

NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: 1018 S 2ND ST

Postal code: 19147

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Andrew Nebinger Jr. house

Current/Common Name: Cieplinski Funeral Home

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Building

Structure

Site

Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: excellent good fair poor ruins

Occupancy: occupied vacant under construction unknown

Current use: Funeral home and residence

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1855 to 1957

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: c. 1855

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: _____

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____

Original owner: George Weist; Andrew Nebinger Jr.

Other significant persons: George W. Nebinger, Robert Nebinger

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization Philadelphia Historical Commission Date February 12, 2026

Name with Title Historical Commission staff Email preservation@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch St., 13th Floor Telephone 215-686-7660

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator is is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: February 12, 2026

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete Date: February 12, 2026

Date of Notice Issuance: February 12, 2026

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Henry Cieplinski

Address: 1018 S 2nd Street

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19147

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: March 18, 2026

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: April 10, 2026

Date of Final Action: April 10, 2026

Designated Rejected

Nomination of 1018 S. 2nd Street
to the
Philadelphia Register of Historic Places



As satisfying Criteria for Designation A and J

Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the said Northwestern side of Second Street at the distance of 80.86' Northeastwardly from the Northwestern side of Washington Avenue; thence extending Northeastwardly along the said side of Second Street 26.25' to a point; thence extending Northwestwardly through the center of a party wall of the premises adjoining 69.69' to a point; thence Southwestwardly 5.08' to a point; thence Northwestwardly through the center of a party wall 70.64' to a point on the Southeasterly side of Moyamensing Avenue 22' to a point; thence Southeastwardly through the middle of a party wall 44' to a point; thence Northeastwardly .37' to a point; thence further Southeastwardly and through the middle of a party wall 103.54' to the said Second Street and place of beginning. Being 1018 S. Second Street.

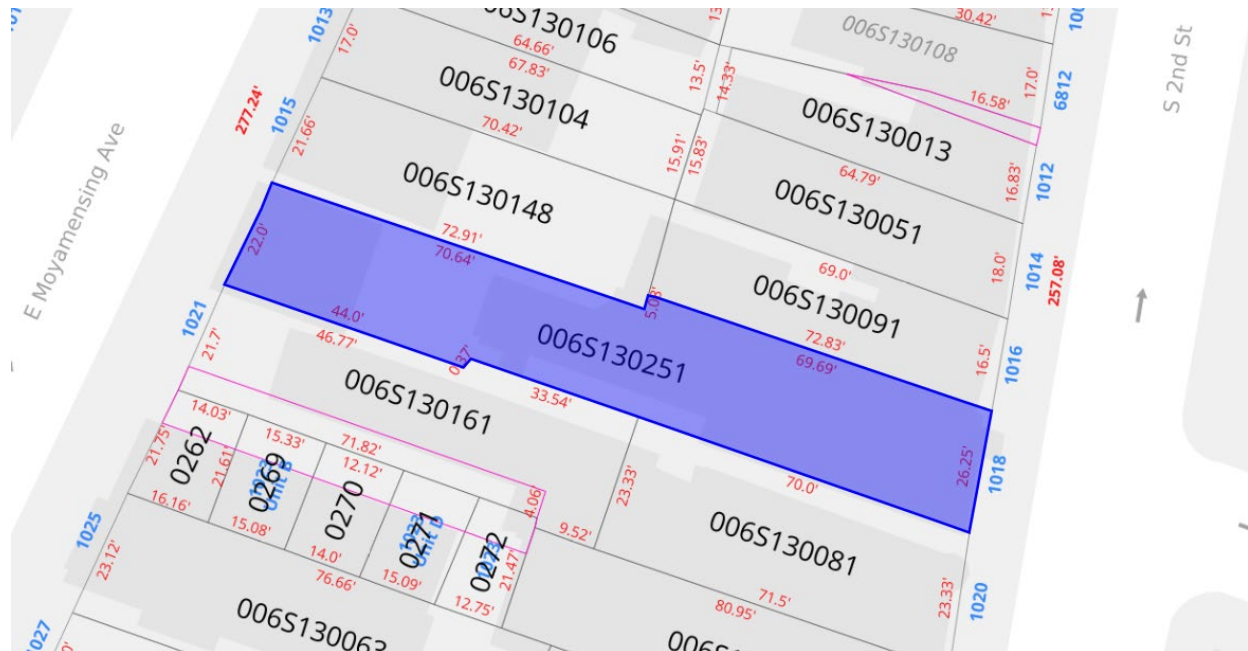


Figure 1. Boundary of 1018 S. 2nd Street. Base map source: atlas.phila.gov.



Figure 2. Aerial view showing 1018 S. 2nd Street highlighted. Source: atlas.phila.gov.

Architectural Description

1018 South 2nd Street is a three-story, three-bay, early Italianate brick rowhouse, located in the Queen Village/Southwark neighborhood of South Philadelphia. The front façade is constructed of red brick laid in a running bond pattern, with marble trim elements and a marble water table. The property extends east-west from South Second Street to Moyamensing Avenue, with the front façade facing South Second Street. On the Moyamensing Avenue side is a 1960 garage that provides entrance to the rear of the property and the rear ell/back buildings. The garage is considered non-historic for the purposes of this nomination.



Figure 3. Photograph of 1018 S. 2nd Street front facade. Photograph by author, February 4, 2026.

The front façade is vertically organized with aligned window openings at the second and third stories. Fenestration consists of tall, narrow, double-hung sash windows set within rectangular openings. Each window is framed by marble lintels and marble sills. Paneled non-historic inoperable shutters are present at the second-and-third story windows, bolted to the façade.



Figure 4. Projecting box bay with metal-clad pent eave. Photograph from [cyclomedia.phila.gov](https://www.cyclomedia.phila.gov), captured July 25, 2025.

The first story features a projecting box bay that spans the two left bays of the front façade. The box bay was a later addition to the building and replaced two windows that would have matched the second and third story windows. The bay projects over the sidewalk and contains a large multi-light non-historic window with grilles between the glass. The bay is capped by a shallow, metal-clad pent eave with a decorative scalloped shingle pattern. Beneath the bay is a decorative wrought iron bracket, not an original feature, added when the box bay was added in the twentieth century. Beneath the box bay are two basement windows at the ground level. They are covered by decorative wrought iron security grates which feature a star and spear motif.

The primary entrance is located in the right bay at the first story. The doorway is set within a rounded-arch marble surround composed of a moulded circular marble head and moulded marble jambs, with an applied decorative keystone featuring scroll, shield, and leaf motifs. The entrance is reached by a set of marble stairs: three treads and one landing. On both sides of the stairs are wrought iron decorative railings with vertical pickets featuring C- and S-shaped scrolls as well as diamond patterns. The wood paneled front door incorporates the C-shaped scroll design. The door includes two main panels in a roughly 60/40 ratio and has an arched transom above with glazing. To the left of the entrance is a metal plaque noting the business name “Cieplinski Funeral Home, Henry J. Cieplinski FD”.



Figure 5. Main entrance at 1018 S. 2nd Street, photograph by author, February 2026.

On the left (south) side of the building is an orange brick archway leading to a side alley. Entrance to the alley is secured by a historic ornate wrought iron gate which features intricate ironwork including vertical iron spears, C-scrolls, and a large 8-pointed star, possibly a compass star. In the middle center of the gate are the initials "A.N." for the original owner of the home, Andrew Nebinger.



Figure 6. Left: iron gate leading to the side of the house, Photograph by author, February 2026. Upper right: image from cyclomedia.phila.gov, to show more of the gate detail without snow. Bottom right: the original key for the gate, possession of Henry Cieplinski, photograph by author, February 2026.



Figure 7. South facade (left side) of the building featuring red brick, a mechanical vent, electrical conduit, and two windows towards the rear. Photograph by author, February 2026.

The main block of the building is capped by a projecting cornice and evenly spaced brackets. The roof is low-pitched and not visible from the street. There is a three-story rear ell which is clad in stucco. Part of the rear ell is one and one-half bays wide and the rearmost portion is one bay wide, both with single-pitched roofs.



Figure 8. 1018 S. 2nd Street building rear and non-historic garage, which faces Moyamensing Avenue. Photograph by author, February 2026.

Site and Building History

The building at 1018 S. 2nd Street was constructed circa 1855 while owned by George Weist, a baker, who purchased the property with frame buildings on it in 1846.¹ By the time of its sale in 1857 to Dr. Andrew Nebinger Jr., the frame buildings were removed and the three-story brick building had been constructed.² The exact date of construction was not able to be narrowed down further, and it is possible that references in a 1856 City Directory showing dentist Andrew Nebinger Sr. and medical doctor Andrew Nebinger Jr. operating out of “482 S 2d” is in fact the subject building just prior to the city-wide change in street numbering which happened around 1856-57. An 1858 insurance survey provides detail on the building at that time (see Appendix A) in addition to a first-floor plan (Figure 9).

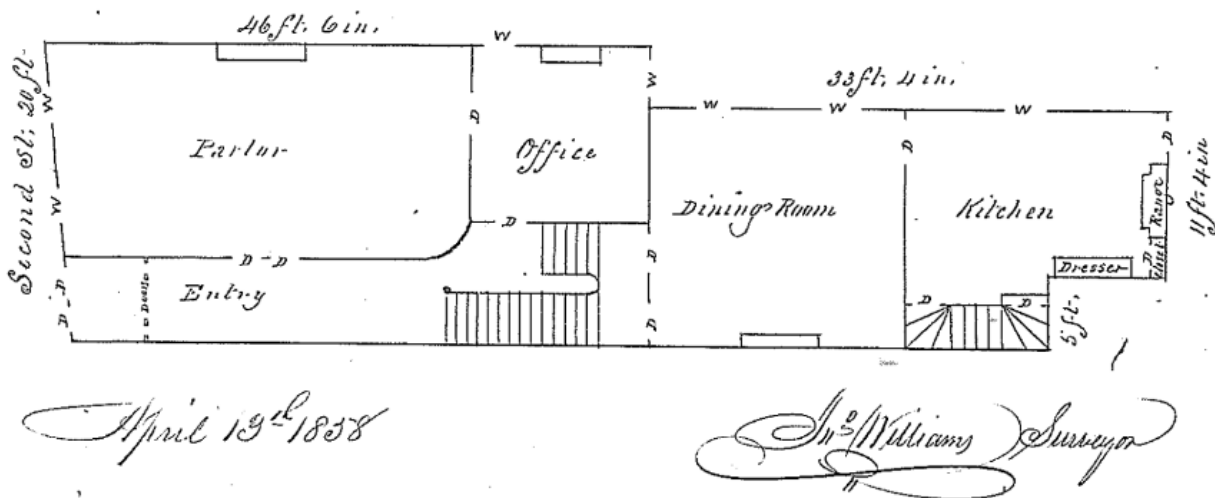


Figure 9. Floor plan sketch from 1858 Insurance Company of North America fire insurance survey. Source: PHC archives.

An 1870 aerial photograph taken from nearby Sparks' Shot Tower shows 1018 S. 2nd Street with two-over-two single or double-hung windows on all floors of the front façade, in addition to a metal hipped roof and two-story rear addition (Figure 10). An 1893 mention in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* noted that contractor Henry C. Dahl was permitted to construct a three-story addition to 1018 S. 2nd Street, which reflects the height of the existing rear addition.³

¹ Deed between Sarah Ann Benke to George Weist, April 7, 1846, AWM book 5 p. 591-92.

² Deed between George Weist to Andrew Nebinger, April 2, 1857, RDW book 126 p. 117-19.

³ "Permits Issued," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 10, 1893, 6.



Figure 10. Aerial west view of the city, as viewed from Sparks' Shot Tower in 1870, with 1018 S. 2nd Street called out. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia, Print and Picture Collection, Castner, Samuel, Jr., 1843-1929 - Compiler. Castner Scrapbook v.7, Walks, Views, Maps, page 6. [Scrapbooks]. <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/56521>.



Figure 11. Zoomed in view of 1018 S. 2nd Street, as viewed from Sparks' Shot Tower in 1870. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia.

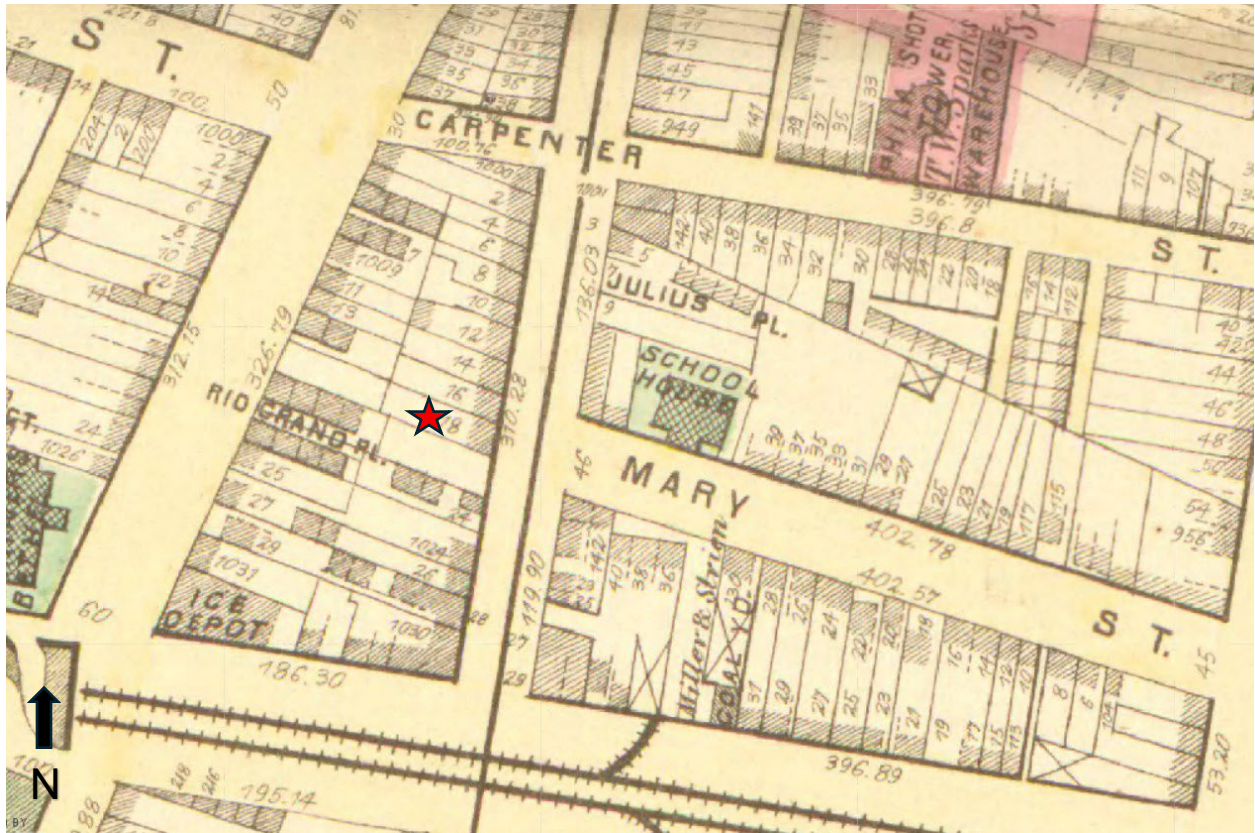


Figure 12. G.M. Hopkins Philadelphia Atlas, 1875. Source: Philageohistory.org.

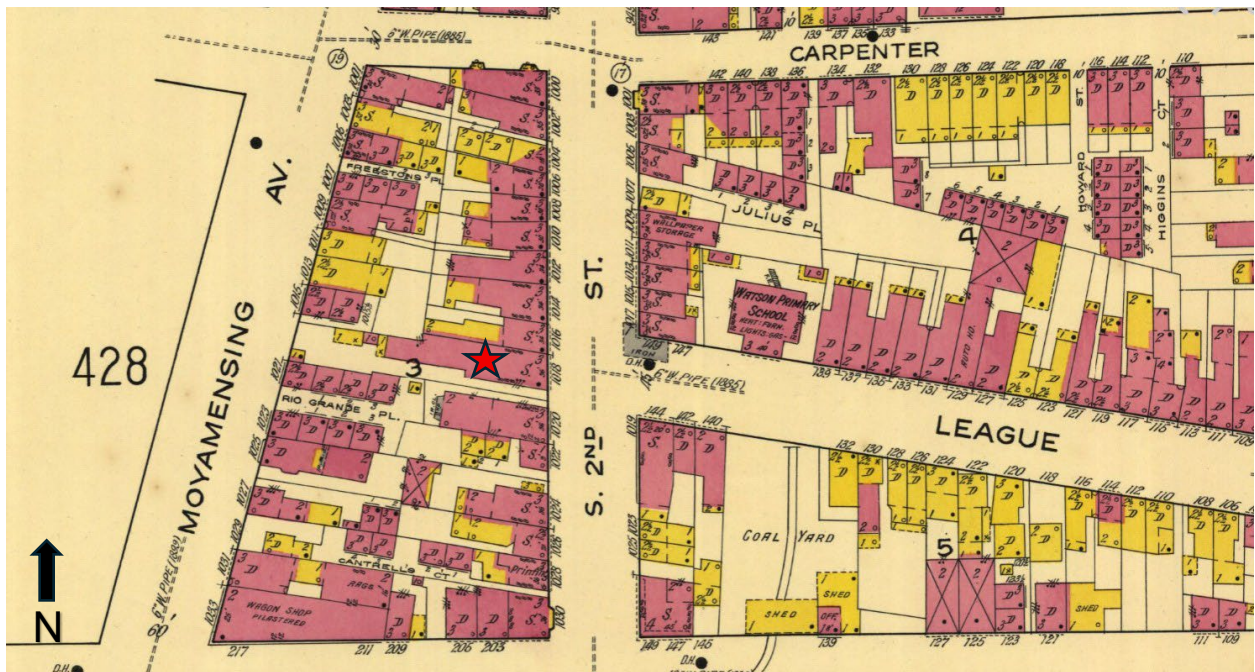


Figure 13. Sanborn Insurance map of Philadelphia, Vol. 5, sheet 429, 1917. Source: Penn State University Libraries digital collections.

The most evident alteration to the front façade of 1018 S. 2nd Street was the installation of one multi-pane bulk window at the first floor with a pent eave, which replaced two double-hung windows. A 1957 zoning permit application called for the remodeling of the front bulk window.⁴ The rear two-car garage was constructed in 1960.⁵ Henry Cieplinski, the property owner, informed the nominators that the front door slab was replaced previously, and the cornice was rebuilt to replicate the historic appearance. In the mid-1960s, Washington Avenue was widened in this area approximately 50 feet northward, resulting in the demolition of buildings fronting Washington Avenue and at the former corner of S. 2nd Street and Washington Avenue.⁶



Figure 14. 1014-1024 S. 2nd Street, 1963. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission Archives.

⁴ Application for Zoning Permit, Application No. 31425F, available online through atlas.phila.gov, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/lni-zoning-pdfs/219-6645.pdf>.

⁵ Application for Zoning Permit, Application No. 85214F, available online through atlas.phila.gov, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/lni-zoning-pdfs/219-6645.pdf>.

⁶ Legal Card, Washington Ave. from Moyamensing Ave. to Front St., LC009086, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/streets-legalcards/legalcards/LC009086.JPG>.

Statement of Significance

The property at 1018 S. 2nd Street satisfies Criteria A and J, for its association with Dr. Andrew Nebinger Jr. (Criterion A) and for its connection to the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Southwark community, as E. Bowen's Son, Inc. Funeral Home and Cieplinski Funeral Home (Criterion J).

Criterion A

Dr. Andrew Nebinger Jr. (1819–1886) was a prominent Southwark-based medical doctor who purchased the newly-constructed building in 1857 for use as his residence and medical office. Dr. Nebinger owned and operated his practice out of 1018 S. 2nd Street until his passing in 1886.



Figure 15. Portrait of Dr. Andrew Nebinger Jr. Source: *Biography of Andrew Nebinger, M.D.* by J. H. Grove, M.D. Read before the Philadelphia County Medical Society, May 11, 1887.

Andrew Nebinger Jr. was born in the Southwark district of Philadelphia in 1819. His father, Andrew Sr., was a dentist from York County, Pennsylvania, and his mother, Honora St. Leger, came from Dublin, Ireland. He attended private school and finished his education in the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania in 1850. During his time in school, he operated an apothecary business with his brothers at the corner of S. 2nd and Mary Streets (now League Street, see Figure 16) directly across the street from what would become his home and office in 1857.⁷ It is likely that he became acquainted with German baker George Weist, the owner of 1018 S. 2nd Street, during this time which would set the stage for Dr. Nebinger purchasing the property from Mr. Weist soon after the frame dwellings on the site were removed and the new three-story red brick dwelling was constructed.⁸



Figure 16. 1019 S. 2nd Street, now known as 144 League Street, directly across the street from the subject property. This photograph is from 1957, shortly before the storefront was removed and the first floor restored to a residential appearance. This was the building which housed the Nebinger brothers' apothecary for many years. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission archive.

⁷ Grove, *Biography of Andrew Nebinger, M.D.*, 3-4.

⁸ Deed between Sarah Ann Benke to George Weist, April 7, 1846; Deed between George Weist to Andrew Nebinger, April 2, 1857.

Contemporary accounts of Dr. Nebinger's medical practice in Southwark highlight the respect which he brought to the profession:

"The Doctor began the practice of medicine in the locality of his birth, and remained there steadfastly devoted to his profession, and assiduously applying himself to his work. He was wedded to his profession, and was careful, in pursuing its practice, to do everything in his power to elevate it, and render it useful in relieving the ills of poor suffering humanity. ...He built up a large and lucrative practice, at the same time paying close attention to the affairs of medical societies. Though always actively engaged as the medical advisor of wealthy patients, he never allowed the poor to suffer, and many are the unfortunate families who are indebted to Dr. Nebinger for kindly attentions. A bachelor, with no personal family cares, he always found time, apart from his regular duties, to aid the poor and lowly, finding recreation in the noble work of a humanitarian."⁹

Dr. Nebinger's reputation led to his appointment as the Cooper Shop Hospital's surgeon-in-charge when it opened in October 1861 (Figure 17). Located approximately at what is now Washington Avenue and Water Street, just down the street from Dr. Nebinger's home, the hospital cared for thousands of sick and wounded Union soldiers before closing in 1865. It was attached to the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon which provided washing, sleeping, and writing facilities to military personnel, sailors, refugees, and freedmen during the Civil War.¹⁰ Dr. Nebinger served at the hospital alongside his brothers George W. and Robert.¹¹ In December 1861, Dr. C.E. Hill, M.D. writes of his visit to the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon:

"Connected with this hall is a hospital, large enough to accommodate thirty patients with all the conveniences the sick can possibly need. Andrew Nebinger, M.D., is the surgeon in charge, and a finer specimen of a gentlemen I never met. His kindness to the sick, and his untiring zeal for their comfort, proves him to be a philanthropist of the first order; and, in fact, the committee vie with each other in their attention to the soldiers. ... This

⁹ Grove, *Biography of Andrew Nebinger, M.D.*, 4-5.

¹⁰ Queen, James Fuller, 1820 Or 21-1886 Artist, and Thomas S Sinclair. *View of the Philadelphia Volunteer Refreshment Saloons*. United States of America Pennsylvania Philadelphia, 1861. Philadelphia: Job T. Williams. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2021670369/>.

¹¹ Grove, *Biography of Andrew Nebinger, M.D.*, 12.

building is owned by William M. Cooper, and was used for a cooper shop until the breaking out of the war.”¹²



Figure 17. Chromolithograph from 1862 shows an exterior view of the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon. Source: Cooper, William M., Copyright Holder, and M. H Traubel. *Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, the First Opened for Union Volunteers in the United States Otsego Street, Philadelphia. Philadelphia United States of America Pennsylvania, 1862. Philadelphia: Chromolithography of M. H. Traubel. Photograph.* <https://www.loc.gov/item/2021670373/>.

Dr. Nebinger was one of the incorporators of the County Medical Society of Philadelphia, and was praised by colleagues for his anti-abortion stance in the 1870s.¹³ He held, in turn, all of the leading offices of the County Medical Society of Philadelphia, in addition to holding positions with the State Medical Society, and membership with the College of Physicians, the American Medical Association of the United States, the Academy of Natural Sciences, the Franklin Institute, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.¹⁴ Dr. Nebinger served as Medical Director of St. Mary's Hospital, and left a substantial amount of money in his will to the new St. Agnes' Hospital.¹⁵

¹² "C.E. Hill to Editor, December 29, 1861," House Divided: The Civil War Research Engine at Dickinson College, <https://hd.housedivided.dickinson.edu/node/32977>.

¹³ Grove, *Biography of Andrew Nebinger, M.D.*, 5, 8.

¹⁴ Grove, 11.

¹⁵ Grove, 12.

About 1870, Dr. Nebinger retired from the medical profession and turned his attention to education and politics. He was a member the Board of Public Education, a position he held for eighteen until his passing. In fact, all three of the Nebinger brothers were active on the Board of Public Education, with each dying in turn while serving on the Board and being replaced by another brother until Robert Nebinger was the last to pass away.¹⁶ Andrew Nebinger took a leadership role in improving and maintaining the public school system, as a member of the High School Committee and chairman of the Committee on Text Books.¹⁷ He was “a Democrat of Democrats” and served as Chairman of the Democratic State Convention in 1873.¹⁸

Andrew Nebinger’s youngest brother, George Washington Nebinger (1824-1868), was also a physician, comptroller of public schools for many years, a director of Girard College for nine years, and is for whom George W. Nebinger Elementary School at 601 Carpenter Street is named.¹⁹

Andrew Nebinger’s other brother, Robert Nebinger (1828-1888), was also a physician and druggist and lived with Andrew at 1018 S. 2nd Street throughout his ownership of the property through Andrew Nebinger’s passing in 1886, at which time Robert maintained residence at the subject property until his own passing in 1888.²⁰ Historical records of the 1860s show Robert operating an apothecary directly across the street from the subject property, at the corner of S. 2nd Street and what is now League Street.²¹ An obituary for his brother Andrew states that Robert owns the “old drug store” across the street from 1018 S. 2nd Street and is “known as a man of large benevolence and Christian charity” who is “left alone in the happy home of the affectionate brothers.”²²

¹⁶ “Dr. Robert Nebinger Dead,” *The Philadelphia Times*, January 13, 1888, 4.

¹⁷ Grove, *Biography of Andrew Nebinger, M.D.*, 13; “Dr. Andrew Nebinger. His Death, After a Painful Illness – Sketch of His Career,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 13, 1886, 2.

¹⁸ *Lancaster Intelligencer*, April 14, 1886, 6.

¹⁹ *Appletons' Cyclopedia of American Biography, 1600-1889* [database on-line]. Vol. IV: Lodge – Pickens, 485. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

²⁰ US Census records, 1860, 1870, 1880; “Robert Nebinger Obituary,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 13, 1888, 5.

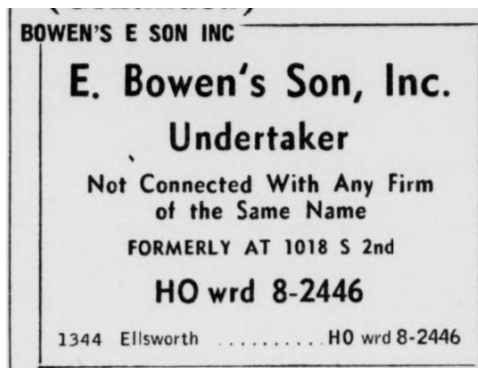
²¹ Ancestry.com. *U.S., Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, City Directory, 1868, Ancestry.com. *U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

²² “Death of Dr. Andrew Nebinger,” *The Sunbury Weekly News*, April 16, 1886, 2.

The funerals for all three Nebinger brothers, in 1868, 1886, and 1888, were held in the subject property at 1018 S. 2nd Street.²³ Several years after the sale of the property in 1890 to Mary J. Bowen, the property use officially changed to funeral home and residence.²⁴

Criterion J

The property at 1018 S. 2nd Street satisfies Criterion J, having served the South Philadelphia community as a funeral home beginning in 1898 and continuing through present-day. Historically, funeral homes served as neighborhood anchors—often operating from family residences where funeral directors lived on site with their families and acted as trusted community figures during times of loss. Such was the case with 1018 S. 2nd Street, where the Bowen family moved in 1890 from just down the block to operate T. H. Bowen and then E. Bowen’s Son, Inc. Funeral Home. This was followed by the Cieplinski family’s ownership in 1945 and funeral parlor business starting in 1948, demonstrating the building’s longstanding role as a place of service, memory, and intergenerational community continuity.²⁵



Cieplinski Funeral Home at 1018 S. 2nd Street stands as part of a broader pattern of neighborhood-based, family-operated funeral service deeply embedded in South Philadelphia’s social fabric.

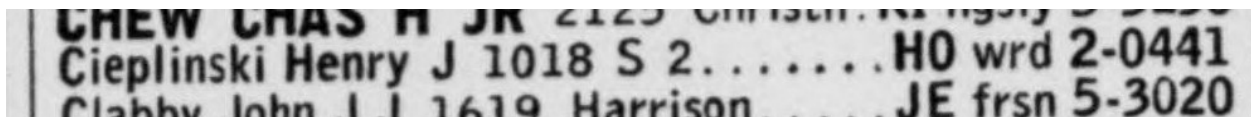


Figure 18. Both images are from the Philadelphia Yellow Pages, August 1950. Source: Library of Congress.

²³ “George Nebinger Obituary,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 9, 1868, 5; “Andrew Nebinger Obituary,” *The Philadelphia Times*, April 14, 1886, 3; “Robert Nebinger Obituary,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 14, 1888, 5.

²⁴ Deed between James B. McMinn and Mary J. Bowen, August 14, 1890. McMinn was the brother-in-law of Andrew and Robert Nebinger and was in charge of settling their estate.

²⁵ Joyce, “The Long View: An Interview with Henry Cieplinski,” 8; “Last Sad Rites,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 20, 1898, 12; “William Bowen Simpson,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 1, 1920, 9; “Katherine Horos,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 12, 1948, 40.

²⁵ Joyce, “The Long View: An Interview with Henry Cieplinski,” 8.

A Brief History of the Funeral Home

There is no evidence that death services were commercialized until the mid-1700s.²⁶ Prior to that time, death was handled non-commercially by friends, family, and religious organizations. Once commercialization began, the labor associated with death was highly gendered.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Philadelphia and elsewhere, caring for the dead was primarily women's work. When a person was sick and nearing death, it would be the female family, friends, and neighbors that came together to witness and ease the suffering of the ill (Figure 19). Once the spirit had left the body, it was the women who took part in what was sometimes called the "awful business" of preparing the body for viewing and burial.²⁷ These activities took place in the deceased's home into the twentieth century (Figure 20).²⁸



Figure 19. Deathbed Scene of Mary King (1826-1839) in Philadelphia, surrounded by women family members, 1846 engraving. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia Digital Archives.

²⁶ Marsh, "A New Lease on Death," 425.

²⁷ Weaver, "'Painful Leisure' and 'Awful Business': Female Death Workers in Pennsylvania," 34.

²⁸ Marsh, "A New Lease on Death," 425.



Figure 20. Chromolithograph of a funeral taking place inside a home around 1860. Source: *Funeral - Man Preaching at Coffin Inside a Home*. [Between 1860 and 1900?] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2004665413/>.

Women hired for this work were known as “watchers,” “watch women,” or “nurses” (Figure 21). They provided end-of-life comfort, food, medicine, and managed bodily evacuations. Spiritually, they offered prayer, organized clergy visits, and welcomed mourners. They also verified death by observing for any sign of breath and shaking the body to see if any life remained.²⁹

²⁹ Weaver, “‘Painful Leisure’ and ‘Awful Business’: Female Death Workers in Pennsylvania,” 36.

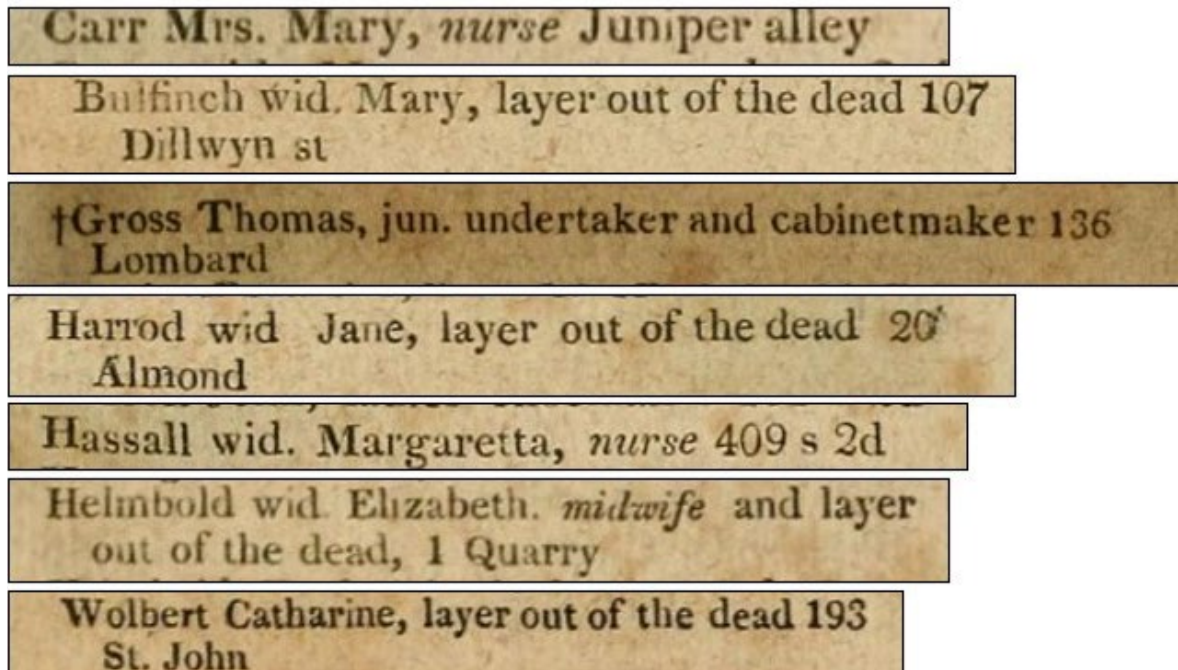


Figure 21. Selection of entries from the 1825 Philadelphia Directory associated with death work. Accessed through the Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/philadelphiadire1825phil/page/2/mode/2up>.

Those who prepared the body were known as “layers” or “layers of the dead” (Figure 21). They cleaned and dressed the remains, sometimes removing internal organs, blocking orifices, and filling body cavities with charcoal or chemicals to delay decomposition and afford loved ones more time to view the body.³⁰ These professions were often held by widows who both needed a means to support themselves financially and had dealt with death at least once. Layers were sometimes also co-listed as midwives, as both roles required a similar skill set (Figure 21). Both required cleaning and clothing the body and midwives during this time would have been no stranger to death.³¹

Men’s roles in the early death industry were more limited. They supplied coffins or caskets and provided transportation, often advertising undertaking services alongside cabinetmaking or carpentry (Figure 21). Their work primarily involved furnishing the coffin and conveying the body to the cemetery (Figure 22).

³⁰ Weaver, “‘Painful Leisure’ and ‘Awful Business’: Female Death Workers in Pennsylvania,” 39-40.

³¹ Rundblad, “Exhuming Women’s Pre-market Duties in the Care of the Dead,” 175.

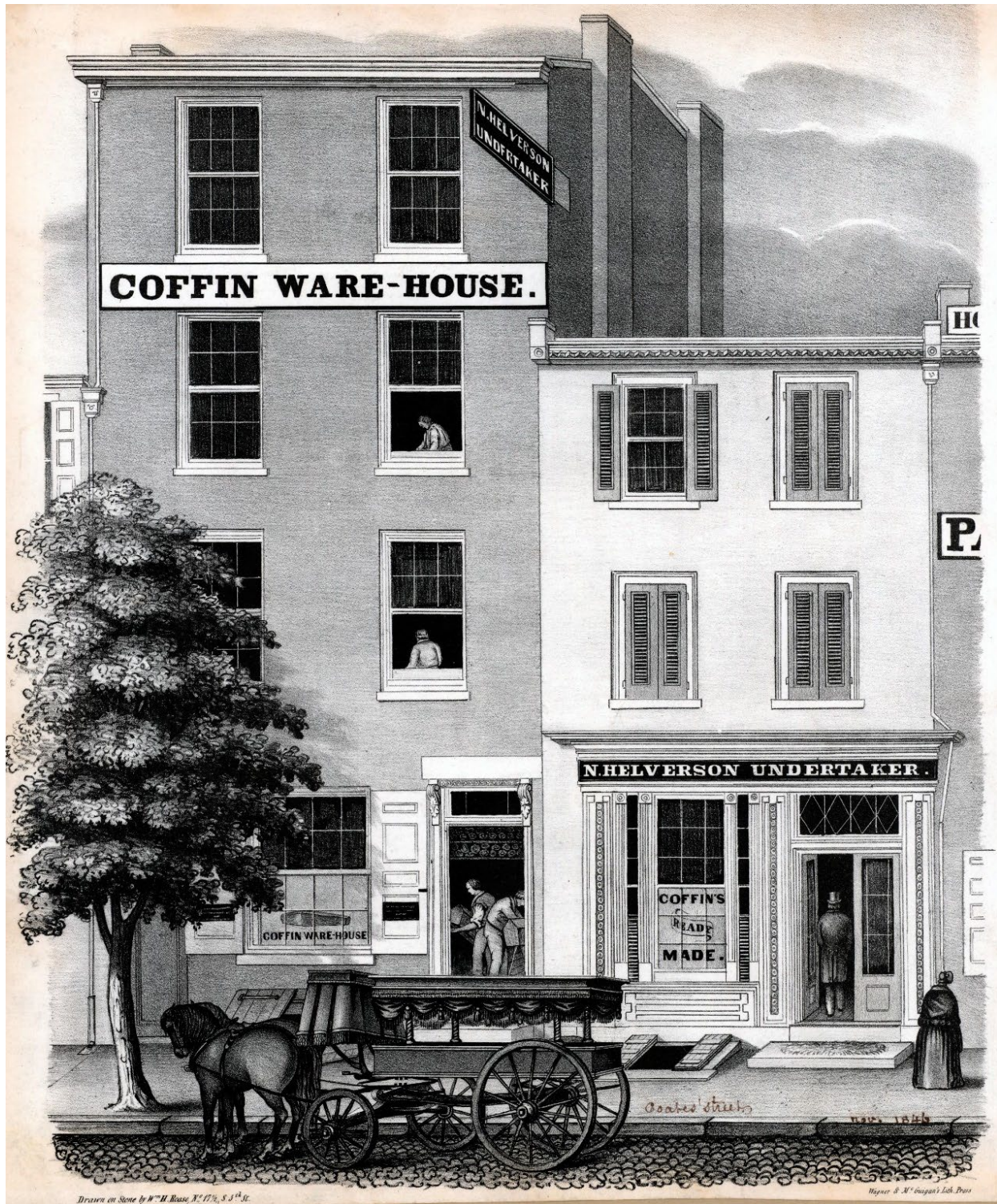


Figure 22. An undertaker and coffin warehouse, highlighting the male role in death work. Source: Rease, William H., *Circa Artist. N. Helverson, Undertaker, 93 Coates Street, Philadelphia. Philadelphia United States of America Pennsylvania, 1846. Philadelphia: Wagner & McGuigan, -11. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2021670252/>.*

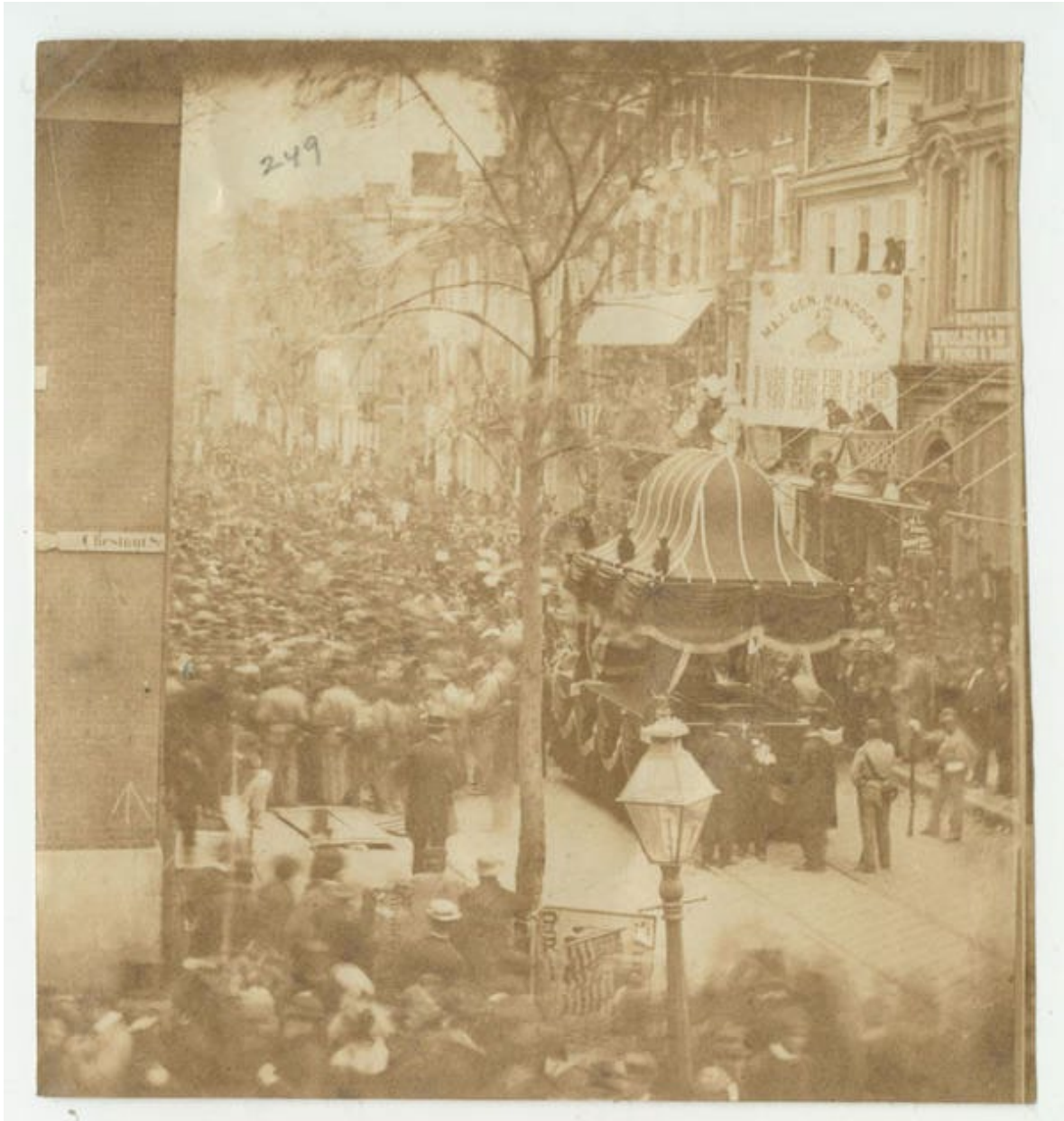


Figure 23. Photograph showing President Lincoln's catafalque followed by crowds of mourners at Sixth and Chestnut Streets in Philadelphia on April 22, 1865. Source: Schreiber & Glover, 1865, Library Company of Philadelphia Digital Archives.

The American Civil War profoundly altered American attitudes toward death, as people had to grapple with large-scale loss of life. Battlefield deaths required new preservation methods to return bodies home. Embalming—once viewed as mutilation—became widely practiced.³² The assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865 further popularized embalming. As Lincoln's body traveled in catafalque from Washington D.C. to Springfield, Illinois, the public witnessed how a

³² Marsh, "A New Lease on Death," 425.

body could be kept in a way to be viewed for a long period of time (Figure 23). Embalming subsequently gained cultural acceptance.

What began in the antebellum era as a secondary trade for cabinetmakers or livery stable operators developed after the Civil War into a distinct, professional industry driven by arterial embalming (Figure 24).³³ Simultaneously, the rise of hospitals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shifted the location of death away from the home. Death became increasingly removed from everyday domestic life.³⁴

By the 1880s, establishments devoted exclusively to undertaking appeared with greater frequency in American towns and business districts, marking a shift away from funerals held in private homes or churches. These undertaking establishments would often include a dedicated parlor for funerals, and as the traditional American family homes started to reorganize and lose their parlors, it became more acceptable to hold a funeral outside of the family home. These “funeral parlors” blended commercial, ceremonial, and domestic spaces. The presence of funeral parlors in residential neighborhoods generated mixed reactions. While necessary, they were sometimes perceived as emotionally unsettling due to their association with death and mourning.³⁵

Unlike most consumer transactions, funeral service decisions were rarely comparative or casual. Families relied on longstanding associations, proximity, and personal referrals, placing significant trust in the funeral director. The role of a funeral director requires technical skill, ceremonial coordination, and emotional sensitivity at moments of acute grief. A funeral—solemn, symbolic, and unrehearsable—carries extraordinary responsibility. By transferring preparation of the dead and conduct of rites out of the home, funeral directors created a professional buffer between families and death, rendering loss more orderly and manageable while preserving dignity and facilitating mourning.³⁶

The American funeral industry is undergoing significant transformation due to changing consumer preferences and industry consolidation. Cremation and alternative burials increasingly replace traditional funerals. Retail funeral establishments now offer lower-cost

³³ Lampros, *Preserved: A Cultural History of the Funeral Home in America*, 23.

³⁴ Laderman, *Rest in Peace: A Cultural History of Death and the Funeral Home in Twentieth-Century America*, 3-4.

³⁵ Lampros, *Preserved: A Cultural History of the Funeral Home in America*, 28-29. See also *Rowland v. Miller* (Superior Court of New York).

³⁶ Quigley, *The Corpse: A History*, 305-308.

services, often operating in malls or shopping centers as they do not handle human remains on site. While cremation arrangements may occur on site, remains are cremated elsewhere and returned in an urn. Without embalming facilities or chapels, these businesses operate at substantially lower costs than traditional funeral homes.



Figure 24. M.A. Tomaszewski and Son - Undertaker and Embalmer, 2728 E. Allegheny Avenue. Photograph taken March 7, 1951. Photograph courtesy of PhillyHistory.org, a project of the Philadelphia Department of Records.

In a 2025 interview with Henry Cieplinski, the interviewer noted:

Cieplinski currently operates a funeral home at his residence. Although it was an important neighborhood business when his father started it, the business may not continue in the years to come. Preferences change, and people tend to prefer cremations now.³⁷

Cieplinski Funeral Home in the context of South Philadelphia

In mid-twentieth-century South Philadelphia, funeral homes were central institutions within neighborhood life. They served as cultural mediators for families navigating grief within an increasingly diverse urban environment. Family-run establishments clustered throughout the area, including the Pennsylvania Burial Company, Baldi Funeral Homes, Jas. J. King and Son, Gangemi Funeral Home, E. Bowen's Son, Inc., the Rachubinski Funeral Home, the Leonetti Funeral Home, Shea Funeral Home, and many more (Figure 30).³⁸

These businesses reflected the ethnic composition of South Philadelphia, where Italian American, Irish, Polish, Black, and other immigrant and migrant communities maintained distinct funeral traditions. Funeral homes facilitated rites that blended religious observance with neighborhood customs, reinforcing communal identity. Multi-generational ownership strengthened trust and continuity, making these establishments cultural touchstones that transmitted memory and mutual support across decades (Figure 25, Figure 27, Figure 28, Figure 29).

Within this context, Cieplinski Funeral Home at 1018 S. 2nd Street stands as part of a broader pattern of neighborhood-based, family-operated funeral service deeply embedded in South Philadelphia's social fabric.

³⁷ Joyce, "The Long View: An Interview with Henry Cieplinski," 9.

³⁸ In the August 1950 Philadelphia Yellow Pages, the author found 50 listings for funeral directors and funeral homes in South Philadelphia. *U.S. Telephone Directory Collection: Philadelphia Yellow Pages*, <https://www.loc.gov/item/usteledirec08145>.



Figure 25. E. Bowen's Son, Undertaker located at 1344 Ellsworth Street. This business moved here after leaving 1018 S. 2nd Street. Photograph taken August 20, 1947. Photograph courtesy of PhillyHistory.org, a project of the Philadelphia Department of Records.



Figure 26. Framed parting gift from E. Bowen's Son, Inc. Undertakers at 1018 S. 2nd Street, in possession of Henry Cieplinski.



Figure 27. D'Alfonso Funeral Chapel, Undertakers. Located at 809 S. 9th Street. Photograph taken March 19, 1954. Photograph courtesy of PhillyHistory.org, a project of the Philadelphia Department of Records.



Figure 28. Shea Funeral Home, located at 1449 S. 29th Street. Photograph taken December 21, 1965. Historical Commission Archives.



Figure 29. A. Ebert's Sons Funeral Home, located at 258 S. 4th Street. Photograph taken January 23, 1957. Philadelphia Historical Commission archives.

<p>GRASSO HENRY L 2526 S 12 HO wrd 2- GRASSO RAYMOND E 2526 S 12 HO wrd 2-</p>	<p>ALLMOND CLARENCE T SON OF THE LATE WM. P. ALLMOND Formerly of 17th & FITZWATER STS. MAIN OFFICE 1819 Bainbridge St. - KI ngly 5-2536 GR anit 2-8120 53 & Vine GR anit 2-8120</p>	<p><i>Funeral Services Of your own choosing</i></p> <p>ARRANGED TO FIT PERSONAL FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES <i>Serving You for Three Generations</i></p> <p><i>Jas. J. King and Son</i></p> <p>MICHAEL J. KING JAS. J. KING <i>Director Director</i> TWO CONVENIENT LOCATIONS WEST PHILA. SOUTH PHILA. 2651 South 64th Street 2129 South 11th Street BE lgrd 6-4050 DE wey 4-0661</p> <p>24 Hour Funeral Service Licensed in Pennsylvania and New Jersey</p>	<p>PENNSYLVANIA BURIAL CO INC PENNSYLVANIA BURIAL CO. Inc. Successor to ITALIAN BURIAL CASKET CO. Contract Dept. 1327 S Broad DE wey 4-1717</p>
<p>EMERY GEORGE F George F. Emery FUNERAL DIRECTOR Dignity - Sympathy 1232 S 22 HO wrd 8-1585</p>	<p>GANGEMI VINCENT GANGEMI FUNERAL HOME BROAD & WOLF STS. FU ltn 9-1847 2238 S Broad FU ltn 9-1847</p>	<p>BLACK & WHITE GEORGE BLACK Successor FUNERAL DIRECTOR Established 1903 HO wrd 8-4811 1412 S 20 HO wrd 8-4811</p>	
<p>DONATO ANTHONY P 5400 Market. AL legny 4-2903 1522 S Broad. HO wrd 8-1522</p>	<p>LEONETTI BROAD & WOLF Funeral Home Inc. Funeral Directors ANYWHERE - ANYTIME THE LEONETTI FUNERAL SERVICE OFFERS IN TIME OF NEED A COMPLETE BURIAL SERVICE WITH UNDERSTANDING KNOWLEDGE & SYMPATHY. Air Conditioned Parlors DE wey 4- 8 6 6 1 2223 S. BROAD PHILA. PA.</p>	<p>BALDI ALFONSO L ALFONSO L. BALDI FU ltn 9-2414 Modern Air Conditioned Funeral Parlors 1331 S. BROAD ST. Member Phila. Funeral Directors' Ass'n 1331 S Broad St. FU ltn 9-2414</p>	<p>BALDI VITO M BALDI Vito M. SERVICES AVAILABLE ANYWHERE DAY or NIGHT HO wrd 8-4042 SE Corner 13 & Federal. HO wrd 8-4042</p>
<p>WEAVER ROYAL S 18 & Fitzwatr... KI Hawkins Jas L Funeral Home 17 & Federal. FU ltn 9-3 SHEA FUNERAL HOME 2634 E Allegheny Av NE gnt 7- 29 & Dickinson DE wey 4- If no answer call... BA ring 2-</p>	<p>Stolfo Chas 2947 S Broad ... Stolfo Charles Jr 2947 S Broad ...</p>	<p>SCHRAISHUHN EDW A 21 & Wolf DE wey 4-5500</p>	
<p>PHILADELPHIA BURIAL CO PHILADELPHIA BURIAL CO. USE OF MODERN PARLORS FREE OF CHARGE DAY and NIGHT SERVICE HO wrd 8-1470 Passyunk & Dickinsn HO wrd 8-1470</p>			

Figure 30. A sample of Funeral Directors and funeral homes located in South Philadelphia, taken from the Philadelphia Yellow Pages, August 1950. Source: Library of Congress.

In Conclusion

In conclusion, the property at 1018 S. 2nd Street merits listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and J. Under Criterion A, the building's early history is associated with prominent medical doctor Andrew Nebinger Jr. Under Criterion J, the property's funeral home use dating back to 1898 and extending through 2026 exemplifies the cultural, social, and historical heritage of the Southwark community.

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Appendix A

1858 Insurance Survey, contained within the Philadelphia Historical Commission archives

Survey of a three story brick building, with two story back buildings.
Situating on the West side of South Second Street, opposite Mary Street,
and N^o 1018, the property of Dr. Andrew Nebinger. (See Plan for size)

First Story front building divided into two rooms & entry, Story 12 feet high in the clear, heart-pine floors, Joice 3 by 12 + 16 in. from center, one row of bridging. Two reveal window frames in front each 4 lights of plate glass 15 by 41 in. Sash $\frac{3}{4}$ thick double hung, panel skirting under each window, outside panel shutters $\frac{3}{4}$ thick moulded face & bead & butt back, Two windows in back room each 12 lights, one 9 by 20 + one 10 by 20 in. sash $\frac{3}{4}$ double hung & panel skirting under each, also panel shutters $\frac{3}{4}$ thick, One of the windows extend to the floor, one pair of folding doors & two single passage doors each $\frac{3}{4}$ thick double faced, one of the doors with two lights each 8 by 16 in. Sub-wash board 9 in. wide & moulded top, Door ways & windows trim Parlor trimmed with 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. architraves with moulded band & square around the edge, Back room doors & windows trimmed with 6 in. moulded architraves, one white Italian marble mantle, with circular face richly carved, 16 white marble brackets & shelf in back room, large stucco cornice in Parlor & ornamental center piece, neat cornice in back room, Front door frame with circular marble head & jambs moulded, transom sash in one light, folding doors to the same $\frac{3}{4}$ thick with 4 circular end panels & large moulding and fillets, Marble ashler, and marble sills & heads to windows in front, Vestibule door frame in entry with side & square transom sash, neat trimming around the frame, folding doors $\frac{3}{4}$ thick with light of glass to each door 9 by 52 in. Vestibule floor laid with variegated tile, with ornamental china work in the center, Marble skirting 18 in high & moulded top,

Stair Case in the entry leading to the 3rd Story, Steps 3 ft. 5 in going, 8 in rise & 11 in tread, $\frac{3}{4}$ thick heart-pine, steps & risers glued & returned on an open string, Octagon newel post varnished with mahogany, Mahogany continued hand rail moulded 2 by 4 in. Six square balusters, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ square turned, made from maple, Panel work under first flight, also closet with panel door $\frac{3}{4}$ thick double faced, one window on upper half space 12 lights 10 by 16 sash $\frac{3}{4}$ double hung & panel shutters $\frac{3}{4}$ thick,


Second Story front building divided into 3 rooms & entry, Story 10 ft. 10 in. high in the

1018 S. 2nd

JAN 283

clear, carolina sap floors, joice 16 in. from the center. Three per cal window frames in front each 4 lights 15 by 20 in. sash $\frac{1}{4}$ double hung, panel skinning under each window, also out side panel shutters $\frac{1}{4}$ thick, one window in each back room 12 lights 10 by 20 in. sash $\frac{1}{4}$ double hung & panel shutters $\frac{1}{4}$ thick, Five closets each with panel door $\frac{1}{4}$ thick single worked, Five passage doors each $\frac{1}{4}$ thick double faced, Sub wash board 8 in. wide & moulded top, Door ways & windows in front room trimmed with 7 in. moulded architraves, Door ways & windows of back room trimmed with 6 in. moulded architraves, Marble mantle shelves & brackets in each room, neat stucco cornice around the rooms & entry,

Third story front building divided into 3 rooms & entry, Story 10 feet 6 in. high in the clear, carolina sap floors, Three per cal window frames in front each 4 lights 15 by 32 in. Three cloths presses & one closet in front room and cloths press in each back room, each with panel door $\frac{1}{4}$ thick single worked, Five passage doors each $\frac{1}{4}$ thick double, worked, Two window frames in back & middle room, each 12 lights 10 by 16 sash $\frac{1}{4}$ double hung & panel shutters to same $\frac{1}{4}$ thick, Panel shutters to front frames $\frac{1}{4}$ thick, Door ways & windows trimmed with 3 in. mouldings, Wash board $5\frac{1}{2}$ wide & moulded top, Marble shelf and brackets in each room,

 Roof of front building pitches 3 ways with 2 hips forming a square thus, and covered good quality cypress shingles $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches to weather, with tin gutters, large wood cornice on 3 sides, supported by 52 brackets of large size an ornamental shape,

First story back building divided into two rooms, Dining room & Kitchen, Story 8 ft 10 in. high in the clear, Heart pine floor. Joice 3 by 12 & 16 in. from center, of Hemlock & yellow pine, Three window frames each 12 lights 10 by 14 sash $\frac{1}{4}$ thick double hung & panel shutters $\frac{1}{4}$ thick, Two passage doors each $\frac{1}{4}$ thick double worked, Neat stucco cornice & center piece in Dining room, Black & Gold mantle with plain pilasters & frieze, Sub wash board 8 in. wide & moulded top, Door ways & windows in Dining room trimmed with 6 in. moulded architraves, Doors & windows in Kitchen trimmed with $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. mouldings, also wash board 5 in. wide & moulded top, winding stairs in Kitchen to the 2^d story with panel door at foot of same $\frac{1}{4}$ thick single worked, one out side door frame with panel door $\frac{1}{4}$ thick single worked, Dresser with panel doors & draws, also cast iron sink

1018

S 2nd

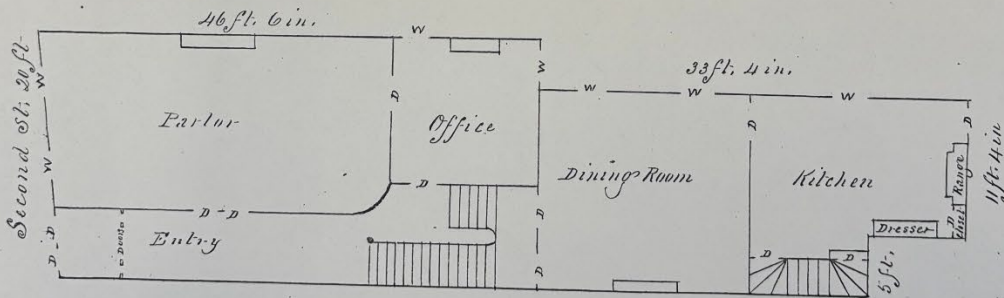
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let into top shelf of dresser, with hot & cold water fixings to the same, Small closet in recess with panel door.

Second story back building divided into sitting room, Bath room, Store room & entry, Story 10 feet high in the clear, Carolina Sap floors. Four window frames each 12 lights 10 by 16 in. sash $\frac{1}{4}$ thick double hung two of the windows have panel skirting under, and all with panel shutters $\frac{1}{4}$ thick, Door ways & windows trimmed with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch Architraves, Windows & door ways trimmed in the Bath & Store room with $\frac{3}{8}$ in. mouldings, Four passage doors each $\frac{1}{4}$ thick double faced, Sub wash board in room 9 in. wide & moulded top, wash board in entry, Bath & Store room 5 in. wide & moulded top, neat stucco cornice & center piece in sitting room, also black & gold marble mantle with plain pilasters & freeze, Transom sash over the doors to Bath room & Store room, One large closet with side & end shelves, Store room shelved, large bath tub made of plank & panelled on the side, hot & cold water fixings to the same,

Gas pipes in all the rooms, Heater in the collar,

Roof of the back building single pitch & covered with cypress shingles of good quality, tin gutters & wood cornice of neat pattern, Sash in all the cellar windows.



April 13th 1858

Dr. Williams, Surgeon

1018 S. 2nd

INA 283

Philadelphia, April 1st 1858

INSURANCE COMPANY OF NORTH AMERICA,

Insure against Loss or Damage by Fire (Perpetually) Twelve hundred Dollars on a three stories brick dwelling House, with 2 stories brick back

Contained in Building, situated on the West side of Fifth Street, opposite May street, design No 1015, in the 2^d Ward of the City of Philadelphia -
According to a survey to be made by John Williams Lushch that be signed by this office

Premium \$20 Cents per 100 Dollars \$20 - 25 1/2 27 1/2
A. M. Bingen

10185.2

JNA 283