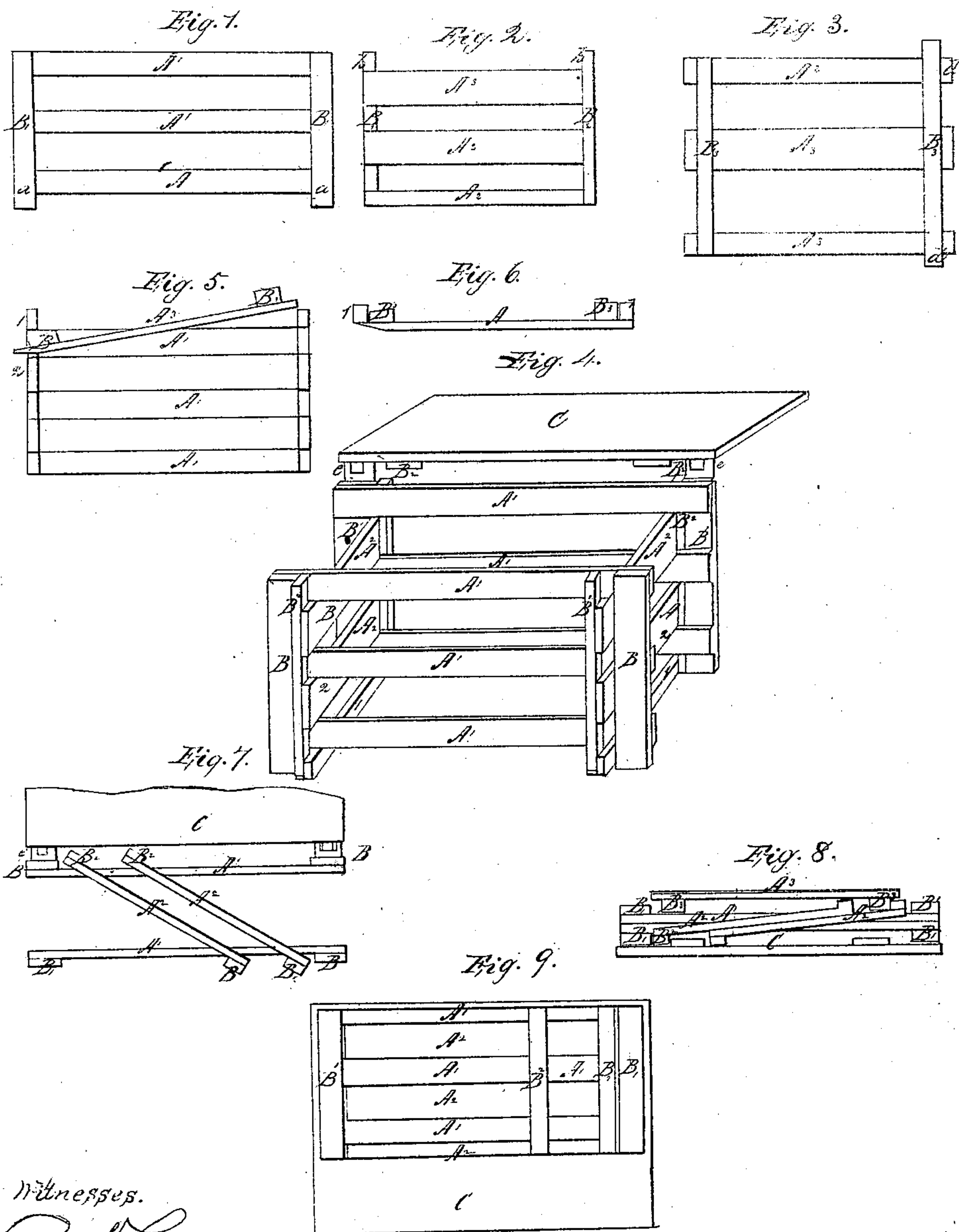


W. Gilbert,
Fruit Crate,
N^o 53,437. Patented Mar. 27, 1866.



Witnesses.
James B. Sanders

Inventor.
William Gilbert

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILLIAM GILBERT, OF CATSKILL, NEW YORK.

IMPROVEMENT IN CRATES FOR CARRYING FRUIT.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 53,437, dated March 27, 1866.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM GILBERT, of Catskill, State of New York, have invented a new and useful Method of Constructing Crates for the Holding and Carriage of Fruits, Vegetables, and Similar Articles, so that they can be folded up when not in use or for purposes of transportation; and I declare the following specification, with the drawings forming part thereof, to be a full and complete description of my invention.

Similar letters in the different drawings denote the same parts of the apparatus.

My crates are constructed with front, rear, and bottom of slat-work frames, with a solid top.

Figure 1 exhibits the form of the front and rear frames; Fig. 2, of the ends, and Fig. 3 of the bottom frame bottom upward. They consist of slats $A^1 A^2 A^3$, held together by stiles $B^1 B^2 B^3$. In the front and rear the stiles are upon the ends of the slats, both upon the same side, and extending a short distance below them at *a*. In the ends the stiles are also upon the ends of the slats, but on different sides, and extending above them at *b*. In the bottom the stiles are on the lower sides of the slats and a small distance from the ends, all as shown in the drawings.

The frames and top are put together as shown in Fig. 4, which is a perspective view of the crate. The frames interlace with each other, not fastened together, but left free to slide in and upon each other. The top *C* is hinged to the back frame at *c*, so as to be folded back against it.

To complete the crate the bottom must be attached. It is done in this way: The frame being put in place, the top is shut down and secured down upon the front side. The whole is then to be turned upside down, when the position of the end slats will be as shown in profile section by Figs. 5 and 6, 1 being the bottom slat and 2 the next above it. (See Fig. 4.)

The bottom frame, which is made in breadth to fit between the front and back frames, with its stiles lying just between the end slats, is placed as shown in Fig. 5, one end, with its stile, which is beveled for that purpose, being inserted between slats 1 and 2 until the other end clears the opposite slat, 1. It is then to be dropped down until the end clears the slat,

when it is to be moved into the position shown by Fig. 6, where, when the crate is turned back to its former position, Fig. 4, the bottom will remain as placed and hold the whole framework in its proper form. The top may be made of slat-work, if desired.

The process of folding the crate is thus: First, the bottom frame is to be taken out; second, the top to be thrown back into the position shown in Fig. 4; third, the front and rear frames to be pressed toward each other, the end frames shifting into the directions shown by Fig. 7, which is a plan view, until the front and rear frames touch each other; then the top *C* is to be turned back against the back frame and the whole turned with the top underneath, then the bottom frame placed upon the whole, when the affair will present in front profile the appearance shown in Fig. 8.

Fig. 9 is a plan view, showing the appearance of the folded crate before the bottom is placed upon it.

The value of this improvement will be manifest when the enormous daily traffic in fruits and vegetables carried to market on steamboats and railway-trains is considered, and the very great cost to return the empty crates to the depots of supply, the price being in proportion to the cubic space occupied by the crates. The construction above described reduces the return crate to less than one-third of its market bulk, and consequently reduces its cost of transportation by that proportion. The amount thus saved to the community is to be measured by hundreds of thousands of dollars in the State of New York alone. The saving of storage-room when these crates are out of service is also a matter of considerable consequence in the economy of their use.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

The combination of front, rear, end, and bottom frames, formed and arranged as described, with a solid or frame-work top or lid, to form crates for the holding and carrying of fruits or vegetables or similar articles, in manner as set forth in the within specification.

WILLIAM GILBERT.

Witnesses:

RICHD. VARICK DE WITT,
JAMES B. SANDERS.