

Finding aid for the Spring Funeral Home records Collection 055

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
January 1988
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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Creator	Spring Funeral Home. (Grand Rapids, Mich.)
Title	Spring Funeral Home records
Date [inclusive]	1906-1953
Extent	5.92 Linear feet 13 boxes
Language	English
Abstract	<p>This collection contains 19 record books recording burials handled by the Spring Funeral Home of Grand Rapids (Mich.) from 1906-1953. Data includes the name of the deceased, address, occupation, death date, age at death, cause of death, parents' names and birthplaces, funeral costs, and place of internment. Additional information, such as race and accompanying newspaper clippings, are included in some volumes.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

Berton A. Spring was born ca. 1875 in Canon Township, Kent County, Michigan. He attended Ferris Institute, now Ferris State University, in Big Rapids, Michigan, majoring in Mortuary Science. He came to Grand Rapids following graduation in 1896. In 1903 he organized both the Grand Rapids Casket Company and the Spring Funeral Home. He sold his interest in the casket company in 1940.

The funeral home was located on the corner of Sheldon and Oakes. In 1911 he sold that site and purchased the Brown Funeral home located at 814 Jefferson Avenue, near the intersection of Jefferson and State Street. In 1950 Spring sold the Funeral Home to the Gulf Refining Company and moved his office into the Zaagman Funeral Home. The Spring Funeral Home remained in business at the site, however, until 1969 being operated by a succession of owners.

Spring died 3 December 1953 in St. Mary's Hospital.

Note: According to the historical information compiled by Richard Harms or Evelyn Sawyer for Collection 097, the Birdsall Funeral Home Collection, Berton Spring purchased Ira Birdsall's original funeral home, at 43 Pearl N.W. (later 91 Pearl, N.W.) in 1910. Birdsall had purchased that first home from the McCallum Undertaking Co. in 1907. It is unknown at this time whether the records in this collection document only the Spring Funeral Home records, or also include the early Birdsall records from 1907 to 1910.

Scope and Contents note

The volumes provide data on the funerals handled by the home. Data such as: name, address, occupation, age at death, cause of death, parents' names and birthplaces, place of internment and details of burial arrangement are included.

The volumes are arranged in chronological order, with some confusion at volumes [6], [6a] & [7]. An index, "Index to Spring Funeral Home Records, 1906-1941" was created by Russell & Betty Moore in 1984, and provides alphabetical access to the fifteen volumes originally received. No alphabetical indexing is yet available for four additional volumes received in 2001. Each volume has a handwritten index for that volume at the front. No digitally accessible index is currently available.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department January 1988

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Roger F. Spring for the Berton A. Spring estate and members of the Spring family, Additions given by Jeff Johnson & Isla Spring, June 2001; accession numbers 1985.005, 2001.056

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

1986.130 (unprocessed) includes correspondence related to Berton Spring and the Grand Rapids Casket Co.

Collection 097: Birdsall Funeral Home Collection, 1912-

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- Genealogy
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Subject(s)

- Registers of birth, etc. -- Michigan -- Kent County
- Undertakers and undertaking -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids

Record books

Collection Inventory

Record books		
	Box	Folder
14 Jan. 1906 - 14 Apr. 1908.	1	1
14 Apr. 1908 - 29 Aug. 1909.	1	2
31 Aug. 1909 - 8 Oct. 1910.	2	3
6 Oct. 1910 - 23 Nov. 1911.	2	4
24 Nov. 1911 - 27 Feb. 1912 [sic, 1913]	3	5
16 Jan. 1911 - 8 Jan. 1912. Entries 1 to 152 are Michigan Soldiers Home related deaths, including burials at the Soldier's Home, Civil War soldiers.	3	6
27 Feb. 1913 – 2 Nov. 1913. Entries 154 to 300, continue from [vol. 5]	3	6
3 Nov. 1913 – 15 Jan. 1915 [2001.056 Added 6/2001] [Has earlier label "9" on spine and flyleaf note, "Where is volume 8?"]	11	6a
7 July 1912 - 16 Dec. 1915.	4	7
20 Dec. 1915 - 10 Jan. 1917.	4	8

Index

9 Jan. 1917 - 5 Feb. 1918.	5	9
8 Feb. 1918 - 24 Jan. 1919.	5	10
9 Jan. 1919 - 9 Feb. 1921.	6	11
9 Feb. 1921 - 17 Mar. 1923.	7	12
17 Mar. 1923 - 29 Mar. 1925.	8	13
28 Mar. 1925 – 15 July 1927 [2001.056 Added 6/2001]	11	13a
14 July 1927 - 12 Aug. 1930.	9	14
12 Aug. 1930 – 10 Apr. 1935.[2001.056 Added 6/2001]	12	14a
12 Apr. 1935 - 18 Aug. 1941.	10	15
2 Jan. 1948 – 7 Feb. 1953 [2001.056 Added 6/2001]	13	16

Index

Index to Spring Funeral Home Records, 1906-1941 / indexed by Russell B. Moore. Typed by Mrs. Betty Moore, 1984. Kept at the Local History reference desk.