

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES A. SEELY AND CHARLES J. EAMES, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

IMPROVED PROCESS OF PRESERVING DEAD BODIES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 74,607, dated February 18, 1868.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, CHARLES A. SEELY and CHARLES J. EAMES, of New York, in the county of New York, in the State of New York, have invented a new and Improved Process for Preserving Dead Bodies; and we do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof.

The nature of our invention consists in the impregnation of the dead body with carbolic acid or other equivalent antiseptic liquid.

We apply the antiseptic liquid to the surface of the body, and also, when deemed advisable, we inject it into the stomach and intestinal canal. For the external application, we take a solution of the acid in water or other convenient solvent, and wash the body with it by means of a sponge or cloth, and when the first washing has been finished, we repeat it one or more times, or, when convenient, we immerse the body in a weak solution of the acid for a short time; or we saturate cloths with a solution of the acid, and then wrap or wind the body in the cloths so saturated, and allow the cloths thus to remain on the body. The body thus brought in contact with the liquid absorbs it by degrees, and the decomposition of the body is arrested or prevented.

We have found that in many cases, and especially in cold weather, the external application of the antiseptic is sufficient to prevent change within a few days; but when it is desirable to keep the body for a long time we inject a small quantity of the antiseptic into the cavities of the chest and the abdomen. We make the injection by the use of a syringe, and at the natural external openings to the cavities. The amount of liquid to be injected should be at least a few ounces, and we find no objection to the use of such a quantity as will distend the cavities. In addition to the applications of the antiseptic, as above described, we sometimes find it useful to place cotton, wool, lint, or cloth saturated with the acid in the nostrils and in the ears.

Our process, when carried out as above described, is entirely efficient for the preservation of a body during the ordinary interval between death and burial. But when the process is used as an embalming process, or when there are no objections to making incisions into the body, we prefer to inject the acid into the arteries and veins; or, in addition to the ordinary external and internal application of the acid, we inject some of the acid through an opening of the skull into the substance of the brain.

For a further security against decomposition of the body, and especially when the cloths saturated with liquid are not kept permanently about the body, we place at the bottom or sides of the coffin sheets of felt or cloth, or similar fibrous material, which has been saturated or dampened with the antiseptic liquid.

In combination with carbolic acid, we have used bisulphite of lime and bisulphite of soda, and a solution of sulphurous or acetic acid, with advantage; but we are satisfied that carbolic acid is the most active and useful agent for our purpose, and that any addition to it is not essential to success.

We have found the use of a mixture of carbolic acid with sawdust or other inert granular matter often advisable in the bottom of the coffin, and this modification of our process we desire to include in our claim for Letters Patent.

What we claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The process for preserving dead bodies, substantially as described.
2. The use of carbolic acid, and combinations of carbolic acid with other substances, for the preservation and embalming of dead bodies.

CHARLES A. SEELY.
CHARLES J. EAMES.

Witnesses:

W. R. C. CLARK,
JOHN S. RAY.