

William Burke
“Resurrection-man”



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Date	Age	Life Event
1792	0	Born in 1792
1811	19	Follows older brother Constantine in to army
1827	35	Moves in with Nelly McDougal and Mickey Culzean
November 1827	35	Meets William Hare, moves in to his house with Nelly
11-29-1827	35	Hare’s lodger, Donald, dies; Burke and Hare sell deceased body to Dr. Knox to cover debt owed by Donald. Sold for £7 10 shillings
February 1828	36	Hare’s lodger, Joseph, falls ill; Burke and Hare smother him with a pillow, sell his body to Dr. Knox for £10.
February 1828	36	Another lodger, a man from Cheshire, ill with jaundice; body sold to Dr. Knox for £10.
02-11-1828	36	Went out drinking with Abigail Simpson; she returned to Hare’s home because she was sick from drinking, Hare and Burke smother her. Sold to Dr. Knox for £10.
04-09-1828	36	Burke, while drinking, meets two prostitutes; buys them more alcohol, takes them back to his brother’s house. One prostitute, Mary Paterson, passes out on the dining table; Burke and Hare smother her. Body sold to Dr. Knox for £8.
May 1828	36	A woman lodger, at Hare’s home for one night, is very drunk; Burke smothers her and the body is sold to Dr. Knox for £10.
May 1828	36	Mary Haldane, a lodger, falls asleep in Hare’s stable; Burke and Hare suffocate her, sell her body to Dr. Knox.
May 1828	36	Effie comes to Hare’s house, Burke takes her to the stable and gets her drunk; Burke and Hare suffocate her, sell the body to Dr. Knox for £10.
May 1828	36	Burke takes a drunken woman, who is being escorted home by an officer, off the

		officer's hands. The woman is killed, and her body is sold to Dr. Knox for £10.
"Midsummer, 1828"	36	Old woman and her grandson from Glasgow lodge at Hare's home; Burke and Hare smother them and sell their bodies to Dr. Knox for £8 each.
June 1828	36	Burke and Nelly move two streets away, in to an apartment with Burke's cousin and her husband, the Broggans.
June 1828	36	Margaret Haldane, daughter of Mary Haldane, suffocated at the Broggan's by Burke; body sold to Dr. Knox for £8.
September 1828	36	Mrs Ostler, a washer, comes to the Broggan's. Burke and Hare get her drunk, then suffocate her. Body sold to Dr. Knox for £8.
Autumn, 1828	36	Ann McDougal comes to visit Nelly at the Broggan's; Hare and Burke get her drunk, then kill her. Body sold to Dr. Knox for £10.
October, 1828	36	Jamie Wilson, who is mentally retarded, is invited to Hare's home by Hare's girlfriend, Maggie Laird; Wilson drinks some, and Burke and Hare suffocate him. They strip his body, taking a spoon and snuff box. Body sold to Dr. Knox for £10.
10-31-1828	36	Mrs. Docherty lured back to Burke's; killed after the Halloween party by Burke and Hare. The struggle is heard by many of Burke's neighbors.
11-01-1828	36	James Gray, neighbor of Burke, goes to the police after his wife discovers the corpse of Mrs. Docherty. Nelly and Burke are taken in for questioning.
11-02-1828	36	Police discover the corpse of Mrs. Docherty in Dr. Knox's basement. The body was identified by neighbors of Burke; Burke, Hare, Nelly and Maggie are charged with murder.
12-01-1828	36	Hare and his wife Maggie offered immunity if Hare comes forward about Mrs. Docherty and any other of Burke's murders. Burke was set for trial on two counts of murder.
12-24-1828	36	Trial begins
12-25-1828	36	Burke found guilty on majority vote (two members voted not guilty) and Nelly is found not guilty. Burke sentenced to hanging on January 28, 1829, and his body to then be dissected.
01-28-1829	37	Burke is hanged publicly. His body is then dissected publicly, in accordance with a law from 1752.

General Information

Sex	Male
Race	White
Number of victims	15
Country where killing occurred	Scotland
States where killing occurred	N/A
Cities where killing occurred	Edinburgh
Type of killer	Gain killer
Height	5'5"

Childhood Information

Date of birth	1792
Location	Strabane, County Tyrone, Ireland
Birth order	Second (Youngest)
Number of siblings	One
XYX?	No
Raised by	Parents
Birth category	Youngest
Parent's marital status	Married
Family event	N/A
Age of family event	N/A
Problems in school?	N/A
Teased while in school?	No information
Physically attractive?	Average
Physical defect?	No

Speech defect?	No
Head injury?	None
Physically abused?	No
Psychologically abused?	No
Sexually abused?	No
Father's occupation	Laborer
Age of first sexual experience	N/A
Age when first had intercourse	N/A
Mother's occupation	N/A
Father abused drugs/alcohol	N/A
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	N/A
Cognitive Ability	
Highest grade in school	N/A
Highest degree	Basic education
Grades in school	N/A
IQ	N/A
Source of IQ information	N/A
Work History	
Served in the military?	Yes; 7 years
Branch	Army
Type of discharge	N/A
Saw combat duty	N/A
Killed enemy during service?	N/A
Applied for job as a cop?	No
Worked in law enforcement?	No
Fired from jobs?	No
Types of jobs worked	Labor-oriented
Employment status during series	Cobbler, 1827
Relationships	
Sexual preference	Heterosexual
Marital status	Married
Number of children	2
Lives with his children	No; left Ireland in 1818, never saw them again
Living with	Accomplice, Hare; Hare's girlfriend, Maggie Laird; and girlfriend, Nelly McDougal
Triad	
Animal torture	No
Fire setting	No
Bed wetting	No
Killer Psychological Information	
Abused drugs?	No
Abused alcohol?	Yes
Been to a psychologist?	No
Time in forensic hospital?	No
Diagnosis	No
Killer Criminal History	
Committed previous crimes?	No
Spend time in jail?	No
Spend time in prison?	No
Killed prior to series? Age?	No
Serial Killing	
Number of victims	15
Victim type	Lodgers, all different types
Killer age at start of series	35

Date of first kill in series	November 29, 1827
Date of final kill in series	October 31, 1828
Gender of victims	Male and female
Race of victims	White
Age of victims	Ranging from 12 to 70's
Type of victim	Lodgers, all different types
Method of killing	First killing – cushion; subsequent killings – suffocation by hand
Weapon	First killing – found at the scene; subsequent killings – hands
Was gun used?	No
Type	N/A
Did killer have a partner?	Yes
Name of partner	William Hare
Sex of partner	Male
Type of serial killer	Gain killer
How close did killer live?	In the same house
Location of first contact	Victim's home, killer's home
Location of killing	Victim's home, killer's home
Killing occurred in home of victim?	Yes
Killing occurred in home of killer?	Yes
Victim abducted or killed at contact?	No
Behavior During Crimes	
Rape?	No
Tortured victims?	No
Stalked victims?	No
Overkill?	No
Quick & efficient?	Yes
Used blindfold?	No
Bound the victims?	No
After Death Behavior	
Sex with the body?	No
Mutilated body?	No
Ate part of the body?	No
Drank victim's blood?	No
Posed the body?	No
Took totem – body part	No
Took totem – personal item	Only in one murder – Jamie Wilson
Robbed victim or location	Yes
Disposal of Body	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	No
Left at scene, hidden	No
Left at scene, buried	No
Moved, no attempt to hide	No
Moved, buried	No
Cut-up and disposed of	No
Moved, to home	Yes – home of Dr. Knox
Sentencing	
Date killer arrested	November 2, 1828
Date convicted	December 25, 1828
Sentence	Death by hanging
Killer executed?	Yes
Did killer plead NGRI?	No
Was the NGRI plea successful?	N/A
Name and state of prison	Tolbooth of Edinburgh; Edinburgh

Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death	January 28, 1829

References

Bailey, B. (2002.) *Burke and Hare: The year of the ghouls*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing (Edinburgh) LTD.

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