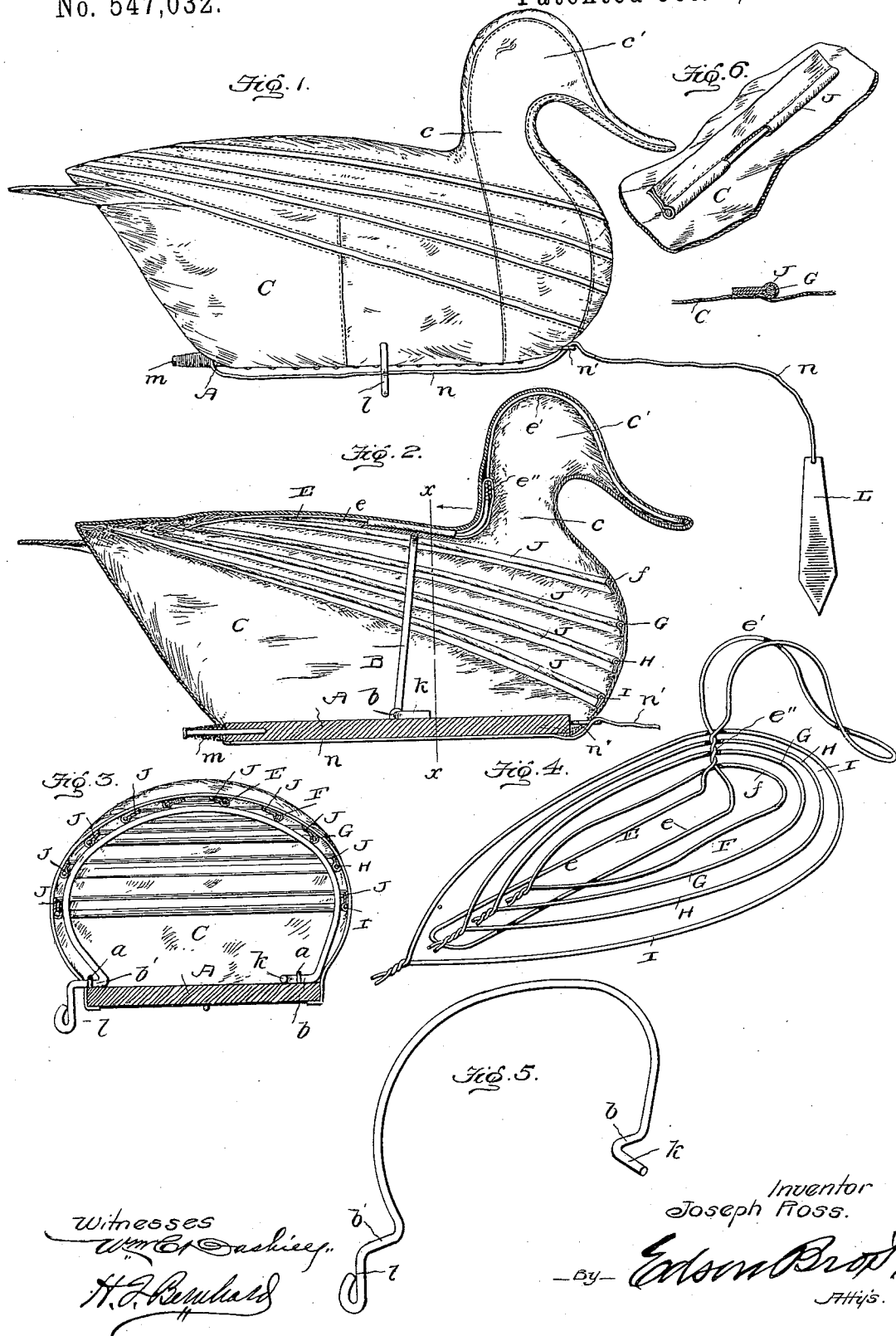


(No Model.)

J. ROSS.
FOLDING DECOY.

No. 547,032.

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Witnesses
Wm. C. Oakes
H. J. Richards

Inventor
Joseph Ross.

By *Edson Bros.*
Attys.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOSEPH ROSS, OF LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO SETH CURLIN, OF SAME PLACE.

FOLDING DECOY.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 547,032, dated October 1, 1895.

Application filed February 6, 1895. Serial No. 537,524. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOSEPH ROSS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Louisville, in the county of Jefferson and State of Kentucky, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Folding Decoys; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates to improvements in foldable decoys and analogous collapsible articles of that class which are adjusted for service mechanically as distinguished from an inflatable decoy; and the object that I have in view is to provide means whereby the decoy can be distended or adjusted for use by the single movement of an adjuster, and, further, to provide a simple and durable construction which can be manufactured cheaply.

With these ends in view my invention consists in making the decoy of a suitable pliable material, and having stiffeners or braces united to said material to give the body, head, and neck the proper appearance or shape, combined with a bottom or float to which the body is united or fastened, and an adjuster supported on the float within the body and arranged to contact with the body to raise or distend the latter, the head, and neck into position for use.

In the preferred embodiment of my invention I make the body of the decoy of textile fabric and strengthen the back, neck, and head by metallic braces, which are arranged to give to the body, back, and head the desired form or shape. The fabric decoy is fastened or united in a suitable way to the float, and on this float, within the decoy, is arranged the adjuster. This adjuster preferably consists of a bail arranged across the float and journaled or pivoted thereon, and said bail has a crank which limits its upward movement and is furthermore provided with an operating-crank that extends outside of the decoy-body, so as to be accessible for the purpose of operating said adjuster-bail either to distend the body or to allow it to collapse.

The invention further consists in the construction and combination of parts which will be hereinafter fully described and claimed.

To enable others to readily understand my invention, I have illustrated the preferred embodiment of it in the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is an elevation of my collapsible article embodied as a decoy-duck. Fig. 2 is a longitudinal central sectional view thereof. Fig. 3 is a vertical transverse sectional view on the plane indicated by the dotted line *x x* of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a view of the bracing for the body, neck, and head of the decoy-body. Fig. 5 is a detail view of the bail-adjuster. Fig. 6 shows by perspective and sectional views details of the sheath for uniting the stiffening-wires to the fabric forming the collapsible body.

Like letters of reference denote corresponding parts in all the figures of the drawings, referring to which—

A designates the bottom board, which serves as the float when the article is used as a decoy.

B is the bail-like adjuster, and C is the body of the article.

In the embodiment of my invention shown in the drawings I have illustrated it and will hereinafter describe it as adapted for a decoy; but I would have it understood that I do not strictly limit the use of the invention to decoys, because I am aware that the collapsible article may be used for other purposes.

The bottom board A is shaped according to the configuration it is desired to give to the collapsible article, and in the drawing of the decoy the ends and sides of the board are made rounding to conform to the breast and tail of the decoy. The body C of the decoy is made of pliable material, either of textile fabric or other material suitable for the purpose, and to the body is united the neck *c* and head *c'* of the decoy. The material forming the neck and head is properly cut to the desired pattern in two or more pieces and suitably united to the pieces of material of which the body C is made, and the lower edges of the body material are folded down over the sides of the bottom A and beneath the lower surface of said bottom in a neat manner, said lower edges of the body material being fastened to the bottom A in a suitable manner. I have shown the body material tacked to the lower face of the bottom A; but it is evident that

other fastenings can be used without departing from the spirit of my invention.

In order to give to the body C, the neck, and head of the decoy the proper shape when it is distended and also to impart sufficient strength thereto to resist and stand the pressure of the adjuster-bail B, I stiffen the pliable body by means of the braces. (Shown more clearly by Fig. 4.) I use a series of these braces, preferably made of wire. The middle brace E is bent to provide the two strands *ee*, which extend parallel to each other along the middle part of the back, and these strands of the middle brace-wire E are extended upward and forward through the neck and head *c c'* of the decoy to impart the desired appearance and stiffness to the head and neck of the decoy. This extension *e'* of the middle brace-wire E is bent to conform to the shape of the neck and head, and to strengthen the parts *e e'* of the wire at the points where the wire is curved or deflected from the body into the neck I twist the two strands of wire together at *e''* to produce a stiff shank. The parallel strands *ee* of the middle brace-wire E are carried rearward a suitable distance along the back of the decoy, and the rear extremities of the strands *ee* are united or twisted together. In addition to the middle brace-wire I use the series of wires indicated at F G H I, which are arranged outside of the middle brace-wire E and lie substantially parallel therewith and with each other, as shown. Each brace-wire is made of a single piece bent to form strands extending longitudinally of the decoy and curved at the front part thereof. Thus the brace-wire F, next to the middle wire E, has the front *f* thereof curved around the fabric at the base part of the neck. Its longitudinal strands are carried alongside the strands *e* a suitable distance, and its ends are brought together between the strands *e*, as shown. The other brace-wires G H I are disposed similarly to the wire F with their front curved portions to stiffen the breast of the decoy and their side strands to stiffen the sides or back of the fabric forming the decoy-body.

To prevent the wires from abrading or cutting the fabric material and to provide a convenient method of uniting the wires and decoy fabric together, I have provided the sheaths J, one of which incloses each wire and is adapted to be stitched or otherwise united to the fabric forming the decoy-body. The sheath preferably consists of a strip of fabric or other suitable material, which is folded around the stiffening-wire and its lapped edges laid against the inside face of the fabric forming the decoy-body, said edges of the sheath being stitched to the decoy fabric during the process of making the body and before it is assembled with the bottom and bail to form the complete article. The body, neck, and head of the decoy may be treated in any suitable way to render it wa-

terproof, and it is painted or finished, as desired, in imitation of a fowl, &c.

The adjuster B is preferably made in the form of a bail or loop and from a single piece of wire. The bail has its ends bent to form the journals *b b'*, which are fitted in the staple-like bearings *aa*, provided on the bottom A, near the sides thereof, so that the bail is arranged transversely across the bottom and body of the decoy. One of the journals *b* of the bail is further bent to provide the crank-stop *k*, which is adapted when the bail is lifted to bear upon the bottom A and thereby limit and arrest the upward movement of the bail when it is turned up to distend the body. The other journal *b'* of the bail is extended and bent to provide the crank-handle *l*, which extends through the body fabric and beyond the edge of the bottom, so that the crank-handle is readily accessible at all times for operating the bail.

With the decoy I have combined an anchor L, the line of which is adapted to be compactly wound or coiled upon a stem *m*, attached to the rear edge of the float A below the tail of the decoy-body. The anchor-line *n* is carried from this stem along the bottom of the decoy, thence passed through a staple-like guide *n'*, fastened to the bottom A at the breast of the decoy, and to the free end of this line is fastened the anchor L, as shown by Fig. 1.

The adjuster-bail B is adapted to be turned down to lie flat upon the bottom A, and the body can then be folded down compactly upon the bottom, the head and neck, however, being raised up somewhat. To adjust the decoy for service it is only necessary to grasp the crank-handle *l* and turn the bail up, thereby bringing the bail to press against the braced back of the body and lifting the body, head, and neck to their distended positions at one adjustment of the bail. When lifted, the bail assumes a slightly inclined position, because the crank-stop is so formed that the bail can be moved to a position slightly beyond the vertical line of the bearings, which pivotally connect the bail to the bottom, and as the stiffened flexible decoy-body affords considerable resistance and pressure on the bail when the parts are distended the bail is practically locked in place when it is raised to distend the decoy.

As shown by Fig. 2 of the drawings, the sheath J is extended along the middle brace E up into the neck of the decoy-body, and the pieces of this sheath are passed and folded between the strands of the brace E and inclose the twisted shank *e''* of the brace E, said ends of the sheath being united together or to the fabric decoy-body by stitching or in any suitable way. By this arrangement of the sheath the twisted upright shank of the middle brace is prevented from rubbing the decoy fabric and the sheath on the middle brace will not be displaced and loosened by

the adjuster-bail rubbing thereon when turning the bail to distend or collapse the decoy.

Although I have described the braces for the decoy-body as made preferably of wire, yet I do not limit myself to the use of this material, because the braces may be made of rattan, willow, whalebone, or any other material suitable for the purpose; nor do I limit myself to the peculiar form and arrangement of the longitudinal braces, nor to the details of construction and form and proportion of parts herein shown and described as the preferred embodiment of my invention, because I am aware that changes and alterations therein can be made by a skilled mechanic without departing from the spirit or sacrificing the advantages of my invention.

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

1. In a collapsible article, the combination with a bottom, of a pliable body attached thereto, and an adjuster supported on the bottom and arranged within the body, to be brought into contact therewith when said adjuster is raised and thereby distend the body, substantially as and for the purposes described.

2. In a collapsible article, the combination with a bottom, of an adjuster pivotally mounted on the bottom, and a collapsible body connected to said bottom and arranged to be lifted or distended by said adjuster, substantially as and for the purposes described.

3. A collapsible article comprising a body of pliable material having the stiffening braces, and a pivoted adjuster disconnected from the body and arranged transversely within the same, to press against and distend the body, substantially as and for the purposes described.

4. The collapsible body made of pliable material and having the stiffening braces attached thereto, combined with a bottom, and an adjuster to distend the body, substantially as described.

5. A decoy having its neck and head stiffened by a metallic brace, and provided with a series of stiffener braces along the body

thereof, combined with a bottom to which the body is fastened, and an adjuster supported by the body in position to press and distend the body, substantially as and for the purposes described.

6. In a decoy, the pliable material forming the head, neck and body, the middle brace extending along the body and into the neck and head, and the series of braces united to the body, combined with a bottom to which the material is fastened, and a transverse adjuster movably supported on the bottom, substantially as described.

7. The combination with a collapsible body, of an adjuster bail pivotally supported within the body and at its base and arranged to press against the body, for the purpose of holding the same in its distended position, substantially as set forth.

8. The combination with a collapsible body, and a bottom, of an adjuster bail pivoted to the bottom within said body and provided with a crank stop for limiting the upward movement of said bail, substantially as and for the purposes described.

9. A collapsible article having its body made of suitable pliable material, stiffening braces, and sheaths which inclose the braces and united to the pliable material, combined with a bottom, and an adjuster arranged within the body, for the purposes described, substantially as set forth.

10. A collapsible decoy having its body, neck and head composed of pliable material, the brace E formed with the upright shank, the series of braces arranged longitudinally of the body and around the breast thereof, and the sheaths, J, which inclose the braces and are united to the pliable material of the body, combined with a suitable bottom, and an adjuster to distend the body, as and for the purposes described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

JOSEPH ROSS.

Witnesses:

J. H. ROSS,

C. B. GUTHRIE.