

## Textile Building

1900, 1909

The Textile Building, located at 119 N. Fourth Street (401 Second Avenue North), was designed by the Long and Kees architectural firm which designed eighteen buildings in the Warehouse District. The building was to be the second home of Winston, Farrington and Company which had outgrown its previous space. Winston started the grocery wholesale business in 1893. The building was initially named for the grocery company.



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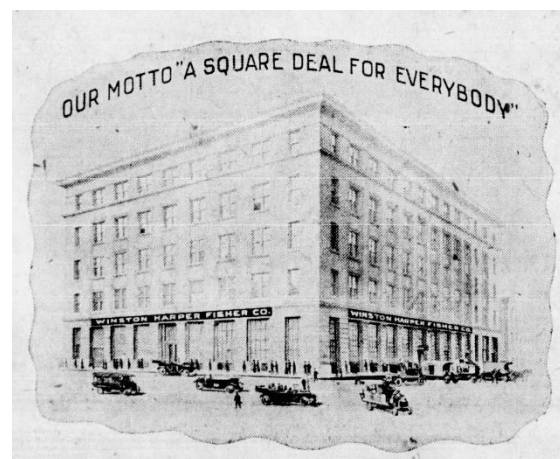
The five-story building was built of light-colored brick and terra-cotta and was constructed in the “mill construction” technique. Bedford stone was used for trim. The first floor of the building’s façade contains pilasters with striated brick and stylized capitals which divide the building into nine bays. The windows of the seven middle bays are paired and organized as vertical elements. A secondary cornice separates the top story, which is also organized with paired windows, flanked by single windows. A flat projecting cornice with an ornamental Greek fret completes the building.

A rear addition on Second Avenue, built in 1909, at an estimated cost of \$100,000, retains the design’s integrity. The addition had a forty-three-foot square open area where

men and teams of horses could work without blocking the alley. The 16-foot alley separated the structure from the Wyman Partridge Building.

The building had an “immense vault” to handle cigars. According to the *Minneapolis Journal* on April 26, 1900, goods kept in the vault would retain freshness indefinitely. The building permits indicate that a barn was constructed on the lot in 1891. The 1900 building permit for the new building listed Pike & Cook as the contractors.

*The Minneapolis Journal* reported on July 22, 1905, that the addition of the Winston, Harper, and Farrington Company (incorporated in 1903) wholesale grocery building, “produced a feeling of final determination of the wholesale site.” The area was now the designated wholesale district for Minneapolis. That same year, Winston, Harper, and Farrington reported that they had a good year and had done very well in candy and cigars. On May 5, 1909, the *Minneapolis Tribune* reported that an addition to the building would be made. The main floor of the addition would be a shipping room, and the remaining space would be storage. The addition



*Minneapolis Star Tribune, June 17, 1919*

would allow shipments to be completed on three sides of the building. A coffee roaster would be added later.

By June 17, 1919, *The Minneapolis Journal* noted that there were 110 wholesale businesses in the Warehouse District (25 grocers, 4 drugs, 8 dry goods, 8 boot and shoe, 3 fur, 5 flour and feed, 4 furniture, 10 hardware, 16 jewelry, 8 mail order, and 19 meat) combined with 13 fuel dealers, and 200 auto-dealers. Minneapolis had become the distribution center for the Northwest.



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*The Minneapolis Tribune* further reported, “The massive warehouse at 119-129 North Fourth Street is a monument to the men whose untiring efforts have made the name of the company [Winston, Harper, Fisher & Company] synonymous with satisfaction. The markets of the world have been scoured to find the staples and delicacies that are here gathered together. A glance at the list of officers inspires confidence in the company as one of the leading assets of both the city and the Northwest.”

The building made the news again in 1928, when it earned its name as the Textile Building. The building was remodeled at a cost of \$30,000. Gellman Brothers moved into the building.

*The Minneapolis Journal* on September 17, 1928, noted that Minneapolis became the textile center of the northwest when Duraware Corporation leased 8,000 square feet of space in the Winston-Harper-Fisher building on Fourth Street and Second Avenue. The newspaper stated that the five-story building was suited for light manufacturing. It was the first textile building in the northwest. Duraware moved from East Lake Street, expanded from 5,000 to 8,000 square feet, and increased its payroll from \$40,000 to \$75,000. Total sales in the next year were estimated to exceed \$200,000. New machinery was added with operations starting on October 1, 1928.



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Minnesota Specialty Company, manufacturers of cloth advertising products, also moved to the Textile Building on November 1, 1928, leasing 10,000 square feet. The firm had a payroll of seventy-five employees and did a gross business of \$250,000. It manufactured caps, aprons, coin bags and other cloth items.

In 1929, the corner store in the Textile Building was leased to S & L Company, chain store operators. That same year, store room space in the building was leased to Pheoll Manufacturing Company, distributors of brass and copper nuts, bolts, and screws. Also leased in the building in 1929 was space for the Star Tool Company for its expanding business.

Thereafter, the Textile Building was less in the news. On August 9, 1965, the Textile Building was advertised for sale at \$270,000 with six long-term tenants at \$50,000 gross rent.

*The Minneapolis Star Tribune* reported on February 17, 1994, that Peter the Great Coat Company was selling Russian made coats out of the building following a loosening of import restrictions.

The Forum Gallery was a tenant in the 1980s as was Old Market Spaghetti Works.

Swervo purchased the building in 2009 and did an extensive upgrade, adding a new entrance, adding a new passenger and freight elevator, and remodeling the restroom core.