

**171 McDERMOT AVENUE – DAWSON RICHARDSON BUILDING
(DE SOTO'S)
*C.S. Bridgman, 1921***



Winnipeg is fortunate to have this distinctive block of buildings situated along McDermot Avenue just east of Main Street. The six buildings east from the lane form an historic streetscape that is unusual for the warehouse district because of its small scale. With the exception of the Porter Building on the far end, the buildings are all low, primarily three storeys, compatible in scale and materials, and complementary in design.

Before 1885, McDermot Avenue was known as Owen Street. Because of its proximity to major thoroughfares, this street was considered a prime location for smaller business and has never been a residential district. While McDermot Avenue west of Main Street has enjoyed some historical stature as “Newspaper Row,” the designation of “Printer’s Row” could apply equally well to this block east of Main. The Dawson Richardson Building was completed in late 1921 and was the last structure to be built along this street.

Dawson Richardson was a grain broker who in 1920 founded a firm devoted to the publication of news for the grain trade. William Sanford Evans, the firm's vice-president, was a well-known statistician, stock broker, politician and publisher. He was the editor of the *Winnipeg Telegram* (1901-1905) and the president and owner of the Telegram Printing Company. His other business activities included being a founding member and president of the Winnipeg Stock Exchange, president of the Royal Canadian Agencies, Canadian Industrial Securities Company and vice-president of the Canadian Bond and Mortgage Corporation. He served as Mayor of Winnipeg from 1909-1911 and sat as a Conservative member of the Manitoba Legislature for fourteen years. Richardson Publications printed the *Grain Trade News*; the *Western Gardener*; *Beekeeper and Poultry Magazine*; and the *Musical Life and Arts Magazine*.

Initially the publication firm was located in Dawson Richardson's brokerage office, but the nature of the enterprise warranted larger quarters. Architect Charles S. Bridgman was commissioned to design a two-storey solid brick building. Bridgman was a graduate of Atelier Masguray in New York and came to Winnipeg in 1903 to establish a practice. He designed a number of churches, apartment blocks and residences in the city including the Courtyard Building on River Avenue.

Although the Dawson Richardson Building is twenty to thirty years younger than its neighbours, it respects the scale, design, and materials of the streetscape. The architect understood the relationship of the older structures and his design demonstrates respect and sensitivity. Built of dark brick, this building is two stories high over a raised basement. The symmetrical façade is regularly punctuated with windows articulated with light-coloured stone sills. A low crenellated parapet tops the structure which also features ornamental brickwork. The building's appearance has not altered radically since its construction.

In 1972 the building was vacant but in the following year it was renovated and converted into the Lock, Stock and Barrel Restaurant with a cocktail lounge in the basement and a licenced dining room on the first floor. The building, one of the first to be rehabilitated in the warehouse district, now houses Desoto's, a popular nightclub.