

Palace Livery and Undertaking Company

Author:

Jennifer Levstik

WestLand Engineering & Environmental Services
4001 E. Paradise Falls Drive – Tucson, Arizona 85712
+1 520-206-9585

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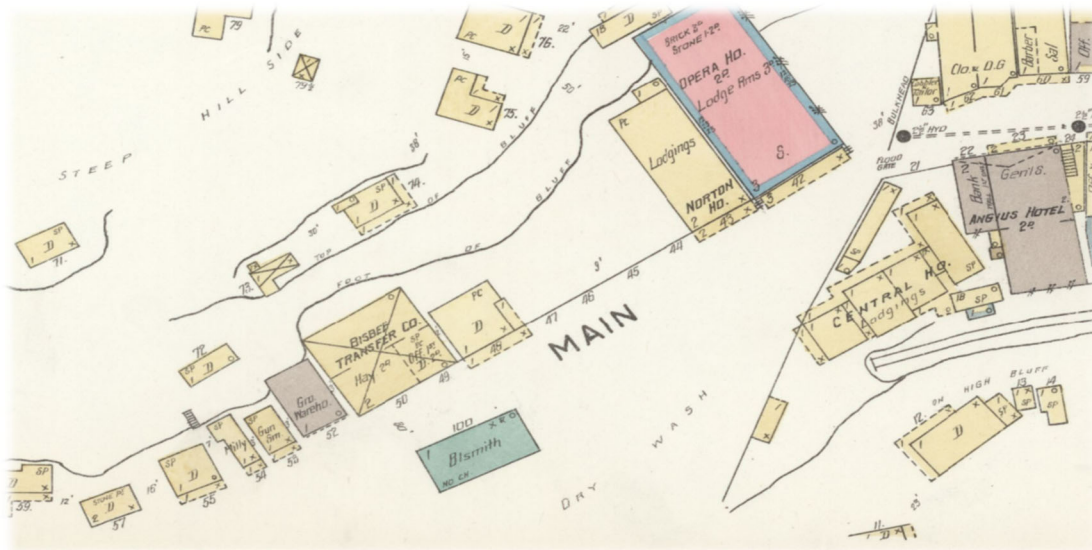


Palace Livery and Undertaking Company Building at 69 Main Street, Bisbee, Arizona

Palace Livery and Undertaking Company

The first iteration of the Palace Livery and Undertaking Company was the Bisbee Transfer Company building at 49-50 Main Street, built before or around 1898 in Bisbee, Arizona. The two-story, wood-framed building originally housed a freighting and shipping business owned by G. S. Shibley and Y. R. Stiles and managed by a man named E. B. Mason. Sometime around 1904, the building was purchased by J. J. Bowen, J. R. Henderson, and Walter G. Hubbard, who opened their livery and undertaking business in the former transfer building. The building proved to be an ideal place to set up their livery, as it was already subdivided to hold hay for horses and mules, and housed a small street-facing office with a large warehouse space along the north half of the building to accommodate horses and their undertaking business. By 1906, Hubbard and Bowen expanded the footprint of their building by adding a small one-story addition to the rear elevation.

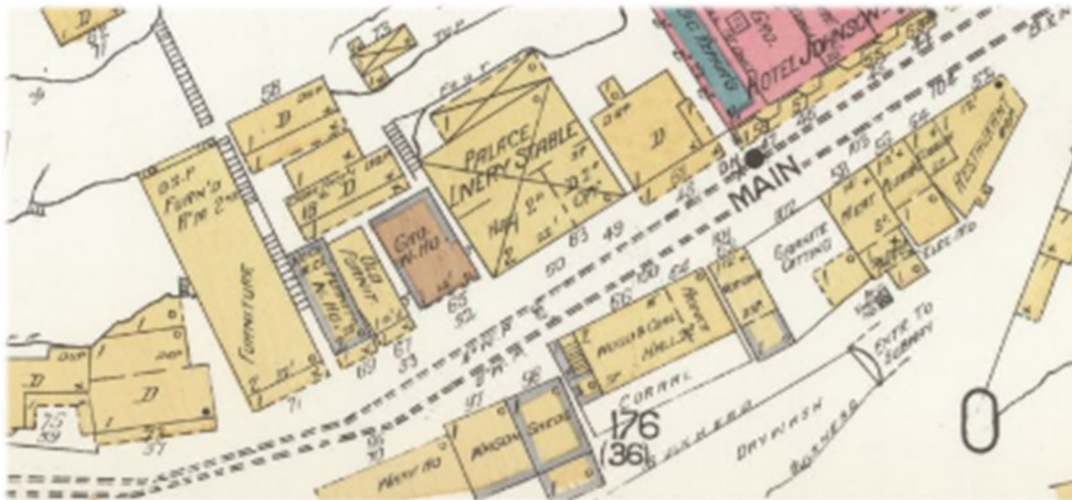
During their early tenure in the former transfer building, the livery and undertaking business expanded, and services included rentals of riding horses and carriages with drivers and the boarding of personal horses, as well as undertaking services for the community. The Palace Livery and Undertaking Company was one of two undertakers in Bisbee at the time, its only competition being the O.k. Livery and Undertaking Parlor managed by Robert Hennessey, who also provided livery services. Hennessey conducted funerals for Mexican, Hispanic, and African Americans, as well as Catholics, while Hubbard's undertaking business focused on Anglican and Protestant funerals, although it is unclear which ethnicities these included.



Excerpt of a 1901 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of Bisbee showing the former livery building at 49-50 Main Street labeled as the Bisbee Transfer Company. Image courtesy of the Library of Congress.



1904 Advertisement for the Palace Livery and Undertaking Company. *Bisbee Daily Review* 25 September 1904.



Excerpt of a 1906 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Bisbee showing the Palace Livery Stable at the same location as the former Bisbee Transfer Company. Image courtesy of the Library of Congress.



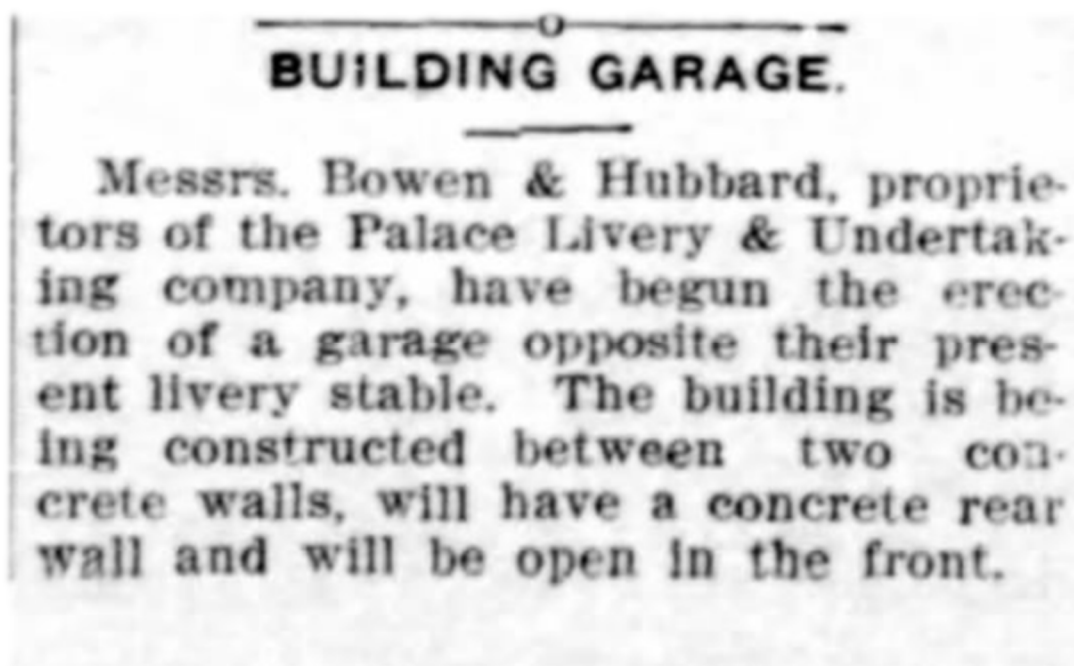
Interior photograph of the Palace Livery and Undertakers office in 1906. Unknown source.

On October 14, 1908, a catastrophic fire erupted along Bisbee's Main Street. Starting at the Grand Hotel on Upper Main Street at 6:00 pm, the fire consumed most of the frame and some of the brick buildings adjacent to the hotel, and by 9:00 pm over \$750,000 dollars' worth of damage had been done. Included in the ruins was the Palace Livery and Undertaking Company building. Despite the devastating loss, Hubbard and Bowen, who had since dissolved their partnership with Henderson, not only rebuilt their business but built it in grand style.

Between 1909 and 1910, they hired an unknown architect and contractor to design a three-story commercial building with a neoclassical storefront (today addressed as 69 Main Street). The new storefront consisted of a tripart façade framed by brick pilasters on stone footers, topped by a stepped parapet, three bays of windows—the central axis of which contained arched windows—atop a brick panel above two ground-floor storefront windows punctuated by a recessed entry. Neoclassical details included a decorative entablature below the cornice with fan molding, plaster medallions, and arched windows. Within the interior of the building, the first floor housed carriages and wagons, while horses and mules were housed on the second floor and transported via a hand-operated elevator (later replaced with an electric motor still present within the building), while undertaking services were housed on the third floor.

As indicated by the grandiosity of their new commercial building, the business was thriving, and Hubbard and Bowen expanded their enterprise to neighboring communities, including establishing a livery and undertakers in the mining community of Courtland. In 1909, they expanded their business again, adding a concrete garage to the rear of their building and establishing the Bisbee Automobile Company, selling Studebakers and Velie trucks and cars. According to Bisbee City Directories, sometime between 1924 and 1926, the businesses appear to have separated. The only business with a similar name, Palace Undertaking, was noted as being located at 76 Main Street (may also be a typo). Walter Hubbard maintained the undertaking business until at least 1936, with the name changing to Hubbard Mortuary and continuing under that name until 1968. It is unclear what became of the livery after 1914, but it is assumed that the popularity of the automobile replaced the need for horse-drawn transportation. By 1978,

the building housed the Bisbee Exchange and to the present day has housed multiple commercial businesses.



Newspaper excerpt announcing the expansion of Bowen and Hubbard’s livery and undertaking business. *Bisbee Daily Review* 11 May 1909.

Interestingly, little archival information could be found about two of the men—J. J. Bowen and J. R. Henderson—who established one of Bisbee’s early businesses. Because these men were often referred to in newspaper articles by their first initial and had common last names, it was difficult to distinguish them in local directories or newspapers from those with similar names beyond mention of them as prominent local businessmen. J. J. Bowen, presumed to be John J. Bowen, was born around 1871 in Missouri and married a woman named Elizabeth. He appears in the 1910 United States (U.S.) Census as a livery owner in Bisbee and at some point was also superintendent in nearby Tombstone and helped co-found multiple businesses along with his long-time business partner Walter Hubbard. Bowen passed away around 1920 and is buried in the local Evergreen Cemetery.

J. R. Henderson was also referred to using his first initials only. According to the 1920 U.S. Census, he was born in Kentucky around 1873, married a woman named Nellie, and was the owner of a lumber business. By 1914, he owned an automobile shop on Brewery Avenue. In 1922, he died in a car accident for which there was a coroner’s inquest to confirm cause of death.

Walter Hubbard, on the other hand, appears in James McClintock’s book, *Arizona: A History of the Youngest State from 1540 to 1915*. According to McClintock, Walter Hubbard was one of seven children born to John and Olive Hubbard in 1872 (or 1878 depending on records). He grew up on a farm in Kansas and during his time at school learned the undertaking business. At the age of 26, he moved to Bisbee, where he worked in the Copper Queen Mine until he was given a position to take over the B. F. Graham Undertaking Company. He later bought an interest in the business but sold out to join J. J. Bowen in his livery company, adding his skills as an undertaker to the venture. In 1903, Hubbard married Katheryne

Hanley from Tombstone, but their marriage was short lived when she passed away at the age of 22 following the birth of her first child. Four days after the Bisbee fire, in 1908, Hubbard married Elora Harper, also from Kansas, and together they had one son a year later.



Image of Walter George Hubbard courtesy of *findagrave.com*.

Despite the hardships of losing his wife and his business to fire, Hubbard became a successful businessman who was credited with owning “practically all the substantial and strongly organized concerns of the city.” In addition to owning at least two local businesses and his own residence in Bisbee, he also owned land in Dade County, Florida; was the proprietor of the Pawnee Mill and Elevator Company in Pawnee, Oklahoma, and landowner of 200 adjacent acres to the mill; and was a stockholder in the Hubbard Mining and Milling Company in Joplin, Missouri. In 1915, he was one of the incorporators and treasurer of the Bisbee Copper Development and Mining Company, as well as the incorporator, secretary, and treasurer of the Gila Land and Water Company. Hubbard passed away in 1936 in San Diego, California, and was survived by his wife Elora and his two children, John and Walter.

Sources Consulted

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- 1907 “Funeral of Mrs. Hubbard is Today.” 3 February 1907.
- 1909 “Courtland is the Coming Camp.” 28 January 1909.
- “Building Garage.” 11 May 1909.

Bisbee Mining and Minerals

- 1898 *List of Businesses Operating in Bisbee, Arizona in 1898*. Accessed 6 June 2022 at business list 1898 | bisbee (bisbeeminingandminerals.com)

Dallas Morning News

- 1908 “Funds Raised for Relief; Outside Aid Not Imperative-Amount of Loss Probably \$750,000.” 17 October 1908.

Huber, Melissa, Jason Fox, Jacob Lauderdale, Renne Villareal, Gretchen Voeks, Keith Walzak, and R. Brooks Jeffery

- 2005 *Evergreen Cemetery National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*. University of Arizona, Tucson.

McClintock, James

- n.d. *Arizona: A History of the Youngest State from 1540 to 1915*. S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, Arizona.

F. A McKinney Publishers

- 1901–1927 *Bisbee City Directories*. F. A. McKinney Publishers, Arizona.

Sanborn Map Company

- 1901–1908 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from Bisbee, Cochise County, Arizona*. On file with the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

United States Census

- 1910–1920 *United States Federal Census for Arizona, Cochise County, Bisbee Ward 3, District 0007*. On file with Ancestry.com.

Wilson, Marjorie, Janet Stewart, James Garrison, and Billy Garrett

- 1978 *Bisbee Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*. Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, Phoenix.

Appendix A:

Arizona State Historic Property Inventory Form

ARIZONA STATE HISTORIC PROPERTY INVENTORY ✓

PROPERTY NAME Bisbee Exchange		C-5	
LOCATION Upper Main Street		PRESENT PHOTOGRAPH	
CITY/TOWN/VICINITY Bisbee	COUNTY Cochise		
OWNER Faith Fellowship Inc.			
OWNER'S ADDRESS OK Street Bisbee, AZ 85603			
FORM COMPLETED BY Marjorie H. Wilson			
ADDRESS Arizona State Parks Board 1688 West Adams Phoenix, AZ 85007			
PHOTO BY Jan Stewart	DATE 1977		
VIEW looking NE			
PRESENT USE Commercial	ACREAGE		
STYLE OR CULTURAL PERIOD Classical Revival Influence			
SIGNIFICANT DATES Probably 1910			
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION			
<p>The three-story brick building has a three-bay facade and recessed entry. The first and second story floors are concrete and the third level floor is wood. The first floor has iron columns and the other two have wood posts. Center windows at the third level are arched. The second floor has small square 12-light windows. Four cartouches decorate the first belt course. The cornice is plain and topped by a low parapet with medallions. Brick pilasters divide the bays.</p>			
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>The building was constructed after the 1908 fire and was originally for auto sales.</p>			
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION			
<p>Bisbee Block 33 Lot 5</p>			