

## Montague Liveries

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H. F. Banks & Company Livery – located on the Northwest corner of Dowling and Water streets

The livery stable was an essential service in every town where land travel was involved. In addition to renting out horses, wagons, etc., the livery stable also provided a place for boarding horses, whether the owner was just in town for a few hours running errands or departing on the train for a longer period of time. The livery served as a kind of parking garage for horses, where they would be fed and looked after until the owner returned. Montague had several liveries or livery stables during its history. Even the Franklin House Hotel reportedly had a livery stable for guests to keep their horses while in town.

In 1876, the Partridge brothers, Fred and John, were operating the Montague Livery, Feed and Sale Stable on Spring Street near the depot. This was a very convenient location for anyone getting off the train and needing a horse or other mode of transportation to get them to their destination.

In 1883, Noel Traversy was operating a Livery located on River Street. It was later sold to August Johnson in 1886.

Llewellyn (L.H.) Clapp had a livery on Spring Street in 1883, according to the City Directory. In 1884, when he decided to move to Muskegon, he sold his livery to August Johnson.

Johnson maintained the livery until August 1886 when he sold the business to George Schuyler. Johnson then established a cheap "bus line" which ran between the two towns every 20 minutes at a cost of just five cents.

According to the 1883 City Directory, George Dumprope had a livery on Ferry Street. According to a map from that time, it looks like it was near the fire station, in the area about where Todd's Pharmacy was built and now The Book Nook & Java Shop. It seems like the livery may have been taken over by brothers John and David Dumprope. It is unclear exactly how long it operated at that location, but a Livery was still located there according to a map in 1910.

In 1883, Lish Wells & John Dennis had a livery on Stebbins near Church Street. In February 1885, Dennis sold his interest in the livery to August Peterson, and it became known as Wells & Peterson.

In 1885, Lish Wells sold his interest in the Montague livery to his partner August Peterson. Peterson continued to operate the livery until his death in January 1901, when the livery went up for auction. In April 1901, Neven (N.P.) Hendrie, Capt. Charles Lysaght, and Ole Olson bid on the Peterson livery. N. P. Hendrie came away as the winner with a \$1,506 bid. The services of Will Paulie and James Reavy were retained. Will Paulie later left and was replaced by Ed. Boardwell.

In October 1902, John Dennis and his assistant Will Paulie succeeded in bidding for Hendrie's livery business. They added new robes and blankets to the equipment as well as some new horses. Mr. Dennis took special care to get good gentle horses which could be driven by the ladies. In June 1905, the livery caught fire and burned to the ground. The livery was located on the northwest corner of Water and Bridge streets (now Dowling).

In 1905, Peter Anderson leased a building owned by Charles Wiard, and formerly occupied by Blacksmith Elmer Grow, and set up a Livery Stable and Blacksmith Shop there. In March 1906, he suffered a devastating loss when a fire destroyed 9 horses, several buggies and the entire contents of the barn. He was able to convince Mr. Wiard to replace the barn and was back in operation a month later. In April 1917, Peter Anderson gave up the livery business and moved to his farm just outside of town.

H. F. Banks' name became associated with the Montague Livery business in October 1905 when it was reported that he set up shop in the barn that was once used by the former Dennis livery. Banks also bought the adjacent property and moved the Franklin Hotel barn to the area to use in connection as his livery business. In Jul 1907, he completed construction of a large 2-story 50x75 foot building with a basement, on the site where the former livery stood. The main floor was for carriages and office space and the upper floor was finished living quarters for Mr. Banks and his wife.

On May 1, 1924, it was reported in the local newspaper that one of the largest real estate transactions in many years took place when H. F. Banks sold his big garage and motor busses and trucks to Robert King and his father-in-law Joseph Mason of Fruitvale. The deal included the entire property – the large two-story frame building on Bridge Street; five lots and the feed stable in the rear; also 10 cars, busses and trucks.

Shortly after purchasing the Banks garage in 1924, Mr. King offered the Ladies Improvement Club of Montague, two fine rooms at the garage for the ladies to furnish and which he would keep clean. The Ladies Improvement Club had been working on a rest room project for two years, and this gave the town its first rest rooms.

Ads that followed referenced only King and Sons, as Joseph Mason died in 1928. Later the King Brothers, Tom & Al, took over the building and operated a garage there until 1935, when they relocated to the Ohrenberger Service Station.

By 1938, the former Banks building was being used by George W. Zatzke who operated Hub Freight Terminal – agents for Wolverine Express and Bachelder Freight Lines.

In February 1946, Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Stoy purchased Wolverine Express Company from Zatzke.

In 1953 Howard Atchinson was associated with Wolverine Express.

At some point in its history, the building was painted red and because of its paint color, was often referred to as the “Big Old Red Barn”.

Barney Deyman, founder of Wolverine Express died in August 1960, at the age of 68.

The building was torn down in April 1961. The basement was filled in and the ground leveled.