March 13, 1956 A. B. SEGUR 2,738,216

TONGS WITH ARCUATE ARTICLE ENGAGING SURFACE

Filed Nov. 8, 1952 4 Sheets-Sheet 1

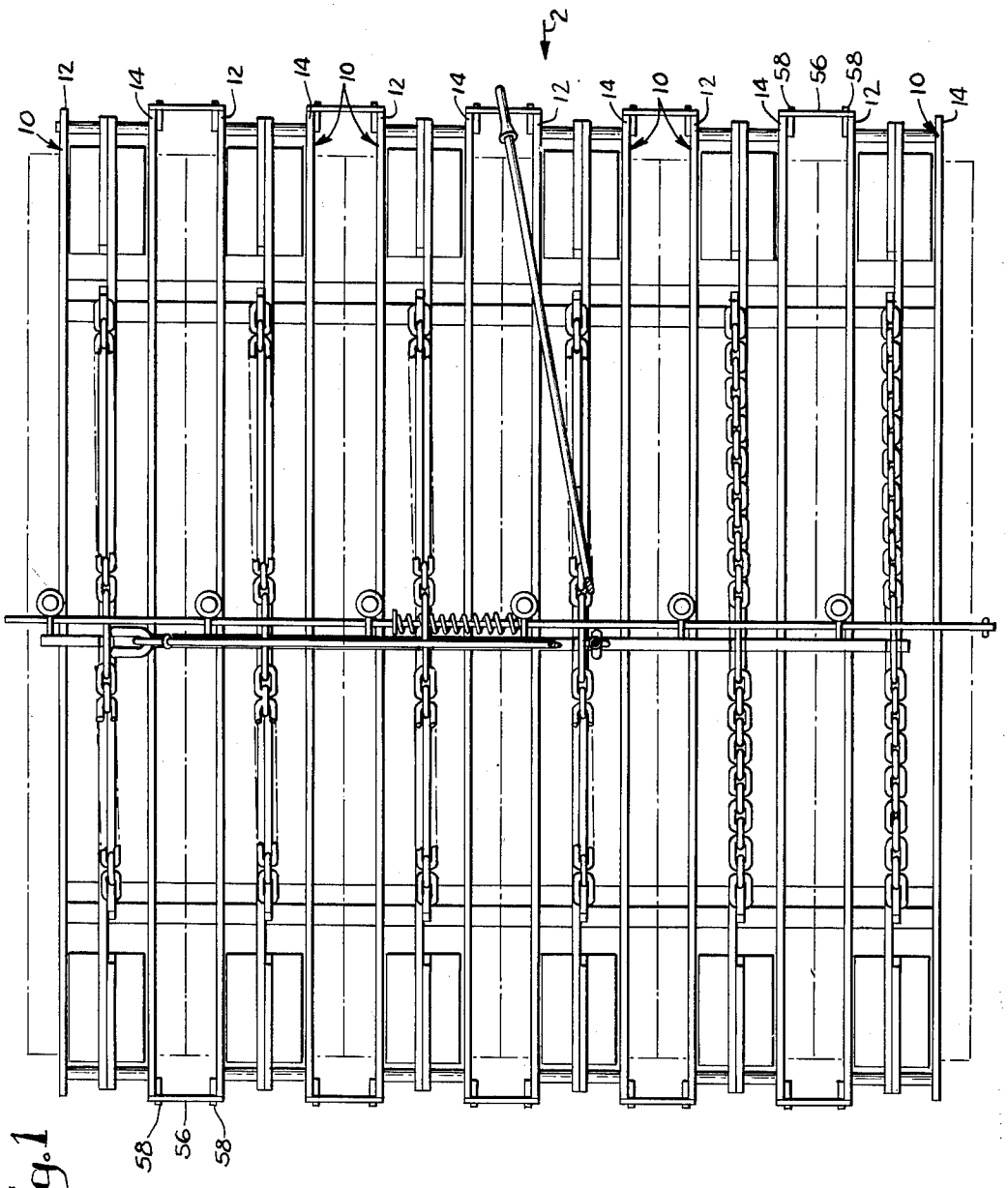


Fig. 1

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TONGS WITH ARCUATE ARTICLE ENGAGING SURFACE

Filed Nov. 8, 1952 4 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 4

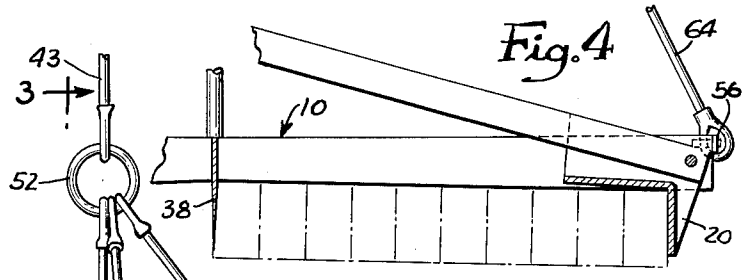
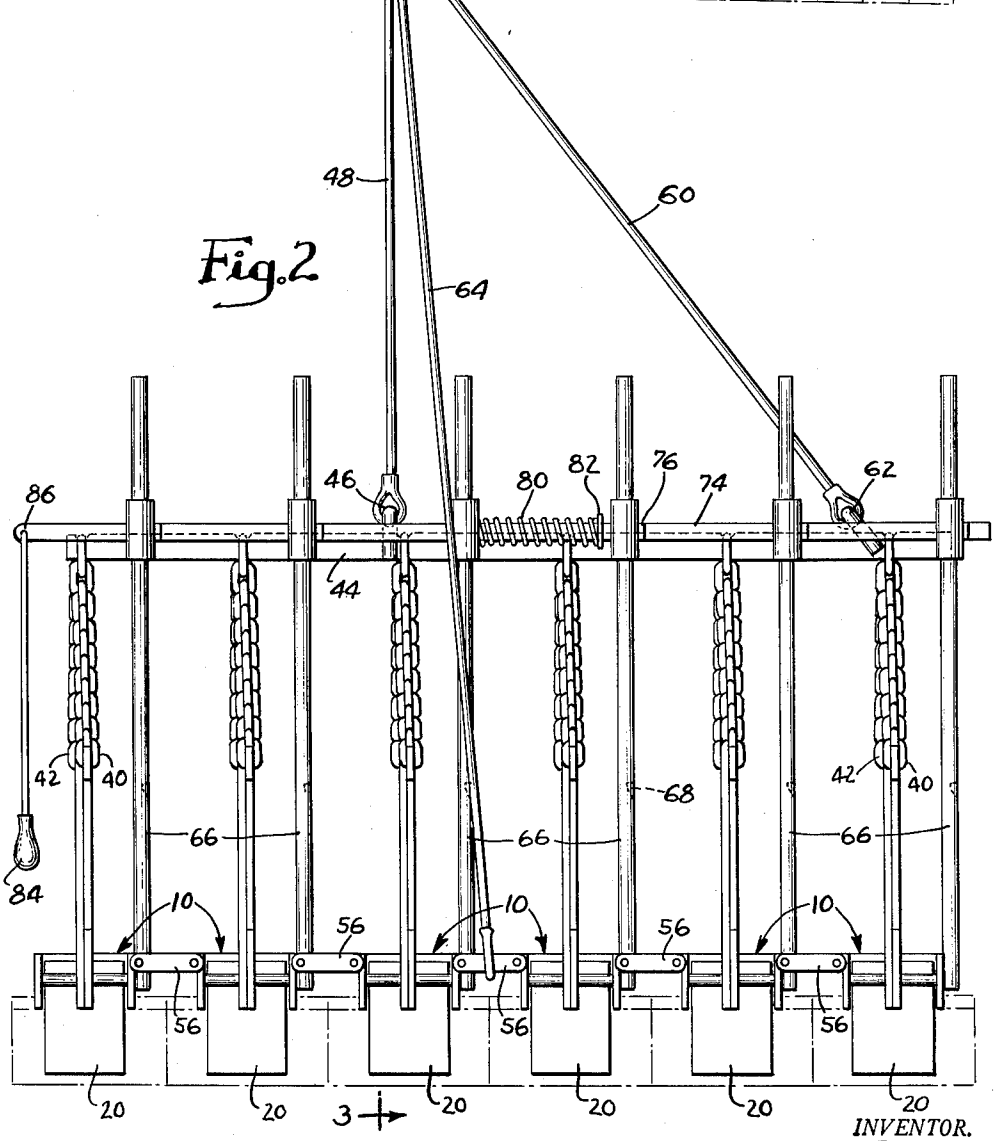


Fig. 2



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Filed Nov. 8, 1952 4 Sheets-Sheet 3

Fig. 3

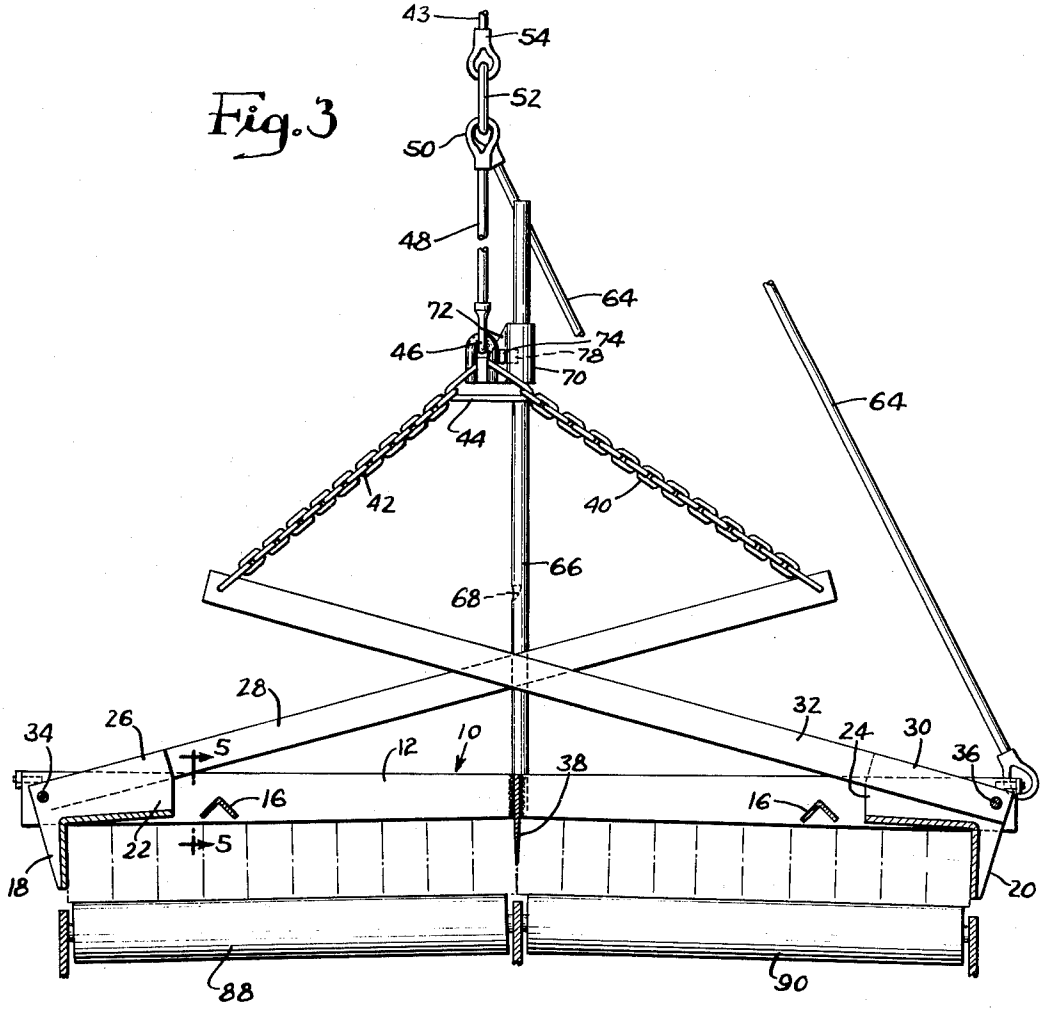
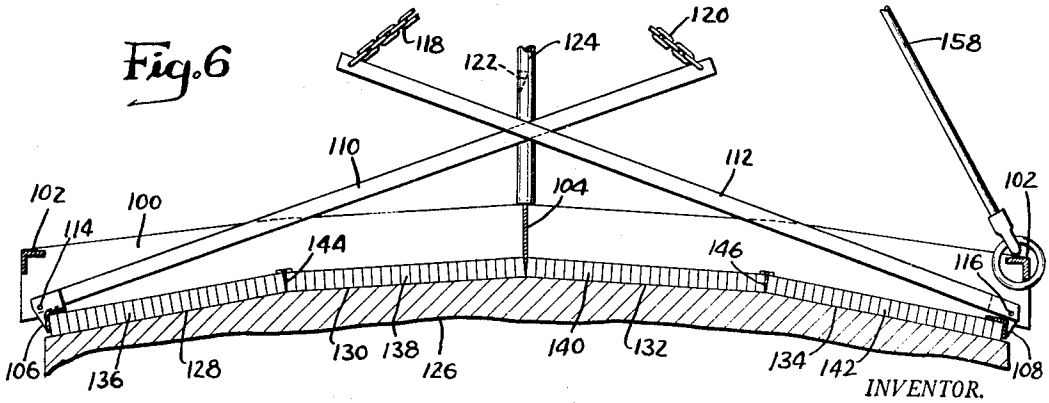


Fig. 6



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March 13, 1956 A. B. SEGUR 2,738,216

TONGS WITH ARCUATE ARTICLE ENGAGING SURFACE

Filed Nov. 8, 1952 4 Sheets-Sheet 4

Fig.8

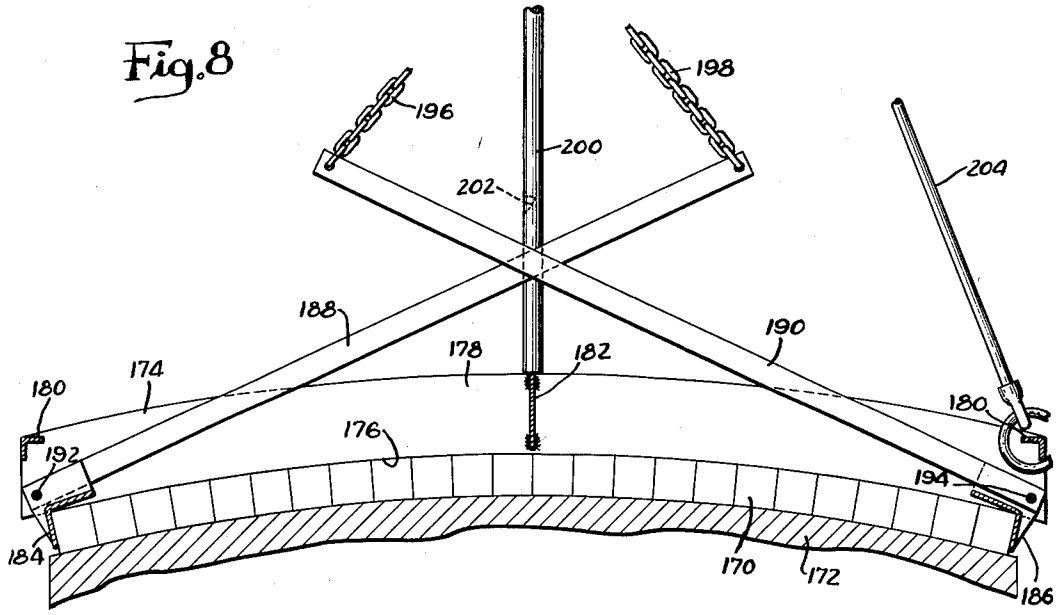


Fig.7

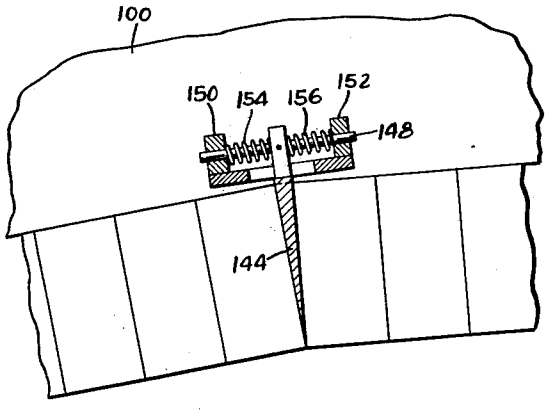
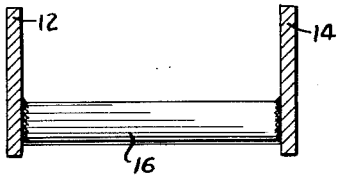


Fig.5



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United States Patent Office 2,738,216 Patented Mar. 13, 1956

2,738,216

TONGS WITH ARCUATE ARTICLE ENGAGING SURFACE

Asa B. Segur, Oak Park, Ill.

Application November 8, 1952, Serial No. 319,507

16 Claims. (Cl. 294—62)

My invention relates to tongs and is more particularly concerned with tongs of the type utilized to pick up and transport brick and like ceramic articles.

An object of my invention is to provide a tongs operating upon a new principle.

Another object of my invention is to provide a new improved tongs which is capable of handling a greater load than tongs heretofore in use.

Another object of my invention is to provide a new and improved tongs which is adapted to pick up and transport either a full or a partial load.

Another object of my invention is to provide a tongs having novel biasing means.

Another object of my invention is to provide a new and improved tongs which can pick up and transport intact a long section of a wall or roof.

Another object of my invention is to provide a tongs having a novel locking means.

Other objects and advantages will become apparent as the description proceeds.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a top plan view of a gang tongs embodying my invention;

Fig. 2 is an elevational view taken in the direction of the arrow 2 in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a vertical transverse sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2 showing the clamping jaws engaging a full row of brick;

Fig. 4 is a partial view similar to Fig. 3 but showing the tongs engaging a half row of brick;

Fig. 5 is a partial vertical sectional view of a detail taken on the line 5—5 of Fig. 3;

Fig. 6 is a partial transverse elevational view of a second embodiment of my invention showing the tongs in engagement with a section of brick wall or roof;

Fig. 7 is an enlarged view of one of the wedge constructions shown in Fig. 6; and

Fig. 8 is a view similar to Fig. 6 but showing a further embodiment of my invention.

The gang tongs of Figs. 1 to 5 inclusive comprises a multiplicity of rectangular frames **10** each having a pair of side members **12** and **14**, the side members of each frame being provided with suitable cross-members or braces **16**. Each frame **10** has a pair of brick engaging jaws **18** and **20** illustrated as being provided by supports **22** and **24** respectively. The jaw support **22** has a portion **26** welded or otherwise attached to one end of an arm **28**, and the jaw support **24** has a similar portion **30** attached to one end of an arm **32**. A pin **34** pivotally connects jaw supports **22** and arm **28** to one end of side members **12** and **14**, and a similar pin **36** connects the other jaw support **24** and its arm **32** to the other end of the frame side members **12** and **14**.

A wedge **38** extends transversely of the central portion of each frame **10** and is welded or otherwise attached to the side members thereof. This wedge adds additional

stiffness to the frames **10** as well as serving a further purpose hereinafter described.

Chains **40** and **42** connect the free ends of the arms **28** and **32** respectively with a beam **44** extending transversely of the entire tongs. The beam **44** is pivotally attached at **46** to the lower end of the main supporting link **48** whose upper end is pivotally connected at **50** to a ring **52** adapted for attachment to the cable **43** of a crane or other suitable transporting means.

The several frames **10** are attached to each other by links **56**, each having a pair of pivots **58** for connecting opposite ends of the link to the frames **10**. This construction permits limited vertical movement of one frame relative to another. In the particular embodiment shown, there are six frames pivotally connected by links **56**, and, while I have found this number to be desirable, it is to be understood that my gang tongs can be provided with a greater or lesser number of frames and associated parts to satisfy different requirements.

Referring particularly to Fig. 2, it will be seen that the pivotal connection **46** between the main supporting link **48** and the beam **44** is located at one side of the center of the tongs so that that side of the tongs to the right of the pivotal connection **46**, as viewed in this figure, would have a tendency to swing downwardly about the pivotal connection **46**. Such movement, however, is prevented by the diagonal link **60** which connects the ring **52** with an eye **62** attached to the beam **44** adjacent one end thereof.

Referring to Fig. 3, it will also be seen that main supporting link **48** is located to the left of the center of the tongs as viewed in this figure so that the right-hand side of the tongs would tend to swing downwardly about the pivotal connection **46**. Such movement is limited by a second diagonal link **64** attached at its upper end to the ring **52** and at its lower end to one of the links **56**. This novel biasing of the tongs greatly facilitates the handling of the tongs under varying load conditions.

I have also provided a novel locking means whereby the tongs can be picked up without causing them to engage bricks or other ceramic articles located therebetween. This locking means comprises a vertical rod **66** attached at its lower end to a side member of each of the frames **10**. Each of these rods has a latch-receiving notch **68**. A sleeve **70** slidably engages each rod **66**, each sleeve **70** being attached by a web **72** to the beam **44** for vertical movement therewith.

A latch bar **74** is slidably mounted in openings provided by the webs **72**, and has latch elements **76** for engaging the notches **68**, the sleeve **70** having cut-away portions **78** to receive the latch elements **76**. A spring **80** (Fig. 2) is confined between one of the sleeves **70** and an abutment **82** on latch bar **74** so that this spring urges the latch bar toward notch-engaging position.

After a load of brick or other ceramic articles have been lowered into position, the beam **44** is further lowered until the latch elements **76** engage the notches **68**, whereupon the entire tongs may be raised without again picking up the load which it has just released. After the tongs have been lowered over another load of brick or ceramic articles to be picked up and transported, the lanyard **84** attached at **86** to one end of the latch bar **74** is pulled in a direction to compress the spring **80** and remove the latching elements **76** from the notches **78**. Lifting of the beam **44** by the crane or other raising and transporting means from which the tongs are suspended will then cause the jaws **18** and **20** to grip the new load and pick it up for transfer to a new location.

In utilizing my novel gang tongs the bricks or other ceramic articles to be moved to a new location are supported in such manner that half of the load, in the present

instance a column ten bricks wide, is located at an angle to the other half of the load so that the two halves of the load form a very shallow V. In Fig. 3 the bricks are illustrated as being supported on two series of rollers indicated by reference characters 88 and 90 respectively with the axes of the rollers 88 forming an angle of slightly less than 180° with the axes of the rollers 90. Such a platform together with a suitable crane and hoist for operating the tongs shown in Figs. 1 to 5 are shown and described in detail in my co-pending application, Serial No. 539,229, filed October 6, 1955, which is a division of my co-pending application Serial No. 318,554, filed November 14, 1952.

The V-shaped arrangement of the two columns of bricks creates a narrow V-shaped space between the center bricks into which the wedges 38 are inserted as the tongs are lowered over the bricks or other ceramic articles to be picked up. These wedges preserve the V-shaped arrangement of the bricks in each of the frames when an upward lift on the beam 44 causes jaws 18 and 20 to engage opposite ends of the column of brick in each frame. An important feature of my invention is the shallow V arrangement of the column of brick in each frame which makes it possible to hold the bricks or other articles firmly in the tongs under much lighter compressive forces of the jaws 18 and 20 than would be required if the column of bricks in each frame were arranged in a straight line. It will be further noted that the lower edges of the side members 12 and 14 of each frame are inclined to conform to the shallow V-shaped arrangement of the bricks and cooperate with the wedges 38 and jaws 18 and 20 to maintain this V-shaped arrangement throughout the time that the bricks or other articles are engaged by the tongs.

Because of the offset relationship of the link 48 with respect to both the longitudinal and transverse center lines of the tongs, the right-hand side of the tongs as viewed in Fig. 3 and the right-hand end of the tongs as viewed in Fig. 2 tend to swing downwardly but are restrained by the diagonal links 60 and 64. This predetermined biasing of the tongs prevents teetering of the tongs about its pivotal support and thereby facilitates handling of the tongs. It is particularly advantageous in locating the loaded tongs accurately with respect to a particular area on which the bricks or other articles are to be deposited, and in locating the empty tongs over a new load to be picked up, and transported.

This biasing of the tongs also is of great assistance when the tongs are utilized to pick up less than a full load. In Fig. 4 I have illustrated a situation in which the tongs are used to pick up a half-load composed of a half-column in each frame. In so doing, the half-column is clamped between a wedge 38 and a jaw 20. The central wedges 38 perform the dual functions of serving as abutments and means for maintaining the V-shape of a full load. The diagonal link 64 limits pivotal movement of the half-loaded tongs about the axis of ring 52 so that the half-load may be accurately deposited on a particular area of a transportation vehicle for other location.

My novel tongs is also adapted to pick up and transport less than the maximum number of full columns. The particular tongs shown has a capacity of six full columns. For certain purposes it may be advisable to pick up only five full columns, or even less. Where less than the capacity number of full columns is to be picked up, the frames beginning with the right-hand frame in Fig. 2 are those preferably utilized. For example, if five full columns are to be picked up, the tongs is positioned over the bricks or other articles so that all except the left-hand frame in Fig. 2 are above columns of bricks and the tongs lowered to engage the five columns of brick. The lanyard 84 is then pulled to release the lock elements from the notches 68 and the beam raised by an upward pull of the hoist or other carrying device from which the tongs is suspended. This causes the jaws 18 and 20 to grip the ends of the five columns and compress these columns toward the wedges 38.

The jaws of the left-hand frame are idle since there are no bricks for them to engage. The unbalance of the load is merely more offset with respect to the axis of the supporting ring 52 than is the normal biasing of the tongs. The diagonal links 60 and 64 control the position of the tongs and its load to afford ease of handling and accuracy of placement of the partial load on a particular area just as they do for a full load.

My novel tongs is capable of picking up and transporting a much longer column of bricks or similar ceramic articles than is the conventional tongs. It is therefore feasible to design my new and improved tongs to pick up and transfer intact a whole section of a wall or roof construction. In Fig. 6 I have illustrated a modified form of tongs especially designed for this purpose.

The tongs of Fig. 6 comprises a generally rectangular frame having a pair of spaced side members 100 connected at their ends by cross-pieces 102 and at their centers by a wedge 104 similar to the wedge 38 of the previous embodiment. The jaws 106 and 108 are attached to the ends of arms 110 and 112 respectively, the arms and jaw elements being pivotally attached to opposite ends of the frame side members by pivot pins 114 and 116. The other ends of the arms 110 and 112 are attached to chains 118 and 120 corresponding to the chains 40 and 42 of the previous embodiment.

The chains 118 and 120 preferably are connected to a beam corresponding to the beam 44 and having a sleeve and latch-bar respectively slidably on and engageable with the notches 122 in rods 124 attached to the side members 100. Where a tongs consists of only a single frame, it is preferable to provide a latch-rod 124 attached to each side member of the frame, whereas, when the tongs comprises a plurality of connected frames, a single latch-bar on each frame will suffice.

Tongs of the kind shown in Fig. 6 can be made to pick up a section of wall or roof construction as much as twenty feet or more in length, and ordinarily such tongs will consist of a single frame, although two or more such frames can be pivotally connected like the frames of the first embodiment, if such a construction is deemed desirable. In order to permit the tongs to pick up and carry a column of this length, the column of bricks is arranged as a plurality of segments each having an axis forming an angle of slightly less than 180° with the axis of an adjacent segment. Thus, in Fig. 6 I have indicated a support 126 which may be a roller platform like that indicated in Fig. 3, or any other suitable supporting means.

The platform 126 has supporting surfaces 128, 130, 132, and 134 on which sections 136, 138, 140, and 142 of the total column of bricks or like articles are supported so that each section forms a shallow V with the adjacent section. The wedge 104 projects into the narrow V-shaped space between the center bricks of the column, and auxiliary wedges 144 and 146 project into the narrow V-shaped spaces between the end bricks of other sections of the column. It will be noted that the lower edges of the frame side members 100 are so shaped that they cooperate with the wedges and jaws to maintain the shallow V-shaped arrangement of the several segments of the total column.

If the brick or like articles had absolutely accurate dimensions, the auxiliary wedges 144 and 146 could be fixed like the central wedge 104, but, because of the variations in sizes of bricks and like articles, the wedges 144 and 146 are floatingly mounted as shown in Fig. 7. In this figure the wedge 144 is illustrated as affixed to one or more pins 148 slidably mounted in cross-members 150 and 152 which also serve to brace the side members 100 of the frame. Springs 154 and 156 tend to center the wedges 144 but permit automatic adjustment of these wedges to compensate for variations in the dimensions of the bricks or like articles.

Since the supporting beam for the chains **118** and **120** would be to the left of center as viewed in Fig. 6 (that is, have the same position as the beam **44** of Fig. 3), the right-hand end of the tongs would tend to swing downwardly and such movement is controlled and limited by a diagonal link **158** corresponding to the link **64** of the previous embodiment. Where a tongs consists of only a single frame it will ordinarily not be necessary or advantageous to bias the tongs crosswise of the frame. This means that in the single frame construction of Fig. 6 a diagonal link corresponding to the link **60** of the previous embodiment is unnecessary and would be utilized only where the tongs is composed of more than one frame.

The previous embodiments of my invention were designed to pick up and transport bricks or like articles of substantially rectangular cross-section, whereas that form of my invention shown in Fig. 8 is designed to pick up and transport a long section of a wall or roof construction composed of bricks or like articles which are of tapered cross-section. In Fig. 8 the bricks or like articles **170** are illustrated as resting upon a platform or other suitable support **172** having a supporting surface which is arcuate lengthwise of the column of articles **170**. The side members **174** of the tongs frame likewise have arcuate lower edges **176** to conform to the upper surfaces of the articles **170**, and in the particular instance shown the upper edges **178** of the side members are also arcuate, although these upper edges may be of any desired configuration. The frame side members **174** are connected by suitable cross-members such as indicated at **180** and **182**, but no wedges need be provided because the tapered articles form a smooth curve between the jaws **184** and **186**.

The jaws **184** and **186** and arms **188** and **190** to which the jaws are attached are preferably secured to the side members **174** by pins **192** and **194**. The other ends of the arms **188** and **190** are attached to chains **196** and **198** as in the previous embodiments. This form of my invention is preferably also provided with locking rods **200** having latch-engaging notches **202** like those previously described in connection with the first two embodiments. The tongs of this Fig. 8 is also preferably provided with a diagonal link **204** to control and limit downward movement of the right-hand end of the tongs due to the biasing resulting from locating the supporting beam to the left of the locking rods **200**.

In the conventional tongs the entire column of bricks is arranged in a straight line and the frictional engagement between sides of the adjacent bricks and between sides of the end bricks and the jaws provide the only force for retaining the bricks in the tongs. This means that for even a relatively short column of bricks, the jaws must exert a relatively great compressive force on the bricks. In my novel tongs, however, I utilize a new principle by arranging the bricks or like articles in an arcuate formation in which they form either shallow V's or true arcs. My novel tongs therefore do not depend alone upon friction resulting from the compressive forces of the jaws. This means that for any given length of column my novel tongs will retain the bricks or like articles firmly in place with far less compressive force between the bricks than is required by the conventional tongs, and because of this my new and improved tongs are capable of handling greater loads and longer columns of bricks and like articles than can be handled by the tongs now in use.

Also because of their improved construction and biasing, my tongs are better adapted to handle both full and partial loads and may easily be guided to deposit such loads accurately and quickly on the exact area designated therefor.

While my novel tongs are especially designed for carrying bricks and other ceramic articles, they are not necessarily so limited and are adapted to carry appropriately shaped articles of other materials, and capable of any use.

It is to be understood that my invention is not limited to the particular details shown and described but includes

all modifications, variations, and equivalents coming within the scope of the appended claims. In these claims the expression "generally arcuate" is used to designate both a true arc like that shown in the curved frame of the embodiment of Fig. 8 and a broad V-shape formed by intersecting straight lines like the frames of the first two embodiments. Similarly, the expression "articles of generally rectangular cross-section" is utilized to cover both articles of true rectangular cross-section and articles varying somewhat therefrom, such as the tapered brick shown in Fig. 8.

I claim:

1. Tongs for carrying long sections of walls and roof constructions of brick and like articles comprising an elongated frame having on its bottom side an article-engaging surface divided into a plurality of sections each forming a shallow V with respect to adjacent sections, clamping jaws pivotally attached to said frame adjacent opposite ends of said surface, arms for operating said jaws, said jaws exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said long section whenever the ends of said arms opposite said jaws are pulled upward, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said long section to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface, a supporting link, chains connecting said arms to one end of said link, said link being offset with respect to the longitudinal center of gravity of said tongs and connected with said frame by a depending element extending substantially vertically above a point near said center of gravity, an alternative supporting means for said frame connected to the frame, said alternative means including latch means complementary latch means on said depending element, and a second link connecting the other end of said first named link substantially with the end of the frame most remote from said first named link.

2. Tongs for carrying long sections of walls and roof constructions of brick and like articles comprising an elongated frame having on its bottom side an article-engaging surface divided into a plurality of sections each forming a shallow V with respect to adjacent sections, clamping jaws pivotally attached to said frame adjacent opposite ends of said surface, arms for operating said jaws, said jaws exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said long section whenever the ends of said arms opposite said jaws are pulled upward, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said long section to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface, a supporting link, chains connecting said arms to one end of said link, said link being offset with respect to the longitudinal center of gravity of said tongs and connected with said frame by a depending element extending substantially vertically above a point near said center of gravity, an alternative supporting means for said frame connected to the frame, said alternative means including latch means, complementary latch means on said depending element, a second link connecting the other end of said first named link substantially with the end of the frame most remote from said first named link, and wedges located in the angles formed by said parts of said surfaces.

3. Tongs for carrying long sections of walls and roof constructions of brick and like articles comprising an elongated frame having on its bottom side an article-engaging surface divided into a plurality of sections each forming a shallow V with respect to adjacent sections, clamping jaws pivotally attached to said frame adjacent opposite ends of said surface, arms for operating said jaws, said jaws exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said long section whenever the ends of said arms opposite said jaws are pulled upward, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said long section to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface, a supporting link, chains connecting said arms to one end of said link, said link being offset with respect to the longitudinal center of gravity of said tongs

and connected with said frame by a depending element extending substantially vertically above a point near said center of gravity, an alternative supporting means for said frame connected to the frame, said alternative means including latch means, complementary latch means on said depending element, a second link connecting the other end of said first named link substantially with the end of the frame most remote from said first named link, and wedges located in the angles formed by said parts of said surfaces, some of said wedges being resiliently mounted.

4. A tongs for carrying a row of bricks and like articles which are tapered in cross-section comprising a frame having on its bottom an arcuate article-engaging surface, said arc substantially conforming to the taper of the articles to be carried, jaws at opposite ends of said arcuate surface, said jaws exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said row whenever said jaws are actuated, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface, and means for actuating said jaws to grip and release articles engaging said surface.

5. A tongs for carrying a row of bricks and like articles which are tapered in cross-section comprising a frame having on its bottom an arcuate article-engaging surface, said arc substantially conforming to the taper of the articles to be carried, jaws at opposite ends of said arcuate surface, said jaws exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said row whenever said jaws are actuated, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface, means for actuating said jaws to grip and release articles engaging said surface, supporting means for said frame located closer to one end of said frame than the other end, said supporting means including a depending element extending substantially vertically above a point near the center of gravity of the tongs, an alternative supporting means connected to said frame, said alternative means including latch means, complementary latch means on said depending element, and bias limiting means connecting said supporting means with the remote end of said frame.

6. A gang tongs of the class described comprising a multiplicity of frames, jaws pivotally attached to the ends of each frame, arms for operating said jaws, a beam extending transversely of said frames, flexible means connecting said arms with said beam, a rod attached to each frame, a sleeve slidable on each rod, said sleeves being attached to said beam, notches provided by said rods, a lock-bar movable with said beam and sleeves, means urging said lock-bar toward notch-engaging position, release means for said lock-bar, a supporting link pivotally attached at one end to said beam and offset in two directions with respect to the center of said frames, diagonal links connecting the upper end of said first named link with a side and end respectively of said tongs, and pivotal connections between said frames.

7. A gang tongs of the class described comprising a multiplicity of frames, jaws pivotally attached to the ends of each frame, arms for operating said jaws, a beam extending transversely of said frames, flexible means connecting said arms with said beam, a rod attached to each frame, a sleeve slidable on each rod, said sleeves being attached to said beam, notches provided by said rods, a lock-bar movable with said beam and sleeves, means urging said lock-bar toward notch-engaging position, release means for said lock-bar, a supporting link pivotally attached at one end to said beam and offset in two directions with respect to the center of said frames, diagonal links connecting the upper end of said first named link with a side and end respectively of said tongs, and pivotal connections between said frames, each of said frames having a V-shaped article-engaging surface and a fixed wedge in the angle formed by said surface.

8. Tongs for carrying bricks and other articles comprising a frame, said frame having on its bottom side an article-engaging surface of generally arcuate configuration, and clamping means carried by said frame for holding a row of articles against said surface, said clamping means frictionally engaging end surfaces of said row and exerting a compressive force thereon, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface.

9. Tongs for carrying articles of generally rectangular cross-section comprising a frame, said frame having on its bottom side an article-engaging surface of generally arcuate configuration, a pair of opposed clamping jaws carried by said frame for holding a row of articles against said surface, said clamping jaws frictionally engaging the ends of said row, at least one of said jaws being movable and exerting a force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface, and actuating means for said jaws.

10. Tongs for carrying bricks and other ceramic articles comprising a plurality of frames each having on its bottom side an article-engaging surface of generally arcuate configuration, means pivotally connecting said frames, clamping means carried by each frame for holding rows of articles against said surfaces, said means exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said rows, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said rows of articles to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface, and a common actuating means for said clamping means.

11. Tongs for carrying a row of bricks and other articles comprising a frame having on its bottom side an article-engaging surface shaped like a shallow V, clamping means carried by said frame adjacent each of said surface, and a wedge at the center of said surface and projecting therefrom for engagement with a row of articles held against said surface by said clamping means, said clamping means frictionalyy engaging end surfaces of said row and exerting a compressive force thereon, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said article-engaging surface.

12. Tongs for carrying a row of bricks and other articles comprising a frame designed to carry a predetermined maximum load of articles, clamping means attached to said frame, said clamping means frictionally engaging end surfaces of said row and exerting a compressive force thereon, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said frame, and means carried by said frame and located intermediate opposing members of said clamping means for gripping less than said maximum load and holding articles so gripped against said frame.

13. Tongs for carrying a row of bricks and other articles comprising a frame, clamping means attached to said frame on the bottom side thereof, said means exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of a row of articles, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said frame, and carrying means fixedly offset with respect to the center of gravity of said tongs, said carrying means comprising at least two depending elements connected to said frame, one of them extending substantially vertically above a point near the center of gravity of the tongs, an alternative carrying means connected to said frame, said alternative means including latch means, and complementary latch means on said one element extending above the vicinity of the center of gravity of the tongs.

14. Tongs for carrying a row of bricks and other articles comprising a frame having an article-engaging surface, clamping jaws pivotally mounted at opposite ends of said frame, arms attached to said jaws, said jaws exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said row whenever the ends of said arms opposite said jaws are pulled

upward, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said frame, a beam above said frame, links connecting said beam and arms, and carrying means connected to said beam, the connection between said beam and carrying means being offset with respect to the longitudinal and transverse axes through the center of gravity of the tongs, said carrying means comprising at least two depending elements connected to said beam, one of them extending substantially vertically above a point near the center of gravity of the tongs, an alternative carrying means connected to said beam, said alternative means including latch means, and complementary latch means on said one element extending above the vicinity of the center of gravity of the tongs.

15. Tongs for carrying bricks and other articles comprising a frame having longitudinal and transverse axes, means for frictionally clamping the ends of a column of articles, said means exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said row, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said frame, pivotal connections between said last named means and said frame, a support for said frame, means for biasing to a predetermined extent the center of gravity of the tongs with respect to said support, an alternative support means connected to said frame, said alternative means including latch means, and complementary latch means carried by said biasing means.

16. Tongs for carrying bricks and other articles comprising a frame having longitudinal and transverse axes, means for frictionally clamping the ends of a column of articles, said means exerting a compressive force on the end surfaces of said row, said force having a component directed vertically upward so as to cause said row of articles to tend to bow upward against said frame, pivotal connections between said last named means and said frame, a support for said frame, means for biasing to a predetermined extent the center of gravity of the tongs with respect to said support, means for limiting movement of said frame relative to said support as a result of such biasing, an alternative support means connected to said frame, said alternative means including latch means, and complementary latch means carried by said biasing means.

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