

## Guilkey & Herider Mortuary

Founded: 1890

Location: 44 West Ninth Street, Anderson (1890– ); 1024 Main Street; 1324–1326 Main Street (1905–51); 504 West Ninth Street (1951– )

Samuel Clayton “Clayte” Sells and his brothers, originally from Ohio, passed through Anderson on their way to buy a street railway in Marion. Evidently they liked what they saw in Anderson, for when the railway deal fell through, the family moved to the city in 1889. Their father, John W. Sells, established a livery business. After first starting a contracting business, adding a lumber department, and then opening his own livery business, Clayte, who had studied embalming under W. A. Gross in the early 1880s, opened an undertaking establishment in 1890. His brother Jesse was a partner for eight years before leaving to establish his own undertaking business. In the early decades of the twentieth century, Clayte’s funeral parlor was in competition with that of his brothers Jesse and Earl.

In 1905 Clayte moved his business to a newly constructed \$62,500 building at 1324–1326 Main Street. Clayte owned a stable, located in the rear of the building, and seventeen horses as well as cabs, a pallbearer’s coach, hearses, a city patrol wagon, and a city ambulance. He and his family lived above the funeral parlor; the third floor contained apartments for four servants. Clayte’s wife, Cora, studied embalming at Sullivan’s school in Pittsburgh and received a diploma from a German school. Clayte’s son, Orville Sells, became a partner in the business in 1912 and ran the shop with his mother upon Clayte’s death in November 1922. The mortuary became a partnership with J. P. Rowe in 1944 and continued as Sells & Rowe Funeral Home for thirty years. By

1951 it had moved to 504 West Ninth Street. In 1974 it became Sells, Rowe & Guilkey and, in 1985, Guilkey & Herider.