P. K. CLOVER.
Coffin-Torpedo.

No. 208,672. Patented Oct. 8, 1878.

Fig. 1.

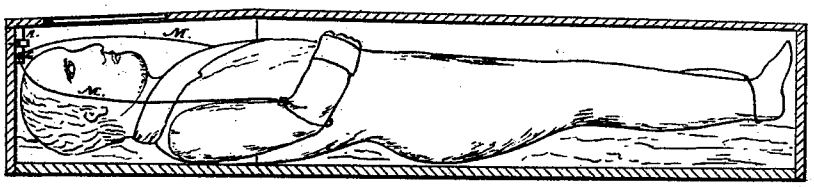


Fig. 2.

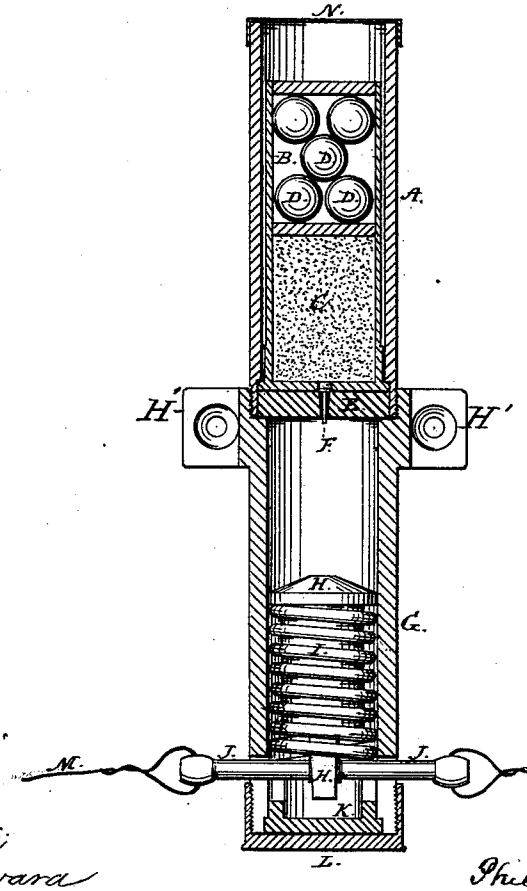
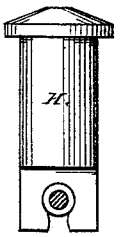


Fig. 3.



Witnesses;
F. A. Howard
John Tyler

Inventor;
Philip K. Clover
By atty Wm. C. Rud. Intire

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

PHILIP K. CLOVER, OF COLUMBUS, OHIO.

IMPROVEMENT IN COFFIN-TORPEDOES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **208,672**, dated October 8, 1878; application filed June 29, 1878.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, PHILIP K. CLOVER, of Columbus, in the county of Franklin and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Coffin-Torpedoes; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, making a part of this specification.

My invention has for its object to provide a means which shall successfully prevent the unauthorized resurrection of dead bodies; and with this end in view my invention consists of a peculiarly-constructed torpedo, adapted to be readily secured to the coffin and the body of the contained corpse in such manner that any attempt to remove the body after burial will cause the discharge of the cartridge contained in the torpedo and injury or death of the desecrator of the grave.

In order that others may fully understand my invention and its mode of application and operation, I will proceed to describe the same in detail, referring by letters to the accompanying drawing, in which—

Figure 1 is a central longitudinal section of a burial-casket, exposing in elevation a body within, secured against removal by the application of one of my improved torpedoes to the casket and the corpse; and Fig. 2 is a central longitudinal section of the torpedo-shell, the interior devices being in elevation.

Similar letters indicate like parts where they occur in both figures.

A is a metallic barrel or tube, provided at its lower end with an exterior screw-thread, and formed interiorly with an annular shoulder, to receive and support the rim of a metallic or other cartridge, B, charged with powder or other explosive compound, C, and balls D. This shoulder is such distance from the end of the tube A as to receive a metallic block, E, bored centrally to receive a tapered firing-pin, F, slightly longer than the thickness of the block E, so that its smaller end will slightly project. It is tapered to prevent its dropping entirely out when the parts are in position.

G is another metallic tube, the upper end of which is provided with wings or ears H′, through which screws may pass for securing the device to the coffin. The upper end of this tube G is formed interiorly with a thread adapted to fit the thread on the upper barrel or tube, A, and shouldered, as clearly shown in the drawing, so as to hold the block E in contact with the base of the cartridge B.

H is a metallic hammer, formed with a head of greater diameter than the shank or body, so as to present a flange, against which the upper coil of a stiff spring, I, bears. This spring, when unconfined or distended, is longer than the shank or stem of the hammer H, the lower end of which is slotted, as clearly shown in the detail, Fig. 3, of the drawing, which is an elevation at right angles to the position the hammer occupies at Fig. 2. This slot, it will be seen, is circular at the upper portion, intersected by a straight channel. The upper portion is of about the size and contour of the central portion of the trigger J, and the intersecting channel or groove about equal in width to the diameter of thinner portion of the trigger-bar. The object of this peculiar construction is, that the spring may be compressed between the trigger-bar J and the flange on the head of the hammer, the thin portion of the trigger-bar J passing in the straight channel or slot in the hammer-shank until the larger central portion of the trigger arrives in axial line with the upper or circular slot in the shank, when the bar J is shoved laterally into position, and held against displacement by reason of the greater diameter of the central portion of bar J being unable to pass through the smaller straight channel or slot in the hammer-shank. It will be observed that the spring is thus held in its contracted or operative position.

The hammer, spring, and trigger are adapted to enter the lower end of the tube G, which is slotted on either side to permit the passage of the arms of the trigger J. K is a tubular head, similarly slotted to pass the bars J, and flanged to rest against a shoulder on the interior of the tube G. This tubular head K, after passing the bar J, rests against the lower coil of the spring I, and said head is held in position by a screw-cap, L, covering the lower end of tube G.

The extreme ends of the trigger-bar J are adapted to receive wires or cords M M. The upper end of the tube or barrel A is covered

by a water-proof seal, N, and the lower end and the openings for the arms of the trigger J in the tube G may be covered with any suitable water-proof material.

From the construction shown it will be observed that if the trigger-bar J be drawn axially in either direction the larger central portion will be drawn out of the circular slot in the hammer stem or shank, bringing the thinner portion in line with the straight slot, whereby the hammer is freed; and as the lower coil of the spring I rests solidly against the confining-head K, and its upper coil under the flange of the head of the hammer, it follows that the extension of the spring projects the hammer against the firing-pin F, which, being forced against the fulminate in the base of the cartridge, ignites the same and explodes the cartridge B, the balls D being discharged with deadly force.

My improved torpedo is adapted to be secured to the head or other portion of the burial-casket by the undertaker, having the trigger and spring in the position shown, but with no cartridge in position. The trigger-wires M M are secured to the arms, legs, or other portion of the body of the corpse in such manner as to induce to the tripping of the trigger should any attempt be made to withdraw the body from the casket. The torpedo is loaded, just prior to the final closing of the casket, by unscrewing the barrel A, placing the cartridge E within it, and replacing the barrel in position.

The torpedo may be placed in variable positions within the casket, and properly concealed by the trimmings of the casket or the apparel of the corpse.

It is not essentially necessary that the torpedo should be waterproofed, as the ordinary conditions of a grave and character of cartridges used are such that the torpedo will be preserved in effective condition until such time as the body would be of no use to robbers.

Of course many changes may be made in the construction of the torpedo-case without departing from the spirit of my invention, the gist of which rests in the idea of a cartridge or torpedo case so constructed and arranged that any attempt at the removal of a body will induce to the explosion of the shell. Of course the removal of the casket bodily may be provided against by connecting the trigger-wire with any object outside the casket.

What I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A torpedo-case composed of two tubes, one containing the firing mechanism and securing-lugs H′, and the other the charge and removable block and firing-pin, the two adapted to be secured in operative position, substantially in the manner set forth.

2. The cylindrical independent and removable block E, provided with a central tapered orifice, in combination with the tapered firing-pin F, the block and pin arranged, as described, within the breech end of the tube A, substantially as and for the purposes described.

3. The tube G, having its lower end slotted to receive the trigger-bar, in combination with the similarly-slotted head-block K and confining-cap L, all arranged as and for the purposes set forth.

4. The hammer-shank formed with the slot shown, in combination with the trigger-bar J, having an enlarged center and thin arms, substantially as shown and described.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 27th day of June, A. D. 1878.

PHILIP K. CLOVER. [L. S.]

In presence of—
WM. C. MCINTIRE,
F. W. HOWARD.