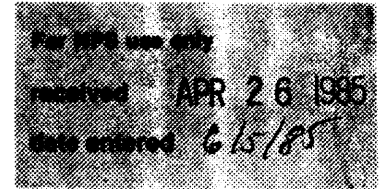


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Historic Resources of Downtown South Bend Item number Page 27

W. R. Hinkle & Co.
225 N. Lafayette
141-56117-598
d. 1922

OWNER: Medow Leasing
227 N. Lafayette Blvd.
South Bend, Indiana 46601

Description:

Photo #29-31; Building #15

The W. R. Hinkle & Company automobile showroom is located midblock on Lafayette between Colfax and LaSalle Streets. The building, which is flanked by the Fredrickson House on the north and a parking lot on the south, is a two-story rectangular plan structure of yellow brick with terra-cotta trim.

The seven bay structure has had modern windows installed and a one-story addition put on the south side; however, the original character of the functional building remains unaltered. The bays are separated by brick piers except for the center bay, which is flanked by narrow terra-cotta piers that extend into pointed finial-like motifs. The brick piers of the end bays are topped by alternating yellow and terra-cotta bricks, while the piers dividing the next set of bays extend into terra-cotta finials. The parapet roof is capped by terra-cotta trim.

Significance:

In 1922 William "Riley" Hinkle had this two-story automobile showroom and garage built for his Ford dealership. The building was designed by a local architect, Noel S. Dunbar.

Prior to acquiring the Ford dealership in South Bend in 1911, Hinkle had worked in a number of jobs, including one in the sales office of the Studebaker Manufacturing Company. Later, Hinkle was appointed to the Board of Works, of which he became president, and in 1930 he was elected Mayor of South Bend.

In 1938 Hinkle retired from the automobile dealership and in 1940 the building and Ford dealership were purchased by Romy Hammes, an automobile dealer from Kankakee, Illinois.

In the September 23, 1946, issue of Life Magazine, in an article on Romy Hammes and his success, Hammes is pictured with an architectural drawing of 225 N. Lafayette with its proposed addition (now standing). Two other photographs of the interior and exterior of the building are in the five page article. The addition is included within the boundaries of this application.

Architecturally, the building is an expressive example of the functional architecture used in the early 20th century for display and repair of the increasingly popular automobile. The large ground floor show windows reflect that level's use as a display area, while the second story was used for servicing automobiles, typical in this type of structure. The rocket-like finials that decorate the main facade are particularly of note, since they anticipate the soaring Art Deco and streamlined Moderne styles that were to become associated with an era fascinated by speed and motion.

UTM Reference: 16/562110/4614150 Acreage: Less than one acre

Legal: Lot 380 and 381 Original Plat of South Bend
Parcel #18-1012-0446