June 14, 1927. 1,632,243

D. D. MYERS

AUTOMATIC LATCHING DEVICE FOR BURIAL VAULTS

Filed April 8, 1926

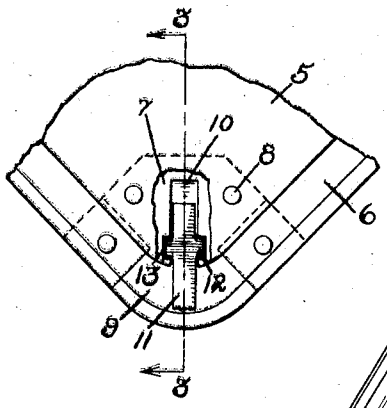

Fig. 2.

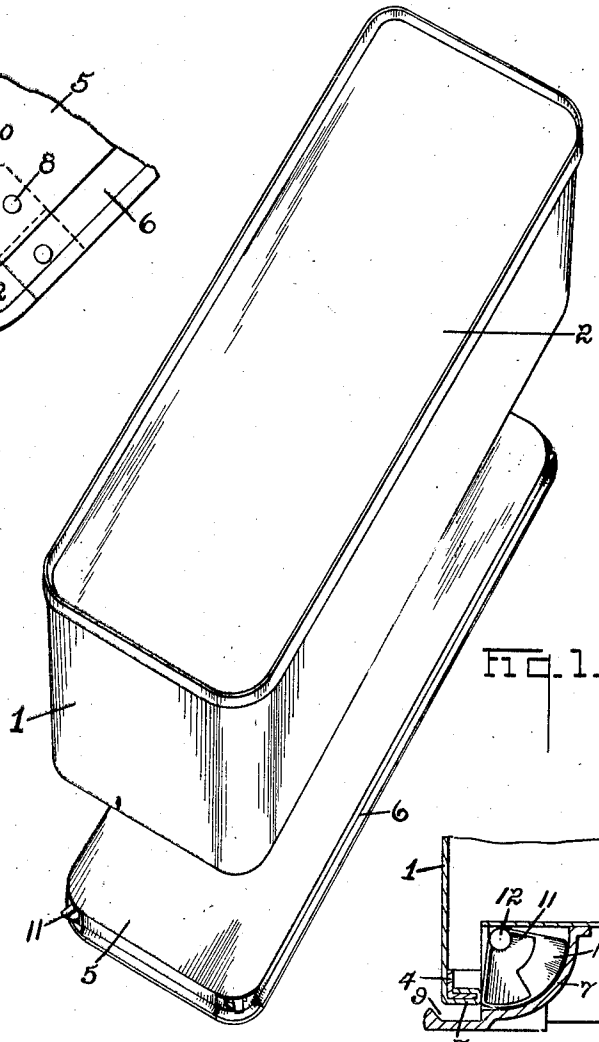

Fig. 1.

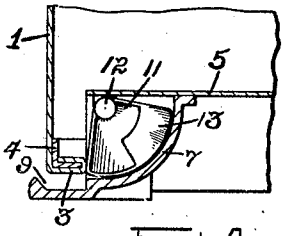

Fig. 4.

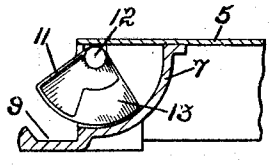

Fig. 3.

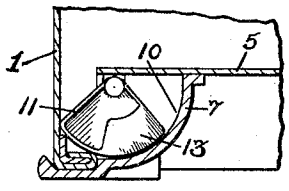

Fig. 5.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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AUTOMATIC LATCHING DEVICE FOR BURIAL VAULTS.

Application filed April 8, 1926. Serial No. 100,504.

This invention relates to an automatic latching device of the keyless type for securing parts together in assembled relation. This invention refers more particularly to devices for automatically securing the casing of a burial vault to the support so that when the parts are assembled separation thereof is rendered practically impossible.

Objects of this invention are to provide a latching device which is automatic in operation, simple in construction and cheap to manufacture, and is adapted securely to secure the parts together when one is applied to the other; to provide a new and improved latching device having the features of construction and arrangement hereinafter described; and to provide a burial vault having a latching means for holding the support and body securely together, the vault parts being constructed to cooperate with the latching means to provide a casing therefor.

The invention is shown by way of illustration in the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the body and platform members of a burial vault having the automatic latch; Fig. 2 is a top plan view of the platform with a part broken away to show the automatic latching device; Fig. 3 is a sectional elevation of the latching device; Fig. 4 is a sectional elevation of the latching device showing the body member being applied to the platform and with the weighted latch member swung inwardly; and Fig. 5 is a view similar to Fig. 4 showing the parts in latched position.

The illustrated embodiment of the invention comprises a burial vault having a sheet metal body member 1 provided with a closed top 2 which is permanently connected to the body member. The lower edges of the body member are turned inwardly to provide a flange 3 which embraces an angle iron 4 for enhancing the strength of the flange. The body member 1 of the vault is connected to a support or platform 5 which is likewise of sheet metal and is provided with a peripheral ledge or groove 6 to receive and support the inturned flange 3 of the body member as shown in Fig. 5. It is to be noted that the ledge or groove 6 is disposed in a plane below the plane of the platform 5 so that the platform extends a slight distance into the interior of the body member 1.

In accordance with this invention, an automatic latching device is provided for automatically securing the body member 1 to the platform 5 when the parts are assembled so that separation of these parts is rendered practically impossible. For this purpose disposed in each corner of the platform 5 is a casing 7 which may be of cast metal and which is connected to the underside of the platform 5 by rivets 8 or in any other suitable manner. Formed in the casing 7 is a ledge or groove 9 of approximately the same width as the ledge 6 and a portion of the ledge 6 overlaps the ledge 9 and is riveted thereto as indicated in Fig. 2. By means of this construction it will be seen that a continuous ledge is formed around the platform 5. Formed in the casing 7 is a relatively narrow arcuately shaped recess 10 having an open outer and upper end, the platform 5 extending over the upper end of the recess 10 for closing the same.

Disposed in the recess 10 is a triangularly-shaped sector or latch member 11 having an arcuately shaped lower end corresponding in shape to the rear wall of the recess 10. Formed on opposite sides of the latch member 11 are trunnions 12 which lie loosely in grooves 13 provided in the casing 7 on opposite sides of the recess 10. It will be seen that when the casing 7 is secured to the platform 5 with the portion of the platform overlying the upper end of the recess 10 that removal of the latch member 11 from the casing is prevented, although this member is free to swing to a position outside of the recess or inwardly to lie wholly within the recess 10.

The inner side of the latch member is weighted as indicated at 13 and although this weight may be a separate part of the latch member, preferably in the form shown it is an integral part thereof. The weight 13 serves normally to hold a portion of the latch member in outward position, as shown in Fig. 3 so that approximately one half of this member extends outside the recesses 10 and the other half lies within the recess.

It will readily be understood that when the body member 1 is applied to the platform 5, the inturned flange 3 first engages the projecting portion of the latch member 13 and further movement of the body member cams the latch inwardly as shown in Fig. 4 to permit seating of the flange 3 on the

ledge 6. After the flange 3 has cleared the ledge 6 the weight 13 causes the latch to swing outwardly to overlie the flange 3 of the body member 1 so that it is practically impossible thereafter to separate the body member from the platform.

It is to be noted that an automatic latching device is positioned in each corner of the platform 5 and the various devices are inclined in different directions so that liability of the parts becoming separated by reason of one or two latches swinging into the respective recesses by tilting of the vault is prevented.

While I have shown and described a construction which fulfills the objects heretofore enumerated, it is to be understood that the above is given merely by way of illustration and not of limitation, and numerous changes in details of construction and arrangement and choice of materials may be effected without departing from the spirit of the invention, especially as defined in the appended claims.

What I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. The combination with a platform having a counter sunk ledge extending around the outer edge of said platform, a body member having an inturned flange on the lower edge thereof to seat in said counter sunk ledge, casings secured to the corners of said platform, ledge portions on said casings coincident with adjacent counter sunk ledge portions to provide a substantially unbroken supporting surface around said platform, each casing having a cavity, and a weighted latch member in said cavity and normally swung outwardly therefrom into the path of said inturned flange for engaging the latter for securing said platform and body member parts together.

2. The combination with a platform having a counter sunk supporting channel on the outer edge thereof, a body member having an inturned flange on the lower edge thereof to seat in said channel, casings fixed to the corners of said platform with the upper surface approximately flush with the platform, each casing having a cavity with an open front and top, channel portions on said casings coincident with adjacent counter sunk channel portions of said platform, and weighted pivoted latches loosely mounted in said cavities and adapted to engage said inturned flange for holding said platform and body member together, a portion of said platform extending over the open top of said casings for retaining said latches in place.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto signed my name to this specification.

DON D. MYERS.