

(No Model.)

J. ROBERTSON.
SELF LEVELING HAMMOCK.

No. 249,403.

Patented Nov. 8, 1881.

Fig. 1.

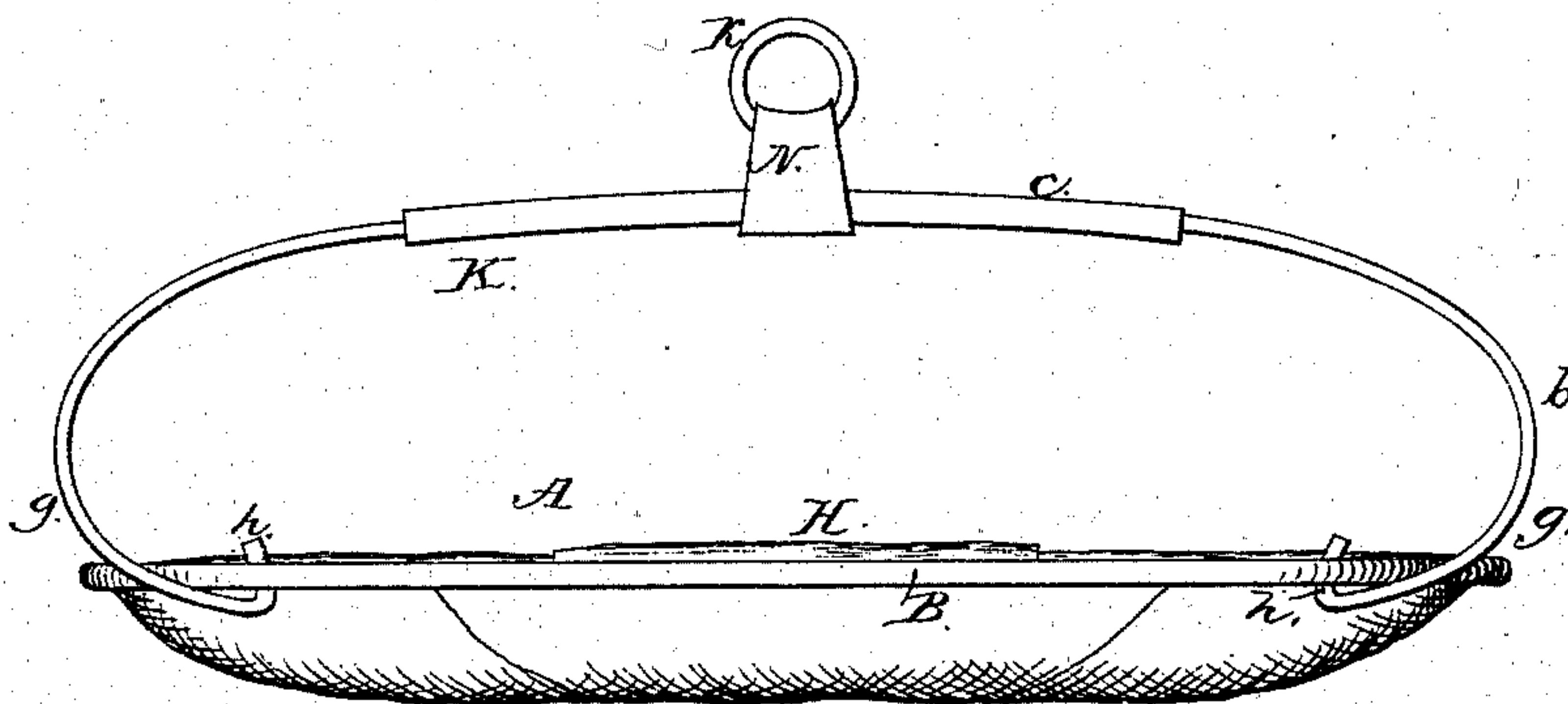


Fig. 2.

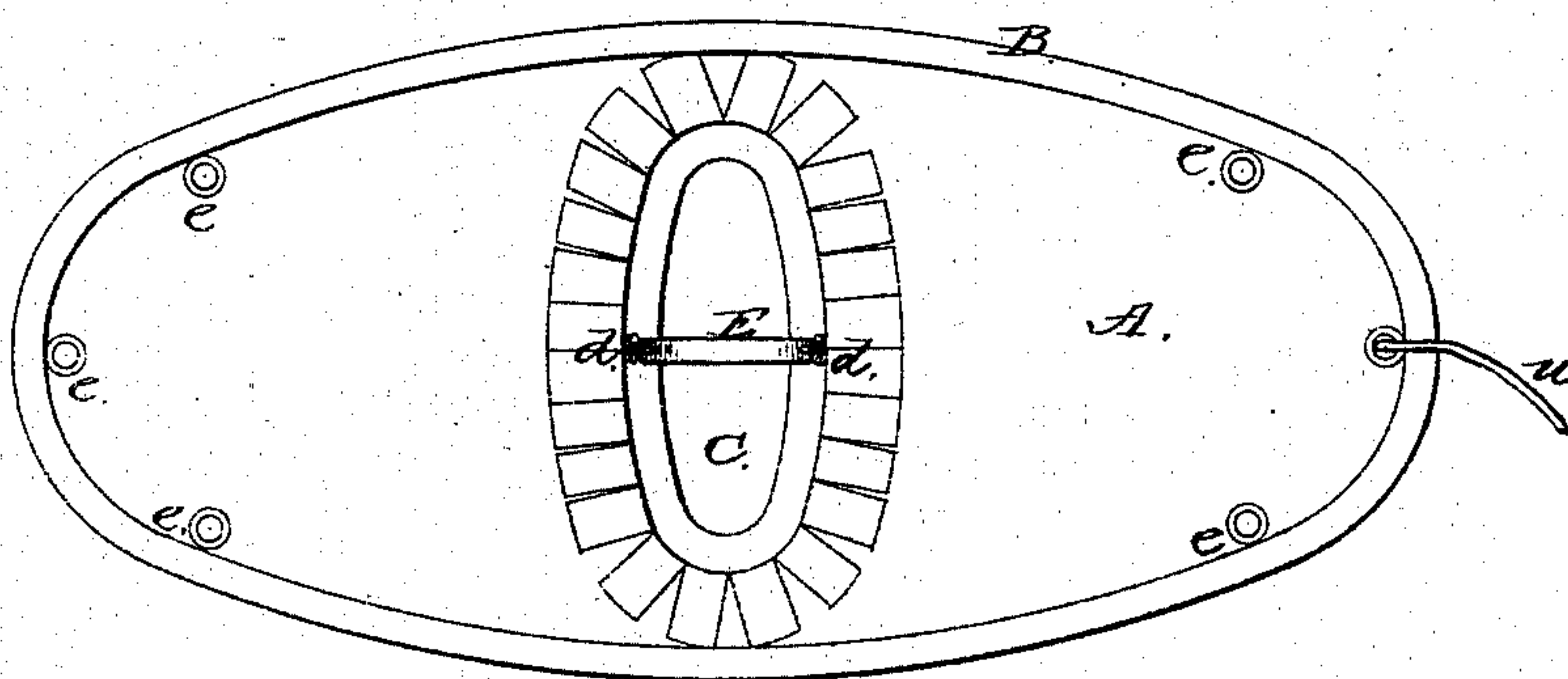


Fig. 3.

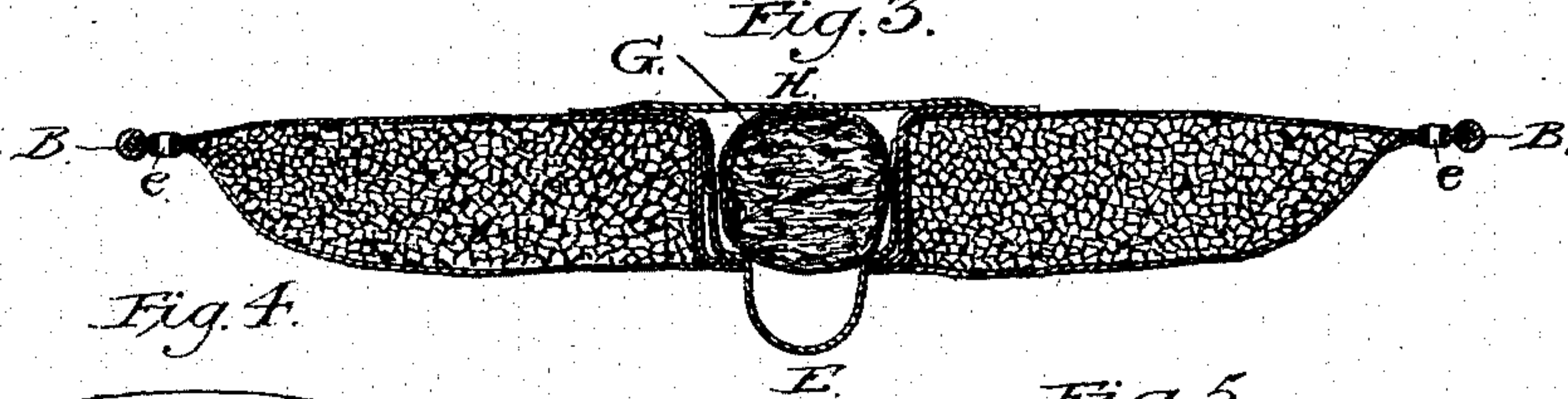


Fig. 4.

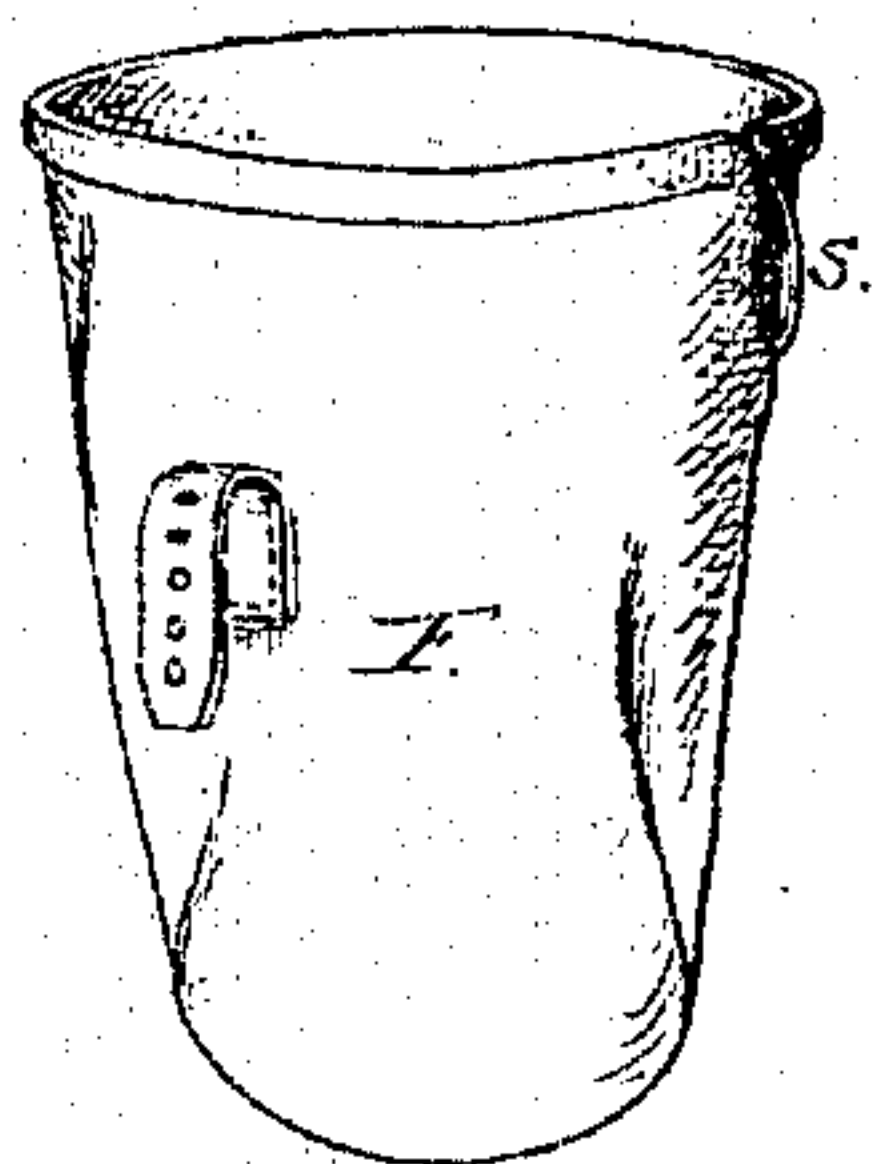
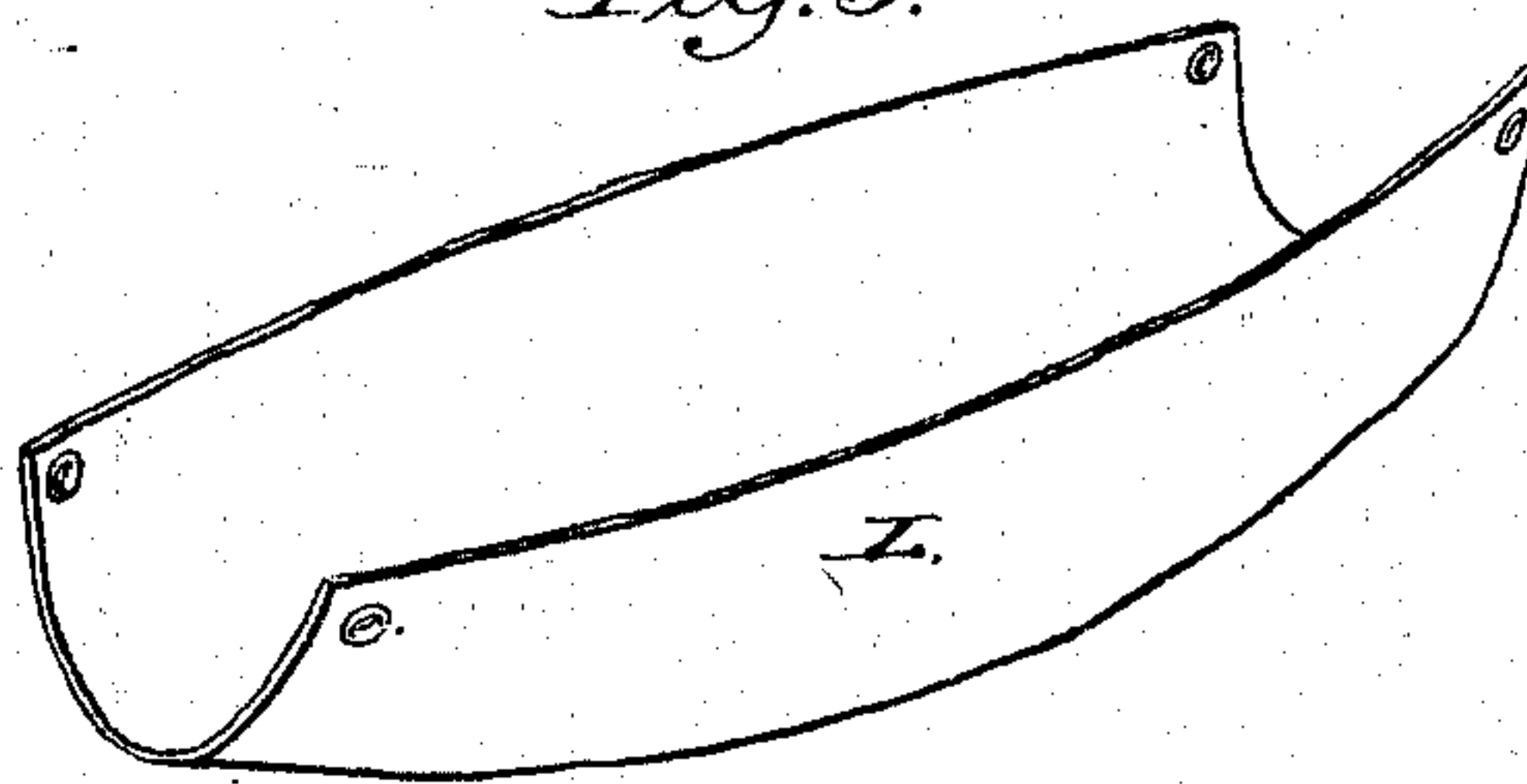


Fig. 5.



WITNESSES

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JAMES ROBERTSON, OF EAST CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

SELF-LEVELING HAMMOCK.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 249,403, dated November 8, 1881.

Application filed April 23, 1881. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JAMES ROBERTSON, of East Cambridge, in the county of Middlesex and State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and valuable Improvement in Self-Leveling Hammocks and Life-Saving Beds; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the construction and operation of the same, reference being had to the annexed drawings, making a part of this specification, and to the letters and figures of reference marked thereon.

Figure 1 of the drawings is a representation of a side view of the hammock in position for use. Fig. 2 is a plan view of the bed, with cushion removed, for use as a float. Fig. 3 is a sectional view of the bed, showing the construction. Figs. 4 and 5 are details.

The present invention has relation to devices for supporting the person on shipboard or in the water; and it consists, mainly, in the construction and novel arrangement of the bed and its adjuncts, constituting a life-preserving float, and in connection therewith a suspending-frame, whereby it is adapted for use on shipboard as a self-leveling hammock, all as hereinafter shown and described.

In the accompanying drawings, the letter A designates the bed, which may be made of any kind of light fabric, as canvas, cloth, or felt, and is designed to have somewhat the form of a boat, this being accomplished by weaving, felting, or cutting to pattern. The parts are connected by cementing, stitching, or binding, and in such relation to each other that the under part is of convex contour, resembling the hull, while the upper part is flattened, being more like the deck of a boat. The bed thus formed is filled with cork chips or other light substance to render it soft and buoyant, and it is designed to be made of fabric either single or in two or three thicknesses, rendered water-proof by means of oil, paint, varnish, or by coating with rubber. Usually a marginal rim or brace, suitably covered, forms the edge of the bed, as indicated at B.

A man-hole, C, is made through the middle of the bed, and in this portion the bed is provided with fastenings *d* for the life-saving devices, consisting, mainly, of a strap, E, designed to be passed between the legs when the lower

portion of the body is inserted through the man-hole, and a sack, F, designed to envelope the lower limbs.

At the marginal portion of the bed are constructed the eyelet-holes *e*, serving as means for connecting to the supporting-frame when on shipboard, and for rafting together when in the water, a lanyard or cord, *u*, being usually connected to the end of the bed to facilitate binding or rafting.

G represents a stopper-cushion, which is used to fill up or plug the man-hole when the article is in use as a bed, this cushion being easily removed when the necessity occurs for the use of the bed as a life-preserver. A flap, H, is used to cover the stopper-cushion.

K indicates a suspending-frame, consisting of two rods or wires, *b*, which are connected along their middle portions by a tube or sleeve, *c*, which allows an opening and closing adjustment of the ends *g*, which are bent downward in elliptical or curved form, and turned up at their extremities in the form of hooks *h* to receive the eyes of the bed, or of a hammock, L, which may be made of canvas or netting, and provided with eyelet-holes at its corners to ship on the pegs or turned points *h* of the frame. The bed may sometimes be laid on the hammock and thereby supported.

A strap or band, N, preferably of leather or other soft material to avoid the squeaking of metal on metal, is used to suspend the frame from the ceiling or wall-bracket, and is designed to allow freedom of motion in every direction, except horizontal turning, which the width of the strap or band will check without shock. The strap or band also serves as a ready means of adjusting the bed to secure the balance of the occupant. In making this adjustment it is slipped along the tube, and the strain will hold it firmly when placed. A ring, *k*, is rove loosely on the strap, and serves as an aid in adjusting the same, also to steady the bed and assist in getting into it.

For use in the water the bed is taken from its frame, if suspended, and the cushion G is removed from the man-hole C. The belt or strap E is always secured to its fastenings. This belt is adjustable, and is designed to pass between the legs of the person in the man-hole, so that it will effectually prevent falling

through, while the hands are left at liberty for the service of the occupant, or to assist others in the water. A sack, F, is added supplementally, this being also secured to the same fastenings as the belt in the man-hole, and designed to incase the lower limbs and part of the body when introduced. The mouth of the sack is provided with a draw-string, s, whereby it can be secured closely around the body. It is not anticipated that the use of the sack will be always possible, or that all persons will be capable of adjusting themselves in it; but when there is mental competence the sack will be considered an additional assurance of safety, preserving the animal heat, while diverting the attention from the horrors of the situation, and will often prove of great benefit.

It will be apparent that no study is required to understand these life-preserving devices. Each part is sufficiently suggestive of its purposes and mode of use. I would number the parts and the locations of the beds at night, as well as during the day, when taken down and stowed away. In this manner their possession would become a subject of thought and discussion, and the passengers prepared for an emergency by familiarity with the chances and means of escape at hand, thereby insuring presence of mind to use their personal powers in time of need.

My invention is designed to effect a recuperative cessation of nervous excitement during the watch below, and to economize space, being easily hung up for use and taken down to be stowed away when not wanted. In either

case the bed can be at any time readily seized on without stopping to undo fastenings as a life-saver, and it is therefore designed to give room by day, rest and refreshment at night, and assurance of safety all the time.

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

1. The combination, with a float-bed or hammock having end eyelet-holes, of the opening and closing suspension-frame, its tubular connection, and the adjusting-strap, substantially as specified.

2. The combination, with the float-bed and its central man-hole, of the sack adapted to be passed through the man-hole, its fastening devices, and draw-strings, substantially as specified.

3. The combination, with a float-bed or hammock having end eyelet-holes, of an opening and closing suspension-frame and its adjusting-strap, substantially as and for the purposes set forth.

4. In a life-preserver, a float-bed connected with an opening and closing frame, and supported by a single cord centrally attached to the frame to make the bed or float self-leveling when suspended, substantially as specified.

In testimony that I claim the above I have hereunto subscribed my name in the presence of two witnesses.

JAMES ROBERTSON.

Witnesses:

C. H. MOULTON,

JAMES H. LEARNED.