Sept. 24, 1963 H. R. HOLT 3,104,447

CORPSE HAND SECURING METHOD

Original Filed Feb. 1, 1960

Fig. 1

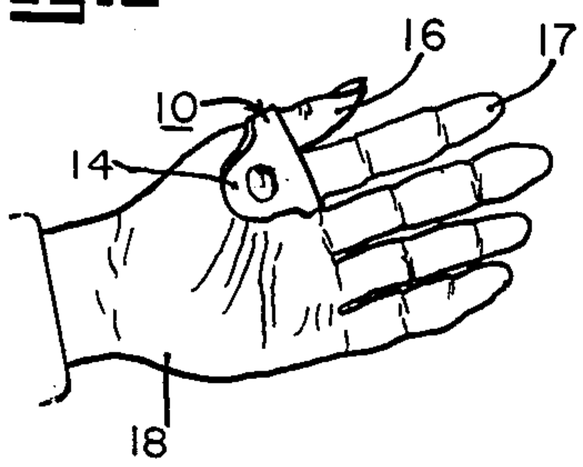


Fig. 2

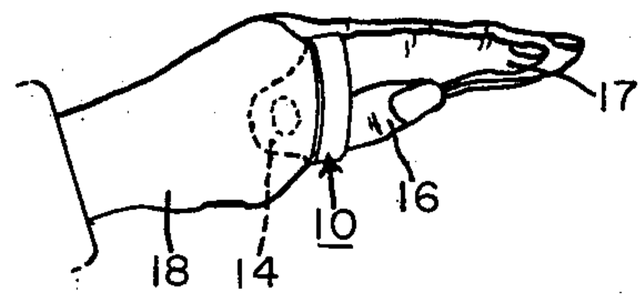


Fig. 5

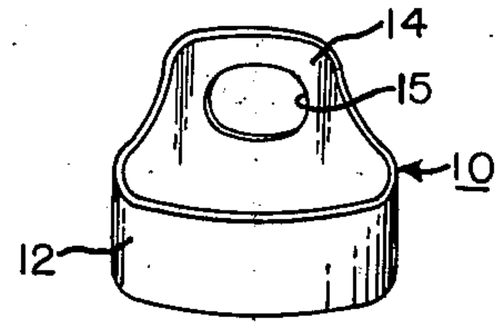


Fig. 3

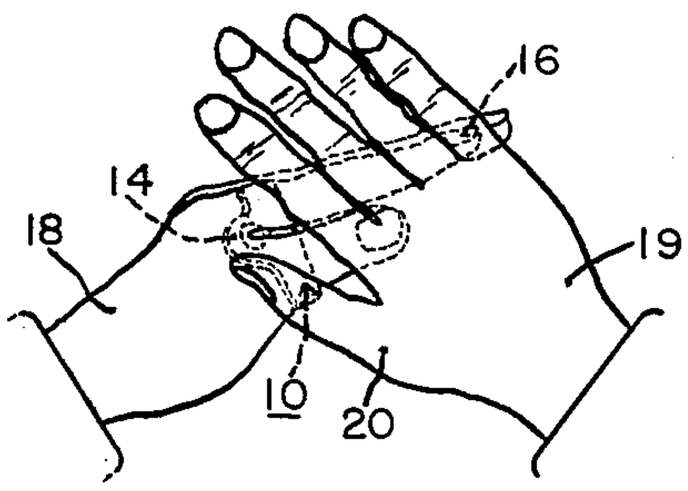


Fig. 6

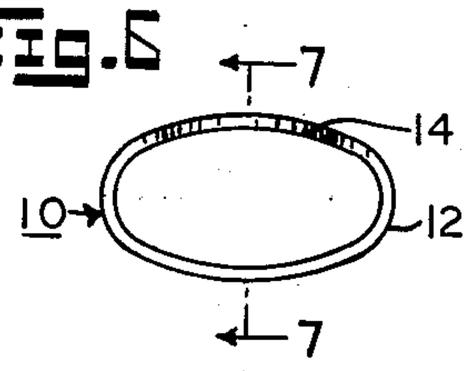


Fig. 4

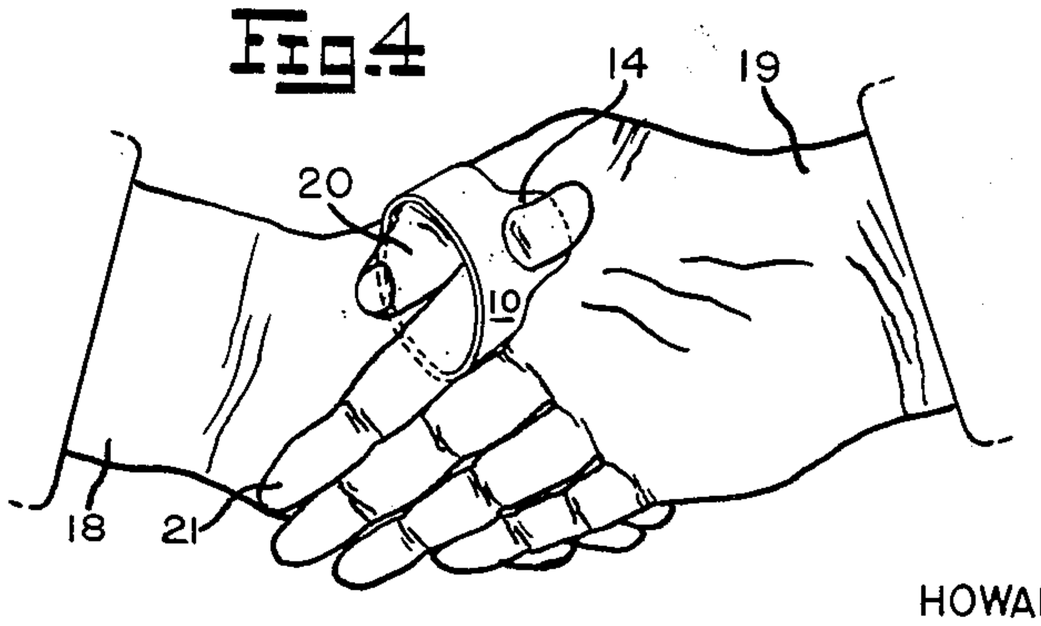
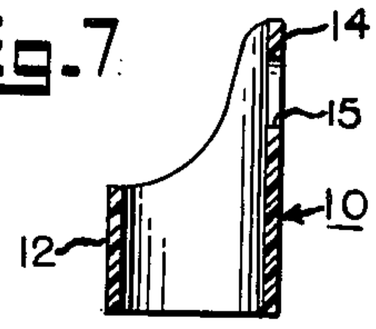


Fig. 7



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CORPSE HAND SECURING METHOD

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Original application Feb. 1, 1960, Ser. No. 6,015, now Patent No. 3,044,144, dated July 17, 1962. Divided and this application Apr. 17, 1962, Ser. No. 188,113
2 Claims. (Cl. 27—21)

This invention is directed to the undertaking and embalming art and, more particularly it relates to an improved fastening method for securing the hands of a deceased person in preparation of the latter for embalming and/or burial, and to the use of means for advantageously practicing my method wherein said means is a hand holder device of the type disclosed and claimed in my copending application, Serial No. 6,015, filed February 1, 1960, now Patent No. 3,044,144, which issued on July 17, 1962, of which the present application is a division thereof.

At death and after rigor mortis, all body parts, muscles, and other tissues assume a partly relaxed state or position. This condition, however, is not natural in appearance. The relatives of a deceased person desire the embalmer to prepare the corpse to have as natural an appearance as possible for sentimental reasons. Accordingly, it is the aim and desire of an embalmer to restore and maintain the position of the various parts of the body of the deceased to as natural a semblance as possible to please the members of the family of the deceased person. Various devices have been tried out in the past but all of them have been found to be too cumbersome or otherwise impractical.

One of the problems which embalmers encounter in preparing a body for burial is the arrangement of the hands which tend to fly apart and assume unnatural or grotesque positions. Also, even after the embalming process has been completed and the hands are clasped across the body of the deceased person with the elbows braced against the casket sides, slipping occurs.

In my copending application, Serial No. 6,015, abovementioned, which matured into U.S. Patent No. 3,044,144, I have illustrated, described, and claimed therein, a universal type of embalmer's hand holder device which is of a simple and inexpensive unitary construction and formed entirely of a suitable resilient material, such as, for example, elastic rubber, the inherent contractile properties of which material will act, when the device is stretched around the thumb and first or forefinger of one hand between which parts is interposed and embraced thereby the extended thumb of the other hand while such hands of the corpse are arranged in a superposed relation one upon the other, thereby to apply to the thus-assembled finger and thumbs a steady pressure sufficient to tightly hold and maintain them firmly clasped together across the front of the body of the corpse without producing distortion of the tissues of the fingers which are grippingly held by such holder.

The said device just described when thus-arranged on the hands of a deceased person in a casket, will be completely concealed from public view, and after the funeral it is not removed but is interred with the body.

It is, therefore, the primary object of this invention to provide a simple and efficient fastening method for securing together the superposed hands of a deceased person in a desired natural life-like arranged position utilizing the embalmer's hand holder device of my copending application, Serial No. 6,015, filed February 1, 1960, now U.S. Patent No. 3,044,144, by means of which the hands of the corpse subsequent to being laid one upon the other in a substantially clasped position will be firmly held and properly retained in such pre-arranged position preparatory for embalming and/or final arrangement of the corpse in a casket.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved method of securing together the extended thumb of one hand and the embracing thumb and first finger of the other hand by use of a hand holder device of the type disclosed in my aforementioned patent application, Serial No. 6,015, now U.S. Patent No. 3,044,144, whereby such hand holder device and my method will be capable of universal use and capable of being advantageously practiced without difficulty irrespective of any various personal differences in size and shape, or other physical properties, of the fingers and thumbs of the particular deceased persons being prepared for burial, as such physical characteristics often have created heretofore a problem to the undertaking profession.

Other objects and advantages of this invention will be apparent during the course of the following detailed description and specification which describes a preferred method of practicing my invention employing one type of embalmer's hand holder device forming the patentable subject-matter of my copending application, Serial No. 6,015 above-identified, now U.S. Patent No. 3,044,144, and as illustrated in the accompanying drawing, in which

FIG. 1 is a pictorial view illustrating the first step of the method of the present invention in which my novel hand holding device of the above-identified copending patent application is shown initially applied onto the thumb and forefinger of the left hand of a human corpse, as seen when looking into the cupped palm side of such hand;

FIG. 2 is a pictorial view similar to FIG. 1 but hereillustrated in side elevation and as viewed from a position exteriorly facing the thumb side of such hand;

FIG. 3 is a pictorial view depicting the positions assumed by the right and left hands preparatory to the insertion of the right thumb through the apertured holding device of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a pictorial view of my hand holding device but applied to the right hand of the corpse and as viewed from the underside of the inverted clasped hands following the prior insertion step of my method as depicted in FIG. 3;

FIG. 5 is a pictorial view of the FIG. 1 form of corpse hand holding device of my invention;

FIG. 6 is a top plan view of the FIG. 5 device; and

FIG. 7 is a vertical section in elevation taken on the line 7—7 of FIG. 6.

Referring now in detail to the drawings, and in particular to FIG. 5 thereof, the corpse hand holder device of the present invention is generally designated by the reference numeral **10** and is made entirely of a suitable resilient material, such as, for example, elastic rubber. The main body **12** of the device is of generally tubular formation of narrow width and constitutes a stretchable annular band which is susceptible to enlargement and contraction and which includes an integral projecting tab portion **14** having the same resilient properties and provided with a central opening **15** therethrough to form a holding loop for a thumb, as will be hereinafter described. The opening **15** may be of appropriate shape as, for example, circular or elliptical, and is of a size to accommodate and hold firmly a wide range of sizes and shapes of thumbs to be held therein.

In the use of the device, the arms of the deceased person are folded across the front of the body with the hands placed one upon the other in a natural appearing clasped position (not shown). Either the right or the left hand may rest on the other, as desired.

As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the band portion **12** of the device **10** is expanded and placed around the proximal

position of the first phalanx of the thumb 16 and the first phalanx of the first finger 17 of the left hand 18 with the projecting tab portion 14 of the device extended under and toward the palm of the hand 18. The fingers of the right hand 19 are clasped over the fingers of the left hand 18 with the right thumb 20 inserted, as indicated in FIG. 3, between the band 12 and the base of the thumb and first finger of the left hand 18 and through the opening 15 in the tab 14 of the resilient hand holding device 10 which then is allowed to contract, thus holding both hands securely in this desired pre-arranged position (see FIG. 4).

If, however, the left hand is the one desired to be placed in the upper position the foregoing described arrangement is reversed, in which case the band portion 12 of the device 10 is expanded and placed around the proximal position of the first phalanx of the thumb 20 and the first or forefinger 21 of the right hand 19 with the projecting tab portion 14 extended under and toward the palm of that hand. The fingers of the left hand 18 then are clasped over the fingers of the right hand 19 with the left thumb 16 inserted between the band 12 and the right hand 19 and through the opening 15 in the tab portion 14 of the hand holding device 10 which then is allowed to contract, thus firmly holding both hands securely in this desired arranged position.

The inside surface of the band or body portion 12 may be either smooth, or suitably roughened, as desired, in order to increase its gripping qualities.

It thus will be apparent that by means of this novel one-piece, simple and inexpensive device, with its resilient properties, the hands 18 and 19 of the corpse will be held indefinitely in a relaxed clasped position, and that, as shown in FIG. 2, the hand holder device 10 is entirely concealed at all times from public view by virtue of its disposition on the underside of the clasped hands and therefore does not require removal from the body at any time.

What is claimed is:

1. In the undertaking art, the method of preparing a human corpse for burial wherein the hands of the deceased are to be crossed one upon the other in a clasped position on the body in which they are desired to be maintained for the funeral rites and final interment by the inherent elastic force of a resilient rubber hand holder device having at least two thumb and finger gripping openings therethrough, comprising the steps of placing one of the hands of the deceased upon the other hand, inserting both the thumb and the first finger of the underlying hand through one of the thumb and finger gripping openings of such hand holder device with the body of the hand holder device projected under and toward the palm of the underlying hand, inserting the extended thumb of the upper hand through the usual space between the base of the thumb and first finger of the underlying hand, and the hand holder device thereon and thence through a second thumb gripping opening in the said hand holder device, whereby the inherent elastic force of the latter will act to maintain the hands of the corpse in the desired pre-arranged clasped position.

2. In the undertaking art, the method of preparing a human corpse for burial wherein the hands of the deceased are to be crossed one upon the other in a clasped position on the body and thus maintained for the funeral rites and final interment by the inherent elastic force of a resilient rubber hand holder device having a plurality of thumb and finger gripping openings therethrough, comprising the steps of applying the hand holder device over the thumb and first finger of the underlying hand to individually embrace said parts, with the body of the hand holder device projected under and toward the palm of the underlying hand, inserting the extended thumb of the upper hand through the usual space between the base of the thumb and first finger of the underlying hand and the hand holder device thereon and thence through another thumb gripping opening in said hand holder device whereby the inherent elastic force of the latter will act to maintain the hands of the corpse in the desired pre-arranged clasped position.

References Cited in the file of this patent

Strube and Frederick, "The Principles and Practice of Embalming" (1959), page 345. (Copy in Scientific Library.)