

*The Family Remains*

After my great-aunt Betty died, she rode around in the trunk of my grandparents' big blue Buick sedan for more than three years. Her cremated remains sat in the cardboard box provided by the funeral home until her big brother Bobby followed her into the hereafter. Then her ashes were disinterred from the trunk, where I can only imagine them resting among the jumper cables and a bottle of wiper fluid. We tucked them into the foot of her brother's coffin.

Aunt Betty was 80 years old and single when she passed away, so there were no spouse and no children to grumble when she was not quickly laid to rest. You might think that would explain how we managed to place this woman—a pillar of her church community, a lady in black and navy dress suits who spent her career working for the Presbyterian Church, a hulking bear of a woman who would pick up strangers arriving from Thailand and house them for the night—in a space normally reserved for groceries and kidnapping victims.

But this neglectful approach to remains is commonplace in my family. We mean well. We have plans for scattering ashes immediately. However, my grandmother, cozy inside a black plastic box, hung out in the workroom behind my parents' garage for seven years before we finally delivered her ashes to Grandpa's grave. My mother's ashes were divided into fourths. We finally scattered a quarter of them at my parents' church four years after her death. I tucked my portion safely into my home office until my husband, daughter, and I poured her ashes into Lake Erie more than five years after she died. My dad scattered his allotment in the Pacific at six years and counting. The last quarter are still waiting patiently in my sister's home office; she plans to put them under a to-be-planted dogwood in her yard.

I can't even dispose of a cat's ashes. When my orange tabby died, I was going to buy a flaming orange azalea and bury her ashes under it. The flowers would remind me of her every spring. But it was the first week of March; by the time I could plant, I was too far advanced in my pregnancy to get out a spade. And then the baby was born. Now the baby is a teenager, and the ashes still sit in my office, along with the green-and-blue kitty collar with Tess's

name and our no-longer-in-service phone number etched on a metal tag.

I feel guilty about these ashes. I owe these loved ones more than a box on a shelf, a corner of the basement, a space in the trunk, yet my family and I have kept some of these ashes in just such spots for years. My day-to-day living has outweighed the whispers of the dead. My mother raised me even though she didn't give birth to me; she made me her own. My grandmother championed me at every step of my life; in her eyes, I could do no wrong. Aunt Betty was the first woman I remember with a career and no husband; she showed me what a strong, independent woman looked like. My cat Tess slept on my feet for 14 years; she trusted me like she never trusted anyone else. Not finding a final resting place for their remains has gnawed at me. Leaving their ashes in a box seems disrespectful, maybe even sacrilegious. Yet to be sacrilegious suggests that there is something sacred about cremains.

The word *cremains* comes—naturally—from the word *cremated* and the word *remains*. Its first documented usage in the Oxford English Dictionary is from the *Times-Mirror* of Warren, Pennsylvania, in a 1950 obituary. The OED lists the use of *cremains* as “chiefly” North American, so cremains are presumably still called *ashes* in other parts of the world. Google Translate is not helpful on this point, translating *cremains* into *cremas* in Spanish, which means *cream*. *Ashes* translates to *despojos mortales*, meaning “mortal remains”—significantly better. Lithuanian has a similar problem with *cremains*, but *ashes* gives us the option of *palaikai*, meaning “remains, relics, ash, clay.” For 66 of the 104 languages listed in Google Translate, the translation of *cremains* is . . . *cremains*. My printed dictionaries—Spanish, German, and Portuguese—don't include *cremains*. My Portuguese dictionary gives me the option of *restos mortais*, which poetically translates back to “mortal ruins.”

The word *cremains* is more precise than *ashes* in describing what sits in those plastic boxes from the funeral home; it puts us much closer to the physical reality of the flesh and bones burned down to phosphate and calcium, to what remains. Cremains can only be one thing: what is left of a body. Although the OED gives a definition of *ashes* as “That which remains of a human body after cremation or . . . total decomposition” dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup>

century, ashes can be the leftovers of anything burned: cigarettes, wood, volcanoes, your Labor Day burger left too long on the grill.

Even though cremains can only be dead bodies, to my ear the word has a lighter sound to it. Perhaps it's the crispness of the *c*, the long *a* sound, or the humming *m* and *n*. The made-up element of the portmanteau even gives it a jaunty air. *Ashes*, on the other hand, has the *sh* weighing it down, like a wool blanket or a disapproving librarian. I also associate the word with a phrase commonly spoken at funerals: "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The phrase comes from the English Book of Common Prayer, although it draws from the Book of Genesis: "from dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." No one says or is ever likely to say, "from cremains thou art, and unto cremains thou shalt return."

While the word *ashes* sounds heavy, ashes themselves are light and are considered a kind of dust: "solid matter in a minute and fine state of subdivision so that the particles are small and light enough to be easily raised and carried in a cloud by the wind," says the OED, sounding oddly lyrical for a dictionary. Cremains can be scattered because they are light. Throw them on water, and most of them float. Waves carry them off in minutes. Dump them on a windy day; the breeze disperses them faster than dandelion seeds. But maybe not in the direction that you want. Anne Lamott describes in *Traveling Mercies* scattering her friend Pammy's ashes: "They tasted metallic, and they blew every which way. We tried to strew them off the boat romantically with seals barking from the rocks on shore, under a true-blue sky, but they would not cooperate." Lamott tells of licking Pammy's cremains off her hands. This idea creeps me out, and I have kept Lamott's experience in mind every time that I have been at an ash scattering. I am fine with the dead being close, but not that close.

Given the Biblical idea that we will all return to dust, I have always found the expectations behind burial rather strange. Bodies are embalmed and then encased in coffins and concrete vaults to preserve them as long as possible. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust . . . later. An early objection to cremation was that bodies needed to be whole in order to appear before God on the judgment day. God is a rather nebulous entity in my eyes, but if he/she/it exists and can perform the miracle of resurrecting souls, I have always imagined that God could reconstitute a cremated body just as well as a badly decomposed one. Anyone who's seen a zombie movie knows those

folks are in pretty bad shape too. As Thomas Laqueur points out in *The Work of the Dead*, “an adult corpse is lucky to survive a decade.”

Another concern of cremation is that you can't be positive that the ashes you get back belong to the person that you handed over to the funeral home. I considered this possibility when I received my cat Tess's ashes. What was keeping the pet crematory from sending me Fido's ashes? All ashes look alike, but if you bury your cat in the backyard, you are certain that you are burying your own cat. The same can be said of an open-casket funeral. If you see the deceased's face, you know that you are saying goodbye to the right person. This worry became a true-life horror story in 2002 when authorities discovered 334 bodies at Tri-State Crematory in Georgia. Owner Ray Brent Marsh returned cement dust instead of ashes to families from three states and stacked bodies in garages, hearses, and the woods. Some bodies had been there at least 15 years, while others had arrived only days before. Not all the bodies could be identified. Marsh spent 12 years in prison and has never spoken about why he didn't cremate the bodies entrusted to him. The funeral homes that sent their bodies to Tri-State and the crematory's insurers settled with families for almost \$40 million, and the case led to national changes in the regulation of crematories.

For some of the families, these punishments seemed inadequate. Marsh had to wear body armor to his court hearings to protect him from furious family members. “Some people thought the death penalty would have been appropriate,” said district attorney Herbert Franklin.<sup>1</sup> But Marsh had not killed anyone. The bulk of the 787 charges filed against him were for theft because desecration of a dead body was not a felony in Georgia at the time. Yet we passionately believe that the bodies of the dead deserve care. Marsh's larger crime, which could not be tried in any court, was a moral and cultural one: he had failed to treat the dead with respect.

Cremation is a recent development for my family. Aunt Betty was the first to be cremated, when she died in 1994. Burial was standard practice in American culture through the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is still dominant in the South and Midwest, which are more traditional and where space for burial is less expensive than elsewhere. The Catholic Church did not allow cremation until 1963; it still prefers burial and forbids scattering cremains

or keeping an urn with Aunt Myrtle on the mantel. We're not Catholic, but I shudder to think what the pope would say if he knew of Aunt Betty's sojourn in Grandpa and Grandma's trunk. Cremation's advantages include its substantially lower price and its smaller environmental footprint (although it still takes a decent amount of fuel to cremate a body). In addition, cremation does not have the religious connotations of burial in our increasingly secular society, and its product is portable—in case you don't live near the cemetery where your relative would be buried. In 2015 cremation topped burial for the first time with 48.5% of Americans electing cremation versus 45.4% choosing burial.<sup>2</sup> (The other acceptable option is donating your body to science, for those of you doing the math.)

My grandfather's gravesite had been the last reserved plot in the family, so when the next round of kin passed away, we either had to buy more land or start cremating. I asked my dad if any family members who had been cremated stipulated what they wanted when they died.

"Nope," said my dad.

As the family patriarch after the death of my grandfather, my dad was in charge of all decisions and the family cremains: my uncle in 2001, my grandmother in 2009, my mother in 2012.

I did some quick calculations. As the oldest child, I will become the family matriarch when my father passes away. I thought I should ask so I wouldn't have another set of ashes in my home office for a decade—or more.

"So," I tried to ask gently, "do you know what you want when your turn comes?"

"I already have a spot at the church," he replied promptly. "I'm next to Ancel Neuburger."

This pre-planning epitomizes my dad. Having been left with the messy leftovers of multiple family deaths, he is determined not to leave such untidiness for his children. After Aunt Betty died, he, my mother, and his cousins spent a couple of weeks going through her two-bedroom Manhattan apartment, stacked floor to ceiling with papers. He helped my grandmother sort through her house full of antiques. Now he is already clearing out his house. Every few months, I get an email with photos of old holiday decorations or Tupperware or plates, asking if I want any of it before he passes it along to the church rummage sale. He calls and explains each

time he updates an aspect of his will. It is obvious that there will be nothing untidy about his death or remains.

My plans for my future remains are murkier. I know that I don't want burial. At least I don't want traditional burial with a coffin, vault, and all the trimmings. By the time I die, I will have taken up plenty of space on the earth. I don't need an eight-by-two-and-a-half-foot plot covered by a granite stone and chemically treated grass surrounded by strangers whom I might not even like. Right now cremation seems like the best option, although I rather hope that by the time I die, better choices will be readily available. The Order of the Good Death, founded by mortician Caitlin Doughty, educates people about alternatives. Possibilities include natural burial, which means no embalming, no elaborate grave markers, and natural elements such as bamboo and cloth for burying; water cremation; and recomposition (a.k.a., composting the dead). I can imagine burial if my body would truly—and quickly—return to the earth rather than take up space in an overly manicured cemetery. A spot in the woods where my decomposing body could become nutrients for the earth sounds pretty awesome and, frankly, more sacred than a cemetery. I love cemeteries as historical artifacts, but I don't like the chemicals that are pumped into the dead to preserve them or the sprays and mowers that keep the grass over the dead green and smooth.

The temperature was over one hundred on the day that my father, my husband, my daughter, and I set off on our quest to scatter Grandma's ashes on Grandpa's grave—the same grave to which Aunt Betty's ashes escaped after they were freed from the car trunk. I hadn't been to this cemetery since my grandfather died more than 19 years earlier. This year, however, we were determined to do right by Grandma and get her out of the garage workroom.

We had talked about making this trip for years, but we always visit my Kansas hometown in the dead of winter and the heat of summer. In December, the temperature can drop so low that the snot inside your nose freezes as soon as you step outdoors. The summers are uncomfortably hot and humid. And our visits are so full of time with live relatives that we just never managed this little trip to the dead ones. My husband's extended family "goes

up to the cemetery” every Memorial Day to clean up around the gravestones and plant flowers. We think about our dead—we tell stories about my mother’s best Halloween costumes, my grandpa’s harmonica playing, my grandma wreaking havoc on her scooter in the assisted living facility—but we don’t visit the graves.

We blasted the air conditioning for the hour-long drive, but the Freon was no competition for the merciless sun and humidity of a Midwest summer. We were hot even before we stepped out of the car into the cemetery’s inadequate shade.

It’s an old cemetery, the oldest chartered cemetery in the state, in fact. Now, however, its southern edge butts up to the interstate, and a Walmart Supercenter sits a few blocks down the road. When we showed up, we didn’t have the slightest idea where any of the family’s plots were, so we stopped at a large 19<sup>th</sup>-century limestone house that serves as the cemetery’s office. Two friendly women looked up the sections and lots where my grandfather as well as my great-grandfather are buried. It turned out that my family is scattered over four sections of the cemetery. Even with directions and a map, we drove cluelessly for a while. We passed the memorial to a major tornado. We saw the groundskeepers pulling trailers of lawn mowers a couple of times as we circled sections of seemingly identical gray stones. Even when we discovered the right section, we were turned around and had to tramp through the brittle, brown grass looking for Grandpa’s gravestone. As soon as we climbed out of the car, sweat beaded up on our faces and trickled uncomfortably down our backs.

*This, I thought, is one reason I don’t live in Kansas anymore. I hate the heat. But everywhere is air-conditioned, people argue. Everywhere except the outdoors.*

My nine-year-old daughter began to grumble.

We found the space for my grandfather’s grave and discovered there was no headstone. Nor was there a stone on my great-grandfather’s gravesite. My grandmother apparently never got around to ordering a stone for my grandfather—a situation that my father has since remedied. My great-grandfather’s case was more complicated. He had two wives, and children with both of them; no one today is quite certain that he divorced his first wife before marrying his second. The relationship between the two families was awkward. Which family would have been in charge of ordering the headstone? His funeral was held at “his home,”

the house of his first wife and older children, according to the obituary in the *Topeka Daily Capital*. However, his second wife — my great-grandmother — is listed as his widow and only relative on the paperwork at the cemetery. The first family, which owned a popular Topeka restaurant, was significantly wealthier than the second, which ran a boarding house. I picture an unresolved argument in 1925 about who should buy the headstone, and my great-grandfather's grave has remained unmarked ever since, perhaps as a result.

My father is usually the world's calmest man, but he kept nervously glancing around the cemetery because he hadn't asked anyone if it was OK to scatter ashes. He looked repeatedly at the groundskeepers in the next section — now eating their lunch — but they didn't pay the slightest attention to us. Policing the visiting folks, especially on a day this hot, was surely above their pay grade. But my dad tends to toe the line, so he was tense about breaking the rules. I, on the other hand, couldn't imagine why anyone would care that we were dumping a few ashes, until later when I looked at the cemetery's website and realized that including cremains in the cemetery's columbarium costs \$1,200. Just burying your pet on the grounds costs \$145. We were headed towards saving ourselves a load of cash.

My father quickly pulled out the bag of Grandma's ashes and poured them in an arcing motion over Grandpa's grave. Then he whipped out some bottled water and added it to the ashes so that they would not blow away. Knowing my family, it probably wasn't even real bottled water but a recycled bottle filled with tap water. *Sorry, Grandma, no Evian for you.*

"OK," he said. "Ready?"

*That's it? I thought. We waited seven years to get Grandma here, and that's all she gets? A quick dump and a bottle of water? It seemed like we should at least say something. A commemoration? A prayer? The occasion didn't seem solemn enough. We were wearing shorts and T-shirts and dripping sweat.*

I considered why I felt an obligation to speak. We had had a memorial service for my grandmother when she died in 2009, and earlier that week we had scattered half the cremains in the columbarium at my parents' church — officially, and probably accompanied by a cash donation. The minister had spoken a few words and said a prayer. Why did we also need to say something here? Scattering the ashes felt like a rite — a ceremony that called for a



more formal acknowledgement. As a churchgoer and an academic, I live a life rich with rituals commemorated by words. The process felt incomplete if we did not say something to recognize the importance of the moment. It was the final formal goodbye to my grandmother. I do talk to her at other times. When I look at her picture, sometimes I say hello and tell her that I miss her. But those are small, private moments. This scattering felt like a bigger, public moment that required a bigger, public statement. I did not want to disappoint her.

But I hadn't prepared anything, so I said the first thing that came to mind.

"She is finally reunited with her Bob-o."

Everyone nodded, and we got back in the air-conditioned car and headed to lunch.

Who cares if we don't disperse the ashes right away or say something profound when we do scatter them? It's not like there are cremains police checking up to make sure we've followed the proper procedure. If we want, we don't have to scatter them at all. I could conceivably keep the cremains of all my relatives and pets in my office cabinet to pass on as macabre heirlooms to my daughter. The choices for urns are endless; don't think you are stuck with a basic ceramic urn like the one Ben Stiller shatters in the movie *Meet the Parents*. One of my graduate school professors kept his mother's ashes in a container that looked like a book on his side table. When one of my classmates set down his drink at a dinner party, the professor freaked him out by announcing, "You just set your glass on my mother." You can buy urns that include clocks and music boxes. There are urns that commemorate your hobbies, including golf, motorcycling, hairstyling, fishing, poker, chess, and the rock band KISS. You can swear your undying love to your alma mater via your urn. I am particularly drawn to the ultra-cheesy quality of an urn shaped like a western saloon. I would never buy it; I love it because it is so horrible.

And urns are not the only options for cremains. You can make your loved one into jewelry, stained glass, paperweights, and hourglasses. Some tattoo artists will sterilize ashes and mix them with ink to imprint you with your loved one forever. You can have your cremains mixed with a tree to plant; although since ashes

are non-organic matter, mixing yourself with a tree won't actually help it grow. "You're lucky if Mom's ashes don't kill the tree," says Order of the Good Death's founder Doughty.<sup>5</sup> You can be mixed with cement to create an artificial reef that is placed in the ocean to rebuild vanishing coral reefs. You can hire a company to have yourself turned into fireworks after you die; the websites offer instructions for how to write the wish "to go out with a bang" into your will.

However, I don't want to keep the remains of my dead loved ones around my house. I know how that statement sounds, given that I have done exactly that. But ultimately, I don't want what's left of Mom or Grandma or the kitty sitting around the house, and if they knew, I can't really imagine their choosing my three-bedroom Dutch Colonial as their final resting place. Yes, I know that the dead don't care. As Thomas Lynch points out in *The Undertaking*, "there is nothing, once you are dead, that can be done *to you* or *for you* or *with you* or *about you* that will do you any good or any harm." This claim is absolutely true when you think of the dead as merely bodies. Whether the remains of my mom or my cat are in my home office cabinet or floating on a beautiful body of water no longer matters to them.

But while the dead don't care, the living clearly do. For us, the dead are not simply bodies. Laqueur, in *The Work of the Dead*, argues that "the dead have two lives: one in nature, the other in culture." The dead may be bodies, but the dead also exist "as social beings . . . who need to be eased out of this world and settled safely into the next and into memory." Laqueur shows that when we perform death rituals, we commit to keeping the dead as part of our community, as part of our memories. "By a remarkable expenditure of human labor and sacrifice," wrote German philosopher Hans-George Gadamer (according to Laqueur), "there is sought an abiding with the dead, indeed a holding fast of the dead among the living." Of course, the rituals are for us and not for the dead. They assuage our grief. They help us say goodbye. But they also help us create new memories of those who are gone that keep them close to us and integrated into our families and communities.

In addition, when we engage in rituals around the remains of the dead, we are honoring the social role of the person who is gone, not the body itself. Laqueur cites many writers and philosophers who articulated similar ideas: the early Christian theologian St.

Augustine, the Romantic poet William Wordsworth, the medieval philosopher and priest St. Thomas Aquinas, the Enlightenment writer William Godwin. Each writer suggests that we care for the remains of the dead for the sake of the person who once inhabited that body. Godwin, Laqueur writes, “tells the story of how the ‘nothing’ of the dead body can become something on account of its having been ‘something’ when it was alive.” Godwin remained attached, in particular, to the body of his first wife, feminist Mary Wollstonecraft, arguing that her “dead body is far closer to that person even than [her] book or her watch.”

And I do picture the location of my mother’s remains mattering to the person that she once was. My mom would always say that we really didn’t need to clean before she came to visit, but we would scrub the house anyway. If we didn’t, she would notice the dust. It bugged her that we still had our Christmas wreath up in early February, even though I assured her it was a “winter wreath,” not a Christmas wreath. She would be horrified to be trapped daily in the clutter and disorganization of our lives. My mother also loved to travel. In her twenties, she was a TWA flight attendant who explored Europe on her own when many women still didn’t travel alone. Later she and my father traveled to China, France, Italy, and Spain. I want to envision her remains exploring the world on the oceans’ currents, unfettered by the body and brain that had failed her at the end, too young. Freeing her from my office cabinet was about honoring who she once was, even if she doesn’t care anymore about where her ashes hang out.

It was a biting day in November when we finally scattered my quarter of Mom’s ashes into Lake Erie. We had also scattered some of my mom’s ashes at the columbarium, called The Garden of Life, at my parents’ Kansas church the previous summer. My mother had abhorred the columbarium when it was built, so I thought it ironic that part of her was ending up there. However, the church was central to her life and my father will end up there, so maybe she would have accepted, even relished, this outcome. The extended family gathered in the garden, and my parents’ minister said some words about my mother and about everlasting life before pouring her ashes into a scraggly bed of pachysandra. In the light breeze, some ashes ended up on his black robe, and I wondered

what he would do about that. Did he send his robe to the dry cleaner and say “human remains” when the dry cleaner asked about the stains? Or would he disappear into the men’s room after the service, dampen a paper towel, and wipe the bits of my mother off? I was also surprised to find myself sobbing as the minister read. I had not cried about my mother’s death for a long time, but with this ceremony all the loss came rushing back. There we were, saying goodbye again.

On this November-gray Ohio day, more than four years after my mother’s death, my husband, my daughter, and I walked along a winding path that would take us to the beach, passing through grasses that arched over our heads and past a closed marina. Because it was so cold, few people were out. I was glad, as I wanted my little memorial service to be as private as possible. I also didn’t know if what we were doing was allowed, although I later discovered that the Ohio revised code “does not prohibit” us from “scattering . . . cremated remains at sea.”<sup>4</sup> I wouldn’t call Lake Erie “the sea,” but it’s as close as Ohio gets.

I was carrying a giant book of poetry that I once used to teach an introductory literature class. I had learned from the moment in the hot Kansas cemetery with my grandmother’s remains, and I came prepared with words. Lots and lots of words. I felt like I had failed my grandmother with the final goodbye, but I would not fail my mother. I was also carrying a plastic bag that held the silver can with the ashes, until my husband offered to carry it. He and I were solemn while our daughter chattered and skipped along beside us. She does not remember her grandmother very well; she was five when “Grandma KC” died and ten when we scattered the ashes. Her memories have become similarly scattered.

The long, rocky beach was deserted except for, at one end, a family with a dog, and two people on the rocks at the other end. We headed straight for the water at the center so that we could do this before either group met up with us. When I pulled out the can, I realized that I was not sure how to open it, and I ended up prying the lid off with my car key. My perfectionist mother, who never even left the house without lipstick on, might have rolled her eyes at my not having planned better. But no matter. The can opened, and we wrestled the bag of ashes out of the can. It was wedged tightly, and I had to spread the ashes out inside the bag as I pulled it from the can. I remembered the minister’s robe and Lamott’s

experience with her friend Pammy's ashes and held the bag close to the water. I did not want to taste my mother. I slowly dropped the ashes into the water, and it turned a murky gray.

I opened the book and read aloud from the poem I had chosen, "Thanatopsis" by William Cullen Bryant:

*Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim  
thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,  
and, lost each human trace, surrendering up  
thine individual being, shalt thou go  
to mix forever with the elements . . .*

I did not know this long poem before finding it in the book's index, but its ideas expressed what I hoped for my mother. Being cremated, she had "lost each human trace," and the lines about being "resolved to earth again" reflected the same sentiment as "ashes to ashes, dust to dust" — the sense of returning to her beginnings. The sense of her "go[ing] / to mix forever with the elements" fit my vision of my mother's ashes following the water's currents, basking in the sun, being nourished by rain — eternally. As I read, I sensed that although it took me too long, this time I got it right. *No Evian for you, Mom, but instead the whole world.*

Each lap of the water dispersed the ashes. The grayness moved slowly east and spread. Each successive roll of the waves took my mother farther away but also incorporated her more into the water, into the elements. I chose the lake because my mom loved water. She loved the ocean more, and my father scattered some of her ashes in the Pacific off California because they made many trips there during their marriage. I liked that the water would disperse my mother's ashes and that she could eventually be anywhere and everywhere. I imagined her drifting across Lake Erie, down the Niagara River to the Falls, from Lake Ontario down the Saint Lawrence Seaway to the Atlantic, and from the Atlantic to anywhere she wanted to go. Perhaps she will eventually meet up with the ashes my father scattered on the other side of the continent, and together they will travel.

*Notes:*

- 1. The case of Tri-State Crematory is covered in numerous news sources, but the quotation from district attorney Herbert Franklin came from a 2012 Times Free Press article by Joy Lukachick Smith commemorating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of finding the bodies.*
- 2. I found statistics on the rates of burial and cremation on CNN.com and slate.com.*
- 3. Caitlin Doughty was quoted in a 2015 Bloomberg News article titled "Recycle Your Loved Ones with Eco-Friendly Funerals"; I also found useful information on her website for *The Order of the Good Death*.*
- 4. Disposing of cremains is covered in section 4717 of the Ohio Revised Code.*