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WALKING CANE

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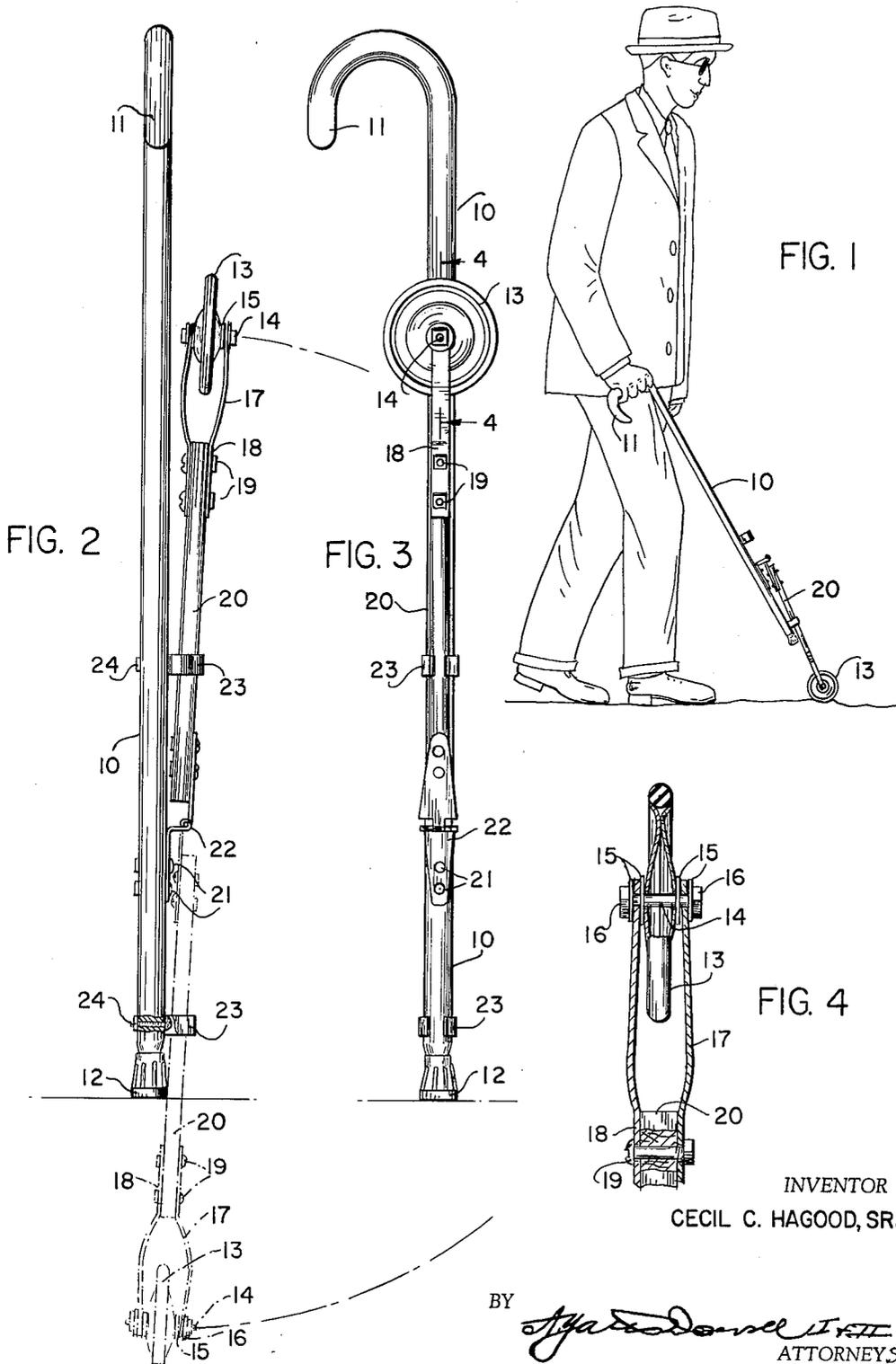


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

FIG. 3

FIG. 4

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3,223,099

WALKING CANE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 135-47)

This invention relates to devices used by humans to assist them in moving from place to place, including on foot, and intended to be used not only for physical support but by those with impaired faculties such as those with deficient vision.

The invention relates particularly to walking canes designed to provide physical assistance, as well as for use in conjunction with the sense of feeling by the blind or those needing to supplement inadequate vision.

Persons needing additional means of supporting during movement on foot sometimes have impaired vision or are sightless and need to feel their way instead of or as a supplement to vision and consequently walking canes of many kinds have been produced. These have not been of a construction that they could be used selectively either strictly as a walking cane or merely as a rolling sensing guide and with a single cane readily adaptable for either use.

It is an object of the invention to provide a walking cane or stick in the form of a shaft with a handle at one end and a surface engaging opposite end carrying rubber tip and with such cane capable of being used in a conventional manner but also of a construction to permit it to be readily converted to have a wheel at its lower end for smoother rolling use as a guiding and sensing device but readily restorable to a straight walking cane type of device.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective illustrating the use of the invention;

FIG. 2, a front elevation;

FIG. 3, a side elevation; and

FIG. 4, a longitudinal section on the line 4-4 of FIG. 3.

Briefly stated, the invention is a conventional walking cane having a crook at the top, a resilient foot at the opposite or bottom end, and a wheel carried on a shaft pivoted to the cane for location in an upright inoperative position parallel to the shaft of the cane and held by a spring clip but swingable to an opposite depending position so that the wheel is disposed beyond the lower end of the shaft and with the shaft carrying the wheel selectively retained in either position by a spring clip, whereby when the wheel is beyond the end of the cane instead of the resilient pad being moved along the surface the wheel can be so moved to determine obstruction as well as elevations and depressions.

With continued reference to the drawing, the invention comprises a conventional walking cane or stick 10 having a handle crook 11 and a resilient foot 12 intended to absorb part of the impact which otherwise would be transmitted through the shaft of the cane to the handle.

In order to improve the usefulness of the cane, a wheel 13 is mounted on a shaft 14 by means of washers 15 and lock nuts 16 between a pair of fork members 17 having straight portions 18 secured by bolts and nuts 19 to a shaft 20.

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The shaft 20 is secured by bolts and nuts 21 and a hinge 22 to the cane 10 so that the shaft 20 may be located in a manner to position the wheel 13 beyond the end of the cane as illustrated in FIG. 1 and in dotted lines in FIG. 2, or to position the shaft 20 with the wheel in a reverse inoperative position as disclosed in full lines in each of FIGS. 2 and 3.

When the wheel 13 is in inoperative position, it will not interfere with the use of the cane in a conventional manner. On the other hand, when the wheel 13 is located beyond the end of the cane it can be rolled along a surface on which the user walks to detect unevenness in the terrain or objects or obstructions.

In order to maintain the shaft 20 in its position of use, as well as in its inoperative position, a pair of spring clips 23 are provided, each spring clip being substantially U-shaped and with a bolt and nut 24 through the center of the same and through the shaft 10 and with the sides of the clip having opposed gripping portions curved corresponding to the curvature of the shaft 20 so that the shaft 20 may be forced between the spring fingers and held in such position.

It will be apparent from the foregoing that the shaft 20 may be swung about the hinge 22 to dispose the wheel 13 beyond the end of the shaft so that the cane can be rolled, or the shaft 20 may be disposed in an opposite position intermediate the ends of the cane so that the foot 12 may be engaged with a surface on which a person walks.

It will be obvious to one skilled in the art that various changes may be made in the invention without departing from the spirit and scope thereof and therefore the invention is not limited by that which is illustrated in the drawing and described in the specification, but only as indicated in the accompanying claim.

What is claimed is:

A walking cane comprising a shaft having a handle at one end and a surface engaging opposite end, and second shaft having a pair of members secured to one end thereof and defining a fork, a wheel rotatably mounted between the outer ends of said members, a hinge connecting said second shaft to the first in a manner that said second shaft and wheel may be extended beyond the end of the first shaft, and means for fastening said second shaft in position with said second shaft extending beyond the end of the first shaft to locate said wheel as an extension of the said first shaft, said fastening means including resilient clip means for securing the wheel carrying shaft with the wheel selectively in extended and inoperative positions.

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