

Montauk Paint Manufacturing Company Building

170 2nd Avenue, Brooklyn
Tax Map Block 1025 Lot 49

Built: 1908

Architect: Garabed George Heghinian

Style: American Round Arch

Action: Calendared June 25, 2019; Public Hearing September 24, 2019;
Proposed for Designation October 29, 2019



Montauk Paint Manufacturing Company Building, 2019, Sarah Moses, LPC

The Montauk Paint Manufacturing Company Building is a handsome and highly intact former factory building located at the corner of 2nd Avenue and 13th Street in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn. Designed by Garabed George Heghinian, it was one of two factories built as investments for William Kelly, president of the Brooklyn Alcatraz Asphalt Company, whose factory and stables occupied the rest of the block bounded at the time by 12th and 13th streets, and 2nd Avenue and the Gowanus Canal. The building's first tenant was the Montauk Paint Manufacturing Company, which by 1910 was joined by the Dessau Cork Company and Diamond Decorative Leaf Company.

The Montauk Paint Manufacturing Company was incorporated in 1908 by Frank E. Cornell and his mother Margaret T. Cornell to manufacture and sell paints, varnishes, and blacking. At the time of the building's construction, *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* noted that "this borough is one of the foremost paint manufacturing centers in the United States; some of the oldest, largest, and most prominent paint varnish, white lead, and linseed oil plants being located here." Cornell retired from the business around 1921, but the company continued production at 170 2nd Avenue until the early 1930s. Between 1943 and 1951, Norge Sailmakers leased the building for the production of covers and sails for pleasure craft.

The Montauk Paint Manufacturing Company Building was designed in a simplified version of the American Round Arch style, and is notable for the handsome, austere ornamentation of its street facades, articulated by corbelled brick piers that are shouldered above the window heads, band courses, and friezes. The building's segmental-arched fenestration is grouped in pairs and trios set in slightly recessed panels. The central bay of the 13th Street facade contains wide segmental-arched loading doors on all three stories, topped by the extant armature for hoist equipment. The 2nd Avenue facade features a segmental arched loading bay at the first story, and recessed panels and an oculus within the gable. Except for the reconfigured window opening on 2nd Avenue, window and door replacements, and some infill at entrances, the building is remarkably intact.

