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PLASTIC CASKET

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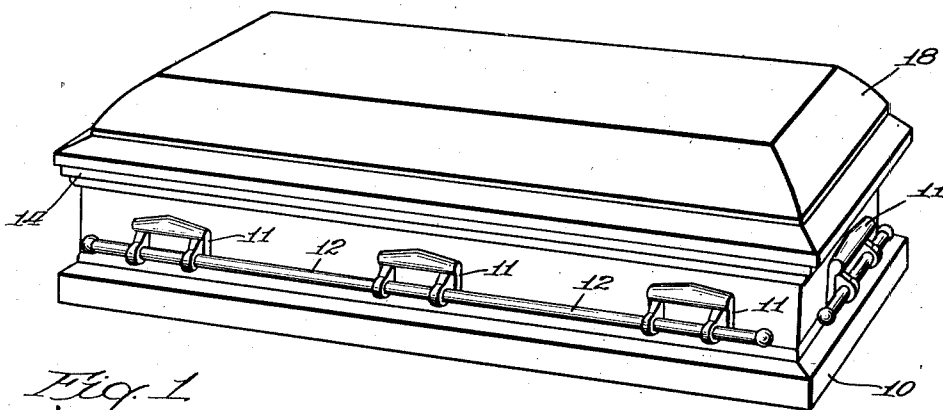


*Fig. 1*

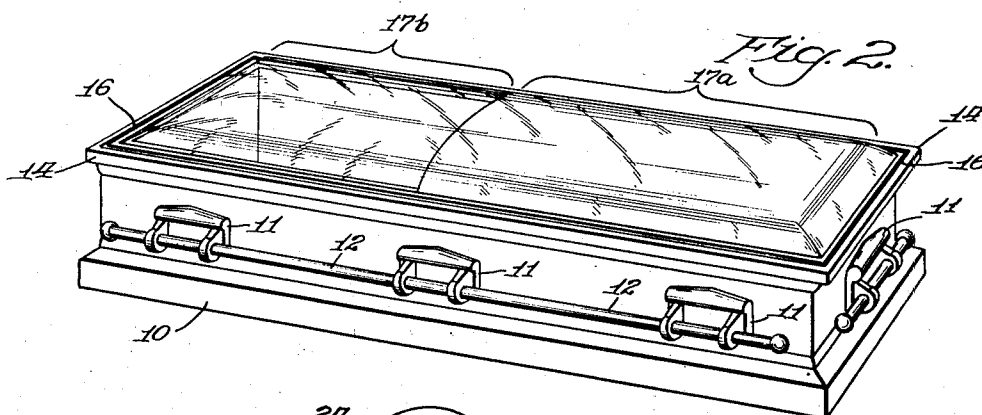


*Fig. 2.*

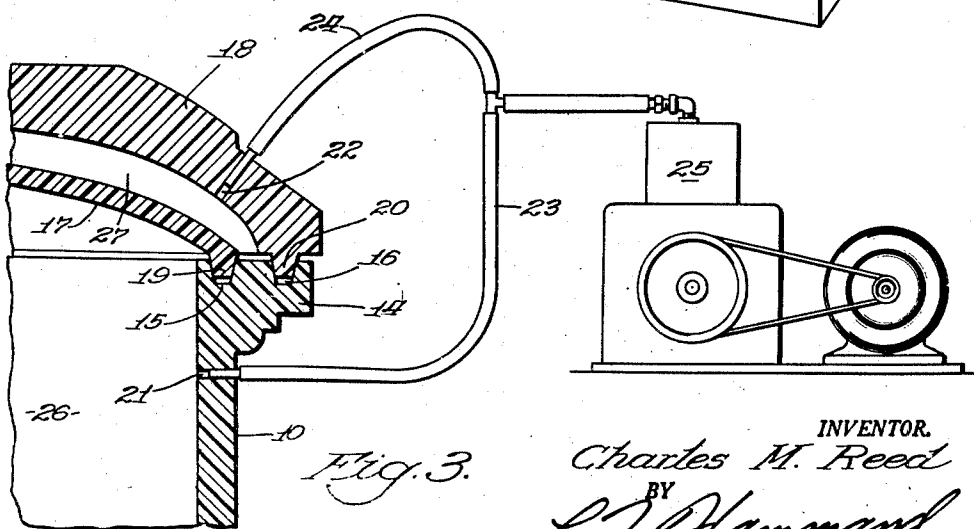


*Fig. 3.*

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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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## PLASTIC CASKET

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1 Claim. (Cl. 27-7)

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This invention relates to caskets and more specifically to a novel and improved casket structure particularly well suited to manufacture of plastic material and having features not heretofore known in the art.

The principal objects of the invention are to provide a casket formed of plastic material so that it is capable of being adequately and easily sealed against moisture, yet is inherently light in weight and attractive in appearance, without the necessity of painting, lacquering, or applying any other outer covering. The use of plastic material also facilitates economical mass-production, and since the caskets may be molded to form no reinforcing frame or understructure is required. It is contemplated that various plastic materials, both combustible and non-combustible, may be used, but for cremation purposes a combustible plastic is used.

A further object of the invention resides in the provision of a plastic casket formed in three separate pieces with an outer opaque cover to seal the casket at the time of burial, and an inner cover that is at least partially transparent, to permit viewing of the deceased during services.

A further object of the invention resides in the provision of a plastic casket having inner and outer covers, each adapted to be chemically fused to the base of the casket. This not only provides an adequate moisture seal after burial, but also permits the casket to be sealed during services as a precaution against spread of communicable diseases. Even though the casket is sealed, the transparent portion permits an unobstructed view of the inside. The cover and shell are both arranged so that they may be fused to the base of the casket without the use of cements or gaskets.

The foregoing objects are accomplished in this disclosure by provision of a casket formed entirely of plastic. Various plastics may be used, but it is contemplated that best results will be obtained by the use of a transparent plastic adapted for molding into relatively large sections; so that portions of the inner shell of the casket may be left transparent, and yet the casket base and cover may be made opaque or colored to any desired shade.

Referring now to the drawings attached hereto and forming a part of this disclosure,

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a casket constructed in accordance with these teachings, and shown with the outer cover in position,

Figure 2 is a perspective view similar to Fig-

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ure 1, showing the cover removed and the inner shell only in position, and

Figure 3 is a detailed fragmental sectional view through the sealing joint between the base of the casket, the shell and the cover, diagrammatically illustrating the means contemplated for partial rarefaction of the air inside of the casket.

The casket includes a base portion 10 which may be ornamental in form and will ordinarily be provided with a plurality of hand grips 11 or rails 12. These need not be molded with the casket structure, but can be easily attached by molding them separately of plastic and cementing or fusing them to the exterior surface of the casket base. The base 10 includes a marginal rim or ledge 14 with an inner V-shaped groove 15, and an outer V-shaped groove 16 extending completely around the base to provide tapered sealing surfaces for an inner shell 17 and an outer cover 18. The shell 17 includes a tapered tongue 19 fitted into the groove 15 and the outer cover 18 includes a similar tongue 20 adapted to be received in wedging engagement in the groove 16. It is contemplated that the cover 18 and base 10 be entirely opaque, but that the inner shell 17 have an opaque portion 17a over the lower end of the casket with a transparent window portion 17b at the upper end, so that the head and shoulders of the corpse will be visible, even with the inner shell 17 sealed in position. This permits the viewing of the deceased during the funeral services, yet provides an adequate safeguard against contagious diseases. Sealing of the casket requires no gaskets nor cement, and may be accomplished merely by flowing a small amount of plastic solvent in the grooves 15 and 16 and then placing the shell or cover 18 in position. The tapered surfaces of the tongues 19 and 20 wedge into the grooves and fuse themselves into sealing relationship with the base portion. This sealing may be facilitated by placing the shell only in place and then withdrawing some of the air from the inside of the casket, so that external air pressure will force the shell downwardly with considerable force and cause a perfect seal between the surfaces of the tongue and groove. To this end an air outlet port 21 is provided in the casket base. A similar port 22 is formed in the cover so that after the shell is sealed in position, both ports may be connected by air lines 23 and 24 respectively to a vacuum pump 25. Air is simultaneously extracted through the opening 21 from the cavity 26 and through the opening 22 from the cavity

27 between the inside shell 17 and the exterior cover. This effectively equalizes the pressures on the opposite sides of the relatively thin shell 17 so that it bears no strain, and permits a somewhat greater rarefaction of the air in order that atmospheric pressure will force the tongue 20 into intimate sealing relationship with the groove 16. The rarefaction of the air within the casket also assists in withdrawing any moisture or vapor within the casket so that it is entirely dry and condensation-proof.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that the teachings of this invention result in the provision of a casket that may be formed of combustible material so that it is well suited to cremation purposes, and at the same time is water resistant, decay resistant, impervious to the action of fungus and bacteria, and not subject to corrosion. It may be economically manufactured, particularly since various styles and designs may have the main portions of identical shape, and different types, sizes and styles of ornamental parts thereafter attached to give the finished caskets differing characteristics of appearance. Further, attractive appearance is achieved without the necessity of applying outer coverings, lacquers, or paints.

The casket permits a view of the deceased, but at the same time protects against the spread of contagious diseases. It not only provides a seal on the inside shell prior to burial, but the exterior opaque cover gives a double seal that prevents any possibility of the entrance of moisture. Moreover, these advantages are accomplished with a comparatively simple structure consisting of only three essential pieces, and the sealing is accomplished by an actual fusion of the plastic surfaces to each other so that any necessity for gaskets or fillers is eliminated.

While the form of the invention illustrated in the drawings is the present preferred construction, it is to be recognized that it is merely illustrative of the principles involved, and is not a limitation on the scope of the invention. It is accordingly pointed out that the invention is not limited to the precise structure shown, but extends equally to any variations and modifications within the terms of the following claim.

Having thus described the invention, what I

claim as new and desire to protect by United States Letters Patent is:

In a casket, the combination of a base portion of generally rectangular shape and formed of opaque plastic material having a marginal ledge around its outer edges with a pair of endless sealing surfaces comprising tapered interior and exterior grooves extending around the ledge and spaced apart from each other to support an interior cover shell and exterior top cover respectively, said grooves being adapted to receive a solvent material, an interior cover shell over the base portion to define an interior cavity of the casket, the shell comprising a single thin convex plastic sheet including a tapered marginal tongue adapted to be received in the inner sealing groove of the base ledge, an exterior cover comprising an opaque plastic top larger than the inner cover and also including a tapered marginal tongue adapted to fit in sealing engagement with the outer groove of the base ledge to seal the space between the top and the inner shell, together with an air port through the base portion and a second air port in said cover shell whereby a source of minus pressure and conduit means may be connected to both of said air ports to thereby apply a minus pressure to the interior cavity of said casket and the space between the convex plastic sheet and the exterior cover, and whereby atmospheric pressure on the surface of the exterior cover may be utilized to effect a pressure fusion of the tongue of the outer shell with the corresponding groove of the base portion.

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