

Kickernick Building 1896, 1902



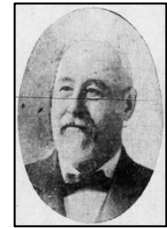
*The Minneapolis Tribune,
April 11, 1897*



*The Minneapolis Tribune,
September 23, 1873*

In 1896, the North Star Boot and Show Company built its seven-story factory at the corner of North Fifth Street and First Avenue North. The Company had been established twenty-three years earlier, with a workshop and salesroom located in the Pacific Block on Washington Avenue, between Second and Third Avenues North.

C.B. Heffelfinger purchased the First Avenue property for \$70,000. The red brick and timber Renaissance Revival structure, designed by Hayes and Spaulding, was built for \$75,000. The original building included keystoned arched entrances at the building corners.



C.B. Heffelfinger

North Star Boot and Shoe Company of Minneapolis had been incorporated in 1873. The *Minneapolis Tribune* reported on July 29, 1873, "The business to be carried on is to be the manufacture and sale of boots and shoes and such matters as are connected with the boot and shoe trade."

Christopher B. Heffelfinger grew up in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania and apprenticed himself to a tanner when he was eighteen years old. He relocated to Minneapolis and served in the Civil War. At the conclusion of the war, he returned to Minneapolis and organized the North Star Boot and Shoe Company, a trade that he knew well from his youth.

During the same year as the new factory construction, "Boot" was dropped from the name and the company became the North Star Shoe Company. C.B. Heffelfinger was the president and business manager.

On Sunday April 11, 1897, *The Minneapolis Tribune* included an article, "Late Fashions for Devotees of the Wheel". Biking had become all the rage. The same *Minneapolis Tribune* issue included a full-page ad for the North Star Shoe Company, displaying photographs of the factory, the latest footwear, and an invitation to the company's April 14, 1897, opening to the public. The ad included a brief history of the company, photographs of the interior of the factory, shots of women's shoes and boots, and the tagline, "This cannot help but be of interest to every citizen of Minneapolis, as we have the finest equipped shoe factory in the United States." North Star featured a line of bicycle boots known as the "Heffelfinger." The

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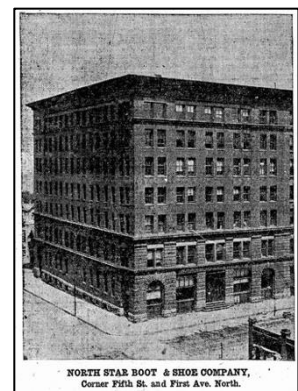
full-page ad announced, "Our bicycle shoe is worn by all the fast riders. Ask for the HEFFELFINGER. Take no other."

By 1899, the company employed five-hundred people in the Minneapolis factory (a second factory had been built in Anoka). The two factories had a daily capacity of three thousand pairs of shoes. On January 2, 1899, the *Minneapolis Times* quoted C.B. Heffelfinger, "The year just closing shows a volume of business well ahead of a year ago; in fact, the largest on record."

The Minneapolis Times reported on October 26, 1899, the death of a 19-year-old female employee. A beader, the young woman fell down the elevator shaft from the fourth floor to the basement. The young woman had been known as, "the life of the entire fifth floor upon which she worked." The elevator attendant had started the car upward and neglected to close the fourth-floor door. Just nine months previously, an eight-year-old boy had fallen into the basement of the factory, stumbling into the coal chute opening in front of the factory. Fortunately, he survived.

On February 16, 1902, *The Minneapolis Daily Times* reported that architects F.B and L.L. Long were preparing the plans to build a seven-story addition to the northern portion of the North Star Boot and Shoe Factory. When built, the factory was expected to provide adequate space for many years, however, the business had grown rapidly, and additional space was needed. The addition would be forty by seventy feet and would cost \$30,000. The addition was designed to look similar to the existing factory, except for the windows which were organized into vertical bands, unlike the original building.

In February 1906, the North Star Shoe Company advertised a competition to name two of its newest line of shoes. A prize of \$25 in gold was to be awarded to the person who submitted the best name for the women's shoe and men's shoe. That same year, it was announced that the S. T. McKnight Company purchased the building, with North Star Shoe signing a 20-year leaseback of the factor



The Minneapolis Journal
December 31, 1905

FOOT TROUBLES ARE DANGEROUS AND PAINFUL

BUNION → FLAT FOOT → CRAMPED TOES → CORNS →

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. If your feet ever bother you—if they get tired easily—don't wait until something more serious has developed—buy a pair of **NATURAL SHOES**—the sure preventive of all foot ills.

If you desire comfort, you will not wait for the signal that your instep is breaking down or that your toes are getting dangerously cramped, you will go to your nearest dealer and buy a pair of **NATURAL SHOES**.

Designed along scientific lines by a prominent surgeon who, troubled with foot weakness, and in a position to know how many others were afflicted in like manner, spent several years of study in perfecting the lasts on which **NATURAL SHOES** are built.

NATURALS are built in all sizes for men; neat in appearance, (being made in several stylish leathers with light and heavy soles) serviceable to a wonderful degree and above all—comfortable.

YOUR FEET DESERVE A PAIR

Naturals are one of the many lines of North Star Shoes

ALL NORTH STAR SHOES ARE GOOD SHOES. Ask for them.

If your dealer does not sell them write us direct.

NORTH STAR SHOE CO.
Minneapolis ·· Minn.

\$5.00

Neat, Stylish
and thoroughly
satisfactory

The Minneapolis Daily Times,
July 13, 1902

In 1907, North Star began advertising their shoes for persons with foot troubles, referring to North Star shoes as Natural Shoes.

By 1910, North Star Shoe Company had suspended business. C.B. Heffelfinger cited the failure as the direct results of the panic of 1907, "At the time of the panic, we were overstocked and could not dispose of the goods on the terms necessary or in the usual volume."

In August 1911, North Star Shoe Company changed the name of the company to Freeman Patterson Company. By 1921, alterations were being made to the building to accommodate the next tenant, the New England Furniture Company. Although the furniture company moved out in 1935, the building was called the New England building during the 1920s and 1930s.

The building was purchased by the Winget Kickernick Company in 1945. In time the building became known as the Kickernick.

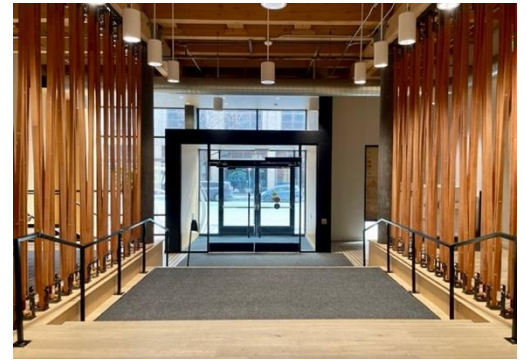
In 1958, a retired Minneapolis retailer purchased the building. Just one year later, Kickernick, the women's wear company had vacated the space, and the building was once again sold, this time to Allied Realty.

In 1983, the building was renovated into offices. In keeping with the entertainment and creative businesses in the neighborhood, the Kickernick became home to ad agencies and design firms. Neighboring buildings were leased to art galleries and architectural firms. The corner street level space has been home to no fewer than eight restaurants.

In January 1989, Kickernick Associates, a limited partnership purchased the building. United Properties purchased the building in 2017, transforming the interior which was completed in 2019. The original wood beam ceilings and red brick walls were exposed, and the original birch floors were refinished.

Kickernick LLC purchased the building in 2024. A woven leather screen guides one from the street into the entry corridor. An interior signage system tells the story of the building's past in the fabrication of shoes and clothing.

The Kickernick Building is a contributing structure in the Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.



Kickernick.com

