

No. 793,458.

PATENTED JUNE 27, 1905.

J. Z. MILLER.

CASKET HOLDING MEANS ADJUSTER FOR HEARSE.

APPLICATION FILED DEC. 31, 1904.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig 1.

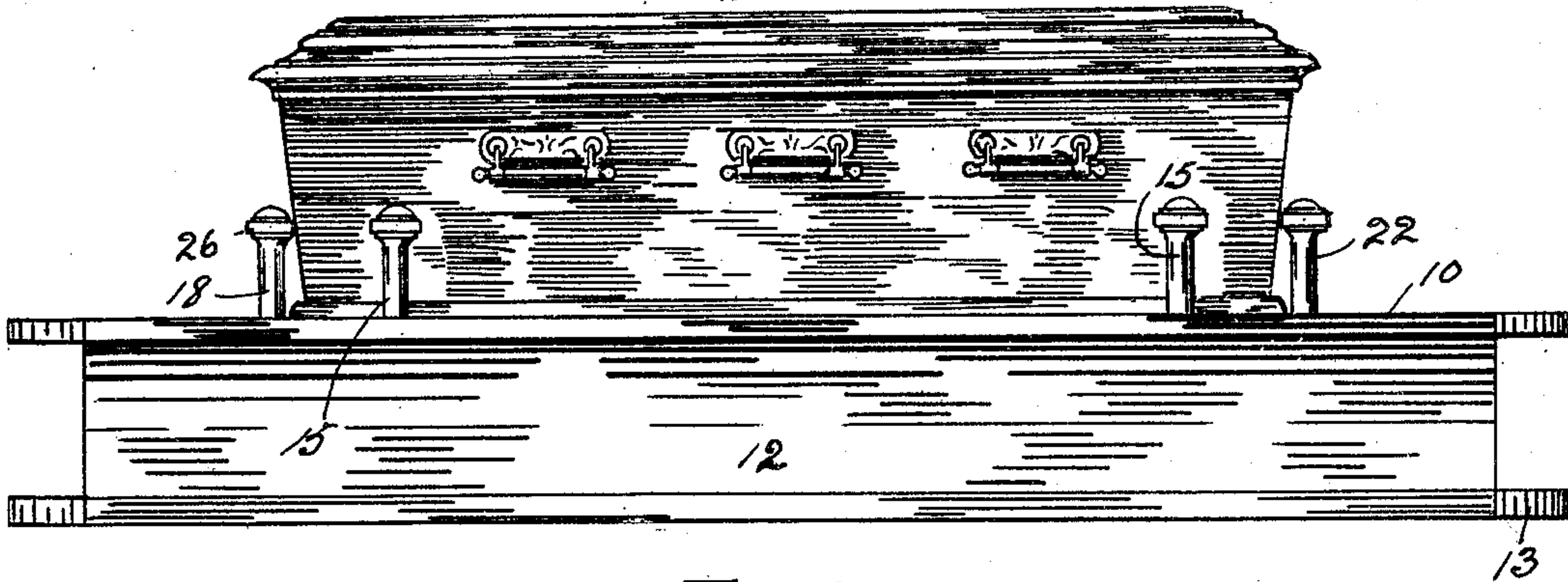


Fig 2.

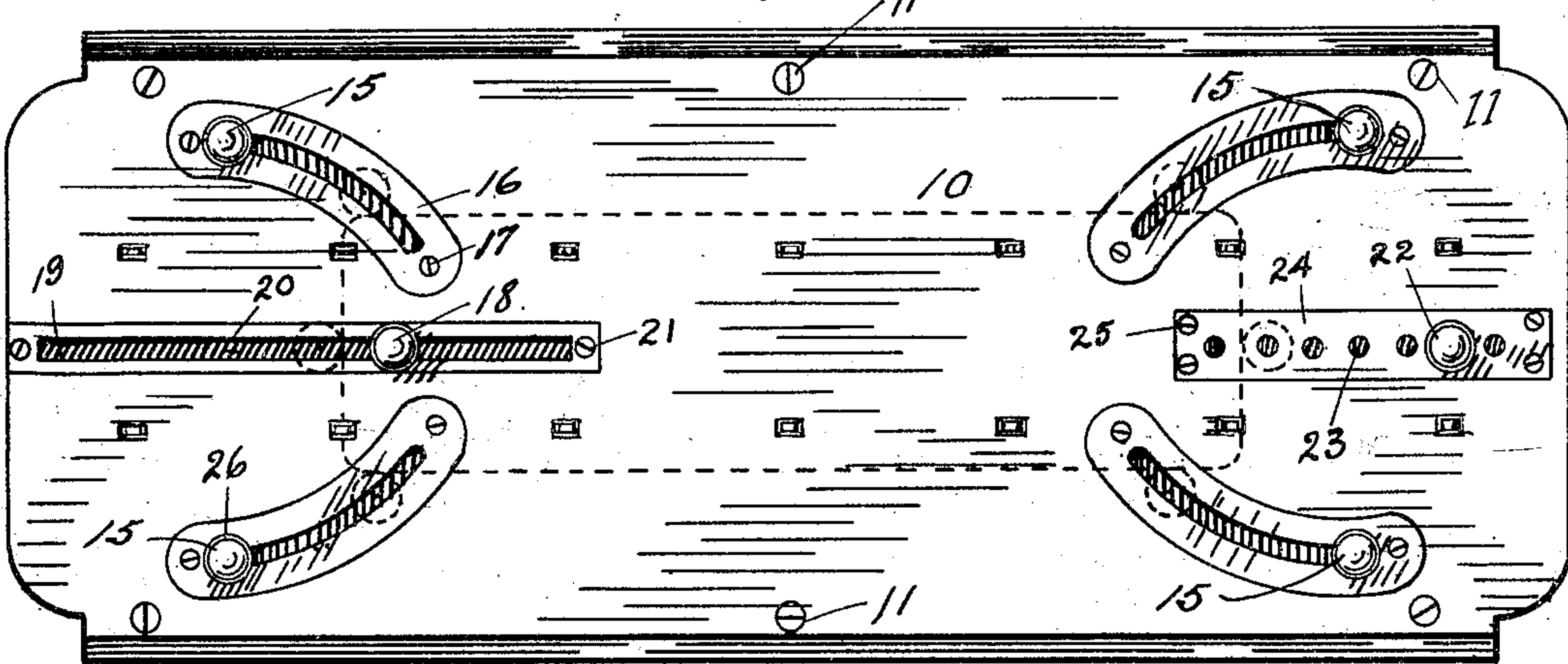
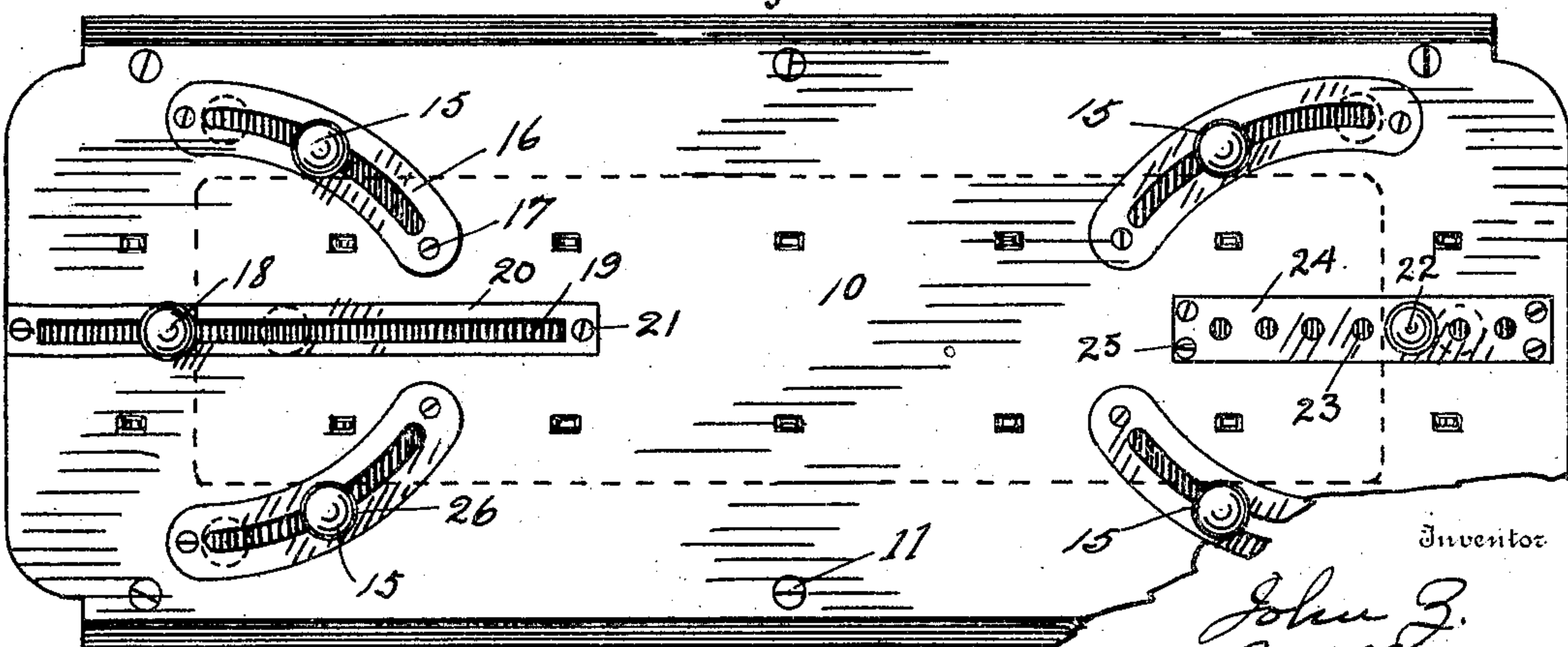


Fig 3.



Witness

Clifford  
N. Allemon

Inventor

John Z.  
Miller

By V. H. Lockwood  
Attorney

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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 4.

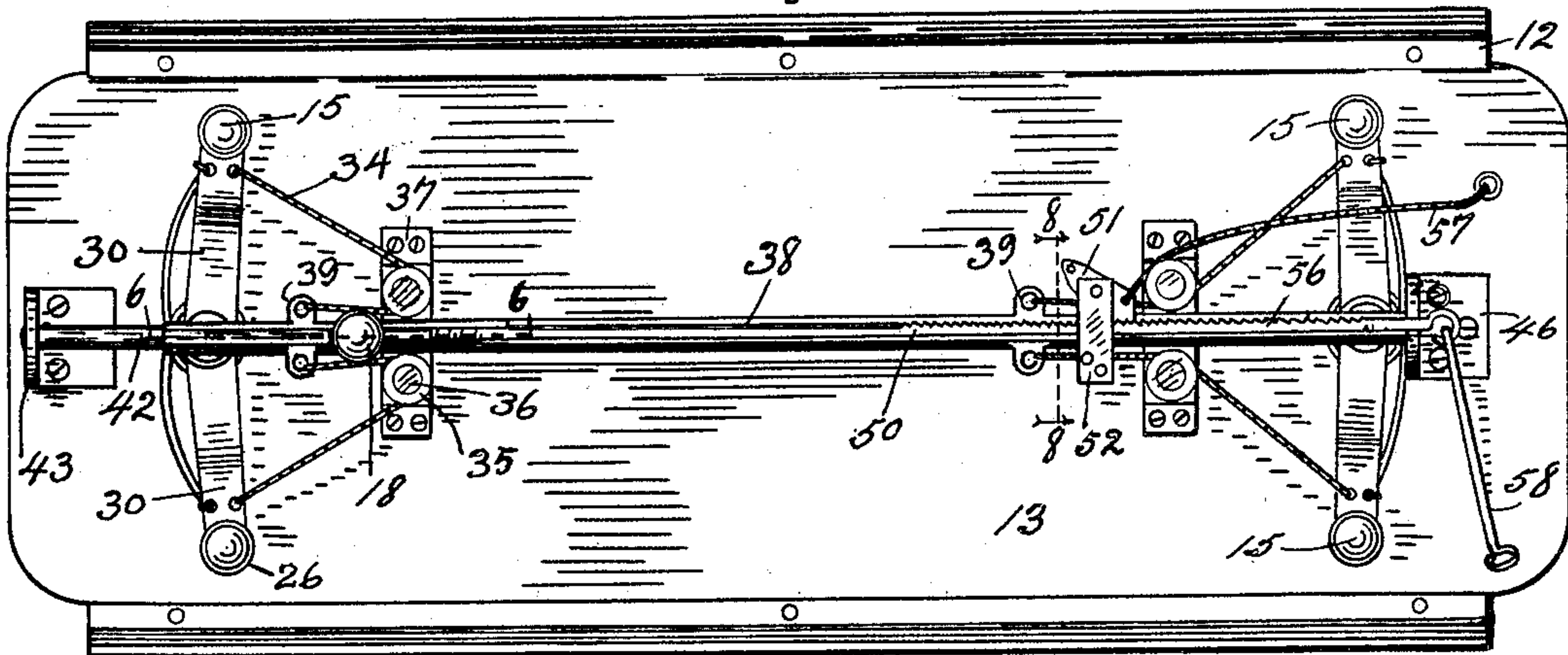


Fig. 5.

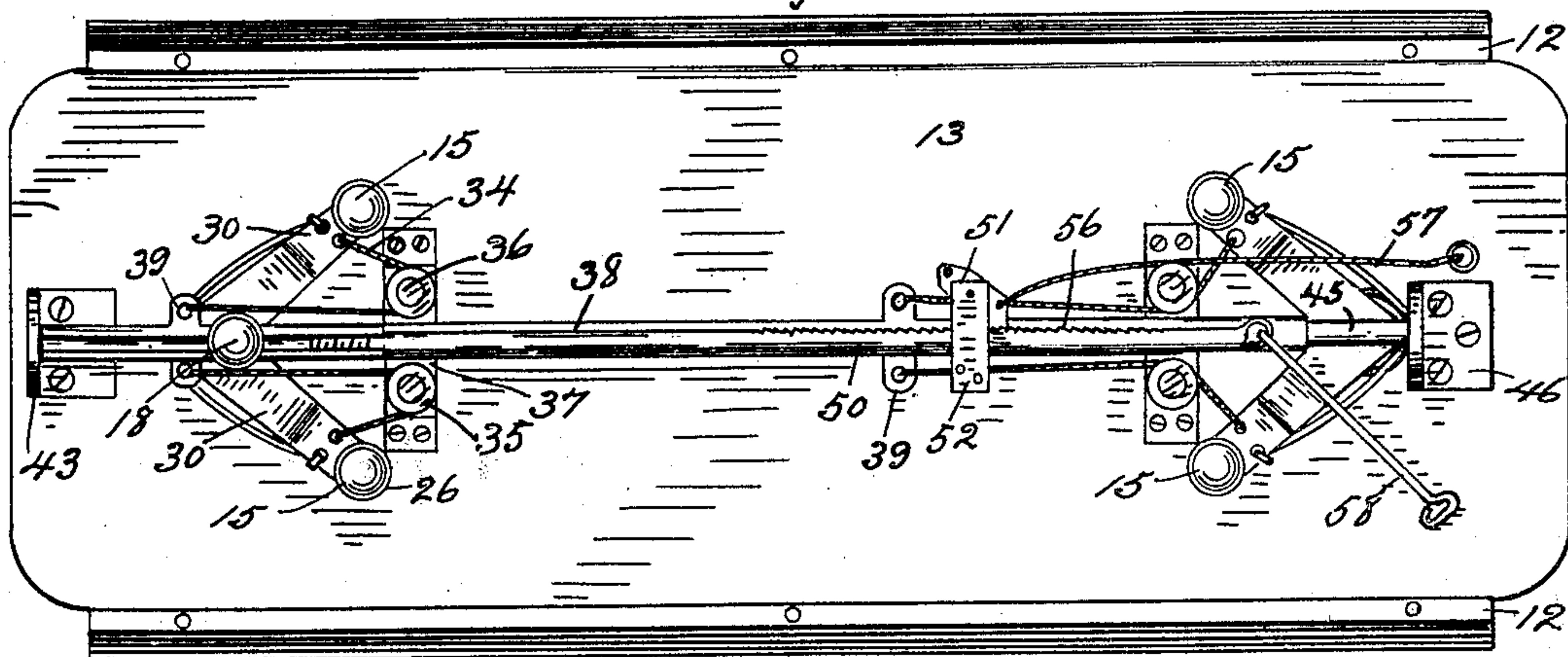


Fig. 6.

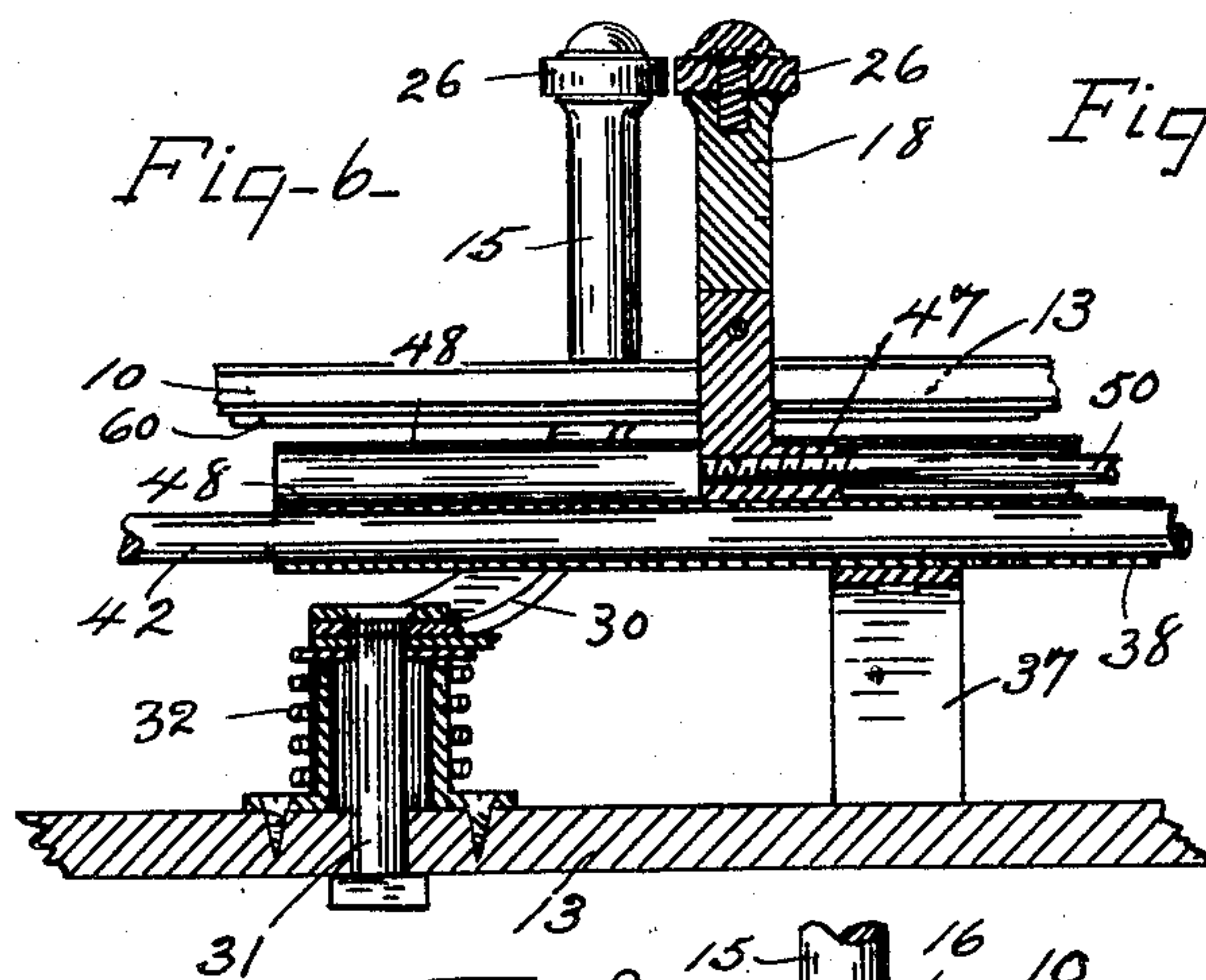


Fig. 7.

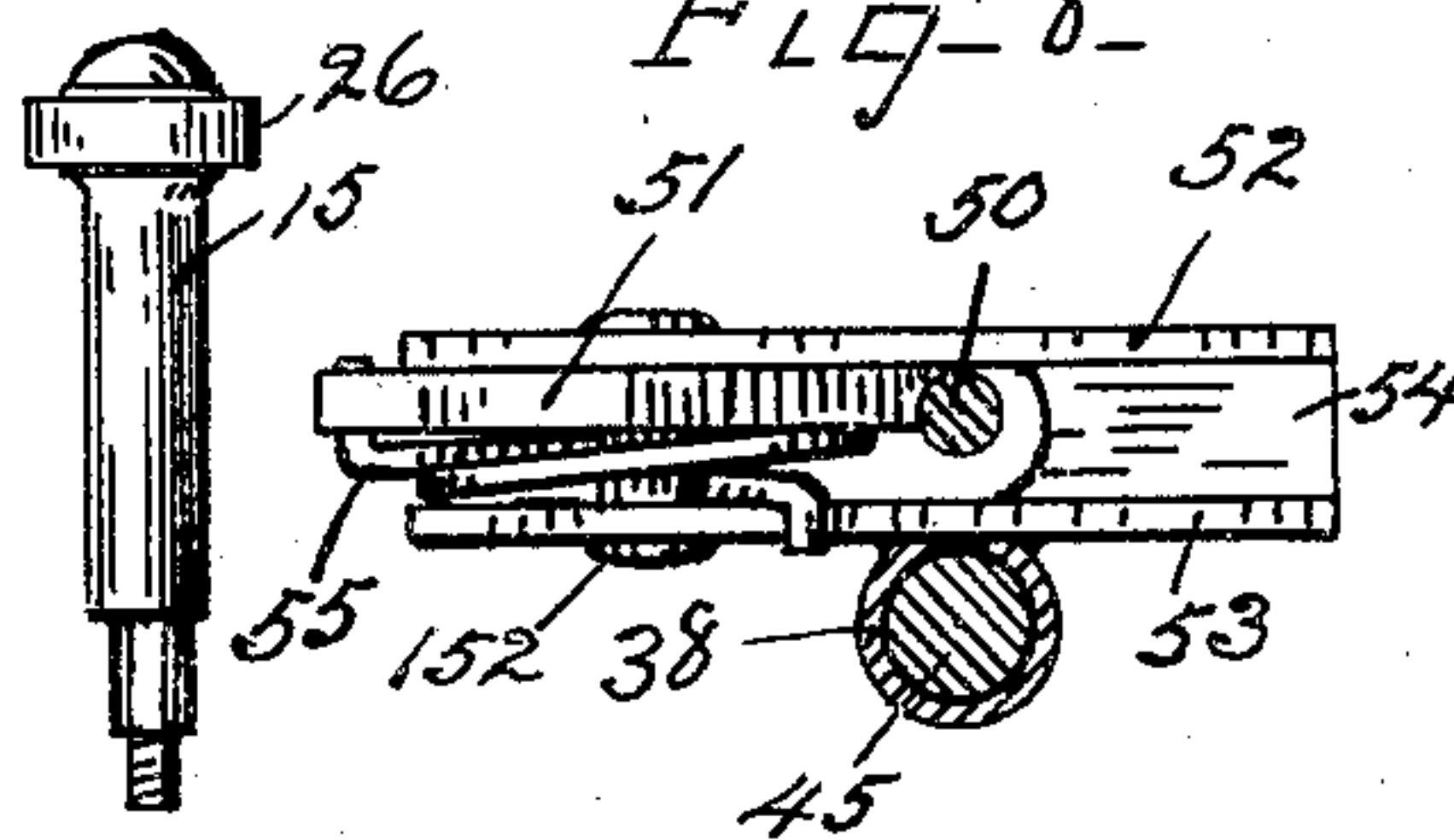
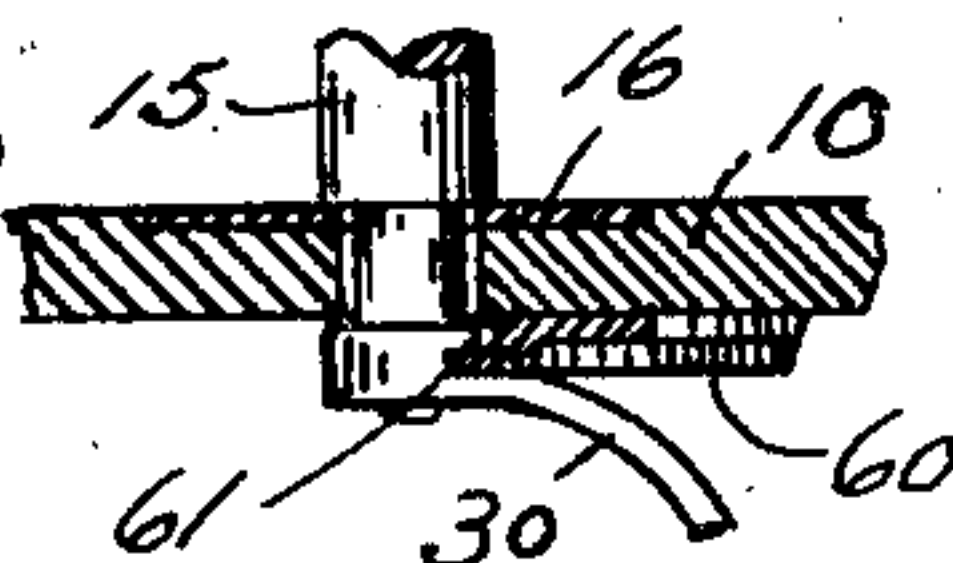


Fig. 8.

Witness

Chas. H. Allen  
N. Allmoning

Fig. 9.



Inventor

John Z. Miller.

By

V. H. Lockwood.

Attorney



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN Z. MILLER, OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

## CASKET-HOLDING-MEANS ADJUSTER FOR HEARSE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 793,458, dated June 27, 1905.

Application filed December 31, 1904. Serial No. 239,242.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, JOHN Z. MILLER, of Indianapolis, county of Marion, and State of Indiana, have invented a certain new and useful Casket-Holding-Means Adjuster for Hearses; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, in which like numerals refer to like parts.

The object of this invention is to provide a construction for holding and moving bier-pins automatically by the casket while it is being put in place and means for readily adjusting the same for holding caskets of varying sizes.

The nature of the invention will be understood from the accompanying drawings and the following description and claims.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a side elevation of a casket and the means for holding the same. Fig. 2 is a plan view of the means for holding the casket, the parts being shown by full lines in their relaxed position and by dotted lines holding a casket shown by dotted lines. Fig. 3 is the same as Fig. 2, showing the parts holding a larger casket, the casket being shown in dotted lines and parts being broken away. Fig. 4 is a plan view of the means for holding the casket, the top thereof, the floor of the hearse or funeral-car being removed and the internal parts being shown in their relaxed position. Fig. 5 shows the same as Fig. 4 with the parts in position for holding a casket. Fig. 6 is a longitudinal vertical section on the line 6 6 of Fig. 4. Fig. 7 is a side elevation of the removable bier-pin. Fig. 8 is a transverse vertical section on the line 8 8 of Fig. 4. Fig. 9 is a vertical section of the guide for holding the outer ends of the bier-pin arms.

In detail the drawings herein show a removable floor 10 for the hearse or car, being secured by the screws 11 on sills 12 from a permanent bottom 13 for the hearse or car. Four bier-pins 15 project up through slots in the floor 10 and curved guide-plates 16 and are secured thereon by screws 17. These pins 15 engage and press against the sides of the casket. The inner end of the casket is held by a bier-pin 18, that projects through a lon-

gitudinally-extending slot 19 in the floor of the hearse or car and in the guide-strip 20, secured thereon by the screws 21. The other end of the casket is held by a removable bier-pin 22, that is placed in one of the holes 23 in the plate 24, secured to the floor of the hearse or car by screws 25. The bier-pins referred to, 15, 18, and 22, have rubber rings 26 in their heads that contact with the casket, so as to prevent injury thereof.

All the bier-pins referred to excepting the pin 22 are moved automatically into holding position against the sides or ends of the casket by merely pushing the casket into place on the floor of the hearse or car against the bier-pin 18. The casket is pushed against said bier-pin 18 until the side bier-pins 15 come in tightly against the sides of the casket. Then the bier-pin 22 is placed by hand in the hole 23 and against the outer end of the casket. This holds the casket positively and safely in position, and the object is accomplished without operating the machinery by hand. Furthermore, by reason of the construction hereinafter described said mechanism is adjustable readily to hold caskets of varying sizes and to hold them centrally on the support. The mechanism for moving said bier-pins thus into position will now be explained.

As seen in Fig. 4 *et seq.*, the bier-pins 15 screw into the ends of the arms 30, that are pivotally mounted at their inner ends on the bolts 31, secured in and extending above the bottom 13. A spring 32 is coiled about each of said bolts 31, with an arm extending transversely in each direction and attached to the outer ends of the arms 30 by passing through a hole, as seen in Fig. 4. Said springs are so arranged as to tend to move all of said arms 30 toward the nearer end of the bottom 13. Hence the arms at one end are forced in an opposite direction to that of the arms on the other end by said springs. Said arms 30, carrying the bier-pins, are held by chains 34, that are at one end secured to the outer end of said arms and then pass inward around the pulleys 35 on the posts 36, extending up from brackets 37, that are secured to the bottom 13. The inner ends of said chains 34 are fastened to a centrally-located longitudinally-



slidable bar 38 by means of ears 39. Both sets of said ears 39 are on the same and inner side of the pulleys 35, so that when said sliding bar 38 is moved toward the forward end of the hearse it will draw the ends of all of said arms inward, as shown in Fig. 5. Said arms are of the same length, and consequently their inward-and-outward movement is always simultaneous and to the same extent.

The sliding bar 38 is shown here as being tubular at each end and as longitudinally slidable on the rod 42, secured in the bracket 43 at the left-hand end of Fig. 4, and the rod 45, secured in the bracket 46 at the right hand of Fig. 4; but said bar 38 may be made in any desired way and mounted in any desired manner, so as to be longitudinally reciprocable. The bier-pin 18 is mounted in connection with the sliding bar 38. To provide for coffins of different sizes, said pin is connected adjustably with said bar 38. As seen in Fig. 6, said pin 18 is secured at its lower end to a longitudinally-threaded sleeve 47, extending at a right angle to the body of said pin and small enough to fit within a slotted guideway 48, secured on top of the bar 38 at the left-hand end, as shown in Fig. 4, and the rod 50, threaded at its inner end, screws into said sleeve 47. Hence said sleeve 47 and the pin 18 and the rod 50 are independently movable with reference to the reciprocable bar 38; but they are held stationary with reference to said bar 38 by means of the pawl 51, mounted between two plates 52 and 53. The lower plate 53 is secured rigidly to the reciprocable bar 38, as seen in Fig. 8, and a spacing-block 54 is secured between the plates 52 and 53. The pawl 51 is mounted on the pivot 152, extending through said plates, and said pawl is controlled by a spring 55, extending about said pivot 152, with one end caught over the lower plate 53 and the other end engaging the outer end of the pawl and tending to cause the inner end of said pawl to engage the toothed portion 56 of the rod 50, as seen in Fig. 4. Said pawl 51 is released by a chain 57, that extends within reach of a person. The outer end of the rod 50 has an extension 58 pivotally connected therewith, that is in reach of a person standing at the right-hand end of the construction, as shown in Fig. 4. Therefore when it is desired to change the position of the bier-pin 18 the chain 57 is drawn outward to release the pawl 51 from engagement with the rod 50. Then the rod 50 is pushed inward, thus pushing the pin 18 inward to provide the device for a longer casket, as shown in Fig. 3. When it is desired to change it for a smaller casket, all that is necessary to do is to pull on the end 58 of the rod 50, and thus draw the pin 18 in toward the middle somewhat, as shown in Fig. 2. As has been explained, when the casket is placed in the hearse and is pushed inward its inner end pushes the pin 18 inward, as shown in Fig. 4, which moves the bar 38 with it, and thus draws the arms 30 inward

and brings the side bier-pins 15 into close engagement with the sides of the casket. Then the bier-pin 22 is placed by hand in tightly against the outer end of the casket. In order to reinforce and more closely hold the outer ends of the bier-pin-holding means when the bier-pins are under strain, a guide-bar 60 is secured to the under side of the top board 10 adjacent the inner side of the curved slots through said board and curved parallel with said slots and with the lip shown in Fig. 9, that extends in under a lip 61 on the upper side of the outer end of the arm 30. Said lips 61 extend inwardly and ride upon the guide-strip during the oscillations of said arm and are at all times braced by said guide-strip, as shown in Fig. 9.

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

1. A casket-support, bier-pins mounted movable, and means actuated by the casket while being placed on said support that moves said pins into a holding position against the casket.

2. A casket-support, bier-pins mounted movable in said support, and means connected with said bier-pins that is actuated by the casket while being placed on said support for moving said bier-pins simultaneously into a holding position against the casket.

3. A casket-support with slots therein extending toward the position to be occupied by the casket, bier-pins projecting through said slots, mechanism under said support for holding and moving said bier-pins along said slots, and means projecting through said support in position to be moved by the casket while being placed on said support for actuating the mechanism below.

4. A casket-support with slots therein extending toward the position to be occupied by the casket, bier-pins projecting through said slots, mechanism under said support for holding and moving all of said bier-pins simultaneously, and means extending above said support in position to be moved by the casket while it is being placed on said support for actuating the mechanism below.

5. A casket-support having slots therein extending substantially toward the center of the position to be occupied by the casket, bier-pins projecting through said slots for engaging the sides of the casket when they are moved inwardly, mechanism under said support for holding and inwardly moving said side bier-pins, a longitudinal slot in said support in the path of the casket to be placed thereon, and a bier-pin projecting through said longitudinal slot and secured to said mechanism below whereby the side bier-pins will be moved in against the casket as the end bier-pin is moved by the casket.

6. A casket-support having slots therein extending substantially toward the center of the position to be occupied by the casket, bier-



pins projecting through said slots for engaging the sides of the casket when they are moved inwardly, mechanism under said support for holding and inwardly moving said side bier-pins, a longitudinal slot in said support in the path of the end of the casket to be placed thereon, a bier-pin projecting through said longitudinal slot and secured to said mechanism below whereby the side bier-pins will be moved in against the casket, and a bier-pin insertible in said support at the other end of the casket.

7. A casket-support, bier-pins for engaging the sides of the casket, means for holding and moving said bier-pins against the casket, a bier-pin adapted to be engaged by the end of the casket as it is put in place on the casket-support, said last-mentioned bier-pin being connected with said mechanism for holding and moving the other bier-pins so that the movement of the end bier-pin will cause the other bier-pins to be moved against the casket, and means for adjusting the position of said end bier-pin in its connection with said mechanism whereby the device will hold caskets of varying sizes in a central position on said support.

8. A casket-support having slots therein extending substantially toward the center of the position to be occupied by the casket, bier-pins projecting through said slots for engaging the sides of the casket when they are moved inwardly, mechanism under said support for holding and inwardly moving said side bier-pins, a longitudinal slot in said support in the path of the end of the casket to be placed thereon, an end bier-pin projecting through said longitudinal slot and secured to said mechanism below whereby the side bier-pins will be moved in against the casket as the end bier-pin is moved by the casket, and means for adjusting the position of said end bier-pin whereby the device will be adapted to caskets of varying sizes and they may be supported centrally.

9. A casket-support having slots therein extending substantially toward the center of the position to be occupied by the casket, bier-pins projecting through said slots for engaging the sides of the casket when they are moved inwardly, mechanism under said support for holding and moving said side bier-pins inwardly, a longitudinal slot in said support in the path of the casket to be placed thereon, a bier-pin projecting through said longitudinal slot and secured to said mechanism below whereby the side bier-pins will be moved in against the casket as the end bier-pin is moved by the casket, means for adjusting the position of said end bier-pin whereby the device will be adapted to caskets of varying sizes and they may be supported centrally, a series of holes in the end of said support opposite said longitudinal slot, and a bier-pin insertible in said holes.

10. A casket-support, arms pivoted under

said support and extending laterally, said support having slots therein above the outer ends of said arms and concentric with the vertical axes of said arms, bier-pins projecting through said slots and secured to said arms, and means for moving said arms toward the position on said support to be occupied by said casket.

11. A casket-support, a pair of radial arms pivoted under said support near each end thereof, the arms of each pair extending in opposite directions to each other, said support having slots therein above the outer ends of said arms, bier-pins projecting through said slots and secured to said arms, and means connected with the outer ends of said arms for moving the same toward the middle of said support.

12. A casket-support, a pair of radial arms pivoted under said support near each end thereof, the arms of each pair extending in opposite directions to each other, said supports having slots therein above the outer ends of said arms, bier-pins projecting through said slots and secured to said arms, means for moving the ends of said arms toward the middle of said support, and a spring tending to hold said arms in a transverse position.

13. A casket-support, a pair of radial arms pivoted under said support near each end thereof, the arms of each pair extending in opposite directions to each other, a single means for moving the end of all arms toward the middle of said support, said support having slots therein over the ends of said arms and concentric with the vertical axes thereof, a longitudinally-extending slot over said actuating means, and bier-pins projecting through said slots, some secured to the ends of said arms and one secured to said actuating means.

14. A casket-support, arms pivoted under the same so as to extend laterally, a spring tending to hold said arms laterally, a longitudinally-movable bar mounted in line with the axes of said arms, pulleys mounted near said bar, one pulley for each arm, a connection from the end of each arm extending about its corresponding pulley and secured at the inner end to said bar at a point in advance of the pulley, said casket-support having slots in it curved concentric with the vertical axis of each of said arms and a longitudinal slot over said bar, and bier-pins projecting through said slots, one bier-pin secured to the end of each arm and one to said longitudinally-movable bar.

15. A casket-support having slots therein, a bottom under and spaced from said casket-support, a bracket secured upon said bottom near each end, inwardly-extending rods secured to said brackets, a longitudinally-movable bar mounted upon said rods, other brackets secured to said bottom intermediate the first-named brackets, pulleys mounted on said intermediate brackets, pins secured in said bottom between said brackets, one at each end



thereof, a pair of arms pivotally mounted at one end on each of said pins, a spring coiled about each of said pins and engaging said arms and tending to force each pair of said arms toward the adjacent end of said bottom, bier-pins secured in the ends of said arms and projecting through the slots in the casket-support, a connection extending from the end of each arm about a pulley and secured to said longitudinally-movable bar so that the movement of said bar will cause the simultaneous movement inwardly or outwardly of all of said arms, and a bier-pin secured to said bar projecting upward through a slot in said casket-support in position to be engaged by the casket when it is put in place thereon.

16. A casket-support, arms pivoted under said support and extending laterally, said support having slots therein above the outer ends of said arms and concentric with the vertical axes of said arms, bier-pins projecting through said slots and secured to said arms, means for moving said arms toward the position on said support to be occupied by said casket, and a

reinforcing-strip secured to the under side of said support in the path of movement of each of said arms that tends to hold the outer ends of said arms in place.

17. A casket-support, arms pivoted under said support and extending laterally, said support having slots therein above the outer ends of said arms and concentric with the vertical axes of said arms, bier-pins projecting through said slots and secured to said arms, means for moving said arms toward the position on said support to be occupied by said casket, and guide-strips secured to the under side of said support parallel and adjacent each of said slots, the outer end of said arms being each provided with a loop that loosely engages and rides upon said guide-strip.

In witness whereof I have hereunto affixed my signature in the presence of the witnesses herein named.

JOHN Z. MILLER.

Witnesses:

W. F. BONHAM,  
N. ALLEMONG.