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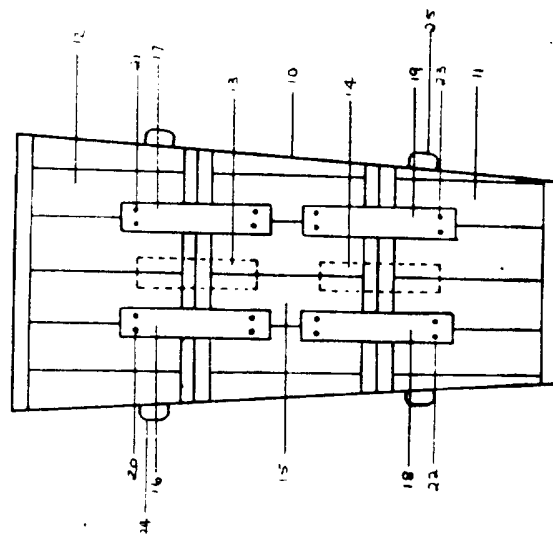
<p>(21) Application Number: AP/P/95/00734</p> <p>(22) Filing Date: 20.04.95</p> <p>(24) Date of Grant &amp; Publication: 08.11.96</p>	<p>(73) Applicant(s): ROBERT CECIL WHYTE 34a Ridge Road Avondale HARARE ZIMBABWE</p>
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<p>(84) Designated States: BW GM GH KE LS MW SD SZ UG ZM ZW</p>	<p>(74) Representative: GALLOWAY &amp; COMPANY P O BOX 2609 HARARE ZIMBABWE</p>

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(54) Title: FOLDING SHROUDED COFFIN

(57) Abstract: The invention sets out to provide a folding, lightweight coffin which is readily transportable. Being sectioned, a unit will serve to inter a child or an adolescent or an adult.

The coffin comprises a sectioned base and a shroud. Strapping means to retain a body on the base and carry handles complete the device.



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(56) Documents cited: WO - 9508973

US - 5035032

This invention relates to coffins and in particular to folding, light-weight coffins.

There is a need for affordable transportable coffins in view of the increased death rate being experienced particularly in Africa, largely as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic but in any event as a result of rapid population growth throughout Africa and Asia. It is an object of the invention to provide such an article.

According to the invention a coffin comprises a base and a shroud adapted to envelop a body placed upon the base.

In a preferred form of the invention, the base is adapted to be segmented into sections. This segmentation facilitates transport as well as being adapted to accommodate bodies from children through adolescents to adults.

In a preferred form of the invention, the base is constructed from wood which is hinged in two places transverse the longitudinal axis of the coffin to enable the base to be folded upon itself to afford a compact, transportable structure, capable of being incorporated into a carry-all or the like container. In addition, the base is double tapered in customary "coffin shape" looked at in plan view and is preferably adapted to fold or be segmented into three sections about hinge or joining points established in the base. Suitable cleating may be associated

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with the joining points to ensure a rigid base when the coffin is assembled for use in a juvenile or adult burial. When the base is assembled and a body is placed upon the base, a shroud may be drawn over the body and secured to the edges of the base. Both shroud and body may be strapped to the base, for example by means of webbing straps or the like. Suitable carrying handles may be provided along the outer elements of the edges of the base.

In order to illustrate the nature of the invention and how it may best be performed, an example will be described with reference to the accompanying drawing in which Figure I illustrates a plan view of a coffin base according to the invention.

Numeral 10 indicates the base as a whole whilst numeral 11 indicates the narrow one third portion of the base with 15 and 12 indicating the middle third and broad third respectively.

Shown in dotted outline and illustrated by numerals 13 and 14 are two flexible hinge mechanisms which may for example be webbed material or thin conveyor belt and which allow the portions 11 and 12 to fold back upon the central portion 15 thus providing a compact and thus readily transportable structure which may be contained in a carry-all (not shown).

In use the folded structure may be removed from the carry-all and opened up about the hinges 13 and 14 to provide a body bearing platform for an adult. To ensure that the structure remains rigid once so unfolded, cleats 16 and 17

associated with portions 11 and 15, and 18 and 19 associated with portions 12 and 15 are provided. These cleats may conveniently be made from strips of wood which are screwed to the bottom side of the coffin 10 by screws illustrated by round dots and numbered 20, 21, 22 and 23 by way of example. Carry handles illustrated as 24 and 25 may be attached as desired to the base 10.

A shroud (not shown) is generally supplied in a colour to customer's requirement as this may simply be thrown over the body on the base 10 and secured in any desired fashion about the body and base 10.

As mentioned earlier in this specification, portions 11 and 15 may be used separately to accommodate an infant or an adolescent body as desired. It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that this is a telling feature to the purchaser of a coffin of the kind in question.

A further eminently desirable feature is the ability of the structure to be rendered into a compact transportable state since the majority of rural bus services and the like in Africa generally do not allow transportation of a conventional coffin so that the family are put to considerable expense to rent transport to and from conventional supply points.

There are many clear advantages to the invention which will spring readily to the mind of those skilled in the art.

CLAIMS

1. A coffin comprising a base and a shroud adapted to envelop a body placed upon the base.
2. A coffin as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the base is adapted to be segmented into sections.
3. A coffin as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the base is double-tapered into customary "coffin shape" observed in plan view and is adapted to fold into three sections about hinge points provided in the base.
4. A coffin as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3 wherein the folded base and associated shroud may be packed into a carry-all type container for ease of transportation.
5. A coffin as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 4 wherein the base is constructed from wood.
6. A coffin as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 5 wherein the segments of the base may be cleated at the joining points/hinge points to ensure that the base remains rigid when assembled from its parts.
7. A coffin as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 6 wherein the narrower one third is large enough to accommodate an infant; the narrower third plus the middle third is sufficient for a young person and all the segments will be required to accommodate an adult.
8. A coffin substantially as herein described and illustrated with reference to the accompanying drawing.

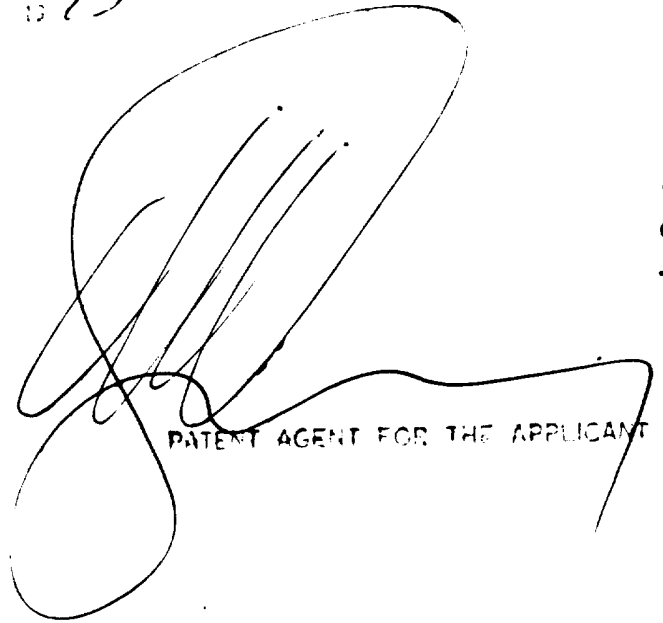
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**ABSTRACT**

The invention sets out to provide a folding, lightweight coffin which is readily transportable. Being sectioned, a unit will serve to inter a child or an adolescent or an adult.

The coffin comprises a sectioned base and a shroud. Strapping means to retain a body on the base and carry handles complete the device.

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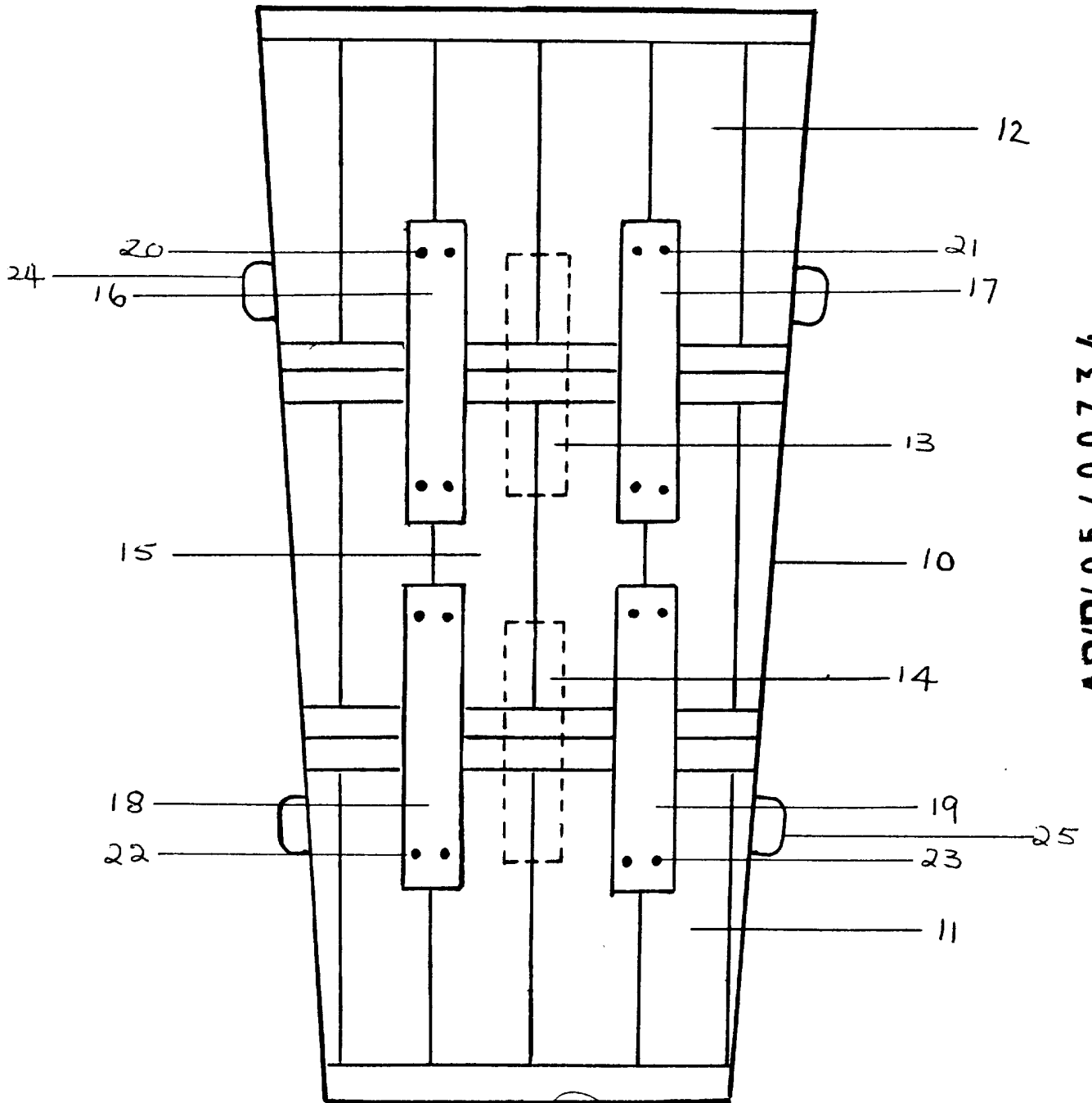
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