

Phillips Building [No. 203]

1874 – John A. Phillips

The New York Store, owned by N.O. Lawton and John M. Post, was a prominent business in the massive Wilcox Block before the Great Fire of 1874. They moved to this location later that year and, by 1875, had expanded their well-established business into the back half of No. 205. Having lost \$30,000 – the equivalent of \$690,000 today – with slightly more than half of it insured, it seems they were unable to recover financially. In 1877, they were forced to declare bankruptcy. Lawton's interest was purchased by A.C. Sweet who, with Post, resurrected the store.

In those days, merchants often named their stores after prominent cities to give them a more upscale image. Though the

New York Store changed hands a number of times, it operated here under that name for the next 34 years.

Post died in 1882 leaving Sweet as the sole owner. He ran a successful business until 1898 when he sold the business to Samuel A. Rivenburg. He operated **The New York Store** for another ten years until 1908, retiring shortly after the death of his wife.

L.D. Stocking then moved his very successful men's clothing store to this location as a precursor to going into partnership with his longtime assistant, A.C. Holzer. It opened as **Stocking & Holzer Clothing**, doing business here until Stocking's death in 1923. Holzer continued as sole proprietor until 1961.

William Few, a merchant tailor, relocated his business to the 2nd floor of Phillips' new

building in 1874. He immigrated from England as a boy and moved to Independence in the 1850s to establish a tailoring business. He shared the space with **Judge O.H.P. Roszell**, another pioneer settler who came to Independence in the late 1840s. His first job was teaching school, which allowed him to study law. He was elected as County Judge in 1851. In 1858, he was elected as County Superintendent of Schools; he also served as mayor a number of times. Sadly, he died quite suddenly in 1877 at the young age of 50.

In 1885, John Burke moved **Burke's Barber Shop** to this location, remaining through 1904. He was one of the earliest and most respected barbers in the town.