

**321 McDERMOT AVENUE – FINNIE MURRAY BLOCK
(WESTERN GLOVE BUILDING)
*G.W. Northwood, 1912***



This functional five-storey building on the western fringe of Winnipeg's warehouse district was erected in 1912 for the Finnie and Murray Manufacturing Company, a wholesale manufacturer and importer of dry goods, men's furnishings and small wares.

The firm, founded in 1910 as a partnership between two city businessmen, David N. Finnie and George C. Murray, subsequently became Murray's Ltd. in 1922 when the partnership dissolved.

Finnie and Murray initially operated from the Miller Morse Block on Princess Street. The firm's ability to erect its own elaborate and expensive structure within two years attests to the availability of investment capital and the market opportunities associated with prairie settlement prior to World War I.

The building, on the northwest corner of McDermot Avenue and Adelaide Street, marked the first incursion of the warehouse district west of Adelaide. It was designed in the Edwardian Commercial style by George W. Northwood and constructed by the Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company for \$81,500.

Northwood arrived in Winnipeg in 1905 after studies in Montreal. He had a distinguished military career during World War I, then joined in partnership with another decorated veteran, Cyril W.U. Chivers. Their architectural firm was responsible for many of the city's outstanding commercial and public projects in the 1920s and 1930s. Northwood also served on the boards of the Manitoba Association of Architects, Manitoba Club and Sanatorium Board, and as the province's representative to Dominion government discussions about post-war relief programs.

The Finnie Murray Block is of brick and mill construction with a raised stone foundation. Red menomoni brick is used on the McDermot (south) and Adelaide (east) elevations; yellow-ochre brick appears on the other sides. Ashlar limestone is used for highlights. Consistent with the Edwardian Commercial style, there is very little ornamentation on the building except at the base and attic.

Emphasis on the ground level is achieved through the contrast of rusticated red brick with the light stone foundation, stone belt above the first storey, and stone caps on the pilasters. Three bays of large single windows appear on both façades. Doors at the southeast corner open onto McDermot and Adelaide from a common vestibule. Two loading docks, one of which is recessed to obtain shelter from the elements, and a service entrance are at the southwest end of the building.

Seven bays of flat-headed windows appear on the upper levels of the McDermot elevation; four bays, plus an iron fire escape, appear on the Adelaide side. Most windows are in pairs and are trimmed with stone sills. Brick panels, in a herring-bone pattern with raised limestone diamonds in the center, top each window bay. Stepped brick-work, and sets of three stylized brick corbels, complete the transition from the attic to the cornice.

The interior is supported by square timber beams and posts with plank laminate for the flooring. It originally was designed to include office, show-room, warehouse and manufacturing space.

By 1927, Murray's Ltd. had left the building. Western Glove Works Ltd. assumed ownership, sharing space with three tenants – Garry Press Ltd., the *Weekly News* and the *Jewish Post*. Garry Press remained until the early 1950s; Western Glove maintained its manufacturing operations in the building until September 1987 when it relocated to a new plant in the Logan Industrial Park.

Bob-Lamar Holdings Inc., current owner, is rehabilitating the structure for mixed office and warehouse uses with assistance from the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative.