L. KNASTER.

SECRET CABINET.

APPLICATION FILED DEC. 15, 1910.

994,009.

Patented May 30, 1911.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

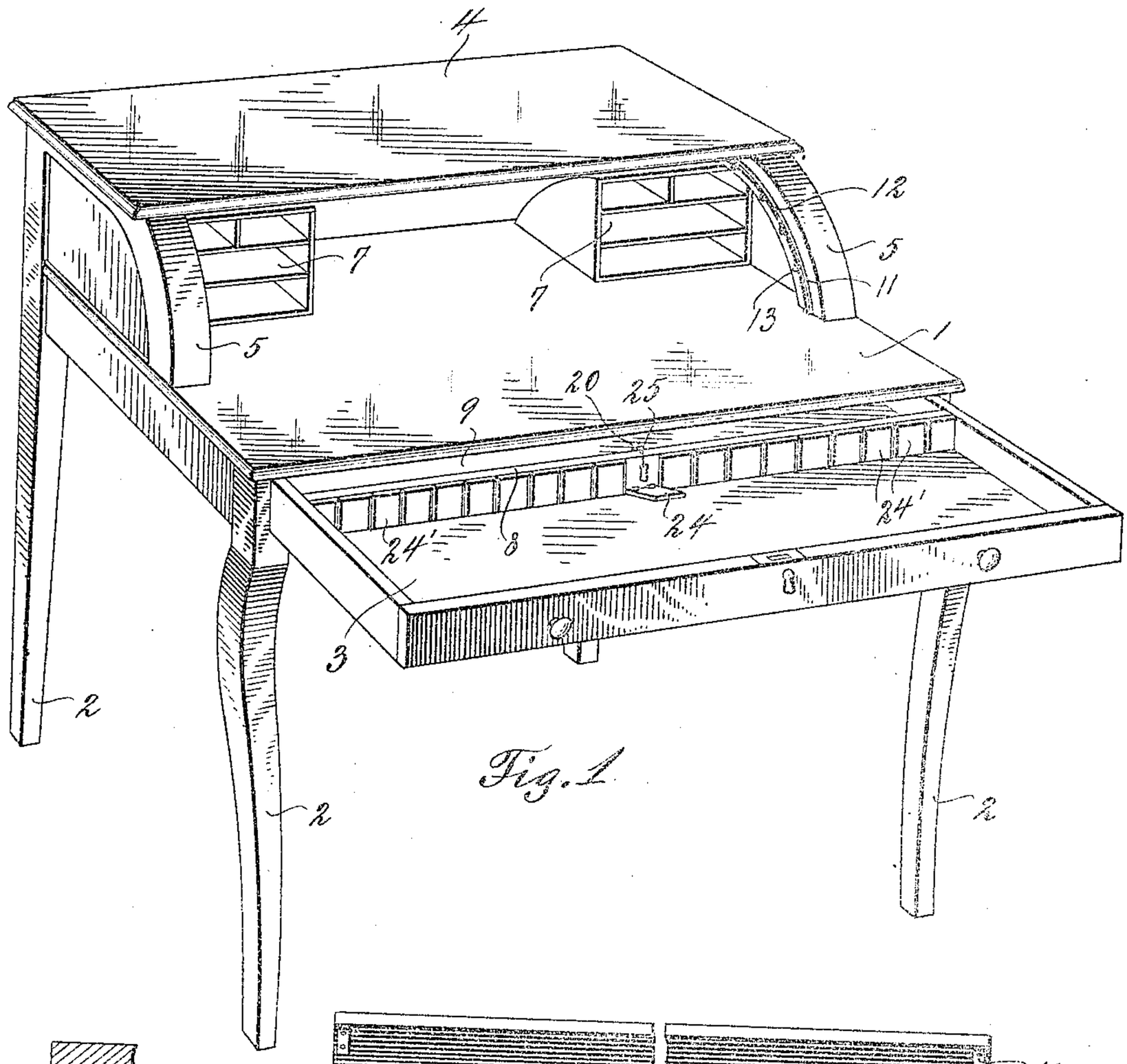

Fig. 1.

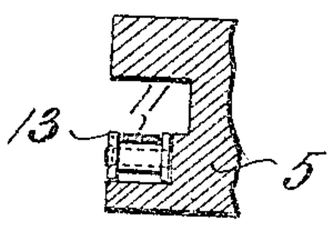

Fig. 10

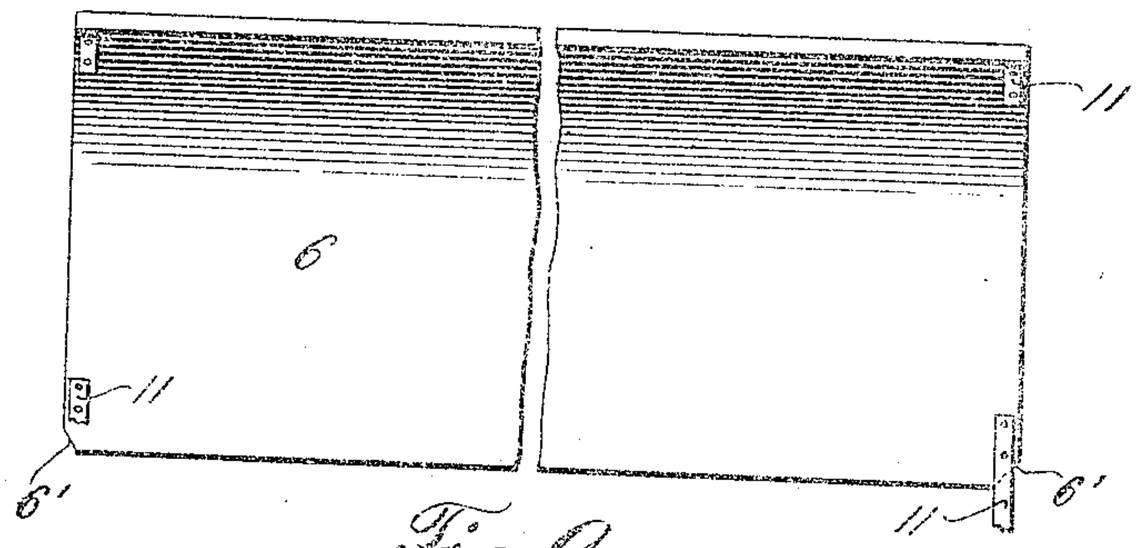

Fig. 9

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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

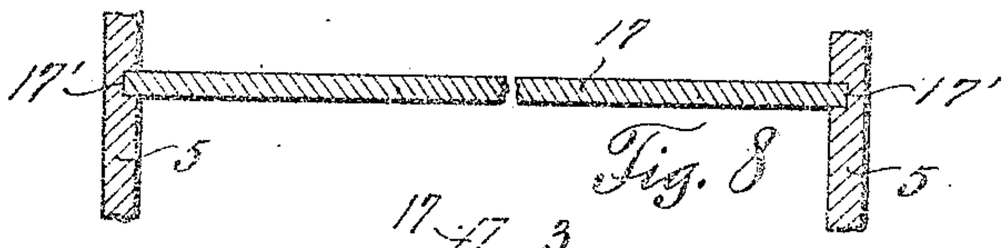

Fig. 8

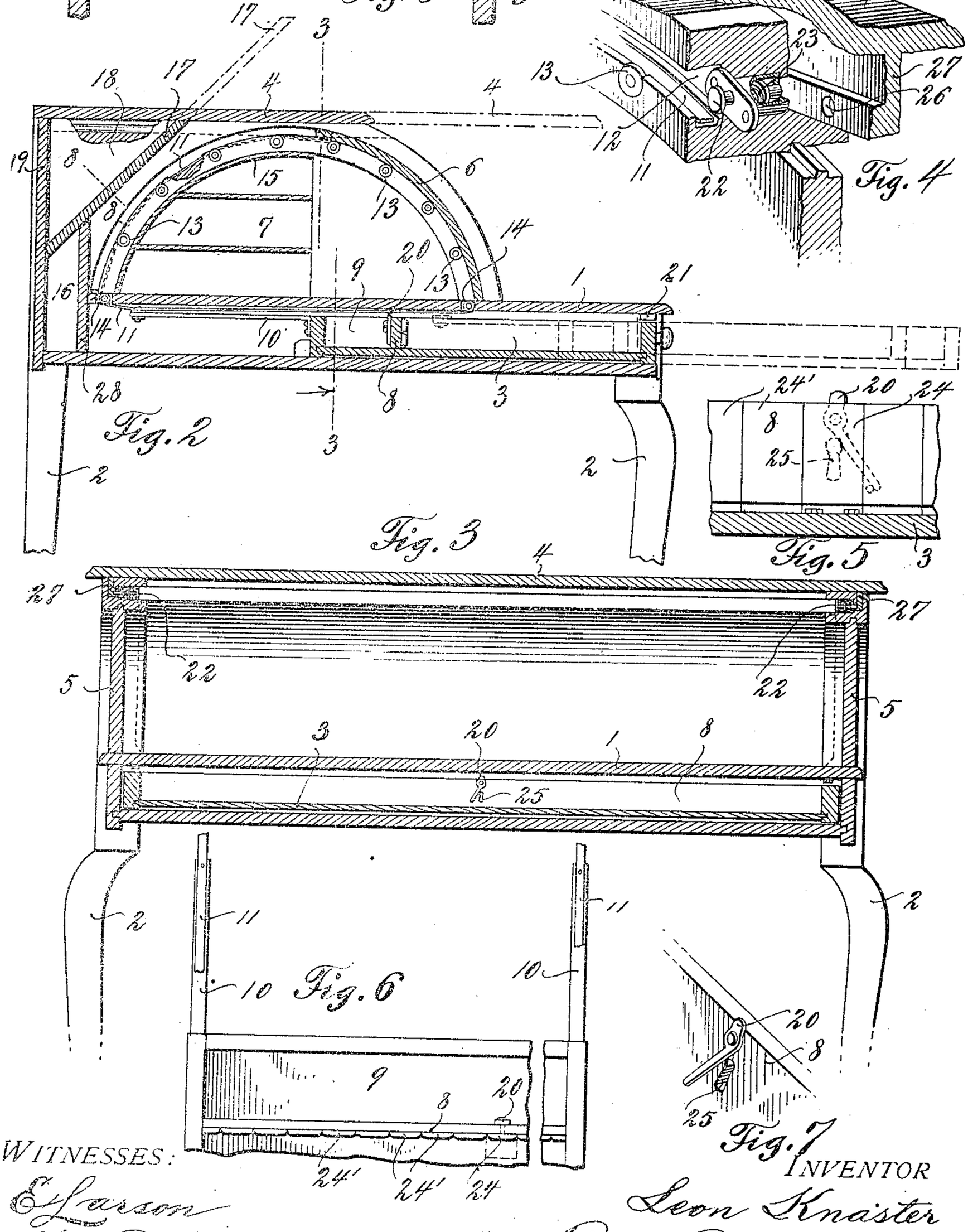

Fig. 2

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 3

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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SECRET CABINET.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, LEON KNASTER, a citizen of the United States, residing at West Hoboken, in the county of Hudson and State of New Jersey, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Secret Cabinets, of which the following is a specification.

The purpose of the present invention is to provide a novel form of secret cabinet designed particularly for use in the home, but susceptible for use in offices, or any other place.

It is very frequent that persons are engaged in business, associated with organizations, or otherwise situated, as to place in their charge papers or articles of a private nature, and oftentimes exceedingly valuable.

A secret cabinet constructed in accordance with the present invention is preferably built in the form of a writing desk adapted for use in the home for practical and ornamental purposes, and containing secret compartments adapted to receive papers or other articles, and only accessible by manipulation of parts according to a predetermined plan of operation known only to one properly informed.

While the invention is embodied in the form of a desk, as hereinafter described, it is to be understood, of course, that the cabinet might be otherwise constructed to produce an article of furniture of entirely different form from that illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a writing desk embodying the invention, the drawer thereof being shown open and the movable panel provided on the false partition of the drawer, being moved into a position exposing the key-hole normally carried thereby; Fig. 2 is a transverse vertical sectional view of the desk or cabinet; Fig. 3 is a longitudinal section taken about on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2; Fig. 4 is a fragmentary perspective view, partly in section, showing one of the spring actuated catches carried by the slidable top and which normally holds said top locked against removal; Fig. 5 is a detail fragmentary view bringing out more clearly the arrangement of the stop lever carried by the drawer; Fig. 6 is a fragmentary plan view of the rear portion of the drawer and associated parts; Fig. 7 is a detail perspective view of the false partition carrying the stop lever arranged thereon; Fig. 8 is a section taken about on the line 8—8 of Fig. 2; Fig. 9 is a view of the movable lid or cover; Fig. 10 is a detail section taken through one of the guideways on each side of the desk.

The desk illustrated in the drawings comprises a body 1 mounted on suitable legs 2 and having a drawer 3 such as customarily used in desks of this class, said drawer, however being of peculiar construction, as will be pointed out more clearly hereinafter. The desk is provided with a superstructure supported by the body 1, said superstructure comprising a top 4, sides 5, a movable lid or cover 6, and suitable pigeon holes 7, should it be desired to employ the latter for convenient filing of papers not of a particularly private nature.

The drawer 3 is provided with a partition 8 intermediate its outer and inner ends, said partition forming a false inner end or back for the drawer and providing a secret compartment 9 just in rear of the partition.

The drawer 3 is operably connected with the lid or cover 6 by means of the provision of arms 10 projecting rearwardly from the drawer, said arms having flexible connections 11 extending from the rear ends of the arms and being attached at their opposite ends to the front and rear ends of the cover 6. The cover 6 is preferably of curved form and may be of rigid or flexible construction as desired, its side edges operating in guideways 12 formed in the opposite sides 5 of the superstructure of the desk. The cover 6 is provided primarily to prevent dust from entering the space adjacent to and in the pigeon holes 7 and if desired, any locking means may be provided for holding the cover in its closed position, shown in Fig. 2.

The flexible connections 11 consist preferably of suitable metallic tape, and said connections operate over rollers 13 located in rear of the pigeon holes 7 and at intervals beneath and throughout the length of the guideways 12. Said connections 11 pass upwardly through openings 14 in the body 1 of the desk to their points of attachment to the cover 6.

It will be obvious from the foregoing that, whenever the drawer 3 is pulled out, a corresponding movement will be imparted to the rear ends of the connections 11, exerting a pull on the rear end of the cover 6 and simultaneously opening the cover. In like manner, when the drawer 3 is closed, the outer of front ends of the connections 11

pull down the outer end of the cover 6 and draw the latter into closed positions, as shown in Fig. 2.

In rear of the pigeon holes 7, and hidden from view from the outside of the desk by a curved partition 15, is a secret compartment 16, above which is a removable shelf 17 forming another secret compartment 18 between the back 19 of the superstructure and the top 4 and said shelf.

Under ordinary conditions of use of the cabinet or desk hereinbefore described, the drawer 3 will be limited in its outward movement by means of a stop lever 20 pivoted to the inner side of the partition 8, one end of the stop lever projecting slightly above the partition so as to engage with a cleat or projection 21 secured to the under side of the top portion of the body 1. The normal limit of movement of the drawer 3 is illustrated by the innermost dotted line position of the drawer shown in Fig. 2, and of course, under ordinary conditions, the fact that there is a secret compartment 9 in rear of the partition 8 would not be known to any one using the cabinet because said compartment 9 is not exposed until the drawer moves outwardly to the outermost dotted line position shown in Fig. 2. In other words, the drawer 3 has two limits of outward movement, the inner limit of outward movement being fixed by engagement of the stop lever 20 with the part 21. In a similar manner, by reason of the connections 11, the cover 6 has two limits of movement rearwardly in the guideways 12, the first limit of rearward movement positioning the cover so that it projects at its end slightly beyond the spring catches 22 mounted on the sides 5 at points intermediate the ends of the guideways 12. Springs 23 coact with the catches 22 and normally tend to force said catches outwardly, such movement being resisted, however, by the cover 6 when the latter is closed and when it is opened to its first limit of rearward movement.

A person possessing a knowledge of the operation of the cabinet for the purpose of obtaining access to the compartments 9, 16 and 18, will first pull the drawer 3 outward to its limit of movement until it stops by engagement of the stop lever 20 with the projection 21, said person then moving downwardly a pivoted panel 24 on the outer side of the partition 8, thereby exposing a key-hole 25 normally hidden by said panel 24. A key is then introduced into the key-hole 25 and turned to engage the lever 20 until the upper end of said lever is disengaged from the projection 21, whereupon the operator pulls the drawer to its outermost limit of movement, said drawer having been released by the above operation. The cover 6 which, when the drawer is pulled to its first limit of outward movement, projected over the catches 22 holding said catches in engagement with the openings 26 in flanges 27 projecting downwardly from the top 4, is caused by the movement of the drawer to its outermost limit, to move sufficiently far in the rearward direction to be disengaged from the catches 22, releasing said catches and permitting their springs 23 to force them out of engagement with the openings 26. The top 4 is adapted for horizontal sliding movement upon the sides 5, said sides having at their uppermost portions grooves to receive the flanges or tongues 27 of the top 4, as shown clearly in Fig. 3. Therefore, when the top 4 is released by disengagement from the catches 22, the operator can readily pull outwardly upon the top 4, moving it into the dotted line position shown in Fig. 2, thereby exposing the compartment 18, which latter may comprise a number of small compartments, should it be desired. The compartment 16 will not be accessible until the shelf 17, which forms a side of the compartment 18, is removed, whereupon any papers or articles located in the compartment 16 will be found accessible. The parts of the invention, having been operated in the manner described, and the secret compartments exposed, the operator closes said compartments by forcing the shelf 17 downwardly over the upper end of the compartment 16, after which the top 4 is slid rearwardly over the shelf 17 to hold the latter in place. The drawer 3 may now be forced inwardly, care being taken that the stop lever 20 is prevented from engagement with the projection 21 in such movement. As soon as the partition 8 is locked at the inner side of the projection 21. the key by which the stop lever 20 is manipulated may be removed permitting said lever to gravitate into its operative position with respect to the part 21. The panel 24 is then raised to cover and hide from view the key hole 25, whereupon these parts of the invention which might create a suspicion that the cabinet is possessed of secret compartments, are rendered practically invisible, because in the closing movement of the drawer 3, the cover 6 has been pulled outwardly a sufficient distance to engage over the catches 22, hiding these parts also from view and throwing said catches into locking engagement with the parts 27 on the top 4, preventing displacement of the latter.

The panel 24 is hinged, but the hinges are practically invisible and said panel is associated with other panels 24′ forming an ornamental portion of the drawer, the latter being rigid, however.

The front side of the compartment 16 consists of the partition 28, and the shelf 17 slides in grooves 17′ in the opposite sides 5 of the superstructure on the body 1.

It will of course be understood that cabi-

nets constructed in accordance with this invention will have different keys actuating their levers 20 in order to prevent opening of the drawer to its outermost limit of movement except by a person having the proper key.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new is:

1. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a movable top normally closing said secret compartment, a drawer mounted on the body, locking means normally preventing movement of the top, and mechanism operable by the drawer and coacting with said locking means for releasing and preventing movement of the top.

2. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a movable top normally closing said compartment, a drawer mounted in the body, locking means normally preventing movement of the top, a device for actuating said locking means to release or lock the top, and means connecting said device for operation by the drawer.

3. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a drawer mounted on the body, a top normally closing said secret compartment, a cover coöperating with the top, means operable by the cover for locking and releasing the top, and connections between the drawer and the cover, whereby the position of the drawer controls the position of the cover and cooperation of the latter with the locking means.

4. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a movable top normally closing said compartment, a drawer, a movable cover associated with the top, catches preventing displacement of the top and normally prevented from operation by the cover, and connections between the cover and drawer for actuating the cover to permit the operation of the catches to release the top.

5. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a movable top normally closing said compartment, catches normally preventing movement of the top, and a cover associated with the top and movable into positions rendering the catches operative and inoperative with respect to the top.

6. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a movable top normally closing said compartment, catches normally preventing movement of the top, and a cover coacting with said catches to throw the same into and out o operative position with respect to the top.

7. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a movable top normally closing said compartment, a drawer, catches normally preventing movement of the top, a cover operable by said drawer and coacting with said catches to throw the same into and out of operative position with respect to the top, and means limiting the movement of the drawer to prevent the cover from rendering the catches inoperative with respect to the top under normal conditions of service.

8. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, a movable top normally closing said compartment, a drawer, catches normally preventing movement of the top, a cover operable by said drawer and coacting with said catches to throw the same into and out of operative position with respect to the top, means limiting the movement of the drawer to prevent the cover from rendering the catches inoperative with respect to the top under normal conditions of service, and means for actuating the last mentioned means to permit the drawer to move the cover into a position rendering the catches inoperative with respect to the top.

9. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, closing means for said compartment rendering same normally inaccessible, locking means for closing means, a drawer coacting with the locking means to render the latter operative or inoperative, and means coacting with the drawer to normally prevent movement thereof beyond a predetermined position, whereby the locking means will be normally maintained inoperative.

10. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, closing means for said compartment rendering same normally inaccessible, locking means for the closing means, a drawer coacting with the locking means to render the latter operative or inoperative, and means coacting with the drawer to normally prevent movement thereof beyond a predetermined position, whereby the locking means will be normally maintained inoperative, and means whereby the last mentioned means may be actuated to permit movement of the drawer beyond a predetermined position to render the locking means operative under certain conditions of service.

11. In a secret cabinet, the combination of a body having a secret compartment, means normally closing said compartment and rendering the same inaccessible, a locking device for the closing means, a movable cover arranged to prevent access to the locking means, means for actuating said cover, means for normally limiting the movement of the cover, maintaining the inaccessibility of the locking means, and means for causing abnormal movement of the cover to render the locking means accessible.

12. In a secret cabinet, the combination of

a body having a secret compartment, means normally closing said compartment and rendering the same inaccessible, a locking device for the closing means, a movable cover arranged to prevent access to the locking means, a drawer connected with the cover for actuating the same, means coöperating with the drawer to limit the movement of the latter to thereby limit the movement of the cover and normally maintain the inaccessibility of the locking means, and means whereby the last mentioned limiting means may be actuated to cause abnormal movements of the drawer and cover, rendering the locking means accessible.

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

LEON KNASTER.

Witnesses:
ADOLPH MUSSOLINO,
ADOLPH GRIMSDER.