

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

A. M. LEWELLEN.  
COFFIN DEPOSITOR.

No. 377,834.

Patented Feb. 14, 1888.

Fig. 1.

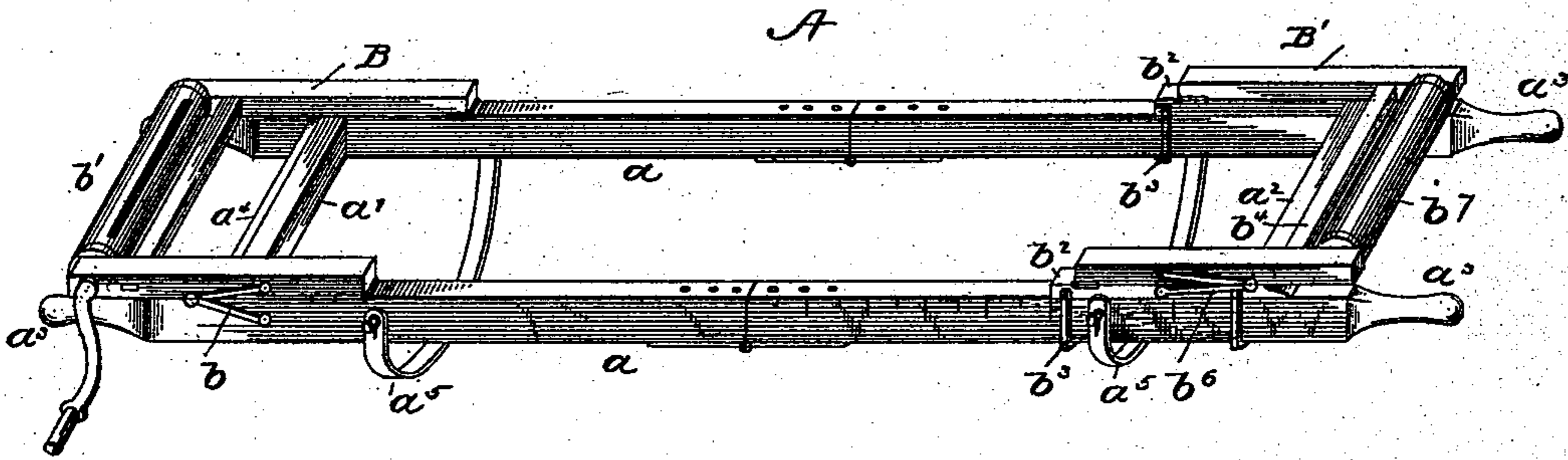
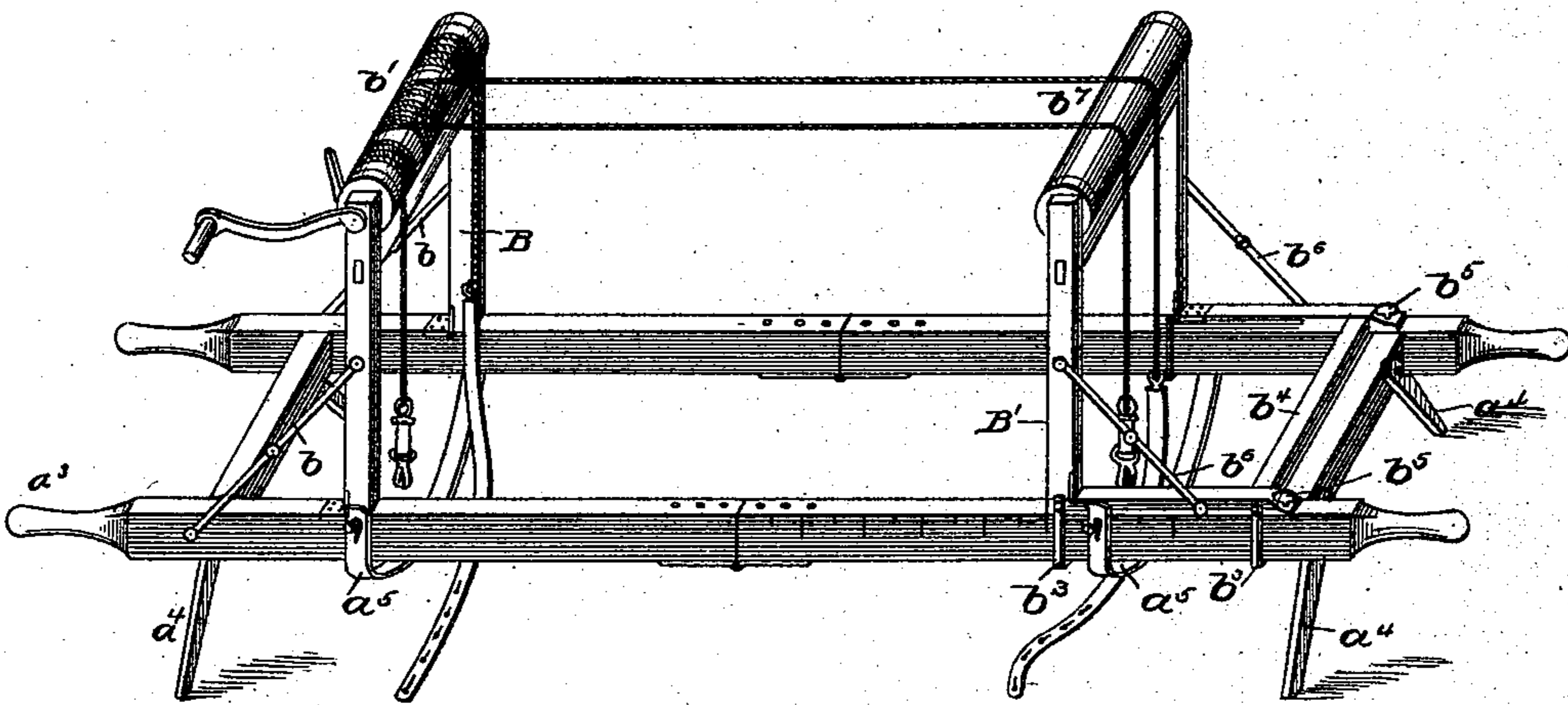


Fig. 2.



Witnesses:

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*H. F. Riley*

Inventor:

by *A. M. Lewellen,*  
*A. S. Dyrenforth,*  
his Attorney.

(No Model.)

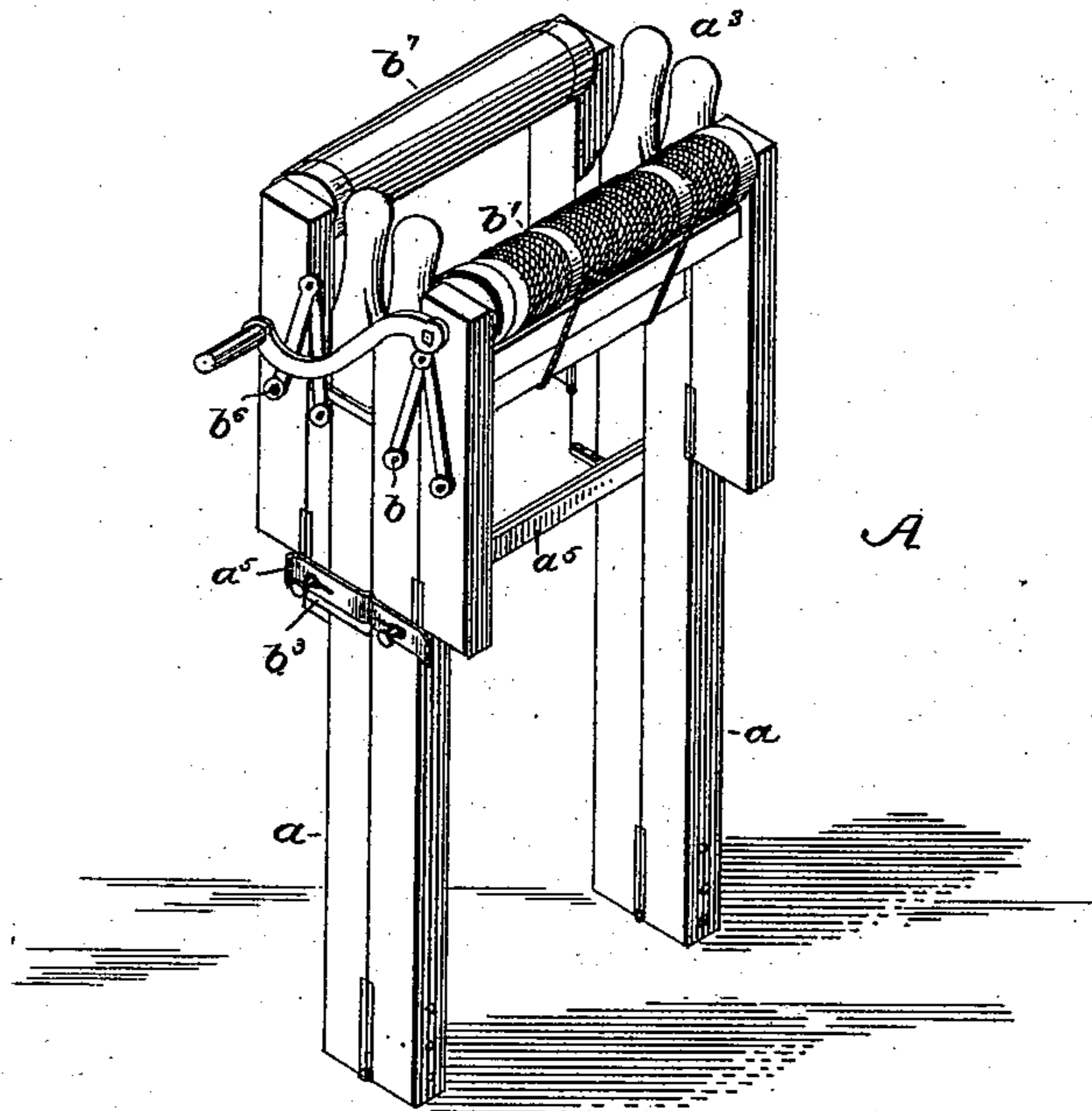
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A. M. LEWELLEN.  
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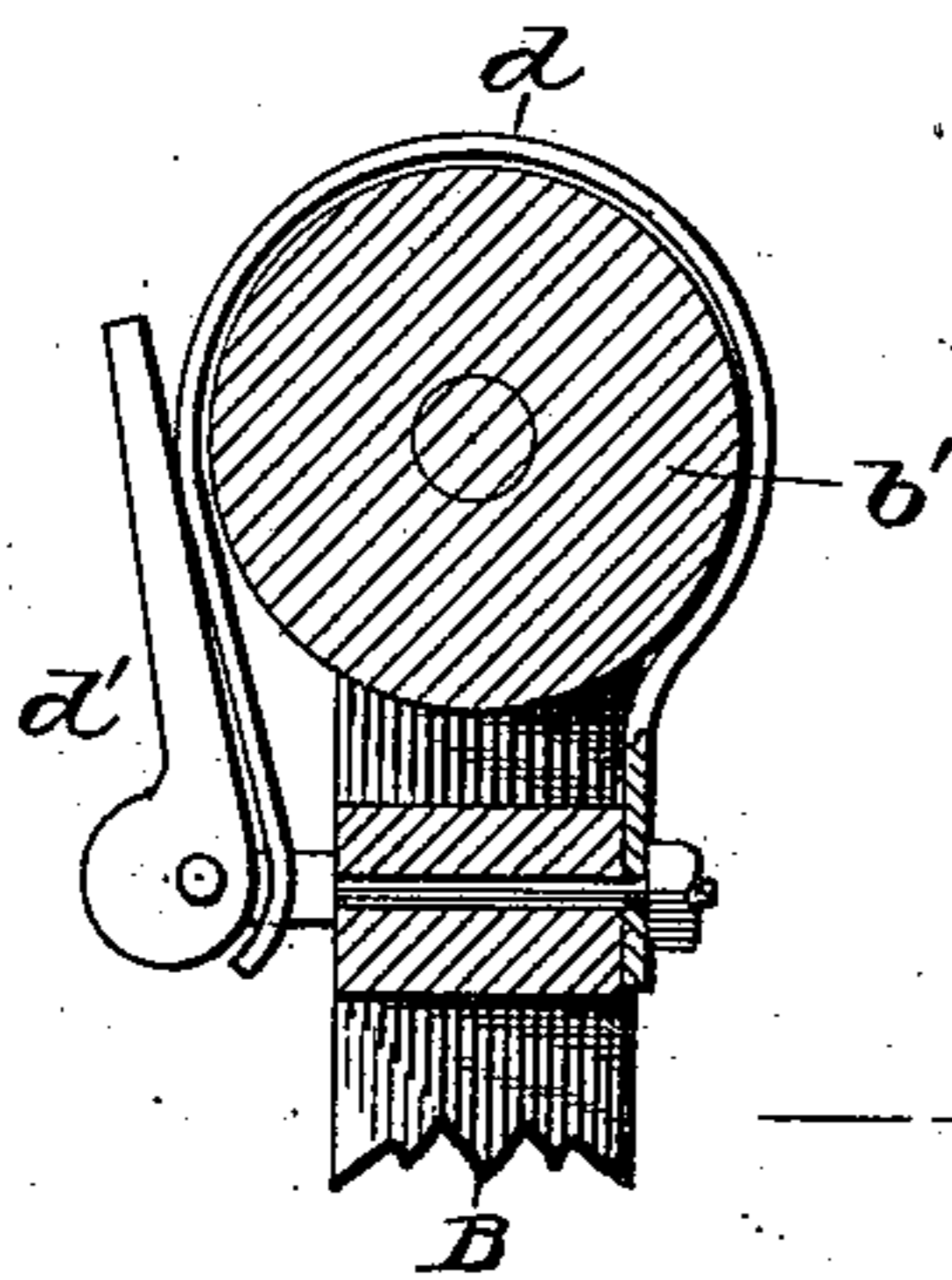
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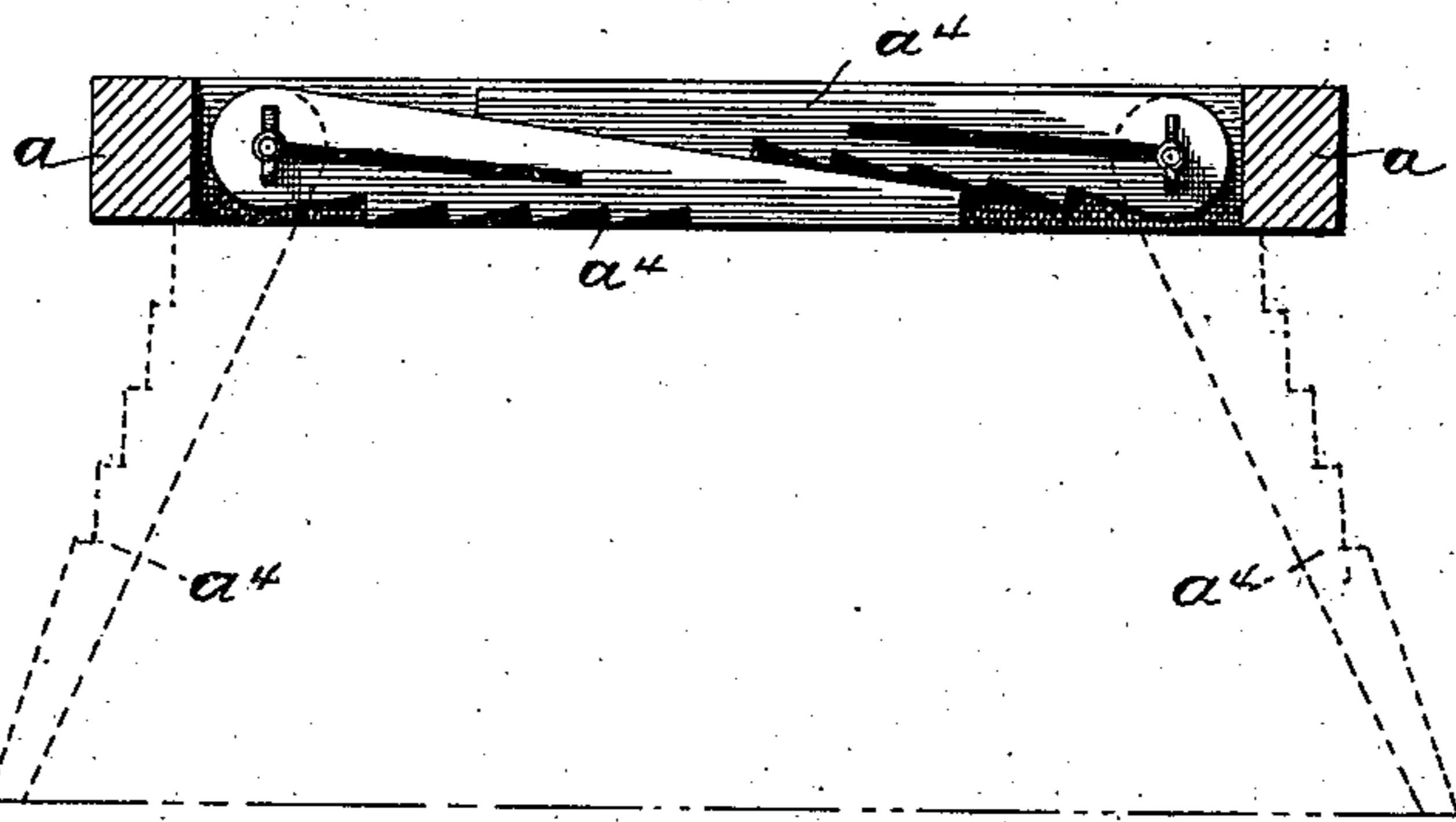
—Fig. 3.



—Fig. 5.

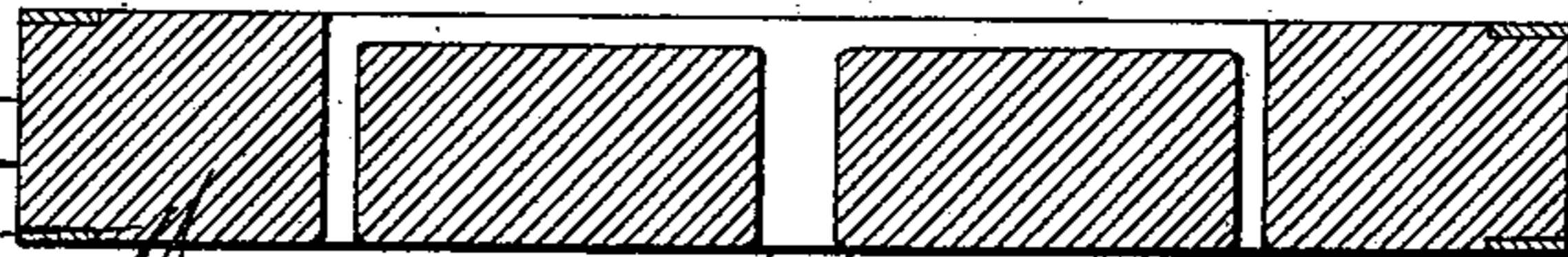


—Fig. 6.



—Fig. 4.

Witnesses:



Inventor :

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ANDREW M. LEWELLEN, OF ROSENDALE, MISSOURI.

## COFFIN-DEPOSITOR.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 377,834, dated February 14, 1888.

Application filed April 23, 1887. Serial No. 235,882. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ANDREW M. LEWELLEN, a citizen of the United States, residing at Rosendale, in the county of Andrew and State of Missouri, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Coffin and Casket Depositors; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates to burial apparatus.

The object is to produce a device by which a coffin or casket can be deposited safely in a grave by the employment of but one person and without danger of the common accident of letting the body fall in lowering it.

The invention consists, generally, in a safety coffin and casket depositor; furthermore, in a portable frame upon which the coffin or casket is placed, which frame is supported upon pivoted legs and provided with uprights which extend from the sides near each end and have rollers mounted upon them, one of said rollers carrying a crank; furthermore, in the above, with ropes running over the rollers, the ropes to be placed beneath the coffin to lower it into the grave; furthermore, in certain constructions whereby the device can be folded into a small and compact form, better to facilitate transportation, and, finally, in certain novel details, which will hereinafter be more fully set forth.

In the drawings, in which like letters of reference indicate corresponding parts, I have shown a device constructed in accordance with my invention.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the apparatus in position for placing the coffin thereon. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the apparatus in position for lowering the coffin. Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the same, showing it folded for transportation. Fig. 4 is a detail view of the slotted roller. Fig. 5 is a detail view of the brake upon the crank-roller. Fig. 6 is a detail view of one end of the apparatus, showing the folding legs.

A represents the main frame of the machine, which is rectangular in form, and is composed of the side bars, *a*, and the cross or tie pieces *a'* *a''*. The side bars *a*, are composed of two

pieces of equal length joined at their inner ends and upon the under side by a hinge and formed at their outer ends with handles *a''*, by means of which, when in position for use, the apparatus may be carried.

Upon the outer sides of the cross or tie pieces *a'* *a''* of the main frame are provided legs *a''*, which are pivoted to the cross-pieces near the side bars and arranged to be folded closely together when not in use. These legs have notches in their outer edges for the side bars of the main frame to take into, and the legs have an outward inclination when set for use. Their pivotal points are provided with bolts and thumb-nuts, by means of which they can be held securely in any position. Near one end of this frame are provided uprights B, which are hinged to the frame in order to allow them to be folded down closely against the sides of the side bars. Jointed braces *b* are attached at one end to the center of the outer side of the upright and at the other end to a side bar, *a*, by means of which the uprights are held in position, and, being hinged, will not interfere with the folding of the uprights to the frame. In the upper end of these uprights is journaled a roller, *b'*, having a crank at one end, by means of which it is operated. This roller *b'* is further provided with a diametrical slot or perforation through its center and a similar perforation near each end, a groove or indentation connecting these perforations, which are for the purpose of attaching the ropes used in lowering the coffin. Just below this roller, and connecting the uprights, is provided a cross-piece, which serves as a lateral brace for the uprights, to one end of which is bolted a clamp spring or strap, *d*, which spring passes around one end of the crank-roller, closely conforming to the shape of the roller, and is brought down upon the opposite side and fastened to the opposite flattened end of the retaining-bolt, which flattened end passes through a slot in the end of the strap. A cam-lever, *d'*, is eccentrically attached to the flattened end of the bolt in such manner that when the lever is turned down the cam is brought to bear against the end of the spring or strap and press it inward, thus tightening the strap upon the roller and preventing its movement until

released by turning the lever upward and withdrawing the cam from engagement therewith.

Near the opposite end of the frame A are provided similar uprights, B', which are hinged to sliding bars  $b^2$ , which rest longitudinally upon the side bars of the frame and are adapted to slide thereon, being held in place by means of stirrups  $b^3$ , the ends of which are attached to the sides of the sliding bar and inclose the side bars. These sliding bars are laterally secured together by means of a cross-piece,  $b^4$ , and are held at any point upon the main frame by set-screws  $b^5$  in the ends of the sliding bars. The sliding frame thus formed may be moved backward and forward upon the main frame, thus adjusting the apparatus to suit coffins or caskets of various lengths. A scale may be placed upon the side of the frame as a guide for movement of the sliding frame. The uprights B' are hinged to the inner ends of the sliding bars, and are further secured thereto by jointed or hinged braces  $b^6$ , similar to the ones connecting the uprights B and the side bars, and which allow the uprights B to be folded down against the sliding bars. In the upper ends of the uprights B' is journaled a roller,  $b^7$ , over which the ropes, which are attached to one end of the coffin, are passed. The uprights are also provided with cross-pieces just below the rollers, to act as lateral braces.

At one end of the apparatus a strap,  $a^5$ , is provided immediately beneath the upright, one end of the strap being permanently secured to a side bar,  $a$ , the other end having a slot, by means of which it is attached to a hook upon the opposite side bar. A similar strap is provided at the opposite end of the main frame, but is secured to the sliding frame and moves therewith during adjustment. These straps are for the purpose of supporting the coffin while the ropes are being secured beneath it. Two ropes are employed in the operation of lowering the coffin. These ropes are of equal length, and are fastened to the crank-roller by being passed through the slot or perforation in the center of the roller from the side opposite to that which bears the groove, an end of each being then passed back through one of the perforations at the end of the groove, thus both ends of each rope issuing from the same side of the roller, or that side which is opposite to the groove, while the bend of the rope is embedded in the groove below the surface of the roller. The inner end of each rope is carried across the loose roller at the opposite end of the apparatus, and should be of such length as to allow both ends of the rope to hang exactly the same distance below the rollers when the crank-roller has been turned and the rope wound thereon. The ends of each rope are upon the same side of the casket. To each end of one of the ropes—for instance, the rope that hangs upon the crank side of the appa-

ratus—is attached an automatic hook, while to the ends of the opposite rope are attached straps of preferably equal length, each having eyelets at short intervals to engage the hooks and allow ready and adjustable attachment to a strap of the hook upon the end of the rope at the opposite side of the coffin. The strap which is intended to be placed beneath the head of a coffin will be hooked up somewhat longer than the one to be placed beneath the foot of the same, since the head of a coffin is wider than the foot, and, as stated, the ropes are of equal length; but as a casket is of the same width from head to foot, the straps in such instance should be hooked up of equal length.

In operation the apparatus is adjusted to suit the size of coffin or casket to be deposited. This is accomplished by pressing the sliding frame to the proper point, as shown by the scale upon the side bar. The frame rests upon the pivoted legs at each end, and the coffin or casket is deposited upon the supporting-straps  $a^5$ , the uprights being then raised to a vertical position, bringing the rollers over its ends. The depending ropes are now hooked beneath and the crank is turned backward, as in the act of lifting the coffin or casket from the supporting-straps, until they assume a moderately-tight tension, whereupon the latch is turned down, which binds the clamp-spring tightly against the roller and prevents its movement, thereby preserving the tension on the ropes, keeping the hooks in their respective eyelets, and preventing coffin or casket from rocking from side to side on the supporting-straps while being carried to and placed over the grave. Arriving at the grave, the operator grasps the crank, raises the latch, and turns backward until the coffin or casket is lifted from the supporting-straps, which are then unhooked, when the crank is turned forward, again permitting the ropes to unwind from the crank-roller and the coffin or casket to descend into the grave. As soon as the coffin or casket touches the bottom of the grave and the ropes are slackened, the hooks automatically unfasten themselves, the ropes are rewound upon the crank-roller, and the apparatus is lifted from over the grave.

The particular automatic hooks need not be described in detail, as they form no part of this invention, but are themselves the subject of a separate application for patent.

To fold the apparatus, the pivoted legs are turned up against the sides of the cross-ties, the jointed braces are doubled, allowing the uprights to resume a horizontal position, lying closely along the side bars of the main frame, and the side bars are swung together, which is accomplished by means of the central hinges. The parts will now assume the position shown in Fig. 3, which, as may be seen by inspection, presents the apparatus in small compass and in compact form.

It will be seen that an apparatus constructed

as above shown will be of simple, light, and economical construction, and will readily accomplish the desired result.

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

10 1. In an apparatus for depositing coffins and caskets in graves, the combination, with the main frame, of uprights extending therefrom and bearing rollers and ropes by means of which the lowering is accomplished.

15 2. In an apparatus for depositing coffins and caskets in graves, the combination, with a main frame composed of two parts hinged together for the purpose of folding, of uprights extending therefrom and attached thereto by means of hinges, braces connecting the uprights and main frame, said braces being jointed or hinged to permit of folding with the uprights, and 20 rollers journaled in the uprights, substantially as shown.

25 3. In an apparatus for depositing coffins and caskets in graves, the combination, with the main frame hinged at its center and having pivotal legs attached thereto, of uprights, one set of which is hinged to the main frame and the other set attached to a frame sliding upon the main frame, substantially as specified.

30 4. In an apparatus for depositing coffins and caskets in graves, the combination, with the main frame, of uprights extending therefrom, one set of said uprights being attached to the main frame, the other attached to a frame slid-

ing thereon, the main frame being provided with a scale for the purpose of adjusting the 35 apparatus to any desired length, substantially as shown and described.

40 5. In an apparatus for depositing coffins in graves, the combination of the main frame centrally hinged for the purpose of folding, uprights hinged to the main frame near one end and uprights hinged to the sliding frame upon the opposite end of the main frame, a strap beneath the main frame attached to the sides thereof near one end, and a similar strap 45 attached to the sides of the sliding frame at the opposite end, the straps being for the purpose of supporting the coffin before lowering it into the grave, substantially as set forth.

50 6. In an apparatus for depositing coffins and caskets in graves, a crank-roller having perforations therein for the attachment of the lowering-ropes, there being a longitudinal groove connecting said perforations, and a brake for locking the crank-roller, consisting of a strap rigidly secured to some convenient point of the 55 frame of the apparatus and passing partially around the roller and connected to a pivoted cam-lever, as set forth.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in 60 presence of two witnesses.

ANDREW M. LEWELLEN.

Witnesses:

E. M. WARD,

W. A. ENNIS.