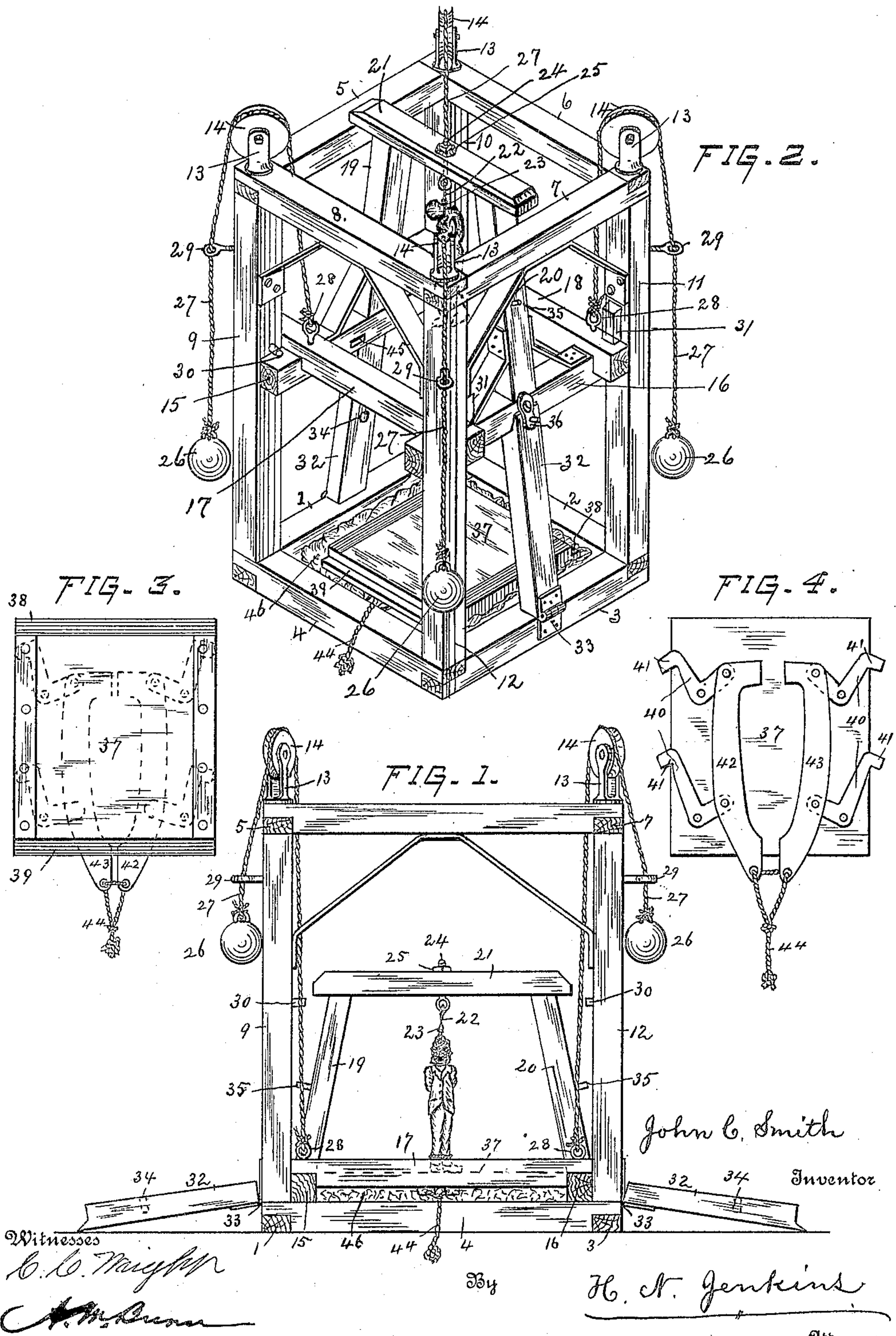


No. 818,306.

PATENTED APR. 17, 1906.

J. C. SMITH.
HANGMAN'S SCAFFOLD.
APPLICATION FILED SEPT. 2, 1905.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN C. SMITH, OF LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-THIRD TO JAMES P. WILLIAMSON AND ONE-THIRD TO BENJAMIN F. MARSH, OF LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA.

HANGMAN'S SCAFFOLD.

No. 818,306.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented April 17, 1906.

Application filed September 2, 1905. Serial No. 276,844.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN C. SMITH, a citizen of the United States, residing at Lynchburg, in the county of Campbell and State of Virginia, have invented new and useful Improvements in Hangmen's Scaffolds, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to an apparatus for the execution of criminals by hanging.

One of the objects of the invention is to dispense with the use of ladders or stairs in connection with executioners' scaffolds, and thus it tends to lighten the labors of those whose duty necessitates escorting and in many cases supporting or conveying the criminal to the point of execution.

The apparatus is so constructed that it may be readily transported as a whole from place to place, or the various parts may be separated and bundled together for storage or shipment.

The invention is clearly shown in the accompanying drawings, whereon—

Figure 1 is a front elevation of the apparatus with the scaffold-frame and drop-platform in lowermost position. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the apparatus with scaffold-frame in uppermost position, culprit hanging from the beam thereof, and the drop-platform in its fallen position. Fig. 3 is a plan or top view of the drop-platform, and Fig. 4 the under side of same.

The main frame of the apparatus comprises a rectangular base composed of four pieces of timber or other material 12 3 4, a top of similar shape composed of pieces 5 6 7 8, and the corner-posts 9 10 11 12, the said parts connected with the base and top section by screws or such other means as will permit of separation of the parts whenever occasion may require.

The upper surface of each corner of the aforesaid frame is provided with a bearing-block 13, having a sheave 14 journaled therein for purposes hereinafter fully set forth.

An elevator-frame adapted to operate within the main frame is composed of a pair of side rails 15 16 and cross-ties 17 18, arranged with projecting crossed ends and secured together by screws or other means so that the said projecting crossed ends may straddle the posts of the main frame, and thus

serve to guide the elevator in its upward and downward movements.

The sides of the elevator-frame are provided with upwardly-projecting pieces 19 20, across the upper ends of which is secured a beam 21, to which the hanging-rope 22 with its noose 23 is secured, either by means of an eyebolt 24 and nut 25 or in any other suitable manner.

The elevator-frame is held in suspension by means of weights 26, connected with ropes 27, which operate over the sheaves 14, the opposite ends of the said ropes being secured to the corners of the elevator-frame by means of eyebolts 28 or such other devices as may serve the same purpose. The aforesaid ropes and weight are held clear of the posts by means of eyebolts or guides, as shown at 29; but the said guides may be dispensed with by increasing the diameter of the sheaves 14 or by forming the bearings of said sheaves with outwardly-curved side plates, as will be readily understood.

To limit the upward movement of the elevator-frame, the posts of the main frame are provided with side pins 30 or blocks 31. Braces 32 are connected by hinges 33 with opposite side of base of the main frame, so that when swung upward they may be made to securely lock the elevator-frame in either its upper or lowermost position, the free ends of the braces abutting against the under surfaces of the sides of the elevator-frame when in its uppermost position and the perforation 34 at the inside of each brace engaging the pins 35, projecting outward from the side pieces 19 20 to hold the elevator-frame when in its lowermost position. Latches 36 are pivotally connected with the sides of the elevator-frame, locking the braces when abutting against the said frame.

The numeral 37 designates a drop-platform of such length and width as to neatly fill the space between the side pieces 15 16 and cross-ties 17 18 of the elevator-frame.

The drop-platform is intended to be inserted within the aforesaid space from the under side thereof, and to limit the depth of insertion its ends are provided with projecting ribs 38 39. To the under surface of the drop-platform is pivotally secured a series of side bolts or latches 40, having inwardly-pro-

jecting arms 41, which are pivotally connected with side bars 42 43. The said bars are adapted to be operated simultaneously by a rope 44 or other suitable means when necessary to disconnect the platform from the frame thereof.

The inner surfaces of the side pieces 15 16 of the elevator-frame are provided with recesses 45 to receive the ends of the bolts 40 when the platform is in position.

To prevent injury to the platform-locking device, as well as to deaden the sound of its fall, a cushion 46 is arranged within the base of the main frame; but springs or other devices may be employed instead to secure the same result.

In the operation of the apparatus the drop-platform is locked within the elevator-frame and the said frame depressed and secured in its lowermost position by raising the hinged braces 32 until the recess 34 thereof shall engage the side pins 35 of the elevator-frame. The culprit is then led or otherwise brought to the platform, and after the noose of the hanging-rope is adjusted around his neck the braces 32 are swung outward from the pins 35, when by reason of the counterbalance-weights 26 the frame is raised to its uppermost limited position. Here it is secured by swinging the free ends of the braces 32 under the sides thereof, and thus secured by the latches 36. A quick pull of the rope 44 will release the locking-bolts and allow the platform to drop from its frame, leaving the criminal suspended from the beam above.

Having described my invention, what I

claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The combination in a hangman's scaffold, of a frame provided with a series of bolt-recesses and a drop-platform having bolts adapted to engage the said recesses with means for simultaneously releasing the said bolts.

2. In a hangman's scaffold, the combination of a main frame and a second frame adapted to operate vertically therein, the second frame provided with bolt-recesses and a drop-platform having bolts adapted to engage the aforesaid recesses, with means for simultaneously operating the bolts.

3. In a hangman's scaffold, a main frame and an elevator-frame adapted to operate therein, the elevator-frame provided with counterbalances and the main frame having side braces for securing the elevator-frame in either its upper or lower position.

4. A hangman's scaffold comprising a main frame, an elevator-frame adapted to operate therein, the said elevator-frame provided with a top beam, a suspensory rope and noose and means for connecting the rope with the beam.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of August, A. D. 1905.

JOHN C. ^{his} × SMITH.
mark

Witnesses:

J. P. WILLIAMSON,
H. N. JENKINS.