na</u> religious
<u>na</u> object	<u>na</u> in process	<u>na</u> yes: restricted	<u>na</u> government <u>na</u> scientific
	<u>na</u> being considered	<u>xx</u> yes: unrestricted	<u>xx</u> industrial <u>na</u> transportation
		<u>na</u> no	<u>na</u> military <u>na</u> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Mead Containers

street & number 1400 Southwestern Parkway P. O. Box 503

city, town Louisville na vicinity of Kentucky state 40201

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 517 W Jefferson

city, town Louisville state Kentucky

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Survey of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible? na yes xx no

date 1980 na federal xx state na county na local

depository for survey records Ky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

## 7. Description

### Condition

x\_\_ excellent    na\_ deteriorated  
na\_ good        na\_ ruins  
na\_ fair        na\_ unexposed

### Check one

na\_ unaltered  
xx\_ altered

### Check one

xx\_ original site  
na\_ moved    date na\_ \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ford Motor Company Plant is located in the far western section of Louisville. It lies between the Ohio River and Southwestern Parkway, part of the Olmsted Park System ( National Register, May, 1982). The plant is also close to the old Kentucky State Fair Buildings.

The Mead Container Building is a large brick structure with a central pavillion and two wings. The building facade is in pristine condition with almost no alteration. The central pavillion has eight bays, seven of which contain large areas of multi-paned glass windows. The bays are articulated by brick pilasters with stone caps. The fourth bay from the right contains the entry. This is the major alteration, in which the door has been replaced with a metal and glass door. A delicate iron canopy with classical decoration covers the entry. A broad stone band runs across the pavillion over the door and window area. The parapet is highly ornamented with a variety of decorative brick and stone motifs. The area above the windows contains diagonal and diamond pattern brickwork. The area above the pilasters has cheveron patterns in brick and stone. A band of vertical brickwork with diamond patterns is below a band of brick corbeling, this is capped by a stone coping.

The two wings also have four bays each and continue the same fenestration and pilaster pattern. The parapet over the three inside bays is not as tall as the central pavillion. The diagonal and diamond pattern work extends in a continuous panel above these bays. This area is capped by a row of brick corbeling and stone coping. The end bay retains the height of the center section in the parapet. The diagonal-patterned panel contains a circular medallion in the center and continues the rest of the decorative work of the parapet of the central pavillion.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
na__ prehistoric	na_ archeology-prehistoric	<u>na</u> community planning	<u>na</u> landscape architecture	<u>na</u> religion
na__ 1400-1499	na_ archeology-historic	<u>na</u> conservation	<u>na</u> law	<u>na</u> science
na__ 1500-1599	na_ agriculture	<u>na</u> economics	<u>na</u> literature	<u>na</u> sculpture
na__ 1600-1699	<u>xx</u> architecture	<u>na</u> education	<u>na</u> military	<u>na</u> social/ humanitarian
na__ 1700-1799	na_ art	<u>na</u> engineering	<u>na</u> music	<u>na</u> theater
na__ 1800-1899	na_ commerce	<u>na</u> exploration/settlement	<u>na</u> philosophy	<u>na</u> transportation
<u>xxx</u> 1900-	na_ communications	<u>xx</u> industry	<u>na</u> politics/government	<u>na</u> other (specify)
		<u>na</u> invention		

**Specific dates** 1924-5

**Builder/Architect**

Albert Kahn

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ford Motor Plant is an outstanding example of industrial architecture in Louisville of the twentieth century. Ford Motor Company continues to be a main element of Louisville industrial economy. The building was designed by the nationally prominent, Detroit architect, Albert Kahn.

Ford Motor Company had Kahn design a multi-story plant in Louisville in 1915, now the Reynolds Building. (Kahn's other work in Louisville, The National Theatre has been demolished). The 1924, Louisville Ford Motor Plant demonstrates Kahn's change in planning schemes from a factory under-one-roof to a factory on one floor. This exemplifies one of Kahn's major contributions to industrial architecture, a responsiveness to the developing needs of the assembly line procedure. The Ford Motor Plant combines the beauty of the geometric, textured decoration with the clarity and utility of its plan.

Albert Kahn (1869-1942) was born in Germany and began his practice in Detroit in 1892. He broke from the standard tradition of mill construction for industrial buildings with his 1903 Packard Building which was the first reinforced concrete factory in America. His designs for every major automobile manufacture are numerous, over 1000 for Ford. In 1939, the office of Albert Kahn numbered over 400 persons.

The Ford Motor Plant is the finest example of Post-WWI industrial architecture in the city. The structure is typical of Albert Kahn's work of the period, both stylistically and functionally.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Herrin, Robert. "Mead Paper Firm Buys Old West End Ford Plant,"  
Louisville Courier-Journal, 8 April 1959.  
 Hildebrand, Grant. Designing for Industry: The Architecture of Albert Kahn.  
 Cambridge: MIT Press, 1974.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 15.2 acres  
 Quadrangle name Louisville West Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u>	<u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

City of Louisville Block 47 E. Lot 2. The main building occupies the majority of the site. The only other structures on the site are five small auxillary utility structures.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	na	code	na	county	na	code	na
state	na	code	na	county	na	code	na

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marty Hedgepeth, Director of Research  
 organization Landmarks Commission date October, 1982  
 street & number 727 W Main Street telephone 502/587-3501  
 city or town Louisville state Kentucky 40202

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Mary Curran Spel  
 title State Historic Preservation Officer date December 17, 1982

For NPS use only  
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
 date 1/27/83  
 Keoper of the National Register  
 Attest: [Signature] date  
 Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

Ford Motor Plant, Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET 2

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

The Legacy of Albert Kahn. Detroit: Detroit Institute of Art, 1970.

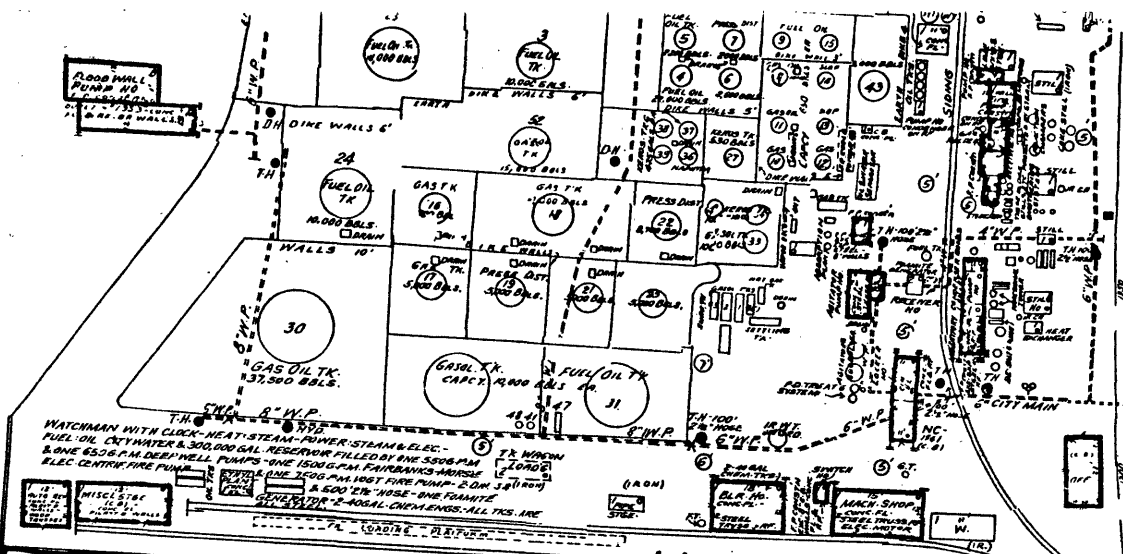
Nelson, George. Industrial Architecture of Albert Kahn, Inc. New York:  
Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1939

"Plans of Ford Motor Plant Revised," Louisville Herald Post 13 June 1924

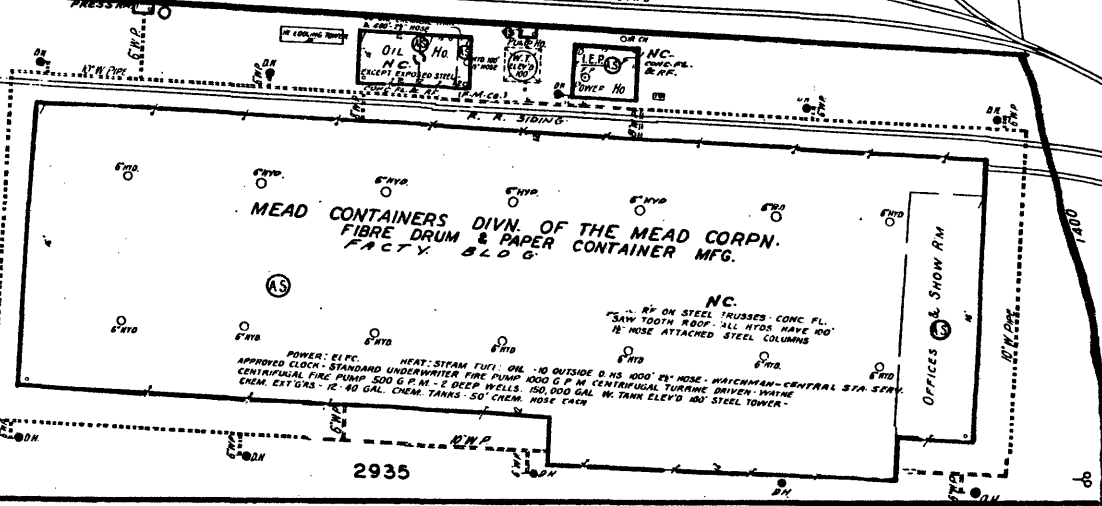
Withey, Henry and Elsie. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects .  
Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970

478-Lot 2

Ohio River



WATCHMAN WITH CLOCK-HEAT-STEAM-POWER-STEAM-ELEC.  
 PUEL OIL CRY WAYER & 300,000 GAL. RESERVOIR FILLED BY ONE 5500 G.P.M. PUMP & ONE 6526 P.M. DEEP WELL PUMPING ONE 1500 G.P.M. FIRE PUMPS-WATERSE  
 REC. CENTRIF. FIRE PUMP  
 TR. WAGON  
 R.R. SIDING  
 MACH. SHED  
 OFF. TRUCK CO.  
 PARK G.  
 S. WESTERN PKWY  
 2846  
 494



MEAD CONTAINERS DIVN. OF THE MEAD CORPN.  
 FIBRE DRUM & PAPER CONTAINER MFG.  
 FACTY BLDG.

N.C.  
 R.F. ON STEEL TRUSSES CONC. FL.  
 SAW TOOTH ROOF ALL HYDS. WARE 00  
 12" HOSE ATTACHED STEEL COLUMNS  
 POWER: 61 P.C.  
 APPROVED CLOCK-HEAT-STEAM-POWER-STEAM-ELEC.  
 HEAT-STEAM FUEL OIL - 10 OUTSIDE 0. HS 4000' 2 1/2" HOSE - WATCHMAN-CENTRAL STA. SERV.  
 CENTRIFUGAL FIRE PUMP 500 G.P.M. - 2 DEEP WELLS 150,000 GAL. W. TRNK ELEV'D 100' STEEL TOWER  
 CHEM. EXT'G'RS - 12-40 GAL. CHEM. TNGS - 50' CHEM. HOSE EACH

TERRITORY SHOWN ON THIS SECTION OF SHEET OUTSIDE OF CORPORATE LIMITS  
 GULF REFINING CO.

GIBSON LANE

495



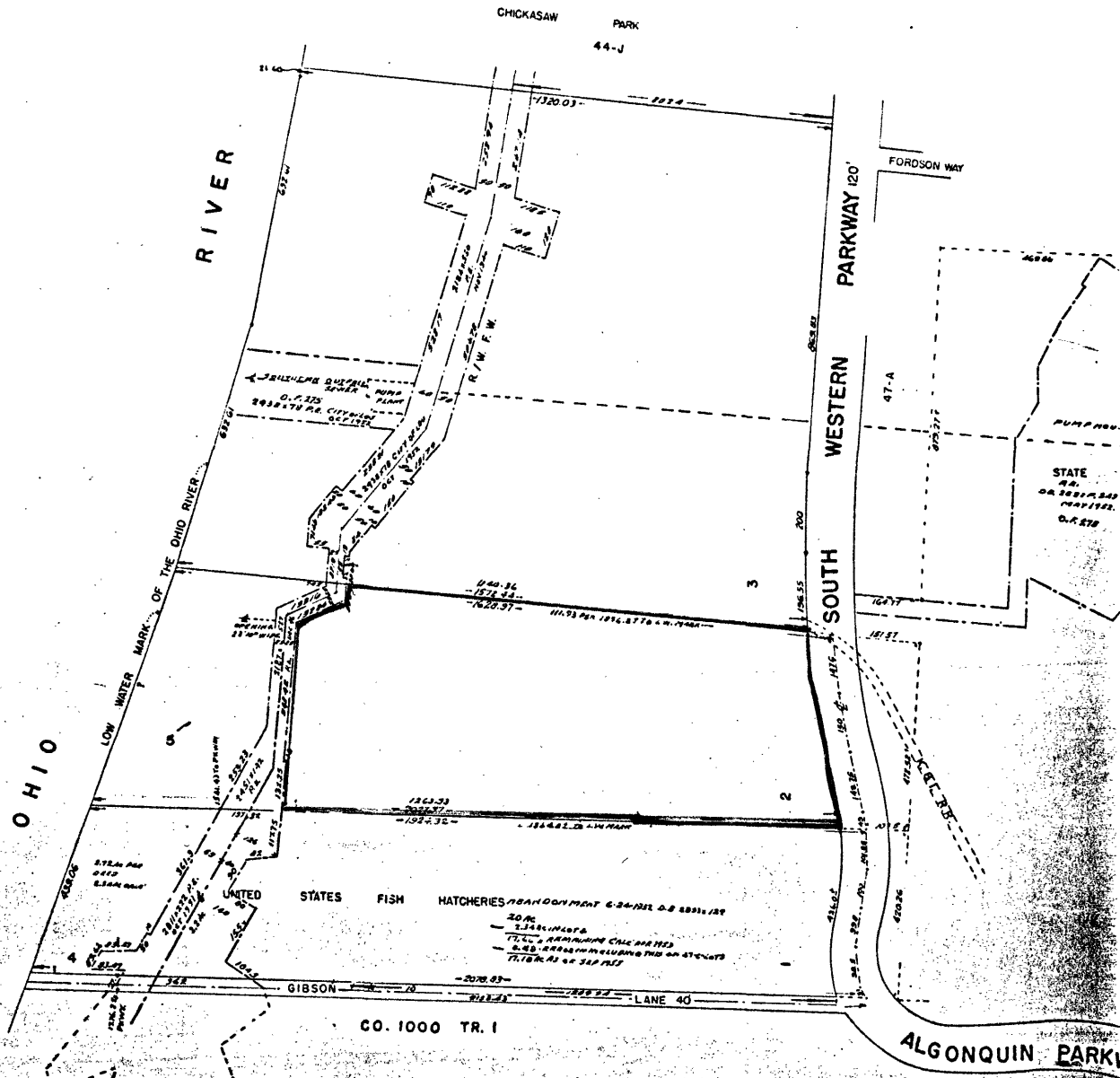
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ALCONQUIN PKWY  
 2022

Ford Motor Co. Plant  
1400 Southwestern Parkway  
Louisville, Jefferson Cty. , KY  
Sanborn Real Estate Maps  
Sanborn Map Co.  
Pelham, N. Y. 1974

Map 2

E, 1" = 200'





Ford Motor Co. Plant  
1400 Southwestern Pkwy.  
Louisville, Jefferson Cty., KY  
Jefferson Cty. Real Estate

Atlas. Miami: Real Estate  
Data, 1979

Map 3-Plot map