

May 31, 1955

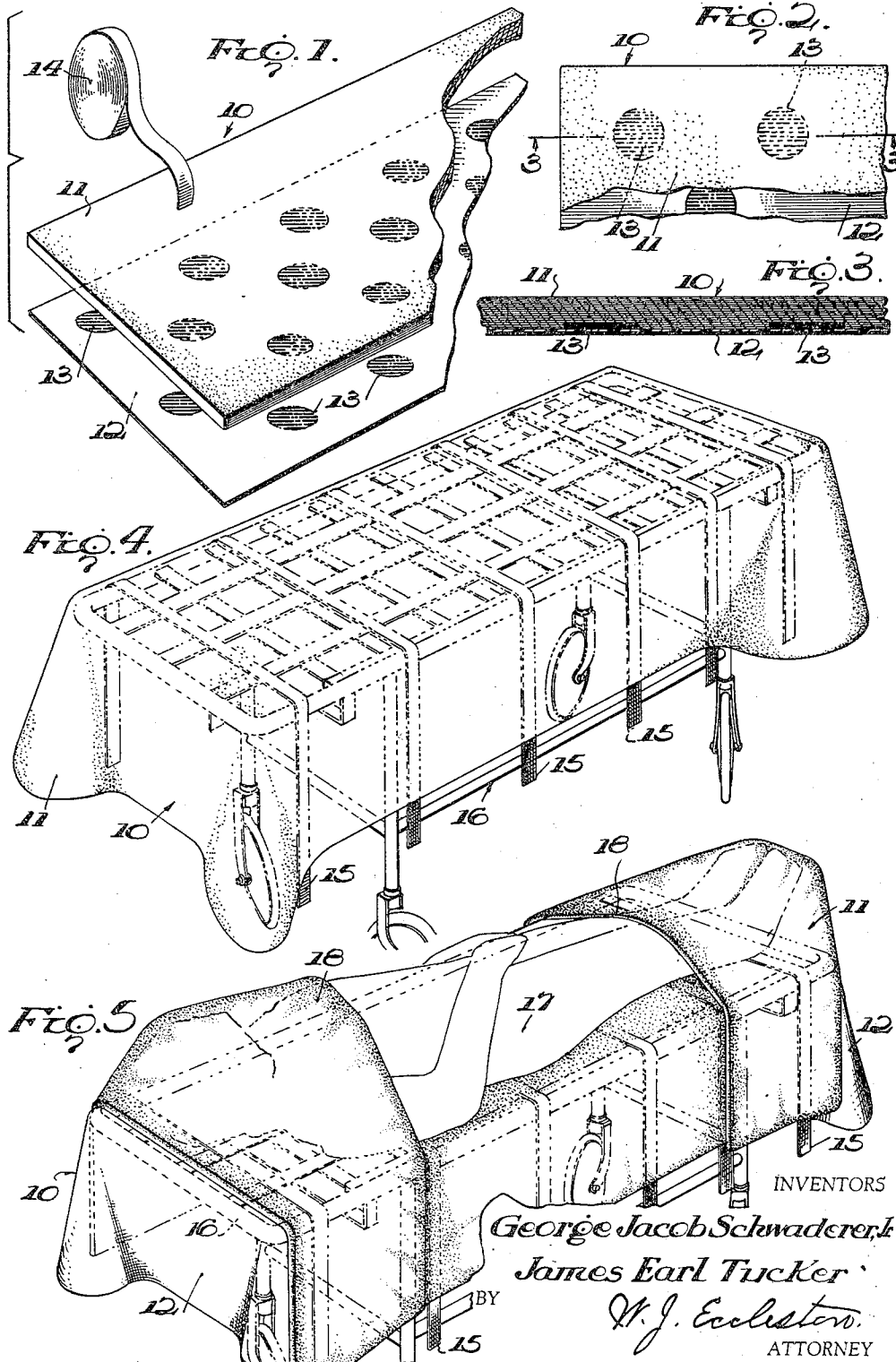
G. J. SCHWADERER, JR., ET AL

2,709,293

BURIAL WRAPPER

Filed Feb. 26, 1953

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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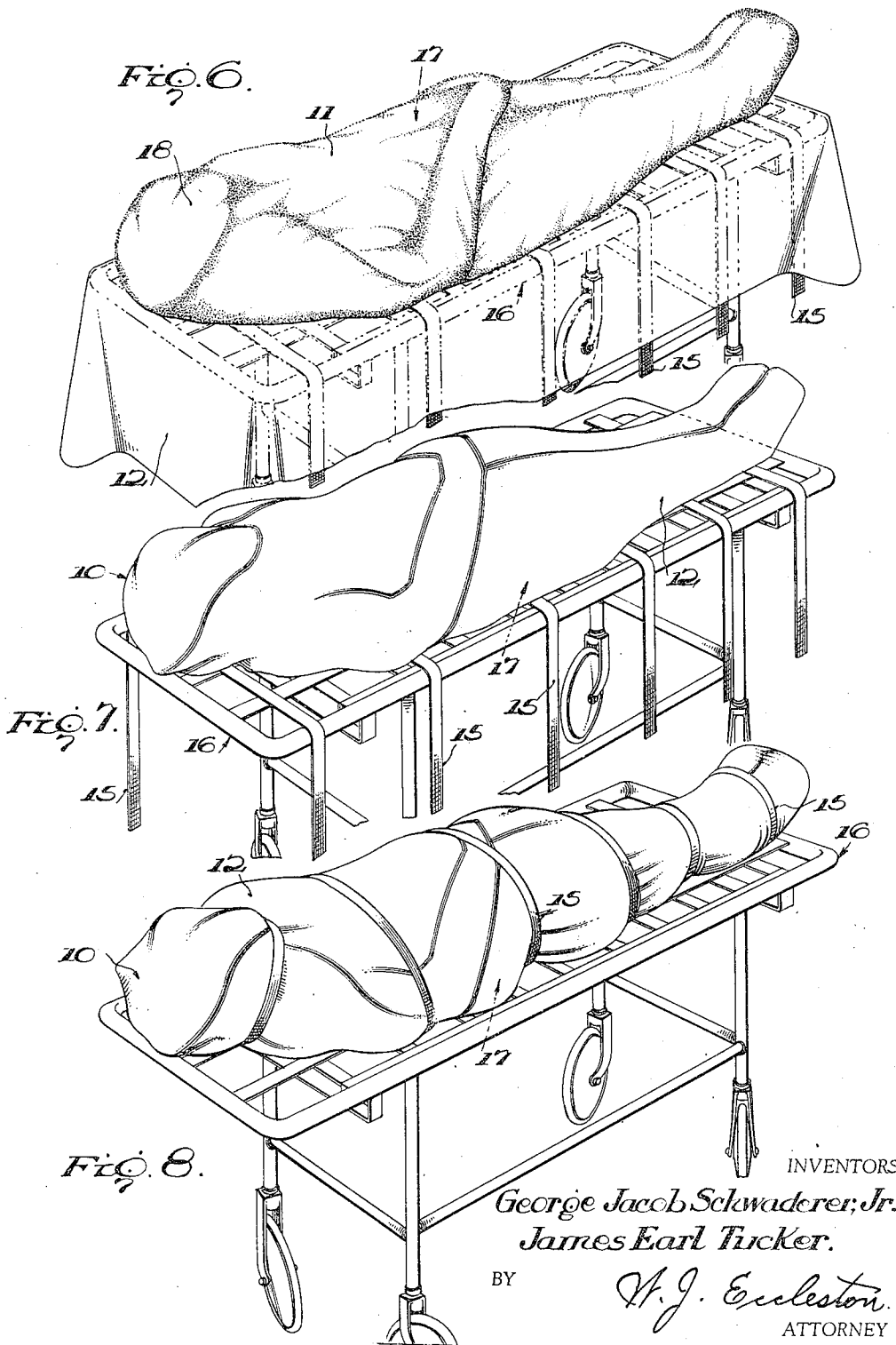
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BURIAL WRAPPER

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11 Claims. (Cl. 27—21)

(Granted under Title 35, U. S. Code (1952), sec. 266)

The invention described herein, if patented, may be manufactured and used by or for the Government for governmental purposes, without the payment to use of any royalty thereon.

Our invention relates to a method of preparing human remains for burial, and to a burial wrapper.

The need has arisen, particularly in connection with military battle casualties, and certain civilian accident casualties, for a suitable burial wrapper for remains or corpses which are non-viewable, after casketing. In the case of military battle casualties it has been the practice in some cases to wrap the remains, after embalming in ordinary woolen blankets, cotton sheets, or the like prior to casketing. This practice has proven to be unsatisfactory for several reasons. The woolen blanket or cotton sheet is not completely odor-tight, and this is obviously undesirable, particularly in cases where the remains have undergone partial decomposition or burning. Also, the woolen blanket or cotton sheet are ineffective in holding moisture, such as the embalming fluid or other body fluids which may be present in the remains, and it is highly undesirable to have these fluids escape through the blanket or the like after the remains are casketed. In addition, the use of an ordinary woolen blanket for wrapping the remains constitutes a rather unsightly arrangement, which has been objected to.

To overcome the above and other inherent disadvantages in the present practice of wrapping non-viewable remains, prior to casketing, it has occurred to us to provide a burial wrapper which is completely moisture and odor-tight, as well as unobjectionable in appearance, so that non-viewable military casualties and certain civilian accident casualties and the like may be wrapped and subsequently casketed, so that the casket may remain open to view for a period, if desired.

It is an important object of the present invention to provide an effective burial wrapper of the above-mentioned character having means to absorb and hold moisture or fluids which may escape from the remains, and means which render the wrapper completely moisture and odor-tight after application to the remains.

A further object of the invention is to provide a burial wrapper including a layer of relatively thick absorbent material which may be molded about the remains, and an additional relatively thin film or layer of moisture and odor-proof material to be wrapped about the remains after the absorbent layer has been applied thereto.

A further object of the invention is to provide a multiply burial wrapper, so constructed that the plies or layers may be separated or partly separated during the application of the wrapper to the remains.

A further object is to provide a burial wrapper of the above-mentioned character, wherein the individual layers or plies are laminated or spot laminated together so that they will not become separated prior to use, but rendering the individual layers separable to the desired extent when the wrapper is applied to the remains.

A further object is to provide a burial wrapper of the

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above-mentioned character including means for binding or tying the wrapper about the remains, so that it will be substantially sealed about the remains, completely encasing the same in a rather permanent manner.

5 A still further object is to provide a burial wrapper of the above-mentioned character which is simplified in construction, relatively lightweight and durable, neat and unobjectionable in appearance, and relatively inexpensive to manufacture.

10 Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent during the course of the following description. In the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this application, and in which like numerals are employed to designate like parts throughout the same,

15 Figure 1 is a fragmentary exploded perspective view of a multiply burial wrapper in accordance with the present invention and showing a length of webbing or tape for use in securing the wrapper to the remains,

20 Figure 2 is a fragmentary plan view of the assembled wrapper,

Figure 3 is an enlarged vertical section taken on line 3—3 of Figure 2,

Figure 4 is a perspective view of the wrapper draped over a mortuary table or the like with lengths of the securing tape or webbing arranged beneath the wrapper in position to be bound about the outside of the wrapper after the same is applied to the corpse or remains,

25 Figure 5 is a further perspective view of the wrapper after the remains have been placed upon the same and portions of the inner absorbent layer of the wrapper have been separated from the outer layer and folded over the head and feet portions of the remains,

30 Figure 6 is a further perspective view of the wrapper and remains with the inner layer of the wrapper completely folded about the remains and encasing the same,

35 Figure 7 is a further perspective view of the wrapper and remains after both layers of the wrapper have been applied to the remains prior to permanently securing the wrapper to the remains with the sections of tape or webbing, and,

40 Figure 8 is a still further perspective view showing the wrapper completely applied to the remains and permanently secured thereto by the several sections of tape or webbing.

45 In the drawings, where for the purpose of illustration is shown a preferred embodiment of the invention, the numeral 10 designates generally our multiply burial wrapper, which is preferably rectangular in shape, and preferably about 9 feet long and 5 feet wide, although these dimensions may be varied somewhat, as desired, and are not intended to be given in a restrictive or limiting sense. The rectangular wrapper 10 comprises an inner relatively thick layer or ply 11 of white absorbent fibrous material, e. g. (and preferably) a fibrous cellulosic paper web, such as that made by International Cellucotton Products Co. under the name "Cellucotton," wood cellulose, or the like, and the layer 11 is preferably formed of approximately 18 or 20 thin sublayers or plies of the cellulosic material, more or less integrally matted together in a conventional and well-known manner. The thickness of the layer 11 is preferably about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch, although this dimension may also be varied somewhat as desired.

50 The wrapper 10 further comprises an outer thin flexible film or sheet 12 of plasticized vinyl resin material, such as polyvinyl chloride, or the like. The outer resin sheet 12 is preferably approximately 8 thousandths of an inch in thickness, and this thickness may be varied slightly as desired. The vinyl resin sheet 12 is preferably colored egg-shell or white, although any other preferred color may be given to the outer sheet 12 if desired. The inner and outer layers or sheets 11 and 12 are coextensive, and arranged in superposed contacting relation in assembly.

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In order to secure the two layers or sheets 11 and 12 together in assembly, we preferably apply discontinuous spots or patches 13 of quick drying liquid cement, such as polyvinyl chloride in the liquid state to one surface of the sheet 12, as shown in Figure 1. The fibrous layer 11 is then placed upon the vinyl resin sheet 12 and pressed into contact with the same, and the spaced portions of the cement 13 will be absorbed by the first three or four subplies of the cellucotton layer 11, as indicated in Figure 3. The remaining 16 or so subplies of the fibrous layer 11, Figure 3, will remain dry and free of the liquid cement 13, which will not penetrate through more than three or four subplies, as previously stated. The arrangement, in effect, spot laminates the inner and outer layers 11 and 12 together, so that the same will not become separated prior to use for wrapping the remains. If preferred, the liquid cement may be applied over the entire area of the vinyl resin sheet 12, before the fibrous sheet 11 is applied thereto, and in such case, the cement will still only penetrate through the first three or four sublayers of the fibrous sheet 11 for bonding or laminating the two sheets 11 and 12 together in assembly.

The assembled wrapper 10 is quite flexible and pliable, and the inner fibrous layer or sheet 11 is highly absorbent with the ability to absorb and hold a substantial amount of moisture. The outer thin film or layer 12 of polyvinyl chloride or the like is completely moistureproof and odorproof, and has the ability to prevent whatever moisture is absorbed by the inner sheet 11 from passing to the outside of the wrapper 10.

A continuous section or roll 14 of bleached cotton tape or webbing is provided with the burial wrapper 10, and separate therefrom, and this webbing is preferably about 26 feet long and one inch wide, although these dimensions may be varied somewhat and are not critical. The webbing 14 is preferably white.

In use, the cotton webbing or tape 14 is cut up into a desired number of lengths 15, preferably about six in number. These lengths or sections 15 of webbing are draped transversely over a mortuary table 16 or the like, as shown in Figure 4, and are arranged in parallel spaced relation, longitudinally of the table. The burial wrapper 10 is then draped over the mortuary table 16 on top of the tape sections 15, with the vinyl resin sheet 12 arranged lowermost and next to the tape sections 15. The wrapper 10 is preferably centered longitudinally and transversely with respect to the rectangular table 16, as shown, and substantial marginal portions of the wrapper hang downwardly at the longitudinal and transverse sides of the table.

The corpse or remains 17 is now placed centrally upon the burial wrapper 10 with the parts arranged in the anatomical position, if possible, and the corpse rests directly upon the fibrous sheet 11 which is arranged uppermost. End portions 18 of the fibrous sheet 11 are now peeled or stripped by hand from the lower vinyl resin sheet 12, and folded over the head and feet portions of the remains 17, as shown in Figure 5. When this stripping or separating of the fibrous sheet 11 from the vinyl resin sheet 12 occurs, small patches of the fibrous sheet adjacent to the cement patches 13 may adhere to the vinyl resin sheet 12, but these patches will only constitute the three or four subplies of the fibrous sheet, through which the liquid cement 13 has penetrated. The unattached areas of the fibrous sheet 11 will of course freely separate from the sheet 12, and the separated sheet portions 18 will still be contiguous and untorn, as shown in Figure 5.

After the operation illustrated in Figure 5, the side portions of the fibrous sheet 11 are stripped or separated from the sheet 12 and folded over the remains and over the sheet portions 18, in the manner generally illustrated in Figure 6. The central portion of the cellucotton sheet 11 directly beneath the corpse 17 may remain attached or spot laminated to the outer vinyl resin sheet 12. The fibrous sheet 11 is pliable and has little resiliency, so that it may be readily molded about the remains 17 to completely

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encase the remains within the absorbent fibrous material. The fibrous sheet has considerable body or thickness, and may be used to build up or impart a generally anatomical shape to the remains, where the same happen to be somewhat deteriorated and shapeless. As previously stated, the fibrous sheet 11 will absorb and hold whatever fluid, such as embalming fluid or the like which happens to be present in the remains 17.

After the fibrous sheet 11 has been applied completely to the remains, as illustrated in Figure 6, the outer vinyl resin sheet 12 is folded about the remains, preferably in substantially the same manner that the fibrous sheet 11 was previously folded about the remains.

The free end portions of the sheet 12 corresponding to the end portions 18 in Figure 5 are first folded over the head and feet portions of the remains, and then the side portions of the sheet 12 are folded about the remains for completely encasing the remains and the inner fibrous sheet 11 within the moistureproof and odorproof outer sheet 12, Figure 7. The burial wrapper is now permanently secured about the remains by binding or tying the tape sections 15 about the exterior of the wrapper in the manner illustrated in Figure 8, and the tape sections 15 serve to substantially close or seal the outer vinyl resin sheet 12 about the remains in a completely moisture-tight and odor-tight manner. The now completely wrapped corpse may be placed in a casket, and the casket may be left open to view for a time, as desired, with no danger of any moisture or undesirable odors penetrating through the burial wrapper 10.

It will be seen from the foregoing description of our invention that we have provided an efficient method and means for preparing human remains, particularly those which by reason of mutilation or at least partial decomposition are unfit for ordinary viewing, for burial in such a manner that they will present the appearance of a shrouded un mutilated and undecomposed corpse prior to interment. It is to be understood that the form of the invention, herewith shown and described is to be taken as a preferred example of the same, and that various changes in the shape, size and arrangement of parts may be resorted to, without departing from the spirit of the invention or scope of the subjoined claims.

We claim:

1. A method of preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial, comprising placing said remains on the inner layer of a laminated sheet, said sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible impervious outer layer and a pliable fibrous inner layer detachably laminated to said first-named layer, delaminating selected portions of said sheet, placing the thus delaminated portions of said pliable fibrous layer into contact with said human remains, molding said last-named delaminated portions into anatomical shapes which cause said remains to assume a substantial resemblance to an un mutilated and undecomposed human body, and wrapping said sheet including the delaminated portions of said first-named layer completely around said human remains and around the shaped fibrous material, whereby the appearance of a shrouded un mutilated and undecomposed human corpse is presented.

2. A method of preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial, comprising placing said remains on the inner layer of a laminated sheet, said sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible impervious outer layer and a moisture-absorbent pliable fibrous inner layer detachably laminated to said first-named layer, delaminating selected portions of said sheet and placing the thus delaminated portions of said moisture-absorbent layer into contact with oozing portions of said human remains, and wrapping said sheet including the

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delaminated portions of said first-named impervious layer completely around the moisture-absorbent material placed in contact with said remains, whereby penetration of fluids and foul odors from said human remains to the exterior is substantially completely inhibited and the appearance of a shrouded undecomposed human corpse is presented.

3. A method of preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial, comprising placing said remains on the inner layer of a laminated sheet, said sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible impervious outer layer and a moisture-absorbent pliable fibrous inner layer detachably laminated to said first-named layer, delaminating selected portions of said sheet and placing the thus delaminated portions of said moisture-absorbent layer into contact with said human remains so as to inhibit the flow of ooze therefrom and cause said remains to substantially resemble the anatomical shape of an unutilized and undecomposed human body, and wrapping said sheet including the delaminated portions of said first-named layer completely around said human remains and around the moisture-absorbent material placed in contact with said remains, whereby penetration of fluids and foul odors from said human remains to the exterior is substantially completely inhibited and an appearance of a shrouded unutilized and undecomposed human corpse is presented.

4. A composite burial wrapper for preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial, comprising a readily delaminatable laminated sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible moisture-impervious and odor-impervious outer layer and an inner layer of moisture-absorbent pliable fibrous material comprising a plurality of plies having substantial aggregate thickness and detachably laminated to each other and to said outer layer; whereby a portion of at least one of said plies may be delaminated and positioned about a mutilated or oozing part of said human remains placed on the inner face of said sheet, and the remainder of said sheet may be completely wrapped around said human remains and around the delaminated fibrous material in contact with said remains, so as to present the appearance of a shrouded unutilized and undecomposed human corpse.

5. A composite burial wrapper for preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial, comprising a readily delaminatable laminated sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible moisture-impervious and odor-impervious outer layer and an inner layer of moisture-absorbent pliable fibrous material comprising a plurality of plies having substantial aggregate thickness and detachably laminated to each other and to said outer layer, a substantial portion of the area of said plies being unbonded; whereby a portion of at least one of said plies may be delaminated and positioned about a mutilated or oozing part of said human remains placed on the inner face of said sheet, and the remainder of said sheet may be completely wrapped around said human remains and around the delaminated fibrous material in contact with said remains, so as to present the appearance of a shrouded unutilized and undecomposed human corpse.

6. A composite burial wrapper for preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial,

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comprising a readily delaminatable laminated sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible moisture-impervious and odor-impervious outer layer and an inner layer of moisture-absorbent pliable fibrous material comprising a plurality of plies having substantial aggregate thickness and detachably spot-laminated to each other and to said outer layer; whereby a portion of at least one of said plies may be delaminated and positioned about a mutilated or oozing part of said human remains placed on the inner face of said sheet, and the remainder of said sheet may be completely wrapped around said human remains and around the delaminated fibrous material in contact with said remains, so as to present the appearance of a shrouded unutilized and undecomposed human corpse.

7. A composite burial wrapper for preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial, comprising a readily delaminatable laminated sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible moisture-impervious and odor-impervious outer layer and an inner layer of moisture-absorbent pliable fibrous material comprising a plurality of plies having substantial aggregate thickness and detachably spot-laminated to each other and to said outer layer, the lamination spots on successive plies of said inner layer being out of transverse alignment; whereby a portion of at least one of said plies may be delaminated and positioned about a mutilated or oozing part of said human remains placed on the inner face of said sheet, and the remainder of said sheet may be completely wrapped around said human remains and around the delaminated fibrous material in contact with said remains, so as to present the appearance of a shrouded unutilized and undecomposed human corpse.

8. A composite burial wrapper for preparing mutilated or at least partly decomposed human remains for burial, comprising a readily delaminatable laminated sheet having a length exceeding the length of a human body and a width sufficient to be wrapped completely around a human body and comprising a thin flexible impervious outer layer and a thick inner layer of pliable and moldable fibrous material detachably laminated to said outer layer; whereby a portion of said inner layer may be delaminated and positioned and molded about a shapeless mutilated or decomposed part of said human remains so as to substantially restore its correct anatomical shape, and the remainder of said sheet may be completely wrapped around said human remains placed on the inner face of said sheet and around the delaminated and molded portion of said inner layer, so as to present the appearance of a shrouded unutilized and undecomposed human corpse.

9. A composite burial wrapper according to claim 8, wherein said outer layer is vinyl resin.

10. A composite burial wrapper according to claim 8, wherein said inner layer is cellulosic material.

11. A composite burial wrapper according to claim 8, wherein said outer layer is vinyl resin and said inner layer is cellulosic material.

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