Aug. 31, 1937. J. STEEN 2,091,495

EXTENSIBLE HANDLE FOR CASKETS

Filed July 30, 1935

Fig. 1

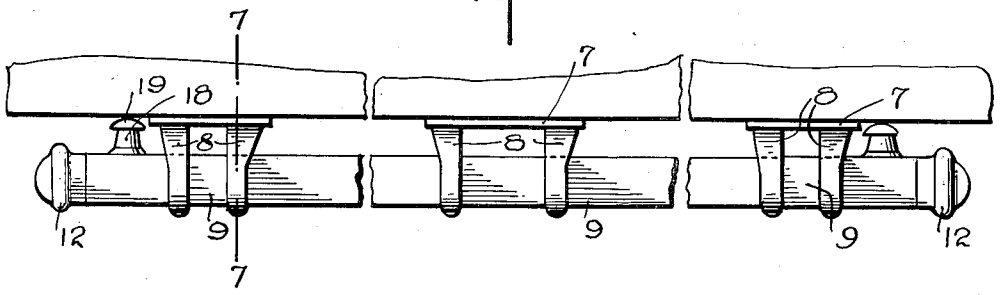


Fig. 2

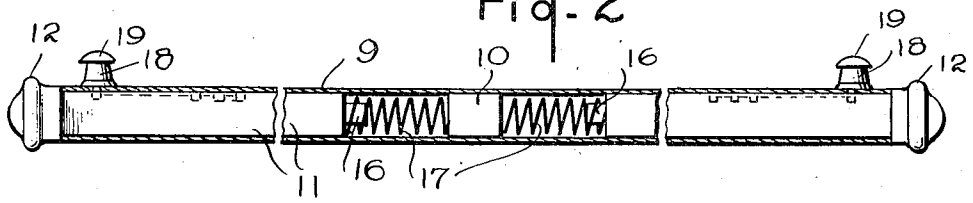


Fig. 3

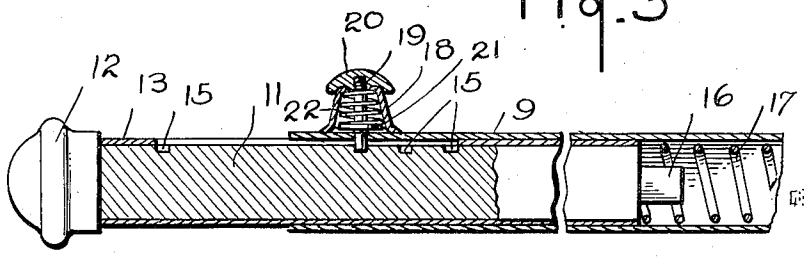


Fig. 7

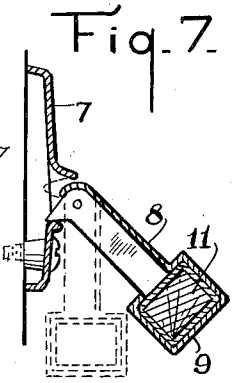


Fig. 4

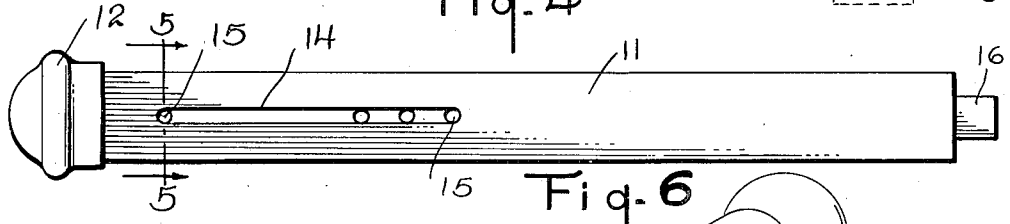


Fig. 5

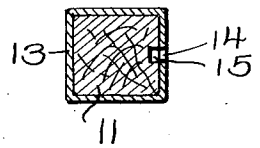
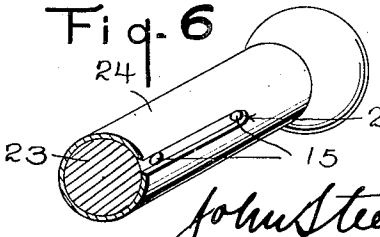


Fig. 6



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EXTENSIBLE HANDLE FOR CASKETS

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4 Claims. (Cl. 16—115)

The invention to which the following description relates is in extensible handles for burial caskets, coffins or the like. The hardware used with coffins and caskets either for handling or ornamentation is generally provided of standard form and size varying greatly in style to suit the preferences either of the undertaker or the customer dealing with him. The selection of a suitable size of coffin, casket or burial case is subject to wide variation. It is sometimes difficult to get the harmonious relation between the casket and the standard size hardware supply. This is particularly true in respect to the handle which is attached to each side of the casket and used by the pall bearers in carrying the casket. These handles are provided in certain definite sizes. A long handle suitable for a large casket may of course be cut down in harmony with the shortness of a small casket. The difficulty, however, arises that such shortened handles increase the awkwardness of handling by the pall bearers.

The usual custom is to provide six pall bearers, three on each side of the casket. There is a normal minimum spacing which these pall bearers must maintain to prevent awkwardnes or interference one with another. If the handle is shortened to conform to a short casket the pall bearers are necessarily crowded.

It is an object of my invention to provide an extensible handle for caskets. This handle may be proportioned suitably for a short casket. At the same time it will permit lengthening so that the pall bearers may maintain a suitable normal and convenient spacing. When the handle is not being used it may be readily returned to its normal size and conform with the desired proportions of the casket.

Another object of my invention is to provide an improved handle which may be attached to the side of the casket at three or more places adjustably spaced apart, but without interfering with the strength and rigidity of the handle.

A further object of my invention is to provide means by which extensions of the handle will be conveniently released to lengthen the handle and at the same time maintain its serviceability.

Other objects of my invention will be apparent from the following description of the preferred form of the invention as illustrated in the attached drawing in which.

Fig. 1 is a plan piew of the extensible handle;

Fig. 2 is a longitudinal horizontal section taken through the handle proper;

Fig. 3 is an enlarged view of one end of the handle similar to what is shown in Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a top plan view of the extension bar shown in Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 is a cross-section taken on the line 5, 5 of Fig. 4;

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of a modified form of extension bar and

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary vertical cross-section taken on the line 7—7 of Fig. 1.

As illustrating the principles of my invention, I have shown the extensible handle to be formed in the following manner. A series of plates 7 are customarily provided for attachment to the side of the coffin. Each plate 7 carries a pair of pivoted arms 8. By means of these arms the handle proper hangs in a vertical plane at the side of the casket when not in use. When it is desired to lift the casket the handle is lifted until the arms 8 extend slightly downward with respect to a horizontal plane.

The central pair of arms 8 is attached fixedly to the mid-portion of a hollow tubular member 9 which forms the shell of the handle. The remaining arms 8 slide along the tube 9 and may be attached to the latter at convenient positions by soldering, welding, screws or the like after such adjustment has been completed. The position of the arms 8 is dependent upon the overall length of the handle and its ratio to the length of the casket itself.

The center of the tube 9 is occupied by a block 10 of wood or other suitable material and this forms an abutment.

Each end of the tube 9 carries a bar 11 similar to what is shown in Figs 3 and 4. This bar 11 forms the extensible part of the handle. In its retracted position the head 12 of the bar rests against the end of the tube 9 as shown in Figs. 1 and 2. This head 12 may be in the form of a knob or any other suitable decoration in harmony with the rest of the hardware.

In like manner the bar 11 may have a coating or sheath 13 similar in material and decoration to the tube 9. It is intended that the sheathing 13 will give the extension bar 11 the appearance of being practically a part of the tube 9.

In Fig. 5 the bar 11 has been shown to be square in cross-section with a sheet metal sheathing 13 surrounding it. This bar will of course conform in cross-section with that of the tube 9 and if both are rectangular then there will be no possibility of the bar rotating relatively to the tube 9.

One side of the bar 11 is grooved as shown at 14 in Fig. 4 and suitably spaced along this groove are recesses or depressions 15, 15 by which the bar may be locked longitudinally with respect to the tube 9.

The inner end of the bar 11 has a restricted portion 16 which forms a bearing for a coil spring 17. This coil spring has its opposite end resting against the abutment 10. The purpose of the spring obviously is to urge the bar 11 to its extended position relative to the tube 9.

Suitable means are provided to latch the bar 11 in one of its selected positions. This means consists of a collar 18 soldered or otherwise fixed to the inner side of the tube 9 near one end. The tube 9 has an opening centrally of the collar 18 to accommodate the plunger 19. The outer end of the plunger has a button 20 which normally rests against the end of the collar 18.

Spaced from the opposite end of the plunger 19 is a washer 21 and a coiled spring 22 runs between the washer 21 and the inner end of the collar 18. The coil spring 22 holds the washer 21 down against the surface of the tube 9 with the free end of the plunger extending inwardly into one of the recesses 15. In this position the button 20 rests against the end of the collar 18.

With the button 20 retracted until the plunger is out of one of the series of recesses 15, the bar 11 may be positioned inwardly against the spring 17 and the button released as soon as the recess 15 is out of registry with the hole in the tube 9. As the bar 11 is forced inwardly the knob 12 comes against the end of the tube 9 at which time the plunger 19 drops into the locking recess 15. This mode of attachment is inconspicuous on the inner side of the handle.

When it is desired to extend the handle it is only necessary to draw up button 20, releasing plunger 19 and the spring 17 then forces the bar 11 outwardly until the plunger is allowed to latch in one of the inner group of recesses 15.

In this manner the handle is extended so as to form a convenient and rigid member permitting the suitable spacing of the pall bearers regardless of a possible shortness in the casket.

As soon as the casket has been carried to a resting place the buttons 20 are withdrawn and the bars 11 driven into the tube 9 restoring the handle to the size most suitable for that length of casket.

In Fig. 6 there is shown a bar 23 round in cross-section to fit within a round tube 9. In this instance the sheath 24 has a groove 25 which serves the additional purpose of holding the plunger 19 during its travel from one recess 15 to another thus preventing any relative rotation between the tube and the bar.

This invention effects a suitable variation in the length of a casket handle but at the same time maintains its rigidity and usefulness. While I have shown the preferred form of my invention it will be apparent that numerous changes can be made in minor details, form and design without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

What I claim is:—

1. In a casket-handle, plates for independent attachment to a casket, and variably spaced apart, arms pivoted to said plates, a tube carried by said pivoted arms, an abutment in the center of the tube, a bar slidable within each end of the tube, a spiral spring between the abutment and each bar, and means for latching the bars to the tube.

2. In a casket-handle, plates for independent attachment to a casket, and variably spaced apart, arms pivoted to said plates, a tube carried by said pivoted arms, an abutment in the center of the tube, a bar slidable within each end of the tube, a stop on the outer end of each bar and means for latching the bars to the tube.

3. In a casket-handle, plates for independent attachment to a casket, and variably spaced apart, arms pivoted to said plates, a tube carried by said arms, an abutment in the center of the tube, a bar slidable within each end of the tube, a spiral spring between the abutment and each bar, said bars each having a series of spaced notches, and spring latches on the tube for selectively engaging one of said notches against the force of the spring.

4. In a casket-handle, plates for independent attachment to a casket, and variably spaced apart, arms pivoted to said plates, a tube carried by said arms, a bar slidable within each end of the tube, said bars each having a series of spaced notches, a collar extending laterally of the tube, a plunger in the collar, a button on the end of the plunger and spring means for holding the button against the collar and the free end of the plunger in one of said notches of the bar.

JOHN STEEN.