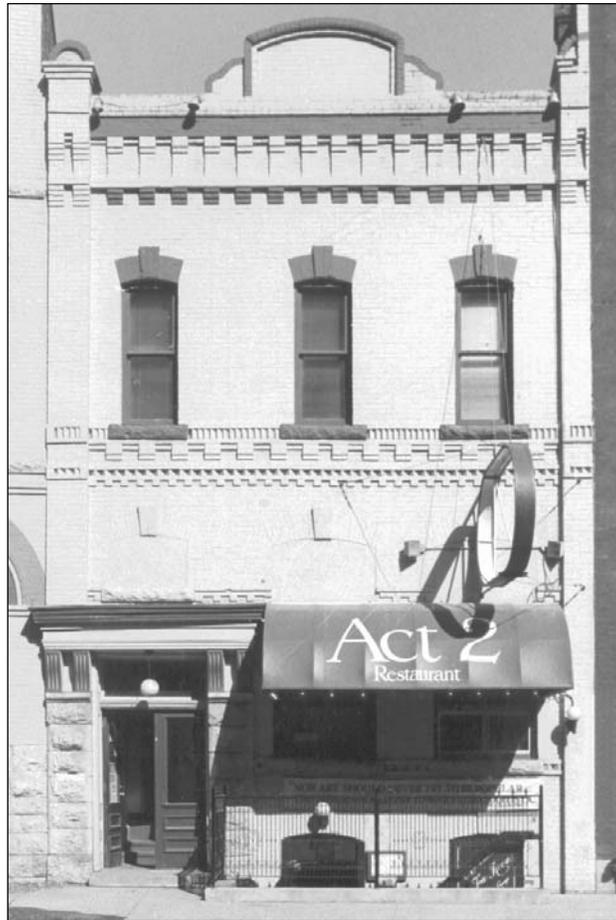


177 McDERMOT AVENUE – T.W. TAYLOR BUILDING
Architect Unknown, 1882



The T.W. Taylor building symbolizes McDermot Avenue's role for many years as the locale for printing. Built in 1882, this two-storey brick structure was a printing plant and book bindery which remained in business until the late 1960s.

Thomas William Taylor, the founder of the company, was born in England in 1852 and immigrated with his family to Ontario where he learned the trade of master bookbinder. He came to Winnipeg in 1877 and opened up his own book bindery business about 1879. In 1880 he purchased a 24 foot lot with a small frame building on McDermot Avenue to house his

printing operation. Within two years he was able to finance a new building with the increasing demand for his services.

Taylor was an energetic individual, one of a number of Winnipeg businessmen who took an active role in the growth of the young prairie city. He was elected alderman in 1892, mayor in 1893, and re-appointed mayor by acclamation the following year. In 1899 Taylor was elected as a Conservative member of the Manitoba Legislature where he held the seat for Winnipeg Centre until 1914. He was also chairman of the City Parks Board and was involved with various philanthropic institutions.

While the Taylor Building is one of two two-storey structures on the block, its design and materials make it perfectly compatible with its neighbours. It is uncertain who the architect was because the call for tenders in July 1882 directed contractors to Taylor himself. Measuring 24 by 80 feet, the building is solid brick on a foundation of limestone. The symmetrical façade is ornamented in a fashion that was typical for modest commercial structures in Canada during the 1880s. The windows have radiating brick segmental heads with a projecting keystone. Twin projecting brick pilasters define the outer edges of the building and are contrasted by corbelled brick patterns that accent the top of the first storey and the cornice line. A parapet crowns the structure with two side caps over the pilasters and a central segmented gable that mimics the shape of the window heads.

The interior of the building is long and narrow, lit by windows on the north and south elevations. Cast-iron columns support the central beam of the structure.

The Taylor Company specialized in quality bookbinding and the printing of account books and blank cheques for commercial use. As well, job printing, publishing, engraving, and ruling services were offered. When Thomas W. Taylor passed away in 1924, W.C. Birt, his son-in-law, took over the business until 1968 when the firm closed.

Since the early 1970s the building was occupied by numerous tenants including an art studio, modeling academy, fitness studio and a restaurant. Richardson Realty, the owners of the building, are planning to rehabilitate the building.