

175 MCDERMOT AVENUE – TORONTO TYPE FOUNDRY BUILDING
David Ede, 1881; Victor Horwood, 1910



Built as a speculative venture during Winnipeg's 1881-82 land boom, this three-storey brick warehouse is the oldest of a distinctive series of six buildings on the north side of McDermot Avenue between Main and Rorie streets.

The six form an unusually small-scale streetscape in Winnipeg's historic warehouse district. With the exception of the six-floor Porter (Galpern) Building at the east end, all are two or three storeys in height and complementary in design and materials.

The warehouse at 175 McDermot was erected by its designer, David Ede, then a partner with Samuel Hooper in a marble works firm. Both men became practising architects, but it was Hooper who gained prominence as Provincial Architect (1907-11).

Ede quickly sold his building to Charles and George Wishart of George Wishart and Company, a retail and wholesale firm established in 1876. The Wisharts used the warehouse for their grocery wholesale business until 1885.

A series of occupants followed -- the Montreal-based fruit and produce firm, Vipond, McBride and Company; Rublee, Riddell and Company, a local business which purchased Vipond, McBride's Winnipeg interests; and Love, McAlister and Company, a stationery wholesaler that took over the building in 1895, sharing space with the Manitoba Produce Commission.

In 1898, the Toronto Type Foundry, an eastern firm which established its Winnipeg branch five years earlier, purchased the warehouse in order to be closer to the centre of the printing trade. Indeed, T.W. Taylor's printing plant and book bindery were next door at 177 McDermot and the Manitoba Free Press was at 183 McDermot.

The foundry carried advanced printing presses and other equipment. It also operated a job printing service for small rural newspapers and others who contracted to run their publications through the foundry's high-speed presses.

The facade of 175 McDermot has been altered substantially from Ede's ornate design which featured round-headed openings and generous use of light stone belt courses, lintels, window surrounds and oversized scrolled brackets at the cornice. The structure cost about \$5,000 to build and was sold with the land to the Wisharts for \$10,000, reflecting boom-time prices.

In 1910, the Toronto Type Foundry commissioned Victor Horwood to redesign the facade. He chose a more utilitarian image, consistent with the nearby Porter and Alloway buildings. The number of window bays was reduced to two from three; the openings became rectangular instead of round; and the entrance was relocated from the centre to the east end of the facade. Stone sills and two long keystones above the third-floor windows were used in contrast to the brown tapestry brick finish. The original cornice and pediment also eventually were removed.

The foundry remained at this site until 1968. Other long-time occupants of the building included the

Winnipeg Newspaper Union and Canadian Ingersoll Rand, a mining machinery company instrumental in providing equipment to open up this industry in the North. At present, the building houses the Plug In Gallery and a luggage shop.