June 9, 1925. 1,540,887

B. T. M. HUNLEY

CRAB WRAPPER AND WRAPPING METHOD

Filed Aug. 17, 1923

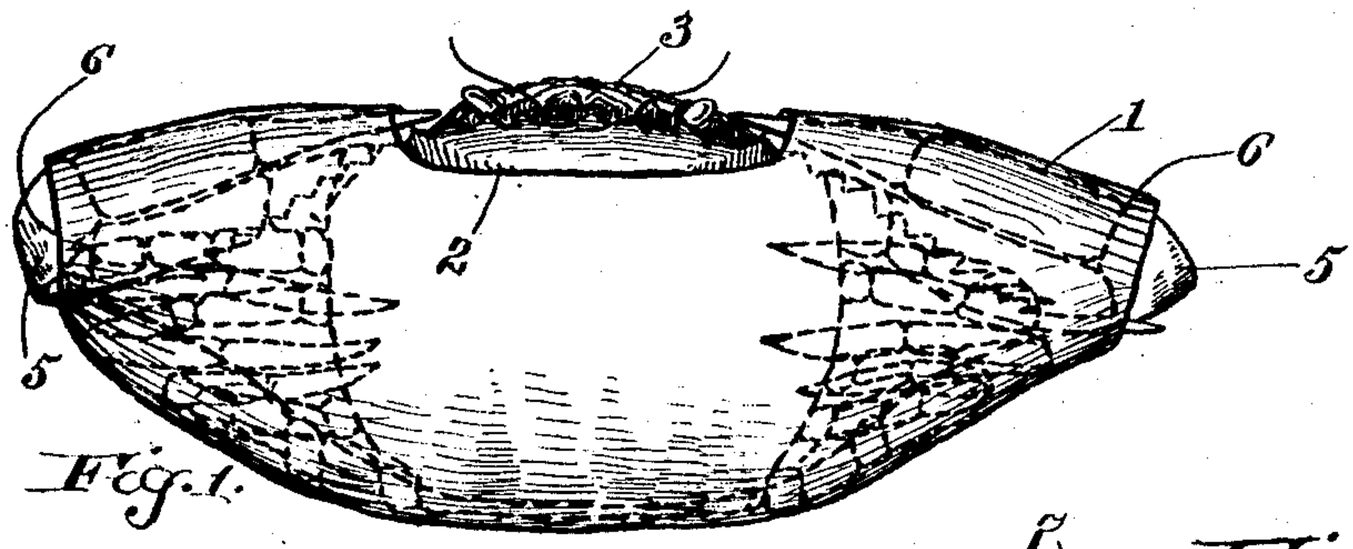


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

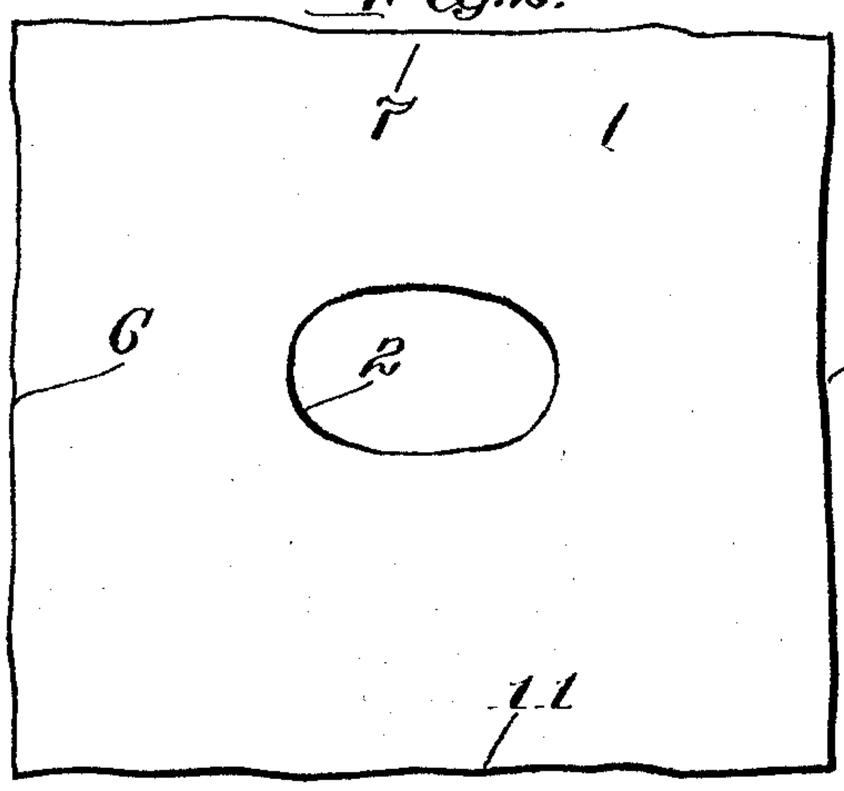
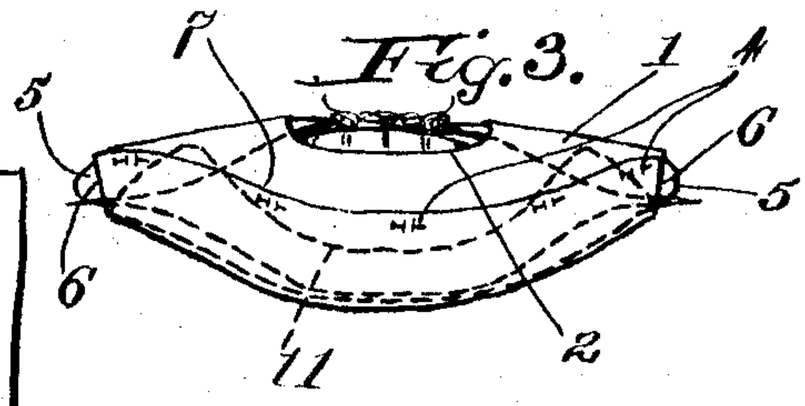


Fig. 3.



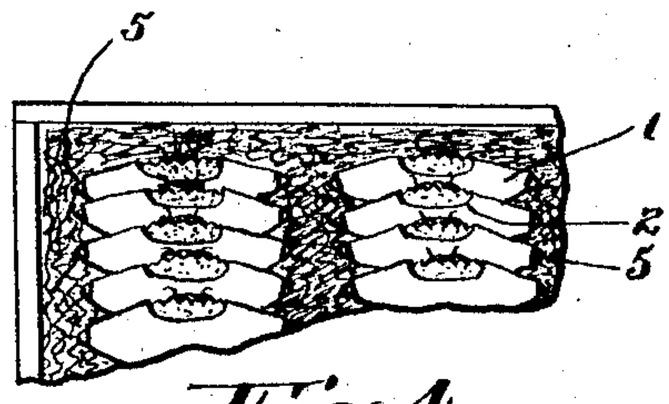


Fig. 4.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

BOOKER T. M. HUNLEY, OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

CRAB WRAPPER AND WRAPPING METHOD.

Application filed August 17, 1923. Serial No. 657,872.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, BOOKER T. M. HUNLEY, a citizen of the United States of America, residing in the city of Baltimore, State of Maryland, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Crab Wrappers and Wrapping Methods, of which the following is a specification.

The difficulties incident to handling and shipping live hard crabs, have tended to seriously limit the industry and to increase the price of the commodity on account of the expense incident to packing the crabs and the loss which results from the fact that the crabs, unless they are carefully separated, will injure each other so that many of them die before they reach their destination and become worthless for food, also, if the crabs are packed in ordinary crates, which are the cheapest and most convenient receptacles for this purpose, many of them escape, so that it has been found necessary, in most instances, to pack them for shipment in barrels which are more expensive and less desirable because the height of the barrels places a considerable weight on the crabs at the bottom due to the pressure of those above and there is less opportunity for ventilation.

The invention relates to a method of confining individual crabs for shipment alive so that the crabs can be easily and safely handled and can be packed in close contact with each other without the necessity for separating them by means of packing material as seaweed and without danger of the crabs escaping or injuring each other.

The method consists in placing and holding the claws and fins of the crab in folded or retracted position and wrapping a sheet of flexible material about the crab in a fore and aft direction and fastening the wrapper to confine the claws and fins, leaving an aperture at the front, exposing the head portions, eyes, mouth, etc., of the crab, permitting free respiration.

In this way the hard crab is made a more merchantable commodity, being as easily handled and shipped as a soft crab and of longer life when packed.

The wrapper consists of a small piece of fabric, as cotton or twilled cloth, a satisfactory size, being ten inches long and six inches wide with a central aperture approximately two and one-half or three inches in diameter. The dimensions may, however, be considerably varied within the scope of the invention to meet the conditions presented, some of those which have been in use being about nine inches square, the edges being folded if desired.

In using the wrapper, the crab is held with the claws and fins folded or retracted and the aperture in the cloth, or wrapper, being placed over the crab's head, so that his eyes and mouth are exposed, the cloth is wound or wrapped about the crab in a fore and aft direction, the edges being lapped over at the rear or in any convenient position and fastened by a suitable means, as pinning, sewing or buttoning.

In the accompanying drawing, I have illustrated a crab wrapper constructed in accordance with my invention. I have also illustrated a crab wrapped in accordance with the method of my invention. In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a top plan view of a crab wrapped in accordance with my invention.

Figure 2 is a plan of a plain wrapper.

Figure 3 is a bottom plan view on a reduced scale of a crab wrapped in accordance with my invention.

Figure 4 is a plan view of a crate packed with crabs wrapped in accordance with my invention, the cover being partly broken away to show the crabs contained therein.

Referring to the drawings by numerals, the wrapper as shown is a rectangular piece of fabric, 1, with a central aperture 2, the aperture being in the preferred form of the invention, elongated or elliptical, the diameters of the ellipse being parallel to the respective sides of the rectangular sheet of material. The edges of the wrapper may be fastened in any suitable manner as by pins, or buttons, or even by cement, it being understood that in the preferred form of the invention the wrapper is wound about the crab, the elliptical opening being placed over the head with the long diameter extending sideways, so that the entire head 3, with eyes and mouth are exposed. This feature is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows a top plan view of the crab thus wrapped. The claws and the form of the lower portion of the shell, all of which are at the under side of the crab and therefore concealed both by the crab's body and by the wrapper, are shown in dotted lines. It will also be noted in Figure 1, that portions of the crab are exposed at 5, at the

sides of the figure beyond the side edges 6 of the wrapper.

Figure 3 is a bottom plane of a crab wrapped in accordance with the invention. In wrapping, the end 11 of the wrapper, as shown in Figure 2, is placed under the bottom of the crab near the rear, it being understood that the crab is held with the claws and fins folded under him. The end or edge 7 of the material then is passed forwardly over the top of the crab, bringing the opening 2 in registration with the head portion and this outside edge 7 having been passed entirely around the crab is brought to the position just under the head opening 2, in which it is shown in Figure 3, and fastened with pins 4 or any preferred form of fastening.

A considerable degree of tension is applied to the wrapper, as it is passed about the crab and fastened, and so applied, it serves to confine the claws most effectively, making the crab safe to handle and preventing him from injuring the other crabs. A most important feature of the invention is that while the crab is thus restrained from activity as to his claws and fins, his respiratory organs are exposed and the life of the crab thus packed, continues as long as it would under any conditions of packing unless the crab were immersed. If desired, moisture-holding material may be placed in the crate.

In Figure 4, I have shown a crate packed with crabs wrapped in accordance with my invention. It will be noted that they are packed close together somewhat after the manner of packing soft crabs which are understood to be the only crabs which are now shipped in any quantities in crates. Hard crabs thus wrapped are as easy to handle and pack as any inanimate object and when thus packed, they are in no wise injured and the restraint thus exerted is shown by test to be practically harmless. In this way they are rendered much more mechantable, being available for packing and shipment much after the manner of soft crabs but much less perishable.

I have thus described specifically and in detail a single embodiment of the article of my invention; I have likewise described specifically and in detail the method of wrapping crabs which is a feature of my invention, this specific description being supplied in order that the nature and operation of the invention may be clearly understood, however, the specific terms herein are used descriptively rather than in a limiting sense, the scope of the invention being defined in the claims.

What I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. The method of wrapping crabs for shipping which consists in holding the claws and fins in folded position and wrapping a sheet of flexible material about the crab and fastening the same to confine the claws and fins, leaving the head portion, including the respiratory organs, exposed.

2. The method of wrapping crabs for shipping which consists in holding the claws and fins in folded position and wrapping a sheet of flexible material about the crab in a fore and aft direction, and fastening the same to confine the claws and fins, leaving the head portion, including the respiratory organs, exposed.

3. A wrapper for confining crabs which consists of a sheet of flexible material having an aperture to expose the head portion of the crab, the sheet of material being adapted to be wrapped about the crab in a fore and aft direction, and means for securing the same at each side of the opening, confining the claws and fins in folded position substantially as described.

Signed by me at Baltimore, Maryland, this 14th day of August, 1923.

BOOKER T. M. HUNLEY.

Witnesses:
PORTER H. FLAUTT,
E. WEHMEYER.