S. H. CHAPMAN.

Stage-Ships for Theaters.

No. 150,396. Patented May 5, 1874.

Fig. 1.

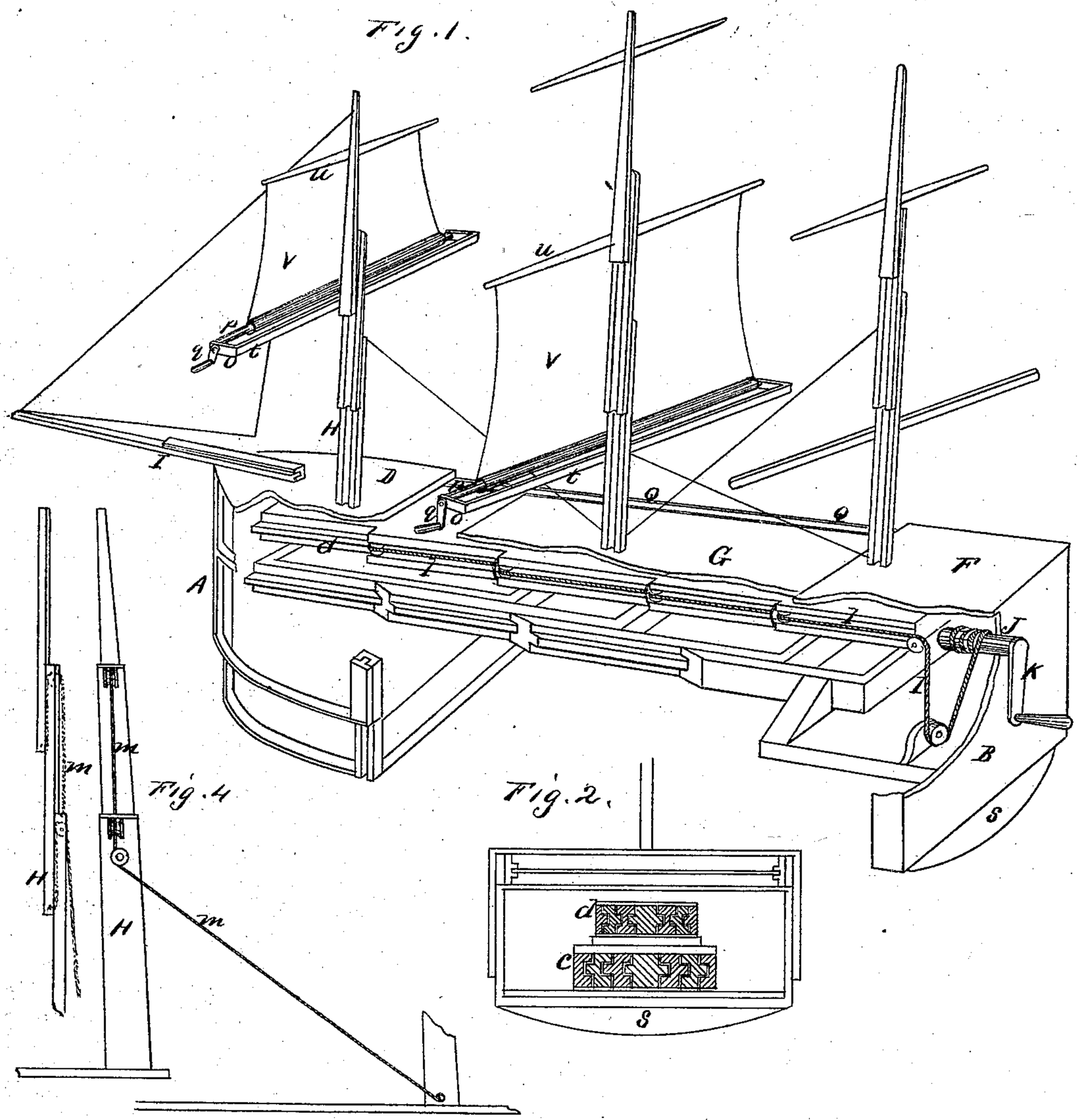

Fig. 4

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Witnesses

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SAMUEL H. CHAPMAN, OF SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA.

IMPROVEMENT IN STAGE-SHIPS FOR THEATERS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **150,396**, dated May 5, 1874; application filed October 15, 1873.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, SAMUEL H. CHAPMAN, of Sacramento city and county, State of California, have invented a Stage-Ship; and I do hereby declare the following description and accompanying drawings are sufficient to enable any person skilled in the art or science to which it most nearly appertains to make and use my said invention, without further invention or experiment.

The object of my invention is to provide a ship for stage or scenic purposes which can be gradually enlarged from a diminutive model to a large ship, and thus give the appearance of a ship in full sail approaching from a distance.

In my stage-ship the hull, masts, decks, sides, and sails are made telescopic, and are all extended simultaneously by means of ropes wound up on a windlass or winch-shaft in the stern of the boat, which is operated by a crank.

In order to more fully illustrate and explain my invention, reference is had to the accompanying drawing forming a part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of my ship. Fig. 2 is a transverse section of the same. Fig. 3 is a plan view. Fig. 4 is a detail view, showing the operation of the masts.

A is the bow of my stage-ship, embracing the forward part of the vessel as far back as the swell of the bow extends. B is the stern of the ship. These two parts are connected together by means of extension-slides *c c d d*, which slide upon one another. I usually employ two sets of slides, one above the other, as shown, in order to give greater strength, and to better accommodate the construction and operation of extending or enlarging the ship. These slides are secured to the forward part or bow A inside of the hull, and also to the rear part B in the same manner, so that when they are closed to shorten the ship, they will be concealed inside of the vessel. The number of lengths to be employed in each series of slides will be regulated according to the amount of extension required. The forward or bow portion A has a deck, D, while the stern has a similar deck, F, these two decks coming almost together when the ship is drawn together into a small compass. A short deck-section, G, which is somewhat narrower than the decks D F, is secured upon the upper series of slides *d*, between the bow and stern decks, so that in shortening the ship the end decks will pass over it. The foremast H is secured upon the bow-deck D, the mainmast upon the middle deck-section G, and the mizzen-mast upon the stern-deck F. Each mast is composed of two or more sliding sections, which are arranged to be extended upward as the vessel is lengthened. The bowsprit and jib-boom I are arranged as slides, to be extended in the same manner. At the stern of the vessel is a windlass, J, which is mounted inside of the stern portion of the boat, the crank K extending to the outside at the point where the rudder is usually placed, so that it can be turned by hand. A cord, *l*, is attached to the rear end of the first slide in each of the series *c d*, and is then led forward around a pulley at the forward end of the second slide, thence forward around a pulley at the forward end of the third slide, and its opposite end is attached to the fourth slide, and so on until the last cord passes around the windlass J. Thus, it will be seen that the slides operate simultaneously to extend the ship. A continuous cord or rope, *m*, is also attached to the sliding sections of each of the masts in the same manner, passing over pulleys at alternate ends, and thence passing across to the foot of the next mast, to which it is secured in the manner of ships' stays.

As the vessel is extended in length, the masts are separated farther apart, thus drawing upon the ropes *m*, and extending the masts upward. The yard-arms can also be made telescopic and extended in the same manner. The hull of the ship is also arranged to extend upward as the ship lengthens. The lower yard-arm *t* on each mast has an end piece, *o*, secured to each end at right angles to the arm. A shaft, *p*, extends parallel with the arm, bearing at each end in the end pieces *o*. A small crank, *q*, at one end serves to wind up this shaft. The upper end of each sail *v* is secured to the upper yard-arm *u*, while its foot or lower end is secured to the shaft *p*, upon which it is wound as it slackens when the masts are lowered; but when the masts are extended the sail unwinds itself. The sides of the

ship are formed of a piece of painted canvas, cloth, or other flexible material, Q, of the desired width, the forward end being fastened to the bow, while the end at the stern of the vessel is secured to an upright shaft, R, which is operated by a crank, *r*, on the upper deck. When the vessel is shortened, these canvas sides are wound up on the shaft R; but as it is lengthened, the shaft is unwound and the sides extended automatically. The uncovered portion of the deck between the middle and end deck-sections will be filled out with separate pieces, and these pieces can either be placed in position by hand, or cord-connections can be employed for drawing them out automatically by the extension of the ship's length.

A stage-ship might be constructed in which the length is only extended without extending the masts or the shaft and crank at the rear, and the operating cords and pulleys might be dispensed with, and the ship extended by other means, which might be readily suggested. The vessel is mounted upon rockers *s s*, so that a rolling or rocking motion similar to the rolling of a ship at sea can be imparted to it.

In practice my stage-ship will be fitted out with all the rigging and paraphernalia of a regular sailing-ship. This ship is intended to be employed upon the stage of a theater to represent a ship approaching under full sail. At first it will appear quite small and in the distance. A person at the stern turns the crank; gradually the ship extends in length; gradually the masts move upward; gradually the sails, still taut, accommodate themselves to the extending masts; rolling as in the sea, she still enlarges as if approaching nearer, until finally, complete in all her appointments, and apparently filling the entire space furnished by the stage, she appears a full-sized ship.

By the above-described construction and arrangement, a stage-ship which will close up into a length of eight or ten feet can be extended to forty or fifty feet in length, providing a spectacular tableau of great beauty and novelty.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The bow-section A and stern-section B of a ship, when connected by one or more series of slides, substantially as and for the purpose above described.

2. An extensible stage-ship's hull, in combination with extension-masts, substantially as and for the purpose above described.

3. The yard-arms *t*, with their end pieces *o* and parallel shaft *p*, in combination with the upper yard-arm *u* and sail *v*, substantially as and for the purpose above described.

4. The canvas or other flexible side Q of an extension stage-ship, one end of which is secured to the bow of the ship, while the opposite end is secured to an upright shaft or roller R at the rear of the ship, substantially as and for the purpose above described.

In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and seal.

SAM. H. CHAPMAN. [L. S.]

Witnesses:

JOHN L. BOONE,

C. M. RICHARDSON.