



US009851408B2

(12) **United States Patent**  
**Tinnemeyer**

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,851,408 B2**

(45) **Date of Patent:** **Dec. 26, 2017**

(54) **METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR BATTERY TESTING**

(71) Applicant: **CADEX Electronics Inc.**, Richmond (CA)

(72) Inventor: **Joern A. Tinnemeyer**, Richmond (CA)

(73) Assignee: **CADEX Electronics Inc.**, Richmond, CA (US)

(\* ) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 872 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **13/693,859**

(22) Filed: **Dec. 4, 2012**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2013/0093428 A1 Apr. 18, 2013

**Related U.S. Application Data**

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 12/994,847, filed as application No. PCT/CA2009/000777 on Jun. 5, 2009, now abandoned.

(60) Provisional application No. 61/059,151, filed on Jun. 5, 2008.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

**G01R 31/36** (2006.01)  
**H01M 10/42** (2006.01)  
**H01M 10/48** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ..... **G01R 31/3606** (2013.01); **G01R 31/3634** (2013.01); **H01M 10/42** (2013.01); **H01M 10/4285** (2013.01); **H01M 10/48** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC ..... G01R 31/3648; G01R 31/3662  
USPC ..... 324/426  
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

5,059,902 A \* 10/1991 Linder ..... G01B 7/023  
324/204  
5,093,624 A \* 3/1992 Stevenson ..... H02J 7/0077  
324/426  
5,250,903 A \* 10/1993 Limuti ..... H01M 10/484  
324/204  
5,537,042 A \* 7/1996 Beutler ..... G01R 27/02  
324/234  
5,675,252 A 10/1997 Podney  
6,033,798 A 3/2000 Tabuchi et al.

(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

EP 0580241 A2 1/1994  
JP 10-228889 A2 8/1998

(Continued)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Shen, et al., "In situ detection of single micron-sized magnetic beads using magnetic tunnel junction sensors", Applied Physics Letters 86, 253901 (2005).

(Continued)

*Primary Examiner* — Drew A Dunn

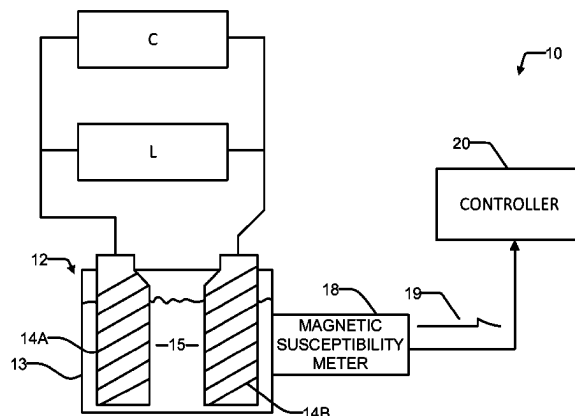
*Assistant Examiner* — Jerry D Robbins

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Oyen Wiggs Green & Mutala LLP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Methods and apparatus for testing electrical storage batteries monitor magnetic susceptibility of components of the storage batteries. In some embodiments, magnetic susceptibility of a plate in a lead-acid battery is determined to provide an indication of the state of charge of the battery.

**16 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets**



(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

6,456,988 B1 9/2002 Singh et al.  
 6,461,767 B1 10/2002 Dansui et al.  
 6,833,980 B1 12/2004 Tsukagoshi et al.  
 7,205,746 B2\* 4/2007 Batson ..... H02J 7/0047  
 320/107  
 2003/0020479 A1 1/2003 Koch et al.  
 2003/0204328 A1\* 10/2003 Tinnemeyer ..... G01R 31/3662  
 702/30  
 2004/0178918 A1 9/2004 Lockhart et al.  
 2004/0196681 A1 10/2004 Xiao et al.  
 2005/0218001 A1\* 10/2005 You ..... C25B 15/02  
 205/89  
 2006/0051659 A1 3/2006 Kelly et al.  
 2007/0182367 A1\* 8/2007 Partovi ..... H01F 5/003  
 320/108  
 2009/0027056 A1\* 1/2009 Huang ..... B60L 11/1857  
 324/439  
 2009/0115420 A1\* 5/2009 Koch ..... G01R 31/3648  
 324/432  
 2010/0094575 A1\* 4/2010 Andrieu ..... G01R 31/3668  
 702/63  
 2010/0292942 A1\* 11/2010 Golf ..... H01M 10/445  
 702/63  
 2013/0154652 A1\* 6/2013 Rice ..... G01R 31/3606  
 324/426

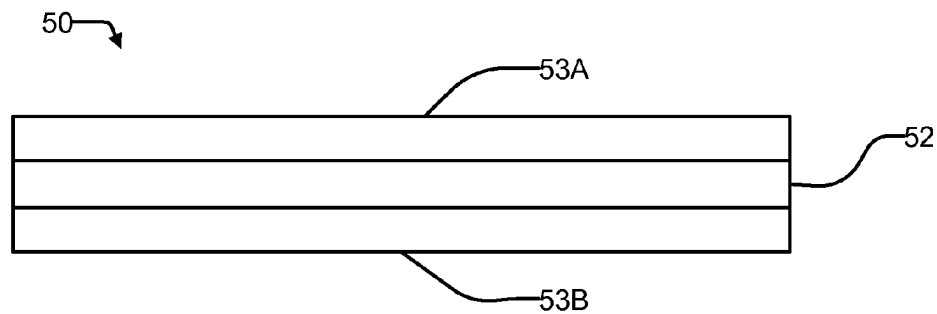
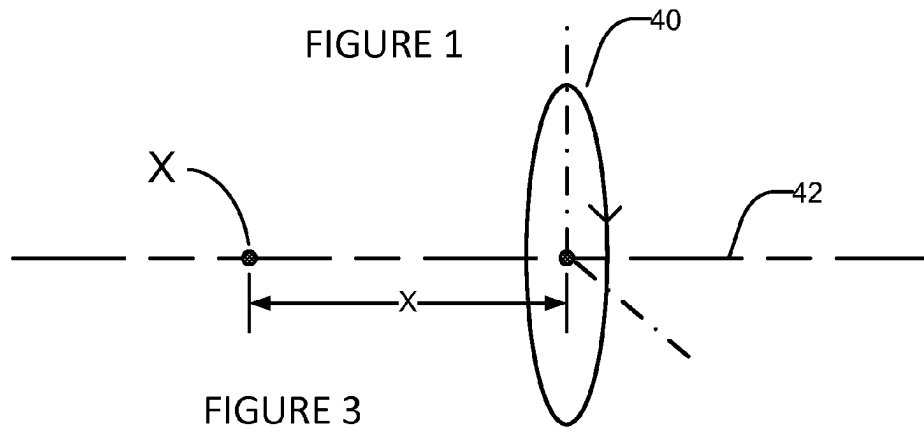
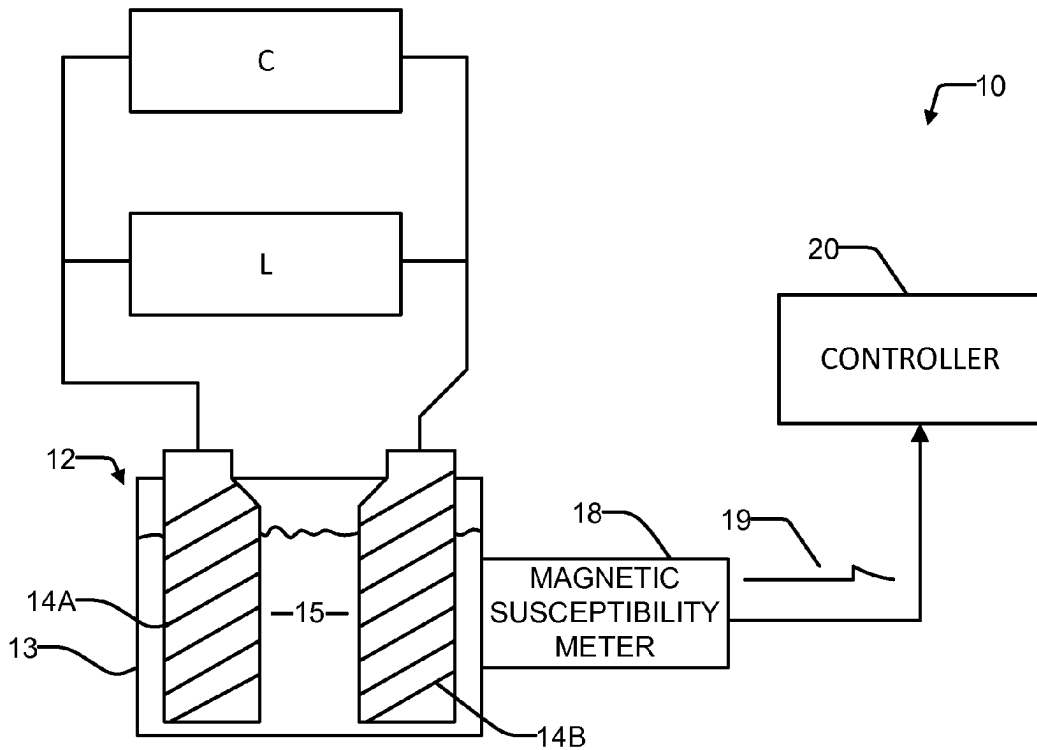
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

JP 2001-076730 A 3/2001  
 JP 2004-199910 A 7/2004  
 WO 2010091170 A1 8/2010

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Schrag, B.D. et al., "Magnetic current imaging with magnetic tunnel junction sensors: case study and analysis", Proceedings of the 2006 International Symposium for Testing and Failure Analysis (2006).  
 Nan, C-W., et al., "Large magnetoelectric response in multiferroic polymer-based composites", Phys. Rev. B 71, 014102 (2005).  
 Ryu, et al., "Magnetoelectric Effect in Composites of Magnetostrictive and Piezoelectric Materials", Journal of Electroceramics, 8, 107-119 (Aug. 2002).  
 Xing, Z.P. et al., "Modeling and detection of quasi-static nanotesla magnetic field variations using magnetoelectric laminate sensors", Meas. Sci. Technol. 19, 015206 (2008).  
 Nathan, A., "How to achieve nanotesla resolution with integrated silicon magnetotransistors", Electron Devices Meeting, 1989, IEDM '89, pp. 511-514 (Dec. 3-6, 1989).  
 Nguyen, V.D.F., "Magnetic sensors for nanotesla detection using planar Hall effect", Sensors and actuators, A, vol. 53, No. 1-3, pp. 256-620 (1996).

\* cited by examiner



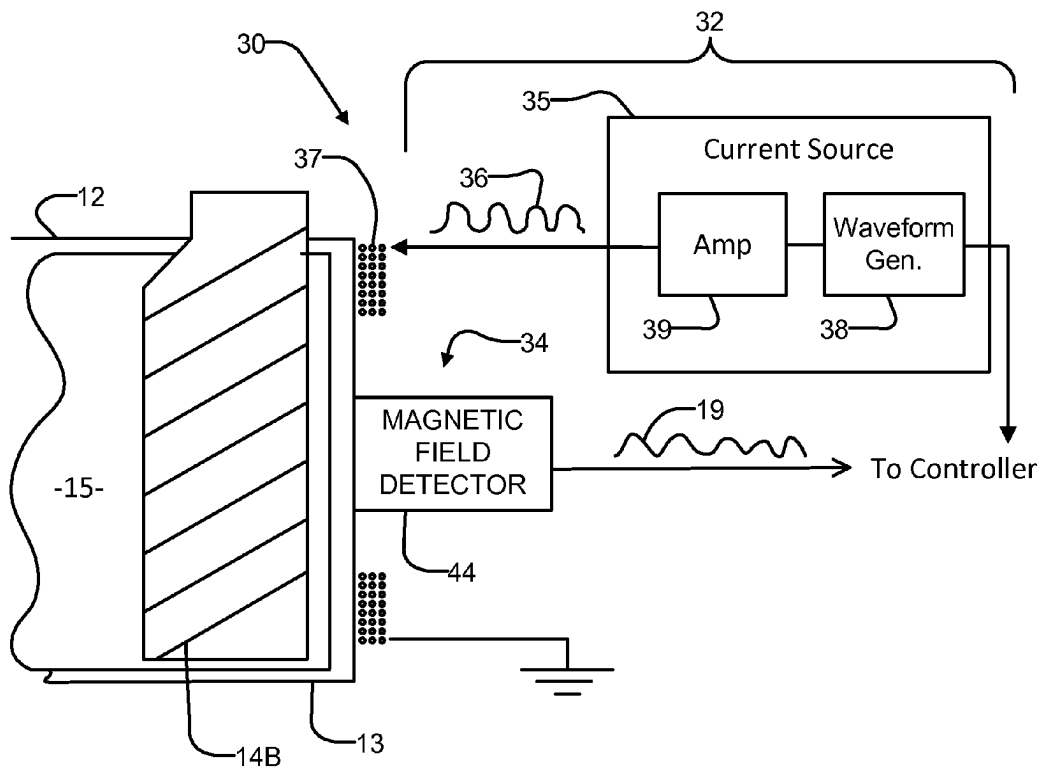


FIGURE 2

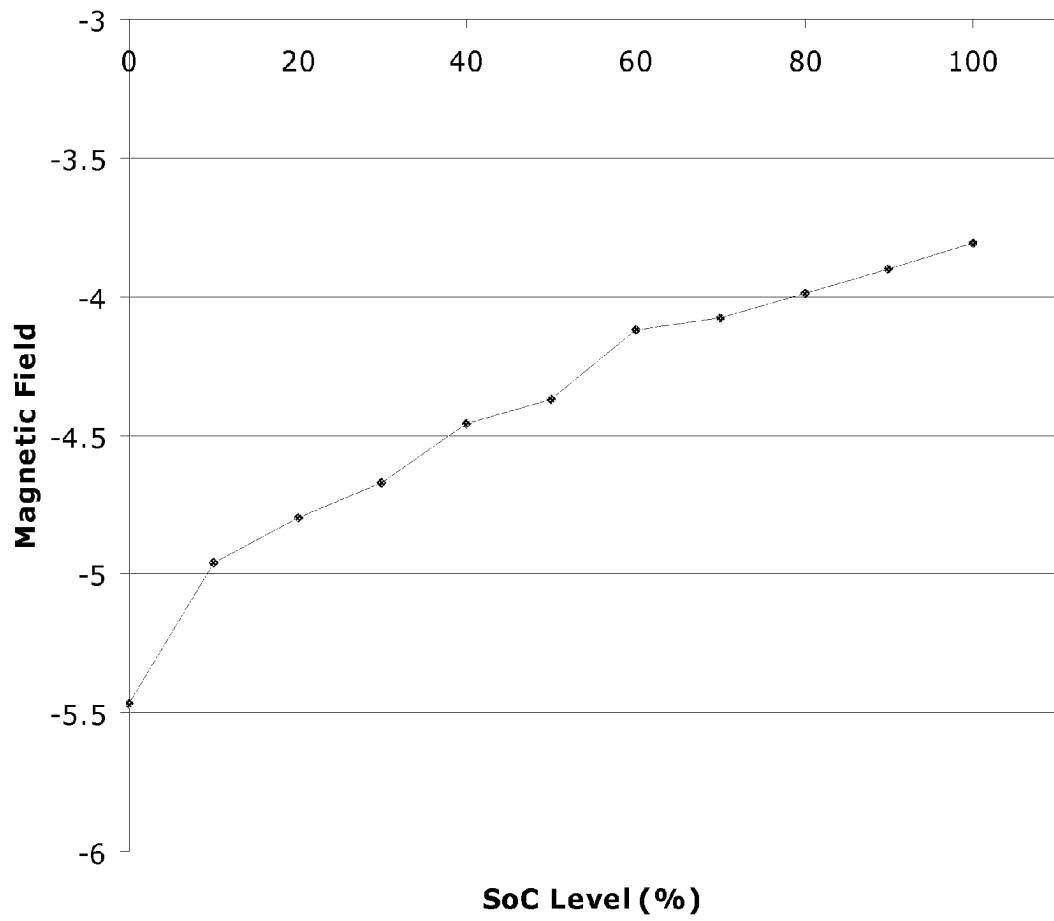


FIGURE 5

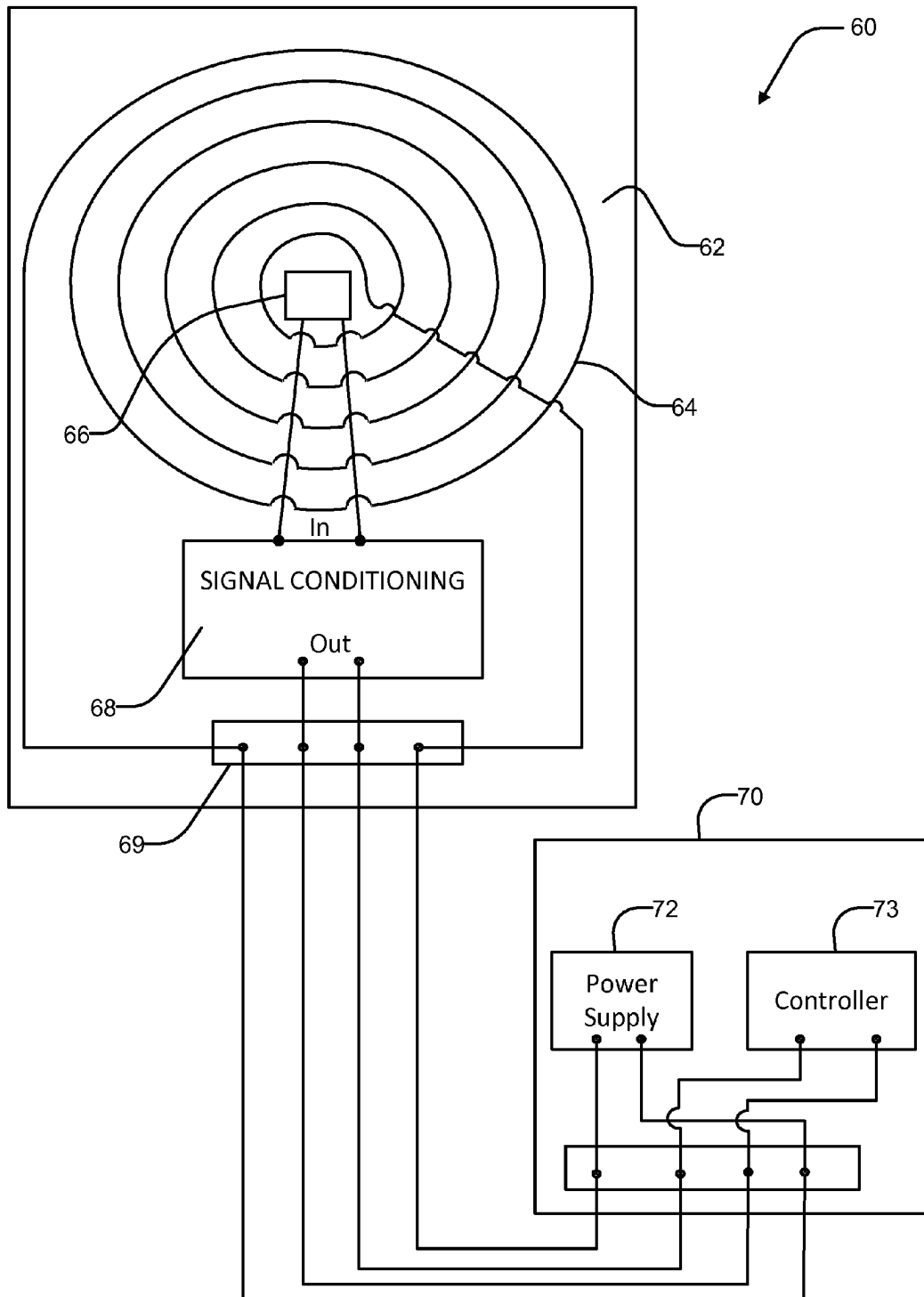


FIGURE 6

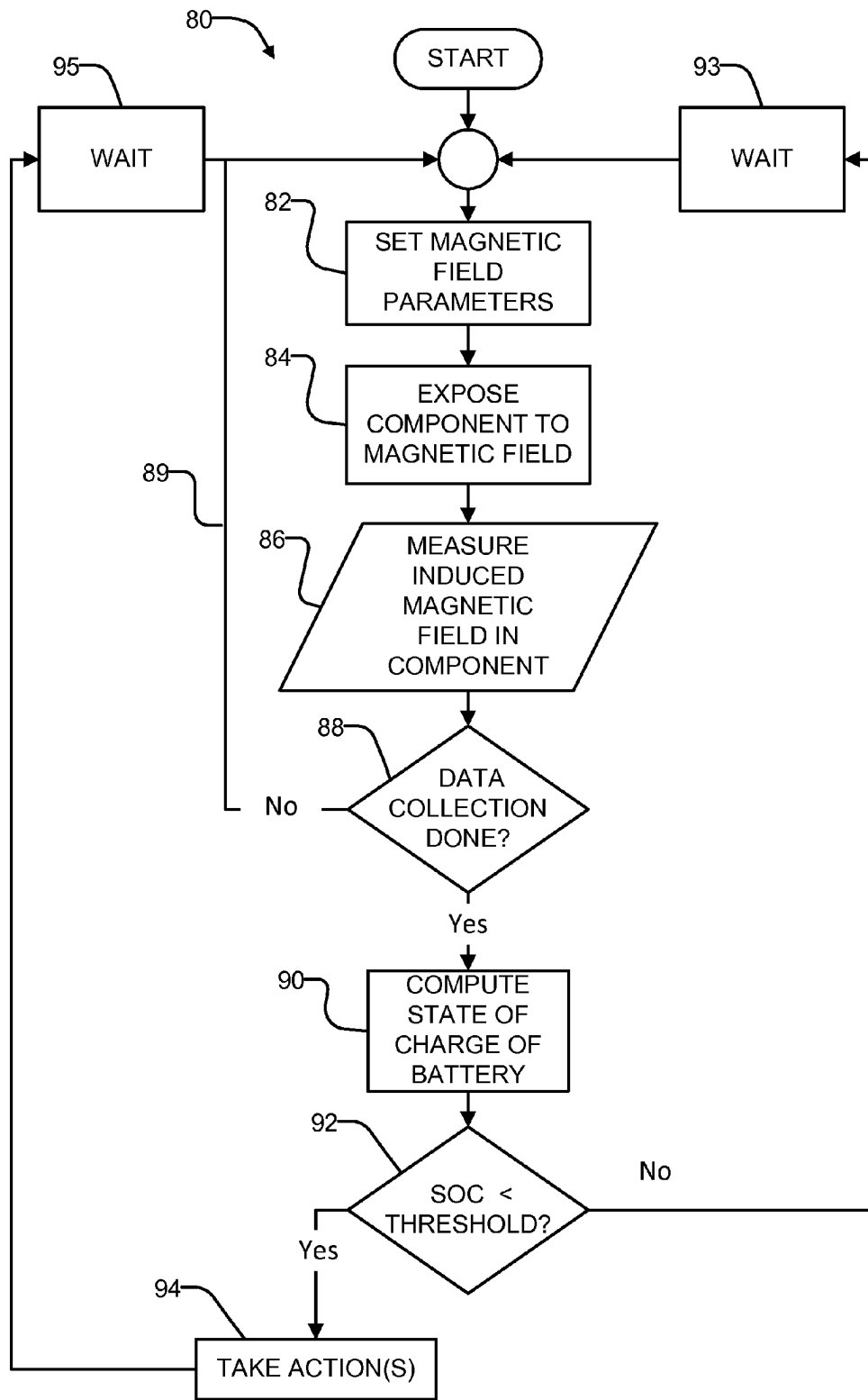


FIGURE 7

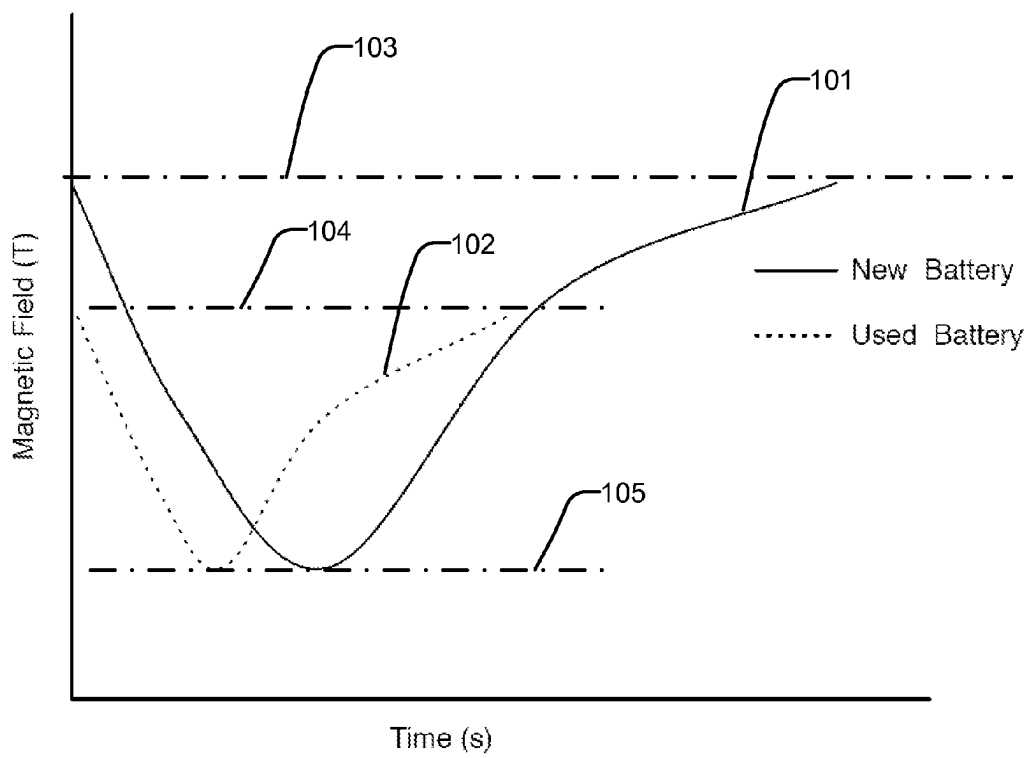


FIGURE 8

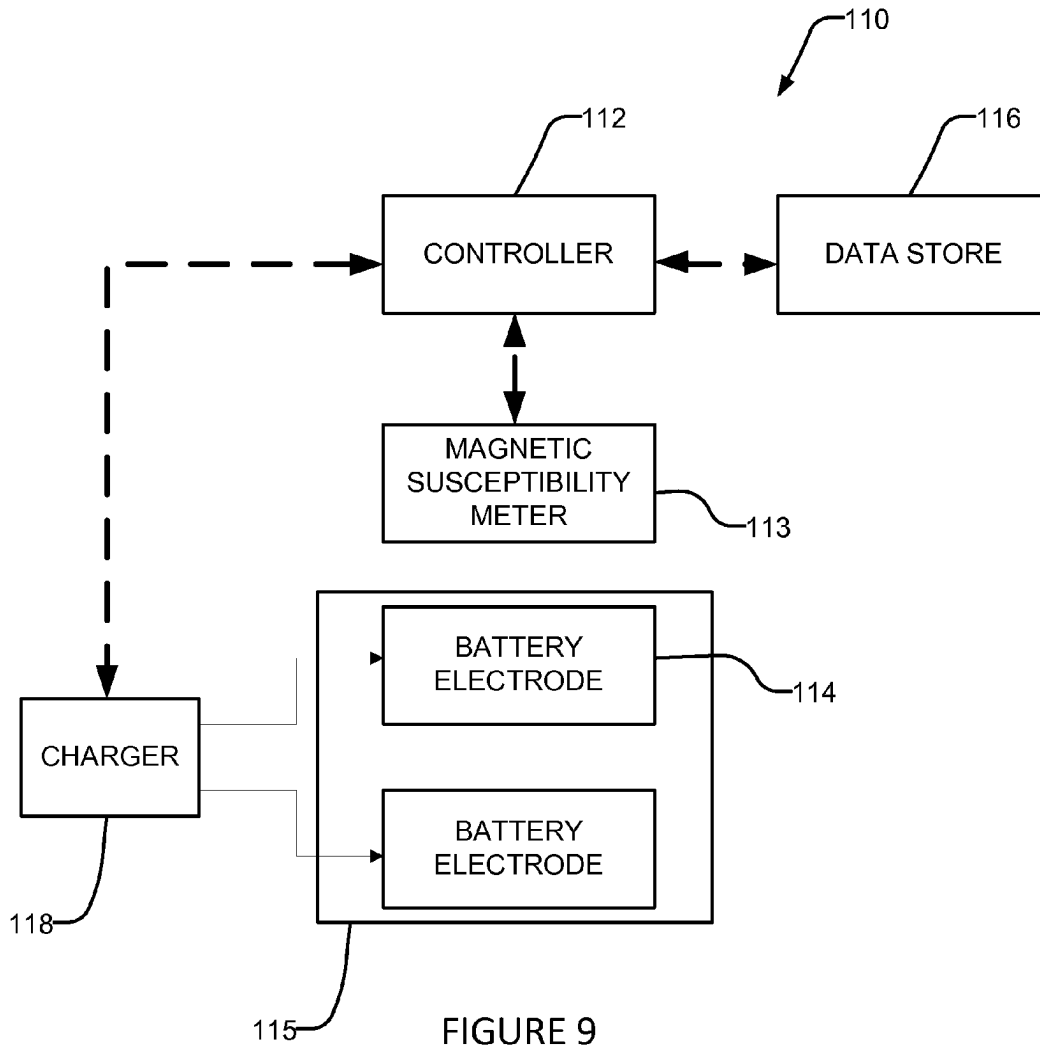


FIGURE 9

## METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR BATTERY TESTING

### CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/994,847 filed on 5 Jun. 2009 and entitled METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR BATTERY TESTING which is hereby incorporated by reference herein for all purposes. This application claims the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §119 of U.S. patent application No. 61/059,151 filed on 5 Jun. 2008 and entitled METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR BATTERY TESTING.

### TECHNICAL FIELD

The invention relates to battery testing. Certain embodiments of the invention relate to testing lead-acid batteries. The invention also has application to testing batteries having other chemistries such as lithium ion batteries.

### BACKGROUND

Batteries are used to supply electricity in a wide range of applications. In the automotive field, batteries are used to supply power for vehicle systems which may include engine starting, lighting, electronic accessories, propulsion, control systems and the like. Newer vehicles include an increasing number of systems that require electricity for operation. Some, such as electronically controlled braking systems and electronic engine control systems, are vital to safe vehicle operation.

Where a critical system is powered by a battery then it can be important to monitor the state of the battery. Battery testing systems are used to evaluate the state of charge (SoC) of batteries as well as the condition (sometimes referred to as the state of health (SoH)) of batteries as well as the amount of power that a battery can supply (sometimes referred to as the state of function (SoF) of the battery). Battery testing systems typically monitor electrical characteristics of batteries. For example, some such systems monitor the impedance of a battery at various frequencies.

A problem with many existing battery testing systems is that the systems are not accurate, especially for batteries that are not new. Such systems can yield estimates of a battery's state of charge that are inaccurate.

There is a need for accurate systems and methods for monitoring the state of batteries.

### SUMMARY

The invention has a number of aspects. One aspect relates to methods for testing electrochemical batteries. Another aspect relates to apparatus for testing electrochemical batteries.

An example aspect provides a method for determining a state of an electrochemical battery. The method comprises exposing an electrode of the electrochemical battery to an electromagnetic excitation field; measuring magnetism induced in the electrode by the electromagnetic excitation field; and determining the state of the electrochemical battery based at least in part on the measured induced magnetism.

In some embodiments the method comprises discontinuing the electromagnetic excitation field before measuring the induced magnetism (as a residual magnetism of the elec-

trode). In some embodiments the method comprises applying an AC excitation field. In example embodiments the excitation field has a frequency in the range of 1 kHz to 20 kHz.

Another example aspect of the invention provides apparatus for determining a state of an electrochemical battery. The apparatus comprises an excitation field generator configured to apply an electromagnetic excitation field to an electrode of the electrochemical battery; a magnetic field detector positionable to determine an induced magnetization induced in the electrode by the excitation field; and, a controller configured to determine the state of the electrochemical battery based at least in part on the induced magnetization. The controller may be configured to discontinue application of the electromagnetic excitation field before measuring the induced magnetism.

Further aspects of the invention and features of example embodiments of the invention are described below and/or illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The appended drawings illustrate non-limiting embodiments of the invention.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a battery testing system according to an example embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 2 shows an apparatus according to a more detailed example embodiment.

FIG. 3 illustrates the magnetic field produced by an electrical current circulating in a circular loop.

FIG. 4 is a schematic illustration of a magnetic field sensor.

FIG. 5 is a graph which includes a curve illustrating measured magnetic susceptibility of a battery electrode as a function of the state of charge of the battery.

FIG. 6 shows a sensor assembly.

FIG. 7 is a flowchart showing an example method for monitoring the state of a battery.

FIG. 8 is a plot comparing magnetic susceptibility of a negative electrode of a lithium ion battery as a function of state of charge for a new battery and a used battery.

FIG. 9 is a block diagram of a battery testing system according to another example embodiment of the invention.

### DESCRIPTION

Throughout the following description, specific details are set forth in order to provide a more thorough understanding of the invention. However, the invention may be practiced without these particulars. In other instances, well known elements have not been shown or described in detail to avoid unnecessarily obscuring the invention. Accordingly, the specification and drawings are to be regarded in an illustrative, rather than a restrictive, sense.

Apparatus and methods according to this invention measure battery state based on changes in the magnetic susceptibility of battery components. The battery component may comprise an electrode of the battery that undergoes a chemical change as the battery is charged or discharged.

FIG. 1 shows a battery testing apparatus 10 connected to test a battery 12. Battery 12 comprises a case 13 housing electrodes 14A and 14B (collectively electrodes 14) immersed in an electrolyte 15. In FIG. 1, battery 12 is illustrated as having only one cell. Battery 12 may have any suitable number of cells. Battery 12 can deliver electrical power to a load L and can be charged by a charger C.

3

The chemical composition of at least one of electrodes **14** changes as the battery is charged and discharged. Consider, for example, the case where battery **12** is a lead-acid battery. In a lead acid battery electrode **14B** comprises a lead anode and electrode **14A** comprises a lead dioxide cathode. Electrolyte **15** is an acid electrolyte.

During discharge, the following half reaction occurs at anode **14B**:



And the following half reaction occurs at cathode **14A**:



During charging, the reactions at each electrode are reversed. What is of interest is that the chemical composition of each electrode changes as the battery is charged and discharged.

The magnetic characteristics of electrodes in batteries of other types also change as the batteries are charged and discharged. For example, in a lithium ion battery lithium ions move to the positive electrode as the battery discharges. When a lithium ion battery is charged the lithium ions are moved to the negative electrode. Consequently, magnetic properties (e.g. magnetic susceptibility) of both the negative and positive electrodes change depending on the state of charge of a lithium ion battery. Since the presence of lithium ions tends to augment magnetic fields, the magnetism induced in the negative electrode of a lithium-ion battery by application of an exciting electromagnetic field tends to increase as the state of charge of the battery increases.

Electrodes in batteries of other chemistries also change in composition as the batteries are charged and discharged. This leads to consequential changes in the magnetic properties of the electrodes. The nature of the changes depends on the chemistry of the batteries.

Apparatus **10** exploits changes in the magnetic susceptibility of an electrode **14**, which correspond to the chemical changes in the electrode **14**, to derive information indicative of the state of battery **12**. For example, apparatus **10** may derive information indicative of the state of charge of battery **12**. Magnetic susceptibility is a measure of the degree to which a material becomes magnetized in response to an applied magnetic field.

Lead has a magnetic susceptibility of  $-23 \times 10^{-6}$  in cgs units while lead sulfate has a magnetic susceptibility of about  $-70 \times 10^{-6}$ . Thus, as battery **12** is discharged and the ratio of lead sulfate to lead in anode **14B** increases, the magnetic susceptibility of anode **14B** also increases (i.e., anode **14B** become more diamagnetic, and will exhibit greater magnetization in response to a given applied magnetic field). Similarly, as battery **12** is charged, the ratio of lead sulfate to lead in anode **14B** decreases and the magnetic susceptibility of anode **14B** decreases (i.e., anode **14B** become less diamagnetic, and will exhibit less magnetization in response to a given applied magnetic field). Thus, the magnetic susceptibility of anode **14B** can be correlated to the state of charge of battery **12**. The magnetic susceptibility of cathode **14A** also changes with the state of charge of battery **12** but the changes at cathode **14A** are smaller than the changes in magnetic susceptibility of anode **14B** because the difference between the magnetic susceptibilities of lead dioxide and lead sulfate is smaller than the difference between the magnetic susceptibilities of lead and lead sulfate.

In the embodiment of FIG. 1, apparatus **10** comprises a magnetic susceptibility meter **18** which provides an output signal **19** that changes in response to changes in the mag-

4

netic susceptibility of anode **14B**. Signal **19** is provided to a controller **20**. Controller **20** takes action based on the value of signal **19**. Examples of actions that may be taken by controller **20** in various applications include:

5 Computing and displaying an estimate of state of charge.

The estimate may be in arbitrary units such as 0 to 10, 0 to 100, GOOD-FAIR-POOR or the like. The estimate may be displayed in terms of numerical or other charge values and/or in the form of a bar graph or other visual display.

Shutting down and/or placing into a reduced power mode one or more components that are included in load L in response to determining that the state of charge is below a threshold.

Generating a warning signal to alert an operator that the state of charge is below a threshold. The warning may be a visual or audible warning or an electronic signal delivered to another control system, an electronic message such as an e-mail, instant message or the like, etc.

Controller **20** may comprise a programmed data processor, logic circuits or the like. In some embodiments, controller **20** comprises a calibration function that associates values of signal **19** with values indicative of battery state of charge. The calibration function may comprise a look-up table, a set of one or more parameters of an equation relating values of signal **19** to the state of charge of battery **12** or the like.

FIG. 2 shows apparatus **30** according to a more detailed example embodiment. Apparatus **30** comprises a magnetic field source **32** and a magnetic field detector **34**. In the illustrated embodiment, magnetic field source **32** and magnetic field detector **34** are mounted on the outside of case **13** adjacent to an electrode **14B**. In the illustrated embodiment, magnetic field source **32** comprises an electrical current source **35** that is connected to pass electrical current through a conductor **37**. Preferably conductor **37** has multiple windings so that a magnetic field large enough to obtain a measure of the magnetic susceptibility of electrode **14B** can be achieved at relatively low levels of electric current supplied by current source **35**. For example, conductor **37** may be in the form of a coil or spiral. In some embodiments, conductor **37** is provided as part of an assembly that can be adhered to case **13**. The assembly may have a self-adhesive face or self-adhesive patches to allow the assembly to be affixed to case **13**.

In some embodiments, conductor **37** is patterned on a circuit board. Conductor **37** may, for example, comprise a spiral patterned on a circuit board. The circuit board may have multiple layers each patterned with a conductor such that magnetic fields generated by current passing through the conductors of each layer reinforce one another. In other embodiments, conductor **37** may comprise one or more coils of fine wire.

Current source **35** may provide a current **36** that is time-varying such that the magnetic field of conductor **37** is time varying. This may cause signal **19** to be time-varying. Controller **20** may use the time variations in signal **19** to reject noise. The noise will not vary with time in the same way as current **36**. In the example embodiment illustrated in FIG. 2, current source **35** comprises a waveform generator **38** coupled to drive an amplifier **39**. The output of amplifier **39** is connected to drive a current in conductor **37**. In some embodiments, the magnetic field is time varying at a frequency in the range of 1 kHz to 20 kHz.

FIG. 3 illustrates the magnetic field produced by an electrical current circulating in a circular loop **40**. From the

Biot-Savart Law it can be shown that the magnetic field produced at a point X on the axis **42** of loop **40** is given by:

$$B_0(x) = \frac{\mu_0 n I R^2}{2(R^2 + x^2)^{3/2}} \quad (3) \quad 5$$

where:

x is the distance of point X along axis **42** from the plane of loop **40**; 10

$B_0(x)$  is the magnetic field at point X;

$\mu_0$  is the magnetic constant (the permeability of free space where loop **40** and the surrounding areas are devoid of matter);

n is the number of turns in loop **40**;

I is the current flowing in loop **40**; and

R is the radius of loop **40**.

If there is a material at point X then the magnetic field from current loop **40** will induce magnetism in the material. The magnitude, M, of the magnetization of the material depends upon the magnetic susceptibility of the material and the strength of the field  $B_0$ . The magnetic field at a point away from point X will be perturbed by the magnetization of the material at point X. Therefore, changes in the magnetic susceptibility of material in the vicinity of point X can be monitored by measuring changes in the magnetic field at a location away from point X. The magnetic field could be measured, for example, in the plane of current loop **40**. In some embodiments, magnetic field detector **34** is located substantially in the plane of current loop **40** inside current loop **40**, for example at the center of current loop **40**. 20

In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 2, magnetic field detector **34** comprises a sensor **44** located on-axis with and substantially in the plane of conductor **37**. Sensor **44** and conductor **37** may be mounted in an assembly that is attachable to case **13** of battery **12** adjacent to an electrode **14B**. 30

Sensor **44** has a sensitivity sufficient to detect changes in the magnetic field resulting from changes in the susceptibility of the material of an adjacent electrode **14B**. Sensor **44** may optionally comprise a flux concentrator to amplify the magnetic field to be detected. In some embodiments, sensor **44** comprises a magnetic tunnel junction (MTJ). Such sensors are available, for example, from Micro Magnetics Inc. of Fall River Mass., USA. Magnetic field sensors based on a MTJ are described in: 40

Shen et al. *In situ detection of single micron-sized magnetic beads using magnetic tunnel junction sensors*, Appl. Phys. Lett. 86, 253901 (2005); 50

B. D. Schrag et al. *Magnetic current imaging with magnetic tunnel junction sensors: case study and analysis*.

A simple MTJ comprises two layers of magnetic material separated by a very thin insulating film. If a voltage is applied across this structure and the insulating layer is thin enough, electrons can flow by quantum mechanical tunnelling through the insulating film. For tunnelling between two magnetized materials, the tunnelling current is maximum if the magnetization directions of the two materials are parallel and minimum if they are aligned antiparallel. Therefore, the tunnelling current, and thus the resistance of the device, will change as external magnetic fields alter the relative magnetic orientations of the layers of magnetic material. 60

Other magnetic sensors that are sensitive enough to detect changes in the magnetic field resulting from changes in the magnetic susceptibility of battery components may also be used. For example, magneto-electric sensors may be 65

applied. Magnetic field sensors based in the giant magneto-electric effect are described, for example, in:

Nan et al. *Large magnetolectric response in multiferroic polymer-based composites* Phys. Rev. B 71, 014102 (2005).

Ryu et al., *Magnetolectric Effect in Composites of Magnetostrictive and Piezoelectric Materials* Journal of Electroceramics, vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 107-119 (August 2002).

Z P Xing et al., *Modeling and detection of quasi-static nanotesla magnetic field variations using magnetolectric laminate sensors* Meas. Sci. Technol. 19 015206 (2008)

Podney, U.S. Pat. No. 5,675,252.

FIG. 4 shows a magnetic field sensor **50** comprising a layer **52** of the giant magnetostrictive material Terfenol-D sandwiched between layers **53A** and **53B** of piezoelectric material. The piezoelectric materials may comprise, for example, lead zirconate titanate ("PZT"). Changes in the magnetic field cause magnetostriction in layer **52**. This, in turn, causes piezolayers **53A** and **53B** to change shape and to create a voltage differential between electrodes on the piezolayers. In some embodiments, sensor **50** is designed to have an electromechanical resonant frequency such that sensor **50** is most sensitive at a frequency at or near a frequency of the driving current provided by current source **35**. 15

Other sensitive magnetic field sensors that may have application in some embodiments include:

Superconducting Quantum Interference Detectors (SQUIDS). SQUIDS are very sensitive but may require special operating conditions that may make them unsuitable for some applications.

Sensors exploiting giant magnetoresistance (GMR).

Fiber optic magnetometers.

Sensors exploiting tunnelling magnetoresistance (TMR).

Search coil magnetometers.

Magnetotransistors as described, for example in A. Nathan et al., *How to achieve nanotesla resolution with integrated silicon magnetotransistors*, Electron Devices Meeting, 1989. IEDM '89, pp. 511-514 (3-6 Dec. 1989).

Ultra-sensitive Hall effect sensors as described, for example, in Nguyen Van Dau F., *Magnetic sensors for nanotesla detection using planar Hall effect*, Sensors and actuators. A, 1996, vol. 53, no 1-3, pp. 256-260.

The sensitivity required for magnetic field sensor **50** will depend on factors including: the strength of the magnetic field generated by magnetic field source **32**; the geometries of magnetic field source **32** and magnetic field sensor **50**; the geometry of the electrode **14** in which chemical changes occur; and the distances between magnetic field source **32**, magnetic field sensor **50**, and the electrode **14**. 50

FIG. 5 is a graph which includes a curve illustrating measured magnetic susceptibility of a battery electrode as a function of the state of charge of the battery. It can be seen that there is a strong correlation between the detected magnetic field and the state of charge of the battery being tested. The graph of FIG. 5 was obtained using an AGM SLI (starting lighting ignition) battery with a capacity of 90 Ahr. Measurements were made using a 25 A discharge current from a fully charged battery down to a voltage of 10.5 V at 20° C. The sensor was located directly on the side of the battery adjacent to one electrode. 60

In some embodiments, the frequency of electrical current source **35** is variable. Such embodiments may obtain additional information regarding a battery by monitoring mag-

7

netic susceptibility of a battery component at two or more different frequencies. The depth of penetration of a magnetic field into a material decreases as frequency increases. The penetration depth is approximated by the skin depth given by:

$$\zeta = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\pi\mu\theta f}} \quad (4)$$

where:  $\zeta$  is the skin depth;  $\mu$  is the magnetic susceptibility of the material;  $\theta$  is the electrical conductivity of the material and  $f$  is the frequency. At 10 kHz,  $\zeta$  is about 2 mm in some materials of interest. By making measurements using magnetic fields which fluctuate at different frequencies (e.g. by varying the frequency of AC or pulsed DC current driving an electromagnet that generates a magnetic field), one can sense the degree to which chemical changes associated with charging or discharging a battery have occurred at different depths within an electrode of a battery.

In some embodiments, a tester according to the invention measures magnetization of an electrode of a battery under test in response to magnetic excitation at two or more frequencies and bases a determination of the state of charge of the battery on the measured magnetization at each of the two or more frequencies. Measurements at different frequencies may be made at different times or at the same time. Obtaining the measure of state of charge may comprise, for example taking an average or weighted average of values obtained for the two or more frequencies of magnetic excitation.

Some embodiments comprise a control system configured to adjust a frequency of magnetic excitation to a frequency that suits a particular battery. This may be done, for example, by varying the frequency to at least approximately identify a transition frequency that is the highest frequency at which the magnetic field fully penetrates the electrode being monitored. The transition frequency may be identified, for example, by sweeping the frequency down from a high frequency and determining the frequency at which the detected magnetism exhibits characteristics that indicate that the magnetic field of electrolyte on a far side of the electrode is being detected.

Some embodiments provide a sensor assembly that comprises a substrate that is attachable to a case of a battery and, supported on the substrate, some or all of:

A coil or other magnetic field source.

A magnetic field detector.

Signal processing circuitry connected to provide preliminary processing for a signal output by the magnetic field detector. The signal processing circuitry may comprise, for example, one or more of: an amplifier, one or more filters (which may serve as a bandpass filter), and artifact rejection circuits.

A driving circuit for the magnetic field detector. The driving circuit may comprise, for example, a circuit that provides suitable bias voltages and/or supplies electrical current to the magnetic field detector.

In some embodiments, the sensor assembly comprises adhesive spots or an adhesive layer that permits a face of the sensor assembly to be adhered to a face of a battery. In some embodiments all circuitry and other components on the substrate are encapsulated or otherwise protected. In some embodiments the outer case of a battery has a recess and the sensor assembly is affixed to the battery in the recess. In such embodiments the sensor assembly is protected somewhat

8

against mechanical damage by being inlaid into a face of the battery. In some embodiments the substrate is flexible so that it can conform well to a surface of the battery. In some embodiments the substrate is generally planar so that it can conform to a generally planar face of a battery. In some embodiments the substrate is curved so that it can conform to a curved face of a battery.

FIG. 6 shows a sensor assembly 60 comprising a substrate 62, coils 64 for generating a magnetic field, a magnetic field detector 66 and signal processing circuits 68. A connector 69 permits connection to an external apparatus 70 which includes a power supply 72 for supplying current to coils 64 and a controller 73 which evaluates a state of a battery based at least in part on signals from magnetic field detector 66 and takes actions such as:

Displaying a state of charge of the battery on a display.  
Computing an estimated run-time before the battery reaches a predetermined state of charge.

Disconnecting optional loads and/or shifting loads into power-conserving modes in response to a determination that the state of charge of the battery has fallen to below a threshold level.

Signalling to other components to indicate a state of charge of the battery.  
etc.

In some embodiments, the battery is a battery in a vehicle and external apparatus 70 is connected to a data communication bus of the vehicle. In some embodiments the data communication bus is a Controller Area Network ("CAN") or Local Interconnect Network ("LIN") bus. Apparatus 70 may send signals over the data communication bus to other components. The signals may cause the other components to switch to a different operating mode and/or shut down or start up as a result of a change in the state of a battery being monitored.

Alternative embodiments differ from the example apparatus described above in various ways. For example:

A permanent magnet could be used in place of an electromagnet to generate a magnetic field.

A battery testing apparatus may operate as described herein and also receive other information regarding a battery. For example, characteristics such as: the complex impedance of the battery at different frequencies, the charge or discharge current of the battery, and/or the voltage of the battery may be monitored. These additional measurements may be combined with information from magnetic susceptibility measurements as described herein to obtain enhanced information regarding the state of the battery being monitored.

Some components of a battery testing apparatus could be built into a battery. For example, a magnetic field sensor could be embedded within a battery electrode. A coil for inducing a magnetic field in a battery electrode could be located inside a battery case and could be embedded within a battery electrode. A magnetic field sensor and coil could be embedded within a wall of a battery case.

An applied magnetic field could be generated by current flowing in the battery for supply to a load. Apparatus may include a current sensor that monitors current supplied by the battery and correlates fluctuations in the supplied current to fluctuations in a detected magnetic field.

FIG. 7 is a flowchart illustrating a method 80 according to some example embodiments of the invention. Magnetic field parameters are optionally set in block 82. In block 84 a

battery component is exposed to at least a first magnetic field. A magnetic field induced in the battery component is measured in block **86**.

In some embodiments, multiple magnetic fields induced in the component are measured. In such embodiments, different magnetic fields (e.g. magnetic fields having different intensities, different polarizations or different time variations may be used for some or all of the multiple measurements. In such embodiments, block **88** determines whether data collection is complete. If not, method **80** repeats blocks **82**, **84** and **86** to obtain an additional measurement as indicated by path **89**.

When data collection is complete (YES result from block **88**) method **80** proceeds to block **90** which determines the state of the battery from the collected data. The state determined in block **90** may comprise the State of Charge of the battery. In block **92** the state of charge is compared to a threshold. If the comparison indicates that the battery is charged sufficiently then method **80** proceeds to block **93** and waits until an appropriate time to measure the state of the battery again. If block **92** determines that the state of charge of the battery is lower than some threshold then one or more appropriate actions are taken in block **94** due to a threshold being exceeded and then method **80** proceeds to block **95** and waits until an appropriate time to measure the state of the battery again.

Some embodiments operate in a mode wherein measurements of the magnetic susceptibility of an electrode or other battery component are made by applying an electromagnetic excitation, stopping or reducing the electromagnetic excitation and then measuring the induced magnetism in the form of a residual magnetic field of the electrode or other structure while the excitation field is off or reduced in intensity. Such embodiments can be advantageous because small differences in the magnetic field of the electrode or other structure can be easier to measure in the absence of the excitation field. In such embodiments, the excitation field is preferably discontinued sharply (as opposed to gradually ramping down the excitation field) to avoid degaussing effects.

A residual field of an electrode or other battery structure may persist for only a limited time after the excitation field is turned off. The residual field starts to decay immediately after the excitation field is turned off. Therefore, it is desirable to measure the residual magnetic field of the electrode or other structure within a short window after the excitation field is turned off. Some embodiments have a controller configured to: apply an excitation field (for example as described in any of the embodiments above) for a period of time; turn off the excitation field; and measure the residual magnetic field in a time window immediately after the excitation field has been turned off. This may optionally be repeated several times and results combined.

It is not necessary to apply the excitation field for a very long time. Although not mandatory it is desirable to apply the excitation field for long enough for a steady-state condition to develop. For example, in some embodiments the excitation field is applied for 10 seconds or less. In some embodiments the excitation field is applied for 4-8 seconds before it is shut off.

For example, measurement of the residual magnetic field may be made within approximately 2 seconds after turning off the excitation field in some embodiments. It is desirable to measure the residual magnetic field of the electrode or other battery structure at a fixed time after the excitation field is discontinued within a time window in which a residual field of the electrode or other battery component is detectable. The time window within which the residual field

can be measured is a function of the nature of the excitation field, the geometry and the material of the electrode or other structure for which the residual field is measured. This time window can therefore vary among batteries of different chemistries, materials and constructions. Measurements of the residual field may be made a very short time after turning off the excitation field.

The magnetic field detected after the excitation field has been turned off may comprise a component due to a residual field within the coil or other field generator. This residual generator field may be accounted for by measuring the residual generator field after the residual field from the battery component has mostly died away (e.g. after 2 seconds or so). The measured residual generator field may be subtracted from the initial measurement of the residual field. For example, in some embodiments, a controller causes application of a selected excitation field for a period of time, discontinues the excitation field, waits for a first time interval, makes a first magnetic field measurement, waits for a second time interval, and makes a second magnetic field measurement. The controller may be configured to determine a measure of a battery characteristic (e.g. SoC, SoH and/or SoF) based on the first and second measurements. In some embodiments the controller is configured to determine the battery characteristic based at least in part on a difference between the first and second measurements. In some embodiments, the sum of the first and second intervals is longer than a time for residual magnetism in the electrode or other battery component to die away to 10% or less (or 5% or less or 2% or less or 1% or less) of its value immediately after discontinuation of the excitation field. In some embodiments the sum of the first and second intervals is 1½ seconds or more.

For typical geometries the excitation field produces circulating electrical currents within the electrode or other battery structure being investigated. These circulating currents, in turn, produce a magnetic field. For some geometries the circulating currents are coaxial with a coil used to generate the excitation field and the resulting magnetic field lines are such that a magnetic field sensor can best detect the residual magnetic field of the electrode or other battery component if the sensor is located off of the axis of the coil. In some embodiments the sensor is oriented in a direction such that the sensor is most sensitive to magnetic fields having a direction perpendicular to a direction of the excitation magnetic field and/or a residual generator field at the location of the sensor.

Various frequency components of the residual field may be measured. A power analysis of the FFT spectrum for a typical residual field contains a DC field component and also an AC field component having a peak at a frequency of the excitation field. Either or both of these components may be measured and used for determining battery characteristics. One advantage of measuring the AC field component is rejection of magnetic fields from other sources such as from currents flowing due to loading or charging of the battery.

In some embodiments a combination of excitation fields is applied. For example, the amount of residual magnetism can be increased by first applying a lower frequency excitation field and immediately (or within a short period such as within 4 seconds) after that applying a higher frequency excitation field.

Apparatus and methods as described herein may be applied to measure the State of Health (SoH) of batteries. For example, the SoH of a lithium ion battery is typically described as a measure of capacity. As a lithium ion battery ages the number of lithium ions available to be transferred

## 11

between the electrodes decreases. An observable difference between a new battery (having a high SoH) and an identical but aged battery (having a low SoH) is that, for the same state of charge, the magnetic susceptibility of the negative electrode in the aged battery will be lower than that of the new battery. This is because, in the aged battery, the number of available lithium ions in the negative electrode will be lower than in the new battery. Hence, if the SoC level of a battery is known then a comparative measure may be made to indicate SoH.

In an example embodiment, SoH is measured while a battery is fully charged (100% SoC). This is a convenient SoC to use because it can be achieved by fully charging the battery. For example, SoH may be measured by measuring the magnetic susceptibility of a negative electrode of the battery when the battery is fully charged and comparing the result of the measurement to the magnetic susceptibility the same electrode had when new (or at some other time when the battery had a known SoH).

FIG. 8 is a plot comparing magnetic susceptibility of a negative electrode of a lithium ion battery as a function of state of charge for a new battery and a used but otherwise identical battery. Curve 101 is for the new battery and curve 102 is for the used battery. In each case, the battery started fully charged, was fully discharged at a constant rate and was then charged until fully charged. Magnetism induced in negative electrodes of the batteries by an electromagnetic excitation field was measured.

In the new battery the induced magnetism had a value 103 when the new battery was fully charged. In the used battery the induced magnetism had a lower value 104 when the used battery was fully charged. A difference between levels 103 and 104 may be used as an indication of SoH for a battery.

An advantage of this technique over some existing methods for measuring SoH is that, as can be seen from FIG. 8, the induced magnetization level 105 which corresponds to a full discharge (0% SoC) is essentially the same for the new and used batteries. This is advantageous because measures of SoH should provide an indication of battery capacity. Since battery capacity is related to the difference between the fully-charged and fully-discharged states of the battery, if induced magnetization level 105 corresponding to the fully discharged condition shifted with battery aging it would be unlikely that a measure of the induced magnetization level 104 corresponding to the fully-charged condition would provide on its own a reliable indication of SoH. While it is not mandatory that SoH be based solely on induced magnetization level 104, one advantage of some embodiments is that a measure of SoH can be based on induced magnetization level 104.

The SoH can be based on a measurement of induced magnetization at a state of charge other than fully-charged (100% SoC) if such a SoC can be reliably achieved.

In some embodiments, variation between sensors is eliminated by a method which uses the same apparatus to measure an induced magnetization of a battery component when the battery is new and to measure changes in the induced magnetization as the battery ages. For example, a battery may be provided with a monitoring system comprising a magnetic susceptibility meter which may, for example, have a construction as described in any of the embodiments herein. A method may charge the battery to a fully-charged state (or another well-defined SoC) and then measure induced magnetization of a battery component (e.g. an electrode, for example, a negative electrode of a lithium ion battery) using the magnetic susceptibility meter. The induced magnetization or another measure of magnetic

## 12

susceptibility of the component may be stored for future reference. In some embodiments, the induced magnetization or other measure of magnetic susceptibility of the component is stored in a data store such as a non-volatile memory.

In some embodiments the data store is attached to the battery and/or integrated with the magnetic susceptibility meter.

In some embodiments calibration information such as a calibration table relating SoH to induced magnetization or other measure of the magnetic susceptibility of the component is derived from the initial measurement of the induced magnetization or other measure of the magnetic susceptibility of the component. The calibration table or parameters defining the calibration table may be stored in a memory, lookup table or other data store. In some embodiments the data store is attached to the battery and/or integrated with the magnetic susceptibility meter. At later times the battery may be charged to a fully charged state (or other well-characterized SoC) and the magnetic susceptibility meter operated to measure the induced magnetization or other measure of the magnetic susceptibility of the component. The SoH of the battery may be determined from the calibration information and/or from a comparison of the original induced magnetization or other measure of magnetic susceptibility to the later measurement of the induced magnetization or other measure of magnetic susceptibility.

Some embodiments provide apparatus comprising a magnetic susceptibility meter and a controller configured to perform a method for determining SoH as described above. The apparatus may be like the apparatus shown in FIG. 1 or 2 for example. In some embodiments the apparatus additionally comprises a battery charger. The controller may control the battery charger to fully-charge the battery for the purpose of a SoH measurement. In the alternative, the controller may determine when the battery has been fully charged by the charger and may operate the susceptibility meter to obtain a measurement from which SoH of the battery may be determined when the battery has been fully charged.

FIG. 9 illustrates an example apparatus 110 comprising a controller 112 connected to receive a signal from a magnetic susceptibility meter 113 located to measure magnetic susceptibility of an electrode 114 in a battery 115. Controller 112 can read and write data to a data store 116. A charger 118 is connected to charge battery 115. Charger 118 may be operated under the control of controller 112 and/or controller 112 may receive signals from charger 118 indicative of a charge status of battery 115.

Controller 112 may be configured to perform an initialization routine when battery 115 is new. The initialization routine may, for example, cause controller 112 to initiate charging of battery 115 until battery 115 is fully charged. The initialization routine may then cause magnetic susceptibility meter 113 to measure magnetic susceptibility of electrode 114 of battery 115. The initialization routine may then cause controller 112 to store a result of the susceptibility measurement or data derived from the susceptibility measurement (calibration data) in data store 116. The calibration data is derived from the result of the susceptibility measurement and may comprise, for example, one or more of a value, a lookup table, a function, one or more parameters for a function or the like.

Subsequently, controller 112 may, on its own initiative (triggered e.g. by a timer and/or by detecting that battery 115 is fully charged (or has another specific state of charge)) or on the initiative of a user as evidenced by a control input execute a SoH measurement routine. The SoH measurement routine may coordinate the operation of magnetic suscepti-

13

bility meter **113** to make measurements for determining a SoH of battery **115**. In an example embodiment the SoH determination routine may for example, cause controller **112** to initiate charging of battery **115** until battery **115** is fully charged. The SoH determination routine may then cause magnetic susceptibility meter **113** to measure magnetic susceptibility of electrode **114** of battery **115**. The SoH determination routine may then cause controller **112** to derive a measure of SoH of battery **115** using the calibration data previously stored in data store **116**. This may be done by one or more of: comparing a result of the susceptibility measurement or data derived from the susceptibility measurement to the information stored in data store **116** and/or using the result of the susceptibility measurement or data derived from the susceptibility measurement to look up an indicator of SoH of battery **115** in a table or other data structure from data store **116** and/or may processing the result of the susceptibility measurement or data derived from the susceptibility measurement according to a function defined in whole or in part by software elements and/or parameters from data store **116**. Controller **112** may display or otherwise make available for use an indication of the SoH of battery **115**. The indication may be human perceptible or a signal readable by a machine.

It is also possible to use information from testing as described herein to determine a state of function (SoF) of a battery. SoF represents an available charge that the battery can supply. For example, a new battery that is  $\frac{1}{2}$  charged may be able to deliver a similar charge as a used battery that is  $\frac{3}{4}$  charged. A user may wish to know how much energy a battery can deliver before it is flat instead of how well does the battery match its specifications. Magnetic susceptibility measurements as described herein can effectively measure the available current carriers (e.g. stored lithium ions in the anode) so that a measure of how much electrochemical work the battery can perform can be derived from the magnetic susceptibility measurements.

The invention may be embodied in a range of ways including, without limitation:

Methods for monitoring the state (particularly the state of charge) of batteries.

Apparatus for testing the state (particularly the state of charge) of batteries.

Batteries having built in components for use in monitoring according to a method as described herein.

Sensor assemblies that can be attached to batteries for use in monitoring according to a method as described herein.

Certain implementations of the invention comprise computer processors which execute software instructions which cause the processors to perform a method of the invention. For example, one or more processors in a battery tester may implement methods for determining the state of charge of batteries based on measured induced magnetic fields by executing software instructions in a program memory accessible to the processors. The invention may also be provided in the form of a program product. The program product may comprise any medium which carries a set of computer-readable instructions which, when executed by a data processor, cause the data processor to execute a method of the invention. Program products according to the invention may be in any of a wide variety of forms. The program product may comprise, for example, magnetic data storage media including floppy diskettes, hard disk drives, optical data storage media including CD ROMs, DVDs, electronic data storage media including ROMs, flash RAM, or the like. The

14

computer-readable signals on the program product may optionally be compressed or encrypted.

Where a component (e.g. a software module, processor, assembly, device, circuit, sensor, etc.) is referred to above, unless otherwise indicated, reference to that component (including a reference to a "means") should be interpreted as including as equivalents of that component any component which performs the function of the described component (i.e., that is functionally equivalent), including components which are not structurally equivalent to the disclosed structure which performs the function in the illustrated exemplary embodiments of the invention.

While a number of exemplary aspects and embodiments have been discussed above, those of skill in the art will recognize certain modifications, permutations, additions and sub-combinations thereof. It is therefore intended that the following appended claims and claims hereafter introduced are interpreted to include all such modifications, permutations, additions and sub-combinations as are within their true scope.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for determining a state of an electrochemical battery, the method comprising:

exposing an electrode of the electrochemical battery to an electromagnetic excitation field;

measuring magnetism induced in the material of the electrode by the electromagnetic excitation field; and determining the state of the electrochemical battery based at least in part on the measured induced magnetism;

wherein the method comprises causing the electromagnetic excitation field to vary at a frequency and discontinuing the electromagnetic excitation field before measuring the induced magnetism and

varying the frequency at which the excitation field varies and identifying a transition frequency, the transition frequency corresponding to a highest frequency at which the magnetic field component of the electromagnetic excitation field fully penetrates the electrode being monitored.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the frequency is in the range of 1 kHz to 20 kHz.

3. The method according to claim 1 comprising, after identifying the transition frequency, varying the excitation field at the transition frequency.

4. The method according to claim 1 wherein exposing the electrode to the electromagnetic excitation field comprises, for a first interval, exposing the electrode to a first electromagnetic excitation field of a first frequency and for a second interval exposing the electrode to a second electromagnetic excitation field having a second frequency higher than the first frequency.

5. The method according to claim 1 wherein the state comprises a state of health of the battery and the method comprises charging the battery to a known state of charge before measuring the induced magnetism.

6. The method according to claim 5 wherein the known state of charge is fully charged.

7. The method according to claim 5 wherein determining the state of health comprises comparing a measure of the induced magnetism to a stored value representing the induced magnetism when the electrochemical battery had a known state of health.

8. The method according to claim 7 wherein determining the state of health comprises comparing a measure of the induced magnetism to a stored value representing the induced magnetism when the electrochemical battery was new.

15

9. The method according to claim 1 wherein the electrode is adjacent to a wall of a case of the battery and the method comprises measuring at a location outside of the case a magnetic field resulting from magnetism induced in the electrode.

10. The method according to claim 1 wherein the state is a state of charge of the battery.

11. Apparatus for determining a state of an electrochemical battery, the apparatus comprising:

an excitation field generator configured to apply an electromagnetic excitation field to an electrode of the electrochemical battery;

a magnetic field detector positionable to determine an induced magnetization induced in the material of the electrode by the excitation field; and,

a controller configured to determine the state of the electrochemical battery based at least in part on the induced magnetization

wherein the controller is configured to:

cause the electromagnetic excitation field to vary at a frequency;

discontinue application of the electromagnetic excitation field before measuring the induced magnetism; and

vary the frequency at which the excitation field varies and identify a transition frequency, the transition frequency corresponding to a highest frequency at which the

16

magnetic field component of the electromagnetic excitation field fully penetrates the electrode being monitored.

12. The apparatus according to claim 11 wherein the state is a state of charge of the electrochemical battery and the controller is configured to receive a signal indicative of the induced magnetism and to estimate the state of charge of the electrochemical battery based at least in part on the signal.

13. The apparatus according to claim 12 wherein the controller is configured to display on a display the estimate of the state of charge of the battery.

14. The apparatus according to claim 13 wherein the controller comprises a calibration function, the calibration function providing a relationship between values of the signal and corresponding states of charge of the battery.

15. The apparatus according to claim 14 wherein the calibration function comprises a lookup table and the controller is operable to look up the state of charge using a value of the signal as a key.

16. The apparatus according to claim 11 wherein the controller is configured to determine the value of the signal when the electrochemical battery has a known state of charge and to determine a state of health of the electrochemical battery based at least in part on the value of the signal.

\* \* \* \* \*