



Lit against the night sky and reflected in the river, the finished masterpiece transcends time and place.

by the manner in which the cost of construction, furnishings and grounds landscaping was financed.

By 1954, when the debt was finally retired, the province's imposing capital building had cost more than ten times the initial estimate: \$23,105,569. By the time the project was completed and the two architects left Winnipeg, Simon and Boddington's commission, according to the Public Building Report of 1919 totalled \$250,000 – as required by their 1912 contract.

The present replacement value of the Manitoba legislature is more than one billion dollars, 500 times the first estimate. In fact, the building should probably be deemed priceless, for should anything happen to it, it could never be replaced. Not only is the cost of materials all but prohibitive, the skilled stonemasons and artisans of ninety years ago are no longer available.

The tenfold increase in financing the cost of the building loomed almost from the day the sod was turned in August 1913. A barrage of unexpected events at home and abroad created shortages of both labor and materials and there were charges of fraudulence and corruption. With the outbreak of World War I in August 1914, thousands of men left the Manitoba workforce to fight overseas.

Demand for munitions created both a price increase and a shortage of the steel required for construction. And scandal dogged the government for the next two years over faulty construction and increasing construction costs.

Constructed of Tyndall limestone quarried at Garson, twenty-five miles northwest of Winnipeg, the Legislative Building is built in an H-design. It faces Broadway, immediately south of downtown Winnipeg, and lies in the centre of twelve hectares of landscaped grounds planted with both native and imported shrubs and trees. In the summer, the walkways and rolling lawns are accented by formal flower beds. The gardens are planted annually with 4,000 geraniums, lilies and chrysanthemums, plus hundreds of petunias, snapdragons and salvia grown in a greenhouse on the riverbank at Kennedy Street.

The Assiniboine River, long a highway for the region's original peoples, as well as for later trappers and traders, forms the southern boundary of the property, while Osborne and Kennedy Streets bound it on the west and east. Its three floors contain an area of approximately one-quarter of a million square feet or 22,500 square metres. Its two wings, which form the vertical



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Summer and winter, the riverside gardens and black lamp standards create a sculptured effect on the south Legislative Grounds.