

Today in Columbus History: On August 26, 1859, an ad appeared in the *Columbus Daily Sun* for Crane's Metal Casket Burial Cases, sold locally by Dillingham and Denson Furniture Co. This store was located at 98 Broad (now in the 1100 block of Broadway) – on the east side of the street. It operated from about 1856 through 1862. The owners were George W. Dillingham and James M. Denson. The store specialized in furniture, carpets, and home décor; they also sold caskets. The casket featured in this ad was made of metal but designed to look like rosewood. Interestingly, it had a glass top – so the body could be viewed without opening the casket. The Crane casket was developed by Martin Hale Crane around 1855; he was a partner in the Crane, Breed & Co., casket manufacturer, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Their caskets came either with a metal or glass tops; the cost was close to \$100. It would be interesting to know if any Columbusites were buried in these glass-topped caskets!


Compiled by Callie McGinnis, Muscogee Genealogical Society

*Our snippets of Columbus history are usually based on a few days-worth of searching through the most popular sources for Muscogee County history. Meant to inspire readers to explore more about Columbus history, they are not exhaustive dissertations on the topic and may contain mistakes. If you have corrections or additional information, feel free to share them with the group.*

Clipping from Georgia Historic Newspapers (GALILEO).

<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu>

**CRANE'S  
CASKET BURIAL CASES!**

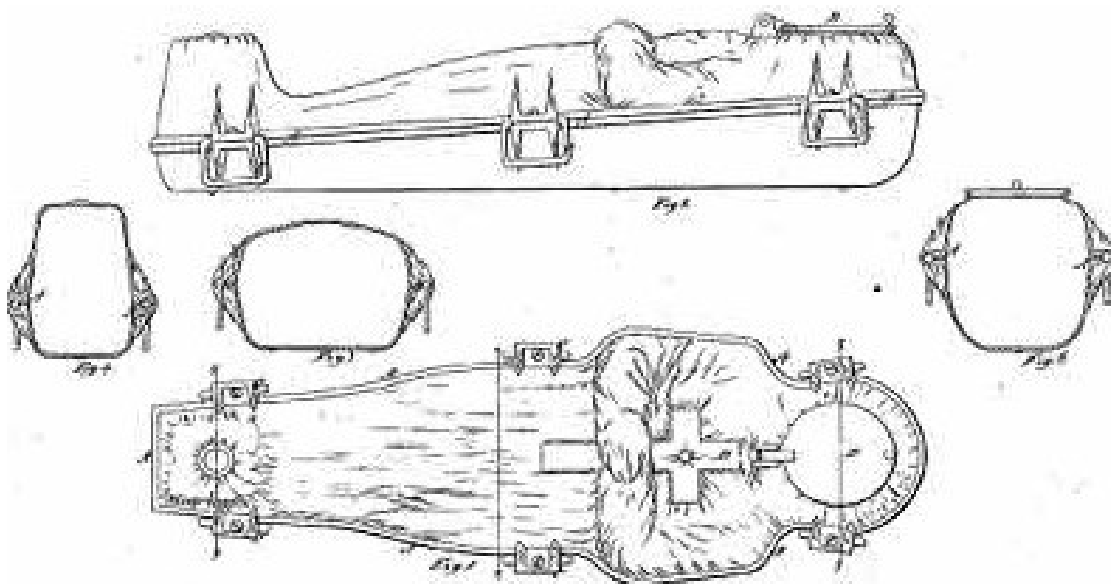


**T**HE CASKET BURIAL CASE, represented by the above engraving, is beautifully finished in imitation of polished Rosewood, and is the most tasteful and appropriate Metallic Case now used. It permits a view of the entire body after it is enclosed, the top being composed of thick plate glass, protected by elaborately ornamented caps, one of which may be seen in its place in the engraving. All sizes, from 27½ to 75 inches in length, constantly on hand.

*AD* Name Plates furnished, neatly engraved.  
je23-6m **DILLINGHAM & DENSON.**



Dillingham and Denson operated from 1856 through 1862.



The "Fisk Airtight Coffin of Cast or Raised Metal" — also known as the "Fisk Mummy" — was designed to preserve the corpse in a cast-iron mummy-shaped case for travel or other delayed interment, and also to keep from spreading disease as outbreaks of yellow fever and cholera were being blamed on overcrowded cemeteries. From *Atlas Obscura*. It was patented in 1848 by Almond Fisk. Martin Crane based his design on the Fisk coffin but took away the mummy shape -- substituting a box.



Top- Casket, Bottom- Coffin, via  
DCInternational

Know the difference between a casket and a coffin? A casket is a rectangular box used for burials; a coffin is burial container, hexagonally or octagonally tapered. Most people don't make a distinction anymore.