

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SENT TO D.C.

11-13-12

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Vesta Accumulator Company Building

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 2100 South Indiana Avenue

not for publication

city or town Chicago

vicinity

state IL code IL county Cook code 031 zip code 60616

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

[Signature] / DSHPO 11-9-12
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

VACANT/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

foundation: Stone

REVIVALS/ Classical Revival

walls: Brick and stone

roof: Asphalt

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Vesta Accumulator Company Building is a four-story masonry loft building located at the southwest corner of South Indiana Avenue and East 21st Street, in the South Loop community within Chicago's historic Motor Row. The building was designed by Chicago architect Carl Almquist and completed in 1913. The building is a rectangular structure six bays by ten bays, built of heavy timber construction, with brick walls and a flat roof. The two primary elevations fronting north on to 21st Street and east on to Indiana Avenue are finished with pressed face brick and feature Classical Revival limestone details. The secondary south and west elevations are Chicago common brick. The primary elevations feature ground floor storefront openings; the upper floors are regularly fenestrated with groupings of three non-historic aluminum windows within the original openings. The secondary elevations are regularly fenestrated with single window openings. The current primary entrances to the building are non-historic aluminum and glass entries located at the center of the east elevation and north elevations.

Typical of early twentieth century loft construction, the interior of the building is open and utilitarian, with exposed brick walls and heavy timber framing. The building houses three stairs, two within original brick enclosures. The building contains one non-historic passenger elevator near the center of the east elevation and one freight elevator at the southwest corner of the building. The first floor contains non-historic partitions and finishes that were installed as part of a failed condominium conversion in the mid-2000s. The second, third, and fourth floors are open with no non-load-bearing partitions. A brick firewall running north-south divides these floors into two spaces.

Narrative Description

Setting and Site

The Near South Side community, located approximately two miles south of the Chicago Loop, developed in the 1860s and 1870s as one of the city's most fashionable and elite residential enclaves, with impressive mansions lining Prairie Avenue, Michigan Avenue, Indiana Avenue, and Calumet Avenue. By 1910, however, the area around Michigan Avenue between 12th Street and 26th Street had been transformed into one of the most concentrated groupings of automobile showrooms and automobile-related specialty buildings in the country. Today, the area immediately surrounding the Vesta Accumulator Company Factory is a mixture of historic automobile-related buildings (many of which have been converted to condominiums) and modern residential mid-rises and high-rises. The Vesta Accumulator Company Building is located at the southwest corner of South Indiana Avenue and East 21st Street.

The building's primary elevations face east towards South Indiana Avenue and north towards 21st Street. Directly south of the building is a vacant lot, beyond which is a new residential high-rise building. The secondary west elevation fronts onto an alley, with a modern high-rise building beyond. North of the building is a parking lot and another high-rise residential building. The building is two blocks west of McCormick Center.

Structure

The Vesta Accumulator Company Building is a four-story masonry loft structure set on a stone foundation, with solid brick walls and limestone detailing. The building has a roughly rectangular footprint; the rear portion of the south elevation is inset above the first floor to form a light well. Roofs are flat with brick parapets and are covered with bitumen roofing material. A brick head house projects near the center of the roof and holds a wooden water tower. The structure is heavy timber construction, with loadbearing wood posts and beams supporting wood floors. A north-south running brick firewall divides the interiors into two large open spaces per floor. The building houses three stairs—one non-historic straight-run stair at the southeast corner of the building that was constructed circa 1945, one heavily altered wood stair in an original brick enclosure at the northwest corner of the building, and a non-historic metal stair within an original brick enclosure near the center of the east elevation. The northwest stair features a metal fire door at the first floor opening. The building contains one non-historic passenger elevator near the center of the east elevation and one freight elevator at the

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southwest corner of the building. An exterior metal fire escape is located on the south elevation near the southwest corner of the building.

Exterior

The building's primary east and north elevations are finished with purplish-brown pressed face brick laid in running bond. Brick piers with simple limestone bases and capitals mark the structural bays; the brick spandrels are slightly recessed and are decorated with a single band of brick corbeling. Another band of corbeled brick sits on top of the piers, and a dentiled limestone cornice marks the top of the building. The window openings feature brick lintels and limestone sills; the wood window framing with simple flat mullions appears to be intact beneath aluminum panning which has been wrapped around the window frames and the mullions between windows. On the east elevation, the ground floor opening at the southeast corner holds a recessed non-historic aluminum and glass entrance; the masonry above the opening is parged with a stucco material and holds white lettering that reads "2100 Executive Building." A second non-historic aluminum and glass entrance is situated at the center of the east elevation. The remaining storefront openings on the east elevation hold aluminum storefronts within the original openings. On the north elevation, a non-historic aluminum and glass entrance with flush sidelights and a recessed door sits within the center ground floor opening; historic photographs show that this was historically an entrance. To the east of the entrance, the original openings now hold aluminum and glass storefronts. West of the entrance, marking the space that functioned originally as a service area for Vesta, the storefront openings alternate between aluminum and glass storefront windows dating from 2006 and earlier configurations with parged openings and narrow transoms. The western-most bay on the north elevation holds two single door openings, which are currently boarded up. The original doors have been removed from these openings by a previous owner.

The building's secondary south and west elevations are common brick and are regularly fenestrated with single window openings housing replacement window sash. As on the north and east elevations, the window openings feature brick lintels and stone sills. On the west elevation, facing the alley, window openings at the ground floor have been partially infilled with brick and parging material. This elevation also holds three doorways—one single door near the northwest corner of the building and two openings (a pedestrian door and a freight/garage door) near the south end of the elevation. On the south elevation, the seven western-most bays are inset on the second through the fourth floors, forming a light well that anticipated construction south of the building. The first floor, which abutted a neighboring garage constructed after 1929 and since demolished, has no window openings; several rough pass-through openings have been boarded up. The south wall on the east side of the elevation is an unfenestrated party wall. The inset portion of the elevation is regularly fenestrated with single window openings that house aluminum replacement sash.

On the roof, a masonry head house near the center of the building holds a wood water tank. A square brick chimney rises from the north side of this head house. A smaller head house with brick chimney marks the location of the freight elevator at the southwest corner of the building.

Interior

Typical of early 20th century manufacturing facilities, the interior spaces of the building are utilitarian, with an exposed heavy timber structure and exposed masonry walls. The beams with the staggered bolts are possibly flitch beams; which would have been needed in order to support manufacturing equipment. Although the building was originally constructed with office space on the first floor, this space was given over to manufacturing uses in 1920, when the Vesta Accumulator Company constructed a separate sales and service station at 29th Street and Michigan Avenue.

On the first floor, non-historic drywall partitions that were installed by the previous owner as part of a failed condominium conversion subdivide the spaces on both sides of the existing masonry firewall. At the northeast corner is a large, open lobby space off of which a non-historic corridor branches, flanked by a number of small offices. The original brick walls and timber decking and beams at the ceiling are exposed throughout. The existing opening at the center of the firewall on the first floor has been infilled with drywall, although the frame remains exposed, and a new opening for the corridor created just north of the historic opening. Near the west end of the first floor, a model condominium unit was constructed. The one-bedroom unit runs north and south, with false windows at the south end leading to a mockup of a balcony. The original beams and columns remained exposed within the unit but the walls are primarily of drywall, since the model was meant as a temporary installation. A two-bedroom model condominium unit was constructed near the center of the first floor, and is also constructed primarily of drywall. Along the south and west sides of the first floor is unfinished space with exposed brick walls and exposed timber structure. A non-historic stair (most likely constructed sometime in the 1940s or 1950s by subsequent owners when the building was converted for offices) is situated in the southeast corner of the first floor and connects the first and second floors. The stairs are non-historic metal and wood stairs within the existing masonry enclosures.

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The second, third, and fourth floors are divided into two large open spaces by a masonry firewall that runs north-south through the building. On these upper floors, the brick perimeter walls and timber structure is exposed throughout, and the flooring is hardwood. The south exterior wall on the second, third, and fourth floors is recessed one bay, extending from the southwest corner east seven bays, marking the location of the exterior light well.

The building's partial basement, which runs along the far west wall and is two bays in width, is unfinished.

INTEGRITY

The Vesta Accumulator Company Building retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship to qualify for individual listing under Criterion A. The building's masonry exterior is intact, with no major additions. The building retains a 20,000-gallon wood water tank, which replaced the original water tank in 1943. The ground floor storefronts and upper floor window sash have been replaced with aluminum storefronts and windows within the original openings, leaving the historic fenestration pattern intact. On the interior, the building's exposed wooden post and beam construction and open floor plan reflect the utilitarian nature of the building. As part of a failed condominium conversion by the previous owner, interior partitions were constructed on the ground floor, but these changes were primarily additive and did not result in the wholesale removal of historic fabric. The building's wooden stairs were replaced in 1952 with steel stairs in the same location.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry

Period of Significance

1913-1929

Significant Dates

1920

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Carl Almquist

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1913, when the building was completed, and ends in 1929, when Vesta moved its manufacturing facilities to another site.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Vesta Accumulator Company Building meets National Register Criterion A for local significance for Industry as the first purpose-built factory constructed for the Vesta Accumulator Company, a nationally-known manufacturer of batteries, headlamps, and other automobile-related electrical parts. The building at 2100 South Indiana Avenue served as Vesta's only known manufacturing facility in the country during the height of the company's growth between 1913 and 1929. During its time in the building, the company developed many innovative products for the automobile industry, including the first battery-supplied electric lighting for commercial trucks. Advertisements from the 1910s and 1920s promoted the Vesta storage battery as the longest lasting automobile battery on the market, and the company developed direct relationships with many of the leading automobile manufacturers, including the Ford Motor Company. The building exemplifies the development of an important specialized subset of Chicago's manufacturing economy, which provided parts and other supplies for the city's thriving automobile industry during the early twentieth century.

The Vesta Accumulator Company was an important player in the development of the automobile industry along Chicago's historic Motor Row, first establishing a presence on Michigan Avenue in 1905 alongside the city's earliest automobile dealerships. Although the company moved its sales and service operations to a site farther down Michigan Avenue, outside of Motor Row, in 1920, the building at 2100 South Indiana remained in operation through 1929 as one of the few buildings on Motor Row where automobile-related products were actually manufactured.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Vesta Accumulator Company Building is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for Industry for its association with the Vesta Accumulator Company, whose growth in the 1910s and 1920s exemplified the development and importance of Chicago's burgeoning automobile industry.

The Vesta Accumulator Company (1897-1929)

The Vesta Accumulator Company was founded in 1897 by Chicago industrialist David P. Perry. Born in 1845 in Painesville, Ohio, Perry arrived in Chicago in 1878. After first making his way in the garment manufacturing business, Perry's interest in applied electricity led him to become general manager of the Standard Electrical Company and an associate with the Hyde Park Electric Light & Power Company. In 1897, he rented space in a building at 53 South Dearborn Street and began a small manufacturing concern that produced electric lamps for bicycles and storage batteries.¹ The company quickly branched into products for the burgeoning automobile industry, and that same year, the Vesta Accumulator Company was incorporated as a "manufacturer of automobile accessories such as headlights, lamps, generators, lighting and ignition batteries."² During the early 1900s, the company continued to expand its product lines and its operations in Chicago, relocating to larger quarters in May of 1902 and again in 1905, when the company moved to the just emerging Motor Row along South Michigan Avenue.

Following the Fire of 1871, Michigan Avenue south of 12th Street developed into an exclusive residential district of impressive mansions, high-end rowhouses, and stately churches. Just after the turn of the century, however, the character of the area transitioned rapidly into a commercial district that catered to the emerging automobile culture. Residents moved to areas farther from the noise and dirt of the city, and Michigan Avenue's wide lanes and smooth pavement made it a popular test-driving route for the city's first automobile dealers. By 1920, the mansions and churches had been replaced by automobile showrooms and related businesses, which created a unique shopping experience for the city's automobile owners. Chicago's Motor Row, which at its height encompassed an area that stretched from 12th Street to 26th Street, from Indiana Avenue to Wabash Avenue,³ was one of the largest early motor-related commercial districts in the country.³

¹ J. Seymour Currey, *Manufacturing and Wholesale Industries of Chicago in Three Volumes* (Chicago: Thomas B. Poole Company, 1918), 347-348.

² Moody Manual Co. *Moody's Manual of Railroads and Corporation Securities* (New York: Moody Pub. Co., 1922), 597.

³ Linda Peters, *National Register Nomination Form for the Motor Row Historic District*, dated July 16, 2002, p. 11

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The Vesta Accumulator Company had a long standing presence in Chicago's historic Motor Row beginning in 1905, when it established a general office and salesroom at 1336 South Michigan Avenue and leased factory facilities in a building at 1521 South Wabash (both buildings are no longer extant). Vesta was one of the first automobile parts suppliers to relocate to the newly emerging Motor Row—it's offices were on the same block as the first automobile showroom to be constructed on South Michigan Avenue (for the American Locomobile Company), and less than a block from the Ford Company's first Chicago showroom, constructed in 1905 at 1444 South Michigan.⁴

Recognizing the advantages of the location, the company decided to remain in close proximity when they again outgrew their existing facilities. In 1912, the Vesta Accumulator Company acquired the property at the southwest corner of 21st Street and South Indiana Avenue to construct a new factory building to accommodate its expanding business. The existing building on the site, the Mt. Sinai Temple, was demolished to make way for a new four-story masonry building that would serve as the first purpose-built factory for Vesta. Chicago architect Carl M. Almquist designed the \$80,000 building with an open, utilitarian floor plan that would allow the Vesta Accumulator Company to consolidate its operations into a single building. J. Seymore Currey noted in his profile of the company in the 1918 *Manufacturing and Wholesale Industries of Chicago* that the construction of the new factory "effected a centralization of all departments of the business, the offices being on the ground floor of the building and the factory and other departments utilizing the other two stories and basement."⁵

Several other industry publications also announced the construction of the new building. The April 27, 1912 edition of *Electrical World* described the building at 2100 South Indiana as "a four-story office and factory building...to be used for [Vesta's] storage-battery business." *The Iron Age* ran a brief announcement on August 8, 1912 that "the Vesta Accumulator Company, Chicago, has awarded the contract for a four-story factory building to be 100x161 feet and to cost \$80,000."⁶

The Vesta Accumulator Company moved to its new factory in 1913, and over the next fifteen years the company continued to expand its business into new territory, establishing branch offices in New York, Boston, Atlanta, St. Louis, Cleveland, Kansas City, Pittsburg, Omaha and Louisville. By 1918, Vesta had also developed a complete line of storage batteries, electric generators, and electric lamps for automobiles, all of which were manufactured at the 2100 South Indiana building. Automobile parts suppliers were an integral component of Chicago's automobile industry during the first half of the twentieth century, one of many small but important subsets of the city's massive and wide-reaching manufacturing economy. As Currey's profile of Vesta stated, "with the marvelous development of the automobile industry has come the possibility of upbuilding of many important manufacturing and supply concerns relative thereto in a direct way, and thus have been extended in large volume the functions and business of the Vesta Accumulator Company."⁷

The building at 2100 South Indiana initially also served as an office and included a service station at the rear where patrons could bring their cars to have the batteries serviced, recharged, or replaced. However, in 1920, Vesta opened a separate service station at 29th Street and South Michigan Avenue that was dedicated to battery repair, sales, and service. *The Commercial Car Journal* announced the company's new building plan in July 1919, which "was made necessary by the large increase in business during the past year. The company had to have more room at its factory, 2100 Indiana Avenue, and the entire service department will be moved to the new location in the near future." When the new service station was completed, *Motor Record* reported in November 1920 that the new building on Michigan would serve as a model for Vesta service stations all of the country, with space for more than 100 cars, "a fully equipped repair department, a recharging room which will handle 2,000 batteries at a time and storage space for more than 5,000 batteries. On the Michigan Boulevard side there is a sales room in which will be carried a complete stock of Vesta lights, as well as battery parts." The service station even provided a special waiting room for women drivers, with "magazines, telephones, writing materials and other conveniences." That same year, the company formally changed its name to the Vesta Battery Corporation, reflecting the company's increasing specialization in the production of batteries.⁸

⁴ Linda Peters, *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form for the Motor Row Multiple Property Listing, Chicago, Illinois*, 2002 (hereafter cited as Motor Row MPL).

⁵ J. Seymour Currey, *Manufacturing and Wholesale Industries of Chicago in Three Volumes* (Chicago: Thomas B. Poole Company, 1918), 347-348.

⁶ *Electrical World*, vol.90, no. 17, April 17, 1912, 922. *The Iron Age*, August 8, 1912, 337.

⁷ Currey, 348.

⁸ "Factory Notes," *The Commercial Car Journal*, July 15, 1919, 36. "Vesta Builds Big Service Station in Chicago," *Motor Record*, November 1920, 8.

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With the new service station taking the burden of sales and service off of the Vesta factory at 2100 South Indiana, the company was free to give the first floor of the factory over for the manufacturing of its products. From 1920 until 1929, the building at 2100 South Indiana was used exclusively as a manufacturing facility.

During Vesta's time in the building, the company developed many innovative products for the automobile industry, including the first battery-supplied electric lighting for commercial trucks. Advertisements from the 1910s and 1920s promoted the Vesta storage battery as the longest lasting automobile battery on the market, and the company developed direct relationships with many of the leading automobile manufacturers, including the Ford Motor Company.

Automobile-Related Industries in Chicago

Like many industries that formed Chicago's massive manufacturing economy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the automobile industry included not only automobile manufacturers but also specialized support industries that provided a wide variety of parts and products for automobiles. By the 1920s, Chicago was home to over six hundred companies whose primary purpose was the manufacture of automobile parts.⁹ Like the Vesta Accumulator Company (which initially produced electric lamps for bicycles), several of these companies, including Western Wheel Works and Smith Steel Stamping, began production as part of the bicycle industry.

By 1925, companies in Chicago produced over \$225,000,000 worth of "electrical machinery, apparatus, and supplies" for the automobile industry.¹⁰ These included the Stewart-Warner Company—which was formed by industrialists John K. Stewart and Thomas J. Clark in 1912 and manufactured speedometers and other instruments for automobiles—and the Borg-Warner Company, which was formed through the merger of several automotive parts companies in 1928 and by the mid-1950s had become one of the world's largest manufacturers of automatic transmissions.¹¹ The company, now BorgWarner Inc., is still a prominent auto-parts manufacturer in the Chicago area.

These large-scale manufacturers were the exception rather than the norm; most automobile parts suppliers were small concerns that sprung up during the 1910s as the automobile industry was expanding rapidly and had disappeared by the 1930s. Those manufacturers that did survive, like Vesta, expanded and modernized their operations in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1929, the Vesta Battery Corporation signed a seventeen-year lease with the Clearing Industrial District for the building of a modern one-story plant that would nearly double the company's manufacturing capacity.¹² The company was one of many that migrated from the cramped industrial areas close to downtown to modern, planned industrial developments on the city's perimeter.

The Clearing Industrial District was planned by promoters as early as 1890 as a literal "clearing yard" for Chicago's massive rail volume, but the district did not develop until after the turn of the century, spurred by a reorganization of the Belt Railway Company in 1912. The Clearing District, on the western edge of the city but serviced by 150 miles of rail track with a capacity of 10,000 cars daily, attracted companies that "desired a Chicago location but served regional and national markets." In contrast to Vesta's factory in Motor Row, the Clearing District advocated single-story "daylight" factories that were more efficient for modern assembly line production.¹³ Between 1920 and 1950, a number of companies within the automotive industry moved to the Clearing Industrial District, including the Hoof Products Company and Cornell Forge, a company which made forgings for the automotive, agricultural and railroad industries. Another automotive parts manufacturer, Indestro Company, moved to the Central Manufacturing District (another large industrial park located near the Chicago neighborhood of Bridgeport) in 1928.¹⁴ The Vesta Accumulator Company continued to produce car and radio

⁹ "Automobile Parts." *Encyclopedia of Chicago* online, Accessed April 20, 2012.

¹⁰ "Chicago Share as Auto Builder is Underrated." *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 25, 1928, 32

¹¹ "Stewart-Warner Corp." *Encyclopedia of Chicago*. Accessed April 24, 2012. "Borg-Warner Corp." *Encyclopedia of Chicago*. Accessed April 24, 2012.

¹² "Battery Firm Leases Site at Clearing," *Chicago Daily Tribune* February 24, 1929, B2.

¹³ Robert D. Lewis, *Chicago made: Factory Networks in the Industrial Metropolis*. Chicago (University of Chicago Press, 2008), 167-188.

¹⁴ "Motor Concern Buys a Factory in Clearing Area," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 18, 1938. "Cornell Forge Will Build Plant in Clearing District", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 10, 1945. "Large Plant for Central Factory Area: Indestro Will Build at 47th-St. Louis," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 22, 1928.

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batteries into the 1960s as the Vesta Battery Company Ltd. In 1964, the company was purchased by Associated Battery Makers, and Australian company.

The former Vesta factory at 2100 South Indiana served as the offices for the Simoniz Company, manufacturer of automobile polishing products, through the 1950s. By 1975, Sanborn maps showed that the building had been converted to offices for the Cook County Department of Public Aid.¹⁵

Although the Vesta Accumulator Company was an important player in the development of the automobile industry along Motor Row and the building at 2100 South Indiana is located within the historic boundaries of Motor Row as outlined in the MPL, the MPL focuses primarily on the development of the automobile showroom as a distinctive building type that evolved to serve the very specialized marketing and servicing needs of automobile owners. The facilities that manufactured products for the automobile, while equally important to the development of the industry, were far fewer in number along Motor Row and thus were not included in the building types outlined in the MPL. Therefore, the Vesta factory must be considered for its significance as an industrial building that produced automobile-related products, and should be listed independent of the Motor Row MPL.

As the first purpose-built factory constructed for the Vesta Accumulator Company and the only manufacturing facility that Vesta operated in the country during the height of the company's growth between 1913 and 1929, the building at 2100 South Indiana is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for Industry. The current condition of the building, with its open and utilitarian interior spaces, speaks to the industrial nature of the operations that make the building significant. The battery manufacturing process at the facility is illustrated in a 1922 publication entitled *The Automobile Storage Battery and Its Repair*, which featured four national battery manufacturing companies—Vesta, Westinghouse, Prest-O-Lite, and Exide. During Vesta's time in the building, the company developed many innovative products for the automobile industry, including the first battery-supplied electric lighting for commercial trucks.¹⁶ Advertisements from the 1910s and 1920s promoted the Vesta storage battery as the longest lasting automobile battery on the market, and the company developed direct relationships with many of the leading automobile manufacturers, including the Ford Motor Company.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

City of Chicago Building Permits

Chicago Daily Tribune, various articles

Currey, J. Seymour. *Manufacturing and Wholesale Industries of Chicago*. Chicago: Thomas B. Poole, 1918.

Electrical World, vol.90, no. 17, April 17, 1912, 922.

"Factory Notes," *The Commercial Car Journal*, July 15, 1919, 36.

Lewis, Robert D. *Chicago Made: Factory Networks in the Industrial Metropolis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Moody Manual Co. *Moody's Manual of Railroads and Corporation Securities*. New York: Moody Pub. Co., 1922.

Peters, Linda. *National Register Nomination Form for the Motor Row Historic District*, dated July 16, 2002, p. 11

Peters, Linda. *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form for the Motor Row Multiple Property Listing, Chicago, Illinois, 2002* (hereafter cited as Motor Row MPL).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1911, 1950, 1975

The Iron Age, August 8, 1912, 337.

"Vesta Builds Big Service Station in Chicago," *Motor Record*, November 1920, 8.

Witte, O. A. *The Automobile Storage Battery and Its Repair*. Chicago: The American Bureau of Engineering Inc, 1922.

¹⁵ Ibid, 99-102. 1950 and 1975 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

¹⁶ O. A. Witte, *The Automobile Storage Battery and Its Repair*, The American Bureau of Engineering Inc, Chicago: 1922.

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Vesta Accumulator Company Factory
City or Vicinity: Chicago
County: Cook County State: Illinois
Photographer: Emily Ramsey
MacRostie Historic Advisors
53 W. Jackson Blvd. Suite 1323
Chicago, IL 60604

Date Photographed: December and February 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 15: North and east (primary) elevation, looking south along Indiana Avenue
- 2 of 15: Same
- 3 of 15: East elevation, looking west across Indiana Avenue
- 4 of 15: East and south elevations, looking northwest
- 5 of 15: South elevation, looking north
- 6 of 15: North and west (alley) elevation, looking southeast
- 7 of 15: West elevation, looking southwest
- 8 of 15: Roof, looking southwest
- 9 of 15: Non-historic storefront infill on north elevation
- 10 of 15: Window and masonry detail, upper story of east elevation
- 11 of 15: First floor interior, looking north at east end
- 12 of 15: First floor interior, looking east from west end
- 13 of 15: Typical upper floor interior
- 14 of 15: Opening at masonry fire wall, second floor
- 15 of 15: Detail of exposed interior wood structure

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Jordan Karlik, Authorized Member
street & number 2100 South Indiana Avenue Equities LLC telephone 212-206-6000
city or town New York state NY zip code 10003-4398

Vesta Accumulator Company Building
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Vesta Accumulator Company Building
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State



Figure 1: Vesta Accumulator Company Building, 1910 (Photograph courtesy of Chicago Historical Museum)



Figure 2: Interior view of Vesta Accumulator Company Building, 1922

Vesta Accumulator Company Building
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

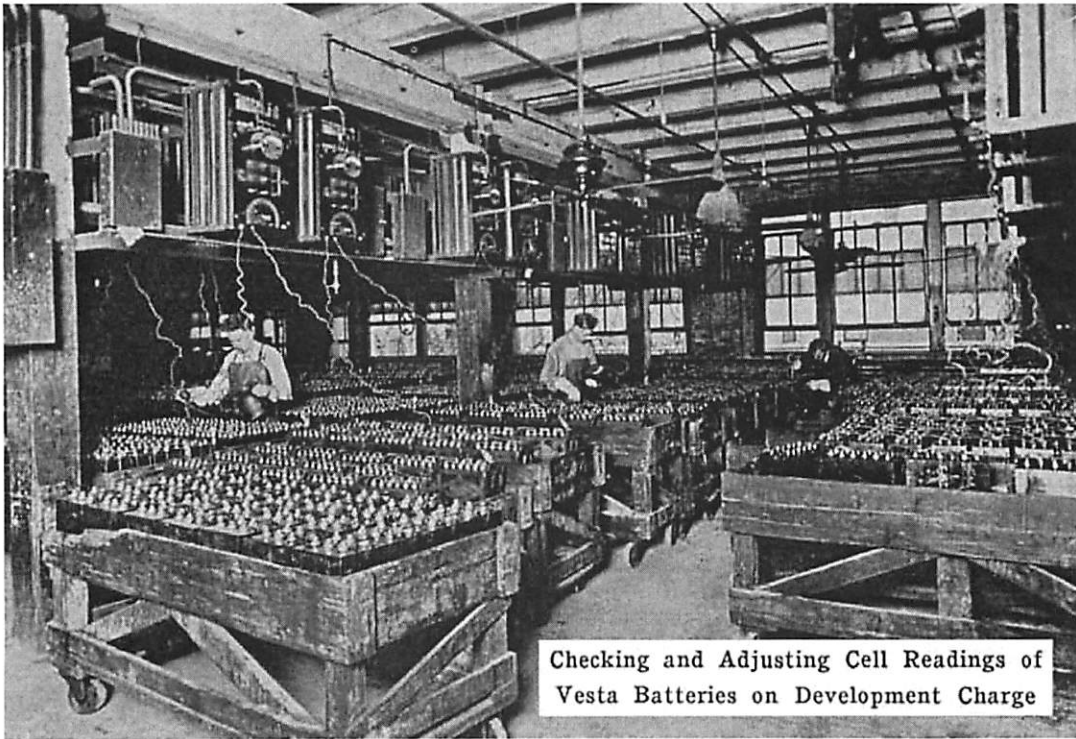


Figure 3: Interior of Vesta Accumulator Company Building, 1922

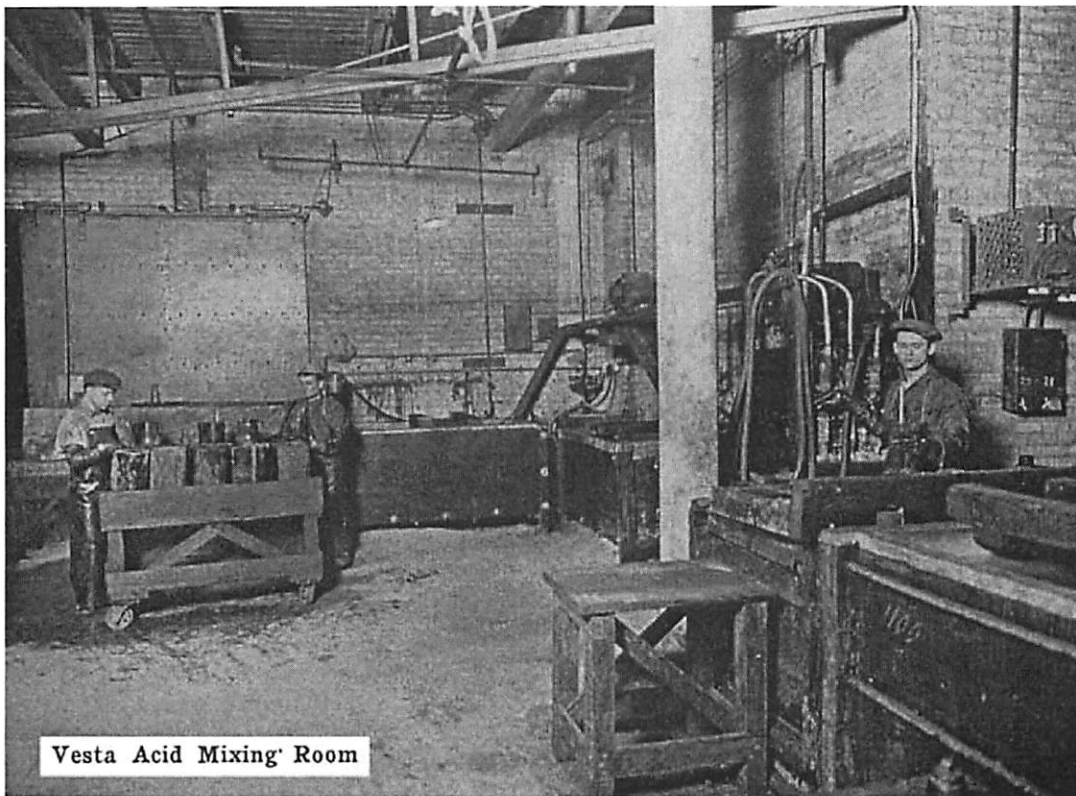
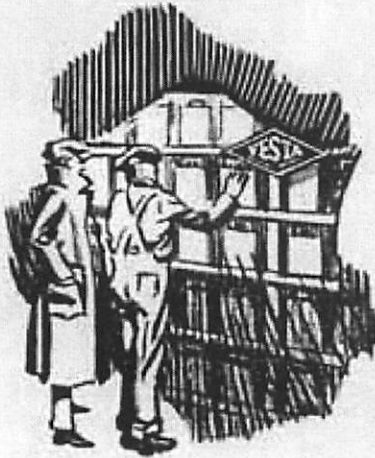


Figure 4: Interior of Vesta Accumulator Company Building, 1922

Vesta Accumulator Company Building
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

At Vesta Service Stations



You will find complete equipment to make repairs on any battery at Vesta Service Stations.

You will find experts in charge. In repairing any battery they use the patented features which have made Vesta batteries famous.

Automobile dealers, garage owners, repair men and veteran motorists all recognize the worth of Vesta service.

This is why Vesta Service Station Franchises are so valuable.

Vesta Battery Corporation

(Formerly Vesta Accumulator Co.)

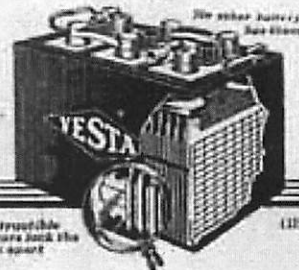
2100 Indiana Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Branch House Subsidiaries:

Vesta Electric & Supply Co. Atlanta, Ga.	Vesta Pacific Battery Co. Los Angeles
Black Mount Equipment Co. Boston, Mass.	Vesta Storage Battery Co. New York City
Vesta Battery Sales Co. Cleveland, Ohio	Omaha Battery & Service Co. Omaha, Neb.
Vesta Detroit Battery Co. Detroit, Mich.	Double Life Storage Battery & Service Co., Pittsburgh, Pa.
Kansas City Battery & Supply Co. Kansas City, Mo.	Vesta Battery & Equipment Co. St. Louis, Mo.

VESTA

COSTS LESS PER MONTH OF SERVICE



Indestructible
Insulation Jack the
plate apart

113

Figure 5: Advertisement for Vesta Battery Corporation (Formerly Vesta Accumulator Company), circa 1925

Vesta Accumulator Company Building
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

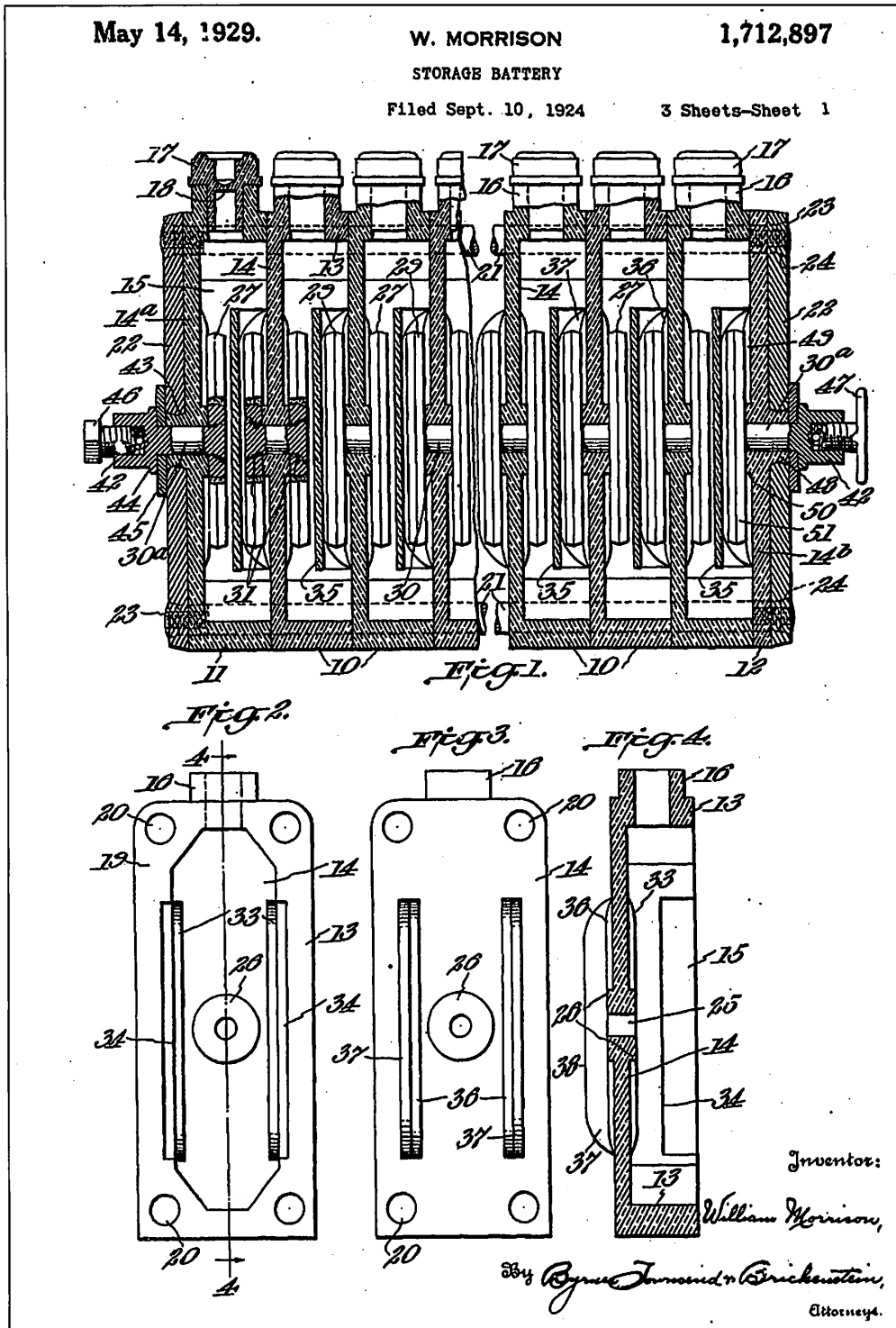


Figure 6: Vesta Battery Corporation, patent for a storage battery, 1929

Vesta Accumulator Company Building
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

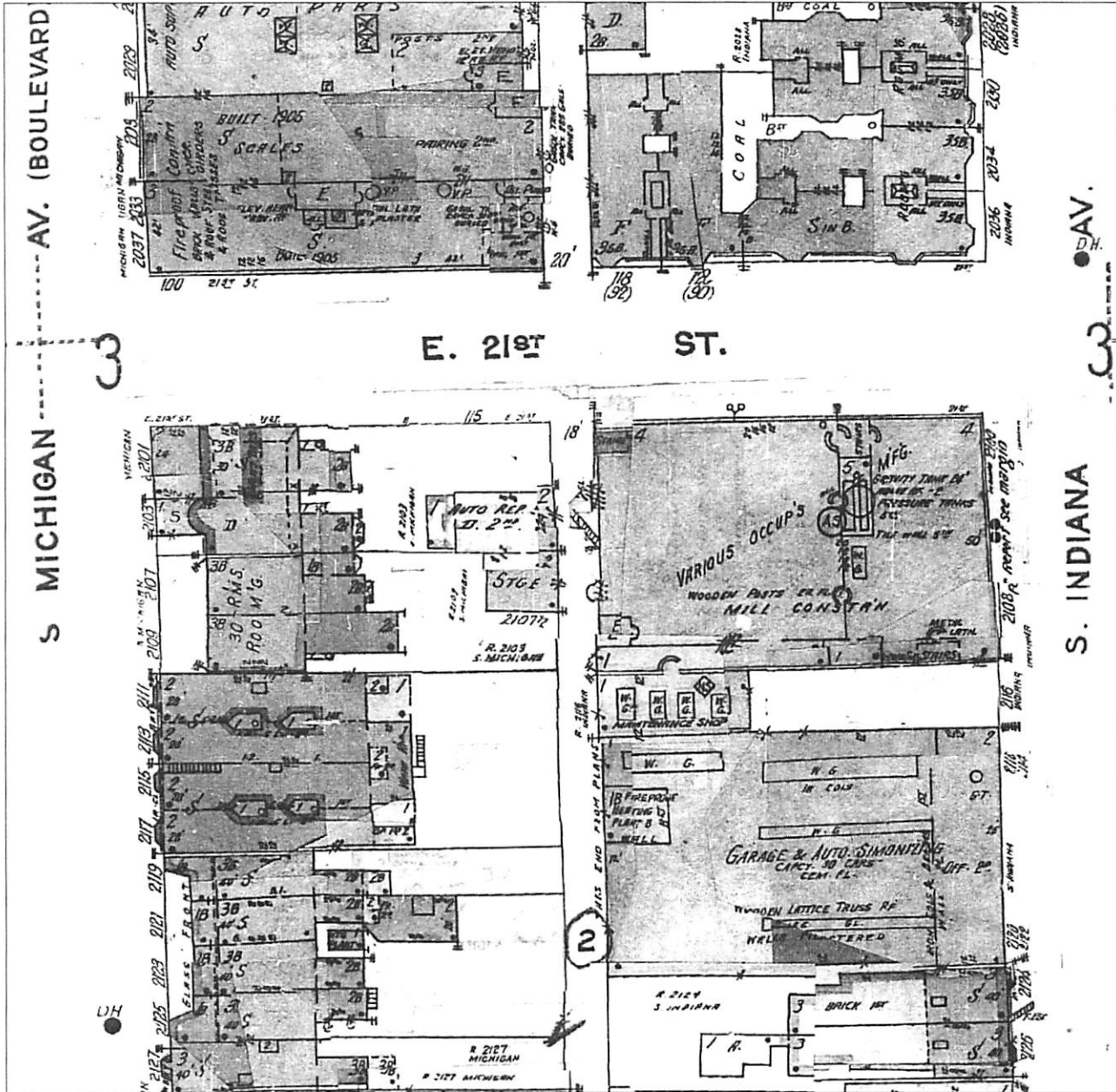


Figure 7: 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Vesta Accumulator Company Building at southwest corner of East 21st Street and South Indiana Avenue

Vesta Accumulator Company Building, 2100 S. Indiana Ave., Chicago, Cook County, IL



feet
meters

1000

500

