

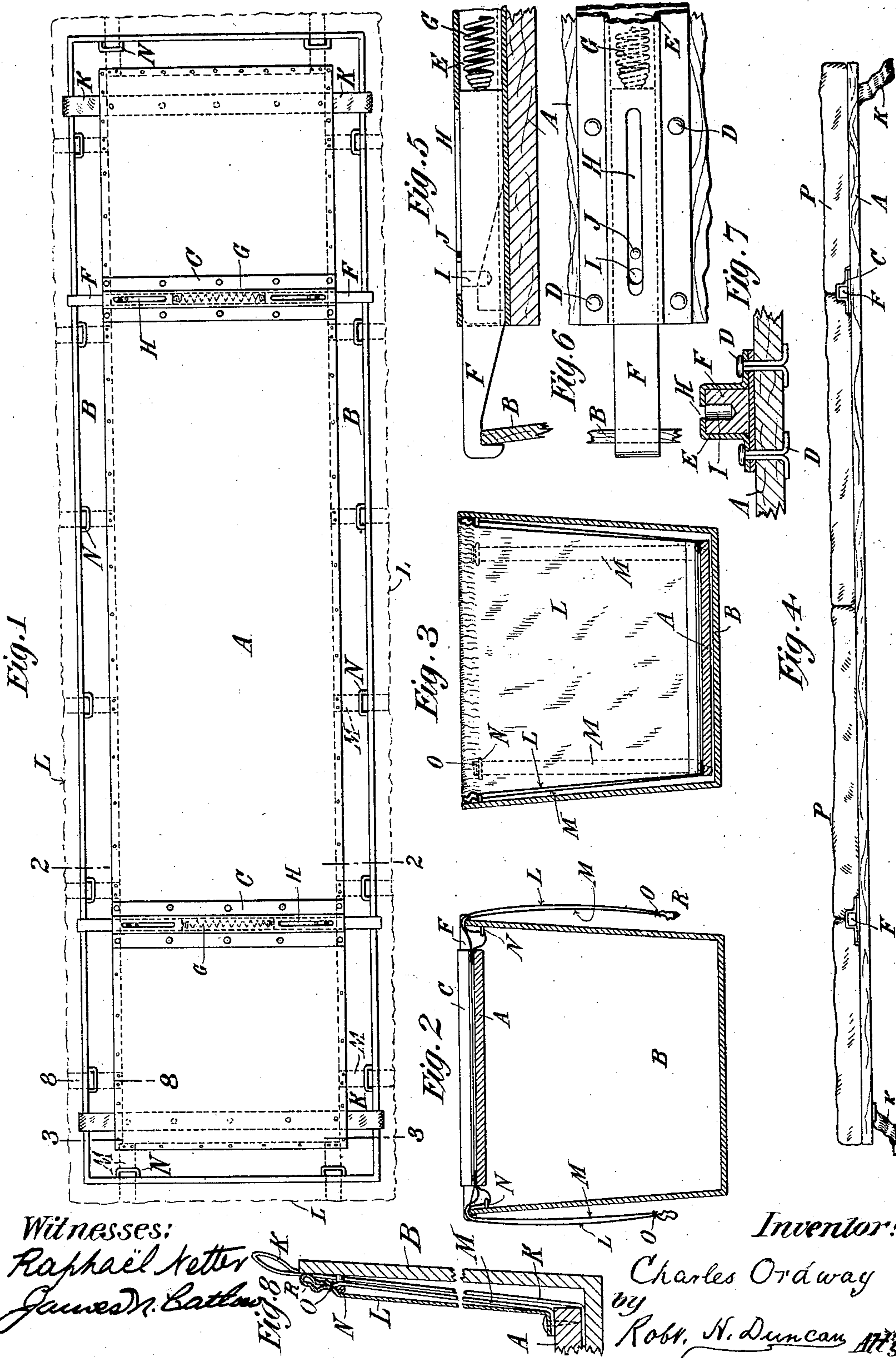
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BURIAL COUCH AND CASKET.

(Application filed Mar. 25, 1899.)

(No Model.)



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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BURIAL COUCH AND CASKET.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 636,283, dated November 7, 1899.

Application filed March 25, 1899. Serial No. 710,409. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES ORDWAY, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city of Toledo, in the county of Lucas and State of Ohio, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Burial Couches and Caskets, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part of same.

Heretofore various methods of "coffining" the bodies of deceased persons have been practiced. More frequently the body dressed for burial has been placed in a fully lined and finished casket, where it frequently remains for a day or more before it is viewed by the friends. Sometimes it is laid upon a couch-casket, one side of which is hinged and swung down, while the lid is also hinged and turned up, and sometimes the body is laid upon an ordinary couch after it is prepared for burial without special relation to the casket, and after being viewed by the friends it is removed from the couch and placed in the casket. Each of these methods has its objections and disadvantages. In the first there is the difficulty of placing the body in the casket without disarrangement of the dress and the lining of the casket, and when in place it frequently presents a cramped and unnatural appearance. There is the added difficulty of supplying proper refrigeration. The couch-caskets of the second method are very expensive and are objectionable by reason of their additional joints, which seriously interfere with hermetical sealing, while the raised lid obstructs the view of the body from one side. The third method has the main objection of the first, with the additional objection that the placing of the body in the casket must frequently be hurriedly done and sometimes in the presence of the friends.

It is the object of the present invention to overcome the defects and objections of these methods and to mitigate as much as possible the unpleasant and frequently distressing details attending the coffining of the dead; and to this end I provide a burial-couch so constructed that it can be readily and conveniently supported with the body lying thereon upon the top of the casket and at the desired moment can be quietly and gently lowered to its place in the bottom of the casket. I fur-

ther provide a strip of cloth or other suitable material, which is so constructed and arranged relatively to the couch and casket that it will serve as a drapery for the casket when the couch is supported thereon, and will also serve as a suitable lining for the sides and, if desired, for the ends of the casket when the couch is lowered into the casket.

The invention consists, stated generally, in the several features of construction and their combinations in burial couches and caskets, substantially as hereinafter more fully described and claimed.

A form of couch and casket embodying my invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a top view of the couch supported upon the top edges of the casket. Fig. 2 is a cross-section of the same through the line 2 2 of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a cross-section of the same through the line 3 3 of Fig. 1. Fig. 4 is an edge view of the couch, showing the mattress in position and the ends of the lifting and lowering straps, the drapery being omitted. Figs. 5 and 6 are detail sectional and plan views showing adjustable supports. Fig. 7 is a cross-section through the parts shown in Fig. 6, and Fig. 8 is a cross-section through the line 8 8 of Fig. 1.

In Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 8 the mattress of the couch is omitted in order that the construction and arrangement of the other parts may be more clearly seen.

In the drawings, A represents the couch, (omitting the mattress,) and B the casket. The base of the couch may be of any rigid material—for instance, a wooden board of a width and length to permit it to be readily lowered into the casket and to fit easily upon the bottom thereof—and the casket may also be of any suitable material and shape.

Secured to the base of the couch at proper distances from its ends are guides C, preferably formed from plate or thick sheet metal and held in place by cotter-pins D or screws passing through or into the base, as seen in Figs. 1 and 7, thus forming two guideways E E, in each of which are located two supports F F and a spring G, which latter connects the supports at their contiguous ends. The supports and connecting-spring are so related in length and capacity that when the supports

are in their normal position they will lie entirely within the limit of the width of the base of the couch, as seen in dotted lines in Fig. 5. The spring G is of such contractile strength
 5 that when the supports are drawn out or extended beyond the guideway to override and rest upon the edges of the casket, as seen in full lines in Fig. 5, and are then released therefrom it will draw the supports back to
 10 their normal position. The supports may be extended or drawn out against the stress of the spring by any convenient means, as by hand-operated hooks inserted through slots H, formed in the guides C, and into holes I,
 15 formed in the supports to register with the slots.

To prevent the supports and their connecting-spring from being moved bodily along the guideway E under an unequal pull upon either
 20 of the supports and the consequent difficulty of centrally supporting the couch on the casket, a stop is provided to hold the supports from moving in opposite directions beyond a certain limit. As shown in the drawings, a
 25 stop or projection J is fixed to each support, so that when the supports are in their normal position it will bear against the head of the slot adjacent the spring. By this arrangement of parts the opposite supports can be
 30 pulled out or extended at different times without materially affecting the position of the central part of the spring.

To provide a drapery for the casket when the couch is supported on the top edges there-
 35 of which shall serve as a casket-lining when the couch is lowered to its final position, a strip of cloth L or other material suitable for a casket-lining, for convenience called "drapery lining," having a width preferably
 40 slightly greater than the depth of the casket, is secured to the couch conveniently by nailing one of its edges to the edges of the base of the couch by small tacks. The opposite
 45 edge of the cloth is adjustably secured to the casket, preferably by pieces of tape M, of proper number and length, fastened to the couch in such manner that their ends will underlie the secured edge of the drapery lining. The free ends of the tapes are preferably
 50 threaded from below upward through staples N, driven into the interior walls of the sides and ends of the casket near their top edges, and the free edge of the drapery lining L and the free ends of the tapes M are united, as
 55 by a row of stitching O, the length of the tapes and the width of the lining being such that when the couch rests on the bottom of the casket the connecting-seam O will be at the staples and the tapes will have the proper
 60 tension to keep the lining in its desired position. When the couch is supported on the casket, the lining L, properly secured to the tapes M, naturally hangs below the couch and forms a tasteful drapery for the sides and
 65 ends of the casket, concealing the tapes and forming a fitting drapery, as seen in Fig. 2 of the drawings, while the lining and the

casket when the couch is lowered are seen in Figs. 3 and 8.

If desired, the lining when in place in the
 70 casket may be provided with an ornamental looped edge, as R, which is conveniently formed by folding the free edge of the lining material at the time it is secured to the tapes
 75 over upon itself and sewing it to the tapes at the desired distance from the head of the fold to form a loose folded edge of the desired length.

The couch is preferably provided with straps K, secured to its base near the ends
 80 thereof and having their ends looped for the convenient grasp of the hand. These straps are for convenience in raising, carrying, and lowering the couch, and after it has been lowered into the casket the ends of the straps
 85 may be tucked between the lining and the sides of the casket and permitted to drop upon its bottom.

The mattress P is conveniently made in sections to fit between the guides C on the
 90 base of the couch.

It will be readily seen that the construction herein described and shown in the drawings affords simple and effective means for exposing to view a body prepared for burial by
 95 placing it upon a couch supported upon a draped casket, where it can generally be viewed to the best advantage and at the desired time for gently lowering the couch and its supported body into the casket, by which
 100 act the drapery lining is converted through its adjustable connection with the casket from an external drapery into an interior casket-lining.

It is not intended to limit the invention to
 105 a construction in which all the features herein described are present, inasmuch as the devices set forth for supporting the couch on the top of the casket are fully operative in the absence of the drapery lining, and the
 110 drapery lining may be equally operative when the couch is supported on the casket by other means than those herein set forth; nor is it intended to limit the invention to the particular parts herein described or their special
 115 construction and operation, except as herein-after claimed.

What is claimed as new is—

1. A burial-couch provided with laterally-adjustable supports, whereby the supports
 120 in their extended position are adapted to sustain the couch on the top of a casket, and in their indrawn position permit it to be lowered to the bottom thereof.

2. In a burial-couch, the combination substantially as set forth, of a transverse guideway, laterally-adjustable supports arranged in such guideway and means for operating the supports.

3. In a burial-couch, the combination substantially as set forth, of a transverse guideway, adjustable supports arranged in such guideway and a spring connecting the adjacent ends of the supports and constructed to

draw and hold them within the width of the couch.

4. In a burial-couch, the combination substantially as set forth, of a transverse guideway, adjustable supports, a device for operating the supports, and stops or projections, as J, fixed to the support and arranged to take against the wall of the guideway, for the purpose set forth.

5. In a burial-couch, the combination substantially as set forth, of a transverse guideway, supports arranged to slide therein, a device for moving the supports in one direction, slots, as H, in the wall of the guideway, and holes, as I, in the supports, for the purpose set forth.

6. The combination, in a burial-casket and a couch adapted to support the body and be lowered into the casket, of a casket-lining secured at one of its edges to the couch, and means for securing its other edge near the top edges of the casket, for the purpose set forth.

7. The combination, in a burial casket and

couch, of a strip of cloth, or other suitable material for a drapery lining, secured at one of its edges to the couch, and means for adjustably securing its opposite edge to the casket, whereby, when the couch is supported on the casket the drapery lining will serve as an external drapery to the casket, and when the couch is lowered into the casket the drapery lining will serve as an interior lining to the casket.

8. The combination, in a burial-casket and couch adapted to support the body and be lowered into the casket, of a casket-lining and fastening-tapes secured to the couch and staples secured to the walls of the casket near their top edges, and means, as seam O, for securing the free edge of the lining and the free ends of the tapes together after the latter have been threaded through the staples, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

CHARLES ORDWAY.

In presence of—

JOHN N. MOORE,
JAMES N. CATLOW.