

Lost Tombstones Identified

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky., 1996

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 31 October 1996, Page 1C

Tombstones need final resting place

Author: Dan Heckel; Messenger-Inquirer



Elizabeth Shannon is looking for a home.

Shannon doesn't ask for much, because she's been dead for more than 100 years. It's her tombstone that needs a final resting place.

The same goes for Lucinda Fulkerson, Wesley Adcock and Pfc. James L. Sattler. Their tombstones, along with seven others, are in a locked room in the garage of the Owensboro Police Department.

The grave markers have been stolen or vandalized over the years and then ended up in someone's yard, said Officer Duane Harper of the police evidence collection unit. "One was found in a garage on Western Court," Harper said.

Finding where the cemetery the stones came from has proved troublesome for the police, said Diann Cecil, the secretary in the evidence collection unit. She has called cemeteries, funeral homes, the coroner, researchers at the public library and even Daviess County naturalist Joe Ford for help in finding the proper home for the tombstones, with no luck.

"I hate the thought of throwing them away," Cecil said.

Normally the police keep found property only 90 days, said Sgt. Marvin Hayden. If the proper owner can't be found, the property is destroyed. Three of the tombstones were turned over to police in April 1992. The rest came in either last year or this year, Cecil said.

"We've tried to hold onto these because of the sentimental value," Hayden said.

Now the stones are taking up too much space in the department's evidence room, Hayden said. None of the tombstones turned in during the past few years has been returned to its rightful place, Hayden said.

Six of the tombstones were found along West Ninth Street, one on East Third Street. Three were discovered in an apartment on Frederica Street while a search warrant was being served and one in a garage on Western Court, Cecil said.

Some of the stones have only partial names on them or nothing legible. Some are small, likely children's tombstones. The four legible tombstones are as follows: Elizabeth Shannon was born Feb. 2, 1828, and died Aug. 13, 1894, her tombstone reads. Lucinda Fulkerson, wife of W.M. Fulkerson, was born Sept. 15, 1830, and died April 17, 1861.

Pfc. James Sattler's 4-foot high tombstone says "Indiana" on it but no town. He served in the 35th Engineering Combat Battalion during World War II, the stone says, and may have died there. He was born March 22, 1922, and died March 25, 1945.

Wesley Adcock was born Aug. 6, 1861, and died Sept. 17, 1905.

Some are only partial listings. One reads, "Sophronia, daughter of Peter & Mary," but the last name is lost.

****If You Can Help *****

Anyone who may be able to identify these tombstones is asked to call the evidence collection unit at 687-8855.

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Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 7 November 1996, page 3C:

Shaving cream helps police find names on mystery tombstones

Author: Dan Heckel; Messenger-Inquirer

A local man with a can of shaving cream and a ruler helped Owensboro police discover more identities Wednesday of people dead for 100 years.

The police have received several phone calls from people with the names of relatives on vandalized tombstones after reading a report on the stones in the department's evidence room in the Oct. 31 Messenger-Inquirer, said Sgt. Marvin Hayden of the evidence collection unit.

But several tombstones were so worn, the names were illegible. Paul Keller of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Forrest's Orphans Camp in Calhoun volunteered to help solve the mystery.

Keller gently cleaned the stones with water and a soft brush.

Then, he sprayed shaving cream on the tombstones and pushed down slowly with a flexible ruler. The white shaving cream seeped in, revealing five more names.

"I've been fooling around with this a little over a year," Keller said.

He has been trying to research Civil War veterans in the area, and when he saw the report in the newspaper he decided to volunteer out of respect for the dead.

"We're trying to get laws to have punishment for grave desecration more severe," Keller said.

Four of the names he uncovered Wednesday appear to be children in the same family, although the spelling of the last name varies, said Officer Duane Harper of evidence collection.

One name revealed said it was an infant daughter of Peter and Mary Leslie and was born and died Jan. 19, 1890. Another was a son of the same couple who died June 20, 1891.

The other two children were of Peter and Mary Laslie, the stones read. They were Tobitha, a daughter who died Aug. 3, 1894 at age 2 years, 11 months and 11 days; and Sophronia, a daughter who died Sept. 5, 1887.

The other tombstone belonged to the infant son of E.S. and M.C. Skelton, who was born and died Oct. 10, 1895.

Anyone with information on the rightful resting place of these stones is asked to call the police evidence collection unit at 687-8855.

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Police seeking information on grave markers Lost Tombstones Identified

The identity of the cemeteries from which the gravestones in the possession of the Owensboro Police Department, as listed in the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer (31 October 1996 p1C and 6 November 1996 p4C) were identified by Jerry Long, Owensboro, KY. On November 1 & November 7 he gave to the police department the names of the cemeteries, descriptions of their locations, and the names of individuals and groups in those counties that may assist in seeing that the gravestones were restored to their rightful locations.

The tombstone inscriptions and the cemeteries from which they were taken are as follows:

St. Alphonsus Cemetery, St. Joseph, Daviess County, KY -

Fulkerson, Lucinda (w/o W. N.)	15 Sep 1830	17 Apr 1861
<u>Shannon Family Cemetery</u> , just north of the Hawesville Cemetery, Hancock County, KY -		
Shannon, Elizabeth	2 Feb 1828	13 Aug 1894
<u>Old Dovey Cemetery</u> , near Hillside, Muhlenberg County, KY -		
Adcock, Wesley	6 Aug 1861	17 Sep 1905
Skelton Cemetery, Highway 62 East, Skelton Township, Warrick County, IN -		
Sattler, Pfc. James L. (Indiana 35th Eng. Combat Batt. – WWII)	22 Mar 1922	25 Mar 1945
Laslie, infant d/o P. & M. A.	born & died	19 Jan 1890
Laslie, d/o & s/o P. & M. A.	died	20 Jun 1891
Leslie, Tobitha (d/o P. & M. A.) (age 2 years, 11 months & 11 days)	died	3 Aug 1894
Leslie, Sophronia E. (d/o Peter & Mary A.)	17 Jan 1887	5 Sep 1887
Skelton, infant s/o E. S. & M. C.	born & died	10 Oct 1895

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