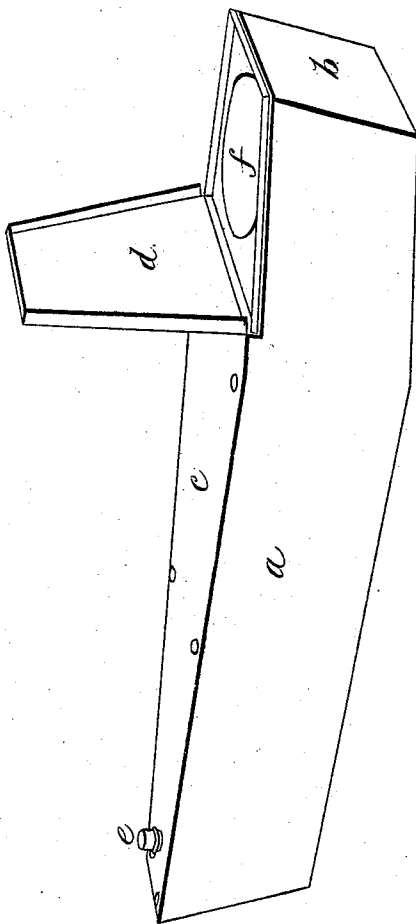


F. Skiff,

Coffin.

N^o 5,084.

Patented Apr. 20, 1847.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FREDK. SKIFF, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

CONSTRUCTION OF COFFINS.

Specification of Letters Patent No. 5,084, dated April 20, 1847.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FREDERICK SKIFF, of the city, county, and State of New York, have invented a new and improved mode of constructing and combining parts to constitute a metallic sarcophagus, coffin, or box by which a dead body or vegetable or perishable matter may be preserved in an unchangeable state for an unlimited duration of time.

The nature of my invention consists in combining 80 parts of iron, 15 parts of zinc and 5 parts of crystals of quartz or glass, (or I may use other proportions producing analogous results) which combination when properly fused together forms a composition or metal which will not deteriorate or oxidize by exposure to the moisture of the earth or the action of the atmosphere, and of making a metallic cement composed of the filings or portions of the above composition, pulverized and mixed with sal ammoniac and water to the consistency of an ordinary paste, and which cement when brought in contact with contiguous pieces of said composition or metal immediately unites the same, and more firmly and in a shorter period of time than any other metallic material can be united in an air tight form by any other agent or process, and thus rendering said composition by the process of uniting the same by means of this cement peculiarly and better adapted to the purpose of coffins and boxes for the preservation of dead bodies and other perishable substances and vegetable matter than any other known material, means or process.

The mode of constructing the said sarcophagus, coffin or box, is as follows. The iron is melted in an ordinary cupola or smelting furnace, and heated to an unusual high temperature, then drawn off into a ladle into which is put the zinc, after which the crystals of quartz or glass is added; the composition being well mixed is then poured into a mold prepared for the purpose of any given dimensions or shape—the recess being cast in one piece, the cover in two. I will more fully describe the nature of my invention by reference to the accompanying drawings.

A, represents one of the two sides. B, one of the two ends. C, a view of the top or lid. D the portion of the lid connected by hinges.

E represents a valve chamber, which is screwed into the lid or attached to it so as to be perfectly air tight, in this valve cham-

ber is contained a puppet or flat valve, ground to its seat so as to be air tight.

F, represents a glass face piece the thickness of which may be half an inch more or less, and in any given form or shape, the glass to be transparent ground and fitted in at the top of the head end or elsewhere and made perfectly air tight by means of the above cement.

The valve piece or chest E, is provided with a cap which screws on its outer surface, which cap presses a spiral spring, india rubber or other elastic substance, down upon the valve in order that the valve shall not rise from its seat, after the subject or other material or matter to be preserved shall have been placed in the sarcophagus, coffin or box and the air pumped out.

In order to prepare the subject or other matter for preservation it should be placed in the sarcophagus, coffin or box, immediately after death or prior to the commencement of decay the cover or lid C, hermetically sealed with the above cement, and screwed or bolted down, the glass face piece F immediately hermetically cemented in like manner, and an ordinary well constructed air pump, with the connection to suit the valve piece E, at once applied and operated until the air contained in the sarcophagus coffin or box and subject or other matter shall have been wholly exhausted. The parts here described being constructed and combined with ordinary skill and ingenuity, and the subject placed in the sarcophagus, coffin or box and cemented as above described and the air wholly exhausted the subject will remain an indefinite period of time in an apparently unchanged state.

What I claim as my invention and desire to secure by Letters Patent is—

1. The before described composition of zinc silex and iron, and the making and preparing said cement for the purpose above stated.

2. And I also claim making coffins boxes or other vessels of this material for the purpose of preserving animal or other perishable substances from decay, substantially in the manner set forth, it being understood and admitted that said compositions are more particularly advantageous and applicable to the purposes in question, and impervious to air.

FREDERICK SKIFF.

In the presence of—

J. P. VAN TYNE,
S. STARKWEATHER.