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BURIAL CASKET AND RETAINING BRACKET THEREFOR

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2 Sheets-Sheet 1

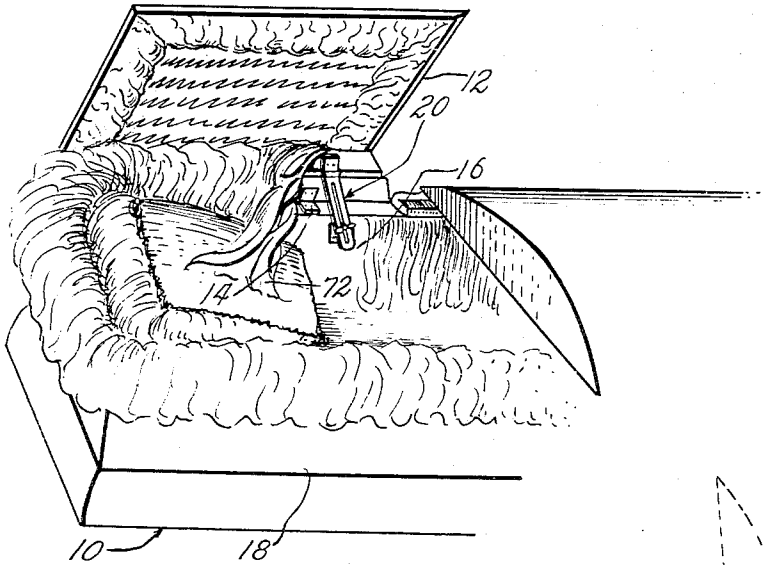


FIG. 1

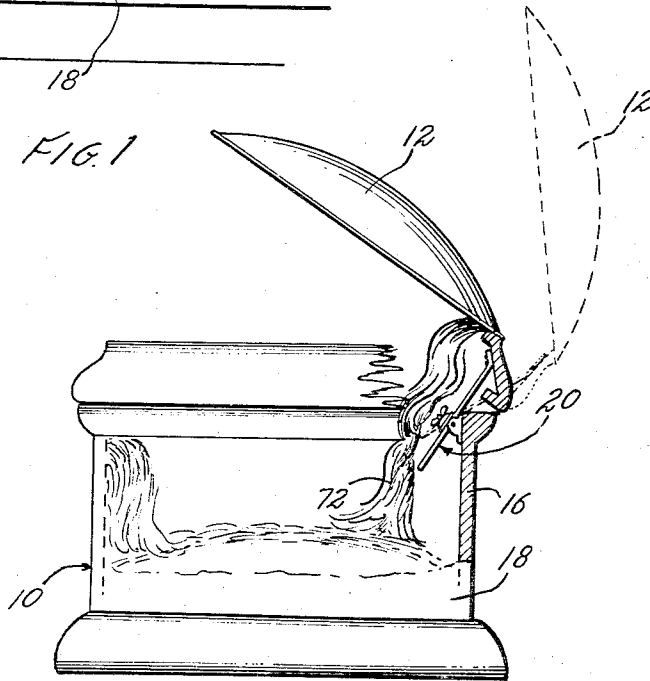


FIG. 2.

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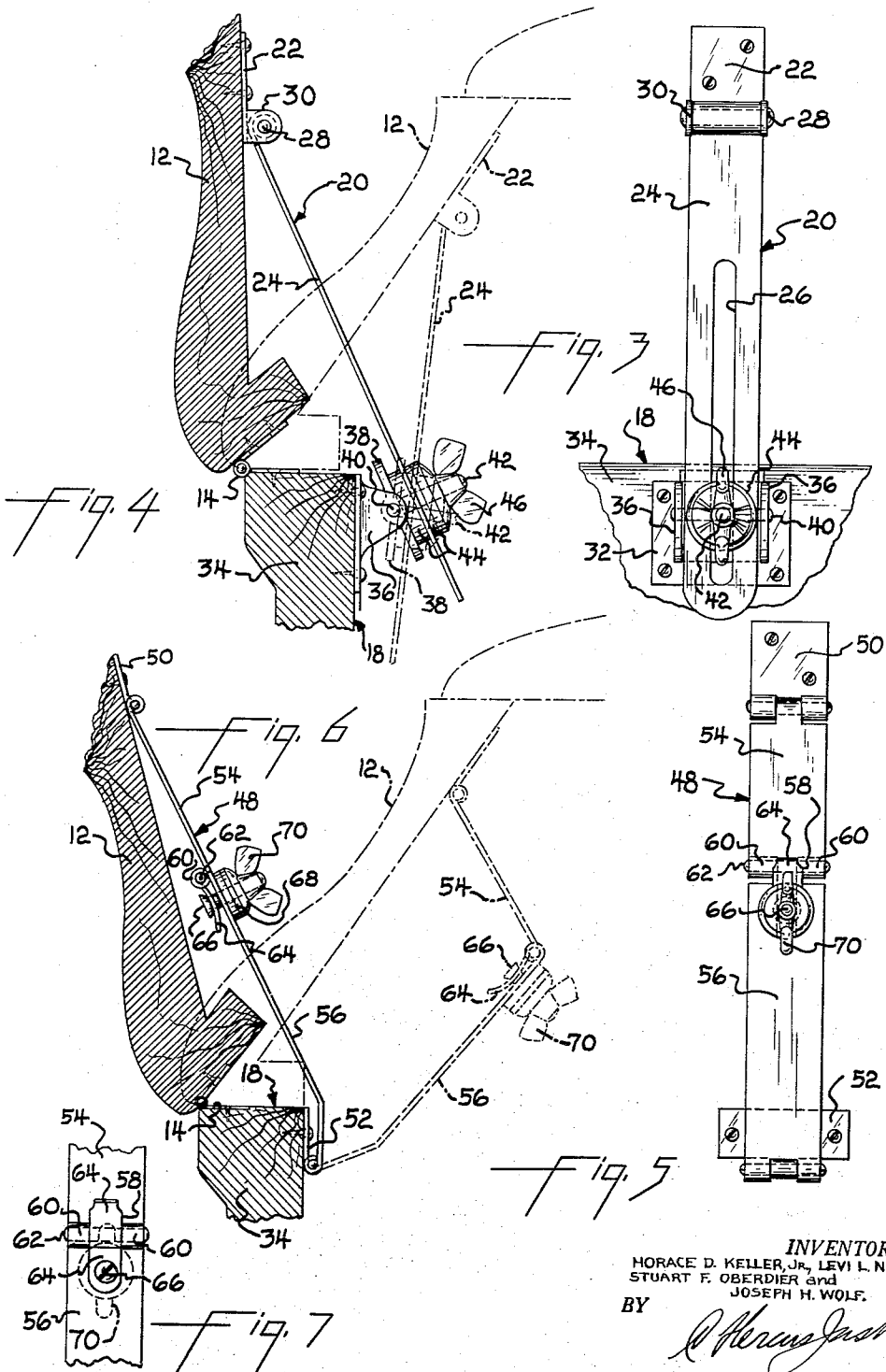
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1

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BURIAL CASKET AND RETAINING BRACKET
THEREFOR

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2 Claims. (Cl. 27—18)

This invention relates to improvements in burial caskets and, more particularly, to retaining bracket structures operable to hold the top of a casket in a desired position relative to the body thereof. The retaining bracket structure comprising the present invention is applicable to a casket having either a full top, such as in a full couch design, a half top such as in a half-couch design, or a hinged face panel.

The tops or face panels, whether half or full, on a casket are relatively heavy. When the top or face panel is fully opened relative to the body of a casket, it extends substantially vertically or at a right angle to the body of the casket. Such tops or face panels are hingedly connected to the upper edge of one side of the casket body. To limit the opening movement of the top or face panel, various means have been used heretofore such as flexible tapes, metallic straps, and the like, the ends of which are respectively attached to the body of the casket and the top or face panel.

Also, it is not uncommon that while a funeral director is arranging a corpse within the body of the casket, or even while someone is viewing a corpse within the same when the top or face panel is open, the cover or face panel will accidentally fall from its open position, for example due to jarring the casket, and serious injury has been sustained by the funeral director or the person viewing the corpse when the top falls shut. Further, it sometimes is desired to position the top or face panel relative to the body of the casket so that the top or face panel is not fully opened or substantially vertical. Heretofore, as far as is known, no control or positioning means for the top or face panel of a casket has existed which permits positioning of the top or face panel at any intermediate position between fully closed and fully open positions.

Further, it is customary to place floral sprays upon the top edge of the open top of a casket and, assuming the open top is substantially balanced when open without the flowers, the weight of the flowers sometimes causes the top to move either backward or forward. If the top moves forward, the funeral director will try to push the top backward and thereby frequently either loosens or breaks the top retaining means. Should the top move backward from the weight of the flowers, the director will try to position the top further forwardly but existing retaining means presently in use do not provide any suitable degree of positioning adjustment required to permit such movement of the top forward from its fully open position and have the top remain so positioned. Also, in situations where floral sprays are sufficiently heavy, the constant weight thereof, supplemented, for example, by jarring the casket or otherwise, sometimes causes the top to break the retaining means now used, such as webbing, or pulling metallic fastening means loose from their attachment to the casket, and the top then falls completely backward.

It is the principal object of the present invention to provide retaining bracket means which are attachable to

2

the body of a casket and the top or face panel thereof so as to extend between the same for purposes not only of limiting the movement of the top or face panel to fully open position but also permitting the top or face panel to be fixed or clamped in any desired intermediate position between fully closed and fully open positions.

Still another object of the invention is to provide retaining bracket means which not only will permit positioning of the top or face panel as desired but also be adjusted to produce a frictional drag during the movement of the top or face panel relative to the body of the casket, whereby particularly the closing movement of the top or face panel takes place slowly in accordance with any desired adjustment of the control means included in the retaining bracket structures comprising the present invention, thus facilitating the operation of the top or face panel by a funeral director for example and minimizing the possibility of accidents occurring.

Details of the foregoing objects and of the invention, as well as other objects thereof, are set forth in the following specification and illustrated in the drawings comprising a part thereof.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a fragmentary perspective view of an exemplary burial casket of the half-couch style showing the top supported in nearly fully open position, the trimming material of the casket being folded back to expose one embodiment of retaining bracket comprising the present invention.

Fig. 2 is an end view of an exemplary burial casket, partly broken away to illustrate details of the invention, the top of the casket being shown in full lines in partially open position and in dotted lines, the top being illustrated in fully open position, this view illustrating the same embodiment of retaining bracket as shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a front elevation of the retaining bracket illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2 but shown in a larger scale than in said figures.

Fig. 4 is a side elevation of the retaining bracket illustrated in Fig. 3, said figure in full lines showing a fragmentary portion of the top positioned in nearly fully open position, while in dotted lines being illustrated in fully closed position.

Fig. 5 is a view similar to Fig. 3 but showing another embodiment of retaining bracket including the principles of the present invention.

Fig. 6 is a view similar to Fig. 4 but illustrating the second embodiment of the invention shown in Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary portion of the retaining bracket illustrated in Fig. 5 as viewed from the reverse face of the bracket illustrated in Fig. 5.

Referring now to Figs. 1 and 2 particularly, there is illustrated a burial casket 10 which, specifically, is of the half-couch style. It is to be understood of course that the retaining bracket comprising the present invention may be applied to either full or half tops for caskets or full or half top face panels, whereby the illustration in the drawings herein is not to be considered restrictive. Further, the caskets and tops may be formed from wood, metal or other suitable material. The half-couch top 12 is connected by conventional hinges 14 to the upper edge of the rear side wall 16 of the casket body 13. In order that the top 12 may be securely positioned either in fully open or partially open position, the present invention provides several embodiments of retaining bracket, the bracket 20 shown in Figs. 1 and 2 comprising one such embodiment of the invention.

The retaining bracket 20 shown in Figs. 1 and 2 is better illustrated in larger scale in Figs. 3 and 4. Said bracket actually constitutes an assembly consisting of a hinge leaf 22 which may be secured by screws, rivets,

welding, or otherwise to the top 12 of the casket, said top being intended to designate, generically, either a full top, half top, or full or half top face panel. An elongated member 24, having a slot 26 extending longitudinally thereof, is hingedly connected by a pin 28 to hinge leaf 22. Said hinge leaf has a plurality of ears 30 projecting perpendicularly therefrom to receive pin 28 therebetween. Fixture 32 is secured by screws or otherwise, similar to the means for securing leaf 22, to the inner surface of the back side wall 34 of the casket body 18 adjacent the upper edge, said fixture also preferably having a pair of ears 36 projecting perpendicularly therefrom for purposes of receiving therebetween a clamping member 38 which is pivotally connected to ears 36 by a pin 40.

Clamping member 38 has a threaded stud or shaft 42 projecting vertically therefrom, said threaded stud extending through slot 26 of member 24. A pair of frictional washers 44, formed from any suitable material such as rubber, leather, resin or the like, surround threaded stud 42 and respectively engage opposite surfaces of member 24. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, a wing nut 46 is threaded upon the outer end of stud 42 so as to be operable to force the washers 44 into frictional engagement with opposite surfaces of the member 24 and thereby retain the top 12 in any desired pivoted position relative to the casket body 18 between fully open and fully closed positions.

Due to the pivotal connection of clamping member 38 to fixture 32, the member 38 will at all times be parallel to the member 24, regardless of the position of the top 12 relative to body 18 of the casket. This is particularly obvious from Fig. 4 wherein two different positions of the top relative to the body are shown, one of these positions being illustrated in full lines, while the other is illustrated in dotted lines.

Not only will the bracket assembly 20 be capable of locking the top 12 in any desired position relative to the body 18 of the casket but, particularly when the clamping means comprising wing nut 46 is only partially loosened from locking position, a frictional drag will be imposed by washers 44 upon member 24, thus causing the top 12 to be moved only slowly relative to the body 18 of the casket. Therefore, it will be seen that controlled movement of the top 12 relative to the body 18 may be effected or the top may be locked in any desired open position relative to the body, particularly for purposes of preventing accidental closing of the top upon the body.

Regarding the embodiment of retaining bracket 20 shown in Figs. 1 through 4, it will be seen that the leaf 22 and fixture 32 comprise elements which respectively are attachable to the top and body of a casket, while the members 24 and 38 comprise members which are pivotally connected respectively to said elements and are interengageable to effect the desired locking or clamping of said members relative to each other.

Reference now is made to another embodiment of the invention illustrated in Figs. 5 through 7, wherein it will be seen that the retaining bracket assembly 48 illustrated therein comprises a pair of hinged leaves 50 and 52 which respectively are secured by screws, rivets, welding or otherwise to the top 12 of a casket and the inner surface of the back side wall 34 of the body 18 thereof adjacent the upper edge of said wall. A pair of elongated members 54 and 56 are pivotally connected at one end of each respectively to the hinged leaves 50 and 52. The opposite end of member 54 is bifurcated at 53, said bifurcation being defined by a pair of loops 60 which receive a hinge pin 62 that is fixed to the loops 60 so as to be immovable relative thereto.

The opposite end of member 56 is provided with a preferably integral tongue 64 which is bent around hinge pin 62 so as to be substantially parallel to but spaced from said opposite end of member 56. A clamping

member 66, preferably comprising a threaded bolt, extends through aligned openings formed in tongue 64 and said opposite end of member 56 and a washer 68 surrounds said member 66. Clamping means comprising a wing nut 70 is threaded onto bolt 66 and is operable to draw the head of the bolt 66 against tongue 64, thereby firmly clamping the member 56 relative to hinge pin 62 which is fixed to member 54.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the wing nut 70 may be tightened to clamp the members 54 and 56 into fixed position relative to each other and thereby hold the top 12 in any desired open position relative to the casket body 18, or wing nut 70 may be partially loosened so as to cause the bent portion of tongue 64 which surrounds the hinge pin 60 to place a frictional drag upon said hinge pin and thereby permit only slow closing of the top 12 relative to the casket body 18.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the retaining bracket 48 comprising the embodiment illustrated in Figs. 5 through 7 is composed of a pair of elements 50 and 52 which respectively are attachable to the top 12 and body 18 of a casket and elongated members 54 and 56 respectively are pivotally connected to said elements 50 and 52 at one end and the opposite ends of members 54 and 56 interengage each other and have clamping means associated therewith comprising clamping member 66 and clamping means 70 for purposes of clamping the members 54 and 56 in any desired relative position to each other, whereby they are locked against relative movement, or a drag may be imposed upon the assembly during pivotal movement of the members 54 and 56 relative to each other.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the present invention comprises several embodiments of retaining bracket assemblies which are attachable to and extend between the top and body of a burial casket. Said retaining brackets may be operated readily and simply either to fixedly position the top in any desired locked position of adjustment relative to the body of a casket or, if preferred, a frictional drag may be imposed upon certain elements of the retaining bracket, whereby the top of the casket may be closed slowly relative to the body of the casket. The shape and construction of all embodiments of the retaining bracket are such that they do not afford any objectionable obstructions within the casket during use and said retaining brackets readily are hidden from view by normally used lining material 72 illustrated particularly in Figs. 1 and 2, said lining material being movable to one side of the bracket to expose the same for manipulation. Also, the retaining means is operable readily even when a corpse is in the casket.

While the invention has been shown and described in its several preferred embodiments, and has included certain details, it should be understood that the invention is not to be limited to the precise details herein illustrated and described since the same may be carried out in other ways falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

We claim:

1. A burial casket body having a top hingedly connected at one edge to the upper portion of the rear side of the casket body, in combination with a retaining bracket connected between said casket top and rear side of said body and operable to permit hinged movement of said top relative to said casket body between closed and open positions, said retaining bracket comprising in combination, a leaf attached to said top, an elongated flat member longitudinally slotted and hingedly connected at one end to said leaf about an axis parallel to the upper edge of the rear side of said casket and the plane of said flat member being parallel to said axis, a fixture attached to said rear side of said casket body adjacent the upper edge thereof and having a pair of short parallel spaced ears projecting perpendicularly from said rear side, a clamping member pivotally supported by said fixture between said ears for movement about an axis parallel

5

to the upper edge of the rear side of said casket body and slidably interengageable with said elongated member in parallel relationship thereto, a threaded stud projecting perpendicularly from said clamping member and extending through the slot of said elongated member, and a hand operated clamping nut member operable upon said threaded stud and interengageable clampingly with said elongated member to secure said elongated member in any desired position relative to said clamping member to hold said top in any desired open position within its normal range of movement relative to said casket body and prevent closing movement of said top from said position until said clamping means is released, whereby said slotted elongated member is disposed relatively close to the inner surface of said rear side of said casket body in all positions of use so as to project only minimum distances into said casket body during use.

2. The burial casket and combined retaining bracket set forth in claim 1 further characterized by said clamping member and hand operated clamping nut member being substantially as wide as said elongated flat mem-

6

ber and friction means being disposed between at least one flat surface of said elongated flat member and one of said clamping members to facilitate the clamping action of said clamping members relative to said elongated member.

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