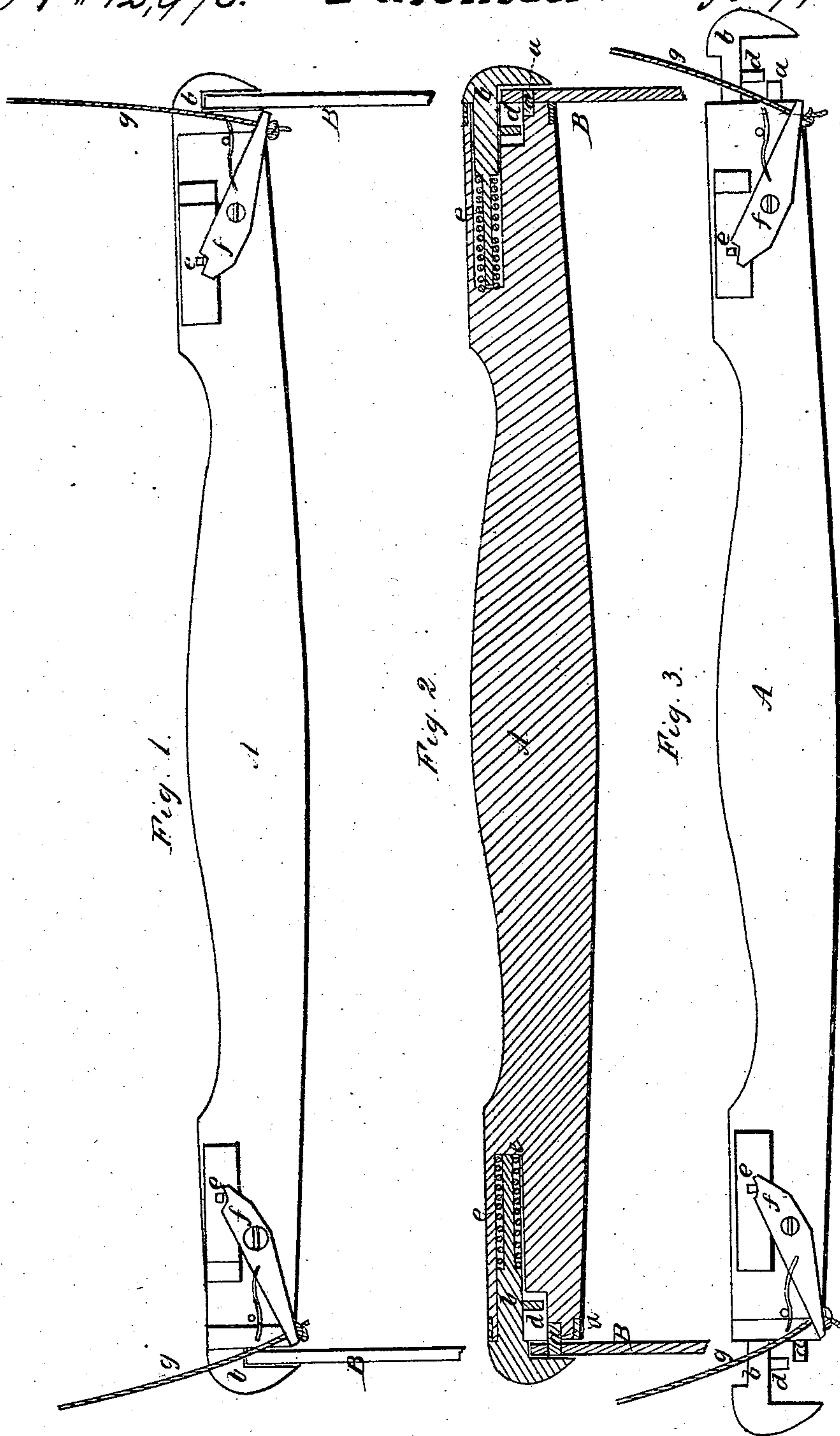


H. & A. Webster.  
Whiffletree.

N<sup>o</sup> 12,976. Patented May 29, 1855.



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HARVEY WEBSTER AND ALONZO WEBSTER, OF MONTPELIER, VERMONT.

## WHIFFLETREE.

Specification of Letters Patent No. 12,976, dated May 29, 1855.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that we, HARVEY WEBSTER and ALONZO WEBSTER, of Montpelier, in the county of Washington and State of Vermont, have invented an improvement in mechanism by which a horse may be suddenly disengaged from a carriage while running away with the same or whenever required to be detached from it quickly; and we do hereby declare that our invention is fully described and represented in the following specification and the accompanying drawings, letters, figures, and references thereof.

Of the said drawings, Figure 1, exhibits a top view of a whiffletree having our improvement applied to it. Fig. 2, is a horizontal section of the same, such also exhibiting the traces as applied to said whiffletree. Fig. 3, is a top view of the whiffletree as it appears when its spring clamps are thrown outward, and the traces are discharged from their stationary pins or holders.

In these drawings A, denotes the whiffletree from each end of which there projects a stationary pin, *a*. In rear of this pin there is arranged on the whiffletree, a sliding clamp *b*, which is formed as seen in the drawings and forced outward by means of a spring, *c*. Projecting from the shank of said clamp and toward the pin or holder, *a*, is a stud, *d*, which may be termed the "cast off" its purpose being to discharge a trace B, from the pin or holder, *a*, when the clamp *b*, is unlatched and is being sprung outward.

The rear end of each trace is formed with a hole through it for the reception of the pin, *a*, and there is projecting upward from the shank of the clamp, *b*, and through the whiffletree, a stud, *e*, which operates in connection with a spring lever latch, *f*, formed and arranged on the whiffletree as seen in the drawings. When the clamp, *b*, is forced into the whiffletree to its greatest extent it, will be maintained in such position by the spring latch taking upon the stud, *e*. Under these circumstances, should the lever latch be moved so as to be thrown out of engagement with the stud, *e*, the clamp, *b*, will be set free and thrown forward by the spring, its cast off being carried against the

trace so as to throw the latter off its pin and thus disengage it from the whiffletree. A cord, *g*, is attached to the outer arms of the spring lever latches and extends upward within reach of a person in the carriage. By pulling on the cord, both traces simultaneously may be set free from the whiffletree.

Our invention, in comparison with others of a like character, has many advantages. It enables the traces to be hitched to the whiffletree with great facility and ease, and to be securely confined thereto without danger of being detached by the ordinary movements of the carriage or horse. It also enables them to be readily unhitched from the whiffletree whenever an accident occurs or is likely to occur, either while the carriage is in motion or at rest. In case the whiffletree should become disconnected from the carriage that it may fall downward, the cords being supposed to be fastened to the carriage, its weight acting on the cord will disengage it from the tugs or traces. So in case a horse runs away with a carriage and it is overthrown or the body of the carriage thrown from the fore wheels, the horse will be disengaged from the whiffletree.

We do not claim combining with a whiffletree a means of suddenly disengaging the traces therefrom, while a horse connected to it is running; nor do we claim combining with the whiffletree, a means of disconnecting it from the carriage under like circumstances, but

What we do claim is—

The arrangement and combination of the movable spring clamp, *b*, its cast off, *d*, its spring latch, *f*, and the stationary pin, *a*, or holder, the whole being applied to each end of the whiffletree and made to operate substantially in manner and for the purpose as specified.

In testimony whereof, we, have hereunto set our signatures this 5th day of May A. D. 1855.

HARVEY WEBSTER.  
ALONZO WEBSTER.

Witnesses:

HENRY G. HUTCHINS,  
SILAS PARKER.