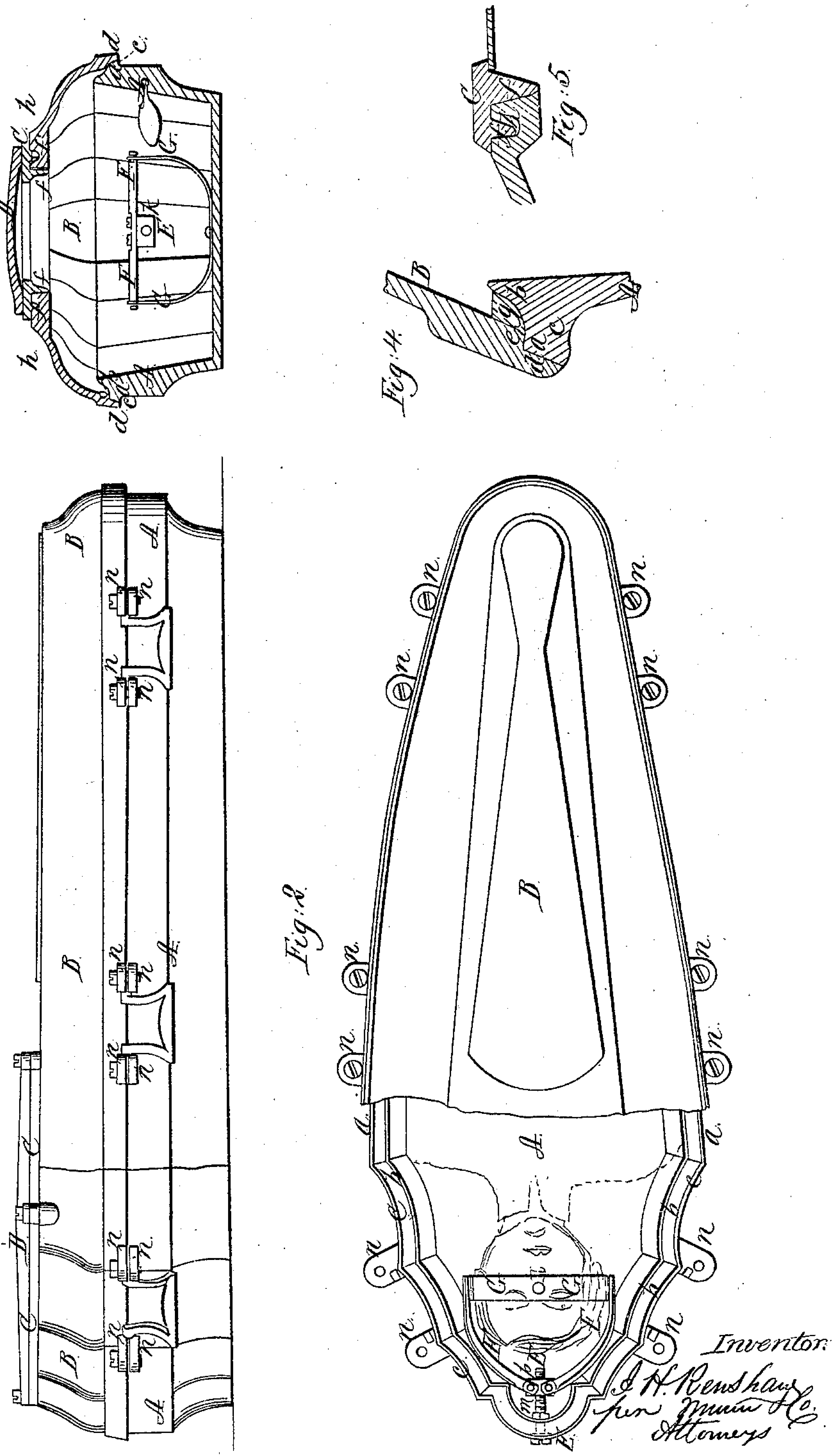
J. H. Renshaw,

Coffin,

№ 31,401, Patented Feb. 12, 1861.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JAMES H. RENSHAW, OF KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE.

METALLIC COFFIN.

Specification of Letters Patent No. 31,401, dated February 12, 1861.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, J. H. RENSHAW, of Knoxville, in the county of Knox and State of Tennessee, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Metallic Coffins; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, making a part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1, is a side view (outside) of the improved metallic coffin. Fig. 2, is a top view of the coffin, with a portion of the cover broken away to show the head supports. Fig. 3, is a vertical transverse section through the coffin, showing the head supports. Fig. 4, is an enlarged sectional view of the joint of the case. Fig. 5, shows the joint of the face-plate.

Similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in the several figures.

This invention relates to an improvement in making air tight joints, and also to a new and improved device for supporting the head of the corpse in a proper position and in keeping it in this position.

My invention and improvements consist, firstly, in making a lapped joint for the coffin case, and in leaving a space between the inside of the lapped portion of the cover and a flange projecting up from the edge of the lower portion or body of the case, which space is to be filled up with rubber or other suitable cement as will be hereinafter described.

The invention consists, secondly, in combining with a curved plate which fits around the back of the head, two jointed and adjustable arms, in such a manner that the head of the corpse may be secured rigidly in a desirable position as will be hereinafter described.

To enable those skilled in the art to fully understand my invention, I will proceed to describe its construction and operation.

The coffins are to be made of cast metal, somewhat of the shape, represented in the drawings; the lower body portion A of this coffin is cast in one piece, and the lid or cover consists of a main portion B, a frame C, and a face plate D, which covers the frame, and which is screwed down to the lid B, with the frame C.

The edge of the lower portion of the case has a projecting beveled surface *a*, and a concave rising surface *b* which is on the outside of a flange projection *c*. The edge of the cover B, has a beveled portion *d*, with a smooth inside surface, made to fit the beveled surface *a*, on the lower edge, and a shoulder *e*, which rests on the lip, or on the edge, of the concave surface *b*, leaving a space between the inside of cover, and the outside of the flange projection *c*,—as represented in Figs. 3 and 4—which is to be filled up with any suitable cement, represented by *g*, in Fig. 4. I thus obtain a compound joint which can be made perfectly air-tight, consisting, of the combination of a beveled lapped joint, which becomes tight in screwing the lid down, and a cemented joint, which is a channel around the coffin filled up with a cement that forms a tight joint inside of the lapped joint; and it will be seen that the pressure of gases on the inside of the coffin will pack the cement down tighter into its channel and make a perfect air-tight joint.

The frame C in which a glass face plate is cemented has a compound joint somewhat similar to the one above described; and the gas which might escape between the lapped portions *f*, *f'*, will press upon the cement which is in a channel *h*, and form an air-tight joint between the surfaces of the frame and lid B.

In the head of the lower portion A, a semi-circular recess is formed and through the end of the case a screw E, is tapped, which should be closely packed to prevent the escape of gas at this point. This screw may have any suitable head on it by which it may be turned. F, F are two curved arms which are jointed to a nut *k*, through which nut the screw E, passes: *m* is a nut which is screwed up tightly on screw E against the inside of the coffin case so as to prevent gas from escaping around the screw stem. The jointed arms F, F have short tenons projecting from their ends which fit into slots in the ends of the semi-circular spring support G, which slots, allow the arms when attached to the head support G, to be adjusted in a direction with their length. The spring support G, is pivoted to the bottom of the case A, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, and this support is adapted to the size of the head by drawing up the nut *k*, which operation contracts the arms and adapts the spring support to the size of the

head. The ends of the support project up a sufficient distance to clasp the head of the corpse and to hold it tightly in place, however much the coffin may be moved about. The head will not only be prevented from moving laterally, but it will be held down on the bottom of the coffin. This adjustment can be effected after the lid of the coffin is screwed down and cemented.

The screws which secure the lid down pass through lugs *u*, *u*, *u*, which project from the sides of the top and bottom portions in pairs and in securing the case together the handles J, J, are at the same time confined between the lugs *u*, *u*, as represented in the drawings.

I am aware that head-rests have been used in coffins for supporting the head in one position, but I do not claim a head rest irrespective of the arrangement herein described, nor do I claim broadly forming an air tight coffin joint by packing the same with india rubber, or cementing the joint but,

Having described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is—

1. The compound joint, consisting of the beveled lapped portions *a*, *d*, and the cemented channel inside of the coffin, so arranged that the gas will press upon the surface of the cement as, and for the purposes herein set forth.

2. The adjusting screw E, nut *k*, jointed arms F, F, and spring support G, combined, arranged, and operating in combination with a coffin in the manner and for the purposes herein set forth.

JAS. H. RENSHAW.

Witnesses:

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