

Waters Funeral Home

Founded: 1894

Location: 100 South High Street (1894–96); 215 West Washington Street (1896–1902); 217 West Washington Street; 219 West Washington Street; 235 West Washington Street; 501 West Washington Street (1947–)

In 1894 William H. Bell, a cooper by trade, moved from Hammond, Indiana, to Hartford City and started a furniture business, later adding undertaking to the enterprise. Four years later he teamed with W. H. Cox, one of the town's leading grocers. The partnership did not last long; in 1899 Bell became sole proprietor of the business. Sometime in the middle to late 1890s Bell and Cox discontinued the furniture operation to concentrate on undertaking.

After the turn of the century J. Will Baxter bought the company, and operated it in partnership with a Mr. Linder until 1931. Harold Markin became Baxter's next partner. Markin moved the business to a refurbished Victorian mansion on West Washington Street in 1947. During the remodeling a five-car garage was added to the back of the home and a hand-operated elevator, used in the former location, was installed. Markin directed the Baxter & Markin ambulance to stand ready at the scene during the 1956 fire in Montpelier to aid anyone hurt by the flames. Fortunately, it remained unused. After Markin's death in 1957, David and Polly Richman acquired the business.

The Richmans kept the business until a first cousin of Markin bought the funeral home in 1981. Ted Lee and Kay Worden Waters purchased the funeral home. Ted was a Vietnam War veteran and a graduate of the Indiana College of Mortuary Science. Ted had worked for the Richman Funeral Home for four years before the purchase of the

business. His first job had been for the Baxter & Markin funeral home in the 1960s. Ted served as county coroner from 1979 to 1986.

In 1998 the Waters continued to operate the funeral home. Ted's son, Tod, joined the company in 1990.