

Joyce Estate, Powerhouse
Chippewa National Forest Road 2144,
3 miles north of County Road 335
Grand Rapids vicinity
Itasca County
Minnesota

HABS No. MN-146-Z

HABS
MINN
31-GDRAP.V,
32-

PHOTOGRAPH
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOYCE ESTATE,
POWERHOUSE

HABS No. MN-146-Z

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31-GRAP. V
32-

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. **Date of Erection** 1918. On 14 March 1917, the Grand Rapids Herald Review noted that initial plans for the Joyce Estate included an "electric light plant." On 7 August 1918, the newspaper reported that "this week electric lights and telephone systems have been installed. There is a private plant for both lights and telephone and the seven cottages and other buildings are all connected." Former caretaker Joseph Waleski, Jr., affirms that the existing Powerhouse was the original structure.¹
2. **Original and Subsequent Owners** In 1916, David Gage Joyce secured the site of the Powerhouse and nearby buildings through the services of Simeon D. Patrick, who purchased the land as an intermediary. In 1917, Joyce acquired title in his own name. After Joyce's death in 1937, the property passed to his wife Beatrice Rudolph and daughter Beatrice Clotilde. In 1946, two years before her death, Beatrice Rudolph conveyed full title to Beatrice Clotilde, who retained ownership until her own death in 1972. In 1973, the Nature Conservancy purchased the property and resold it at cost the following year to the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service for incorporation into the Chippewa National Forest.²
3. **Builders, Contractors, Suppliers** Unknown.
4. **Alterations and Additions** All electrical equipment has been removed.

B. Historical Context: Completed in 1918, the Powerhouse originally contained electrical generating equipment and switch-gear equipment. According to an account published in 1922, "all buildings and the grounds are electric lighted, Delco system." This system, which combined a gasoline-powered generator and storage batteries, produced sufficient electricity for lighting and small appliances. For refrigeration, however, the estate relied

¹ Author's interview with Joseph Waleski, Jr., Grand Rapids, MN, 27 January 1987.

² S.D. Patrick, Deed to David G. Joyce, 9 May 1917, Deed Book 35, 103; "In the Matter of the Estate of David Gage Joyce, Final Decree of Distribution," 30 June 1938, Book of Deeds 144, 401-406; Beatrice Rudolph Joyce, Deed to Beatrice Clotilde Joyce, 3 July 1946, Deed Book 167, 249 (all the foregoing in the Itasca County Recorder's Office, Itasca County Courthouse, Grand Rapids, MN); "Former Joyce Estate Is Dedicated to Public," Grand Rapids Herald Review, 14 October 1974.

on lake-harvested ice stored in the Ice House (HABS No. MN-146-L) until about 1946, when it was tied into the REA power grid, making electric refrigeration possible.³ At that time, the Powerhouse ceased operation.⁴ For further information, see the historical overview of the Joyce Estate in HABS No. MN-146.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural Character** Only the Powerhouse's east wall, a rectangle of concrete painted green, is visible; the rest of the structure is built into a hill. The green wall and adjacent fieldstone and concrete embankments blend unobtrusively into the natural environment.
2. **Condition of Fabric** Fair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall Dimensions** Approximately 27'10" by 16'.
2. **Foundations** Concrete.
3. **Walls** Only the front (east) wall is visible; it is painted green. The top of the wall forms a flat parapet.
4. **Structural System, Framing** Cast concrete.
5. **Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Bulkheads** None.
6. **Chimneys** None.
7. **Openings**
 - a. **Doorways and Doors** Double-leaf board door to the north of center, painted white. The frame is untrimmed.

³ A Zone of Plenty (Grand Rapids, MN: Grand Rapids Herald Review, 1922), 17.

⁴ Grand Rapids Herald Review, 7 August 1918; A Zone of Plenty (Grand Rapids, MN: Grand Rapids Herald Review, 1922), 17; author's interview with Waleski, 1987.

- b. **Windows and Shutters** The opening for the northern, two-over-two, double-hung sash window has been partially covered by insulating material. Another two-over-two, double-hung sash window is to the south of the door. The frames are untrimmed.

8. **Roof**

- a. **Shape, Covering** Earth-covered.
- b. **Cornice, Eaves** None.
- c. **Dormers, Cupolas, Towers** None.

C. **Description of Interior:**

1. **Floor Plans**

- a. **Describe Floors** A single, rectangular room, entered from the east.

2. **Stairways** None.

3. **Flooring** Cast concrete.

4. **Wall and Ceiling Finishes** Concrete painted white; the ceiling has a gable form, with the axis running east-west.

5. **Openings**

- a. **Doorways and Doors** Untrimmed.
- b. **Windows** Untrimmed.

6. **Decorative Features and Trim** None.

7. **Hardware** None.

8. **Mechanical Equipment**

- a. **Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation** Two metal tanks stand in the southeast corner; one appears to be a water heater, no longer operative.

- b. **Lighting** All electrical equipment has been removed.
- c. **Plumbing** None.

D. Site:

- 1. **General Setting and Orientation** The Powerhouse is located just north of a "T" in the entry road: the road turning south approaches the Main Cabin Compound, while the road north leads to the Farmhouse (HABS No. MN-146-EE) at the north end of the Caretaker's Compound. The Powerhouse stands on the west side of the latter road. For further information, see HABS No. MN-146.
- 2. **Historic Landscape Design** The Powerhouse's front (east) wall is flanked by angled, fieldstone-and-concrete, retaining walls.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

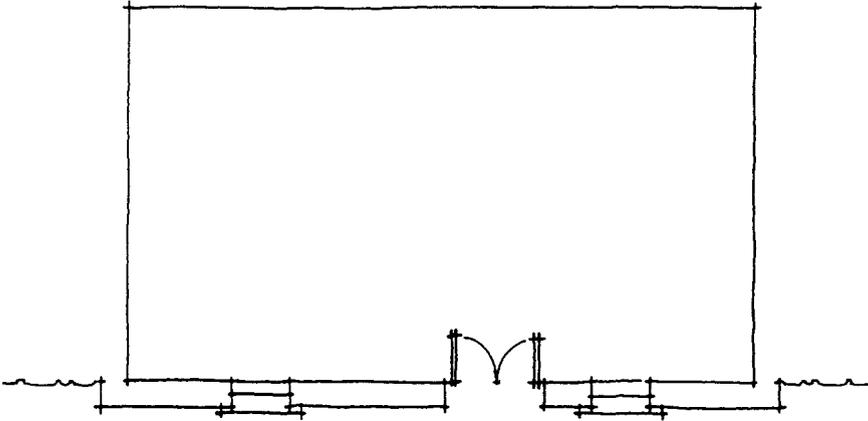
A. Interviews: See HABS No. MN-146.

B. Bibliography:

- 1. **Primary and Unpublished Sources** See HABS No. MN-146.
- 2. **Secondary and Published Sources** See HABS No. MN-146.

C. Likely Sources not yet Investigated: See HABS No. MN-146.

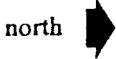
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION See HABS No. MN-146.



0 1 3 6 feet



0 1 2 meters



SKETCH PLAN: POWERHOUSE