C. L. SHERWOOD.

BURIAL VAULT.

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1,129,745. Patented Feb. 23, 1915.

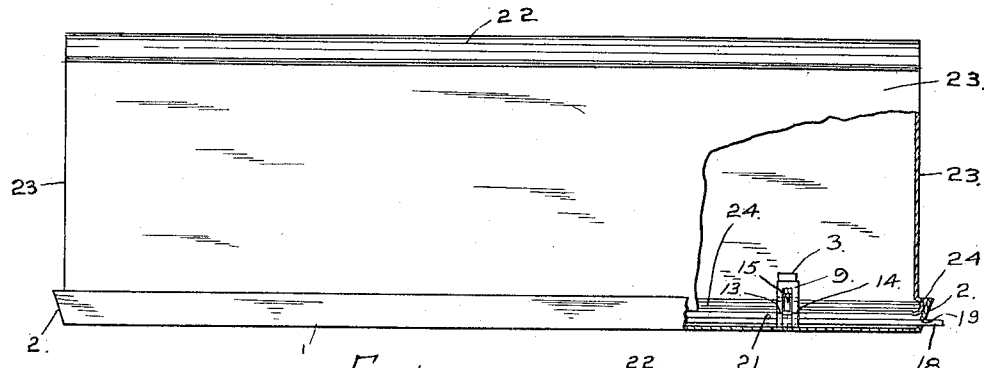


Fig. 1.

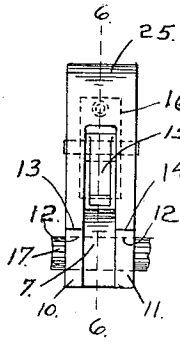


Fig. 5.

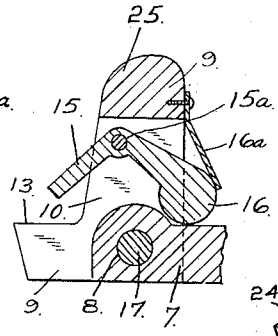


Fig. 6.

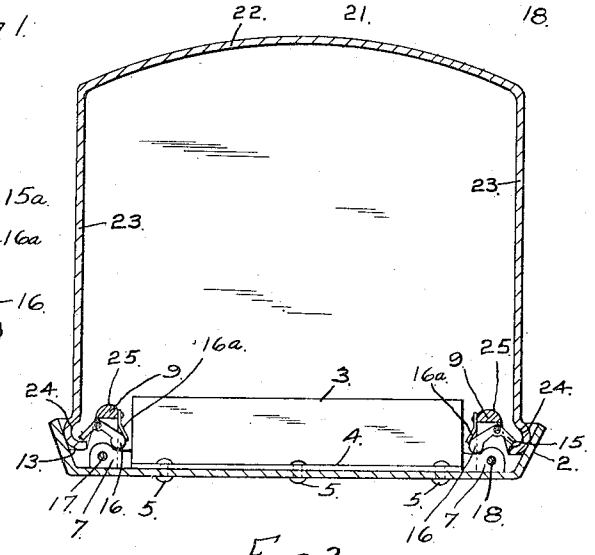


Fig. 2.

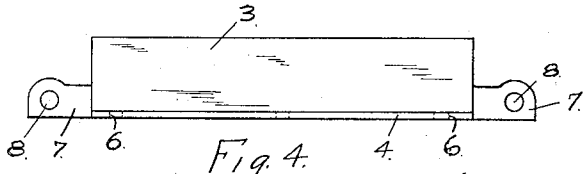


Fig. 4.

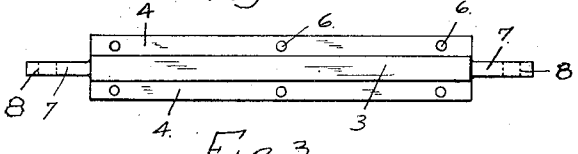


Fig. 3.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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BURIAL-VAULT.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES L. SHERWOOD, a citizen of the United States, residing at London, in the county of Madison and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Burial-Vaults, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to burial vaults and is particularly directed to the provision of a burial vault which combines a rigidity of structure and readiness of assemblage, with a comparative cheapness of manufacture. It is primarily constructed in a manner to render it readily separable as to its major parts when not in use, but is further constructed to render it peculiarly incapable of separation of its parts when in operative position. In other words, the burial vault is of such a form that when placed in position in a grave, the narrow confines of the grave render it impossible to unlock the grave vault and separate the top piece from the bottom thereof.

In the preferred embodiment of my invention, it comprises a base element in the form of a tray and a lid element adapted to fit within such tray, said tray and lid element being connected together by a peculiar means of attachment.

The preferred form of my invention is shown in the accompanying drawings, in which similar characters of reference designate corresponding parts, and in which:

Figure 1 is a side elevation of my improved burial vault showing a portion of the side thereof broken away to display the interior assembled structure, Fig. 2 is a transverse section of my burial vault, Fig. 3 is a plan view of one of the supporting strips which are mounted in spaced relation within the tray bottom of my burial vault, Fig. 4 is a view in elevation of the strip shown in Fig. 3, Fig. 5 is a sectional detail of one of the latch elements adapted to straddle the ends of the strips shown in Figs. 3 and 4, and Fig. 6 is a vertical section taken on line 6—6 of Fig. 5.

In the drawings, the base may be designated 1 and is desirably provided with outwardly and upwardly flaring sides 2 extending entirely around the said base. Within the tray-like base member, there are provided a plurality of spaced strips or rest rails 3 having base flanges 4 secured to the base by rivets 5 extending through holes 6 in the said flanges. These rails are additionally provided at their ends with reduced extensions 7 having apertures 8 formed therein and being of a suitable thickness to receive and be straddled by the latch supporting elements 9 of bifurcate form which have their legs 10 and 11 formed with registering apertures 12. These latch supporting members 9 are desirably formed at their bases with flanges 13 and 14 and the general contour of the base of these members is such as to cause them to fit with comparative closeness between the walls 2 of the base element and the ends of the main portions of the rails 3, thus effecting a comparatively rigid bracing action. The latch supporting members 9 are of peculiar form in that they carry gravity latches in the form of L-shaped pieces 15 secured pivotally as at 15^a and having their latching ends extended into the path of the edges of the top in the movement of said top to operative position upon the base. The opposite ends of these latches are weighted as at 16 and these weights serve to normally maintain the said latches in operative position. The maintenance of said latches in operative position is assured by the use of leaf springs 16^a which bear upon the weighted ends of the latches. But for these springs, the latches might possibly be released by inversion of the vault. These latches are formed in the manner described, to facilitate their ready attachment and detachment, which is desirably accomplished by means of rods 17 and 18 preferably extending longitudinally of the burial vault and passing through the registering openings 8 and 12 in all of the latch supporting members and extensions of the rails 3. These rods 17 and 18 pass through apertures 19 in one of the end walls of the base member 1 and they may be rigidly secured against removal, if so desired, by the provision of keys or other similar restraining elements, as shown at 21. Under normal conditions and considering that the restraining element 21 is not being utilized, these rods cannot be withdrawn while the base element is within the grave, owing to the confined area. Therefore, the latches are desirably placed in position before the base element is placed

within the grave and at any time when this confined area is not existent, the rods may be removed and replaced with a consequent release and connection of the latch members at will.

The top element of my invention is rendered peculiarly simple and efficacious because of the fact that it may be made from one entire piece having a top 22 and sides and ends 23. These sides and ends 23 are provided at their lower edges with ridges 24 which are preferably stamped from the integral metal and desirably curved inwardly, so as to bring them, when in operative position, slightly beneath the latches 15. In so as to bring them, when in operative position, it is readily guided thereinto by the convex formation of the upper ends of the latch supporting elements as shown at 25. Striking these convex formations, the top is guided into such a position that the lower edges thereof rest upon the bases 13 and 14 of the latch members with the edges held downwardly by the latches 15. These bases 13 and 14 are of a sufficient height to maintain the top above the level of the rods 17 and 18 and consequently such rods 17 and 18 may be removed and replaced at will regardless of whether or not the top is in position. It will be understood that the removal of the rods 17 and 18 while the top is in position, immediately serves to release the latch supporting members and renders the top removable.

From the above, it will be apparent that I have provided a superior burial vault for the reason that it is possible to secure the latch elements in place before the top is placed upon the base member, while at the same time the latch elements may be released while the top is thereon, providing the burial vault is not within a confined area as is the case when the burial vault is within a grave. In addition to these features, the formation of the latch members is such as to guide the top into position and at the same time form a bracing structure for the base tray. Furthermore, the top is formed integral with a lower curved ridge and this curved ridge is at a comparatively determinate angle to the spring element, retaining the same in place upon the base member.

What I claim, is:

1. A burial vault comprising a base element with upstanding sides and ends, a top element fitting within said base element, a plurality of latches mounted upon one of said elements for locking the other thereon, and a rod removable when the top is in its locked position upon the base for releasing said latches to permit removal of said top.

2. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, said top element being formed with an integral curled ridge along its lower edges, and a plurality of latches carried by said base element and coöperating with said curled edges.

3. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, a plurality of latches carried by one of said elements, ridges carried by the other of said elements for cooperation with said latches to lock said two elements together, and means externally accessible for detaching said latches to effect a separation of said two elements after they have been locked together.

4. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, a plurality of latches carried by said base element, ridges along the lower edges of said top for coöperation with said latches, and a rod normally holding said latches in position on said base and removable, when the top is in locked position on the base, to release said latches from the base.

5. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, a plurality of latches on one of said elements, a rod for removably holding said latches in position when said two elements are locked together, and means for supporting said top above said rod when in locked position.

6. A burial vault comprising a base element having upstanding sides and ends, a top element fitting within said base element, ridges along the lower edges of said top element, a plurality of latches for coöperation with said ridges, rods removable when the two elements are in locked position to release said latches, and means for supporting said top above said rods when in locked position.

7. A burial vault comprising a base element having upstanding sides and ends, a top element fitting within said base element, latch supporting members carried by said base element, shoulders on said supporting members upon which said top element rests when placed in position upon the base, latches carried by said supporting members, and a rod normally securing said supporting members to said base and removable to release said members when said two elements are in locked position.

8. A burial vault comprising a top element, a base element, means for removably locking said two elements together, and supplemental means arranged to be placed in operative position before said top element is placed on said base element and thereafter operating to prevent release of said locking means to effect a separation of said two elements.

9. A burial vault comprising a top element, a base element, detachable latches for locking said two elements together, said latches being detachable when the top is in its locked position upon the base, and supplemental removable means for preventing

detachment of said latches when in locked position.

10. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, a plurality of latches for locking said two elements together, a rod connecting said latches to one of said elements, said rod being removable to release said latches when said top is locked to said base, and a key for preventing removal of said rod when mounted thereon.

11. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, a plurality of rest rails carried by said base element, a plurality of latch supporting members on the ends of said rest rails, and means for removably connecting said latch supporting members to said rest rails, said means being operable to release said members when said top is in its locked position on said base.

12. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, a plurality of rest rails carried by said base element, a plurality of detachable latch supporting members and a rod removable when said two elements are locked together and adapted to normally lock said members to said rest rails.

13. A burial vault comprising a base element, a top element, a plurality of rest rails carried by said base element, extensions on the ends of said rest rails, a plurality of latch carrying members straddling said extensions, latches carried by said members and adapted to lock said two elements together, and a rod passing through said members and said extensions whereby said members are detachable when said elements are locked together.

14. In combination with the base of a burial vault, a plurality of rest rails, a plurality of latch structures, and a rod connecting said latch structures to their respective rest rails.

15. In combination with the base of a burial vault, a rest rail, a pierced lug on said rest rail, a latch supporting member pierced to coöperate with said lug, and an attaching rod passing through said pierced portions.

16. A burial vault comprising a top element, a base element, means for removably locking said two elements together, and supplemental means placed in operative position before said top element is placed on said base element and thereafter operative to positively hold said two elements in locked position when once they have assumed such position.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

CHARLES L. SHERWOOD.

Witnesses:
WALTER E. S. BOCK,
A. L. PHELPS.

Copies of this patent may be obtained for five cents each, by addressing the "Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D. C."