

T. M. Taylor,

Coffin.

No. 10,181.

Patented Mar. 22. 1870.

Fig. 1.

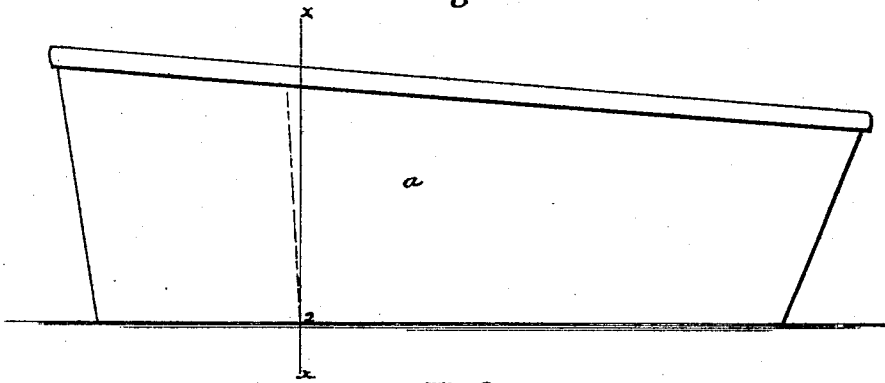


Fig. 2.

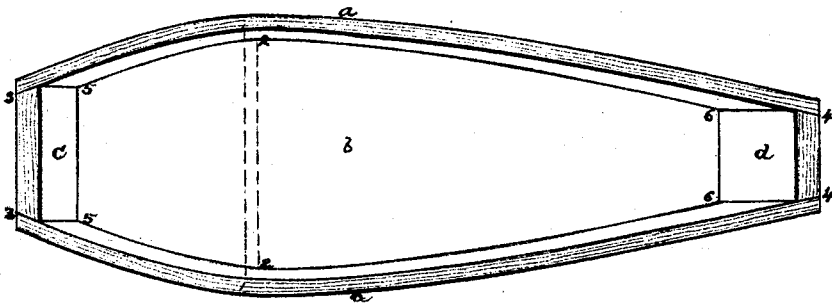
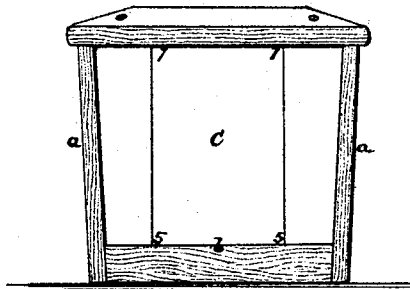


Fig. 3.



Witnesses

J. F. Beale

F. W. Howard.

Inventor.

Thomas M. Taylor
by Crosby & Walsted's Guild
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

THOMAS M. TAYLOR, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

IMPROVEMENT IN COFFINS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **101,181**, dated March 22, 1870.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, THOMAS M. TAYLOR, of the city, county, and State of New York, have invented certain Improvements in Coffins; and I do hereby declare that the following, taken in connection with the drawings which accompany and form part of this specification, is a description of my invention sufficient to enable those skilled in the art to practice it.

My invention is an improvement upon the coffin patented to Mahlon R. Margerum, dated September 26, 1865, and numbered 50,144, and which is owned by myself and my partners in business, as appears by the Patent Office records. In his mode of construction both sides and one end of the coffin are formed of a single piece of lumber, which, in order to make the short curve at the end, is saw-cut or kerfed with close cuts, weakening the wood very materially. To make such a coffin of full average size requires a piece of lumber of about fourteen feet in length, and as choice wood is generally used it is frequently difficult and often costly to obtain proper pieces. In making such coffins, also, this piece for its whole length, both at its sides and at its bent end, is necessarily perpendicular to the coffin-bottom, and therefore precludes any adaptation of it to that prevalent form which demands that at certain points the sides shall incline somewhat to the horizon.

Another mode of construction, invented by myself, differed from that of Margerum in dispensing with the curved or bent head, and in connecting two bent sides to the usual separate head and foot pieces, the sides being bent by steaming or otherwise, but not saw-cut or kerfed; but such bending was in no wise peculiar, the wood being merely bowed at the proper place, leaving it in such condition that when these sides were put upon the coffin their entire surfaces were in vertical planes. This was an improvement upon the Margerum construction, in being not only far more economical, but in admitting of constructing the head and foot in the approved mode, while securing all the advantages of the strength and simplicity of his sides, and avoiding the unseemly appearance and weakened condition of his rounded heads. But a coffin is almost universally made or sought to be made with a greater breadth at its top than on its bottom at that

portion corresponding to the shoulders of the corpse. By neither of the above modes could that be accomplished while the ends of the sides stood in vertical planes, as customary.

The object of my invention is to form a coffin whose sides, each made of a single bent piece, shall at those points where desired be strictly vertical, and at other portions be inclined outward from the coffin-bottom, having thereby a larger swell at the top line than at the bottom line, such peculiar form being attained without any sawing or kerfing or weakening of the wood, but by bending a flat board while steamed or otherwise into this peculiar shape. The apparatus which I have devised for this purpose may form the subject of an independent application for a patent, and I shall therefore not describe it here further than may be necessary for the purposes of this application. The flat board, of appropriate length and breadth for a side piece, previously steamed or not, as may be found requisite in the particular case, is firmly clamped by one end in the apparatus, and then by its free end it is borne down with something of a torsional action upon a former composed, preferably, of a series of rods not arranged in the same or parallel planes, and adapted to give to the board not a mere regular bend, but a peculiar and irregular one, such that at that portion usually the broadest in coffins a gentle bend or curvature on one edge of the board shall gradually be intensified toward its opposite edge. The result of this is that the radius of the curvature at the bottom edge is shorter than that at the top edge, so that a line drawn from the crest or apex of the swell at one edge to that of the other edge shall be in a plane forming an acute angle with the general plane of the board, and so that the chord which would subtend the arc or curvature at one edge shall be longer than that of the other edge.

In the drawings, Figure 1 represents a side view of one of my improved coffins made agreeably to my invention. Fig. 2 is a top view of the same with the top or cover removed; and Fig. 3 is a cross-section, looking toward the head-board, taken at the line $x x$ of Fig. 1.

It will now be seen from the preceding description and the drawings that the sides a , formed as above stated, may be secured to the

bottom piece, *b*, and to the head and foot boards, *c d*, in any well-known manner; that no part of the sides is cut or sawed away to give them their curvature; that their strength throughout is, by reason of the arch and the slight torsion of the wood, materially increased, and that the coincidence of the fiber or grain with the varying swells of the surface is the same as it was with the flat surface before the board was bent.

In further illustration of the peculiar bend given to the side pieces, the line 1 1 in Fig. 2 designates the greatest swell at the top edge, and the line 2 2 the greatest swell at the bottom edge, while the dotted line 1 2 in Fig. 1 is drawn connecting these swells, and showing that they are not in the same vertical line, the point 1 being nearer the head-board. A line drawn from and connecting the points 3 4, and a similar one drawn to connect 5 6, show plainly also the different arcs or curvatures such chords would subtend. The vertical ends 5 7 5 7 in Fig. 3, show also plainly by contrast how the sides *a a* diverge upward from each other, and incline outward at the bend of the

sides. The head and foot pieces may incline to the horizon or not, as custom may warrant.

No unusually large or costly pieces of wood are required to make my improved coffin; but pieces which under some circumstances would not admit of successful sawing or kerfing and then bending will be available to make the sides in the manner I have above described.

I do not claim, broadly, a wood coffin having solid sides, nor do I claim anything shown or described in the rejected application of C. Bulkley; but

I claim—

A coffin whose sides, formed of solid wood having no kerf or cross-cuts therein to give curvature, are by steaming or otherwise so bent that when their ends are secured to the bottom piece and to the edges of the head and foot pieces their curvature or swell shall be greater at the top than at the bottom line, substantially as shown and described.

THOS. M. TAYLOR.

Witnesses:

B. V. STEVENSON,
CHARLES D. HOTCHKISS.