

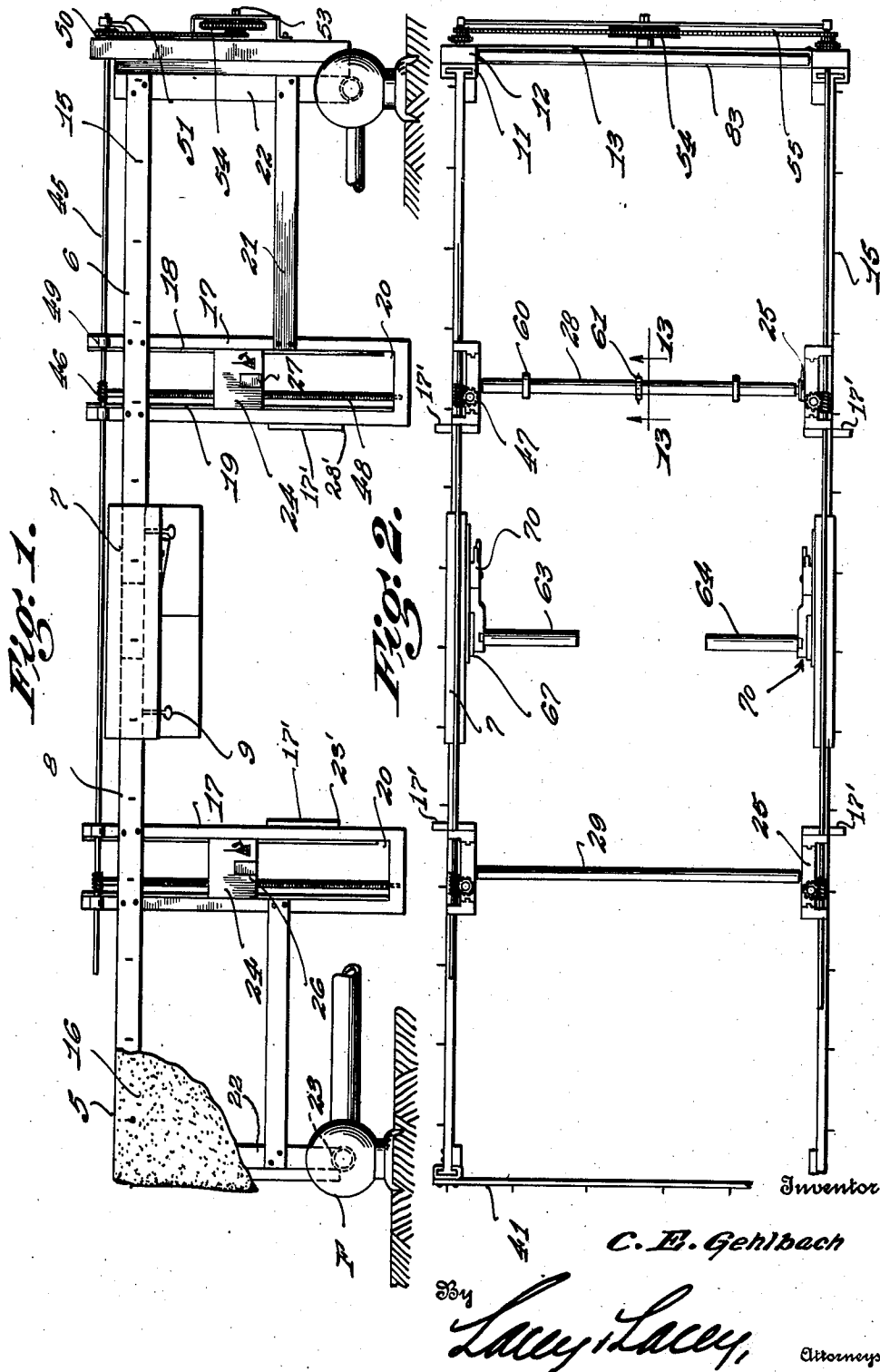
July 15, 1941.

C. E. GEHLBACH
CASKET PLACING DEVICE

2,249,126

Filed Feb. 5, 1940

4 Sheets-Sheet 1



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Fig. 3.

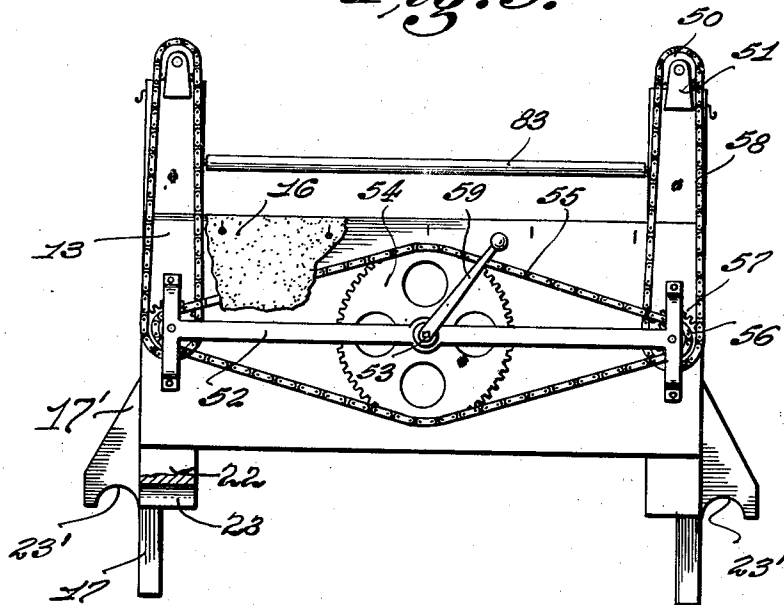
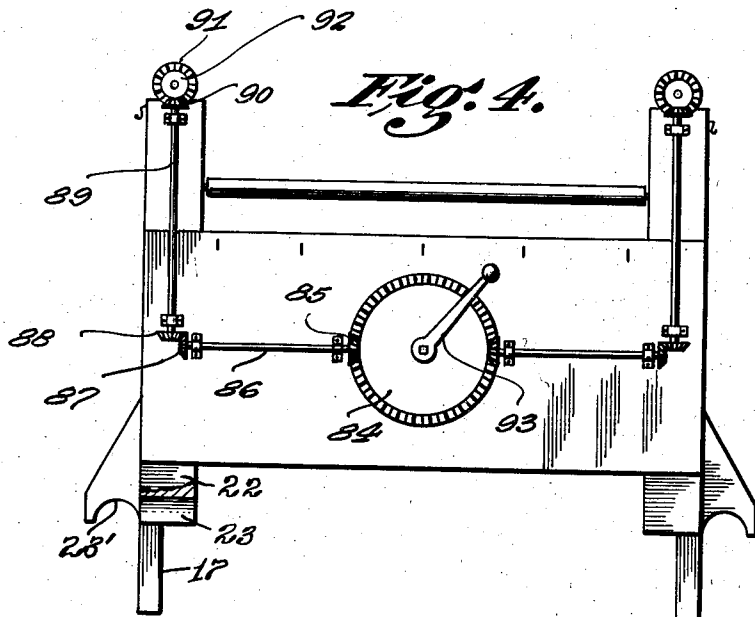


Fig. 4.



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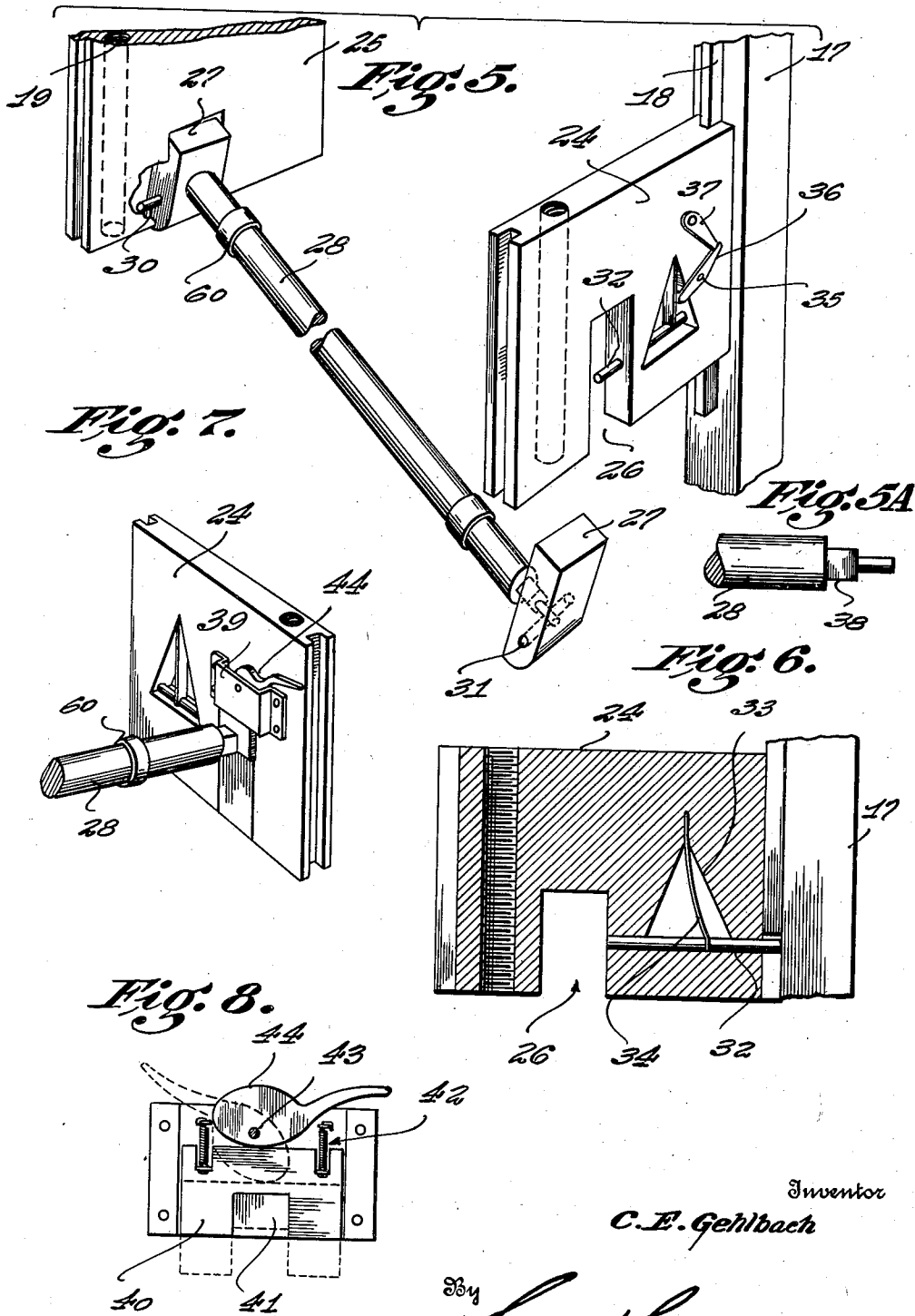
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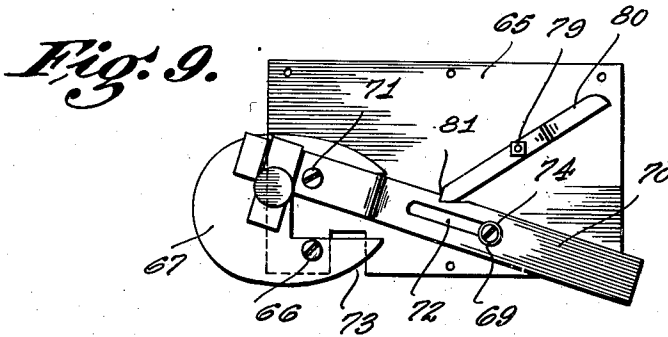
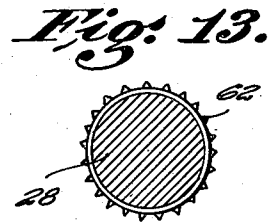
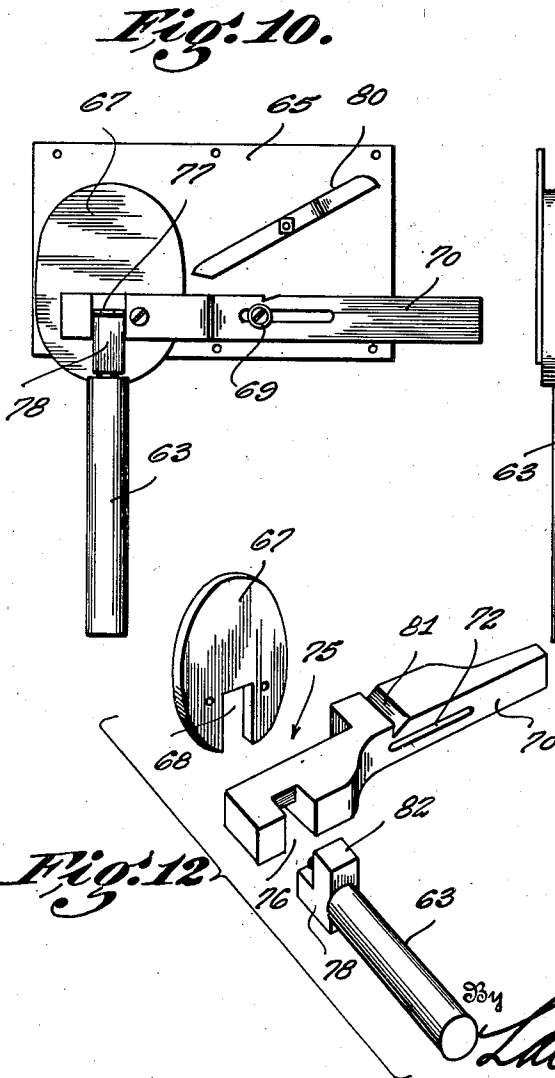
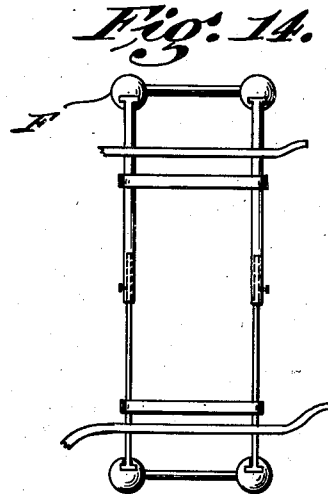
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CASKET PLACING DEVICE

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11 Claims. (Cl. 27—30)

This invention relates to burial apparatus and more particularly to a novel form of casket placing device.

The object of the invention is to provide a comparatively simple and thoroughly efficient device of the class described for placing a casket over a grave and lowering the same to the top of the grave or onto the usual lowering device for interment.

A further object of the invention is to provide a casket placing device comprising a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave and provided with main and auxiliary supporting rollers on which the casket is initially placed during the burial ceremony, means being provided for lowering said rollers with the casket thereon and means for automatically releasing the main supporting rollers when the casket reaches its lowermost position to permit said rollers to swing or drop to the side of the grave and out of the way while the casket is being lowered into the grave.

A further object is to provide a sectional auxiliary roller and means associated therewith for locking the sections thereof in operative position and releasing said sections prior to lowering the casket.

A further object is to provide a safety lock or catch for one of the main supporting rollers to prevent rotation thereof and consequent longitudinal displacement of the casket while in position on the device.

A still further object of the invention is generally to improve this class of devices so as to increase their utility, durability and efficiency.

In the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification and in which similar numerals of reference indicate corresponding parts in all figures of the drawings:

Figure 1 is a side elevation of a casket placing device embodying the present invention, showing the same in position on a supporting frame or lowering device.

Figure 2 is a top plan view,

Figure 3 is an end elevation showing the construction of the sprocket wheels and chains for raising and lowering a casket,

Figure 4 is a similar view showing the adaptation of gearing for this purpose,

Figure 5 is a perspective view of one of the main rollers and its associated parts, one end of the roller being shown just after it has been released from the adjacent sliding block to permit said roller to drop or swing downwardly within a grave,

Figure 5a is a side elevation showing the con-

struction of the squared end of the roller shown in Figure 5,

Figure 6 is a vertical sectional view through one of the sliding blocks showing the construction of the spring-pressed locking bolt,

Figure 7 is a perspective view of one of the sliding blocks showing the construction of the safety lock for preventing rotation of the adjacent main roller,

Figure 8 is a front elevation of the safety lock with the cover plate thereof removed, the parts being shown in full lines in inoperative position and in dotted lines in operative position,

Figure 9 is a side elevation of the mechanism employed for normally holding the sections of the auxiliary roller in a horizontal position,

Figure 10 is a similar view showing the position of the parts when the operating lever is moved to released position to permit dropping of the sections of the auxiliary roller,

Figure 11 is a side elevation of Figure 10 showing in dotted lines the normal position of the adjacent stub section of the auxiliary roller and in full lines said section in lowered or released position,

Figure 12 is a perspective view of the mechanism shown in Figure 9 detached, the parts being separated for sake of clearness,

Figure 13 is a transverse sectional view taken on the line 13—13 of Figure 2, and

Figure 14 is a plan view on a reduced scale of one form of frame or lowering device used in connection with the placing device.

The improved casket placing device forming the subject-matter of the present invention comprises an elongated frame 5 adapted to be positioned over a grave and rest on a supporting frame or standard lowering device, indicated at F. The frame 5 comprises longitudinally disposed side bars 6 preferably angular in cross section and having their inner ends spaced apart and slidably mounted in a connecting casing 7 so as to permit longitudinal adjustment of the bars to shorten or lengthen the frame. The bars 6 are formed with graduations 8 to permit accuracy of adjustment of said bars with respect to each other, said bars being held in adjusted position by clamping screws or similar devices 9 which extend through the casing 7 and engage the bars, as best shown in Figure 1 of the drawings.

The opposite ends of the longitudinal bars 6 are provided with T-shaped heads 10 which are detachably fitted within correspondingly shaped sockets 11 secured to end posts 12. The posts

12 are connected by front and rear end walls 13 and 14, and said end walls as well as the longitudinal side bars of the frame are provided with spaced hooks 15 from which may be suspended suitable fabric or grass drapery, indicated at 16.

Secured to the longitudinal bars 6 are depending vertical frames 17 having their lower ends closed and their inner side walls provided with guiding tongues 18 and 19, the guiding tongue 18 being preferably shorter than the guiding tongue 19 to form a recess 20 adjacent the closed end of the frame. The frames 17 are reinforced and strengthened by the provision of relatively short horizontal bars 21 having their inner ends bolted to the frames 17 and their outer ends bolted to upright members 22 disposed adjacent the corner posts. The lower ends of the upright members 22 are formed with concave seats 23 adapted to fit over the cylindrical end rails of the supporting frame or lowering device F. Secured to the frames 17 are flat vertically disposed strips 17', the lower ends of which are formed with concave seats 23' similar to the seats 23 and adapted to receive the side rails of the lowering device F.

Mounted for vertical movement within the frames 17 are sliding blocks 24 and 25 having substantially rectangular openings 26 formed therein and opening through the lower edge of the blocks, said openings having bearing members or blocks 27 fitted therein and carrying the main casket supporting rollers, indicated at 28 and 29. The bearing blocks 27 on one side of the frame are pivotally mounted, at 30, within the adjacent openings 26 while the bearing blocks 27 on the other side of the frame are detachably fitted within the openings 26 of the adjacent sliding blocks and are provided with transverse openings 31 adapted to receive a locking bolt 32. The bolts 32 are slidably mounted in the guide blocks and seated in a recess 33 in the adjacent sliding block is a leaf spring 34, the tendency of which is to normally and yieldably hold the outer end of the bolt in contact with the adjacent tongue 18.

Mounted, at 35, on the sliding block 24 is a lever 35 and cooperating with the free end of said lever is a pivoted pawl or latch 37 so that by depressing the lever 36 and then moving the locking pawl 37 in engagement therewith the spring 34 will actuate the bolt 32 to enter the recess 21 in the adjacent bearing block 27 and thus prevent displacement of said bearing block. When the locking lever 36 is released, however, and the sliding block 24 reaches its lowermost position, the spring 34 will retract the bolt 32 so as to release the adjacent bearing block 27 and thus permit said bearing block together with the roller 28 to swing downwardly on its pivotal axis 30 at the side of the grave. One end of one of the main rollers, preferably the roller 28, is provided with a squared portion 38, and mounted on the adjacent sliding block 24 at said squared portion is a safety catch or lock of the construction shown in Figures 7 and 8 of the drawings. This safety lock comprises a casing 39 having a plate 40 slidably mounted therein and provided on its lower edge with an angular cut-out portion 41 adapted to fit over the squared portion 38 of the roller 28 and lock the roller against rotation so as to prevent longitudinal displacement of the casket when supported on said main rollers. The plate 40 is yieldably supported within the casing by means of coiled springs 42 and pivotally mounted, at 43, above

the plate is an operating cam 44 which, when moved to the dotted line position shown in Figure 8 of the drawings, causes the angular portion of the plate to span the angular end 38 of the roller and prevent rotation thereof, as previously described.

Extending longitudinally of the frame on opposite sides thereof and spaced from the longitudinal bars 6 are operating shafts 45 preferably square in cross section and extending through correspondingly square openings in worms 46 which latter mesh with worm gears 47 fitted to the ends of threaded rods 48. The rods 48 are threaded through the adjacent sliding blocks 24 so that, as the rods 48 rotate, said blocks will be raised and lowered.

The operating shafts 45 are journaled in suitable bearings 49 on the upper ends of the frames 17 and the forward ends of said shafts extend through the adjacent corner post 12 and are provided with sprocket wheels 50 arranged at the rear of brackets 51 and provided with square openings which receive the angular terminals of the operating shafts. Secured to the front end wall 13 is a skeleton frame 52 and mounted for rotation on a stub shaft 53 extending through said skeleton frame is a relatively large sprocket wheel 54 over which is trained a sprocket chain 55. The sprocket chain 55 engages oppositely disposed relatively small sprocket wheels 56 to which are secured larger sprocket wheels 57. Extending around the sprocket wheels 57 are sprocket chains 58, the upper ends of which are trained over the sprocket wheels 50 so that, when the crank or handle 59 is rotated, the operating shafts 45 through the medium of the worms 46 and worm gears 47 will raise or lower the sliding blocks 24, as will be readily understood.

One of the main rollers, preferably the roller 28, is provided with spaced yieldable bands 60 preferably formed of rubber for engagement with metal caskets, and secured to said roller between the yieldable bands 60 is a band 61 provided with radiating spurs or teeth 62 for engagement with wooden caskets. Disposed between the main rollers 28 and 29 is an auxiliary roller, preferably formed in two sections 63 and 64 having their inner ends normally spaced apart at the center of the frame, as best shown in Figure 2 of the drawings.

Secured to the casing 7 on each side of the supporting frame is a plate 65 and pivotally mounted, at 66, on the plate is a cam 67 having a rectangular opening 68 in one side thereof. Pivotally mounted, at 69, on the plate 65 is an operating lever 70 which is, in turn, pivoted, at 71, to the cam 67 so that longitudinal movement imparted to the lever 70 will turn the cam so as to cause the opening 68 therein to register with a correspondingly shaped opening 73 in the plate 65. The lever 70 is provided with a slot 72 and a spring 74 is preferably interposed between the head of the pivot 69 and the lever 70 so as to hold said lever against the plate 65. The outer end of the lever 70 is cut away, at 75, to accommodate the cam 67, said lever being provided with a recess 76 disposed opposite the cut-away portions 75 and in which is hingedly mounted, at 77, a bearing block 78 carrying the adjacent section 63 of the auxiliary roller. Pivotally mounted, at 79, on the plate 65 is a locking pawl 80, the inner end of which is adapted to engage a locking notch 81 formed in said lever for the purpose of preventing turning movement of the cam 67. It will thus be seen that the cam 67 nor-

mally extends across the opening 73 in the plate 65 so as to cause the lug 82 on the bearing block 78 to bear against the cam and thus hold the auxiliary roller section 63 normally in a horizontal position. When the pawl 80 is released, however, and a longitudinal pull is exerted on the lever 70, the cam 67 will be rotated so as to cause the slot 68 therein to register with the slot 73 in the plate 65 and in which position the auxiliary roller section 63 together with the bearing block 78 is free to swing downwardly to the inoperative position shown in Figures 10 and 11 of the drawings. It will, of course, be understood that the parts just described will be arranged on each side of the supporting frame, as best shown in Figure 2 of the drawings. A roller 83 preferably extends transversely at the front of the supporting frame and disposed in a plane slightly below the plane of the main rollers 28 and 29, the purpose of said rollers being to receive the casket when it is placed on the device.

In operation, the device is positioned over a grave with the seats 23 engaging the end rails of the supporting frame or lowering mechanism F, after which the levers 36 are actuated so as to move the locking bolts 32 within the openings 31 and in which position they are held by the pawl 37. The crank 59 is then rotated and through the medium of the sprocket chains 55 and 58 motion is imparted to the operating shafts 45 which, in turn, actuate the worms 46 and worm gears 47 to rotate the threaded rods 48 and thus elevate the sliding blocks 24 to bring the rollers 28 and 29 at the top of the frame. The casket is then placed on the roller 83 and moved rearwardly over the roller 28, auxiliary roller sections 63 and 64 and roller 29 so as to support the casket in position to be lowered onto said lowering device. The levers 36 are then actuated so as to partially release the bolts 32 and cause the inner ends thereof to yieldably engage the tongues 18. After the casket is in position on the rollers, the cam 44 is operated so as to cause the notched edge of the plate to engage the squared portion 38 of the roller 28 and thus prevent rotation thereof and consequently any tendency of a casket to slide rearwardly on the rollers. Prior to lowering the casket, the levers 70 are actuated to release the auxiliary rollers 63 and 64 which, as previously stated, swing downwardly on their pivotal axes 77 and out of the way, it being understood that these auxiliary rollers are for the purpose of supporting the central portion of the casket when in position on the frame. The crank 59 is then rotated to lower the sliding blocks 24 carrying the rollers and casket. As the sliding blocks 24 approach the lower ends of the vertical frames 17, the locking bolts 32 will enter the recesses 20 formed at the lower ends of the tongues 18 and thus permit the spring 34 to entirely retract said bolts and allow the bearing blocks carrying the rollers 28 and 29 to swing downwardly on the pivot pins 30 at the side of the grave and thus permit the casket to be lowered within the grave by means of the lowering device F or any other device provided for that purpose.

In Figure 4 of the drawings, there is illustrated a modified form of the invention, in which a master beveled gear 84 is provided in lieu of the sprocket wheel 54. The master gear 84 meshes with beveled pinions 85 secured to stub shafts 86, the outer ends of which are provided with beveled pinions 87 meshing with correspondingly beveled pinions 88 secured to the lower end of

vertical shafts 89. The upper ends of the shafts 89 are provided with beveled pinions 90 which, in turn, mesh with beveled gears 91 secured to the adjacent ends of the operating shaft 92, the construction and operation of the device being otherwise similar to that shown in Figure 1 of the drawings.

From the foregoing description, taken in connection with the drawings, it is thought that the construction and operation of the device will be readily understood to those skilled in the art and further description thereof is deemed unnecessary.

It will, of course, be understood that the casket placing devices may be made in different sizes and shapes and constructed of any suitable material without departing from the spirit of the invention.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new is:

1. A casket placing device including a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave, casket supporting rollers journaled on the frame and each having one end thereof pivotally connected therewith, means operatively connected with the rollers for adjusting said rollers vertically of the frame, means for locking the other end of each roller, and means for automatically releasing the locking means when the rollers are in lowered position to permit said rollers to swing downwardly at the side of the grave.

2. A casket placing device including a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave, vertical guides secured to the frame, bearing blocks adjustable vertically within the guides, casket supporting rollers journaled in the bearing blocks, means for locking one end of each roller in the adjacent bearing block, a pivotal connection between the other end of each roller and the adjacent bearing block, means operatively connected with said bearing blocks for raising and lowering the rollers, and means for automatically releasing the locking means when the rollers are in lowered position to permit said rollers to swing downwardly on their pivots at one side of the grave.

3. A casket placing device including a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave, a roller mounted on the frame and comprising coacting sections, the inner end of each of which is pivotally connected with the frame, means for locking the roller sections in horizontal position, and means for releasing the locking means to permit downward swinging movement of the roller sections.

4. A casket placing device comprising a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave and having means for engagement with a lowering device, said frame including front and rear ends, longitudinal side bars detachably secured to said ends, vertical guides depending from the longitudinal bars, bearing blocks slidably mounted for vertical movement in said guide frames, threaded rods extending through the bearing blocks, worm gears carried by the rods, casket supporting rollers journaled in said bearing blocks, operating shafts mounted for rotation on the frame and provided with worms meshing with the worm gears for raising and lowering the bearing blocks, operating means mounted on one end of the frame and operatively connected with the shafts for rotating said shafts, and means for automatically releasing one end of each roller from the adjacent bearing block when the rollers are in

lowered position to permit said rollers to swing downwardly at the side of the grave.

5. A casket placing device including a longitudinally adjustable frame, vertical guides carried by the frame and provided with tongues, one of the tongues of each guide terminating short of the bottom thereof to form a recess, guide blocks slidably mounted for vertical movement on said tongues and provided with recesses opening through the lower edges of the blocks, there being a transverse opening formed in one of the blocks and intersecting the adjacent recess, bearing blocks fitted in said recesses, a pivotal connection between one of the bearing blocks and the adjacent guide block, casket supporting rollers carried by said bearing blocks, a locking bolt normally and yieldably engaging the adjacent tongue and slidably mounted in the transverse opening and adapted to engage the adjacent bearing block for normally preventing displacement thereof, threaded rods extending through said guide blocks, means at one end of the frame and operatively connected with the threaded rods for rotating the same to vertically adjust the guide blocks, and a spring operatively connected with the bolt for moving the latter within the recess at the end of the vertical guide when the guide block is in lowered position to permit said rollers to swing downwardly on their pivots on one side of the grave.

6. A casket placing device including a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave, vertical guides secured to the frame, guide blocks mounted for vertical movement in the guide frames, bearing blocks carried by the guide blocks, one of said bearing blocks being pivotally mounted on the adjacent guide block and the other detachably secured thereto, casket supporting rollers secured to the bearing blocks and provided with angular portions, a safety catch mounted on the frame and movable into engagement with the angular portion on the roller to prevent rotation thereof, means for holding the detachable bearing block in position, means operatively connected with the guide blocks for raising and lowering the same, and means for automatically releasing said holding means when the rollers are in lowered position to permit said rollers to swing downwardly at one side of the grave.

7. A casket placing device comprising a longitudinally adjustable frame, vertical guides forming a part of the frame, guide blocks slidably mounted in said vertical guides, rollers carried by the guide blocks and each having one end thereof pivotally connected with the adjacent guide block and its other end detachably secured to the other guide block, threaded rods extending through the guide blocks and provided with pinions, operating shafts journaled on the frame, worms secured to the operating shafts and engaging the adjacent pinions, means mounted on one end of the frame and operatively connected to the shafts for rotating the same, locking mechanism for normally preventing displacement of

the detachable end of the roller, and means for automatically releasing the locking mechanism when the roller is in lowered position to permit said roller to swing downwardly at one side of the grave.

8. A casket placing device including a frame having longitudinally adjustable side bars, a casing enclosing the inner ends of said side bars, means extending through the casing and engaging the side bars for holding said side bars to adjusted position, vertical guides forming a part of the frame, guide blocks slidably mounted within the vertical guides, rollers carried by the guide blocks, one end of each roller being pivotally connected with the adjacent guide block and the other end of the roller detachably secured to the mating guide block, locking means for normally holding the detachable end of the roller against displacement, means operatively connected with the guide blocks for raising and lowering the same, and means for automatically releasing the locking means when the rollers are in lowered position to permit said rollers to swing downwardly at the side of the grave.

9. A casket placing device including a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave, vertical guides forming part of the frame, guide blocks slidably mounted in said guides, rollers journaled in the guide blocks and each having one end thereof pivotally connected therewith, means for raising and lowering the guide blocks, and means for detaching the other end of each roller when the guide blocks are in lowered position to permit the detached ends of the rollers to swing downwardly on their pivots.

10. The combination with a lowering device, of a casket placing device including a frame adapted to be positioned over a grave and rest on the lowering device, casket supporting rollers journaled on the frame and each having one end thereof pivotally connected therewith, means operatively connected with the rollers for adjusting said rollers vertically of the frame, means for locking the other end of each roller, and means for automatically releasing the locking means when the rollers are in lowered position to permit said rollers to swing downwardly at the side of the grave.

11. The combination with a lowering device adapted to be positioned over a grave and including longitudinal and transverse rails, of a casket placing device comprising a frame provided with seats engaging the rails of the lowering device, vertically adjustable casket supporting rollers journaled on the frame and each having one end thereof pivotally connected therewith, means for locking the other end of each roller, means operatively connected with the rollers for adjusting said rollers vertically of the frame, and means for automatically releasing the locking means when said rollers are in lowered position to permit the rollers to swing downwardly on their pivots at the side of the grave.

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