

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

BANNAN FUNERAL HOME
H. W. BANNAN
FUNERAL DIRECTORS
222 S. 2d Ave. Tel. ELmwood 4-8411



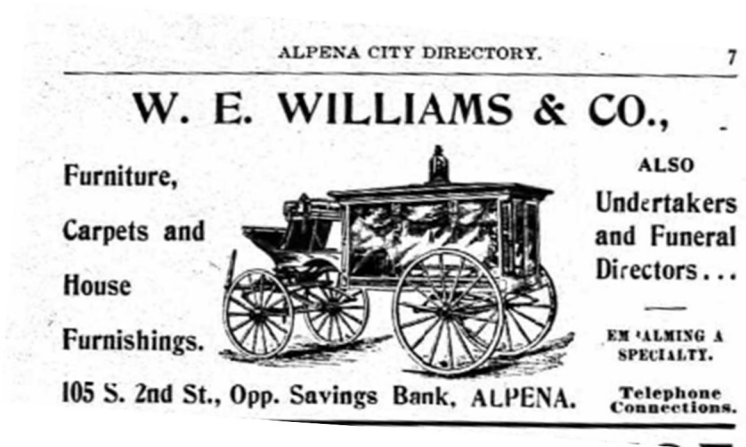
Advertisement from Polk's 1960 Alpena City Directory

Early History of the Bannan Funeral Home

Prepared by
Daniel A Earl

The Williams Family

William Edwin Bannan was born in March of 1868 in Mundy, Genesee County Michigan, to William Ida Williams, of Durham, Ontario, Canada and Selina L. Peck of Milford, Oakland, Michigan¹². William's brother Charles Bradley Williams moved in Alpena about 1895 with his family and was a cashier at the Alpena County Savings Bank³. William joined him sometime between 1899 and 1903 and it was during this time he setup a business that included undertaking and embalming⁴ on 2nd Street, opposite the bank where Charles still worked.



Advertisement from Polk's City and County Directory of Alpena, 1903

As the brothers' business diversified they opened a second location on Chisolm Street. By 1910 Charles was operating the clothing side of the business and William ran the home furnishing and mortuary side of the business.⁵ In late 1913, Charles moved to Los Angeles, California⁶ where he died in 1939. In the late 1910's William hired on an additional embalmer, Ivan H. Downing.⁷

As time went on, William focused his business efforts on funeral directing and picture framing and by the late 1930s, advertisements in the city directory indicate his business was focused on those two things. William died in March of 1940 in Alpena⁸. After William's death his widow Ida continued to own the business and

¹ 1870 Federal Census; Mundy, Genesee, Michigan, p. 31

² Williams, William Edwin, Michigan Death Certificate

³ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1895-1896, p. 221

⁴ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1903, p. 251

⁵ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1910, p. 221

⁶ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1914, p. 251

⁷ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1920, p. 68

⁸ Williams, William Edwin. Michigan Death Certificate

hired on George Ray Bannan and his son Harold W. Bannan as a funeral director and embalmer in 1941⁹. Ida Williams passed in October of 1951¹⁰. William and Ida Williams are buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Alpena.¹¹

Ivan H. Downing

Ivan H. Downing was born on North Bass Island, Ottawa County, Ohio in March 1882 to Seth Downing and Ida Fox.¹² Ivan began his long career in the funeral industry as an embalmer for J.E. Denton Funeral Home as early as 1903 in Alpena.¹³ He worked for J.E. Denton until about 1918¹⁴ when he began working for William Willams. He worked for Williams Funeral Home until after William's death in 1940. He worked for the Bannan Funeral Home until 1951 when he began working for the R.A. Hunter Funeral Home.¹⁵ He worked there until 1955 when he retired after nearly 52 years in the funeral industry.¹⁶ Ivan died on March 10th, 1964 in Alpena.¹⁷ He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Alpena.¹⁸

The Bannan Family

George Ray Bannan was born on December 7th, 1883 at Tawas, Iosco County, Michigan to John S. Bannan and Margaret Wray, who were both from Canada. John's father was an immigrant from Ireland. Prior to entering the funeral industry George worked as a station manager for the Detroit & Mackinac Railway.¹⁹ George moved to Alpena with his wife Albena, daughter Mildred, and son Harold between 1927 and 1929.²⁰ He continued his employment with the railroad through at least 1930²¹ and began employment in the funeral industry by 1935.²² George continued in the funeral industry until his death in March of 1953.²³

⁹ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory 1941, p. 27

¹⁰ Williams, Ida Belle. Death Certificate

¹¹ Findagrave Index, Evergreen Cemetery, Alpena County Michigan

¹² Downing, Ivan H. Michigan Marriage Records, 1926

¹³ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1903, p. 86

¹⁴ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1920, p. 124

¹⁵ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1952, p. 58

¹⁶ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1956, p. 128

¹⁷ Downing, Ivan H. Michigan Death and Burials Index, FamilySearch.org

¹⁸ Findagrave Index, Evergreen Cemetery, Alpena County Michigan

¹⁹ Bannan, G Ray, 1920 Federal Census, Prescott, Ogemaw, Michigan

²⁰ Bannan, George R, 1930 Federal Census, Alpena, Alpena, Michigan

²¹ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1930, p. 25

²² Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1935, p. 46

²³ Bannan, George Ray. Michigan Death and Burials Index, FamilySearch.org



Advertisement from the 1946 Alpena City Directory

Harold Wray Bannan was born December 14th, 1914 in Michigan to George Ray Bannan and Josephine Albena Kannell.²⁴ He became engaged in the funeral industry in the mid-30s first as an apprentice embalmer²⁵ and was a funeral director by 1937.²⁶ Harold continued the Bannan Funeral home along with his mother after his father's death in 1953. Josephine Albena Bannan died in March of 1978 at age 92.²⁷ Harold died the following year, in September of 1979.²⁸ The Bannan family sold the funeral home to William and Nancy Mischley in 1978.²⁹ The Bannans are buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Alpena.³⁰

²⁴ Bannan, Harold Wray. Michigan Death and Burials Index, FamilySearch.org

²⁵ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1935, p. 46

²⁶ Polk's Alpena City and County Directory, 1937, p. 29

²⁷ Bannan, Josephine Albena. Michigan Death and Burials Index, FamilySearch.org

²⁸ Bannan, Harold Wray. Michigan Death and Burials Index, FamilySearch.org

²⁹ 'About Us' on bannanfuneralhome.com/about-us

³⁰ Findagrave Index, Evergreen Cemetery, Alpena County Michigan