

No. 713,778.

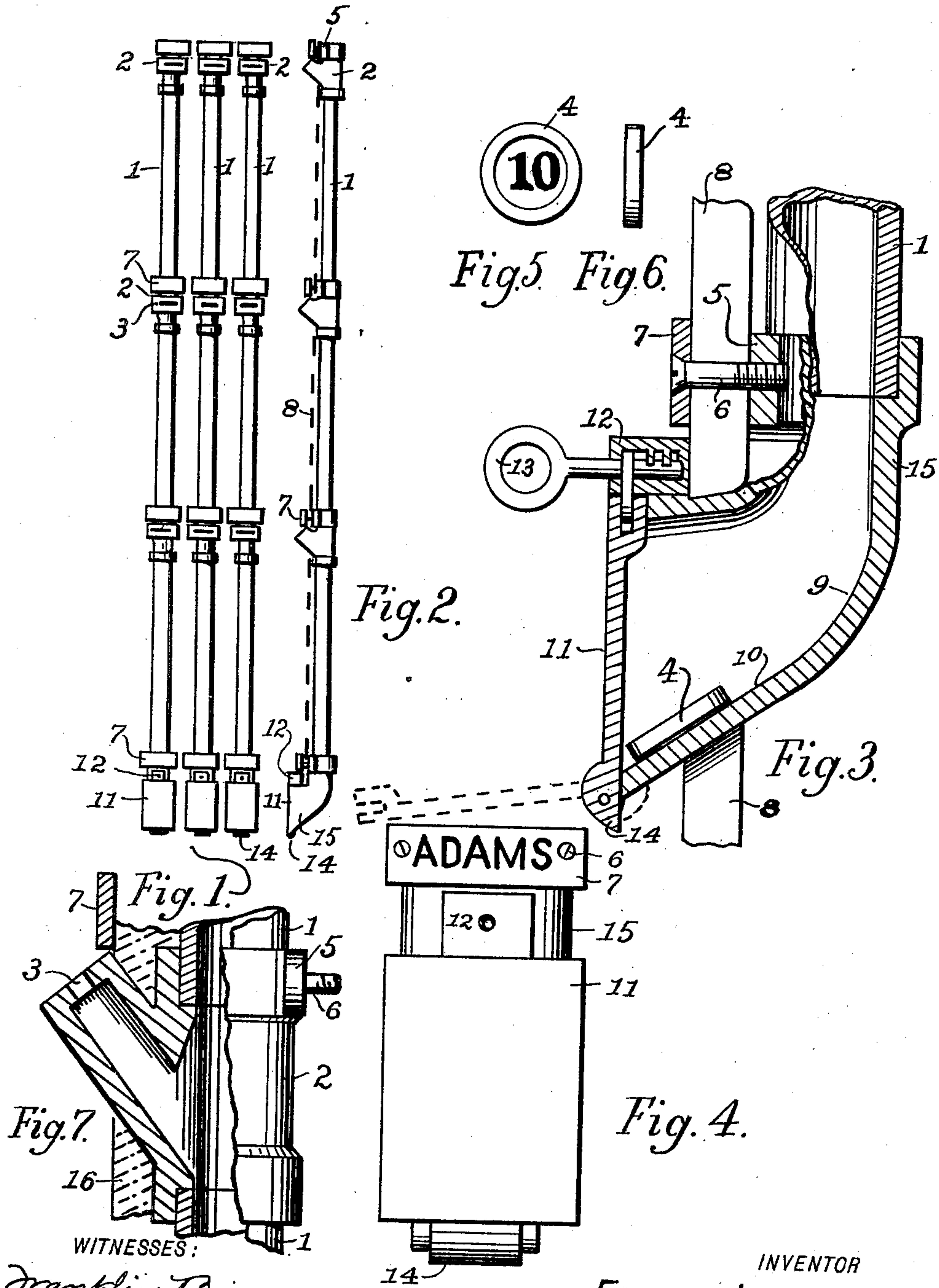
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E. LEE.

APPARATUS FOR CALLING EXPRESSMEN, &c.

(Application filed Sept. 26, 1901.)

(No Model.)



WITNESSES:
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APPARATUS FOR CALLING EXPRESSMEN, &c.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 713,778, dated November 18, 1902.

Application filed September 26, 1901. Serial No. 76,659 (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ELMER LEE, a citizen of the United States, residing at No. 127 West Fifty-eighth street, in the city, county, and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Apparatus for Calling Expressmen, &c., of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to improvements in apparatus for calling expressmen and similar uses, the objects being to produce a simple device not liable to get out of order, to insure the attendance of the desired messenger without a probability of error, and to have the mechanical parts in such a place or position that they are easily got at for repairs, if ever required. For this reason my invention is readily attached to the elevator-shafts of existing buildings or can be placed in the walls beneath the plaster of new buildings in course of erection or alteration. My apparatus is specially adapted for giving notice to drivers of express-wagons from any floor in large office and manufacturing buildings that their service is desired.

My invention is fully shown in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a front elevation of my apparatus. Fig. 2 is a side view of one of the tubes shown in Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is an enlarged view of the discharge end of a tube. Fig. 4 is a front view of Fig. 3. Fig. 5 is a front view of a disk or check, and Fig. 6 is a side view of same. Fig. 7 is a side view of a fitting into which the calling-checks are dropped.

Similar reference-numbers refer to similar parts in the several views.

The apparatus consists of a series of tubes 1, a tube being intended for each express company. These tubes run vertically and have a fitting 2 on each floor, into which the tubes are secured by screwing or otherwise. The fitting 2 has an integral member provided with a slot 3 of a size sufficient to permit the disk or check 4 to be dropped into it. The fittings 2 are provided with wings 5, set flush with the front side of the fitting and arranged for the passage of screws 6, which screws also pass through a name-plate 7, thereby holding the fitting in place on the grating 8 of an elevator-shaft.

When used in a wall and tubes are covered

with plaster 16, it is obvious that the wings 5 may be placed on rear of the fittings, so as to fasten to wall, as shown in Fig. 7.

At the lowest point of the tube 1 a fitting 15 is secured to it, said fitting being also provided with wings, as shown in Fig. 3. The fitting is curved so as to form a long-bend elbow, (shown at 9,) the part 10 being preferably straight.

11 is a hinged door.

12 is a lock above the door.

13 is a key.

To limit the movement of the door when opened, a stop 14 is provided, which can be cast or formed up integral with the door. Dotted lines in Fig. 3 show door opened.

The check 4 I prefer to make of vulcanized fiber, vulca asbestos, rubber, celluloid, or of any suitable material or composition, which while hard will not have a tendency to make a disagreeable noise in its descent, but, on the contrary, the sound will be muffled rather than metallic.

Such being the construction, the operation is as follows: Each loft or office is provided with a quantity of checks 4, each bearing the number of the room or loft stamped or impressed thereon. The checks are all of the same size and color, the only difference between them being the number of office or loft to which the checks belong. The obverse side of the check may bear the name or address of the building to which the check belongs. A plurality of tubes having been installed, one for each express company, said tubes extend from the upper to the ground floor or wherever the expressman calls for packages, &c. On each floor there is an opening 3, communicating with the inside of each tube, for the reception of the check. A name-plate bearing the name of an express company is fastened immediately above the opening 3 in the fitting 2. If a person in No. 10 wants, say, Adams Express Company's man to call, he drops one of his checks bearing his number into the tube marked "Adams." If he also wants the "American," he drops another check into the tube or fitting under that name, &c. The check reaches the bottom fitting 15, where it will rest until the expressman makes his rounds. The "Adams" man will unlock the door bear-

ing his company's name and call at the offices or lofts indicated by the number on the checks. The tumblers in each lock are so arranged that no one key will fit any other lock 5 in the group or series—that is to say, the "Adams" key will unlock all "Adams" boxes wherever located, but will not unlock the box of any other express company.

It will be seen that all the working parts 10 are easy of access. There is no electrical contrivance to get out of order or no puzzling system of colored balls which must be carefully selected to insure the attention of the desired expressman. There is no opportunity of the 15 check going into the wrong pocket of its own volition, as is the case with single-tube systems. The name of the company being close to the slot intended to receive the check and the checks being all of a uniform size and 20 color, a mistake can only be made through gross carelessness.

Expressmen have a certain territory which they pass over at a certain time a fixed number of times a day. When an alarm or signaling system is used and it happens that a 25 certain expressman has just made his rounds and gone to continue his route and a person wants the expressman and drops an indicating-ball, even if only a few minutes after he 30 has gone, the signal will be set and burn for hours until the next trip that the called-for expressman makes.

In the use of my improved apparatus there is no waste of the electric current and on account of its few parts and simplicity it is easy 35 to install and inexpensive to maintain. The

tubes can be increased in number or obsolete tubes may be removed without interfering with the rest of the service. The number of expressmen that can be called is almost unlimited, as the number of tubes can be increased indefinitely, the checks answering 40 for any and all tubes.

Such being the construction and operation of my apparatus, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is— 45

An express-call of the type set forth adapted for use by one express company only, comprising in its entirety a vertical tube having a fitting upon each floor of the building consisting of an integral member adapted to be 50 interposed in the tube and carrying an upwardly-extending box closed at its front end and provided with a slot for the reception of a disk, and a name-plate placed above each box, and a vertical fitting secured onto the 55 lower end of the tube and comprising a bent elbow merging into a downwardly-inclined portion 10, with a vertical door hinged onto the lower end of said inclined portion, a lock 60 for the door, and wings carried by the fittings for securing the same to the supports, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification, in the presence of 65 two subscribing witnesses, this 24th day of September, 1901.

ELMER LEE.

Witnesses:

CHAS. P. ALBEE,
VALENTINE ELSASSER.