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(71) Applicant and

(72) Inventor: **EVERSHED, Deborah, Susan** [GB/GB]; 3
Compton Close, Peckham, London SE15 5FZ (GB).

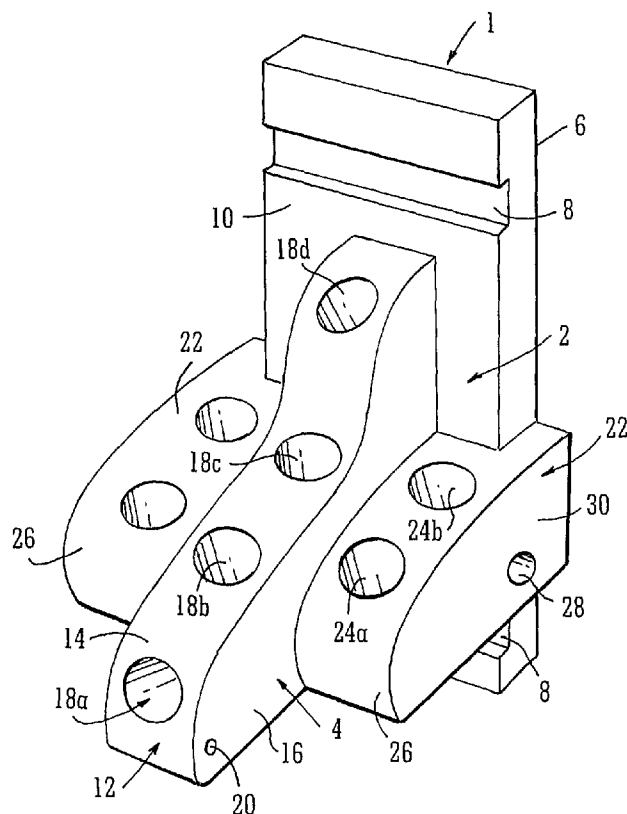
(74) Agent: **JEFFREY, Philip, M.**; Frank B. Dehn & Co., St
Bride's House, 10 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8JD
(GB).

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(54) Title: ADAPTABLE BRACKET



(57) Abstract: A bracket (1) is disclosed comprising a mounting portion (2) having a rear surface (6) and a first mounting section (8). A first strap engages with the first mounting section (8) to attach or secure the mounting portion (2) to an object. The bracket (1) further comprises a support portion (4) comprising one or more first holes or recesses (18) which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a projecting member. The one or more first holes or recesses (18) are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to the rear surface (6), wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.



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ADAPTABLE BRACKET

5 The present invention relates to brackets and wall mountable brackets.

Many different types of bracket are known for attaching articles to a permanent object such as a tree, lamp post, fence post or wall. For example, it is known to fix a road sign, display board or banners on a semi-permanent basis to a pole-like object using a bracket. The bracket may be attached to the pole-like object by metal straps or clamps. GB-2226750, for example, shows a system for clamping a bracket to a post. The bracket can be used to hang a flower basket. However, in such systems the bracket and any parts projecting from the bracket are fixed once the bracket is clamped into place. Known brackets also tend to provide only a limited number of positions and angles for attaching an article relative to the object to which the bracket is fixed.

Different types of wall mountable bracket are also known. However, wall mountable brackets tend to have a particular purpose and are relatively inflexible. Once a wall mountable bracket has been mounted to a wall it is likely to offer a relatively limited number of options for the way in which articles can be supported by or attached to the bracket.

25 It is desired to provide an improved bracket.

According to an aspect of the present invention there is provided a bracket comprising: a mounting portion having a rear surface and a first mounting section wherein, in use, a first strap engages with the first mounting section to attach or secure the mounting portion to an object; and a support portion comprising one or more first holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a projecting member, wherein the one or more first holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.

The one or more holes or recesses in the support portion preferably provide a number of alternative positions and/or angles for supporting projecting members which are received in use in the holes or recesses. As the one or more holes or recesses are inclined at an angle or angles to the rear surface

of the mounting portion of the bracket, they can effectively expand the range of ways in which members can project from the bracket. This means, in turn, that there is greater variety in the way that articles can be supported on or by the bracket.

5 Many different kinds of projecting member may be employed. The bracket is thus adaptable to many different uses and situations.

The use of a strap provides a particularly simple and convenient method of attaching the bracket to an object on a permanent, semi-permanent or temporary basis, without
10 necessarily causing any damage to the object. The strap may be adjusted or tightened so as to secure the mounting portion to any chosen part of an object, regardless of its shape and size.

According to an embodiment θ_1 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°;
15 (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

The rear surface may be substantially planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of the rear surface. Alternatively, the rear surface may be
20 substantially curved or non-planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of the rear surface.

In a preferred embodiment the first mounting section may comprise a first groove or recess in the mounting portion. The first strap preferably passes, in use, around the first groove
25 or recess. The first groove or recess may have a width selected from the group consisting of: (i) < 0.1 cm; (ii) 0.1-0.5 cm; (iii) 0.5-1.0 cm; (iv) 1.0-1.5 cm; (v) 1.5-2.0 cm; (vi) 2.0-2.5 cm; (vii) 2.5-3.0 cm; (viii) 3.0-3.5 cm; (ix) 3.5-4.0 cm; (x) 4.0-4.5 cm; (xi) 4.5-5.0 cm; (xii) 5-6 cm; (xiii) 6-7 cm; (xiv)
30 7-8 cm; (xv) 8-9 cm; and (xvi) 9-10 cm. The first groove or recess may have a length selected from the group consisting of: (i) < 1 cm; (ii) 1-2 cm; (iii) 2-3 cm; (iv) 3-4 cm; (v) 4-5 cm; (vi) 5-6 cm; (vii) 6-7 cm; (viii) 7-8 cm; (ix) 8-9 cm; (x) 9-10 cm; (xi) 10-11 cm; (xii) 11-12 cm; (xiii) 12-13 cm; (xiv) 13-14
35 cm; and (xv) 14-15 cm.

In some embodiments the first mounting section may comprise a first channel through the mounting portion and wherein, in use, the first strap passes through the first

channel. According to other embodiments the first mounting section may comprise one or more first apertures in the mounting portion and wherein, in use, the first strap passes through the one or more first apertures. The first mounting section may
5 comprise a first lip provided on the mounting portion and wherein, in use, the first strap passes under the first lip.

The first mounting section is preferably located above the support portion when the bracket is attached or secured, in use, to an object. This helps prevent the mounting section from
10 interfering with the support portion.

The first mounting section may comprise a first strap to attach or secure the mounting portion to an object in use. The first strap may be fixed to the first mounting section by adhesive, chemical or mechanical fixing means.

15 According to the preferred embodiment the mounting portion may comprise a second mounting section spaced apart from the first mounting section. A second strap preferably engages with the second mounting section to attach or secure the mounting portion to an object. By providing the mounting portion with
20 two mounting sections the bracket can be attached more securely to an object. A user is also provided with a choice of mounting sections or positions such that the most convenient mounting section or position can be used depending upon the nature of the object to which the bracket is attached. For example, it may be
25 easier to pass a strap around one part of an object than another.

The second mounting section preferably comprises a second groove or recess in the mounting portion. The second strap preferably passes around the second groove or recess. The
30 second groove or recess preferably has a width selected from the group consisting of: (i) < 0.1 cm; (ii) 0.1-0.5 cm; (iii) 0.5-1.0 cm; (iv) 1.0-1.5 cm; (v) 1.5-2.0 cm; (vi) 2.0-2.5 cm; (vii) 2.5-3.0 cm; (viii) 3.0-3.5 cm; (ix) 3.5-4.0 cm; (x) 4.0-4.5 cm; (xi) 4.5-5.0 cm; (xii) 5-6 cm; (xiii) 6-7 cm; (xiv) 7-8 cm; (xv)
35 8-9 cm; and (xvi) 9-10 cm. The second groove or recess preferably has a length selected from the group consisting of: (i) < 1 cm; (ii) 1-2 cm; (iii) 2-3 cm; (iv) 3-4 cm; (v) 4-5 cm; (vi) 5-6 cm; (vii) 6-7 cm; (viii) 7-8 cm; (ix) 8-9 cm; (x) 9-10

cm; (xi) 10-11 cm; (xii) 11-12 cm; (xiii) 12-13 cm; (xiv) 13-14 cm; and (xv) 14-15 cm.

5 The second mounting section may comprise a second channel through the mounting portion wherein, in use, the second strap passes through the second channel. The second mounting section may comprise one or more second apertures in the mounting portion and wherein, in use, the second strap passes through the one or more second apertures. The second mounting section may comprise a second lip provided on the mounting portion and
10 wherein, in use, the second strap passes under the second lip.

According to the preferred embodiment the second mounting section is preferably located below the support portion when the bracket is attached or secured in use to an object. This can prevent the mounting section from interfering with the support
15 portion. Furthermore, by using the spaced apart mounting sections to secure the bracket both above and below the support portion, the support portion and the weight that it bears in use are more evenly distributed. The bracket is also preferably prevented from tilting away from the object to which it is
20 attached.

The one or more first holes or recesses are preferably provided or located in a front face of the support portion. According to an embodiment the one or more first holes or recesses may comprise one or more through holes. This may help
25 to ensure that water and debris does not become trapped in the holes when not in use. Trapped water may pose a particular threat in winter as its expansion upon freezing could damage the bracket. According to another embodiment the one or more first holes or recesses may comprise one or more blind holes. The
30 depth of the holes may be tailored to different projecting members.

According to the preferred embodiment the bracket may further comprise one or more second holes or recesses which are preferably arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member.
35 The one or more second holes or recesses may be inclined at an angle θ_2 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_2 \leq 90^\circ$. Preferably, θ_2 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-

10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

5 The one or more second holes or recesses can extend the range of angles at which projecting members may be supported relative to the bracket. In particular, the second holes or recesses may allow for horizontally and/or vertically extending projecting members.

10 The one or more second holes or recesses may be provided or located in the mounting portion. Additionally or alternatively, the one or more second holes or recesses may be provided or located in a front face of the support portion.

15 According to an embodiment the one or more second holes or recesses may comprise one or more through holes. According to another embodiment the one or more second holes or recesses may comprise one or more blind holes.

20 According to the preferred embodiment the bracket may further comprise one or more third holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member. The one or more third holes or recesses are preferably inclined at an angle θ_3 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_3 \leq 90^\circ$.

Preferably, θ_3 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

25 The one or more third holes or recesses can further extend the range of angles at which projecting members may be supported relative to the bracket.

30 The one or more third holes or recesses may be provided or located in the mounting portion. Additionally or alternatively, the one or more third holes or recesses may be provided or located in a side face of the support portion.

According to an embodiment the one or more third holes or recesses may comprise one or more through holes. According to another embodiment the one or more third holes or recesses may comprise one or more blind holes.

35 It will be appreciated that the bracket may provide a great number and variety of different holes or recesses on its different faces, such that members can project in all directions

- 6 -

from the bracket and at numerous different angles. The bracket is therefore adaptable to a wide range of applications.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided the combination of a bracket as described
5 hereinabove and a first strap which is arranged to engage with the first mounting section.

A second strap may be arranged to engage with a second mounting section.

According to another aspect of the present invention there
10 is provided the combination of a bracket as described hereinabove and a projecting member.

The projecting member is preferably selected from the group consisting of: (i) a pole or rod; (ii) a support for a baby bouncer; (iii) a support for a tent; (iv) a support for a
15 lamp; (v) a support for a hammock; (vi) a support for a hanging basket or plants; (vii) a support for a solar panel; (viii) a support for a battery pack; (ix) a support for lighting; (x) a support for a security sensor; (xi) a support for a bird house; (xii) a support for a bird or animal feeder; (xiii) a support
20 for a road sign; (xiv) a support for a harvest net; (xv) a support for a fishing rod; (xvi) a support for a windbreak; (xvii) a support for a basketball, badminton, tennis or other sporting net or hoop; (xviii) a support for tools; and (xix) a support for a hosepipe.

According to an embodiment the projecting member may
25 comprise a stop for limiting the insertion of the projecting member into a hole or recess. This may be particularly useful when the member is inserted into a through hole. Additionally or alternatively, the projecting member may comprise a pole or
30 rod having one or more interchangeable end fixings. The one or more end fixings may be selected from the group consisting of: (i) a sliding groove; (ii) a ring or eye; (iii) a hook; (iv) a flattened or rounded extension bar attachment; (v) a clip; (vi) a pocket; and (vii) a Velcro fastener.

According to another aspect of the present invention there
35 is provided the combination of a bracket as described hereinabove and a back plate.

The bracket and the back plate are preferably slidably securable to one another. The bracket or the back plate may

comprise a dovetail rebate for slidably securing one to the other. The bracket or the back plate may comprise a projection for slidably securing one to the other. According to the preferred embodiment the back plate comprises a further strap
5 for attaching or securing the back plate to an object. The back plate preferably provides additional support to the bracket, especially when attached or secured to the object by its own further strap. The back plate can help to ensure that the bracket does not slide down the object to which it is attached.

10 According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a wall mountable bracket comprising: a mounting portion having a rear surface, wherein the mounting portion is arranged and adapted to be secured to a wall by one of more fixings which pass through the mounting portion into the wall;
15 and a support portion having one or more first holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a projecting member, wherein the one or more first holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.

20 It will be appreciated that a wall mountable bracket in accordance with this aspect of the invention is adaptable to many different uses and situations in the same way as the bracket described above.

Preferably, θ_1 is selected from the group consisting of:
25 (i) $0-10^\circ$; (ii) $10-20^\circ$; (iii) $20-30^\circ$; (iv) $30-40^\circ$; (v) $40-50^\circ$; (vi) $50-60^\circ$; (vii) $60-70^\circ$; (viii) $70-80^\circ$; and (ix) $80-90^\circ$.

The rear surface may be substantially planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of the rear surface. Alternatively, the rear surface may be
30 substantially curved or non-planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of the rear surface.

According to the preferred embodiment the mounting portion may comprise a first mounting section wherein the bracket is secured to the wall, in use, by one or more fixings which
35 preferably pass through the first mounting section into the wall. The first mounting section is preferably located above the support portion when the bracket is attached or secured in

use to the wall. This can prevent the fixings from interfering with the support portion.

According to the preferred embodiment the mounting portion preferably comprises a second mounting section spaced apart from the first mounting section. The bracket is preferably secured, in use, to the wall by one or more fixings which preferably pass through the second mounting section into the wall. The second mounting section is preferably located below the support portion when the bracket is attached or secured in use to the wall. This can also prevent the fixings from interfering with the support portion. Furthermore, by using the spaced apart mounting sections to secure the bracket to a wall both above and below the support portion, the support portion and the weight that it bears in use are more evenly distributed. The bracket is preferably prevented from tilting away from the wall.

According to the preferred embodiment the bracket may further comprise one or more second holes or recesses which are preferably arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member. The one or more second holes or recesses are preferably inclined at an angle θ_2 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_2 \leq 90^\circ$. Preferably, θ_2 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) $0-10^\circ$; (ii) $10-20^\circ$; (iii) $20-30^\circ$; (iv) $30-40^\circ$; (v) $40-50^\circ$; (vi) $50-60^\circ$; (vii) $60-70^\circ$; (viii) $70-80^\circ$; and (ix) $80-90^\circ$. The second holes or recesses can extend the range of angles at which projecting members may be supported relative to the bracket. In particular, the second holes or recesses may allow for horizontally and vertically extending projecting members.

According to the preferred embodiment the bracket may further comprise one or more third holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member. The one or more third holes or recesses are preferably inclined at an angle θ_3 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_3 \leq 90^\circ$.

Preferably, θ_3 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) $0-10^\circ$; (ii) $10-20^\circ$; (iii) $20-30^\circ$; (iv) $30-40^\circ$; (v) $40-50^\circ$; (vi) $50-60^\circ$; (vii) $60-70^\circ$; (viii) $70-80^\circ$; and (ix) $80-90^\circ$. The third holes or recesses can further extend the range of angles at

which projecting members may be supported relative to the bracket.

The first holes or recesses are preferably in a front face of the support portion. The second and/or third holes or recesses may be in the mounting portion. Additionally or alternatively, the second holes or recesses may be in a front face of the support portion. The third holes or recesses may be in a side face of the support portion. As before, it will be appreciated that the bracket may provide a great number and variety of different holes or recesses on its different faces, such that members can project in all directions from the bracket, at numerous different angles relative to the wall. The bracket is therefore adaptable to a wide range of applications.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided the combination of a wall mountable bracket as described hereinabove and a projecting member.

The projecting member preferably comprises: (i) a hanging or suspended shelving unit; (ii) a hanging or suspended chair or seat; (iii) a hanging or suspended lamp; (iv) a hanging or suspended table; and (v) a hanging basket. In other embodiments the projecting member is selected from the group consisting of: (i) a pole or rod; (ii) a support for a baby bouncer; (iii) a support for a tent; (iv) a support for a lamp; (v) a support for a hammock; (vi) a support for a hanging basket or plants; (vii) a support for a solar panel; (viii) a support for a battery pack; (ix) a support for lighting; (x) a support for a security sensor; (xi) a support for a bird house; (xii) a support for a bird or animal feeder; (xiii) a support for a road sign; (xiv) a support for a harvest net; (xv) a support for a fishing rod; (xvi) a support for a windbreak; (xvii) a support for a basketball, badminton, tennis or other sporting net or hoop; (xviii) a support for tools; or (xix) a support for a hosepipe.

The projecting member may comprise a stop for limiting its insertion into a hole or recess. The projecting member may comprise a pole or rod having one or more interchangeable end fixings. The one or more end fixings may be selected from the group consisting of: (i) a sliding groove; (ii) a ring or eye; (iii) a hook; (iv) a flattened or rounded extension bar

- 10 -

attachment; (v) a fork; (vi) a clip; (vii) a pocket; and (viii) a Velcro fastener.

The projecting member may comprise integral attachment means selected from the group consisting of: (i) a hook; (ii) a
5 ring or eye; (iii) a fork; (iv) a bar; (v) a socket; (vi) a plug; (vii) a screw thread; (viii) a bayonet fastener; and (ix) a pin.

According to a further aspect the present invention there is provided a bracket comprising: a mounting portion having a
10 rear surface, wherein the mounting portion comprises means arranged and adapted to engage with a back plate which is secured to a wall by one of more fixings which pass through the back plate into the wall; and a support portion having one or more first holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to
15 receive, in use, a projecting member, wherein the one or more first holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.

In accordance with this aspect of the invention a back plate which is secured to a wall may be used to support any
20 number of different brackets. The brackets can be interchangeably mounted onto the back plate. As it is only the back plate which is fixed to a wall, the bracket may be selectively mounted as and when required. The back plate can be strengthened to provide the necessary support for the bracket,
25 while the bracket itself may be free of fixings or straps.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided the combination of a bracket as described above and a back plate.

The back plate preferably comprises an upwardly open
30 channel. The mounting portion preferably comprises a downwardly extending member attached to the rear surface. The back plate may comprise a base plate arranged to support the mounting portion from underneath. This can help to bear the weight carried by the bracket.

35 According to a yet further aspect of the present invention there is provided a bracket comprising: a mounting portion which is arranged and adapted to be secured to an object by one or more straps; and a support portion comprising a plurality of

holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive one or more projecting members.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a bracket comprising: a mounting portion for
5 attaching or securing the bracket to an object, the mounting portion having a rear surface and a mounting flange or lip; and a support portion which extends from the mounting portion, the support portion comprising one or more first holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a projecting
10 member, wherein the one or more first holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.

The mounting flange or lip is preferably curved downwards and is preferably arranged to engage, in use, with a flange or
15 lip which is curved upwards. The upwardly curved flange or lip may be provided, for example, by a fence post hook. A bracket in accordance with this aspect of the invention is preferably arranged and adapted to be secured to different objects in a number of different ways.

In some embodiments a first strap is preferably arranged,
20 in use, to engage underneath the mounting flange or lip to attach or secure the bracket to the object. The mounting portion preferably further comprises a mounting section and a second strap is preferably arranged, in use, to pass around the
25 mounting section to attach or secure the bracket to the object. The mounting section is preferably located below the mounting flange or lip. The mounting section may be provided on the front surface of the mounting portion.

In some embodiments the bracket preferably further
30 comprises a groove or recess in the front surface of the mounting portion and a strap is preferably arranged, in use, to pass around the groove or recess to secure the bracket to an object.

In other embodiments a strap is preferably arranged to be
35 located, in use, in a wedge or groove between the mounting portion and the support portion in order to secure the bracket to an object.

In some embodiments the mounting portion preferably comprises a dovetail or other shaped rebate or projection for slidably securing the bracket to a back plate.

5 In some embodiments the mounting portion is preferably arranged and adapted to be secured to a wall by one or more fixings which pass through the mounting portion into the wall. The mounting portion is preferably provided with corresponding holes for the one or more fixings.

10 In accordance with all embodiments the mounting flange or lip is preferably provided on or by the rear surface of the mounting portion. It is preferable that at least a portion of the mounting flange or lip is substantially flush, parallel or co-planar with the rear surface so as to provide a planar or non-planar mounting surface. In some embodiments the rear
15 surface of the mounting portion is preferably substantially planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, or 80%, 90% or 100% of the rear surface. In some embodiments the rear surface of the mounting portion is substantially curved or non-planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%,
20 80%, 90% or 100% of the rear surface.

The support portion may be integral with the mounting portion. The support portion may be removably or interchangeably attached to or engaged with the mounting portion. The support portion preferably has a substantially
25 continuously curved surface or volume.

As regards the first holes or recesses in the support portion, θ_1 is preferably selected from the group consisting of:
(i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°;
(vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°. The
30 one or more first holes or recesses may comprise one or more through holes. The one or more first holes or recesses may comprise one or more blind holes.

The bracket preferably further comprises one or more second holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to
35 receive a projecting member, wherein the one or more second holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_2 relative to the rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_2 \leq 90^\circ$.

- 13 -

According to an embodiment θ_2 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

5 The one or more second holes or recesses are preferably provided or located in the support portion. Additionally or alternatively, the one or more second holes or recesses are preferably provided or located in the mounting portion.

10 According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a hook for mounting or securing to or against a fence post or the like, wherein the hook comprises a mounting portion for grippingly securing the hook to a fence post and wherein the hook further comprises a mounting flange or lip which engages, in use, with a mounting flange or lip of a
15 bracket.

 According to an embodiment the mounting portion preferably comprises a gripping ring or frame for securing the hook to the upper portion and/or side portions of a fence post. The gripping ring or frame preferably comprises a plurality of
20 serrations and/or resilient members for aiding in securing the hook to the fence post or the like. The gripping ring or frame may have a substantially square, rectangular, triangular, oval, circular, pentagonal, hexagonal, polygonal or curved circumference or outer profile.

25 According to an embodiment the mounting portion preferably further comprises one or more resiliently gripping flanges, lips or members. The one or more resiliently gripping flanges, lips or members preferably comprises a plurality of serrations for aiding in securing the hook to the fence post or the like.

30 According to an embodiment the hook preferably further comprises one or more side arms which are arranged to secure the hook to one or more sides of a fence post. The one or more side arms are preferably arranged to grippingly engage with the fence post.

35 According to a further aspect of the present invention there is provided the combination of a bracket as described hereinabove and a fence post hook as described hereinabove, wherein the mounting flange or lip of the fence post hook is

arranged to engage, in use, with the mounting flange or lip of the bracket so that the bracket is mounted or secured to the fence post hook.

5 Various embodiments of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a bracket according to a first embodiment of the invention;

10 Fig. 2 shows a projecting member with different interchangeable end fixings for use with a bracket according to an embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 3A shows a front view of a back plate for a bracket as shown in Fig. 1, Fig. 3B shows a top view of the back plate and Fig. 3C shows a top view of the bracket;

15 Fig. 4 shows a second embodiment of a bracket in use with a back plate;

Fig. 5 shows a third embodiment of a bracket in use with a back plate;

Fig. 6 shows a fourth embodiment of a bracket in use;

20 Fig. 7 shows a fifth embodiment of a bracket in use;

Fig. 8 shows a sixth embodiment of a bracket in use;

Fig. 9 shows a first alternative embodiment of a wall mountable bracket;

25 Fig. 10 shows a second alternative embodiment of a wall mountable bracket;

Fig. 11 shows a third alternative embodiment of a wall mountable bracket;

30 Fig. 12 shows a bracket secured to a wall mountable back plate according to a further alternative embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 13 shows a side view of a bracket and wall mountable back plate according to a yet further alternative embodiment of the invention;

35 Fig. 14A shows a back view of the bracket shown in Fig. 13, Fig. 14B shows a front view of the wall mountable back plate shown in Fig. 13 and Fig. 14C shows a side view of the wall mountable back plate;

Fig. 15 shows a perspective view of another bracket in accordance with an alternative embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 16A shows a side view of the bracket shown in Fig. 15 and Fig. 16B shows a front view of the bracket shown in Fig. 15;

Fig. 17 shows detailed back, side and end view of the mounting portion of the bracket of Fig. 15;

5 Fig. 18A shows a fence post hook in accordance with an embodiment of the invention and Fig. 18B shows a cross-section taken along line A-A; and

Fig. 19 shows a fence post hook in accordance with another embodiment of the invention.

10 A bracket 1 according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention is shown in Fig. 1. The bracket 1 comprises a mounting portion 2 and a support portion 4. The bracket 1 is preferably made from wood and may be treated to make it more waterproof, durable or attractive in appearance. The mounting
15 portion 2 is preferably arranged and adapted to be secured to an object by means of one or more straps. To this end, the mounting portion 2 preferably comprises a pair of grooves 8 on its front surface 10 for receiving suitable mounting straps (not shown). The grooves 8 are preferably located above and below
20 the support portion 4. According to a less preferred embodiment a single groove may be sufficient. The one or more grooves 8 may be provided with a lip to assist in retaining the mounting strap(s).

The mounting portion 2 preferably has a rear surface 6
25 which preferably contacts the object to which the bracket 1 is mounted in use, e.g. a wall, post or tree trunk. The rear surface 6 of the mounting portion 2 may be covered with rubber or other material to prevent the bracket 1 from slipping when it is mounted against a surface.

30 The support portion 4 preferably extends in a plane orthogonal to the mounting portion 2. The support portion 4 preferably comprises a central block 12 that extends forward from the mounting portion 2. The central block 12 preferably has a front-facing surface 14 and side-facing surfaces 16 either
35 side of the front-facing surface 14. Four front-facing holes or recesses 18a-d are preferably provided in the front-facing surface 14. The holes 18a-d are preferably each inclined at an acute angle θ_1 relative to the rear surface 6 of the mounting

- 16 -

portion 2 such that $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$. The holes 18a-d are preferably spaced along the front-facing surface 14 and are preferably inclined at a progressively increasing angle θ_1 as their distance from the mounting portion 2 increases along the front-facing surface 14. This allows for an array of projecting members (not shown) to be received in the holes 18a-d in a fan-like manner.

The central block 12 preferably has a passage 20 therethrough with openings at either end in the side-facing surfaces 16. The passage 20 is preferably positioned towards the front of the central block 12 and is preferably spaced forward of the mounting portion 2. The passage 20 is preferably adapted to receive one or more members (e.g. rods) which can be inserted into the passage 20 such that they project from the side-facing surfaces 16 in a direction which is preferably generally parallel to the rear surface 6 of the mounting portion 2. A number of such passages 20 may be provided in the central block 12 although only a single passage 20 is shown in Fig. 1. One or more holes may also be provided in the side-facing surfaces 16 of the central block 12, instead of or in addition to one or more passages 20 passing through the central block 12, to receive side-projecting members.

The central block 12 of the support portion 4 is preferably sandwiched between two or more side blocks 22 (although according to a less preferred embodiment it is contemplated that a single side block 22 may be provided). The side blocks 22 preferably extend back either side of the mounting portion 2 and preferably form part of the rear surface 6. The side blocks 22 preferably do not extend as far forward as the central block 12 of the support portion 4 so as to leave clearance for members projecting sideways from the central block 12. The side blocks 22 are preferably provided with holes 24a, 24b in their front-facing surfaces 26 which are preferably inclined at an angle θ_2 ($0^\circ \leq \theta_2 \leq 90^\circ$) relative to the rear surface 6 of the mounting portion 2. The holes 24a, 24b in the side blocks 22 may receive projecting members extending vertically (i.e. parallel to the rear surface 6 of the mounting portion 2), horizontally, or at any angle inbetween.

One or more passageways 28 extending all the way through the side blocks 22 and the central block 12 are preferably arranged to receive one or more further side-projecting members. One or more holes may also be provided in the side-facing surfaces 30 of the side blocks 22. These holes may be inclined at an angle θ_3 ($0^\circ \leq \theta_3 \leq 90^\circ$) relative to the rear surface 6 of the mounting portion 2.

According to a less preferred embodiment one or more holes or recesses may also be provided in the front-facing and/or side-facing surfaces of the mounting portion 2.

It will be appreciated that the bracket 1 can provide a number of alternative holes and passages for receiving one or more projecting members, both in the plane of the rear surface 6 and in a plane perpendicular to the rear surface 6. The preferred bracket 1 therefore has great versatility.

The bracket 1 is preferably designed to enable a user to attach items to objects (such as trees and posts) on a permanent, semi-permanent or temporary basis. By inserting members into the holes, recesses or passages provided in the bracket 1, items can be supported off the ground and the bracket can enable various activities to be carried out. The bracket is portable and can be used in parks, camping sites, gardens, fields, etc. For example, the bracket can be used to support a fishing rod or a basketball net. The bracket can be made of any suitable material such as wood, resin, plastics or metal. It may be solid or hollow.

Rigid rods or poles may be inserted into the openings in the bracket 1 as projecting members which can be used to support an item of interest. The rods or poles can have various different end fixings for hanging, suspending or otherwise supporting an item. Fig. 2 shows various interchangeable end fixings for a projecting member. Each of the end fixings are preferably secured in place by a pin 34 which preferably passes through the end attachment and the rod 36. In Fig. 2A the end attachment comprises a sliding groove 37. In Fig. 2B the end attachment comprises an elongate ring 38 or round ring 38A. In Fig. 2C the end attachment comprises a hook 39. The end attachment may according to another embodiment comprise a

flattened or rounded extension bar attachment (not shown) or any other suitable attachment means.

The preferred bracket 1 can be attached or secured directly to an object by passing one or more straps around the grooves 8 in the mounting portion 2, e.g. by tightening and fastening the strap(s) around a post or tree trunk. Heavy duty straps and locking mechanisms can be used to ensure that the bracket 1 is firmly secured against the object. However, in some circumstances, especially where the bracket 1 may be used to support heavy loads, the bracket 1 may be attached to the object using a back plate. A suitable back plate 3 is shown in Fig. 3.

The back plate 3 preferably comprises a back portion 40 and a base portion 42 which preferably extends perpendicular to the back portion 40. A strap 44 is preferably attached to the back portion 40 for overhead attachment of the back plate 3 to an object such as a tree branch. On the front of the back portion 40 there is preferably provided a support slide 46. As seen from the top view in Fig. 3B, the support slide 46 preferably comprises a dovetailed protrusion on the back portion 40. As seen in Fig. 3C, a bracket having a corresponding dovetailed slot 48 in its rear surface 6 can be slidably secured to the back plate 3.

Fig. 4 shows the combination of a bracket 1 and a back plate 3 being used to support a baby bouncer 50. The bracket 1 is preferably slid down onto the back plate 3 until the bottom of the mounting portion 2 rests on the base portion 42 of the back plate 3. This provides additional support and prevents the bracket 1 from sliding down further. Straps 62 are preferably wrapped around both the bracket 1 and the back plate 3 in order to secure them against a tree trunk, with the back plate 3 pressed firmly against the tree trunk. A further strap 44 is preferably attached to the back plate 3 and preferably passes over a branch and can be tightened to prevent any tendency for downward slide of the back plate 3 against the tree trunk.

In Fig. 4 the bracket 1 is used to support a baby bouncer 50. A regular baby bouncer 50 comprises a support 52 to support a baby and a bouncy or elastic rope 54 attached to a clip 56 which can, for example, be hooked onto a doorframe. The bracket

- 19 -

1 preferably allows the baby bouncer 50 to be used outdoors. A
projecting rod 58 having an eyelet 60 is preferably received in
one of the holes or recesses in the support portion 4 of the
bracket 1. A user can choose which hole or recess to use
5 depending upon the angle at which it is desired to suspend the
rod 58. The clip 56 of the baby bouncer is preferably hooked
onto the eyelet 60 of the rod 58. The preferred arrangement
enables a baby to be kept safe in the shade and at the same time
prevented from putting anything lying on the ground in their
10 mouth or crawling away.

Fig. 5 shows a bracket 1 being used to support a number of
different items, such as a baby bouncer 50, a table 63, a
hammock 64, a hanging basket 66 and a bird feeder 67.
Projecting members of different lengths, having a variety of
15 different end fixings, may be used to hang and support these
various items. As the bracket 1 provides a number of holes,
recesses or passages which are preferably inclined at different
angles to the rear surface of the bracket 1 and thus to the tree
to which the bracket 1 is secured, projecting members can stick
20 out from the bracket in a variety of different directions. It
will be appreciated that the bracket 1 can be secured to a tree
trunk or post without causing any damage. Moreover the bracket
1 is readily portable, can be mounted and re-mounted quickly,
and can adapt to be secured to objects of various different
25 shapes and sizes.

Fig. 6 shows an embodiment wherein a bracket 1 is strapped
directly to a tree trunk and a projecting member is used to
secure a guide rope of a tent 79.

Fig. 7 shows an embodiment wherein four brackets 1 are
30 strapped against the trunk of a fruit tree 80. Two or more
poles 82 project from each bracket 1. The angle at which the
poles 82 are supported can be chosen depending on which hole in
the bracket 1 is used. The poles 82 are preferably adapted to
support a harvest net 84 which preferably encompasses the tree
35 80 below its branches. Fruit dropping from the branches is
preferably caught in the net 84 and preferably rolls towards one
of the collecting holes 86. A bucket 88 can be positioned
underneath each hole 86 to collect fruit caught by the net 84.
This system can be used with a fruit tree of any size and is

selectively positionable at the optimum height for collecting fruit.

Fig. 8 shows another embodiment wherein a preferred bracket 1 is secured to a lamppost 90. Temporary road signs 92 or other display boards can be supported by the bracket 1. It can be seen from this embodiment that the projecting member 94 can be adapted to be received in more than one of the holes or recesses provided by the bracket. This can help to ensure that the projecting member 94 is not easily knocked or blown out of its position inserted in the bracket 1.

Fig. 9 shows an alternative embodiment wherein a preferred bracket 100 is wall mountable. The bracket 100 preferably has a different mounting portion 200 to the previously described embodiments. The mounting portion 200 preferably does not include any mounting sections such as a groove for a strap. Instead, the mounting portion 200 may be fixed to a wall, such as the wall of a post or fence, by one or more fixings which preferably pass through the mounting portion 200 into the wall. The bracket 100 preferably has a support portion which is similar to that described in relation to the embodiments shown in Figs. 1-8.

Projecting members can be inserted into the holes, recesses or passages in the support portion to suspend various items. A double-ended extension bar 102 may according to one embodiment be fixed onto the end of a projecting pole to hold, for example, a twin bird feeder. A hooked pole 104 can be used to suspend, for example, a hanging plant. Another hooked pole 106 may be used to suspend, for example, a bird bath. A pronged pole 108 can be used as a support rest for garden tools such as one or more forks or spades 110. A large hook 9 may be suspended on projecting members at either side of the bracket 100 and used, for example, to hang a garden hose 112.

A wall mountable bracket 300 according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention is shown in more detail in Fig. 10. The mounting portion 210 of the bracket 300 is preferably adapted to be secured to a wall by fixings 220 which preferably pass through the mounting portion 210 into the wall. The support portion preferably comprises a solid support block 230. The support block 230 may be made of wood, resin or

plastics material. A number of inclined holes 240 preferably extend from the surface of the support block 230 into the interior of the support block 230. The holes 240 are preferably inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to the rear surface of the mounting portion 210, where $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$. One or more through holes 250 may pass through the support block 230 from one side to the other. A single projecting member can be inserted through each hole 250 or two separate members may be inserted from either side.

10 According to another embodiment a wall mountable bracket 300 may receive a projecting hanger 310 for a hanging basket and a support pole for an uplighter 320 as shown in Fig. 11. The wall mountable bracket 300 is suitable for both indoor and outdoor use.

15 For heavy duty use where the weight of the items to be suspended is more considerable, a wall mountable back plate 400 can be used in combination with a bracket 402 having a support block as shown in Fig. 12. The back plate 400 is preferably secured to a wall by one or more fixings which preferably pass through the back plate 400 into the wall. A bracket 402 may be selectively mounted to the back plate 400. Whilst the back plate 400 stays fixed in position against a wall, the bracket 402 may be removed and interchanged for another. This allows for flexibility such that a different bracket 402 may be mounted to the back plate 400 for different uses. The bracket 402 may also be made more ornamental as the back plate 400 may provide the majority of the support and strength required.

25 As shown in Fig. 12, a strong pole 404 can be inserted into a hole in the bracket 402 to suspend a hanging chair 405. A more lightweight pole 406 can be used for a hanging plant 408. The bracket 402 may also be used to support a jointed or flexible projecting member 410 such as an angled lamp. Right-angled poles 412 may be used to suspend tables 414 at either side of the chair 405. The tables 414 may have a fold out section underneath.

35 Another embodiment of a bracket 430 and wall mountable back plate 400 is shown in Fig. 13. The back plate 400 is shown in more detail in Figs. 14B and 14C. The back plate 400 may

comprise a wall mounting portion 420 through which fixings preferably pass through to secure the back plate 400 to a wall. As shown in Fig. 14B the back plate 400 may be secured to the wall at several locations across the top and bottom of the wall mounting portion 420.

On the front of the wall mounting portion 420 an upturned flange or lip 422 may be provided to preferably enable attachment of a bracket 430. A horizontal support base 424 may project forwards from the front of the wall mounting portion 420 of the back plate 400. The support base 424 can be shaped to match the base of a bracket 430, e.g. as shown in Fig. 13. In this manner a bracket 430 may mate with the support base 424 to assist in connecting the bracket 430 to the back plate 400.

The bracket 430 preferably comprises a mounting portion 432 which is preferably secured to a connecting plate 434 by screws or other fixings 436 which preferably pass through holes 437 in the connecting plate 434. Fig. 14A shows four holes 437 located at the four corners of the connecting plate 434. The connecting plate 434 may be used to assist in connecting the bracket 430 to a back plate 400. However, the bracket 430 itself may instead be provided with means for connecting it to a back plate 400.

In the embodiment shown in Fig. 13 the connecting plate 434 preferably has a downturned clip 438, which is also seen from Fig. 14A. The clip 438 is preferably arranged to slot over the upturned flange 422 of the wall mountable back plate 400 so as to connect the bracket 430 to the back plate 400. When the clip 438 is fully engaged into the flange 422, the base of the bracket 430 preferably rests on the support base 424 of the back plate 400. The weight of the bracket 430 may be thus more evenly transmitted to the back plate 400. The bracket 430 is also preferably prevented from tilting forward and is preferably securely held against the back plate 400. The wall mountable back plate 400 also helps to distribute the weight of items supported by the bracket 430.

The bracket 430 shown in Fig. 13 may be disconnected and transferred easily from one place to another, with minimal effort. The bracket 430 can be interchanged. It will be appreciated that the back plate 400 preferably provides a

universal way of securing different brackets to a wall. Each bracket 430 needs only to be provided with a corresponding connection means such as the clip 438. The same universal connecting plate 434 can be secured to different brackets 430 regardless of the brackets 430 having different mounting portions 432.

A bracket 500 according to an alternative embodiment is shown in Figs. 15-17. The bracket 500 is arranged and adapted to be secured to different objects in a number of different ways. The bracket comprises a support portion 504 and a mounting portion 502 at the rear of the bracket 500. The support portion 504 preferably comprises a number of holes or recesses 518. The holes or recesses 518 can be used to support various projecting members (not shown) as in the embodiments described hereinabove. The bracket 500 may therefore be used in a similar manner to embodiments described previously and hence further details will not be repeated.

A difference between the embodiment shown in Figs. 15-17 and the previously described embodiments is that the support portion 504 preferably has an outwardly curved surface or volume. A continuously curved surface can preferably provide holes or recesses 518 therein at any number of different angles, thereby providing greater flexibility in the possible angles for projecting members. The holes or recesses 518 preferably comprise a mixture of differently shaped (e.g. circular and rectangular) openings to preferably match the shape of corresponding projecting members. One or more of the holes 518 may be through holes whereas other of the holes 518 may be blind holes.

The bracket 500 is preferably made from metal but may alternatively be made from wood or other materials. The mounting portion 502 and the support portion 504 are preferably integrally formed, e.g. by casting, or permanently attached to one another, e.g. by welding. The mounting portion 502 and/or support portion 504 may be solid or hollow. One or more drainage openings 507 are preferably provided to allow for any trapped water and/or debris to escape from the support portion 504. One or more drainage channels or grooves (not shown) may

also be provided on the surface of the support portion 504 to aid in run-off.

Another difference between the embodiment shown in Figs. 15-17 and the previously described embodiments is that the mounting portion 502 provides a number of alternatives for the way in which it can be mounted to an object in use. As before, the mounting portion 502 preferably has a rear surface 506 which preferably contacts the object to which the bracket 500 is mounted in use, e.g. a fence post, a wall or a tree trunk.

The mounting portion 502 comprises a mounting flange or lip 505 which in the embodiment shown preferably takes the form of a downwardly curved hook. The mounting flange or lip 505 is preferably provided at the top of the mounting portion 502 but could be provided at any point. In the embodiment shown the mounting flange or lip 505 is preferably provided by the rear surface 506 and further preferably the flange or lip 505 is substantially flush with the rear surface 506. This means that the mounting portion 502 can be mounted up against a flat surface such as a wall whilst still providing a mounting flange or lip 505.

The mounting flange or lip 505 can preferably be used to mount the bracket 500 onto a corresponding mounting flange or lip of a fence post hook, as will be described in more detail below with reference to Figs. 18-19. The mounting flange or lip 505 may alternatively be used to hook the bracket 500 directly over the top of a fence.

Alternatively, the mounting flange or lip 505 may be used to secure the bracket 500 to an object by means of one or more straps (represented by broken lines in Fig. 15). For example, a strap can preferably pass underneath the mounting flange 505 and preferably wrap around a tree trunk or fence post. Additionally or alternatively, a further strap may preferably be passed across the front of the mounting portion 502 to further secure the bracket 500. Such a further strap may preferably be located in a wedge or groove 508 between the mounting portion 502 and the support portion 504, i.e. underneath the curved surface of the support portion 504, as shown. Alternatively, a dedicated groove or recess (not shown) may be provided. Further additionally or alternatively, a channel (not shown) may be

provided through the mounting portion 502 to allow a strap to pass therethrough.

Using the mounting flange or lip 505 to secure the bracket 500 to an object, either directly or indirectly, allows for attachment without requiring any permanent fixings. The bracket 500 can be easily detached and interchanged if desired.

The mounting portion 502 is also preferably arranged and adapted to be secured directly to a wall by one or more fixings. The mounting portion 502 therefore preferably comprises a number of holes or fixings 520 which preferably pass through the mounting portion 502. This can allow the bracket 500 to be attached to a wall on a more permanent basis if desired.

As is best seen from the views shown in Fig. 17, the mounting portion 502 also preferably comprises a dovetail slot 548 in the rear surface 506 which can allow the bracket 500 to be preferably slidably secured to a back plate (not shown). A suitable back plate is shown, for example, in Figs. 3-5. Alternatively, the mounting portion 502 may preferably be provided with a downturned clip (not shown) which is arranged to slot over an upturned flange on a wall mountable back plate, for example as shown in Figs. 13-14. Such embodiments can allow the bracket 500 to be supported by a preferably heavy duty back plate which is itself attached to an object on either a temporary or permanent basis, instead of the bracket 500 being attached or secured directly to an object.

It will be understood that the bracket 500 provides a number of options for the way in which it can be attached or secured to another object. Thus a user has great flexibility and choice and the bracket 500 can be used in many different situations, both indoors and outdoors.

A fence post hook is shown in Figs. 18A and 19 which is preferably suitable for use with the bracket 500 of Figs. 15-17. In the embodiment of Fig. 18A a hook 600 for mounting or securing to or against a fence post 602 is shown which comprises a mounting portion 604 and an upwardly curved mounting flange or lip 606 which preferably engages, in use, with a downwardly curved mounting flange or lip 505 of a bracket 500.

The mounting portion 604 preferably grippingly secures the hook 600 to the fence post 602 via a gripping ring 608. As

shown in Fig. 18B in a cross-section taken along line A-A, the gripping ring 608 preferably has a plurality of serrations or other surface texture formed on its inner surface to aid in securing the hook 600 to the fence post 602. The gripping ring 608 preferably has a square section which matches that of the fence post 602. The gripping ring 608 may have any desired outer profile, e.g. to provide an ornamental effect in addition to providing a gripping force.

The mounting portion 604 preferably further comprises a pair of side arms 610 which are preferably arranged to contact opposing side faces of the fence post 602. The side arms 610 can preferably prevent the hook 600 from tilting or twisting away from the fence post 602 when a load is applied to the mounting flange or lip 606. Preferably, the gripping ring 608, mounting flange or lip 606 and side arms 610 are integrally formed in a framework which is attached over the fence post 602. The mounting flange or lip 606 preferably rests against a front face of the fence post 602.

Fig. 19 shows another embodiment of a hook 700 which comprises a mounting portion 704 and an upwardly curved mounting flange or lip 706 which preferably engages, in use, with a downwardly curved mounting flange or lip 505 of a bracket 500. As in the embodiment of Fig. 18A, the mounting flange or lip 706 preferably rests against a front face of a fence post 702. However, instead of a gripping ring which circumscribes a fence post, there is provided a gripping frame 708 which preferably engages over the top of the fence post 702. The gripping frame 708 preferably comprises a resilient gripping flange 712 made, for example, of spring steel which preferably grips onto a rear face of the fence post 702 opposite the mounting flange or lip 706. The gripping flange 712 is preferably provided with serrations 714 or other surface texture formed on its inner surface to aid in securing the frame 708 onto the fence post 702.

The frame 708 preferably has an aperture 716 which engages over the top surface of the fence post 702. This allows for the fence post 702 having a curved top and also reduces material cost and weight.

- 27 -

The frame 708 preferably has one or more pairs of side arms 710 which preferably wrap from the front to the side faces of the fence post 702 and which preferably help to support the mounting portion 704 against the fence post 702. Although not
5 shown, the side arms 710 may also provide a resilient gripping effect and/or may be provided with serrations or other surface texture.

It will be understood that the various features of the fence post hooks described with respect to Figs. 18 and 19 may
10 be interchanged and provided in different combinations.

Although the present invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various modifications in form and detail may be made without departing from the scope of the present
15 invention as set forth in the accompanying claims.

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Claims

- 5 1. A bracket comprising:
a mounting portion having a rear surface and a first
mounting section wherein, in use, a first strap engages with
said first mounting section to attach or secure said mounting
portion to an object; and
- 10 a support portion comprising one or more first holes or
recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a
projecting member, wherein said one or more first holes or
recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to said rear
surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.
- 15 2. A bracket as claimed in claim 1, wherein θ_1 is selected
from the group consisting of: (i) $0-10^\circ$; (ii) $10-20^\circ$; (iii) $20-30^\circ$;
(iv) $30-40^\circ$; (v) $40-50^\circ$; (vi) $50-60^\circ$; (vii) $60-70^\circ$; (viii)
70-80°; and (ix) $80-90^\circ$.
- 20 3. A bracket as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said rear
surface is substantially planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%,
40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of said rear surface.
- 25 4. A bracket as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein said rear
surface is substantially curved or non-planar across at least
10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of said rear
surface.
- 30 5. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said
first mounting section comprises a first groove or recess in
said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said first strap
passes around said first groove or recess.
- 35 6. A bracket as claimed in claim 5, wherein said first groove
or recess has a width selected from the group consisting of: (i)
< 0.1 cm; (ii) 0.1-0.5 cm; (iii) 0.5-1.0 cm; (iv) 1.0-1.5 cm;

(v) 1.5-2.0 cm; (vi) 2.0-2.5 cm; (vii) 2.5-3.0 cm; (viii) 3.0-3.5 cm; (ix) 3.5-4.0 cm; (x) 4.0-4.5 cm (xi) 4.5-5.0 cm; (xii) 5-6 cm; (xiii) 6-7 cm; (xiv) 7-8 cm; (xv) 8-9 cm; and (xvi) 9-10 cm.

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7. A bracket as claimed in claim 5 or 6, wherein said first groove or recess has a length selected from the group consisting of: (i) < 1 cm; (ii) 1-2 cm; (iii) 2-3 cm; (iv) 3-4 cm; (v) 4-5 cm; (vi) 5-6 cm; (vii) 6-7 cm; (viii) 7-8 cm; (ix) 8-9 cm; (x) 9-10 cm; (xi) 10-11 cm; (xii) 11-12 cm; (xiii) 12-13 cm; (xiv) 13-14 cm; and (xv) 14-15 cm.

8. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 1-4, wherein said first mounting section comprises a first channel through said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said first strap passes through said first channel.

9. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 1-4, wherein said first mounting section comprises one or more first apertures in said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said first strap passes through said one or more first apertures.

10. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 1-4, wherein said first mounting section comprises a first lip provided on said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said first strap passes under said first lip.

11. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said first mounting section is located above said support portion when said bracket is attached or secured, in use, to an object.

12. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said first mounting section includes a first strap to attach or secure said mounting portion to an object in use.

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13. A bracket as claimed in claim 12, wherein the first strap is fixed to the first mounting section by adhesive, chemical or mechanical fixing means.

14. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said mounting portion comprises a second mounting section spaced apart from said first mounting section and wherein, in use, a second strap engages with said second mounting section to attach or secure said mounting portion to an object.

15. A bracket as claimed in claim 14, wherein said second mounting section comprises a second groove or recess in said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said second strap passes around said second groove or recess.

16. A bracket as claimed in claim 15, wherein said second groove or recess has a width selected from the group consisting of: (i) < 0.1 cm; (ii) 0.1-0.5 cm; (iii) 0.5-1.0 cm; (iv) 1.0-1.5 cm; (v) 1.5-2.0 cm; (vi) 2.0-2.5 cm; (vii) 2.5-3.0 cm; (viii) 3.0-3.5 cm; (ix) 3.5-4.0 cm; (x) 4.0-4.5 cm; (xi) 4.5-5.0 cm; (xii) 5-6 cm; (xiii) 6-7 cm; (xiv) 7-8 cm; (xv) 8-9 cm; and (xvi) 9-10 cm.

17. A bracket as claimed in claim 15 or 16, wherein said second groove or recess has a length selected from the group consisting of: (i) < 1 cm; (ii) 1-2 cm; (iii) 2-3 cm; (iv) 3-4 cm; (v) 4-5 cm; (vi) 5-6 cm; (vii) 6-7 cm; (viii) 7-8 cm; (ix) 8-9 cm; (x) 9-10 cm; (xi) 10-11 cm; (xii) 11-12 cm; (xiii) 12-13 cm; (xiv) 13-14 cm; and (xv) 14-15 cm.

18. A bracket as claimed in claim 14, wherein said second mounting section comprises a second channel through said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said second strap passes through said second channel.

19. A bracket as claimed in claim 14, wherein said second mounting section comprises one or more second apertures in said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said second strap passes through said one or more second apertures.

20. A bracket as claimed in claim 14, wherein said second mounting section comprises a second lip provided on said mounting portion and wherein, in use, said second strap passes under said second lip.
- 5 21. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 14-20, wherein said second mounting section is located below said support portion when said bracket is attached or secured in use to an object.
- 10 22. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses are provided or located in a front face of said support portion.
- 15 23. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses comprise one or more through holes.
- 20 24. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 1-22, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses comprise one or more blind holes.
- 25 25. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, further comprising one or more second holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_2 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_2 \leq 90^\circ$.
- 30 26. A bracket as claimed in claim 25, wherein θ_2 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.
- 35 27. A bracket as claimed in claim 25 or 26, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are provided or located in the mounting portion.

- 32 -

28. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 25, 26 or 27, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are provided or located in a front face of said support portion.

5 29. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 25-28, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses comprise one or more through holes.

10 30. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 25-28, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses comprise one or more blind holes.

15 31. A bracket as claimed in any preceding claim, further comprising one or more third holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_3 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_3 \leq 90^\circ$.

20 32. A bracket as claimed in claim 31, wherein θ_3 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) $0-10^\circ$; (ii) $10-20^\circ$; (iii) $20-30^\circ$; (iv) $30-40^\circ$; (v) $40-50^\circ$; (vi) $50-60^\circ$; (vii) $60-70^\circ$; (viii) $70-80^\circ$; and (ix) $80-90^\circ$.

25 33. A bracket as claimed in claim 31 or 32, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses are provided or located in the mounting portion.

30 34. A bracket as claimed in claim 31, 32 or 33, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses are provided or located in a side face of said support portion.

35 35. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 31-34, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses comprise one or more through holes.

36. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 31-34, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses comprise one or more blind holes.

5 37. The combination of a bracket as claimed in any preceding claim and a first strap which is arranged to engage with said first mounting section.

10 38. The combination of a bracket as claimed in any of claims 14-37 and a second strap which is arranged to engage with said second mounting section.

15 39. The combination of a bracket as claimed in any of claims 1-36 and a projecting member.

40. The combination as claimed in claim 39, wherein said projecting member is selected from the group consisting of: (i) a pole or rod; (ii) a support for a baby bouncer; (iii) a support for a tent; (iv) a support for a lamp; (v) a support for a hammock; (vi) a support for a hanging basket or plants; (vii) a support for a solar panel; (viii) a support for a battery pack; (ix) a support for lighting; (x) a support for a security sensor; (xi) a support for a bird house; (xii) a support for a bird or animal feeder; (xiii) a support for a road sign; (xiv) a support for a harvest net; (xv) a support for a fishing rod; (xvi) a support for a windbreak; (xvii) a support for a basketball, badminton, tennis or other sporting net or hoop; (xviii) a support for tools; or (xix) a support for a hosepipe.

30 41. The combination as claimed in claim 39 or 40, wherein said projecting member comprises a stop for limiting its insertion into a hole or recess.

35 42. The combination as claimed in claim 39, 40 or 41, wherein said projecting member comprises a pole or rod having one or more interchangeable end fixings.

- 34 -

43. The combination as claimed in claim 42, wherein said one or more end fixings are selected from the group consisting of: (i) a sliding groove; (ii) a ring or eye; (iii) a hook; (iv) a flattened or rounded extension bar attachment; (v) a clip; (vi) a pocket; and (vii) a Velcro fastener.

44. The combination of a bracket as claimed in any of claims 1-36 and a back plate.

45. The combination as claimed in claim 44, wherein said bracket and said back plate are slidably securable to one another.

46. The combination as claimed in claim 44 or 45, wherein said bracket or said back plate comprises a dovetail rebate for slidably securing one to the other.

47. The combination as claimed in claim 44 or 45, wherein said bracket or said back plate comprises a projection for slidably securing one to the other.

48. The combination as claimed in any of claims 44-47, wherein said back plate comprises a further strap for attaching or securing said back plate to an object.

49. A wall mountable bracket comprising:

a mounting portion having a rear surface, wherein said mounting portion is arranged and adapted to be secured to a wall by one of more fixings which pass through said mounting portion into said wall; and

a support portion having one or more first holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a projecting member, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.

50. A bracket as claimed in claim 49, wherein θ_1 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

5

51. A bracket as claimed in claim 49 or 50, wherein said rear surface is substantially planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of said rear surface.

10

52. A bracket as claimed in claim 49, 50 or 51, wherein said rear surface is substantially curved or non-planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of said rear surface.

15

53. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 49-52, wherein said mounting portion comprises a first mounting section wherein said bracket is secured to said wall, in use, by one or more fixings which pass through said first mounting section into said wall.

20

54. A bracket as claimed in claim 53, wherein said first mounting section is located above said support portion when said bracket is attached or secured in use to said wall.

25

55. A bracket as claimed in claim 53 or 54, wherein said mounting portion comprises a second mounting section spaced apart from said first mounting section and wherein, in use, said bracket is secured to said wall by one or more fixings which pass through said second mounting section into said wall.

30

56. A bracket as claimed in claim 55, wherein said second mounting section is located below said support portion when said bracket is attached or secured in use to said wall.

35

57. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 49-56, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses are provided or located in a front face of said support portion.

- 36 -

58. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 49-57, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses comprise one or more through holes.

5 59. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 49-57, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses comprise one or more blind holes.

10 60. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 49-59, further comprising one or more second holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_2 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_2 \leq 90^\circ$.

15 61. A bracket as claimed in claim 60, wherein θ_2 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

20 62. A bracket as claimed in claim 60 or 61, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are provided or located in the mounting portion.

25 63. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 60, 61 or 62, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are provided or located in a front face of said support portion.

30 64. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 60-63, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses comprise one or more through holes.

35 65. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 60-63, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses comprise one or more blind holes.

66. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 49-65, further comprising one or more third holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member, wherein

said one or more third holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_3 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_3 \leq 90^\circ$.

5 67. A bracket as claimed in claim 66, wherein θ_3 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

10 68. A bracket as claimed in claim 66 or 67, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses are provided or located in the mounting portion.

15 69. A bracket as claimed in claim 66, 67 or 68, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses are provided or located in a side face of said support portion.

20 70. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 66-69, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses comprise one or more through holes.

71. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 66-69, wherein said one or more third holes or recesses comprise one or more blind holes.

25 72. The combination of a bracket as claimed in any of claims 49-71 and a projecting member.

30 73. The combination as claimed in claim 72, wherein said projecting member comprises: (i) a hanging or suspended shelving unit; (ii) a hanging or suspended chair or seat; (iii) a hanging or suspended lamp; (iv) a hanging or suspended table; and (v) a hanging basket.

35 74. The combination as claimed in claim 72, wherein said projecting member is selected from the group consisting of: (i) a pole or rod; (ii) a support for a baby bouncer; (iii) a support for a tent; (iv) a support for a lamp; (v) a support for

a hammock; (vi) a support for a hanging basket or plants; (vii) a support for a solar panel; (viii) a support for a battery pack; (ix) a support for lighting; (x) a support for a security sensor; (xi) a support for a bird house; (xii) a support for a bird or animal feeder; (xiii) a support for a road sign; (xiv) a support for a harvest net; (xv) a support for a fishing rod; (xvi) a support for a windbreak; (xvii) a support for a basketball, badminton, tennis or other sporting net or hoop; (xviii) a support for tools; and (xix) a support for a hosepipe.

75. The combination as claimed in claim 72, 73 or 74, wherein said projecting member comprises a stop for limiting its insertion into a hole or recess.

76. The combination as claimed in claim 74, wherein said projecting member comprises a pole or rod having one or more interchangeable end fixings.

77. The combination as claimed in claim 76, wherein said one or more end fixings are selected from the group consisting of: (i) a sliding groove; (ii) a ring or eye; (iii) a hook; (iv) a flattened or rounded extension bar attachment; (v) a fork; (vi) a clip; (vii) a pocket; and (viii) a Velcro fastener.

78. The combination as claimed in claim 72, wherein said projecting member comprises integral attachment means selected from the group consisting of: (i) a hook; (ii) a ring or eye; (iii) a fork; (iv) a bar; (v) a socket; (vi) a plug; (vii) a screw thread; (viii) a bayonet fastener; and (ix) a pin.

79. A bracket comprising:

a mounting portion having a rear surface, wherein said mounting portion comprises means arranged and adapted to engage with a back plate which is secured to a wall by one or more fixings which pass through said back plate into said wall; and

a support portion having one or more first holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a projecting member, wherein said one or more first holes or

recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.

5 80. The combination of a bracket as claimed in claim 79 and a back plate.

81. The combination as claimed in claim 80, wherein said back plate comprises an upwardly open channel.

10 82. The combination as claimed in claim 80 or 81, wherein said mounting portion comprises a downwardly extending member attached to said rear surface.

15 83. The combination as claimed in claim 80, 81 or 82, wherein said back plate comprises a base plate arranged to support the mounting portion from underneath.

20 84. A bracket comprising:
a mounting portion which is arranged and adapted to be secured to an object by one or more straps; and
a support portion comprising a plurality of holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive one or more projecting members.

25 85. A bracket comprising:
a mounting portion for attaching or securing said bracket to an object, said mounting portion having a rear surface and a mounting flange or lip; and
30 a support portion which extends from said mounting portion, said support portion comprising one or more first holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive, in use, a projecting member, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_1 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$.

86. A bracket as claimed in claim 85, wherein said mounting flange or lip is curved downwards and is arranged to engage, in use, with a flange or lip which is curved upwards.

5 87. A bracket as claimed in claim 85 or 86, wherein, in use, a first strap is arranged to engage underneath said mounting flange or lip to attach or secure said bracket to said object.

10 88. A bracket as claimed in claim 85, 86 or 87, wherein said mounting portion further comprises a mounting section and wherein, in use, a second strap is arranged to pass around said mounting section to attach or secure said bracket to said object.

15 89. A bracket as claimed in claim 88, wherein said mounting section is located below said mounting flange or lip.

20 90. A bracket as claimed in claim 88 or 89, wherein said mounting section is provided on the front surface of said mounting portion.

25 91. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-90, further comprising a groove or recess in the front surface of said mounting portion and wherein, in use, a strap is arranged to pass around said groove or recess to secure said bracket to said object.

30 92. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-91, wherein, in use, a strap is arranged to be located in a wedge or groove between said mounting portion and said support portion in order to secure said bracket to said object.

35 93. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-92, wherein said mounting portion comprises a dovetail or other shaped rebate or projection for slidably securing said bracket to a back plate.

94. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-93, wherein said mounting portion is arranged and adapted to be secured to a wall

by one or more fixings which pass through said mounting portion into said wall.

5 95. A bracket as claimed in claim 94, wherein said mounting portion is provided with corresponding holes for said one or more fixings.

10 96. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-95, wherein said mounting flange or lip is provided on or by the rear surface of said mounting portion.

15 97. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-96, wherein at least a portion of said mounting flange or lip is substantially flush, parallel or co-planar with said rear surface so as to provide a planar or non-planar mounting surface.

20 98. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-97, wherein said rear surface of said mounting portion is substantially planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, or 80%, 90% or 100% of said rear surface.

25 99. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-98, wherein said rear surface of said mounting portion is substantially curved or non-planar across at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or 100% of said rear surface.

100. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-99, wherein said support portion is integral with said mounting portion.

30 101. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-99, wherein said support portion is removably or interchangeably attached to or engaged with said mounting portion.

35 102. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-101, wherein said support portion has a substantially continuously curved surface or volume.

103. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-102, wherein θ_1 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

5

104. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-103, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses comprise one or more through holes.

105. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-104, wherein said one or more first holes or recesses comprise one or more blind holes.

106. A bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-105, further comprising one or more second holes or recesses which are arranged and adapted to receive a projecting member, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are inclined at an angle θ_2 relative to said rear surface, wherein $0^\circ \leq \theta_2 \leq 90^\circ$.

107. A bracket as claimed in claim 106, wherein θ_2 is selected from the group consisting of: (i) 0-10°; (ii) 10-20°; (iii) 20-30°; (iv) 30-40°; (v) 40-50°; (vi) 50-60°; (vii) 60-70°; (viii) 70-80°; and (ix) 80-90°.

108. A bracket as claimed in claim 106 or 107, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are provided or located in the support portion.

109. A bracket as claimed in claim 106 or 107, wherein said one or more second holes or recesses are provided or located in the mounting portion.

110. A hook for mounting or securing to or against a fence post or the like, wherein said hook comprises a mounting portion for grippingly securing the hook to a fence post and wherein said hook further comprises a mounting flange or lip which engages, in use, with a mounting flange or lip of a bracket.

111. A hook as claimed in claim 110, wherein said mounting portion comprises a gripping ring or frame for securing said hook to the upper portion and/or side portions of a fence post.

5

112. A hook as claimed in claim 111, wherein said gripping ring or frame comprises a plurality of serrations and/or resilient members for aiding in securing said hook to said fence post or the like.

10

113. A hook as claimed in claim 111 or 112, wherein said gripping ring or frame has a substantially square, rectangular, triangular, oval, circular, pentagonal, hexagonal, polygonal or curved circumference or outer profile.

15

114. A hook as claimed in any of claims 110-113, wherein said mounting portion further comprises one or more resiliently gripping flanges, lips or members.

20

115. A hook as claimed in claim 114, wherein said one or more resiliently gripping flanges, lips or members comprises a plurality of serrations for aiding in securing said hook to said fence post or the like.

25

116. A hook as claimed in any of claims 110-115, further comprising one or more side arms which are arranged to secure said hook to one or more sides of a fence post.

30

117. A hook as claimed in claim 116, wherein said one or more side arms are arranged to grippingly engage with the fence post.

35

118. The combination of a bracket as claimed in any of claims 85-109 and a fence post hook as claimed in any of claims 110-117, wherein the mounting flange or lip of said fence post hook is arranged to engage, in use, with the mounting flange or lip of said bracket so that said bracket is mounted or secured to said fence post hook.

1/17

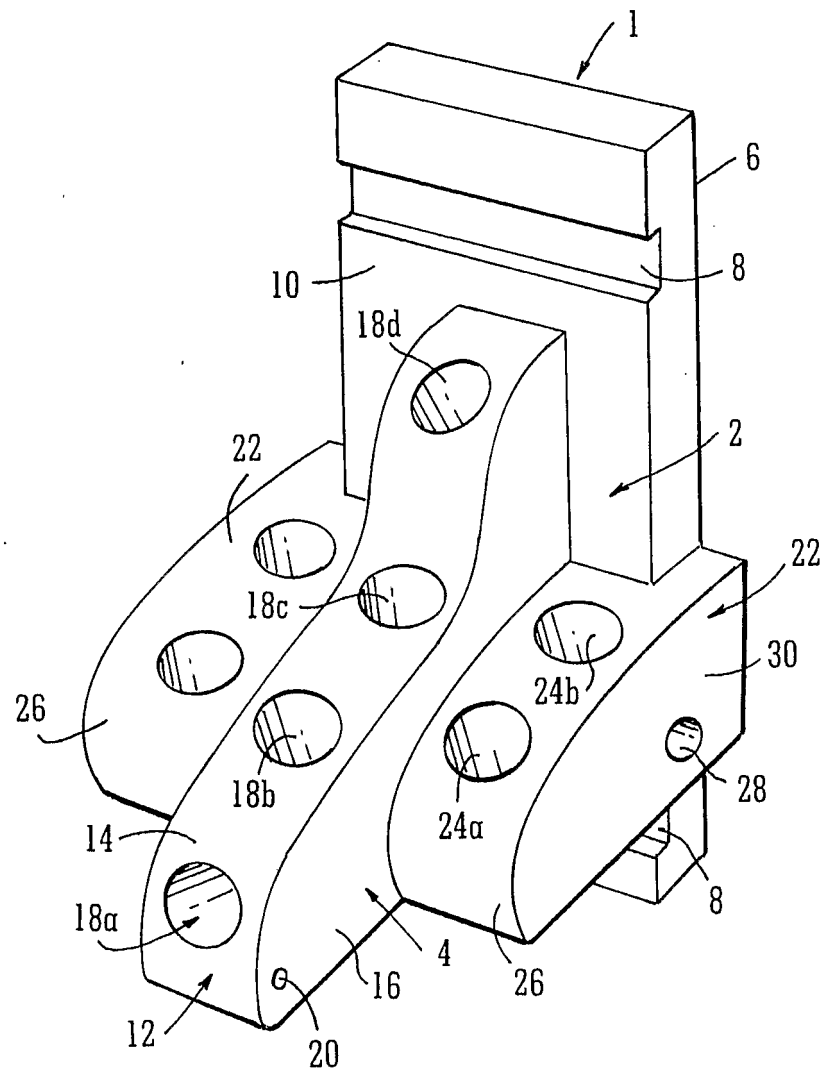
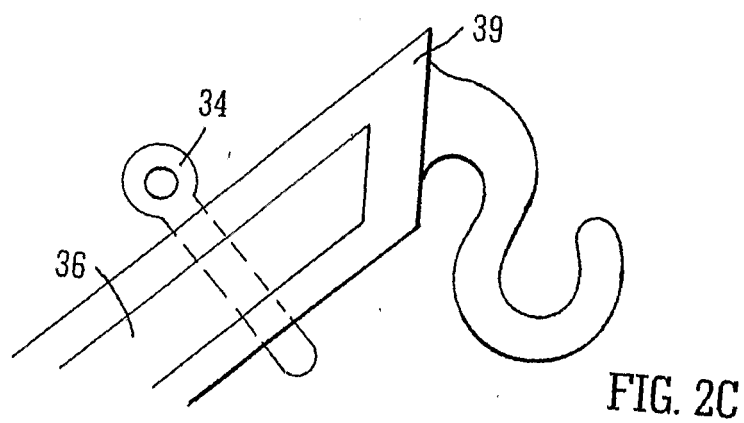
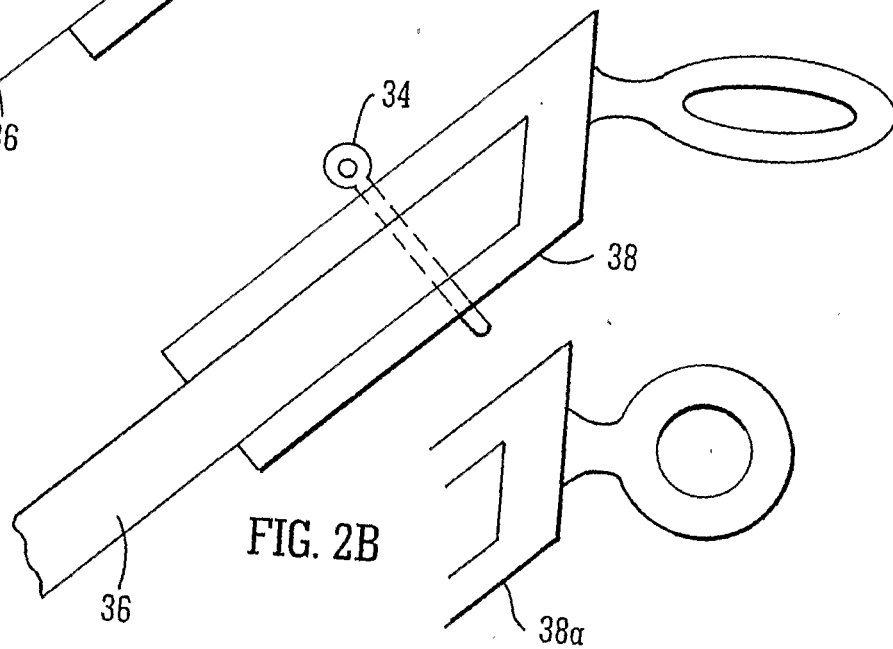
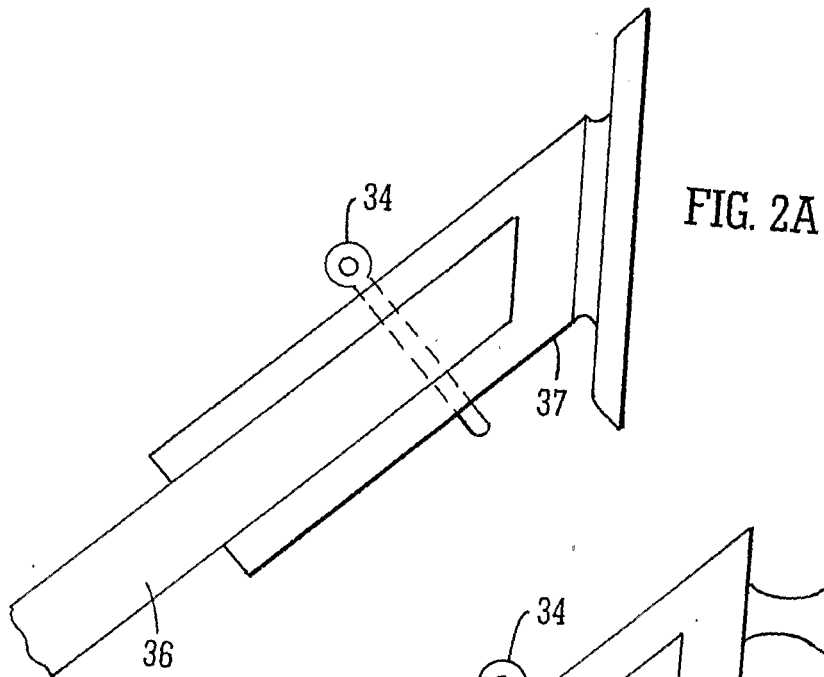


FIG. 1

2/17



3/17

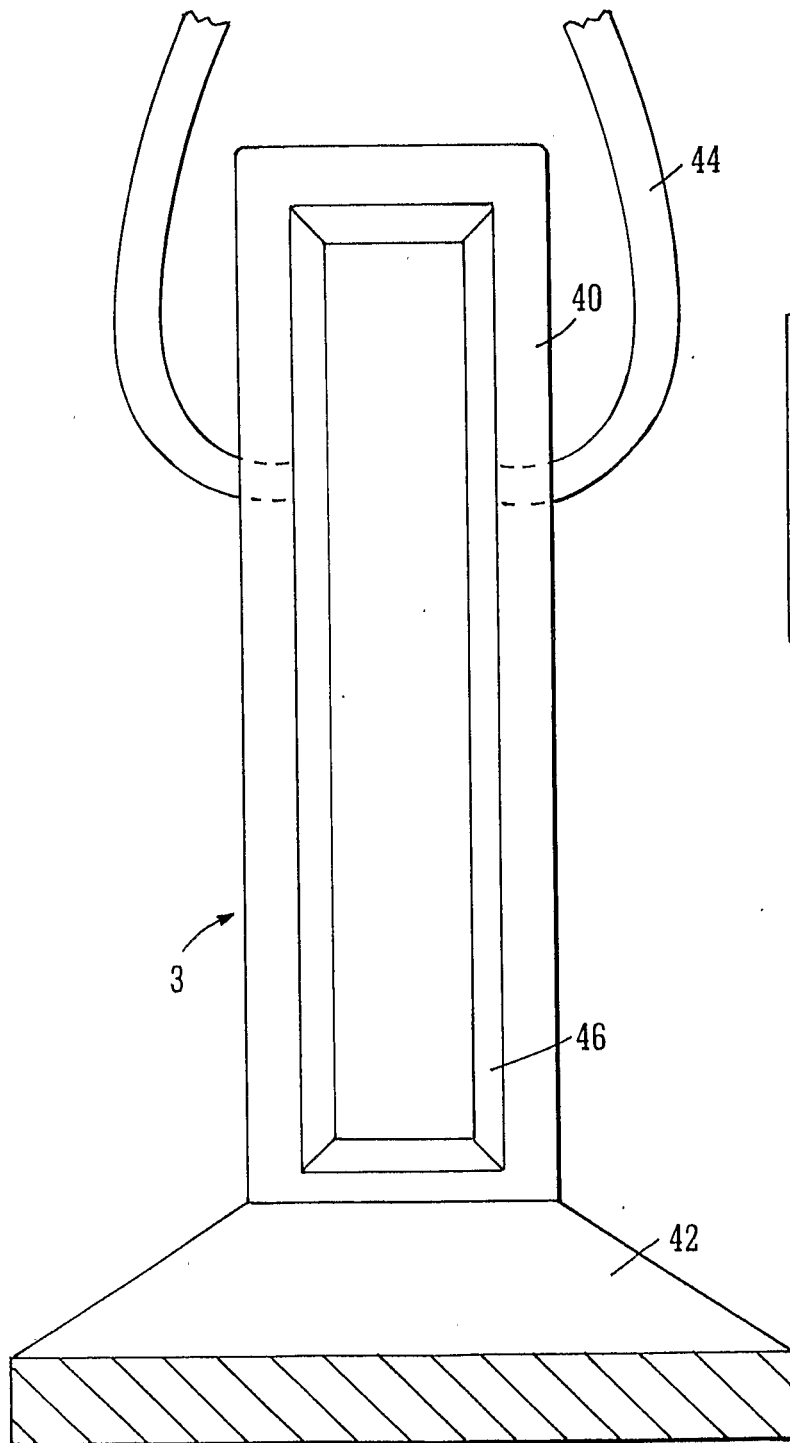


FIG. 3A

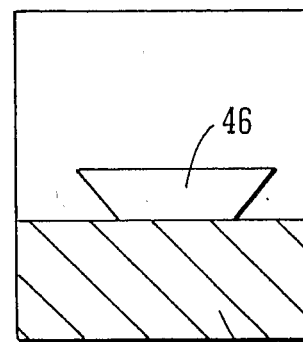


FIG. 3B

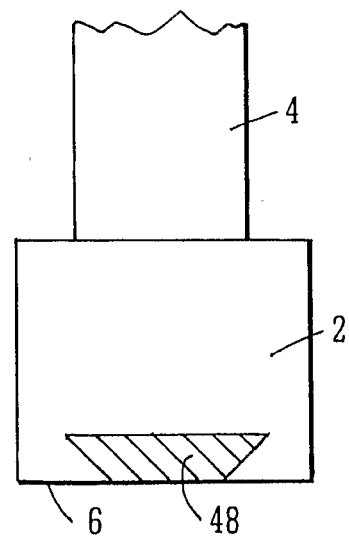


FIG. 3C

4/17

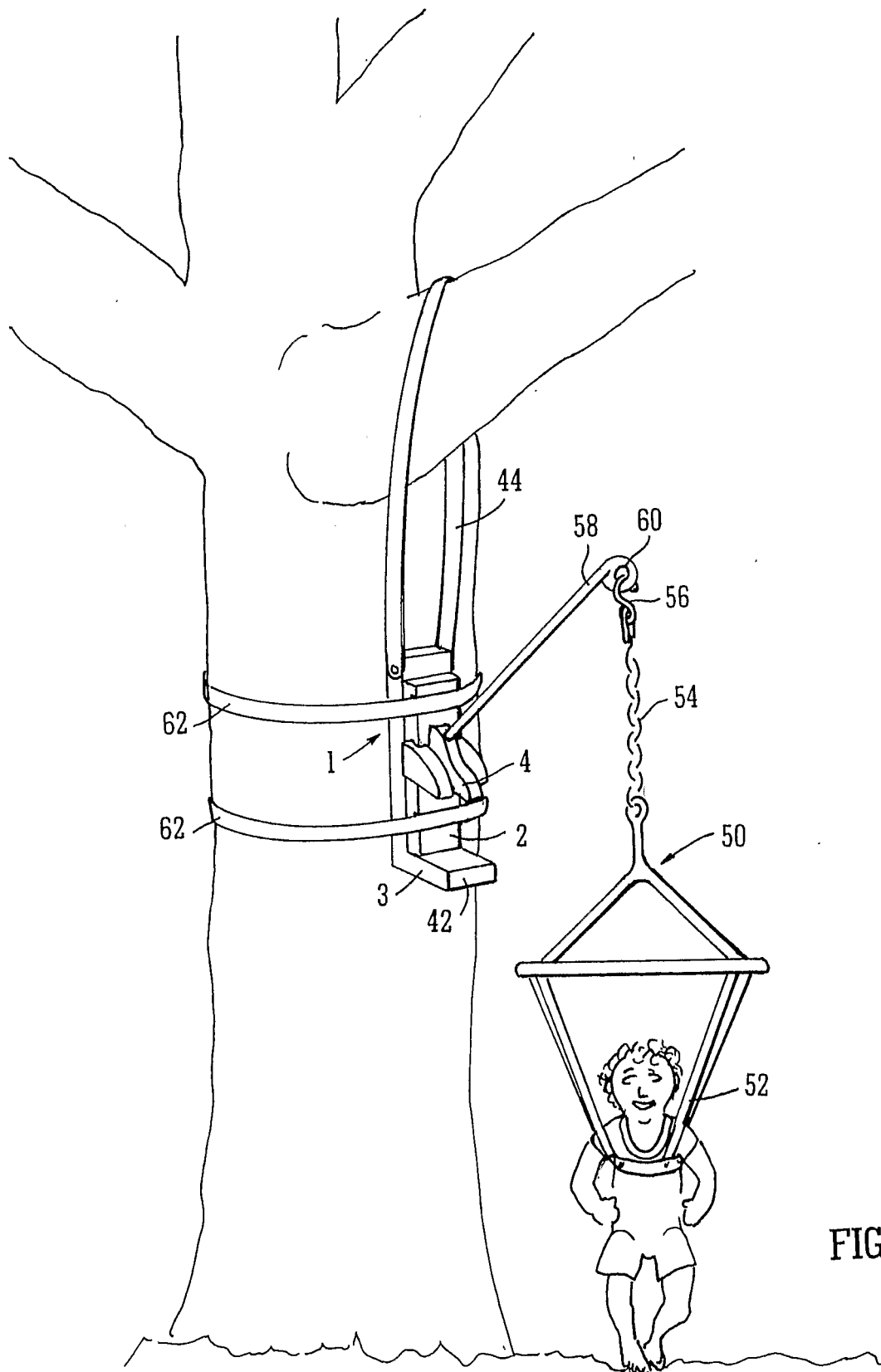


FIG. 4

5/17

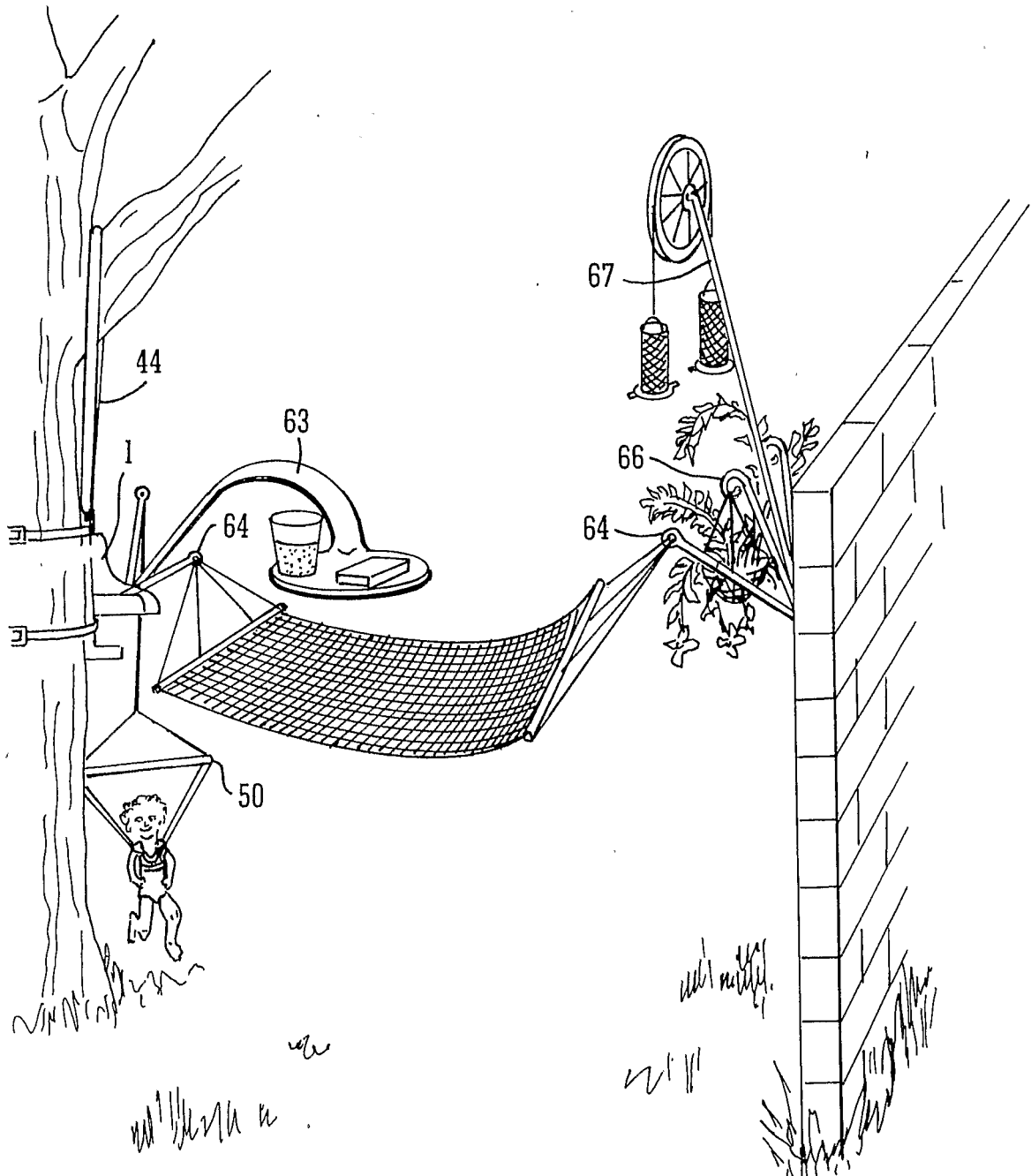
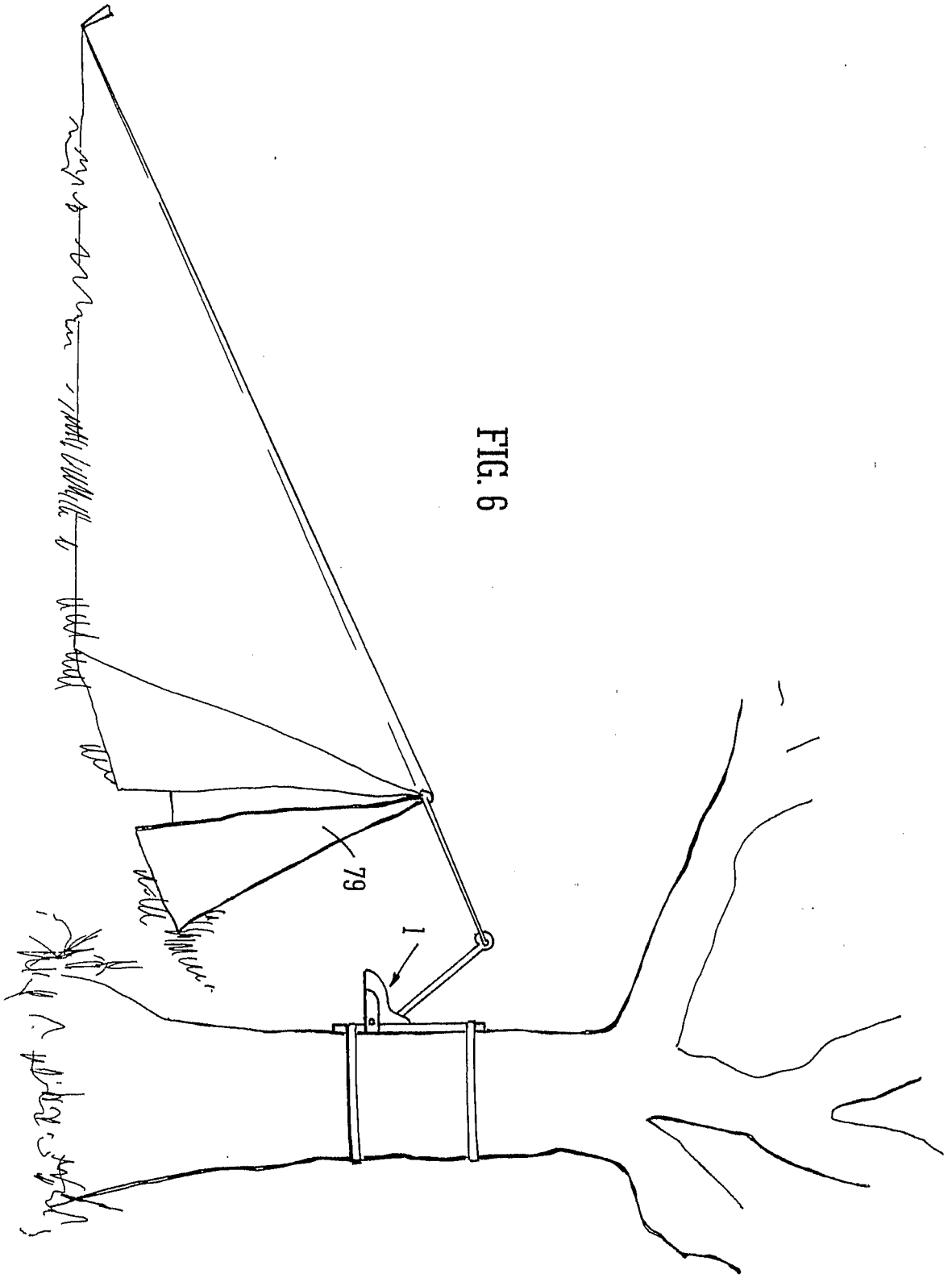


FIG. 5

6/17



7/17

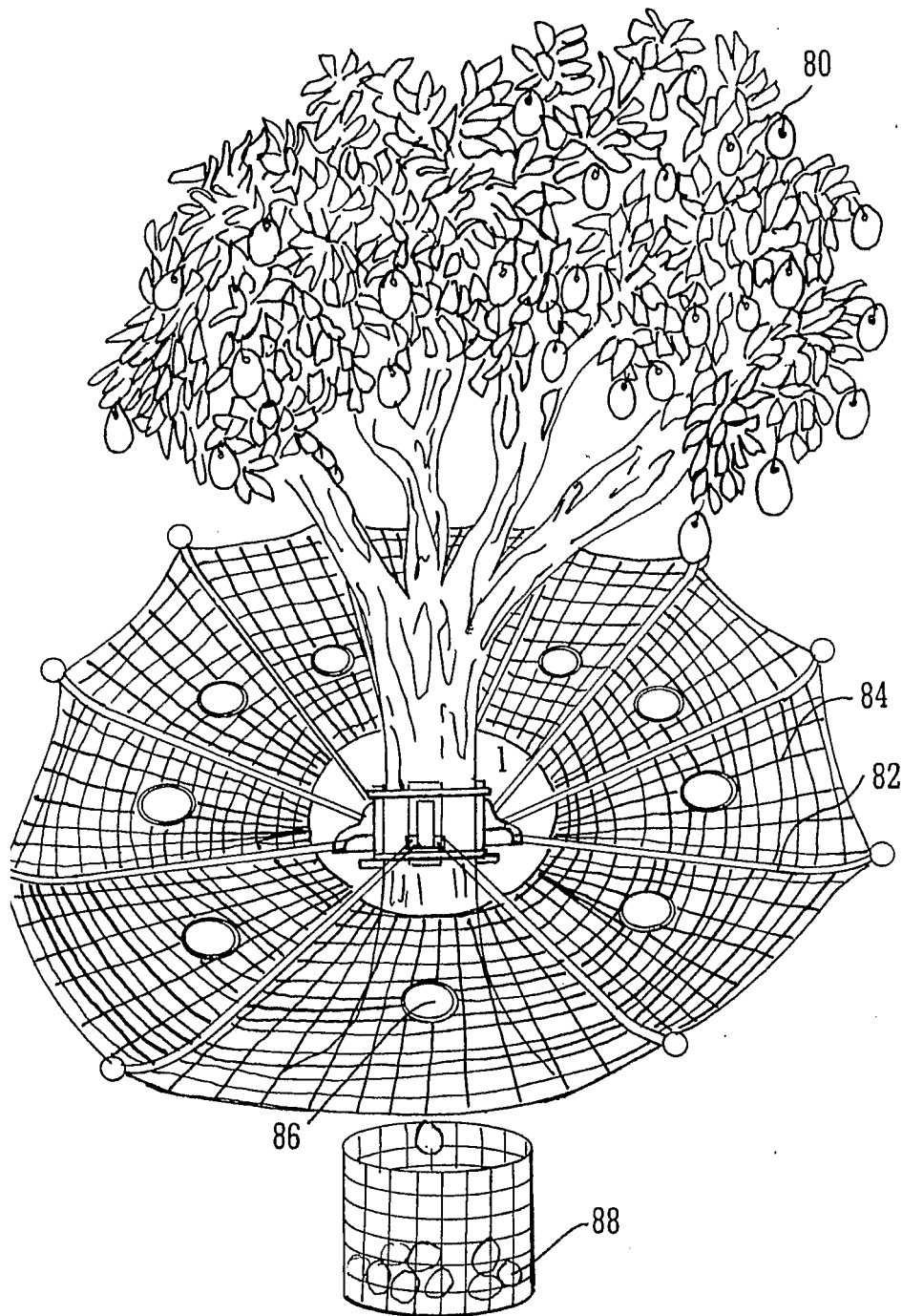


FIG. 7

8/17

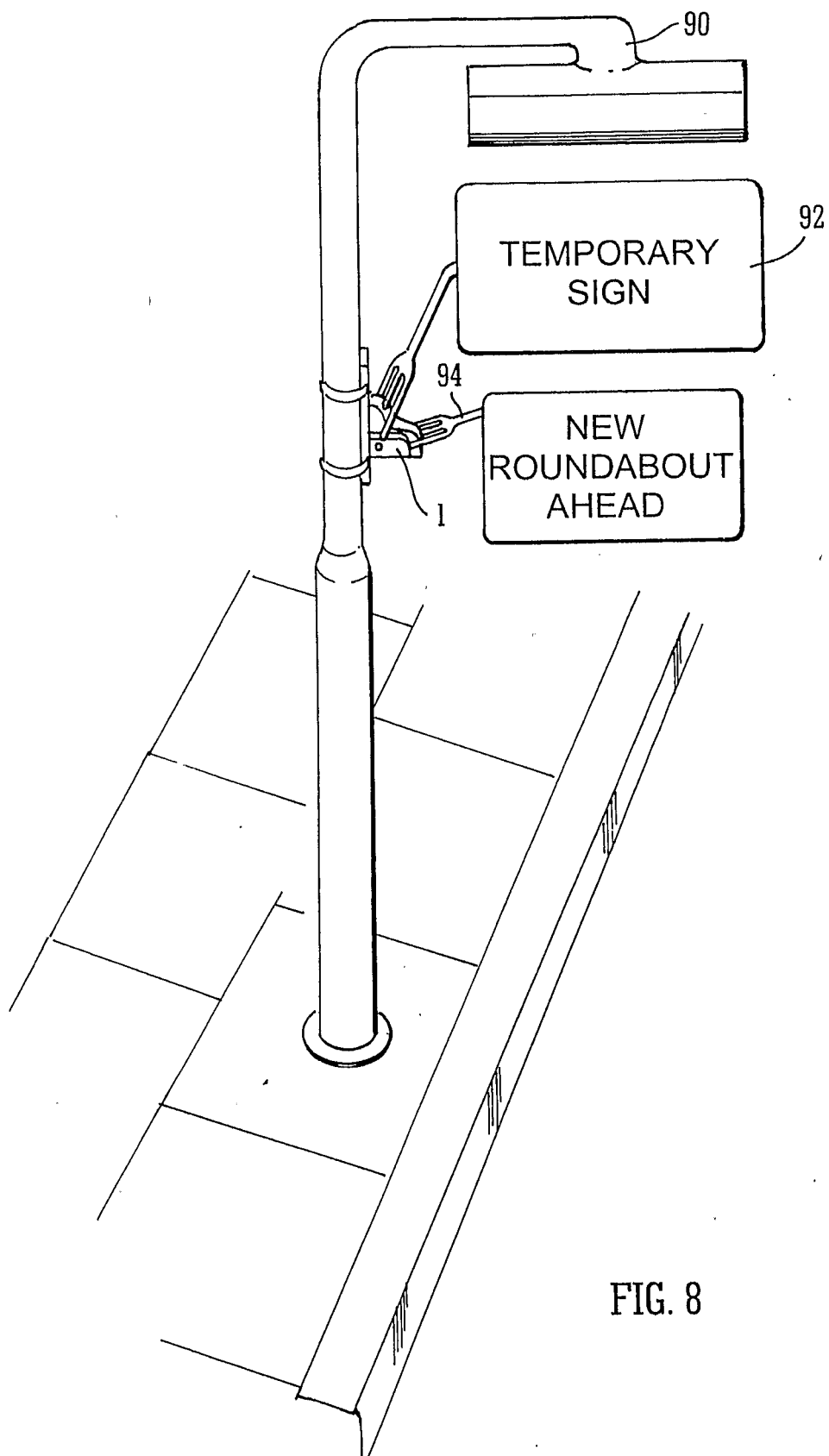


FIG. 8

9/17

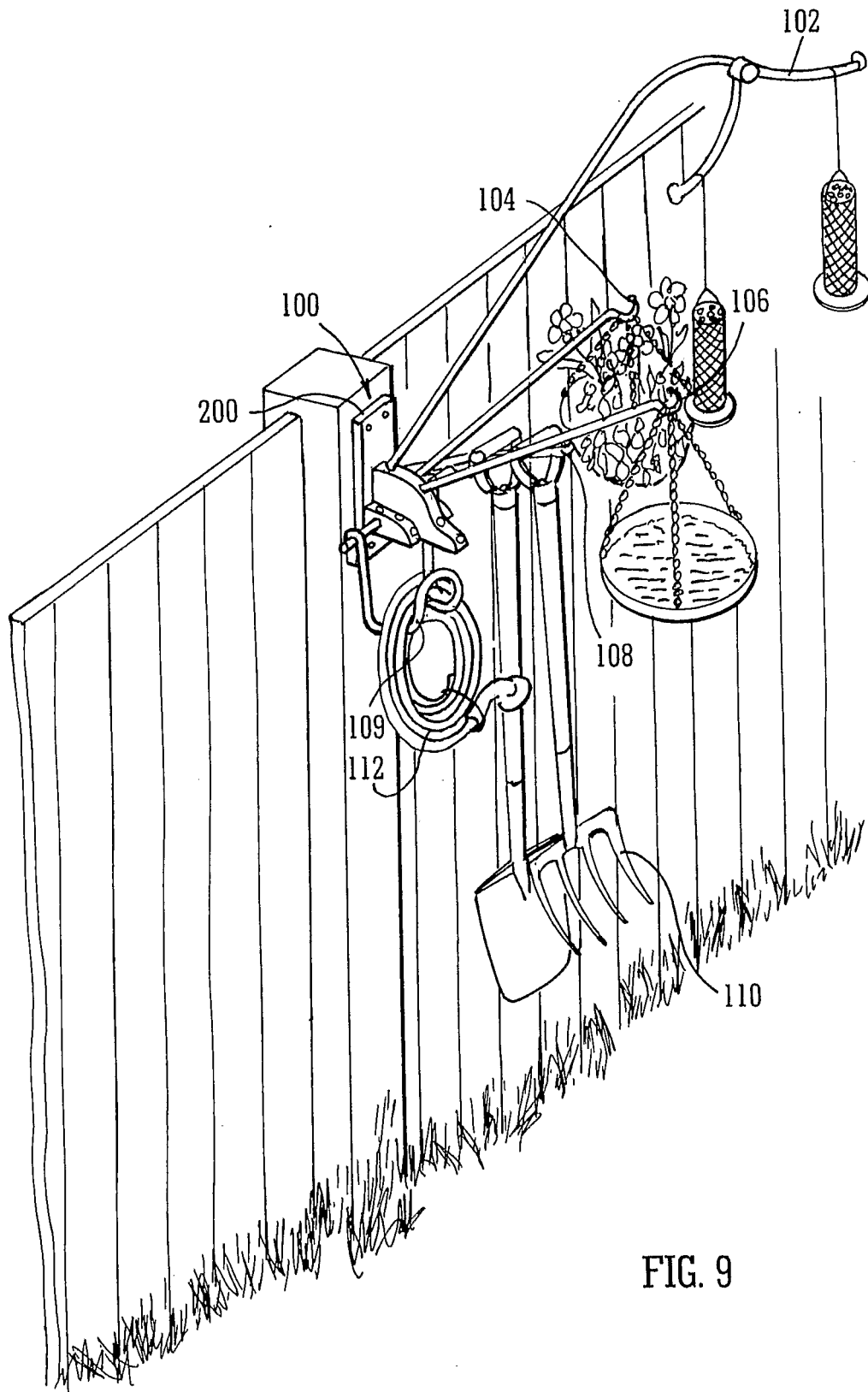


FIG. 9

10/17

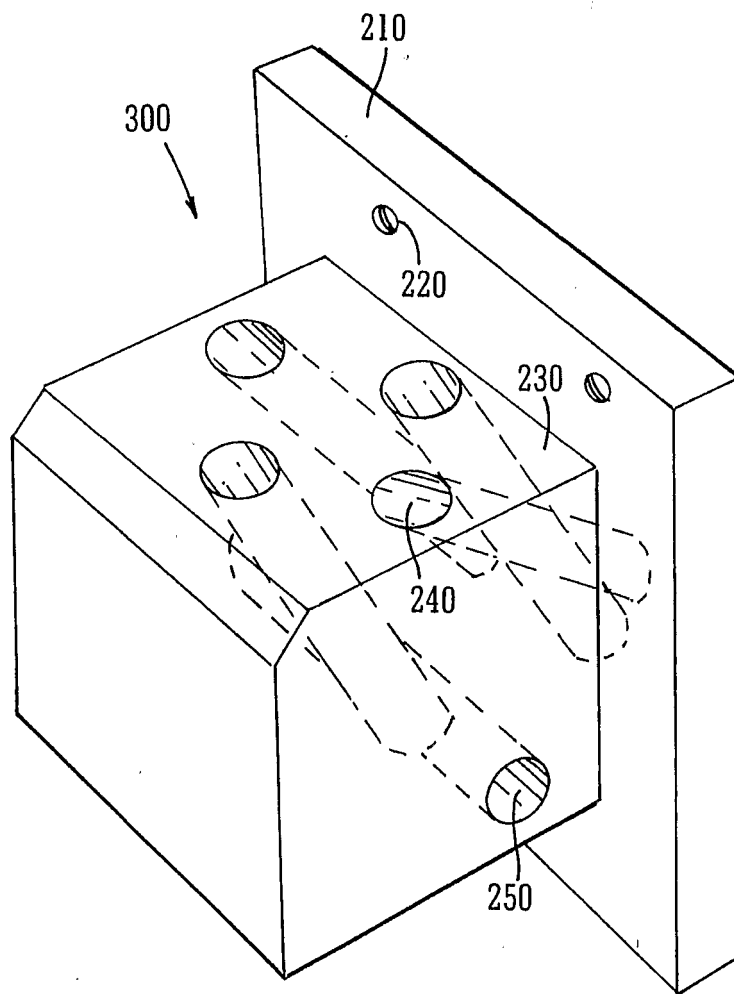


FIG. 10

11/17

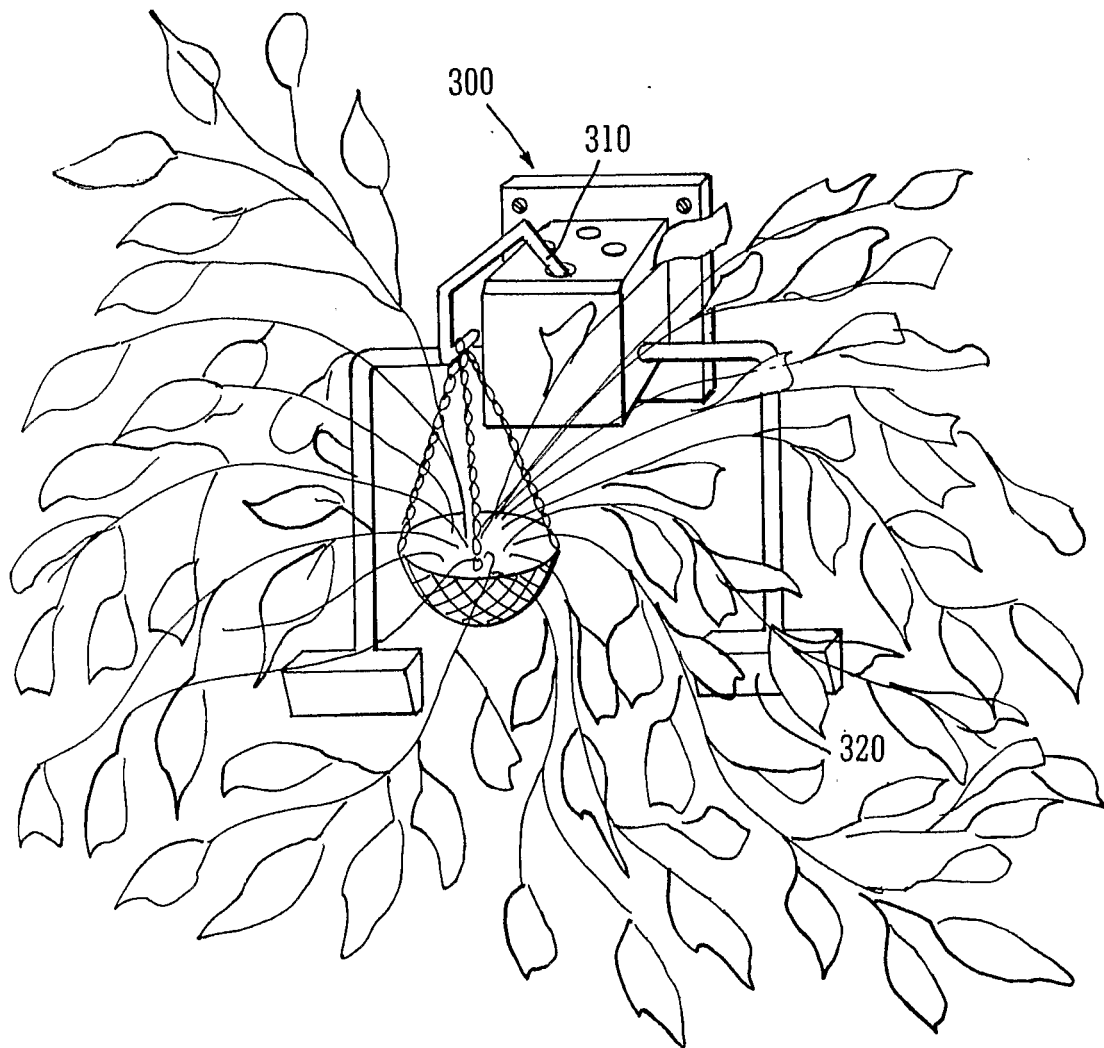


FIG. 11

12/17

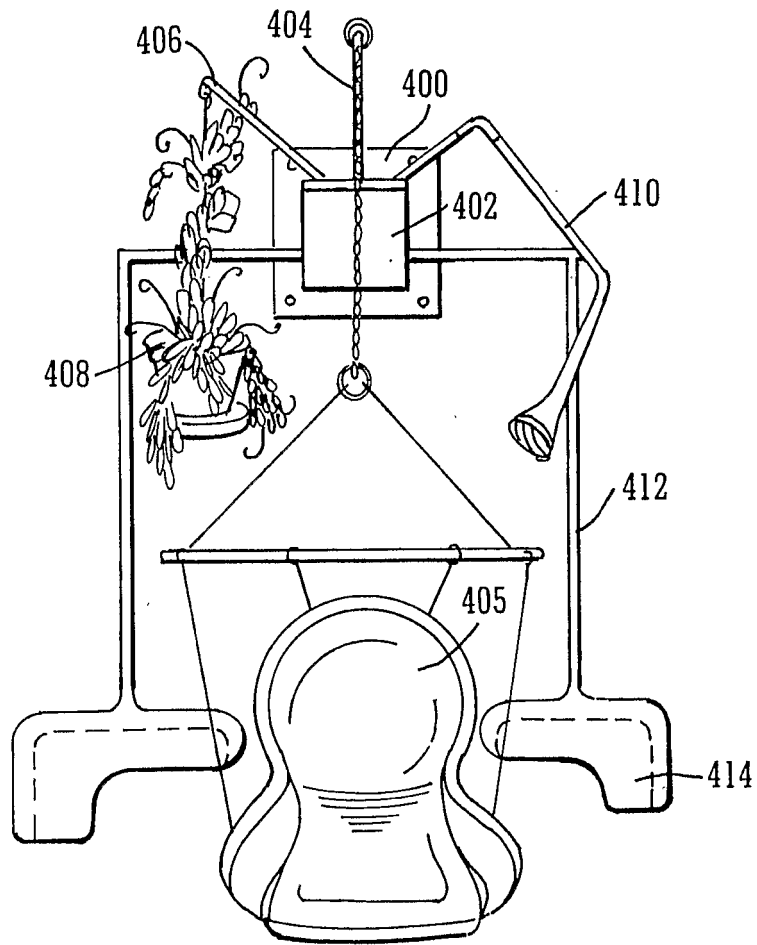


FIG. 12

13/17

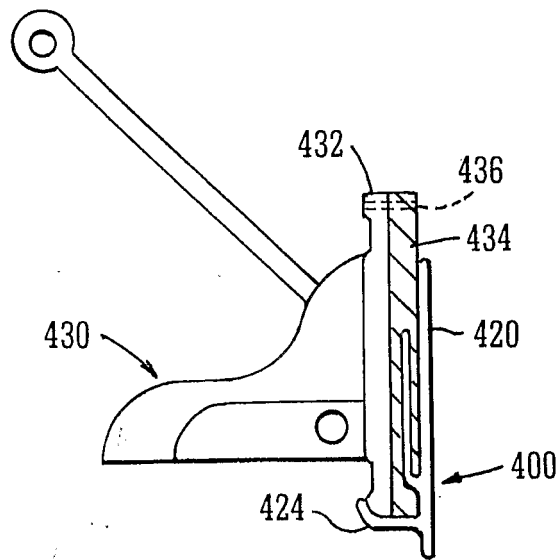


FIG. 13

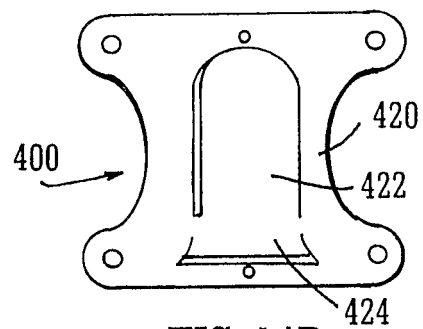


FIG. 14B

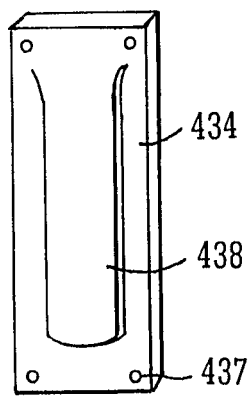


FIG. 14A

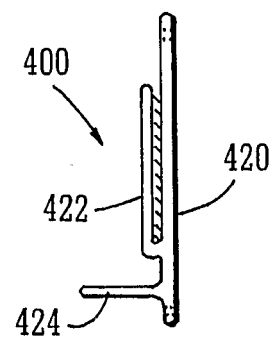


FIG. 14C

14/17

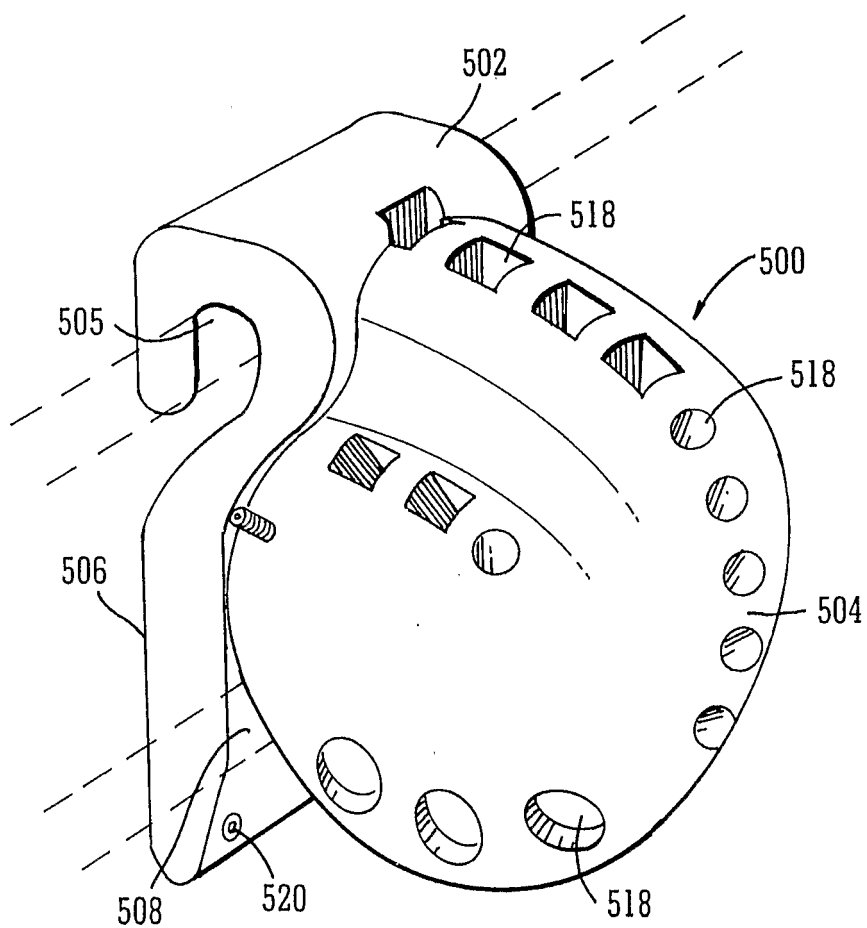


FIG. 15

15/17

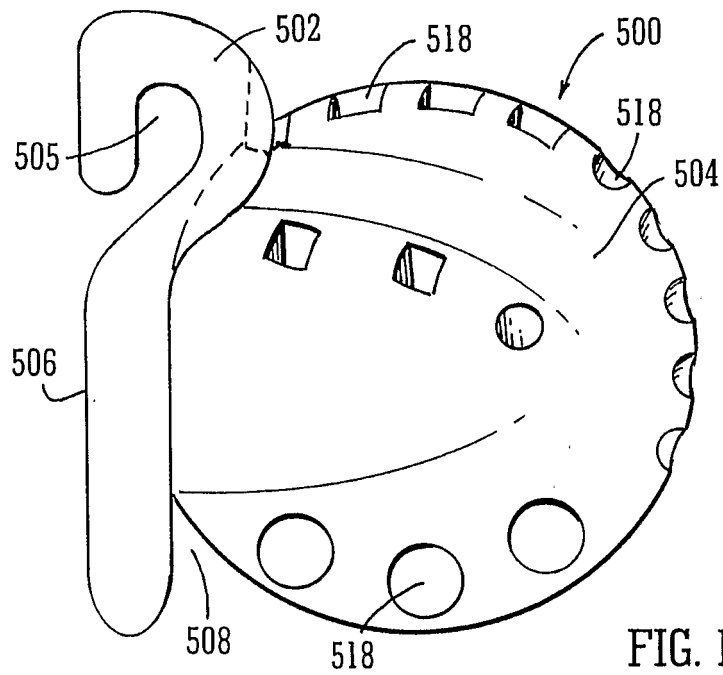


FIG. 16A

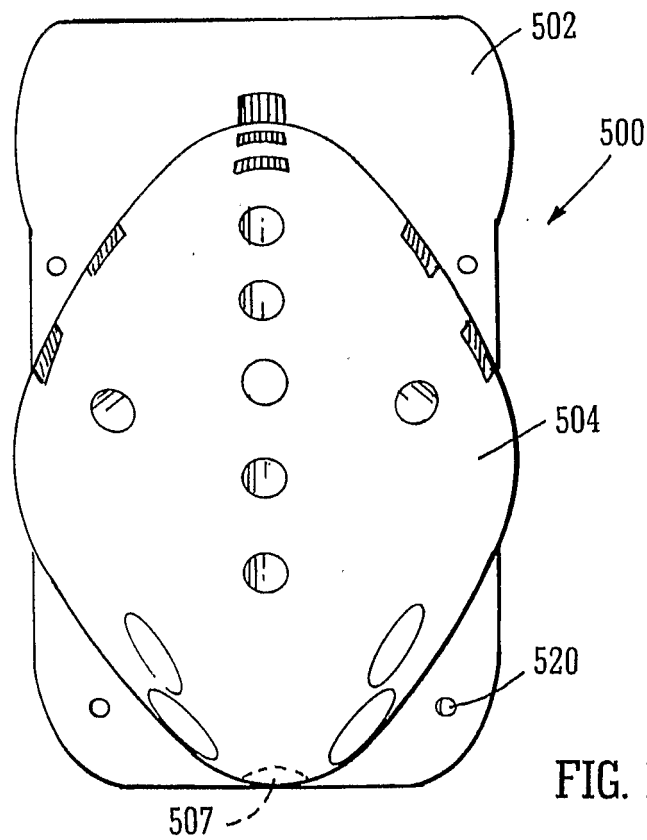


FIG. 16B

17/17

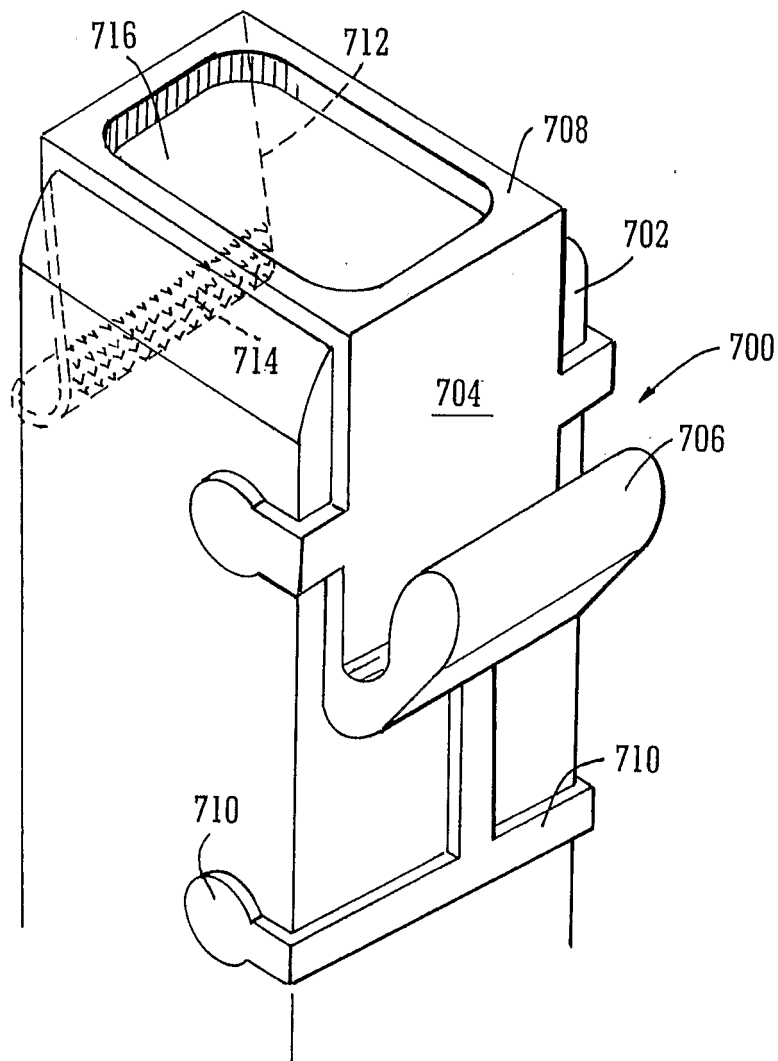


FIG. 19