

Pittsburg State University

## Pittsburg State University Digital Commons

---

Finding Aids

Special Collections & University Archives

---

1-2023

### Bender Crimes Photographs, 1873

Special Collections, Leonard H. Axe Library

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/fa>



Part of the [History Commons](#), and the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

---

## **Bender Crimes Photographs, MS 405**

### **Overview of the Collection**

<b>Title</b>	The Bender Crimes Photographs
<b>Collection Number</b>	MS 405
<b>Creator</b>	Roger O'Connor
<b>Dates</b>	1873
<b>Quantity</b>	1 linear foot
<b>Summary</b>	Three photographs taken in rural Labette County, Kansas in 1873 at the Bender family house and property shortly after the discovery of the murders of approximately 12 individuals.
<b>Repository</b>	Pittsburg State University, Leonard Axe Library, Special Collections & University Archives 1701 S. Broadway Pittsburg, Kansas 66762 (620) 235-4883 speccol@pittstate.edu
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	There are no restrictions and the collection is open for research. Researchers must use the collection in accordance with the policies of the Special Collections & University Archives, Leonard H. Axe Library, Pittsburg State University
<b>Languages</b>	English

**Biographical and Historical Note** Roger O'Connor (1941-2006) ran a bookstore, Mostly Books, in Pittsburg, Kansas, selling books, papers, and photographs. He previously had bookstores in Lawrence, Kansas and Omaha, Nebraska before coming to Pittsburg. He previously had attended Pittsburg State University, where he received a master's degree. The Bender Family crimes occurred in 1872-1873 where a mysterious family going by the name of Bender (aka "Bloody Benders") murdered, apparently for their money, approximately a dozen travelers in remote Labette County, after they had stopped at a make-shift inn they operated. The family escaped shortly before their crimes were discovered and were never caught nor brought to

## **Bender Crimes Photographs, MS 405**

justice. In 2022, Roger O'Connor's daughter, Shannon O'Connor, donated the three photographs to Pittsburg State University that had been in her father's possession, from his own research on the Benders.

This collection of primary and secondary resources and is divided into the following series:

1. Photographs
  - a. Individuals standing around graves, with names of victims written in
  - b. Individuals standing around graves
  - c. Individuals around the Bender cabin