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A. J. MERKELBACH.

BURIAL VAULT.

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1,035,987. Patented Aug. 20, 1912.

Fig. 1.

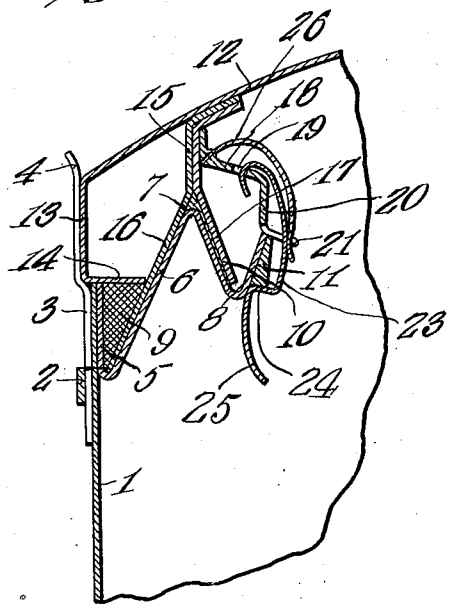


Fig. 2.

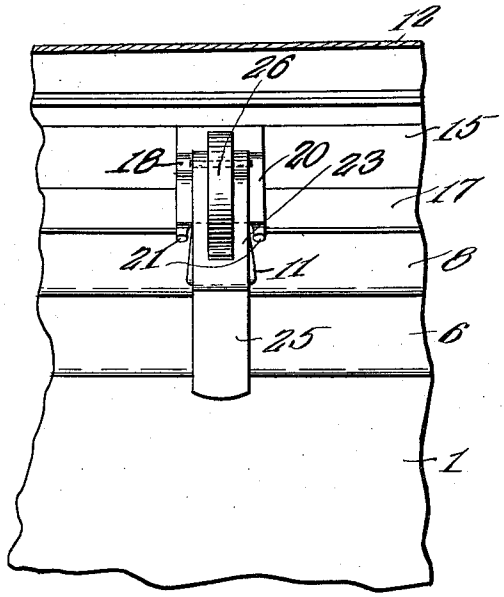


Fig. 3.

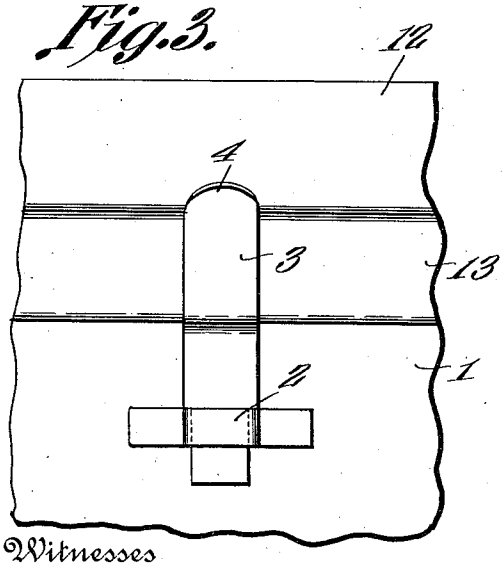
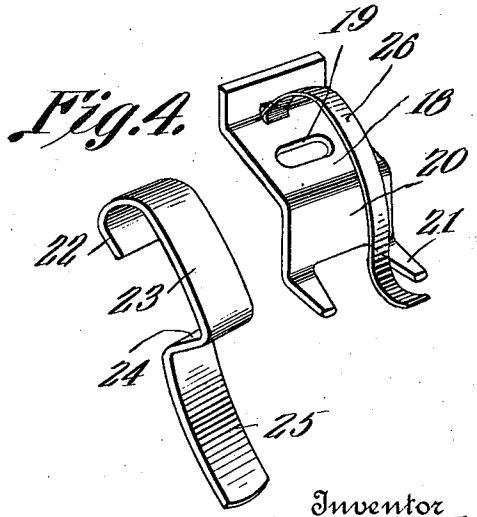


Fig. 4.



Witnesses

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BURIAL-VAULT.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ALBERT J. MERKELBACH, a citizen of the United States, residing at Muscatine, in the county of Muscatine and State of Iowa, have invented a new and useful Burial-Vault, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to burial vaults of that type formed of pressed steel or the like, and its principal object is to provide a double sealing device which will positively prevent the admission of air or moisture.

A further object is to provide a vault the top of which will be automatically locked, when closed so that it is impossible to open the vault without destroying some part thereof.

With the foregoing and other objects in view which will appear as the description proceeds, the invention resides in the combination and arrangement of parts and in the details of construction hereinafter described and claimed, it being understood that changes in the precise embodiment of the invention herein disclosed can be made within the scope of what is claimed, without departing from the spirit of the invention.

In the accompanying drawings, the preferred form of the invention has been shown.

In said drawings:—Figure 1 is a vertical section through a section of a vault having the present improvements combined therewith. Fig. 2 is an inner elevation of the parts shown in Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is an elevation of the outside of a portion of the vault. Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the lock, the parts thereof being separated.

Referring to the figures by characters of reference 1 designates a portion of a wall of a vault, said wall being made of pressed steel or the like and having brackets 2 formed upon the outer face thereof at desired intervals for the reception of guide strips 3, the lower end portions of which are insertible into the brackets while the upper end portions are curved laterally, as indicated at 4. It is to be understood that all of the walls of the vault may be of similar construction. Each wall is provided, on its inner face adjacent the upper edge thereof, with a metallic strip 5 welded or otherwise connected thereto and the lower edge of which merges into an upwardly and inwardly inclined strip 6 forming a ridge 7 which is located above and parallel with the upper edge of the wall and is formed along one side of a trough-like extension 8 substantially V-shaped in cross sectional contour and extending throughout the length of the wall. The parts 5 and 6 also coöperate to form a trough extending throughout the length of the wall and this trough is adapted to be partly or entirely filled with litharge, as shown at 9, to be used as a sealing element. White lead is preferably placed within the trough 8, as shown at 10 for use as a sealing medium, as will be hereinafter set forth. One or more projections 11 are formed on the innermost face of the trough-like extension 8 and these projections coöperate with the locking element hereinafter described.

The top 12 of the vault is formed of pressed steel or other suitable material and has marginal flanges 13 each of which is formed, along its lower edge, with an inwardly directed marginal portion forming a ledge 14 adapted to rest upon the upper edge of one of the side walls, as illustrated in Fig. 1. An inverted Y-shaped cleat 15 is welded or otherwise secured to the under surface of the top 12 and one wing 16 of this cleat is adapted to rest within the trough formed by the elements 5 and 6 and to lie in the angle of the trough, while the other wing 17 of the Y is adapted to lie within the trough 8. A bracket 18 extends from the upper portion of the cleat and has an opening 19 in the upper portion thereof. An arm 20 extends downwardly from this bracket and has a fork 21 extending at an angle from the lower end thereof. The opening 19 is in the form of a slot and is adapted to receive the hooked end 22 of a catch 23. This catch is formed with a shoulder 24 adapted to engage the projection 11, and a tongue 25 extends downwardly from the shoulder whereby the catch is properly guided into position when the cover 12 is placed on the vault. This tongue is curved, as shown in Figs. 1 and 4 so as to ride easily over the projection 11 while the catch is being lowered into engagement with the projection. A spring 26 is secured at one end to the bracket 18 while its other end bears upon the catch so as to cause it to engage the projection 11 automatically.

It is to be understood that the parts constituting the seal and lock hereinbefore described are to be located along each side and end of the vault. After the trough formed by the strip 5 and element 6 has been partly

or entirely filled with a sealing element, such as litharge, and after another sealing element, such as white lead, has been placed in the trough 8, the top of the vault is lowered to position with wings 16 and 17 straddling the ridges 7 and engaging the sealing materials shown at 9 and 10. The cover is guided to proper position by the strips 3 and when it has been lowered a predetermined distance, the shoulders 24 on the catches 23 will automatically move into engagement with the projecting portions 11 and thus lock the cover in place. Thus it will be seen that the vault will be hermetically sealed and cannot be opened from the outside without cutting or drilling through it. It will be noted that the ledge 14 extends inwardly to the inclined wing 16 and bears downwardly on the sealing material 9. Furthermore it will be seen that the sealing material 10 completely fills the space between the wing 17 and one wall of the trough 8.

As hereinbefore stated litharge is preferably used as a sealing medium within the trough 5—6 while white lead is used to seal the parts in trough 8. Litharge will set quickly and thus protect the white lead in the inner seal from the action of water while the white lead slowly hardens. The seal can be used near the bottom of the vault as well as adjacent the top.

What is claimed is:—

1. A vault including a wall, interior troughs supported adjacent the upper edge of the wall, each trough constituting means for holding a sealing medium, a cover, and means depending from the cover and adapted to be seated within the respective troughs.

2. A vault including a wall, separate troughs within the vault and adjacent the upper edge of the wall, a cover, an inwardly directed portion thereon for bearing downwardly upon the wall, and downwardly diverging means connected to the cover and adapted to be seated within the respective troughs.

3. A vault including a wall, separate means within the vault and adjacent the upper edge of the wall for supporting separate sealing means, said separate supporting means converging upwardly, a vault cover, and downwardly diverging means connected to the cover for engaging the sealing means adapted to be supported upon the respective supporting means.

4. A vault including a wall, troughs within the vault and adjacent the upper edge of the wall, said troughs having upwardly converging walls forming a ridge, a vault cover, downwardly diverging means connected to the cover for straddling the ridge and projecting into the respective troughs.

5. A vault including a wall, troughs within the vault and adjacent the upper edge of the wall, a vault cover, downwardly diverging means connected to the cover and movable into the respective troughs, and cooperating means upon the cover and one of the troughs for automatically locking the cover to the troughs.

6. A vault including a wall, troughs within the vault and adjacent the upper edge of the wall, said troughs constituting means for holding a sealing medium, a vault cover, downwardly diverging means thereon adapted to be seated within the respective troughs, a spring controlled catch connected to the cover, and means upon one of the troughs for engagement by the catch to lock the vault cover in closed position.

7. A vault including a wall, interior troughs supported adjacent the upper edge of the wall, each trough constituting means for holding a sealing medium, a cover, means depending from the cover and adapted to be seated within the respective troughs, and cooperating means upon the cover and one of the troughs for automatically locking the cover to the troughs.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own, I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

ALBERT J. MERKELBACH.

Witnesses:
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Copies of this patent may be obtained for five cents each, by addressing the "Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D. C."