

Burr Block [North Half – No. 117 & 119]

1874 – Nathaniel Burr

The northern most storefront of Burr Block, No. 119, was occupied by **J.L. Cross Organs, Pianos & Sewing Machines** through 1883. Burr re-opened his agricultural warehouse at No. 117, the second storefront from the north. With his departure in 1877, he rented it to **S.C. Luckey & Co. Restaurant**. Luckey sold the restaurant to George Wilkins in 1880, who then passed it on to Frank Aborn and Charles Few. They renamed it the **Chatham Street Restaurant** and operated it for several years.

In 1884, these two storefronts were purchased by Daniel Smyser, a local lawyer. Smyser rented both to saloon keeper Michael Daugherty on the condition that he

strictly follow the city's temperance laws. In 1888, **Daugherty's Saloon**, along with several others, were permanently shut down for failure to comply.

The storefronts were once again rented separately. The newly organized **Rush Park Seed Co.** set up shop at No. 119 in late 1889. By 1896, they needed more space and moved to a building of their own.

Meanwhile, the **Bargain Hardware** store opened at No. 117 in 1890. It was first owned by Robert Gick and, later, D.W. Hammond. In 1895, O.R. **Gates Hardware** moved to Independence and set up shop at this location. He soon transferred to 1st St. E., making way for the **Webster Seed Co.** Mel L. Webster, one of the founders of the Rush Park Seed Co., sold his interest in 1897 and opened his own seed store. He

occupied both of the north end storefronts and developed a highly successful business.

Webster remained until 1911 when P.C. Heege, a furniture merchant and undertaker, bought these two storefronts and rented the two to the south for his thriving business. He remodeled the interior of the block into one large store and filled both floors with merchandise. It became known as **Heege's Big 4 Furniture Store**. Heege's was a major retail establishment in the downtown through 1948.