

No. 688,694.

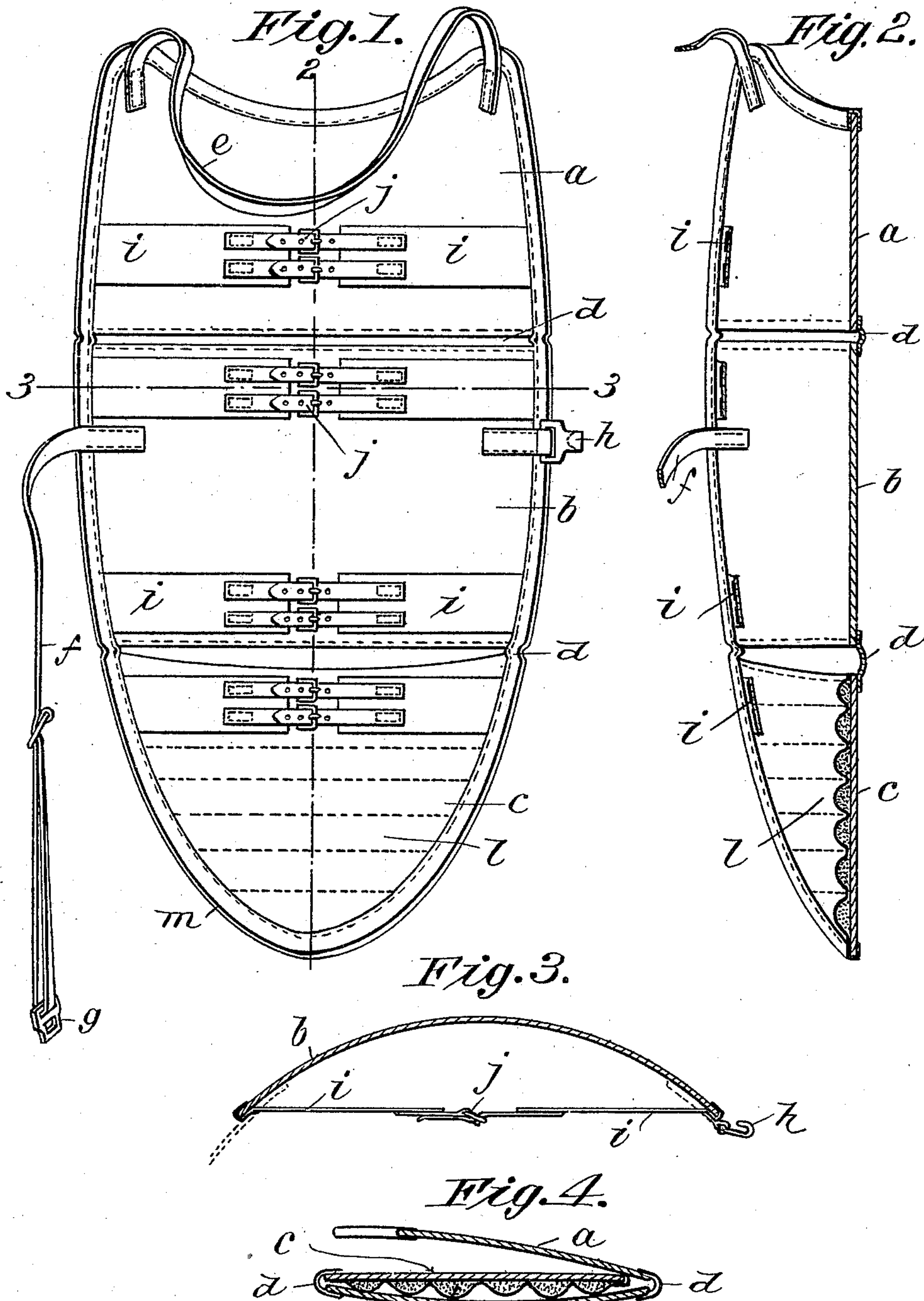
Patented Dec. 10, 1901.

E. L. ROGERS.

BODY PROTECTOR FOR PLAYERS OF BASE BALL.

(Application filed Mar. 6, 1901.)

(No Model.)



Witnesses:
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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BODY-PROTECTOR FOR PLAYERS OF BASE-BALL.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 688,694, dated December 10, 1901.

Application filed March 6, 1901. Serial No. 50,059. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ELROY L. ROGERS, a citizen of the United States of America, residing at Springfield, in the county of Hampden and State of Massachusetts, have invented new and useful Improvements in Body-Protectors for the Players of Base-Ball and other Games, of which the following is a specification.

10 This invention relates to body protectors or shields—such as are used, for example, by catchers and umpires in base-ball games—and has for its object the construction of a device of this character which shall be cheaper than the
15 pneumatic protectors now in general use and fully as effective as a shield and which shall possess the further characteristics of lightness, constant readiness for use, and capability of being folded into a conveniently
20 small compass for packing or carrying; and the invention consists in the construction hereinafter fully set forth in the following specification, and pointed out in the claims.

In the drawings forming part of this specification, Figure 1 is an elevation of the rear side of a shield embodying my invention. Fig. 2 is a sectional elevation on line 2 2, Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a transverse section on line 3 3, Fig. 1. Fig. 4 shows the protector as folded
30 for packing or carrying in the hands, the strap being omitted.

Heretofore practically the only form of shield of this character which has been employed has been the pneumatic shield, which
35 is a flat rubber bag of the proper dimensions, which is blown up and strapped to the body. These protectors have the disadvantage, first, of being excessively uncomfortable to the wearer on a warm day, of being rendered use-
40 less by a puncture, and of being very expensive.

The shield forming the subject of this application is made of stiff paper-board or leatherette, or vulcanized fiber, and analogous material, and to adapt it to the particular use described herein, as a shield for catchers and umpires, it is preferably made in three
45 pieces or sections *a*, *b*, and *c*. These sections are united, as at *d*, by a leather or other flexible hinge, the shape of such sections being

such that when so united they will constitute a structure having substantially the shape shown in Fig. 1. At the upper end of the section *a* a suitable neck-strap *e* is secured, which, passed over the head of the wearer, 55 supports the shield in proper position.

In suitable position, usually at some point on the section *b*, an adjustable waist-strap *f* is secured, on the end of which is a metal loop *g*, adapted to engage the hook *h* on opposite 60 sides of the shield. Any of the well-known means for adjusting the length of the waist-strap may be employed—as, for example, the buckle shown in Fig. 1.

At proper intervals two straps *i* are secured 65 at opposite points to the edge of the shield, their free ends being provided, respectively, with straps and buckles *j* or other suitable form of connection. These straps are made of such length that when they are united by 70 the said buckles *j* they will draw together the edges of the shield-sections, as shown in Fig. 3, springing the latter outward in the form of an arc, of which the straps constitute the chord. It will be observed that the section *c* 75 being tapered will when its edges are drawn together by the tightening of the strap *i* not stand as far away from the body as the sections *a* and *b*, and therefore to afford additional protection the interior of said section 80 *c* may be padded. This padding may be applied in any convenient way and is indicated by the letter *l*.

To protect the edges of the sections, the latter are preferably bound with thin leather *m*, 85 stitched thereto.

It will be observed that when the straps *i* are drawn up, as shown in Figs. 1 and 3, and the shield is hung over the neck of the wearer the waist-strap *f* will hold the shield firmly 90 against the body, the straps *i* bearing against the body, and if the strap *f* be drawn up as tightly as it usually would be worn the straps *i* will be forced inward, assuming the form of the contour of the body with which it 95 comes in contact, and the spring of the sections of the shield to which these straps are attached will tend always to keep the straps taut, and the latter will always maintain the shield-sections in their outwardly-bowed form 100

at a proper distance from the body. By means of this construction there is always room for a proper circulation of air between the body and the shield, and the outwardly-bowed form of these spring-like shields will receive the impact of a ball and stop it without injury to the wearer and with far less shock than would be imparted through one of the pneumatic shields. When the straps *i* are unbuckled, the shield-sections will spring out flat and the shield may be folded up, as shown in Fig. 4, the waist-strap *f* being used to bind the sections together, if desired.

The meeting line between the sections *b* and *c* is located substantially at the waist of the wearer, and in order to permit the proper flexure of the body at this point of the said sections the contiguous edges of these are cut away to a greater degree than are the sections *a* and *b*, as shown, at the center of the shield and tapering from that point toward each side thereof.

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

1. A body-shield for the purpose described comprising two or more sections hinged together, means for drawing opposite edges of said sections toward one another to bend said

shield to the form of an arc, of which said means constitutes the chord, combined with means for supporting said shield on the wearer, substantially as described.

2. A shield of the class described comprising two or more sections arranged edge to edge one above another, a hinge connection between the contiguous edges of said sections, a plurality of flexible, adjustable connections extending transversely across said sections, whereby the latter may be bowed outwardly, a neck-strap attached to the upper one of said sections, and suitable padding for the lower of said sections, substantially as described.

3. A body-shield for the purpose described consisting of a plurality of flat boards of suitable material placed end to end, and sprung outwardly to form an arc, a connection extending from side to side of said sections to maintain the said arc form of the latter, pliable connections between the contiguous edges of said sections, and means for securing said shield to the body, substantially as described.

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