



365 BANNATYNE AVENUE

FORMER STOVEL COMPANY BUILDING

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings Committee

August 1992

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In 1841 at a mission near Norway House, the Methodist minister James Evans employed lead from the lining of tea chests, hand-made wooden moulds, and a jackpress used for bundling furs to produce one hundred copies of his 16-page Cree translation of hymns. This dedicated but makeshift effort was the first printing operation in what was to become Manitoba.¹ Eighteen years passed before the area's first newspaper, The Nor'Wester began publishing in the Red River Settlement.

Over the next four decades, the region slowly developed. Provincial status was granted, the City of Winnipeg was incorporated, and railway development greatly improved the area's links with population and industrial centres in Eastern Canada. Prairie settlement gradually expanded until the turn of the century when mass immigration along an ever-increasing network of railway lines led to an economic boom across all of Western Canada.

Winnipeg, at the heart of this growth, quickly acquired the types of services available in the more established eastern centres. Printing was one such service that developed at pace with the region. Newspapers, pamphlets, advertisements, magazines, business cards, directories, and a host of other printed matter soon were being produced in Winnipeg for local, national and international consumption.

In 1916, one of the early and most influential printing firms in the city, the Stovel Company, built new premises on the western outskirts of the warehouse district.

STYLE

The former Stovel Company Building is a utilitarian structure, lacking in style due to the nature of its role. Because this was a printing factory, emphasis was placed on making the building as

¹ D.C. McMurtrie, The First Printing in Manitoba (Chicago: Eyncourt Press, 1931), p. 8.

sturdy as possible. Ornamentation was limited, although the status of the original owners, and the fact that some contact with the public was necessary, assured the inclusion of some embellishments in the design.

CONSTRUCTION

The building is located on the north side of Bannatyne Avenue between Ellen and Dagmar streets. The land is legally described as 6&7^W St. John, Plan 151, Lots 1 and 2, part of Lot 3, Lots 15 and 16.²

The two-storey structure is supported by a reinforced concrete foundation and structural framework. This construction type represents an advancement in warehouse/factory design from the earlier mill construction. The latter, used throughout North America, was based on a frame of large, squared timber columns and beams. It offered both support and fire resiliency, which were important considerations for large structures. In 1906, however, the Bemis Bag Company built a six-storey reinforced concrete plant in Winnipeg, thus bringing a new technology to the warehouse district.³ Reinforced concrete was used for beams, columns, slabs for floors and ceilings and walls. The method was much stronger and more fire resistant than its wooden counterpart. John Woodman, one of the architects responsible for the design of 365 Bannatyne Avenue, was among the local pioneers of this type of construction.

The former Stovel Company Building contains a series of reinforced concrete mushroom columns,⁴ 81.3 cm (32”) in diameter in the basement and on the first floor, and 76.2 cm (30”) on the second floor. All floors are 22.9 cm (9”) concrete slabs. Footings were made extra large to accommodate additional storeys if needed.⁵

² City of Winnipeg Assessment Record, Roll No. 611075, Ward 2, PC 10. Below as AR.

³ L.K. Eaton, “The Bemis bag plant in Winnipeg, Canada,” in Concrete International, February 1979, pp. 63-65.

⁴ Named mushroom columns because they spread at both floor and ceiling levels to increase overall support.

⁵ AR.

The ceiling measures 4.04 m (13'3") in the basement, 3.97 m (13') on the first floor and 3.36 m (11') on the upper level. Exterior walls, built of Tyndall limestone and hard wire cut face red brick, measure 50.8 cm (20") in the basement, and 33.0 cm (13') on the first and second floors. The entire building measures 66.70 x 42.85 x 12.51 m (199 x 140½ x 41'), giving the owners over 32,000 cubic metres (1,146,340 cubic feet) of useable space.⁶ Total cost of the warehouse/factory was \$160,000; the contractor was the Fort Garry Construction Company. Materials used included 500,000 bricks, 2,505 superficial square m (3,000 square yards) of plaster, and nearly 3,500 cubic m (4,500 cubic yards) of concrete.⁷

DESIGN

The plain rectangular building draws its ornamentation from the varied materials of the main façades rather than from specific decorative elements (Plates 1 and 2). The smooth-cut Tyndall limestone base, in reality a raised basement, rises 2.14 m (7') above grade on all four elevations (Plates 3-5).⁸ The first floor features newer rectangular aluminum windows with smooth stone lug sills and is built of red brick.

The second floor of the south, east and west façades features several window groupings set in smooth stone panels. These panels are separated by small, horizontal dividers of red brick. The flat roof is unadorned, although the brick dividers rise above the level of the stone panels to create a battlement effect at roof level. The rear façade features a loading dock area, but stone window panels are absent from its top floor.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #346/1916.

⁸ AR.

INTERIOR

Access to much of the building could not be gained; however, the interior appears to have been significantly altered. One original element is the main stairway (Plate 6); some of the warehouse space on the top floor remains virtually unchanged.

INTEGRITY

The building occupies its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. Its outward appearance has been modestly altered (Plate 7). Permits listed for the building include: new basement completed in 1959, \$700,000 worth of alterations in 1977 (a loading dock, new roof, new windows and new interior flooring), and \$600 in interior alterations in 1979.⁹ The original main entrance on Bannatyne Avenue is presently covered by signage.

STREETSCAPE

The former Stovel Company Building is situated in a mixed-use area, sharing the block with the William Avenue Carnegie Library (now the City of Winnipeg Archives), and surrounded by schools, small- to medium-sized homes, and other large factories and offices. Taken as a group, they represent the type of mixed neighbourhood prevalent on the outskirts of the city's warehouse district.

ARCHITECT

Woodman and Carey, a local firm, designed the Stovel Company Building. This partnership was responsible for a number of outstanding structures throughout Winnipeg (see Appendix I for biographies). They have been given 20 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.

⁹ Ibid.

INSTITUTION

The Stovel Company was founded by three brothers from Ontario – John Augustus B., and Chester D. Stovel.¹⁰ They came to Winnipeg in 1885 from their birthplace at Mount Forest, Canada West (Ontario) where they had been involved in printing a weekly paper.¹¹ John began a modest printing company in Winnipeg in 1888. The next year, the brothers formed the Stovel Company, with headquarters in the Spencer Block (which was later demolished to make way for the Curry Building on Portage Avenue).¹²

In 1893, the firm, requiring larger facilities, erected its own premises at the corner of McDermott Avenue and Arthur Street (the present-day Kay Building, Plate 8). A German newspaper occupied the top floor of the three-storey structure. The first job lino-type purchased by any printer in Canada was bought by the company and put in the new facility. Also in 1893, the company acquired a local engraving and lithographing firm operated by brother Henry C. Stovel. Soon it was producing one of the earliest three-colour process plates in Canada.¹³

Expansion of the business necessitated alterations to the building in 1900. The structure was extended to King Street and two storeys were added to the entire complex. Only a dozen years later, the enterprise began to search for property to construct even larger facilities.¹⁴ The Bannatyne Avenue site was purchased and a small warehouse was built “principally then used for storage of paper and long press run production.”¹⁵

¹⁰ Winnipeg Tribune, May 30, 1923, p. 1; Winnipeg Free Press, December 20, 1937, pp. 1 and 7; and “Biography Scrapbooks,” Legislative Library, B7, p. 107. The three men were very successful in many fields: John (ca.1858-1923) was a Member of the Provincial Legislature in 1921 and 1922, president of the Winnipeg Board of Trade, and completed a term as managing executive of the Y.M.C.A.; Chester D. (1870-1937) was also the director of the Standard Trusts Company, and president of Nor’West Farmers Limited and Canadian Farm Implements Limited; and Augustus B. (1865-1921) was the director of the Empire Loan Company and president of the Baptist Union of Western Canada.

¹¹ Winnipeg Tribune, September 30, 1972, p. 10.

¹² Historical Outline of The House of Stovel (Winnipeg: Stovel Company Limited, 1931), p. 9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

On May 2, 1916, the McDermot Avenue building was completely gutted by fire.¹⁶ Although the walls remained standing, all interior merchandise and machinery was destroyed. Plans for a new plant on Bannatyne Avenue, which had been put aside because of World War I, were revived.

After the deaths of the three founding brothers, other family members took over control of the company. However, the firm ultimately moved into non-family management. It was renamed Stovel-Advocate Publishing ca.1953 and disappeared from city directories in 1976.¹⁷ In May 1977, the building was sold to the Dominion Construction Company which, in turn, sold it to GWG Limited.¹⁸ The Sterling-Stall Group, fur dealers, is the present occupant.

EVENT

There is no known significant event connected with this building.

CONTEXT

This building was a late addition to Winnipeg's warehouse district, therefore necessitating its removed location from the Market Square area. It is illustrative of the technological advances made in warehouse construction in North America which resulted in the replacement of wood members with reinforced concrete floors, beams and columns. It also reflects the trend that began during the War to replace highly stylized exterior designs with modest, less ornate structures.

¹⁶ Manitoba Free Press, May 3, 1916, p. 1.

¹⁷ Henderson's Directory, 1900-1980.

¹⁸ City of Winnipeg Assessment Roll, Roll No. 611075 (old No. 10213).

LANDMARK

The former Stovel Company Building occupies a removed location in the downtown and use by the public is minimal. It therefore has little familiarity or conspicuousness within the city or neighbourhood.



CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report

Date: July 1992

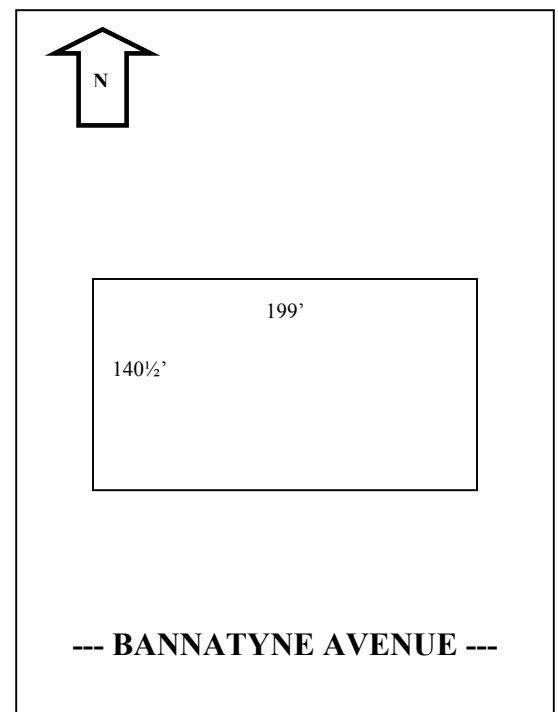
Assessment Record

Prepared By: M. Peterson

Building Address: 365 Bannatyne Avenue Building Name: Former Stovel Company Building
Original Use: factory/warehouse Current Use: factory/warehouse
Current Owner: --- Resident: ---
Roll No. (Old): 611075 (10213) Certificate of Title: ---
Municipality: 12 Ward: 2 Property or Occupancy Code: 50
Legal Description: 6&7^W St. John, Plan 151, Lots 1/2, part of Lot 3, Lots 15/16
Location: north side, from Ellen to Dagmar streets
Date of Construction: 1916 Storeys: 2 + basement
Construction Type: brick, stone and reinforced concrete
Building Permits (Plans available: [A] Archives; [M] Microfilm; [V] Vault):
- 346/1916 \$160,000 [A] (original); 3944/1959 \$10,000 (concrete floor in basement); 2061/1977 \$700,000 (alteration and addition); 460/1979 \$600 (interior alteration)

Information:

- 199 x 140½ x 41 = 1,146,340 cu. ft.
- roof – 9” concrete slabs, mushroom columns 32” in basement, 30” on 1st and 2nd
- Permit 2061/1977 – new roof, new aluminum windows, new interior floors, 2-storey loading dock built
- exterior walls – 20” concrete in basement, 13” “hard wire cut face brick” on 1st & 2nd ; cut stone base (7’) & window trim & mullions
- office section 40 x 88’, oak panelled walls & columns, plaster ceiling
- vestibule – plaster walls, terrazzo floor
- original footings made large to accommodate extra storeys if necessary



APPENDIX I

John Woodman & Raymond Carey

The Winnipeg architectural partnership of Woodman and Carey had a successful, albeit short career, designing numerous buildings of every size, description and use.

John Woodman was born in Oshawa, Canada West (Ontario) in 1860, moved to Winnipeg with the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1880, and by the late 1890s had risen to the post of chief engineer, western division. In the late 1880s, he also worked for the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway as an engineer and superintendent of construction.¹

In 1901 he retired from the railway to establish a private practice. He was a pioneer in the new technique of reinforced concrete construction, new in the sense that it was not popular in Winnipeg, although it was being used extensively elsewhere in North America.² He formed a partnership with Raymond Carey in 1911 and over the next five years they designed many structures in the city.³ In 1917 Woodman entered a new partnership with A.E. Cubbidge. From 1904-20 he was also one of the Hudson Bay Company's principal architects.⁴ He retired from his practice in 1927 and died in Winnipeg in 1944.⁵

Little is known about Raymond Carey, although he is still mentioned as an active architect in 1939.⁶ Carey is listed as the architect for the J.H. McDonald house, Tuxedo Park (1926), the Walter Moss house on Roslyn Road (1927), and the G. Harold Aikens house (ca. 1939).⁷

¹ Henderson's Directory, 1890, and "C.N.R. East Yards, N.P. and M.R. Engine House" in The Year Past, 1985 (Winnipeg: Historical Buildings Committee, 1985), pp. 27-8.

² L.K. Eaton, "The Bemis bag plant in Winnipeg, Canada" in Concrete International, February 1979, pp. 64-5.

³ City of Winnipeg, Building Permits (below as BP), 1910-1917.

⁴ Hudson's Bay Company Archives, "Architectural Drawings in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives."

⁵ Winnipeg Tribune, May 18, 1944.

⁶ "Western Winter: Winnipeg has Spacious Homes" in Canadian Homes and Garden, XVI, May 1939, pp. 34-7.

⁷ J. Wade, Manitoba Architecture to 1940 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1978).

An incomplete list of structures designed by one or both these men includes:⁸

- Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway Engine House, The Forks, 1889 (Woodman)
- Allen or Wilson Building, 288 McDermot Ave., 1905 (Grade III) (Woodman)
- Layton House, 101 Stradbrook Place, 1905 (Woodman)
- G.F.R. Harris House, 117 Stradbrook Place, 1905 (Woodman)
- McLean=s Block, 5922 Main St., 1905 (Woodman)
- Somerset Building, 294 Portage Ave., 1906 (Woodman)
- Breadalbane (Ambassador) Apartments, 379 Hargrave St., 1909 (Grade III) (Woodman)
- Sidney E. Lang House, 967 Grosvenor Ave., ca.1911 (Woodman and Carey)
- Hudson's Bay Company Wholesale Building, 77-93 Main St., 1911 (Woodman and Carey)
- Lorne Cameron House, 265 Dromore Ave., 1912 (Woodman and Carey)
- G.H. Miller House, 638 McMillan Ave., 1912 (Woodman and Carey)
- Lindsay Building, 228 Notre Dame, 1911 and 3-storey addition in 1912 (Grade II) (Woodman and Carey)
- The Free Press Building, 300 Carlton St., 1911-13 (Woodman and Carey)
- Union Stock Yards, Administration Building and Powerhouse, 780 Marion St., 1912-13 (Woodman and Carey)
- Goldin and Company (Blackwood's Ltd.) Building, 415 Mulvey Ave. East, 1912 (Woodman and Carey)
- J.B. Carter (Blackwood's Ltd.) Building, 421 Mulvey Ave. East, 1912 (Woodman and Carey)
- Rodgers (Heubach) house, 64 Nassau St., 1913 (Grade III) (Woodman and Carey)
- Paris Building, 257 Portage Ave., 1915-17 (Grade II) (Woodman and Carey)
- Stovel Company Building, 365 Bannatyne Avenue, 1916 (Woodman and Carey)
- The Public Press Building, 290 Vaughan St., 1917 (Grade III) (Woodman and Cubbidge)
- J.H. McDonald house, Tuxedo Park, 1926 (Carey)
- Eaton's Company Track Warehouse, Alexander Ave., 1927 (Woodman)
- W. Moss house, Roslyn Road, 1927 (Carey)
- G.H. Aikens house, ca. 1939 (Carey)

⁸ Compiled from Ibid.; BP; Winnipeg Tribune, May 18, 1944; and Western Canada Contractor and Builder, July 1920, October 1922, September 1923 and May 1927.

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Plate 1 – 365 Bannatyne Avenue, former Stovel Company Building, front (south) façade. (M. Peterson, 1992.)

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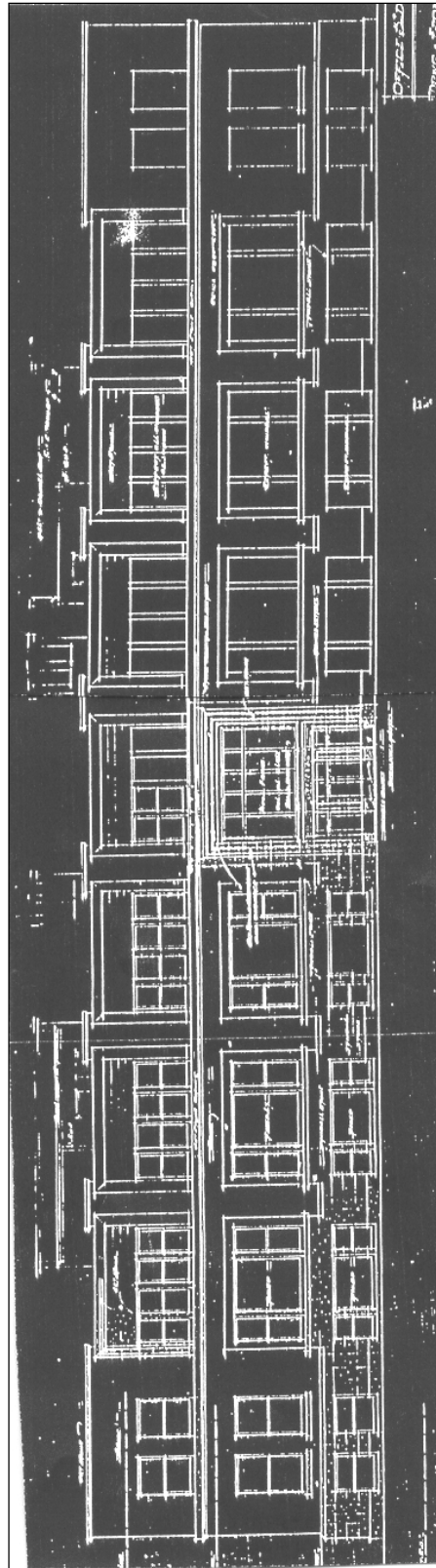


Plate 2 – 365 Bannatyne Avenue, former Stovel Company Building, original plan of south façade. (City of Winnipeg Archives, Plan #346/1916.)

365 BANNATYNE AVENUE – FORMER STOVEL COMPANY BUILDING



Plate 3 – 365 Bannatyne Avenue, south and east façades. (M. Peterson, 1992.)



Plate 4 – 365 Bannatyne Avenue, front and west façades. (M. Peterson, 1992.)

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Plate 5 – 365 Bannatyne Avenue, rear (north) façade. (M. Peterson, 1992.)

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Plate 6 – 365 Bannatyne Avenue, interior staircase. (M. Peterson, 1992.)



Plate 7 – 365 Bannatyne Avenue, Stovel Company Building, ca.1931. (Reproduced from Historical Outline of The House of Stovel [Winnipeg: 1931], p. 9.)

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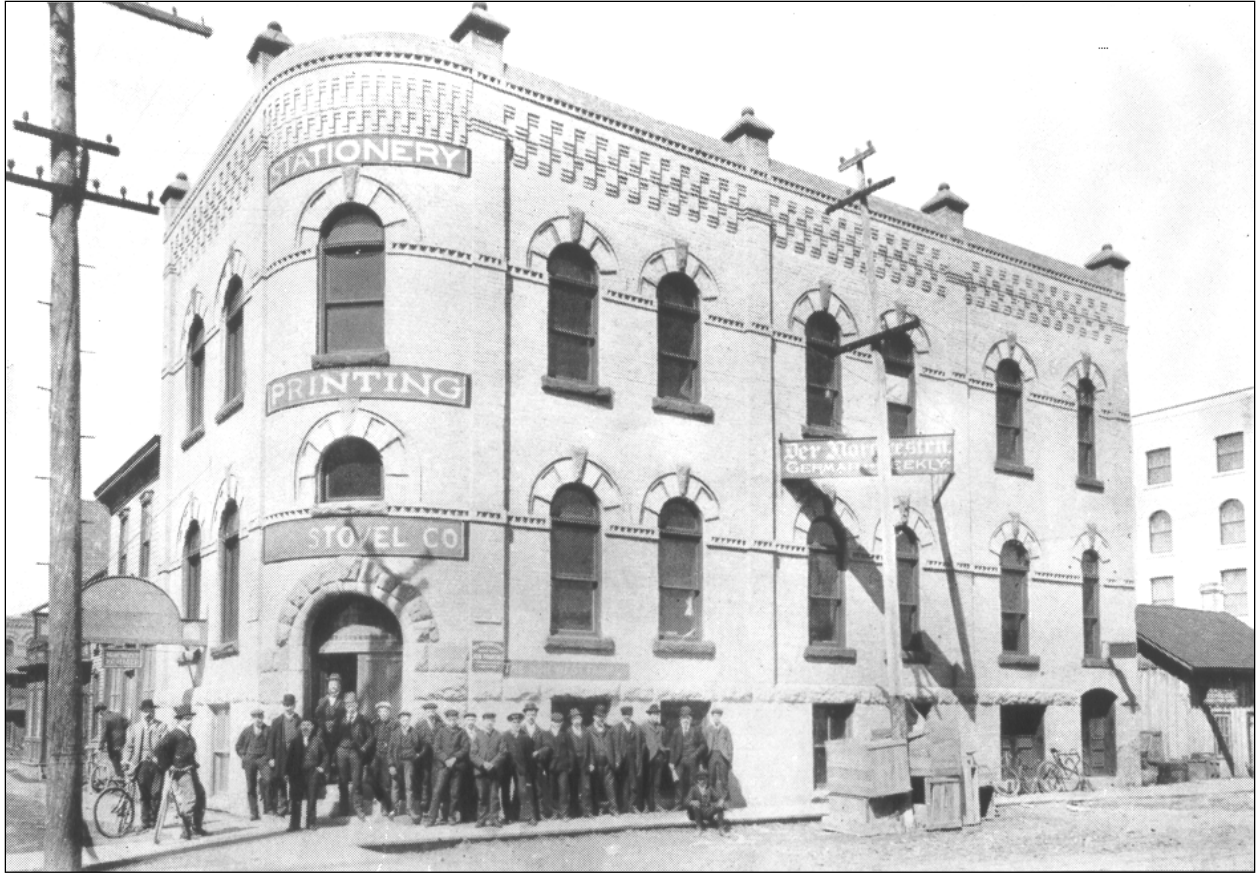


Plate 8 – 245 McDermot Avenue, Stovel Company Building, shortly after construction in 1893.
(Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)