

Inside Today's Record

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The "Living Corpse" is dead.

Burlington's Jim Gernhart passed on to his eternal reward just about 29 years after Life magazine and the nation's wire services had covered his first funeral. A packed National Guard armory heard the 55-minute service which Jim attended in his best suit, bought in 1925 for \$75, and a borrowed white shirt. Listening to the eulogy, he grew long-faced and melancholy, like one who has suffered a great loss; but when he posed for reporters in his peach velvet-lined, solid copper casket he cracked: "It's real comfortable. There don't many guys get in one of these things and then get out!" Solid copper, the casket cost about \$2,500, but Jim figured it was worth that much since it is a thing that he will be using for quite a spell.

Jim's last funeral was Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 23, and you'll find more about his first inside The Record on 4.



Jim Gernhart ... dead at 103 ... (picture taken in 1951)

Colorado man dies after 23 funerals

Nearly 30 years ago Joe Gernhart staged his own "funeral" and got national publicity with his proclamation that he "wouldn't be caught dead in Burlington." The funeral was the first of 23 he gave for himself.

But he did die in Burlington, Colo., January 20, at age 103. His last graveside funeral was just across the state line in Goodland, Kan. He was buried in the same copper casket he bought for himself in 1951, with one minor alteration — there was a new lining.

It seems that Gernhart wore out the original lining climbing in and out of the casket.