(No Model.)

J. H. BURKS.

FIRE ESCAPE.

No. 288,304. Patented Nov. 13, 1883.

Fig. 3

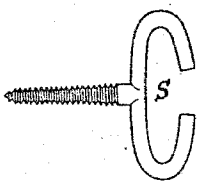


Fig. 1

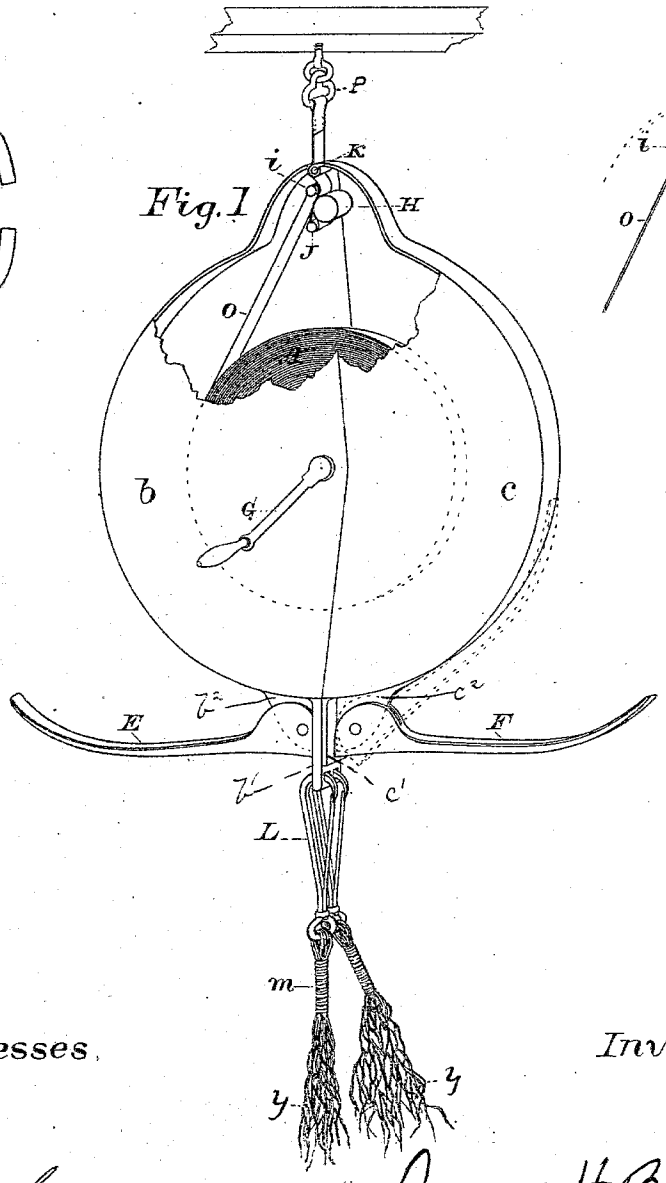
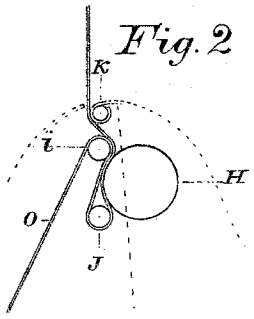


Fig. 2



Witnesses,

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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FIRE-ESCAPE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 288,804, dated November 13, 1883.

Application filed March 29, 1883. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JESSE H. BURKS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Los Angeles, in the county of Los Angeles and State of California, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Fire-Escapes, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to providing a cheap, convenient, and practical means of escape from the upper parts of a building in case of fire—an instrument so compact that it may be placed at every window of a building without obstructing the room, and so small and light that it may be carried by persons traveling without inconvenience.

My device is very simple, and is fully illustrated by the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a view of the complete apparatus, with a part of the case cut away to show the interior. Fig. 2 is an enlarged side view of the upper part.

Similar letters refer to similar parts in the two views.

My invention consists, essentially, of a case, of metal, or other suitable material, made in two parts, which are hinged together at K, Fig. 1, and containing within a roll of strong tape, to be paid out from the case as a person descends. The two parts of the case are of unequal dimensions, so that the center of the case falls in the part *b*, where there is a pin or axle, provided at one end with a crank or handle, by means of which the tape may be wound up. This crank may be detachable; or it may be made to fold up like the crank on the case of an ordinary tape-measure. The upper end of the part *b* is provided with two or more pins, around which the tape is passed to produce the necessary friction. The part *c* of the case is provided with a larger pin or projection, H, so placed that when the two parts of the case are pressed together at the lower extremity by means of the handles E F the tape is pressed firmly against one or both of the pins *i* J, so that it cannot slip at all. When the handles E F are pressed slightly apart, the grip is released, and one may descend as fast or as slowly as he chooses, and by pressing them firmly together he may stop at any desired point. The part *b* of the case is provided with a flange on either side, (not shown in the drawings,) which project over the joint and cause the parts to close correctly. There may be also a large-headed screw passing through a slot in the lower part of one section of the case and fixed in the other, so as to prevent the parts from being opened too wide. For convenience, the handles E F may fold up against the case, as shown by the dotted line, when not in use. A person may let himself down by simply holding on to the handles E F; but for greater safety a net or belt is provided which can be attached to the lower part of the case by means of the hooks L. In this net one or more persons may sit with safety and regulate their descent by means of the handles. When the appliance is introduced as a fixture, it may be securely fastened to the window-casing or wall of a room, as shown in Fig. 1; but as a ready means of attaching it to any window or other convenient object, I have devised the hooked handled gimlet, Fig. 3, which, when driven into the wall or window-casing, makes a convenient and reliable attachment for the ring or link P on the upper end of the tape O. The tape may be made of thin flexible steel, woven wire, silk, linen, or cotton, or, by a slight modification of the brake arrangement, a round wire or cord might be used; but, believing it to be more reliable under all circumstances, I prefer a tape of linen, silk, or cotton, which may be rendered fire-proof by immersion in some one of the solutions used for that purpose.

I am aware that devices for this purpose have been used in which a cord or chain is drawn out from a case attached to the window or wall; but I am not aware that any device has been used in which the case containing the cord or tape is carried by the person in his descent.

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

1. In fire-escapes, a portable case made in two parts, hinged together at the top, and provided with folding handles at the lower extremity of each part, as shown in Fig. 1, and containing within a coil of cord or tape.

2. In a fire-escape, the combination, with a suitable casing having a tape-exit in its upper end, of the pins *i* J, secured in place below the exit-opening, and the tape stored within the casing and passed up over the pin *i*, and thence

down around pin J, and thence back over the pin *i*, the said tape lapping itself on the pin *i* and passing therefrom at an angle out of the exit-opening, whereby the device is automatically braked in its descent, substantially as set forth.

3. In a fire-escape, the combination, with the section *b*, having tape-exit, and the pins *i* J, secured in the upper portion of said section, below and slightly to one side of the exit, and the tape stored in section *b* and passed around the said pins in the manner described in its passage to the exit, and the pin H, secured to a suitable support pivoted to the section *b*, and arranged in position to be forced against the tape in the upward passage of the latter from pin J to pin *i*, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

4. The combination of the case composed of the sections *b c*, the handles E F, the tape O, the net or belt *y*, and the gimlet *s*, substantially as and for the purposes specified.

5. In a fire-escape, the combination, substantially as described and shown, of the sections *b c*, pivoted together at their upper ends and movable apart at their lower ends, and provided at their said ends with depending lugs b' c', and plates b^2 c^2, extended outward from and at right angles to the plane of the lugs b' c', and the handles E F, pivoted, respectively, on the plates b^2 c^2, and having their inner ends, beyond their pivotal points, made eccentric or cam-shaped, and arranged to engage lugs b' c', whereby the said handles may be turned up against their respective sections, and are prevented from a downward motion beyond an approximately horizontal position, as and for the purposes specified.

JESSE H. BURKS.

Witnesses:
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