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GRAVITY-ACTUATED CLOSURE DEVICE FOR A LATCH OPENING IN A CASKET LID

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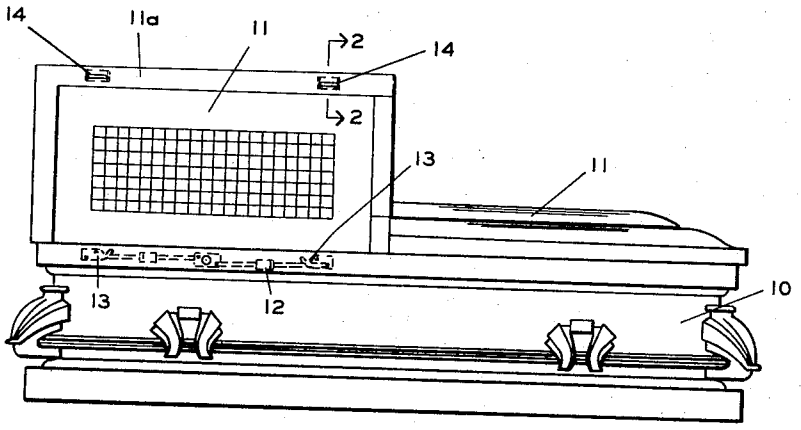


Fig. 1

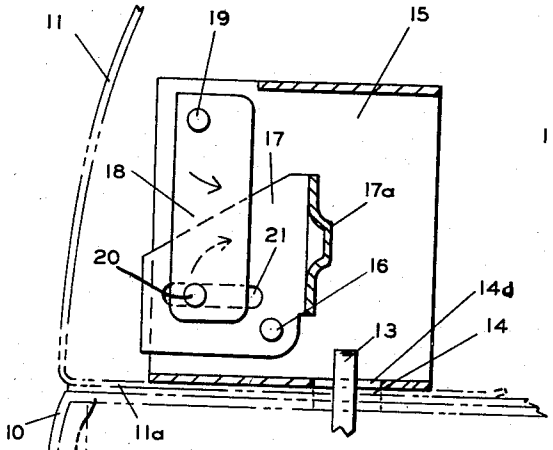


Fig. 3

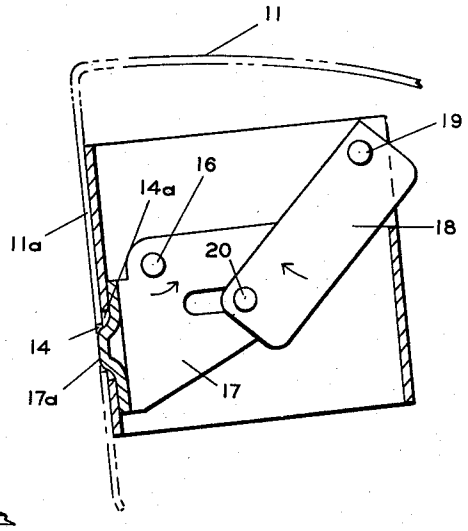


Fig. 2

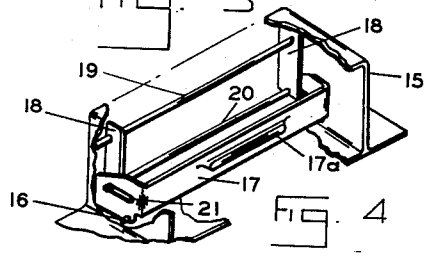


Fig. 4

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GRAVITY-ACTUATED CLOSURE DEVICE FOR A LATCH OPENING IN A CASKET LID

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5 Claims. (Cl. 27—14)

My invention relates to a gravity-actuated closure device for a latch opening in a casket lid. It has to do, more particularly, with a closure device which will automatically function to close a latch-receiving opening in the flange of a casket lid when the lid is raised and to expose such opening when the lid is lowered.

Casket lids are ordinarily hinged to the body of the casket so that they swing upwardly and rearwardly. When the lid is swung upwardly, the front sealing flange thereof is ordinarily positioned at about eye-level when the corpse is being shown therein. In this flange, latch-receiving openings are provided which function, when the casket lid is swung downwardly and forwardly into closed position, to receive the latches or hooks of suitable pull-down mechanism which locks and seals the lid to the casket body. Although these openings are necessary for the function of the locking and sealing mechanism, they present an unsightly appearance when the lid is raised.

It is the main object of this invention to provide a closure device in association with each latch-receiving opening of a casket lid so that as the lid is raised, the opening is automatically closed and will be substantially invisible and, therefore, the esthetics of the open casket lid are greatly improved, but which will also automatically function, as the lid is lowered, to positively insure exposure of the opening for proper reception of the associated pull-down latch or hook.

Another object of this invention is to provide a closure structure which is simple but positive in operation even though it is automatic in operation so that the opening will always be exposed for reception of the latch when the lid is lowered and there will be no possibility of the closure structure jamming the latch.

Various other objects will be apparent.

In the accompanying drawing, I have illustrated the preferred embodiment of my invention.

In this drawing:

Figure 1 is a front elevational view showing my invention applied to a casket lid which is in raised position.

Figure 2 is an enlarged transverse sectional view taken along line 2—2 of Figure 1 and showing the closure device of my invention in position to close the associated latch opening.

Figure 3 is a similar view but showing the latch opening exposed with the casket lid down.

Figure 4 is a detail in perspective showing the closure device and mounting means.

With reference to the drawing, in Figure 1 I have illustrated my invention applied to a casket which includes the body section **10** and a lid structure composed of the two half-sections **11**. These lid sections **11** are hinged to the body section **10** in the usual manner for swinging upwardly and rearwardly from closed position. However, it is to be understood that my invention is equally applicable to a casket having a full lid composed of a single section.

For sealing each of the lid sections a suitable locking and pull-down mechanism is provided which is indicated

generally at **12** and which is provided with hooks **13** that will be received in latch openings **14** provided in the forward sealing flange **11***a* of the lid section **11**. As indicated in Figure 3, when the lid section **11** is down in closed position, the flange **11***a* thereof is horizontal and will be in sealing engagement with the flange **10***a* of the body section **10**. Each hook **13** at this time may be projected upwardly through the associated latch opening **14**. When the lid section **11** is in open position, as shown in Figure 2, the flange **11***a* will be substantially vertically disposed and each opening **14** will be facing forwardly.

I provide a closure structure for closing each opening **14** when the lid section **11** is swung upwardly. This closure structure will operate on the gravity principle so that the associated opening **14** will be automatically closed when the lid section is raised and automatically opened when the lid section is lowered. The closure structure is carried by a supporting bracket **15** of elongated or bridge form which is mounted on the inner surface of the casket lid flange **11***a*, being suitably attached thereto, over the opening **14**, and which is provided with an opening **14***a* that coincides with the opening **14**. Pivoted to the bracket **15** for swinging movement in a vertical plane about the pivot pin **16** are the arms of a closure-carrying plate **17** of U-form (Figure 4). This plate **17** is provided with a closure section **17***a* which is formed on the main part thereof and which projects rearwardly when the casket lid section **11** is in lowered position (Figure 3) but which will project forwardly (Figure 2), when the lid is raised, into the opening **14** to snugly fill such opening. Associated with the plate **17** is a control and weight structure **18** including a pair of arms pivoted to the bracket **15** at **19** and connected to the plate **17** by a pin **20** which it carries and which operates in slots **21** in the arms of the member **17**. With the closure device in the position shown in Figure 3, the weight **18** will hang downwardly and will thereby position the plate **17** with the slot **21** horizontal and the pin **20** will be located towards the forward end of the slot **21**.

With the casket lid section **11** lowered, as indicated in Figure 3, the latch hook **13** can project upwardly through the opening **14** which will be exposed by the closure portion **17***a*, it being noted that the portion **17***a* will be spaced above and forwardly of the opening **14**. However, as the lid **11** is swung upwardly, the closure portion **17***a* is automatically moved by gravity into the opening **14** so that the outer surface of the closure portion **17***a* is flush with the outer surface of the flange **11***a*, as indicated in Figures 1 and 2. To accomplish this, as the lid **11** is raised, the plate **17**, as indicated by the arrows in Figure 3, will be swung clockwise about the pivot **16** by the weight **18** which will swing counterclockwise about the pivot **19**. Continued upward and rearward movement of the lid **11** will cause the weight to continue to exert a positive force on the plate **17**, swinging it forwardly so that the closure portion **17***a* will move into and fill the opening **14**. The necessary relative movement of members **17** and **18** will be permitted by the pin and slot connection therebetween. Thus, there is a positive gravity force exerted by the weight **18** moving the closure portion **17***a* into the opening **14**. As the lid **11** is swung forwardly and downwardly, the members **17** and **18** will swing about their respective pivots in the directions indicated by the arrows in Figure 2, the weight **18** swinging clockwise and the plate **17** being swung counterclockwise. This will insure that the plate **17** will be positively moved so that the closure portion **17***a* will be positively withdrawn from the opening **14** and moved away therefrom so as not to interfere with projection of the hook **13** through the opening **14**. It will be noted that the weight **18** and plate **17** swing in a vertical plane which

is substantially at right angles to the flange **11***a* and that these members swing about their respective pivots **19** and **16** which are widely spaced and are on opposite sides of the pin **20**. The pin **20** will move to positions on opposite sides of a line joining the centers of the pivots **16** and **19** and when it moves, past center in either direction will tend to snap the plate **17** into its final position and hold it in such position.

It will be apparent that I have provided a closure structure for each of the latch-receiving openings in a casket lid which will make the latch openings substantially indistinguishable when the casket lid is raised thereby contributing to the esthetics of the casket. It will further be apparent that the closure structure will be positively moved into closing position, as the lid is raised, but will also be positively moved away from the opening, as the lid is lowered, so as not to interfere with the proper operation of the locking mechanism.

According to the provisions of the patent statutes, the principles of this invention have been explained and have been illustrated and described in what is now considered to represent the best embodiment. However, it is to be understood that, within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically illustrated and described.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim is:

1. In combination with a lid hinged for swinging movement in a vertical plane and having a latch-receiving opening therein, means for automatically closing said opening when the lid swings upwardly and exposing it when the lid swings downwardly, said means comprising a closure member movably attached to the lid in cooperation with said opening for movement between closing position and exposing position and gravity-actuated means for moving the closure member between said positions.

2. In combination with a lid hinged for swinging movement in a vertical plane and having a flange which will

be substantially horizontal with the lid in lower position and substantially vertical with the lid in raised position, said flange having a latch receiving opening therein, means for automatically closing said opening when the lid is moved into raised position and exposing the opening when the lid is moved to its lower position, said means comprising a closure plate pivotally mounted adjacent the opening and movable relative thereto during the raising and lowering of the lid and a gravity-actuated control member pivotally mounted on said lid and pivotally connected to said closure plate to move said closure plate to close and expose the opening as the lid is moved into said positions.

3. The combination of claim 2 in which the plate is pivoted to the lid for movement in a vertical plane adjacent the opening and is provided with a closure portion for closing the opening.

4. The combination of claim 3 in which the closure plate is pivoted within said lid inside the flange thereof and is pivoted for movement in a plane substantially at right angles to the plane of the flange.

5. The combination of claim 4 in which said control member is a weight which is pivoted to the lid adjacent the pivoted closure plate for movement in a vertical plane and is connected thereto by a pin and slot connection, the pin of the pin and slot connection being movable to positions on opposite sides of a center line joining the pivots of the closure plate and the weight during the swinging movements of the plate and weight as the lid is raised and lowered.

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