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(54) **Customized container for transport and burial of a corpse**

(57) The present invention concerns a customized container (1) for transport and burial of a corpse, particularly a coffin, having a bottom, at least four side walls and a cover (2). The container is characterized in that it comprises at least one glass cover element (3) of predetermined width, length and thickness, removably associated by fastener means (4) with the cover (2) and/or with one or more of said at least four side walls, which at least

one glass element (3), when associated with said cover (2) and/or with one or more of said at least four side walls, at least partially covers the surface of said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls, and which at least one glass cover element (3), when removed from said cover (2) and/or from one or more of said at least four side walls, can be associated with another funeral product (5, 6, 7).

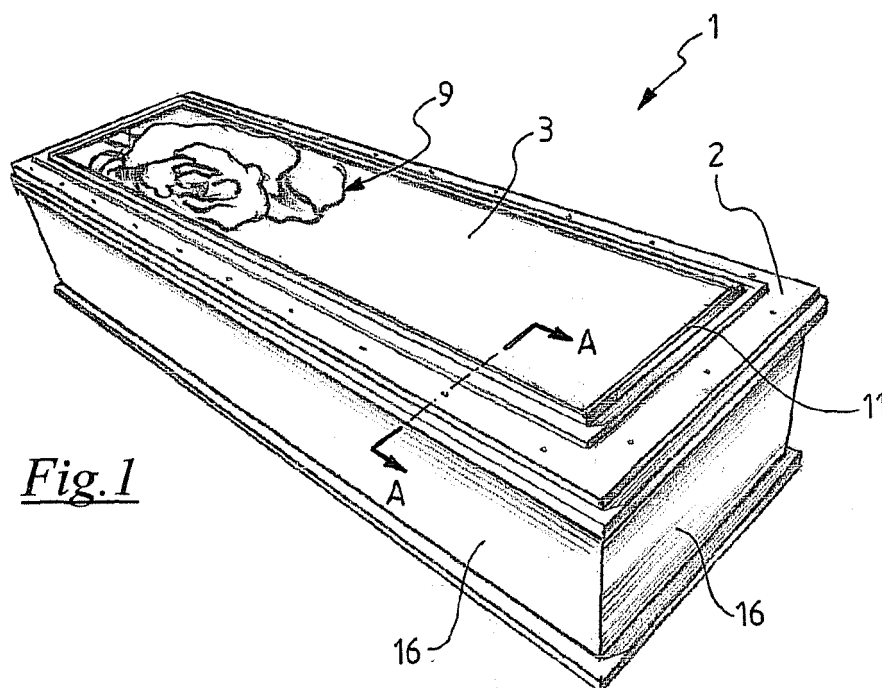


Fig. 1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a customized container for transport and burial of a corpse, particularly but without limitation a coffin, according to the preamble of claim 1.

[0002] Containers or coffins for transport and burial of a corpse are known in the art.

[0003] During a funeral, the attention of relatives, family or friends of the dead person is focused on the image of the coffin which, in spite of any customization with cloths, wreaths and objects dear to the dead person, may not fully meet the tastes, needs or requirements of such relatives, family or friends.

[0004] Particularly, the funeral is followed by burial of the coffin with the corpse therein or cremation.

[0005] A few tangible signs of the funeral day are left to the relatives and/or family as a memory of the dead person.

[0006] In most cases, the relatives, family or friends of the dead person receive the flowers that have been used to decorate the coffin or, in case of cremation, a cinerary urn.

[0007] Nevertheless, flowers have a short life and leave relatives with little or no memories of the funeral rite, whereas a cinerary urn is not directly associated with the funeral.

[0008] In view of the above state of the art, the object of the present invention is to preserve and perpetuate the memory of the funeral in the family, relatives or friends of the dead person, even after years from burial.

[0009] According to the present invention, this object is fulfilled by a customized container for transportation and burial of a corpse, particularly a coffin, according to claim 1.

[0010] With the present invention, the coffin may be given an identity, and be embellished with images (or decorations) printed on a glass cover element, that is removably associated with the cover and/or the side walls of the coffin.

[0011] Particularly, the printed images may be of various types, and may be possibly designed to meet the tastes of the family, relatives and/or friends of the dead person.

[0012] In addition to being impressed in the memory of the family, the image, preferably printed on the cover element, may be removed from the coffin at the end of the religious rite and be possibly associated with another funeral product, depending on the model.

[0013] For example, the cover element may form the cover of the buried coffin if the dead person is designed to be buried, of a niche if it is designed to be placed in a columbarium, or may become a cinerary urn in case of cremation.

[0014] Thus, the family will also find that image in the place of worship in which the loved one will be finally held.

[0015] This solution also provides advantages in terms of costs.

[0016] While the cost of the coffin comprising the cover element with the image or decoration preferably printed thereon is a little higher than average, in view of the advantage that the decorations on the glass are still useful after the end of the funeral, because they may later become a part (of economic relevance) of the grave, significant savings may be achieved.

[0017] The characteristics and advantages of the invention will appear from the following detailed description of one practical embodiment, which is illustrated without limitation in the annexed drawings, in which:

- Figure 1 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the customized container with the cover element associated with the cover of the container, according to the present invention;
- Figure 2 is a perspective view of a possible reuse of the cover element of Figure 1 on another funeral product, such as a burial grave;
- Figure 3 is a cross sectional view as taken across line A-A of Figure 1;
- Figure 4 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the customized container with the cover element associated with the cover of the container, according to the present invention;
- Figure 5 is a perspective view of a possible reuse of the cover element of Figure 4 on another funeral product, such as a cinerary urn;
- Figure 6 is a cross sectional view as taken across line B-B of Figure 4;
- Figure 7 is a perspective view of a third embodiment of the customized container with the cover element associated with the cover of the container, according to the present invention;
- Figure 8 is a perspective view of a possible reuse of the cover element of Figure 7 on another funeral product, such as a columbarium.

[0018] Referring to the annexed figures, numeral 1 generally designates a container for transport and burial of a corpse, which is preferably embodied as a wooden coffin.

[0019] The container 1 comprises a bottom, at least four side walls and at least one cover 2, whose dimensions may have the values commonly used in the field of transport and burial of corpses.

[0020] The container 1 has at least one glass cover element 3 which is advantageously removably associated with the cover 2 by fastener means 4.

[0021] The glass cover element 3 has predetermined length, width and thickness, which are a function of the size of the container 1 for which it is designed and, as described below in greater detail, of the funeral product with which it will be later associated after removal from the container 1.

[0022] In other words, the dimensions of the glass cover element 3, particularly width and length, are preferably at the most identical (i.e. not larger) than the width and

length dimensions of the container 1 and also the dimensions (i.e. the width and length) of such glass cover element 3 are compatible with the funeral product for which it is designed, once it has been removed from the container 1.

[0023] The thickness of the cover element 3 is negligible as compared with the length and/or width, preferably a few centimeters.

[0024] Preferably, the glass cover element 3 is embodied as a plate formed of glass, glass-ceramic or glass-reinforced plastic crystals.

[0025] It shall be first noted that the term funeral product is intended herein to designate the objects that are commonly used in the funeral field, such as burial grave (Figure 2), a cinerary urn 6 (Figure 5) or a columbarium 7 (Figure 8).

[0026] In the embodiments as shown in Figures 1, 4 and 6 and described below, the glass cover element 3 is shown in association with the cover 2 only.

[0027] Nevertheless, such glass cover element 3 may be designed to be removably associated with one or more of the at least four side walls of the container 1.

[0028] Particularly, when the glass cover element 3 is associated with the container 1, it is adapted to at least partially cover the top surface 15 (i.e. the one opposite to the bottom of the container 1) of the cover 2 and/or the outer surface 16 (i.e. the one opposite to the cadaver receiving area) of one or more of the side walls of the container 1.

[0029] Preferably, the glass cover element 3 at least partially covers the top surface 15 of the cover 2 and/or the outer surface 16 of one or more of the side walls of the container 1.

[0030] For example, in the embodiments as shown in Figures 4 and 7, the glass cover element 3 only covers a part of the top surface 15 of the cover 2, whereas in the embodiment of Figure 1 the glass cover element 3 covers almost the whole top surface 15 of the cover 2.

[0031] Preferably, the glass cover element 3 at least partially covers the top surface 15 of the cover 2 and/or the outer surface 16 of one or more of the side walls of the container 1.

[0032] This affords greater customization of the container 1, as explained in detail below.

[0033] Referring to Figure 1, the glass cover element 3 is shown as a single glass element that is designed to be re-associated to another funeral product, such as a burial grave 5, once it has been removed from the container 1.

[0034] Thus, the burial grave 5 is completed by reusing the glass element 3 that had covered the container 1 during the funeral.

[0035] Particularly, the cover element 3 covers the container 2 as long as it is associated therewith and becomes a gravestone when it is removed therefrom.

[0036] The width and length dimensions of the cover element 3 change according to the dimensions allowed for burial graves 5.

[0037] Referring to Figure 4, the glass cover element 3 is shown as being composed of a plurality of glass cover elements.

[0038] In the particular view of Figure 4, the glass cover element 3 is composed of four glass elements 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D, for instance arranged in side-by-side relation along a predetermined direction of extension that may be the direction of the longer side of the container 1.

[0039] Other arrangements may be envisaged, such as one or more elements on the surface 15 of the container 2 and others on one or more of the outer surfaces 16 of the side walls.

[0040] Once the above mentioned four glass elements 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D have been removed from the container 1, they may be used to be re-associated with four walls, preferably the side walls, of the cinerary urn 6, as shown in Figure 5.

[0041] The sizes of the four glass elements 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D depend on the sizes of currently available cinerary urns.

[0042] Referring now to Figure 7, the glass cover element 3 represents a portion of an ornamental glass element 8.

[0043] Particularly, the ornamental glass element 8 is preferably permanently associated with the cover 2 and/or one or more of said at least four side walls of the container 3.

[0044] Permanent association of the ornamental glass element 8 with the cover 2 (or with one or more of the four side walls) may be obtained by methods known to those of ordinary skill in the art.

[0045] In other words, the cover element 3 is removably associated with the top surface 15 of the cover 2 (or with one or more of the four side walls) whereas the ornamental element 8 is permanently associated with the surface 15 of the cover 2 (or one or more of the four side walls).

[0046] It shall be noted that the ornamental glass element 8 is adapted to at least partially or integrally cover the exposed surface of the cover 2 and/or one or more of said at least four side walls.

[0047] The ornamental glass element 8 is also preferably embodied as a plate of predetermined length, width and thickness, formed of glass, glass-ceramic or glass-reinforced plastic crystals.

[0048] It shall be noted that, in one embodiment, the thickness of the ornamental glass element 8 is selected to coincide with the thickness of the cover element 3, to create a seamless surface between said ornamental and cover elements.

[0049] The glass cover element 3 (and also the ornamental glass element 8) has a surface for a first image 9 to be printed (or alternatively for a decoration to be adhered) thereon, which is customizable according to the tastes of the family of the deceased.

[0050] This image 9 is visible to the family when the glass cover element 3 is associated with the cover.

[0051] The image 9 preferably extends over a limited

portion of the surface of the cover element 3 although it can also extend over the whole surface thereof.

[0052] In the embodiments of the figures, the image 9 has, for instance, the form of a rose (Figure 1, 2, 4 and 5) or the face of Jesus Christ (Figure 7 and 8).

[0053] Due to the particular materials selected for the glass cover element 3 (glass-ceramic, glass-reinforced plastic, glass crystals) the image reproduced thereon is preserved with time, as said materials are resistant to weather and/or atmospheric agents.

[0054] Thus, each time that the relatives of the deceased are before the burial grave 5, the cinerary urn 6 or the columbarium 7, they will remember the funeral rite.

[0055] Particularly, the family, relatives and/or friends will find the image 9 supported by the cover element 3 that was on the container 1 during the funeral.

[0056] The strength with which the memory will be evoked by the family will depend on its connection with the image of the deceased, and on the extension of such image as compared with the surface of the cover 2 and/or one or more of the four side walls.

[0057] It shall be noted that the ornamental glass element 8 may have a second image 10 (or a decoration) on a surface thereof, which is printed on such surface to be visible to the family when the ornamental glass element 8 is associated with the cover 2.

[0058] Once again, the second image 10 can be customized according to the family's tastes.

[0059] In a preferred embodiment, with reference to Figure 7, the image 9 printed on the cover element 3 is a smaller-scale version of the image 10 on the ornamental element 8.

[0060] Preferably, the cover 2 and/or one or more of said at least four side walls of the container 1 has a seat 13 designed to receive the at least one glass cover element 2.

[0061] Particularly, also referring to Figure 3 or 6, the seat 13 is shown as being defined in the thickness of the cover 2 and/or one or more of said at least four side walls.

[0062] Particularly, the seat 13 is defined in the thickness of the cover 2 and/or one or more of the at least four side walls from the outer surface to the area of the container 1 that is designed to receive the cadaver.

[0063] It should be noted that the depth of the seat 13 is preferably equal to or smaller than the thickness of the glass cover element 3.

[0064] This prevents the glass cover element 3, in the preferred embodiment, from jutting out of the outer surface of the cover 2 (or the one or more side walls to which it may be attached).

[0065] In order that the glass cover element 3 may be removably associated with the cover 2, the container 1 includes the fastener means 4, which are composed of:

- a frame 11 abutting along at least a portion of the periphery of the glass cover element 3 and/or
- a plurality of screws 12 for holding the glass cover element 3 against the frame 11 and the cover 2

and/or one or more of said at least four walls.

[0066] Otherwise, the fastener means 4 are provided in the form of adhesive materials, such as silicone, double-sided adhesive tape or the like, whose holding force may be easily overcome with or without the use of tools.

[0067] Such materials are interposed between the bottom surface 14 (i.e. the one opposite to the surface with the image 9 thereon) of the glass element 3 and the top surface 15 (i.e. the one opposite to the bottom of the container 1) of the cover 2, when the glass element 3 abuts against the cover 2.

[0068] At the end of the funeral, e.g. before burial of the container in a grave cut (not shown), the glass cover element 3 is removed from the cover 2 and/or one or more of the at least four side walls, to be associated with another funeral product 5, 6 or 7.

[0069] This operation particularly consists in removing the fastener means 4 to release the cover element 3.

[0070] In the embodiment of the figures, such removal operation consists in unscrewing the screws 12 and removing the frame 11 from the seat.

[0071] Thus, the cover element 3 is free and removable from the container 1.

[0072] Advantageously, the cover element 3 may become, depending on its size, the burial grave stone 7, or the walls of the cinerary urn 6 or a decorative element of the columbarium 7.

[0073] Those skilled in the art will obviously appreciate that a number of changes and variants may be made to the customizable container for transport and burial of a corpse according to the invention as described hereinbefore to meet specific needs, without departure from the scope of the invention, as defined in the following claims.

Claims

1. A customized container (1) for transport and burial of a corpse, particularly a coffin, comprising a bottom, at least four side walls and a cover (2), **characterized in that** it comprises at least one glass cover element (3) of predetermined width, length and thickness, removably associated by fastener means (4) with the cover (2) and/or with one or more of said at least four side walls, which at least one glass element (3), when associated with said cover (2) and/or with one or more of said at least four side walls, at least partially covers the surface of said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls, and which at least one glass cover element (3), when removed from said cover (2) and/or from one or more of said at least four side walls, can be associated with another funeral product (5, 6, 7).
2. A container as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls

comprises a seat (13) designed to receive said at least one glass cover element (3), said seat (13) being defined within the thickness of said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls, said seat (13) having a thickness equal to or smaller than the thickness of said glass cover element (3).

3. A container as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said fastener means (4) for removably fastening said glass cover element (3) to said cover and/or one or more of said at least four walls comprise:

- a frame (11) abutting along at least a portion of the periphery of the glass cover element (3) and/or
- a plurality of screws (12) for holding said at least one glass cover element against said frame (11) and said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four walls.

4. A container as claimed in claim 1, wherein said glass cover element (3) is associated with the outer or exposed surface of said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls of said container (1).

5. A container as claimed in claim 1, wherein said glass cover element (3) has a first image (9) on one surface thereof, which is customizable and visible when said glass cover element (3) is associated with said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls.

6. A container as claimed in claim 1, wherein said glass cover element (3) represents a portion of an ornamental glass element (8), said ornamental glass element (8) being permanently associated with said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls, said ornamental glass element (8) having predetermined width, length and depth and being adapted to at least partially cover the surface of said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls.

7. A container as claimed in claim 6, wherein said ornamental glass element (8) has a second image (10) on one surface thereof, which is visible when said ornamental glass element (8) is associated with said cover (2) and/or one or more of said at least four side walls, said second image (10) being customizable.

8. A container as claimed in claims 5 and 7, wherein said first image (9) is a smaller-scale version of said second image (10).

9. A container as claimed in claim 7, wherein said second image (10) extends in a seamless fashion when said cover element is removed from said ornamental glass element.

10. A container as claimed in one or more of the preced-

ing claims, wherein said ornamental glass element (8) and/or said glass cover element (3) are plates made of glass, glass-ceramic or glass-reinforced plastic crystals, of predetermined width, length and thickness, wherein the length-by-width size of said plates is at the most substantially identical to the length-by-width size of said cover (2) and/or one of said at least four side walls.

11. A container as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said glass cover element (3) covers at least ten percent of the surface of said cover and/or one or more of said side walls.

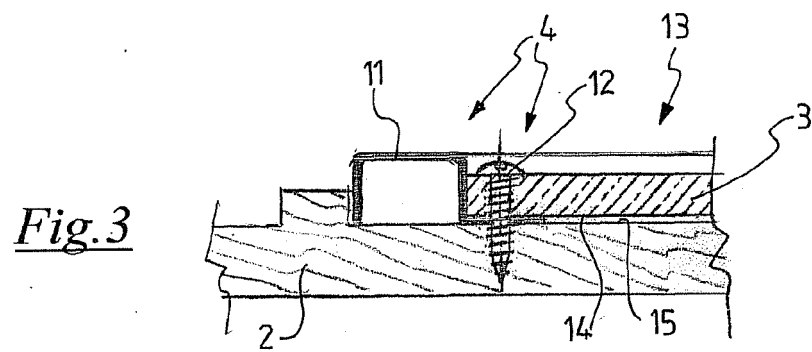
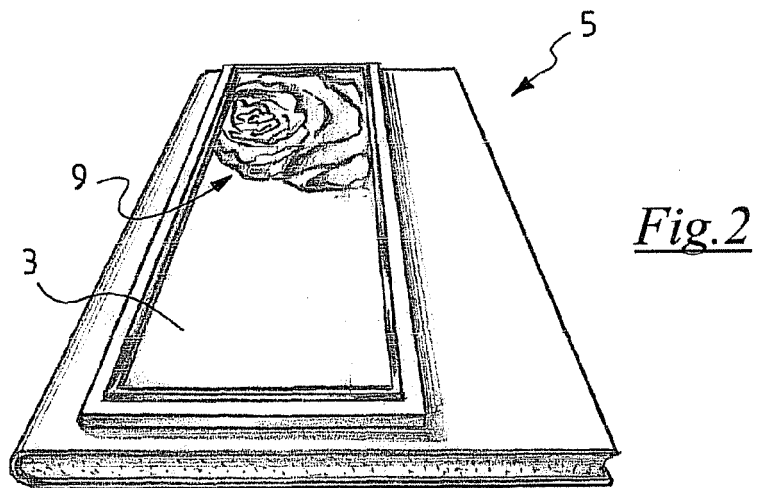
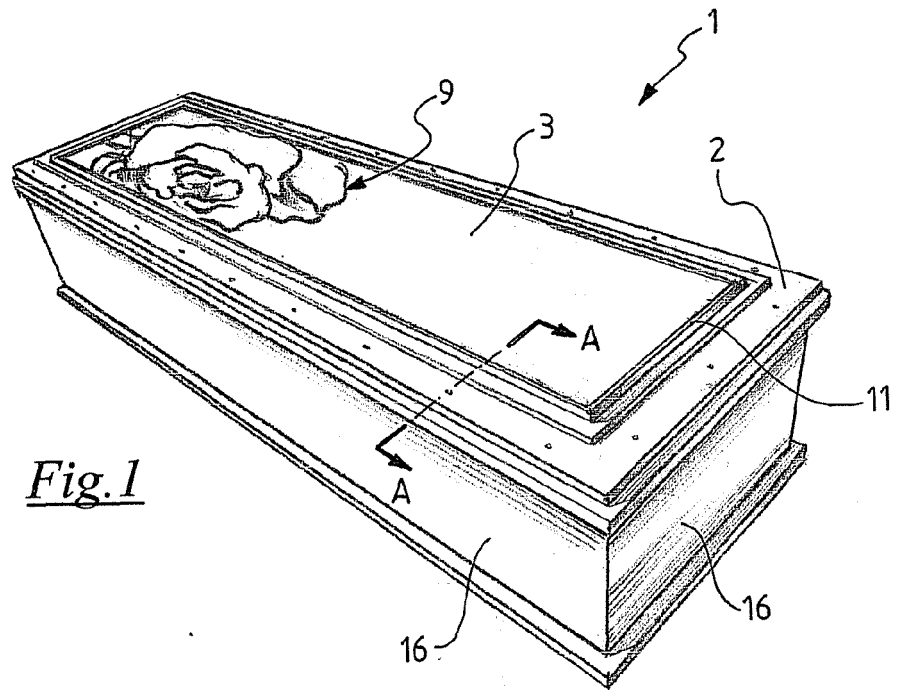
12. A method of customizing a container for transport and burial of a corpse, including the steps of:

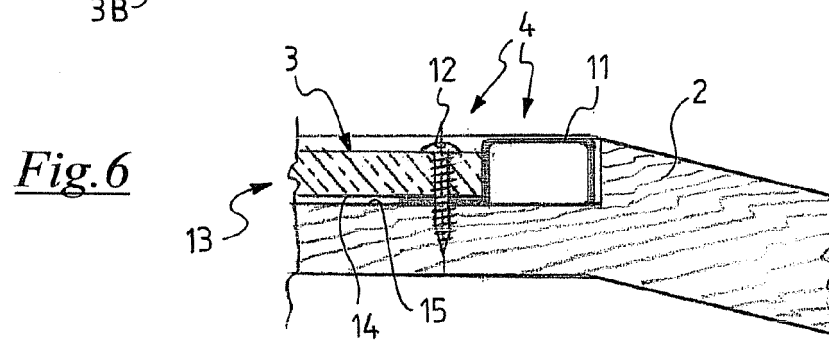
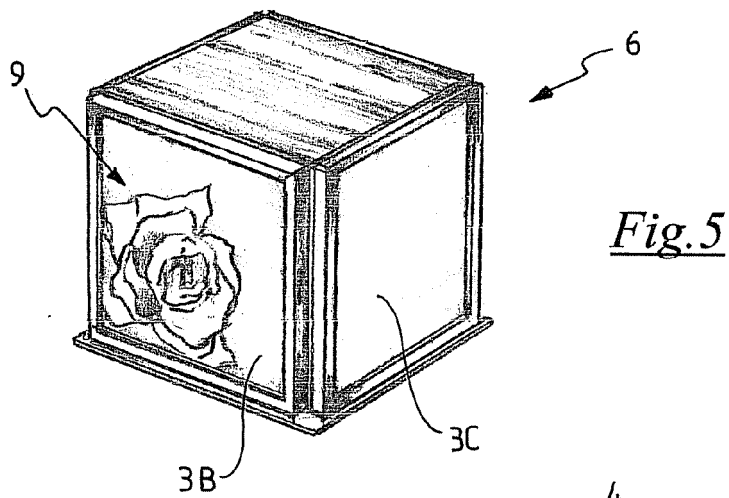
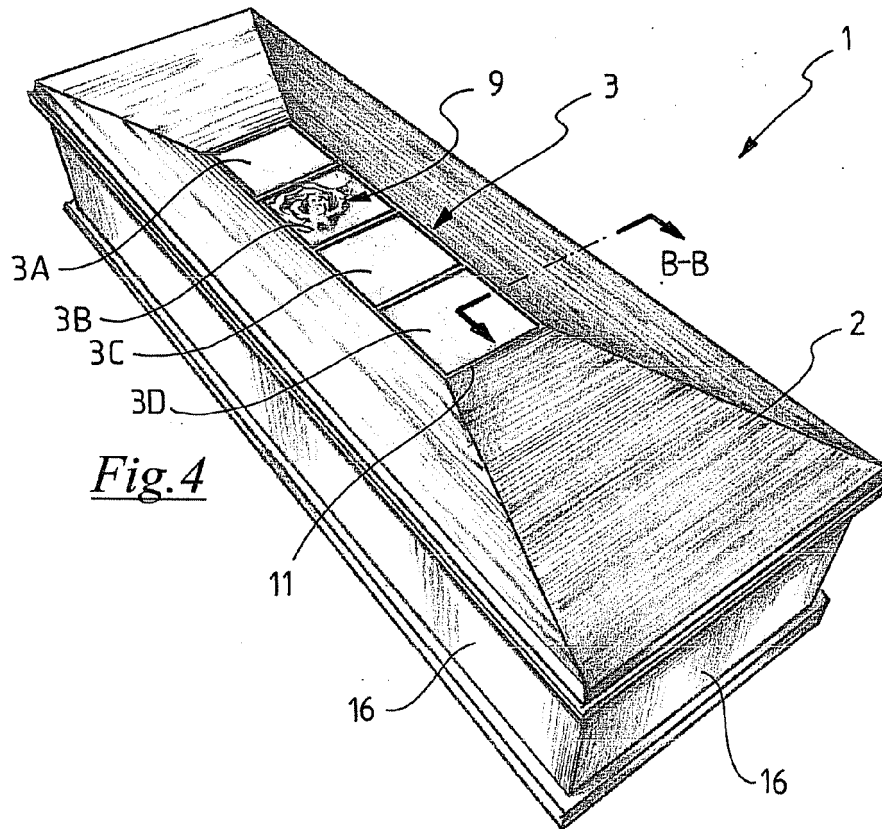
- providing a container (1) for transport and burial of a corpse having a bottom, at least four side walls and a cover (2);
- providing at least one glass cover element (3) of predetermined width, length and thickness;

characterized in that it comprises the step of:

- removably associating said at least one glass cover element (3) with the surface of said cover (2) and/or one or more of said side walls for covering at least ten percent of the surface of said cover and/or one or more of said at least four side walls.

13. A method as claimed in claim 12, comprising the additional step of associating the glass cover element with another funeral product (5, 6, 7) selected from the group comprising a burial grave (5), a columbarium (7) or a cinerary urn (6), once said glass cover element (3) has been removed from the cover (2) and/or one or more of the side walls of said container (1).





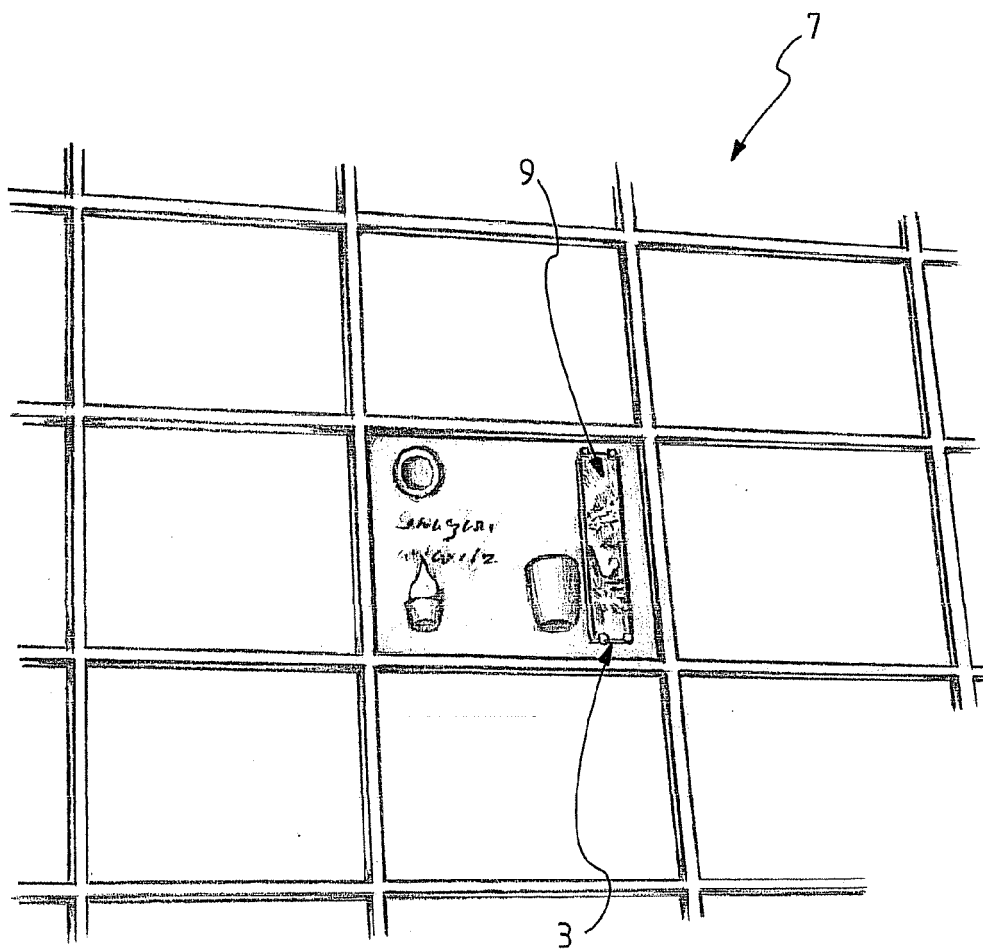


Fig. 8

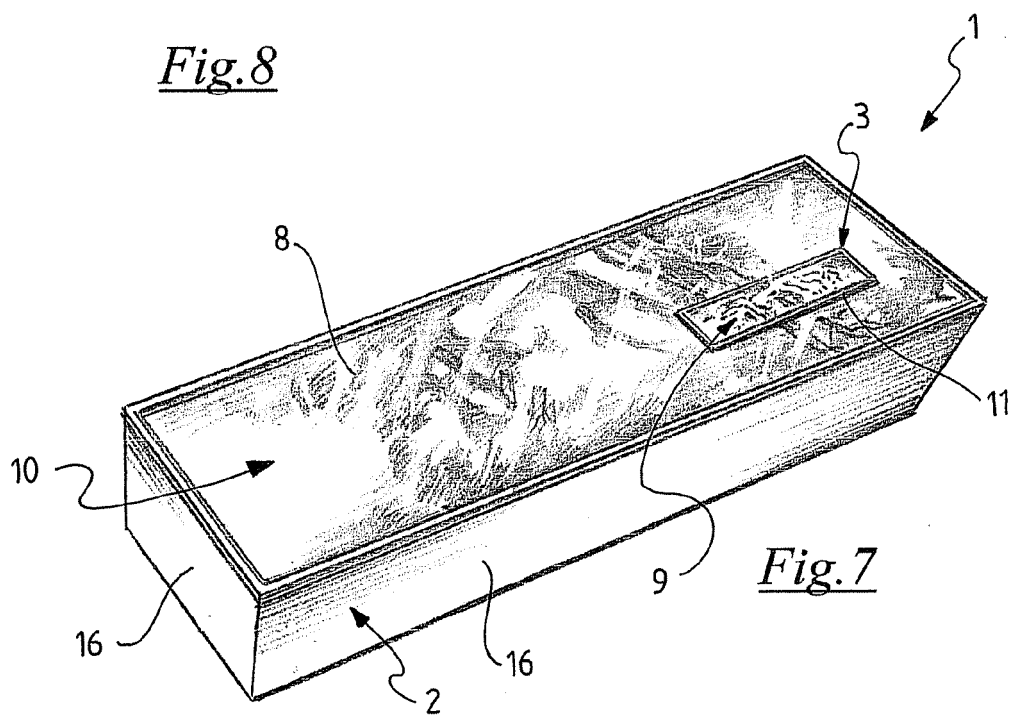


Fig. 7



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 10 42 5134

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
X	US 5 533 241 A (MCCONNELL JERRY M [US]) 9 July 1996 (1996-07-09) * column 4, line 42 - line 54; figures 1,3 *	1-13	INV. A61G17/04 A47G1/06 A47G1/14
X	US 4 199 848 A (KOHNER HOWARD W [US]) 29 April 1980 (1980-04-29) * column 3, line 33 - line 44 *	1-13	
X	US 1 343 280 A (REYNOLDS) 15 June 1920 (1920-06-15) * page 2, left-hand column, line 1 - right-hand column, line 85; figures 1,2,4-6 *	1,2,4-12	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			A61G A47G
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 15 September 2010	Examiner Godot, Thierry
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 10 42 5134

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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15-09-2010

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 5533241	A	09-07-1996	NONE	
US 4199848	A	29-04-1980	NONE	
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