

**120 KING STREET – SPARLING SALES BUILDING
(A. CARRUTHERS & CO. BUILDING)
*J. Greenfield, 1896***



Located in the heart of a growing needle trade district, this two-storey structure built for Andrew Carruthers was constructed as a result of Winnipeg's prominence in the historic fur trade. Carruthers had operated a hide and wood business in Ontario before coming to Winnipeg in 1889. The new company prospered and Joseph Greenfield was commissioned to design a main office for the trade of hides, wool, furs and Seneca root.

In 1906, the upper floor of the building was rented to the Der Nordwestern Publishing Company. This was the first and largest German language press in Western Canada, printing the weekly Der Nordwestern since 1889. It was the most important German language paper in the west. At its peak, from 1904 to 1914, Der Nordwestern published 20,000 copies weekly, and employed thirty people in the King Street plant. Difficulties occurred during the last days of the First World War, when all "foreign" newspapers were forced to publish in English. During the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, the publication was suspended outright.

In 1922, Frank Dojacek bought the business and expanded the firm to print several multi-lingual publications. Dojacek and his son Charles Dojack are credited with having a great influence on the ethnic press in Canada.

During the 1940s, the general offices of the fledgling Canadian Pacific Airlines were located in this building. From 1951 to 1983 Sparling Sales have operated a radio and television supply wholesale firm from this site. In 1983, the building was renovated and converted to offices with a restaurant in the basement.

Little is known about the architect, Joseph Greenfield, but this building shows how well-versed he was in the Romanesque Revival commercial vernacular. The structure is of heavy masonry construction with buff-coloured brick on a limestone foundation. The original doorway was in the center arcade. Greenfield carried the rusticated stone up to the top of the first floor with a radiating pattern around the round-headed arches. The second level is divided by pilasters with rusticated stone accents. The recessed round-headed windows are given greater mass by the radiating round-headed brick motif. A corbel table supporting a rusticated stone cornice is used. What is most unusual about the roof-line is Greenfield's use of a pediment to cap off the building. This feature is rarely seen in warehouse design and is even more uncommon when combined with Romanesque Revival details in a structure having a flat roof.

The history in this small building combines the past of the fur trade, the arrival of the immigrant, and the beginnings of Canadian air travel.