(No Model.)

A. T. CLARK.

MACHINE FOR BLOCKING HATS.

No. 355,254. Patented Dec. 28, 1886.

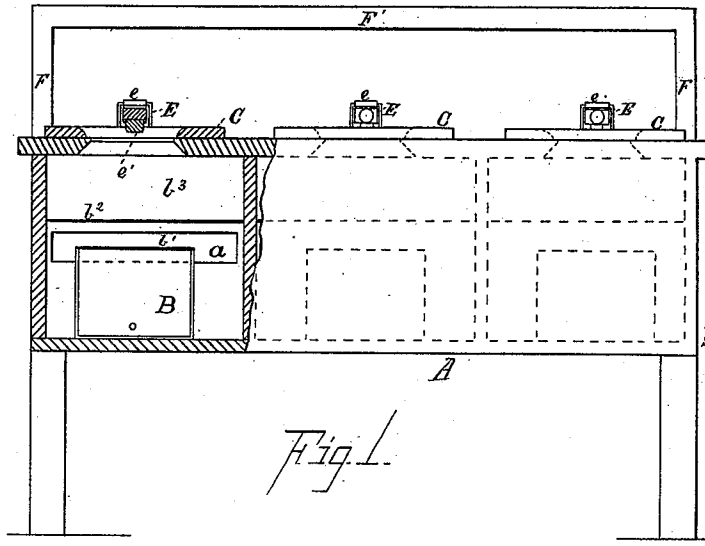

Fig. 1.

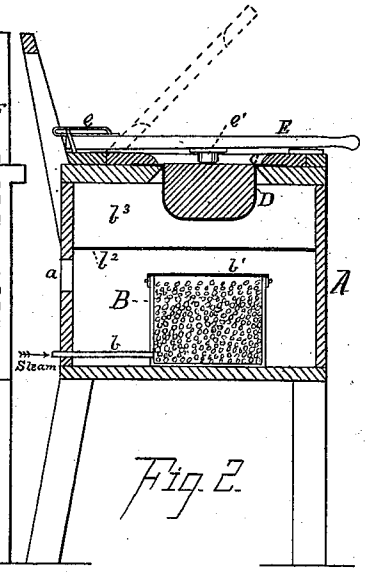

Fig. 2.

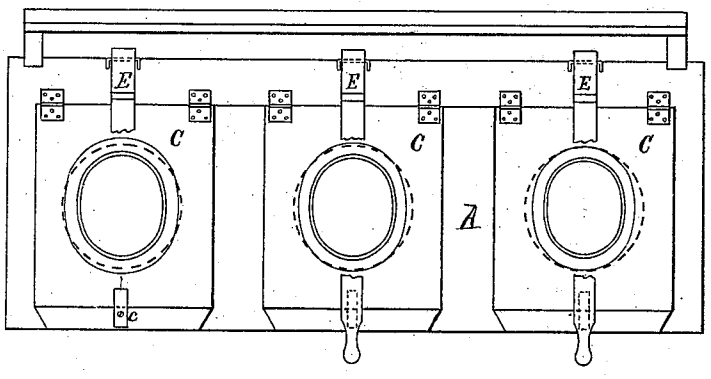

Fig. 3.

Witnesses:
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

AARON T. CLARK, OF YONKERS, NEW YORK.

MACHINE FOR BLOCKING HATS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 355,254, dated December 28, 1886.

Application filed June 23, 1886. Serial No. 207,964. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, AARON T. CLARK, of the city of Yonkers, in the county of Westchester and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Machines for Blockings Hats; and I declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, when taken in connection with the drawings which accompany and form part of this specification.

The ordinary method of blocking hats for finishing consists in holding the hat over a steam-pot until it is heated, then drawing it down over the block by hand, drawing down a portion of the body at a time, following it down by a cord drawn tightly around the outside of the hat, which cord is forced down by a "runner down" in the hand of the hatter until the hat is forced onto the block and adapts itself to its shape. There are numerous objections to this method, principal among which is the fact that the steam on emerging from the pot is exposed to the air, which partially condenses it, and thus it very imperfectly performs its work of heating the hat; also, when the hat is drawn down over the block, five or six pulls are often required to draw it down. In doing this each pull is applied to only one-sixth of the circumference, and if the hat fits the block very tightly, or if there is any imperfection in the body, the result is, that the hat is torn and made worthless.

The object of this invention is to provide means whereby steam at a high temperature and free from moisture is continuously applied to the hat to heat it, and also means by which the strain on the hat-body is equalized. I attain these objects by the mechanism illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 shows a front view of the machine, one of the compartments being shown in section; Fig. 2, a transverse section of a compartment, and Fig. 3 a plan.

The apparatus consists of an oblong box, A, which box may be set on legs at a convenient height, and which is divided into compartments. In each compartment is an ordinary steam-box, B, which is filled with pebbles, and is supplied with steam through pipe *b*. Steam-box B is covered with a thickness of burlap or equivalent material, and about two inches above the steam-box is another thickness of burlap, which separates the compartment into two parts, the upper one being entirely inclosed.

a is an opening in lower half of compartment to allow escape of steam.

C C C are hinged covers having oval openings corresponding with similar openings in top of box A.

E E E are levers having universal hinges *e e e*, which permit the levers to be so moved about that the knob or projection *e'* can be moved to any part of the oval opening in cover C.

F F are posts supporting rail F', against which the covers and levers may be leaned.

The operation is as follows: The lever E and cover C being thrown back, a hat, D, is inserted in the opening and the cover lowered and fastened by button *c*, thus keeping the brim flattened. A block is then put in the hat and the steam turned on pot B. The steam, rising through burlap cover *b'* and burlap b^2, enters the confined space b^3 in a very dry state, and being thus closely confined retains its heat, and is in a condition to quickly and thoroughly do its work of heating the hat-body D. When this is accomplished, the lever E is lowered until the knob *e'* touches the top of block in hat D, when pressure is applied to force the block down into the hat-body. The lever E being movable laterally and longitudinally, the pressure may be applied to any part of the block desired, the result being that a uniform strain is applied to the hat-body without danger of tearing it.

A great saving of time is also effected by this mechanism, as by the hand method the hat requires to be steamed each time it is pulled down on the block, and being removed from the steam soon becomes cool; but in this device the hat-crown is surrounded by steam during the time the pressure is applied.

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

1. In a machine for blocking hats, the combination, with a steam-pot covered with por-

ous material, of a separate inclosed steam-chamber, in which the hat is inserted for heating, substantially as described.

2. In a hat-blocking machine, the combination of an inclosed steam-chamber having an oval opening for the insertion of a hat-crown, a hinged cover for holding the brim flat, and a universal-hinged lever having a projection which can be moved to any part of the opening, substantially as described.

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