

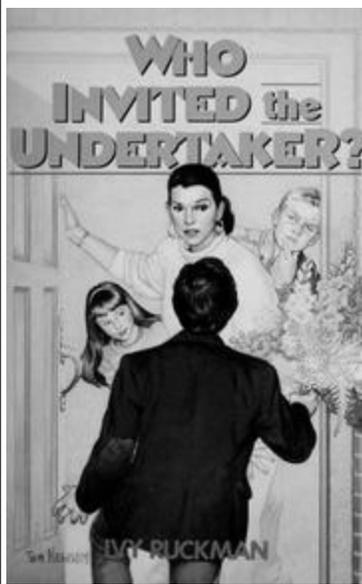
DEATH DEMYSTIFIED

Digging Deeper into Coroner &
Funeral Home Records

Tina Beard

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Death Industry



- Undertakers were professionals who would 'undertake' the task of preparing your loved one for burial.
- Huge increase in undertakers during the Civil War. Originally embalmed bodies with arsenic
- 1920s industry and innovation spark huge increase in number of morticians.

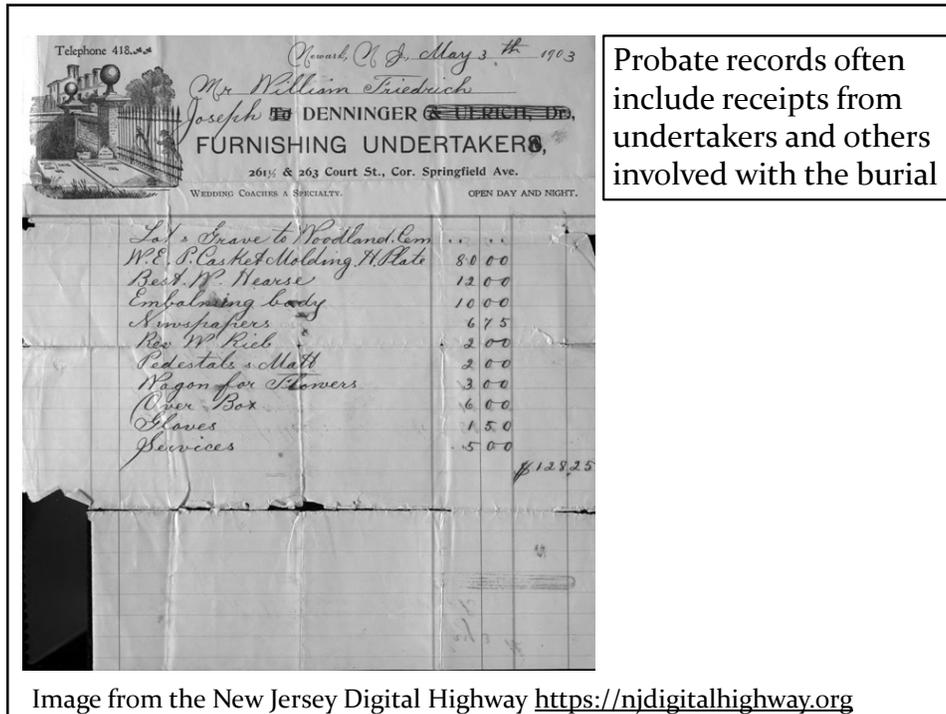
Funeral Home Records

- Funeral Homes are private businesses. If a mortuary closes, they are not required to turn the records over to another entity.
- Morticians/Funeral Directors require a state license: www.idfpr.com/profs/FunDirEmb.asp
- Records relating to the care & burial of the deceased
 - Date of death
 - Cause of death
 - Place of burial
 - Person requesting services (paying funeral bill)

Funeral Home Records

- Funeral Expenses:
 - Embalming
 - Casket,
 - Hearse/Livery
 - Flowers/singers
 - Grave Digging

*Records do not always include additional genealogical information like parents or place of birth



Coroner's & Medical Examiners

- In Illinois, statehood brought the first coroners who were originally elected for 2 year terms. Earliest existing records are Macoupin Co. 1835.
- Medical Examiners are appointed and are required to be either doctors or trained forensic pathologists.
- NPR: Post Mortem Death Investigation in America <https://n.pr/2wEUVGV>
- NPR: How is Death Investigated in Your State? <https://n.pr/2jXzB6c>

Coroner's Inquest Records

- Some coroner's filed separate death certificates that are not always interfiled with county death certificates.
- Historic coroner's records will include:
 - Personal affects found on the body
 - Next of kin
 - Cause of death
 - List of jurors/place of residence
 - Verdict

Coroner's Inquest Records

- Modern Coroner's records will include:
 - Time and location of incident
 - Responding Agency
 - Cause of death
 - Next of Kin
 - Reports
 - Autopsy (can include photos)
 - Toxicology
 - Testimony
 - Funeral Home/Cemetery
 - Verdict

Coroner's Inquest Records

- Coroner's Inquest juries are appointed by the county circuit court.
- Juries can be appointed to serve one inquest or quarterly. Historically, local newspapers would list the appointed jurors.
- Modern inquests may have eyewitness testimony.
- Information is often available through FOIA.

JON GARY SCHAFFERT
CASE # 00-307
PAGE # 9

CAUSE OF DEATH:
A) MASSIVE CRUSHING INJURY TO CHEST
B) BEING CAUGHT IN PUNCH PRESS

RULING: ACCIDENT

James R. Pritchard, D.O.
Stark County Coroner
JRP:evf

OFFICE OF THE CORONER STARK COUNTY
Administrative Offices and Forensic Facility
Deacon Hospital of Stark County
480 Audubon Avenue NW
Mansfield, OH 44866

James R. Pritchard, D.O., BCIM, BCPE
County Coroner
Board Certified - Forensic College of
Forensic Examiners
Diplomate American Board of
Internal Medicine
F.S.S. - Merits, M.D.
Chief Deputy Coroner
DIPLOMA COLLEGE OF
FORENSIC EXAMINERS
Forensic Examiners
Anthony P. Bates, D.O.
Ernie P. Bates, D.O.
Lynn A. Kenna, D.O., FAOACA

INVESTIGATION
CASE # 00-307
PAGE # 1

Called at 10:13 AM on 12/07/2000 by Aultman Hospital ER
Arrived at 10:50 AM on 12/07/2000 at hospital

DECEDENT:	JON G. SCHAFFERT AGE: 35 Y RACE: W SEX: M DOB: 01/22/1965 1014 Weaver Street SW Canton OH
LOCATION OF INCIDENT:	Meter Devices Company, 3359 Brunsing SW, Canton Township, Stark County, OH
TIME OF INCIDENT:	8:59 AM, 12/07/2000
NEXT OF KIN:	Gary Schaffert, Father 221 Cheyenne Trail Mabers OH
PRONOUNCED:	12/07/2000 9:35 AM Dr. O'Toole Aultman Hospital ER
AGENCY AT SCENE:	Canton Township Fire Department EMS Stark County Sheriff's Department
BLOOD, VITREOUS & URINE COLLECTED:	12/07/2000 3:45 PM Dr. Murthy Stark County Morgue
ATTENDING PHYSICIAN:	None
FUNERAL HOME:	Rossi
VALUABLES:	Recollected
EXAMINED:	Dr. Murthy

CANTON TWP. Industrial safety 12-8-00
00-307

Worker killed in accident at Meter Devices

By JIM H. KENNEDY
Times and Star

CANTON TWP. — Co-workers, including his father, tried to free Jon G. Schaffert after he became entangled in a punch press at Meter Devices on Thursday.

Schaffert, 35, was working on the press when it apparently jammed, said Harry Campbell, assistant Stark County coroner. "I heard him scream and saw people running," said Kay Booth, a friend among the close-knit group of workers. "I ran over and saw him pinned in the press."

Schaffert of Weaver Street SW was hospitalized at 1:20 a.m., Campbell said.

The press picks up a large piece of metal, moves it into the press, punches it and pushes it out the other side.

"It looks like the machine jammed, and he climbed into the machine," Campbell said. "As a parent, no good. Booth said, 'He loved them to death. The coroner cordoned off the area around the press and set the work scope. The Occupation Safety and Health Administration was called to investigate the accident,' Campbell said. Company officials declined to comment on what happened.

Stark County, OH Coroner's Inquest Records www.familysearch.org

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
Office of the Coroner of Cook County, Ill.
Chicago, Illinois, 1903

This is to Certify, That I, JOHN E. TRAGER, Coroner, in and for the County of Cook, State of Illinois, have viewed the body of Perley H. Gates found at 902 Walnut St in the 14th Ward of said City and County; that I have held an inquest upon said body and that the verdict of the Jurors is, that he came to his death from the workage of the lungs metastatic disease from Place of burial unknown N York

Name of Deceased Perley H. Gates
Age 65 yrs
Sex Male
Nationality American
Color White
Occupation Wine Merchant
Married or Single Married
Place of Birth 402 Walnut St Chicago Ill
Date of Death June 6 1914

John E. Trager Coroner

Coroner and Medical Examiner's Offices often issue their own death certificates.

In Chicago, the Coroner issued temporary certificates until an official inquest verdict was reached.

<https://maps.cookcountyil.gov/medexammaps/>

Perley Gates does appear in both the Cook Co. Inquest & Cook Co. Death Indexes

NO CORONER'S FEE COLLECTED **PERMANENT ORIGINAL**

STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH—DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS
CORONER'S CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

County of Cook Registration Dist. No. 310A 31
City of Chicago (When the name differs from that of the County)
Do not enter "R. R.", "P. O.", or "Address"

Name of Deceased John Ulik (If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give the NAME of such institution)
Address and Residence 1215 Chestnut St Chicago Ill

1. PLACE OF RESIDENCE, STATE, COUNTY, CITY OR VILLAGE, and STREET AND NUMBER, if known

2. PLACE OF DEATH, STATE, COUNTY, CITY OR VILLAGE, and STREET AND NUMBER, if known

3. DATE OF DEATH June 4 1914
4. AGE OF DECEASED AT TIME OF DEATH 47 years 9 months 18 days

5. SEX Male
6. OCCUPATION Business

7. MARITAL STATUS Married
8. CAUSE OF DEATH ARSENIC POISONING

9. MANNER OF DEATH Accidental

10. PLACE OF BURIAL Home

11. SIGNATURE OF CORONER John E. Trager

12. SIGNATURE OF DEPUTY CORONER G. F. Brodie

13. SIGNATURE OF PHYSICIAN Wm. J. ...

14. SIGNATURE OF WITNESSES ...

15. DATE June 6 1914

16. PLACE Chicago

17. COUNTY Cook

18. YEAR 1914

19. MONTH June

20. DAY 6

21. HOUR ...

22. MINUTE ...

23. SECOND ...

24. TERTH ...

25. QUART ...

26. FIFTH ...

27. SIXTH ...

28. SEVENTH ...

29. EIGHTH ...

30. NINTH ...

31. TENTH ...

32. ELEVENTH ...

33. TWELFTH ...

34. THIRTEENTH ...

35. FOURTEENTH ...

36. FIFTEENTH ...

37. SIXTEENTH ...

38. SEVENTEENTH ...

39. EIGHTEENTH ...

40. NINETEENTH ...

41. TWENTIETH ...

42. TWENTY-FIRST ...

43. TWENTY-SECOND ...

44. TWENTY-THIRD ...

45. TWENTY-FOURTH ...

46. TWENTY-FIFTH ...

47. TWENTY-SIXTH ...

48. TWENTY-SEVENTH ...

49. TWENTY-EIGHTH ...

50. TWENTY-NINTH ...

51. THirtiETH ...

3816

TRANSPORTATION CERTIFICATE.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

City of San Antonio, Texas, *1912* 1890

Permission is hereby granted to transport the body of *Frank*

A. Willman Sex *Male*

Age *57* Race *White* Nativity *U.S.* Mar. *Mar.*

State of death *California*

Died at *San Antonio* on the *12* day of *July*, 189*0*

Destination *Chicago Ill. Follet St.*

Shipped by *Chas. W. Miller* In air-tight Casket.

I hereby certify that *A. C. Willman* died from *the* contagious disease.

J. Brannagh, M. D., Health Officer.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the DEATH RECORD for the decedent named therein, and that this record was established and filed in my office in accordance with the provisions of the Illinois Statutes.

County clerk of Wall County, Illinois

Dated: _____ deputy

Burial Transfer Permits

Burlington & Missouri River Railroad. 3803

PASSENGER DEPARTMENT.

PERMIT FOR TRANSPORTATION OF CORPSES.

Permits may be accepted for shipment only in accordance with the following rules:

Rule 1. The transportation of the bodies of persons who have died of Smallpox, Asiatic Cholera, or Yellow or Typhus Fever, is positively forbidden.

Rule 2. The transportation of the bodies of persons who have died of Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Typhoid Fever, Erysipelas, Malaria, or other contagious or infectious diseases (except those named in Rule 1) is permitted, providing such bodies are wrapped in a core-cloth, and in addition either incased in an antiseptic interment sack, hermetically sealed, or else placed in an air-tight casket.

All other bodies may be transported, provided they are incased in a core-cloth, or antiseptic interment sack, hermetically sealed, in addition to being in a coffin, and this in a tight airtight box.

NOTE.—A core-cloth is a strong cotton winding sheet, which has been dipped in a mixture of melted wax, tallow, or lard, and carbolic acid; or else thoroughly saturated with a strong solution of chloride of lime, in the proportion of one-half pound of chloride or lime to one gallon of water.

Rule 3. Every body must be accompanied by the following certificates, properly filled out, and signed by Physician or Coroner and shipping Undertaker.

PHYSICIAN'S OR CORONER'S CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.

Name of Decedent *Chas. W. Miller* Cat. No. *20-90*

Date of Death *July 12* 189*0* (if a minor give parent's name first)

Age *57* Years Months Days

Place of Death *San Antonio*

Cause of Death *the*

I hereby certify that the above is true, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Residence *Walla* County of *Walla* State of *Ore.*

SHIPPING UNDERTAKER'S CERTIFICATE.

I hereby certify that the within body of *Chas. W. Miller* of *Walla* has been prepared for transportation by being incased in a core-cloth or in an antiseptic sack, hermetically sealed, in addition to being put in a coffin, and this in *an air-tight casket*.

Residence *Walla* Shipping Undertaker *Chas. W. Miller*

These two certificates must be securely fastened onto the casket box, which must also bear the name and full address of the party to whom the body is destined, together with a description of the route of the ticket on which the shipment is made. Agents will keep a stock of these blanks on hand for use of undertakers at their stations, and will see that the certificates are properly filled out and signed, before receiving a corpse for shipment.

T. MARSHALL, G. B. A. J. FRANCIS, G. F. and T. A.

City Directories

- City Directories are a great resource for finding businesses associated with the funeral industry in the 19th and 20th centuries.
 - Benevolent Societies/Secret Societies/Unions
 - Casket manufacturers
 - Cemeteries
 - Churches
 - Coroner
 - Funeral directors/undertakers/morticians
 - Insurance companies
 - Lawyers
 - Monument dealers

- Modern phone books would provide the same types information

Illinois State Resources

- Cook County Coroner's Indexes
www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases/cookingt.html
- Elgin Genealogical Society funeral home records
<https://bit.ly/2jXlmPa>
- Illinois Coroner record indexes for Dewitt, Macoupin, Vermillion & Wayne available at IRAD Locations:
www.ilsos.gov/isa/localGovRecordsSearch.do
- Illinois Digital Archives www.idaillinois.org

State Memory Projects

- Alabama Mosaic www.alabamamosaic.org
- Online Archive of California www.oac.cdlib.org
- Florida Memory Project www.floridamemory.com
- Indiana Memory <https://digital.library.in.gov>
- Ohio Memory Connection www.ohiomemory.org
- New Jersey Digital Highway <https://njdigitalhighway.org>
- South Carolina Memory <http://scmemory.org>

Ancestry www.ancestry.com

- Arizona County Coroner & Death Records 1881-1971
- California Mortuary Records of Chinese Descendants 1870-1933
- California Mortuary & Cemetery Records 1801-1932
- Panama Canal Zone Gorgas Hospital Mortuary Records 1906-1991
- Rapid City South Dakota Mortuary indexes 1879-1971

FamilySearch www.familysearch.org

- Affiliate Library Access to digital Card Catalog
 - Millions of records available through card catalog!
- Database Access
 - Stark County, OH Coroner's Records 1890-2002
 - Summit County, OH Coroner's Records 1882-1949
 - San Francisco Funeral Home Records 1835-1979
 - Lock Funeral Home Records Baltimore 1936-2007
 - Ljubljana, Slovenia Funeral Accounts 1937-1970
 - African-American Funeral Programs VA 1935-2009

mortuary

Search for:
Call Number
Film/Fiche Number

Availability

Any
 Online
 Family History Center

Update Reset

Year

- + 1800 (19)
- + 1900 (50)
- + 1400 (1)
- + 1500 (5)
- + 1600 (6)
- + 1700 (6)
- + 2000 (1)

Category

- + Birth, Marriage and Death (368)
- + Business records and occupations (29)
- + Court, Land, and Wills (13)
- + Directories (2)
- + Histories, Memories, and Stories (7)
- + Institutions (8)
- + Military (8)
- + Other (486)

Author: Banchi, Lillian Bilyeu	
Index to J. Will Baxter Mortuary records, Hartford City, Indiana. Jan. 8, 1906--June 26, 1928	Add
Author: Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County. Reynolds Historical Genealogy Department	
Index to mortuary records, North Brevard County, Florida	Add
Author: Wooley, Rose; Genealogical Society of North Brevard (Titusville, Florida); Koon's Funeral Home (Titusville, Florida); Smith Funeral Home (Titusville, Florida); North Brevard Funeral Home (Titusville, Florida)	
Index to the Behren's Mortuary records, 1879-1971	Add
Author: Barnes, Donald S.; Bishop, Ellen	
Jackson County, mortuary records	Add
Author: Lacy, Ruby Sullivan	
Jefferson County, Oregon cemetery index, death certificate index, mortuaries index, 1874-2000	Add
Author: Dodge, Sharon R. Brewer	
Johnson Township cemetery records, 1999 : from grave stones, mortuary records, newspaper items and other reliable sources	Add
Author: Rice, Dorothy Jean Bibb	
Klaehn Funeral Home, mortuary records, 1876-1964	Add
Lafferty and Tobias Funeral Home, Altoona, Pa., from mortuary records April 16, 1907 - December 31, 1918	Add
Author: Blair County Genealogical Society (Pennsylvania); Lafferty and Tobias Funeral Home (Altoona, Pennsylvania)	
Leo Graves furniture and Mortuary, Davison, Michigan, volume 1, 1886 through 1889	Add
Leo Groves furniture and mortuary, Davison, Michigan	Add

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California, San Francisco Area Funeral Home Records, 1835-1931 Transcription

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First name(s)	Caroline Elisabeth
Last name	Sperry
Sex	Female
Marital status	Widowed
Age at death	75
Birth year	1830
Birth place	Sandy Hill New York
Death year	1905
Funeral home	Clark & Booth and N. Gray & Co.
Funeral home and category	Clark & Booth and N. Gray & Co. Funeral Records
Obituary notice	YES
Town	Sacramento
County	Sacramento
Country	United States
State	California
Record set	California, San Francisco Area Funeral Home Records, 1835-1931
Category	Birth, Marriage & Death (Parish Registers)
Subcategory	Civil Deaths & Burials
Collections from	Americas, United States

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ARCHIVEGRID

911 **mortuary**

Records 1 to 10 of 911

Gibbons Mortuary (Coffey County, Kan.) funeral records [microform], 18---19--

Gibbons Mortuary
 Kansas State Historical Society
 Funeral records from the Gibbons Mortuary (Coffey County, Kan.)

Mortuary records

Ross, Silas Earl, 1887-1975
 University of Nevada, Reno - Mathewson IGT Knowledge Center
 Copies of mortuary records from the following Reno firms: Sanders Funeral [Home], 1879-1906; Perkins-Gulling, 1902-1908; and Ross-Burke, 1906-1908. Each volume contains an index and name of deceased, age, cause of death, nativity, and sometimes details of funeral arrangements

Parker Mortuary records, 1898-1912

Parker Mortuary (Tucson, Ariz.).
 Arizona Historical Society - Library and Archives
 Ledgers list the name of deceased, the person who order the mortuary service, age at death, cause of death, burial date, burial place and costs from 1898 to 1912

ARCHIVEGRID

5,248 **funeral home**

PEOPLE		GROUP		PLACES	
Name	Count	Name	Count	Name	Count
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865	25	Kentucky Historical Society	69	United States	224
Glab, Hazel	11	Smith-Rees Funeral Home (Cynthiana, Ky.)	27	United States - Civil War, 1861-1865	32
Carter, Jimmy, 1924	14	Smith-Rees Funeral Home (Cynthiana, Ky.) Records and correspondence Microform	27	California - Los Angeles	41
Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969	14	Smith-Rees Funeral Home (Cynthiana, Ky.) Registers Microform	27	South Carolina	23
Bentley, Frank	7	United States Army	11	Kentucky - Harrison County	21
Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973	11	United States	13	California	25
Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972	11	Rogers Funeral Home (Frankfort, Ky.)	12	Washington (State)	25
Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973	8	Rogers Funeral Home (Frankfort, Ky.) Records and correspondence Microform	12	Georgia	24
Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963	6			Minnesota	23

ARCHIVES		ARCHIVE LOCATIONS		TOPICS	
Name	Count	Name	Count	Name	Count
State Historical Society of Missouri	170	United States - District of Columbia - Washington	205	Funeral homes	242
New York Public Library	112	United States - New York - New York	227	Undertakers and undertaking	143
Library of Congress - Research and Reference Services	117	United States - Massachusetts - Cambridge	216	Registers of births, etc	138
Wisconsin Historical Society Library and Archives	116	United States - California - Los Angeles	112	Manners and customs	59
Harvard University - Schlesinger Library	84	United States - Connecticut - New Haven	177	Funeral rites and ceremonies	25
University of Utah - J. Willard Marriott Library	52	United States - Pennsylvania - Philadelphia	122	African Americans	41
Minnesota Historical Society	28	United States - Wisconsin - Madison	122	Travel	28
Cornell University - Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Collection	28	United States - Missouri - Columbia	120	Politics and government	27
		United States - Georgia - Atlanta	106	Business enterprises	29

Subject Terms & Results:
 Mortuary- 911
 Undertaker- 667
 Crematorium- 113
 Funeral Directors- 2597
 Funeral Homes- 5248

Other Useful Websites

- Cyndi's List <https://cyndislist.com>
- Digital Public Library of America <https://dp.la>
- Internet Archive www.archive.org
- Redbook National Directory of Morticians 1936-.
Earliest book at Allen County Public Library
2018 volume searchable online:
www.redbookfuneraldirectory.com

Book Resources

- Blanche, Tony. *Death In Paradise*. Philadelphia. Running Press. 2001.
- Doughty, Caitlin. *From Here to Eternity*. New York. W.W. Norton & Co. 2017
- Harris, Mark. *Grave Matters*. New York. Scribner. 2007.
- Roach, Mary. *Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human cadavers*. New York. W. W. Norton. 2004.
- Valentine, Carla. *The Chick and the Dead*. New York. St Martin's Press. 2017