

C. C. ST. CLAIR.

Corpse Preserver.

No. 67,145.

Patented July 23, 1867.

Fig. 1

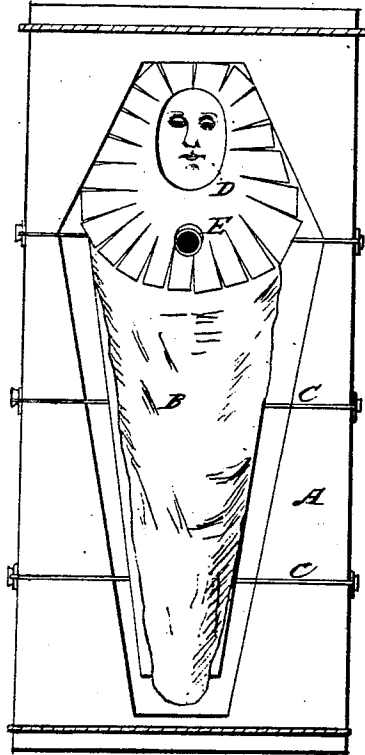


Fig. 2

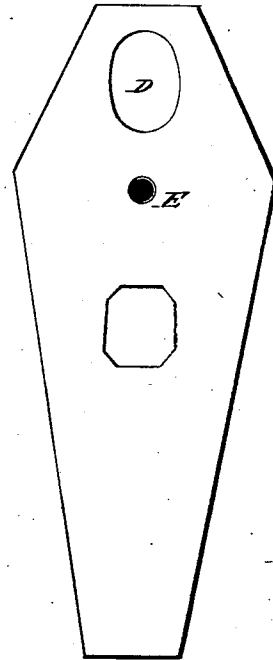
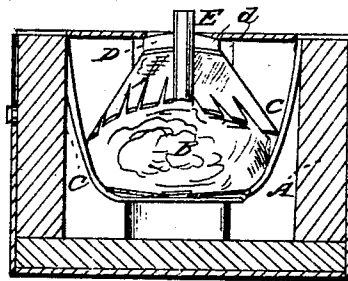


Fig. 3



Witnesses:

Chas. A. Pettit
 John C. Kemmer

Inventor:

C. C. St. Clair
 By Munroe
 Attorney

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67,145

COLIN CREE ST. CLAIR, OF WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Letters Patent No. 67,145, dated July 23, 1867.

IMPROVED MODE OF PRESERVING DEAD BODIES.

The Schedule referred to in these Letters Patent and making part of the same.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Be it known that I, COLIN CREE ST. CLAIR, of the city and county of Washington, and District of Columbia, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Preserving Dead Bodies; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming part of this specification, and in which—

Figure 1 is a top view of my invention, showing the body in place in the mould before the composition is filled in.

Figure 2 is a top view of the solid case or sarcophagus, formed by the process hereafter described.

Figure 3 is a transverse section of the mould, with an end view of the body enclosed.

Similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in the two figures.

In this invention a liquid composition or cement is poured around the body in a suitable mould, which, drying and hardening, effectually preserves the body, and at the same time serves the purpose of a coffin or sarcophagus. In the drawings—

A represent the mould or flask, in which the body B is suspended by means of the wires or flat hoops C, the body resting on two metal strips or boards, extending longitudinally with the mould, and supported by the wires or cords *c c* passing transversely under them. The board or strips may be connected by cords, so as to be increased or diminished in width at pleasure for different sizes of bodies. A glass plate, D, is placed over the face of the corpse, and a small tube, E, is inserted into the chest or other suitable part of the body, and left standing vertically in that position, projecting a few inches above the body. The composition which is to encase the body is then poured into the mould and left till it hardens, when the body may be taken out, thus encased, and transported, buried, or entombed. The glass plate D may be omitted if desired. The tube E must be inserted, however, and allowed to remain a few days for the escape of the gases formed by the decomposition of the body, which will probably have taken place to some extent before the body is placed in the embalmer's hands. After a few days the tube E may be removed, and the hole formed by it filled up with lead or with the composition used for encasing the body. I do not design to limit myself to any particular kind of composition. For the present I use a compound of one part plaster of Paris, mixed with two parts of hydraulic cement. I intend to use any composition or substance that may be poured around the body in the mould, and which will afterwards become hard by drying. The composition that I have described is a very excellent one for this purpose, as it becomes hard in a few hours, and when once dried encases the body in a solid, durable sarcophagus of stone. The glass plate D I make with a flange, *d*, which is buried in the composition or cement, and is firmly held by it when dry. Around the edges of it a collar of thin leather, oiled silk, or other suitable material may be used, sufficiently wide to cover and protect the hair if it is desired to do so.

A body thus enclosed will be preserved from decay for an indefinite period. The air is completely excluded from it, and oxidation cannot take place. This method of enclosing the body will be invaluable in cases where death has ensued from any loathsome or infectious disease. In such a case the body will be perfectly insulated, and all danger from contagion completely prevented. No noxious effluvia can possibly escape through the hardened cement. It will also be invaluable where the burial ground is low and saturated with water. In such ground corpses cannot be preserved for any length of time by the ordinary means of burial. Wood coffins soon decay, and any kind of metal corrodes and is destroyed almost as soon as wood. But a cement, properly made as I have described, turns to a stone and becomes harder and more indestructible by age. A body encased in it will be preserved equally well in wet as in dry ground. A sarcophagus of this kind is actually cheaper than the ordinary coffin. If, however, it is desired to use a coffin, the body, encased as I have described, may be enclosed in one.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letter Patent, is—

1. The preserving of dead bodies by encasing them in liquid cement compositions, which harden by drying, substantially as and for the purpose described.
2. The composition described above, composed of one part plaster of Paris with two parts of hydraulic cement, substantially as and for the purpose specified.
3. The use of the glass plate D and the tube E, in connection with the encasing of bodies in the composition or cement, substantially as and for the purpose described.

COLIN CREE ST. CLAIR.

Witnesses:

JAMES H. GRIDLEY,

CHAS. A. PETTIT.