Oct. 13, 1953 G. R. KNOPF 2,654,897

CORPSE-CONCEALING STRETCHER

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Fig. 1.

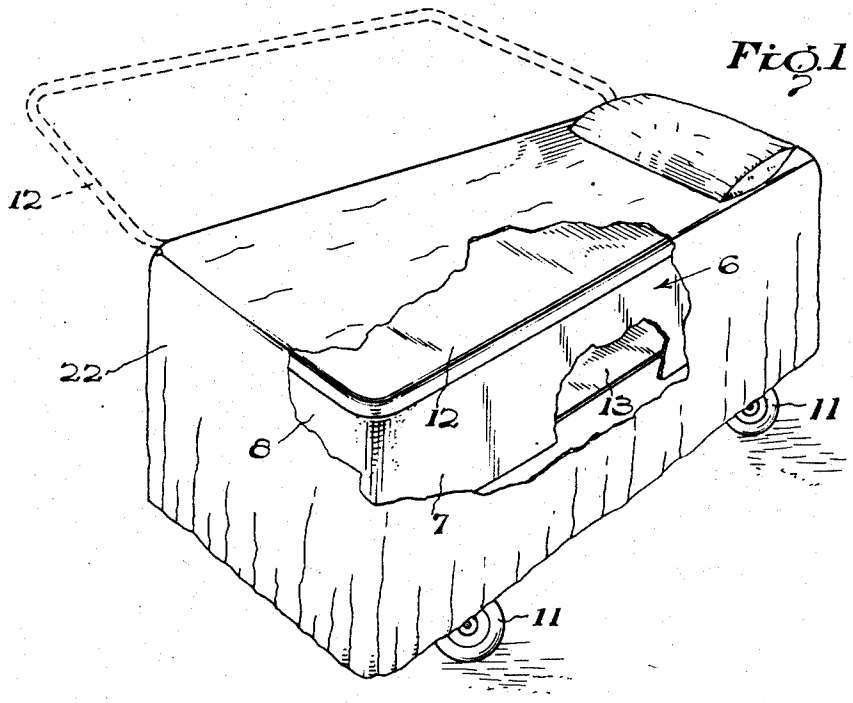
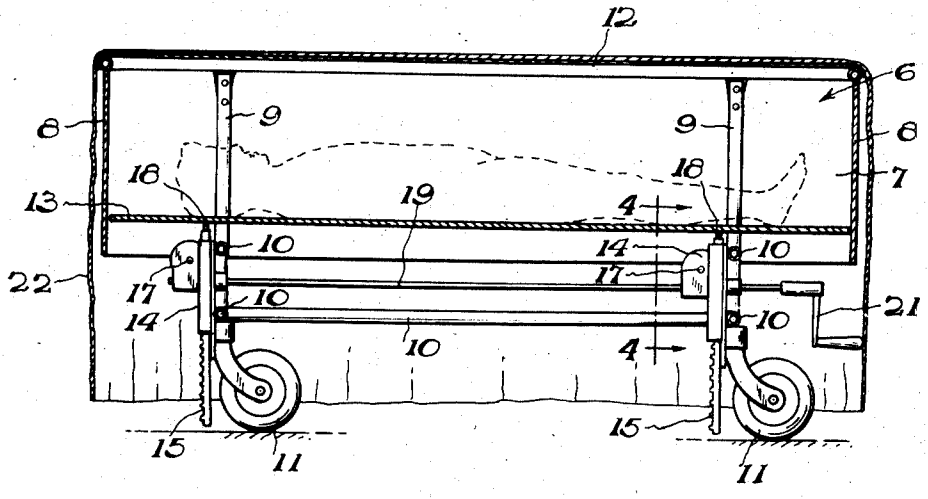


Fig. 2.



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Fig. 3.

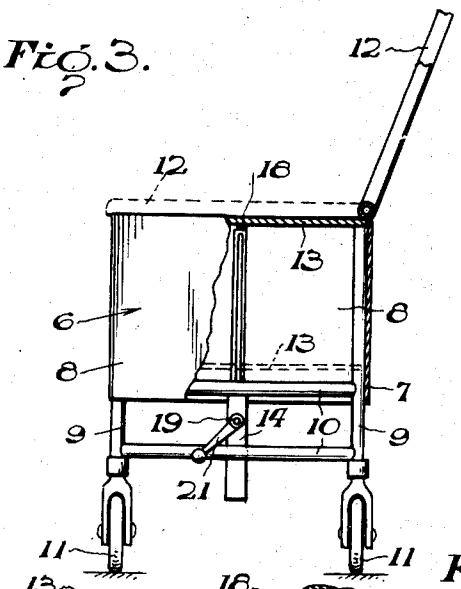


Fig. 4.

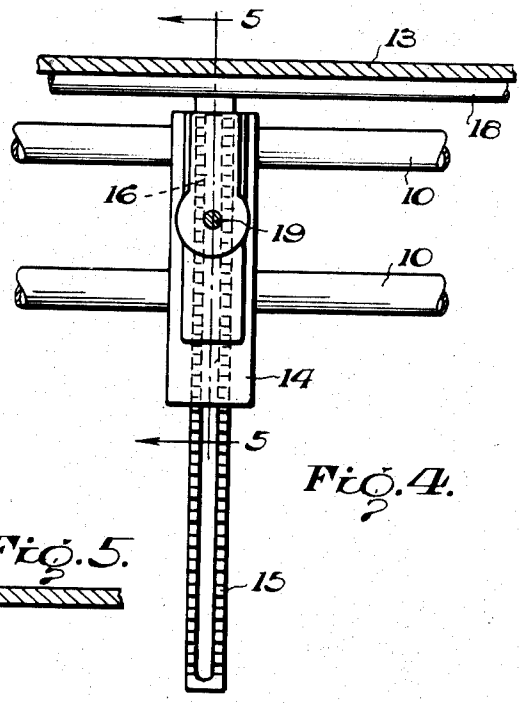


Fig. 5.

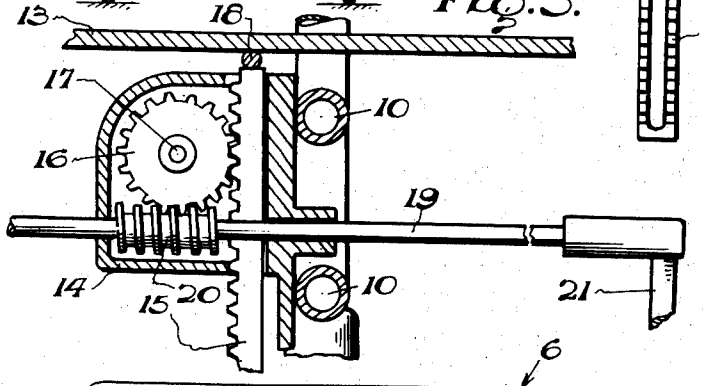
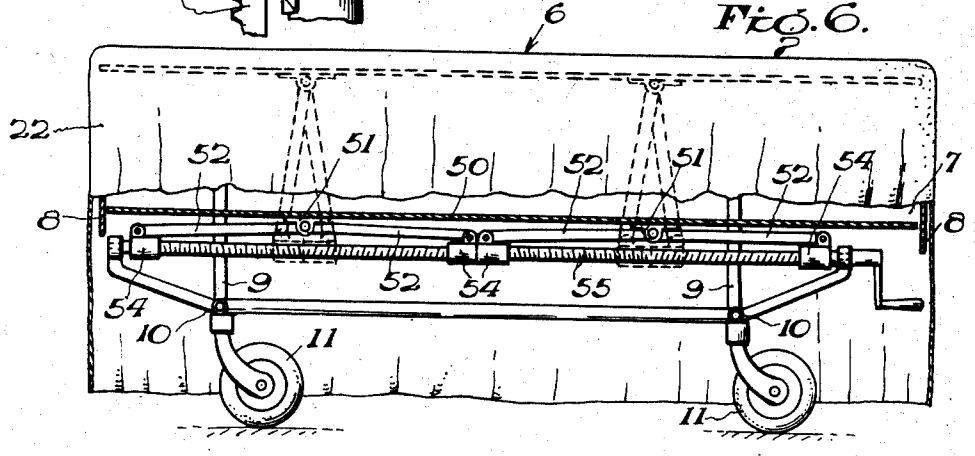


Fig. 6.



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CORPSE-CONCEALING STRETCHER

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Application November 6, 1950, Serial No. 194,262

2 Claims. (Cl. 5—86)

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My invention relates to stretchers and more particularly to the wheeled type for hospital and similar use.

In hospitals and other similar institutions, it is desirable, for psychological reasons, to conceal from the patients therein the death of other patients. Heretofore it has been the practice to transfer the corpse from the bed to the morgue on a wheeled stretcher with the entire body being covered with a sheet or the like while being transported. Obviously, almost any patient, without even being hospital-wise, upon viewing a stretcher with a covered body thereon, knows that someone has just passed away.

My invention overcomes the foregoing difficulties and disadvantages, it being one of the objects thereof to provide a stretcher which is so constructed and arranged as to not only effectively conceal a corpse being transported thereby, but in a manner indicative of an empty stretcher.

An important object of my invention is to provide a stretcher of the foregoing described character which is simple in construction, durable in use, efficient in operation, economical in manufacture, and capable of being used as a stretcher for transporting patients in the same manner as prior art stretchers of ordinary construction.

With the above and other objects in view, as will hereinafter appear, the invention consists in the combination and arrangement of parts hereinafter set forth and illustrated in the accompanying drawings from which the several features of the invention and the advantages attained thereby will be readily understood by those skilled in the art.

Referring to the drawings wherein like reference characters designate like parts throughout the several views:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of my invention.

Figure 2 is a longitudinal sectional view.

Figure 3 is an end elevation, partly in section, with the top being open and the bottom in raised position for receiving a corpse thereon.

Figure 4 is a detail sectional view taken on the line 4—4 of Figure 2.

Figure 5 is a sectional view taken on the line 5—5 of Figure 4.

Figure 6 is a side elevation, partly in section, of a modification.

In practicing my invention, as illustrated in the drawings, I provide a stretcher comprising a box-like frame or casing 6 defined by side and end walls 7 and 8, respectively. The frame is supported in fixed relation above a chassis or under-

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carriage having a quaternary of upwardly extending bars or supports 9 with a pair of the latter being secured to the inner faces of each of the side walls 7. The bars 9 are secured together in spaced relation by means of longitudinally and transversely extending rods 10 and with the lower ends of the bars 9 having swivelly connected thereto wheels 11 whereby the stretcher can be wheeled from one locality to another in the same manner as stretchers of ordinary construction as exemplified in U. S. Letters Patent No. 1,694,172.

The upper end of one of the side walls 7 has hinged thereto one side of a cover 12 which is adapted to be raised to permit access to the interior of the casing 6 and closed to conceal a corpse therein and/or to permit the cover 12 to be utilized as a stretcher member for supporting a patient thereon. Slidably mounted within the casing 6 is a bottom or platform 13 which is adapted to support the corpse within the casing, the sides of the platform being formed with slots for slidably accommodating the bars 9 to permit sliding of the platform relative to the bars.

At the ends of the chassis, the transverse rods 10 have fixed thereto gear housings 14 each having slidably mounted therein a rack bar 15 meshing with a gear 16 mounted on a shaft 17 journaled in the respective housing. The upper ends of the rack bars 15 have fixed thereto cross members 18 on which the platform is detachably seated. An operating shaft 19 extends through both of the housings 14 and has fixed thereto, within the housings, worms 20 which mesh with the gears 16, respectively. By rotating the shaft 19, vertical movement is imparted to the rack bars 15 through the worms 20 and gears 16 whereby the platform 13 is raised or lowered within the frame 6 depending upon the direction of rotation of the shaft 19, the latter having attached to one end thereof a suitable crank 21 to facilitate its operation.

In use — assuming the stretcher has been wheeled to the bedside of a patient who has expired, the cover 12 opened and the platform 13 raised to its uppermost position as clearly illustrated in Figure 3—the corpse is lifted from the bed onto the platform 13 whereupon the shaft 19 is rotated by means of the crank 21 to lower the platform to its lowermost position as illustrated in Figure 2 of the drawings. When the platform has thus been lowered, the cover is closed and a sheet 22 is then draped over the cover and about the sides of the casing 6 to effectively conceal the casing. As an added touch, a pillow may be positioned on the sheet and over

the cover, as illustrated in Figure 1, for simulating the appearance of an empty stretcher. When the corpse is contained within the casing with the sheet and pillow thus arranged, the stretcher may be wheeled through the hospital without giving any indication, especially to patients, that someone has just expired and is being moved to the morgue.

In the modified form of the invention illustrated in Figure 6, the platform **50** is supported on a pair of transverse cross members **51** each having pivoted thereto ends of a pair of levers or links **52**. The opposite ends of the links **52** are pivotally connected to sleeves **54** arranged in axially confronting paired relation with the sleeves of each pair being right and left-hand interiorly threaded and mounted on correspondingly threaded sections, respectively, of an operating shaft **55**. Rotation of the shaft **55** in one direction serves to move the sleeves of each pair towards each other to effect raising of the platform by elevating the links **52**. Rotation of the shaft **55** in the opposite direction causes the lowering of the links by reverse movement of the sleeves **54**.

Without further elaboration, the foregoing will so fully explain the invention that others may, by applying current knowledge, readily adapt the same for use under various conditions of service. Moreover, it is not indispensable that all the features of the invention be used conjointly since they may be employed advantageously in various combinations and subcombinations.

It is obvious that the invention is not confined to the herein described use therefore as it may be utilized for any purpose to which it is adaptable. It is therefore to be understood that the invention is not limited to the specific construction as illustrated and described, as the same is only illustrative of the principles involved which are capable of extended application in various forms, and the invention comprehends all construction within the scope of the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. In a stretcher construction, a body supporting member, an undercarriage, a corpse-concealing casing interposed between said member and said undercarriage and having sides and an open top, said undercarriage having upwardly extending supports fixed to said casing for mounting the latter above said undercarriage, said casing having a platform slidably mounted therein between said sides and constituting the bottom wall of said casing for supporting thereon a corpse for concealment within said casing, elevating means carried by said undercarriage and connected to said platform for raising the latter to a raised position within said casing to facilitate loading and unloading of said corpse onto said platform, said body supporting member being pivotably connected to said casing and normally disposed in a closed position over said top for supporting a body thereon and closing said top, said body supporting member being pivotable from said closed position to permit said loading and unloading, said body supporting member being equipped with masking material draped about said sides for masking said casing from view when said body supporting member is in said closed position.

2. In a stretcher construction, a body supporting member, an undercarriage, a corpse-concealing casing interposed between said member and said undercarriage and having sides and an open top, said casing being carried by said undercarriage and having a platform slidably mounted therein between said sides and constituting the bottom wall of said casing for supporting thereon a corpse for concealment within said casing, elevating means mounted on said undercarriage subjacent said casing and connected to said platform for raising the latter to a raised position within said casing to facilitate loading and unloading of said corpse onto said platform, said body supporting member being hinged to said casing and normally disposed in a closed position over said top for supporting a body thereon and closing said top, said body supporting member being pivotable from said closed position to permit said loading and unloading, said body supporting member being covered with a covering extending thereover and draped about said sides for masking said casing from view when said body supporting member is in said closed position.

GEORGE R. KNOPF.

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