My invention belongs to the general class of devices known as casket overlays which are generally placed over the top of a half casket type of casket and hang down at the front and back sides thereof. In practice the overlay is usually placed over the closed half of the casket top adjacent the inner end of the latter.

In a drop front or half drop casket, the outer front wall of the casket at the head is hinged to drop down, the lining being ordinarily attached thereto so that it may be draped before the open casket, and in caskets where there is not a drop front or the equivalent, the lining may be draped out of the casket. Obviously, regardless of the type of construction, when the lining is draped at the outside, it projects beyond the front wall of the casket and an overlay laid over the casket would drop or drop to the front wall and not be aligned with the front of the draped lining.

My invention has among its objects the production of an overlay of the kind described which will be maintained in alignment with the draped casket lining and which will not be readily displaced or disarranged by one stepping up to the casket and leaning against the overlay.

The invention also has as an object the production of a device for maintaining the overlay in a substantially fixed relation to the casket wall, in which the device is formed as an integral part of the overlay itself rather than a support mounted on the casket, the latter type of device being easily disarranged, broken or might otherwise prove defective as it must necessarily be substantially rigid in construction. The support herein described forms a part of theoverlay which may be folded when the overlay is not in place so that the overlay itself may be compactly folded or stored, but which may automatically open to operative position by merely pulling the overlay from the front of the casket.

The invention has also as an object the production of a supporting device of the kind described which will maintain the overlay in position, but which is pliable and resilient, and which will not in any way detract from the beauty of the overlay nor be readily seen when in use.

Among its further objects is the production of a device of the kind described that is exceedingly simple, inexpensive, durable, convenient, attractive and satisfactory under all conditions.

Many other objects and advantages of the construction herein shown and described will be obvious to those skilled in the art from the disclosure herein given.

To this end my invention consists in the novel construction, arrangement and combination of parts herein shown and described, and more particularly pointed out in the claims.

In the drawing, wherein like reference characters indicate like or corresponding parts:

Fig. 1 is a side elevation of the casket with the lid raised, showing the overlay in place;

Fig. 2 is an end elevation of a portion of the casket and overlay, showing the support in operative position;

Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken substantially on line 2-2 of Fig. 1; and

Fig. 4 is a sectional view through the overlay and support taken substantially on line 4-4 of Fig. 1.

Referring to the drawing, I represents an overlay of suitable material which may be moulded, pressed, sewed, quilted, tufted or otherwise formed to produce an ornamental and attractive overlay suitable for being draped over the top 2 of the casket and depend at the front side 3. The lining 4 of the casket is shown lifted out and draped about the edge of the casket, this being usually done by means of a drop as previously stated, the lining projecting from the front wall 3 as to present a couch effect and ordinarily it extends several inches or more in front of the casket. Obviously, without a support or spacer, the overlay would hang down before the front 3 of the casket and would not be aligned flush with the front edge of the draped lining. The purpose of my invention is to support or space the end of the overlay at the front of the casket substantially as shown in Fig. 2, the spacing means being made a part of the overlay.

Referring particularly to Figs. 3 and 4, the overlay shown is provided with front and back sheets 7 and 8, of the same material as the casket lining, spaced as indicated at 9 by means of filling, padding, tufting, quilting, tufting or otherwise. Usually a piece of fringe, lace or the like 10 is secured to the extreme end for purposes of ornamentation.

On the back or inner side 8 of the overlay is secured a spacer which consists of a body portion 11 of relatively stiff material, such as buckram or like material which will be sufficiently stiff to support the overlay but which is resilient and pliable and therefore will readily give when force is applied against it. Obviously, card or pressed board may be used in place of the buckram which is a strip of burlap mounted on a sheet of material, the two being sized so that it is relatively stiff. This body member is fitted with a close-fitting covering 12 of the same material as the
overlay comprising two pieces of the material of similar shape as the body member, the two being stitched together with an invisible stitch along their sides 13 and the circular portion 14. A lock or fold 15 is taken in the back or inner side 8 and the free edges 16 of the spacer covering 12 are inserted in this lock after which the whole is stitched together by means of the stitching 17, the latter running the entire width of the overlay. In this construction, the covering of the body member 11 provides a suitable hinge for the latter, allowing the same to be folded back against the overlay when the latter is placed in the casket, or is otherwise packed or stored.

To maintain the body member in operative position, the inner or circular end of the spacer is carried by a tape or cord 18 which may be stitched to the spacer as at 19 and which is preferably constructed in two pieces so that the position of the spacer in relation with the overlay may be varied to accommodate the latter to various shaped caskets, wherein the draped lining of the caskets may not project out as far as that shown in the drawing.

While the secured edge 16 of the spacer extends parallel with the wall 3 of the casket, the inner or rear edge 14 is preferably curved or arcuately formed so that it has contact or bearing on the casket intermediate its ends. Should one lean or bear against the overlay at either side, however, the same may temporarily move inwardly, but will immediately spring back into the position shown.

When the overlay is placed on the casket and the ends pulled out substantially flush with the lining 4, the spacer will drop down to operative position as shown in Fig. 2, maintaining the overlay in proper position.

In practice, when the casket is to be closed, the overlay is generally placed over the body like a blanket, the end being tucked in the closed portion of the casket. With the present device folded back against the overlay, the latter may easily and readily be tucked in the casket, the spacer furnishing sufficient rigidity to prevent the overlay from being unevenly tucked in.

Having thus described my invention, it is obvious that various immaterial changes may be made in the same without departing from the spirit of my invention; hence I do not wish to be understood as limiting myself to the exact form, construction, arrangement and combination of parts herein shown and described, or the uses mentioned.

What I claim as new and desired to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. An overlay forming part of the interior of a casket provided with spacing means carried thereby for maintaining the overlay spaced outwardly from the front of the casket.

2. An overlay for caskets provided with spacing means hingedly carried thereby for maintaining the overlay spaced outwardly from the front of the casket.

3. A overlay provided with a spacer member hingedly attached to the underside of the overlay, and means for supporting said spacer in operative position.

4. A overlay provided with a spacer member hingedly attached to the underside of the overlay, and engageable with the casket, and adjustable means for supporting said spacer in operative position.

5. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material having one edge hingedly connected to the back side of the overlay, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position consisting of flexible means attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

6. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material having one edge hingedly connected to the back side of the overlay with the opposite edge of arcuate formation, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position consisting of flexible means attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

7. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, the covering along one edge of said member being attached to the back side of the overlay to form a flexible hinge, and means for supporting said member in operative position.

8. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, the covering along one edge of said member being hingedly attached to the back side of the overlay to form a flexible hinge with the opposite edge of said spacer member of arcuate formation, and means for supporting said member in operative position.

9. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, the covering along one edge of said member being attached to the back side of the overlay to form a flexible hinge, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position consisting of flexible means attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

10. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, the covering along one edge of said member being attached to the back side of the overlay to form a flexible hinge with the opposite edge of
said spacer member of arcuate formation, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position consisting of flexible means attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

11. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, the covering along one edge of said member being attached to the back side of the overlay to form a flexible hinge, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position consisting of flexible means of adjustable length attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

12. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, the covering along one edge of said member being attached to the back side of the overlay to form a flexible hinge with the opposite edge of said spacer member of arcuate formation, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position consisting of flexible means of adjustable length attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

13. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a close-fitting covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, a tuck running across the back side of the latter adapted to receive the covering along one edge of said spacer member, the covering held in place by the stitching closing the tuck to form a flexible hinge connection, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position comprising flexible means of adjustable length attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

14. In an overlay for burial caskets, a covering member of a length to depend in front of the casket, and means for maintaining the overlay spaced from the casket at said front side consisting of a spacer member constructed of relatively stiff material, a close-fitting covering for said member of substantially the same material as the overlay, a tuck running across the back side of the latter adapted to receive the covering along one edge of said spacer member, the covering held in place by the stitching closing the tuck to form a flexible hinge connection, with the opposite edge of said member of arcuate formation, and means for maintaining the spacer in operative position comprising flexible means of adjustable length attached at one end to the free edge of the spacer and at its other end to the overlay at a point above the spacer.

15. A flexible overlay for caskets of a length to overlie the top of the casket and depend before the front side wall thereof, and spacing means engageable with the casket, said means being carried by the overlay for maintaining the latter spaced outwardly from the front of the casket.

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