No. 630,070. Patented Aug. 1, 1899.

W. F. PFEIFFER.

LOWERING MECHANISM FOR CASKETS.

(Application filed Apr. 1, 1899.)

(No Model.)

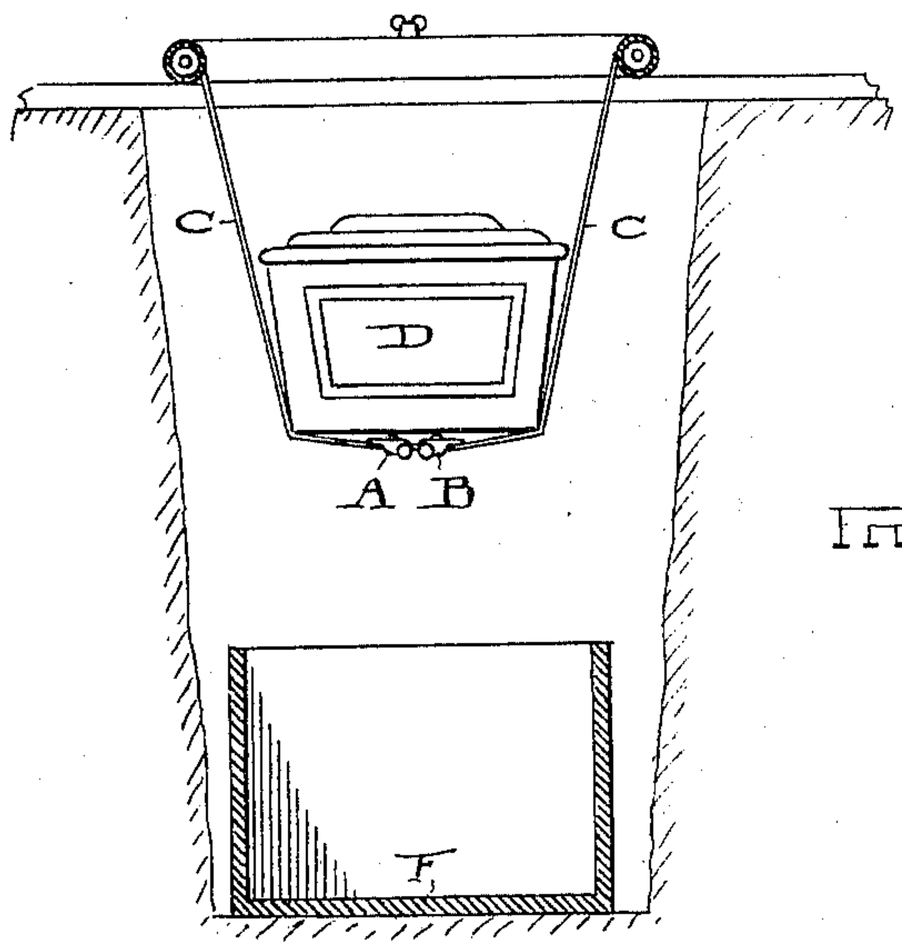


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

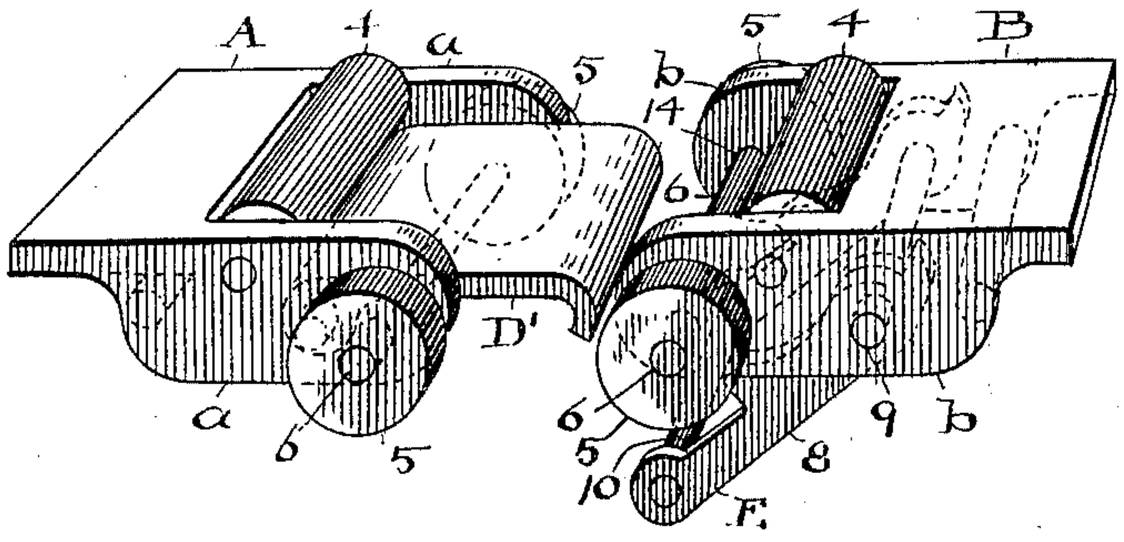
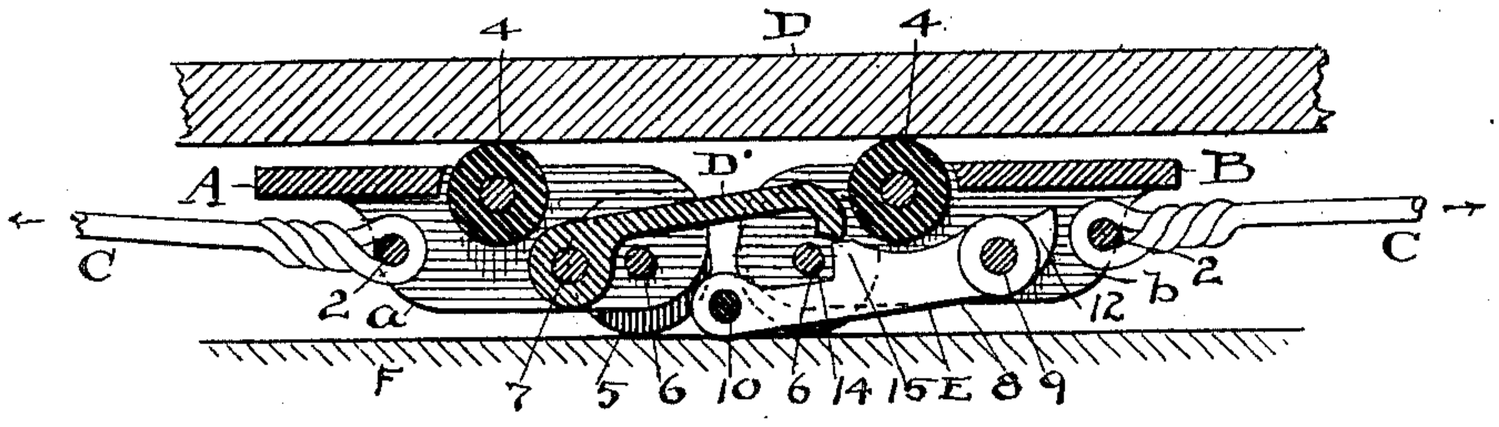


Fig. 3



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LOWERING MECHANISM FOR CASKETS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 630,070, dated August 1, 1899.

Application filed April 1, 1899. Serial No. 711,330. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM F. PFEIFFER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Akron, in the county of Summit and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mechanism for Lowering Caskets into Graves; and I do declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, which will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates to mechanism for lowering caskets into graves; and the object of the invention is to provide such mechanism with means which will not only automatically separate the ends of the lowering cords or straps when the casket has reached the bottom of the receiving-box, but also enable said ends to be quietly and easily removed or drawn out. Hence my invention consists in the construction and arrangement and combination of parts, substantially as shown and described, and particularly pointed out in the claims.

In the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 is a cross-section of a grave and a box in its bottom and a casket suspended by cords or straps connected at their ends beneath the casket and sustaining the weight. Fig. 2 is enlarged perspective elevation of the two parts of my improved coupling or connecting device separated. Fig. 3 is a sectional elevation of the same parts shown as they appear just as they have been released or unhooked and before drawing out from beneath the casket and with the ends of the cords attached thereto.

A and B represent the main parts or framework of the two sections of the coupling, and which carry all the other parts. The cords or straps C are attached to said frames on suitable cross-rods 2, engaged between or through the side flanges *a* and *b*, respectively, of the two frames A and B. Each frame carries a top roller 4, extending across the full width of the frame, as shown here, and above the sides and adjacent top portions of the frame to afford a free bearing and support for the casket D, resting exclusively on said rollers. It will of course be understood that while only one set of couplings is shown here there necessarily are two used with every complete device; but since both sets are alike it is necessary to show only one here. There might be, say, two single rollers in lieu of one on each section; but I prefer a long roller 4 to two in its stead. These run between the side flanges of the frames, as shown. Each frame also carries rollers at its bottom to rest and run on the floor of the receiving-box when the casket is let down to its resting-place, and in this case there are two rollers or wheels 5 on each frame and supported on the outside thereof by means of spindles or rods 6, which in this instance extend through the frames from side to side, and the said wheels or rollers extend below their frames sufficiently to bring the entire weight thereon when the casket comes to a rest in the box.

When viewed vertically, the rollers 4 are in advance of rollers 5, and as the lines C are connected with the frames A and B in advance of rollers 4 it occurs that when the lines C are drawn upon to pull out the couplings both sets of rollers will necessarily work and perform their function until withdrawn, and this, too, with no possibility of so tilting or twisting as to get into any angular relation and get caught in the withdrawal.

In all the foregoing respects and features of construction the two parts A and B may be alike and made from the same pattern, though they are shown as slightly different here, and now as a means of temporarily locking them together I have a hooking member or hook D′ on section A and a hook-disengaging member E on the frame B. The hook D′ is shown as wide enough to occupy the full space between the side flanges *a* and is pivoted on a transverse rod 7, engaged at its ends in said flanges, while the disengaging member E is practically a frame consisting of two side parts 8, pivoted on a transverse rod 9 and connected at their forward end by a rod 10, and the normal position of this frame is down, relatively, as seen in Fig. 2, to which position it drops by gravity. It is prevented from dropping below a good working position by the heel or extension 12 behind its pivot striking against the cross part of frame B and limiting its movement, so that when it strikes the floor of box F in the lowering of the casket it will rise toward the position seen in Fig. 3.

The hook D engages on the cross-rod 14 and will remain engaged until automatically released by the releasing-frame, and for this purpose the sides of said frame have each a projection 15 in position to bear against the hook part proper and force it out of engagement with rod 14, and the weight of the casket as it is lowered and is about at its place of rest serves this purpose. Such disengagement is shown in Fig. 3, and the casket is now down and the parts are ready for withdrawal. Said parts will remain substantially in the position seen in Fig. 3 until they are withdrawn, and the rod 6 on part A will prevent hook D′ from dropping down to engage the cross-rod 10 on frame E.

Of course the depth of the couplings A and B from top to bottom is as slight as possible, so as to occupy the least practicable room and yet have all the requisite strength to carry all caskets as they may come and without danger of breakage. This strength is made up largely in width.

I have described each and all the parts as they are shown here; but obviously one or all may be more or less modified in construction and serve the same purpose, so that all equivalent mechanisms are regarded as within the spirit and scope of my claims.

What I claim is—

1. Coupling mechanism for casket-lowering lines, consisting of two parts constructed to be temporarily hooked together, and top and bottom rollers on each part to bear against the casket and the floor of the receiving-box, respectively, substantially as described.

2. As a new article of manufacture, a coupling member for casket-lowering lines, said member consisting of a rigid frame, a set of rollers at the rear of said frame and extending below the same, and a transverse roller at the top and front of said frame and extending above the same, and means on said frame to effect engagement with an opposite member, substantially as described.

3. In a burial apparatus, a coupling for lowering-straps consisting of a hook member adapted to be carried by one strap, and a keeper member adapted to be carried by the other strap, and both said members having rollers on opposite sides, and a tripping device depending from the keeper member and movable to engage and release the hook and separate said members, substantially as described.

4. The two coupling-sections having each a top and a bottom roller on different vertical planes, a pivoted hook on one section and a keeper on the other, and a pivoted frame on the keeper-section constructed to raise and release the hook, substantially as described.

Witness my hand to the foregoing specification this 24th day of March, 1899.

WILLIAM F. PFEIFFER.

Witnesses:
H. T. FISHER,
R. B. MOSER.