

70 ALBERT STREET – TELEGRAM BUILDING
Architect Unknown, 1882



Built for R.J. Whitla, this four-storey building was a warehouse and office for his dry goods wholesale business. When constructed in 1882, it was one of the first large buildings in this formerly residential district; however, by 1900 the area was known to Winnipeggers as the “warehouse district”. The area was ideal – close to markets, main streets and the railway but with enough economical space for the necessary loading docks and large-scale operations.

As Winnipeg serviced a hinterland that extended from Thunder Bay to the Rockies, the wholesale businesses thrived and grew. By 1899, Whitla moved the business to a bigger warehouse. The Telegram Printing Company purchased the former Whitla Building and used it to print both a daily and a weekly Telegram. The paper was staunchly Conservative at a time when partisan politics, even for the press, was fair play. In 1901, Sanford Evans, then a Toronto journalist, purchased the paper and became its editor for several years. Following his election as mayor of Winnipeg in 1909, he continued to use the paper to support his cause. When the Telegram merged with the Tribune in 1920, Evans went on to become a member in the Manitoba

Legislature and eventually the Conservative leader of the opposition. The W. Sanford Evans Company continues business in financial, statistical and printing concerns to this day.

The style of the massive structure is emphatically Victorian, with architectural details drawn from numerous classical orders. Excellent and creative craftsmanship is demonstrated in the brickwork, and the heavy cornice and rounded windows add to the beauty and interest of this structure.

In 1921, the building again became the warehouse for a dry goods business, and later for a household appliance firm until it was purchased by Modernage Furniture Ltd. in 1976. The façade has been imaginatively painted, and cast iron columns are visible now that the interior has been renovated.