

No. 643,164.

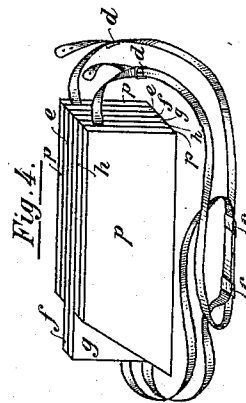
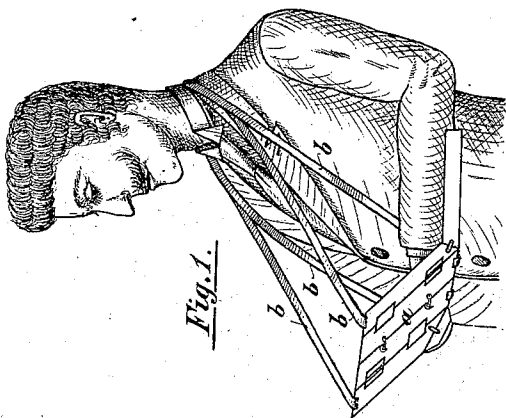
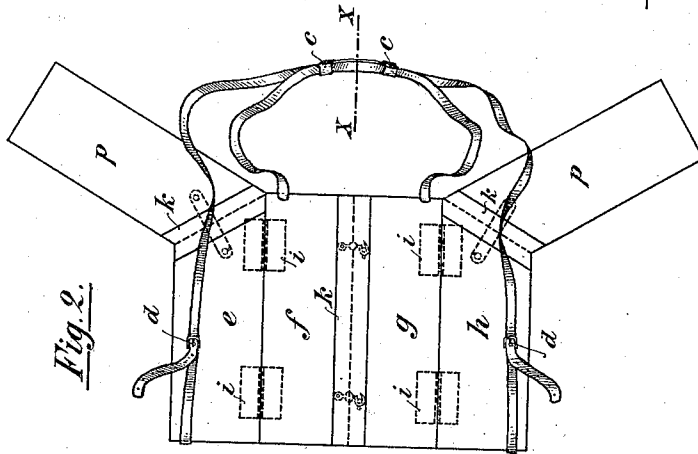
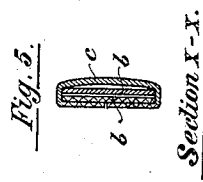
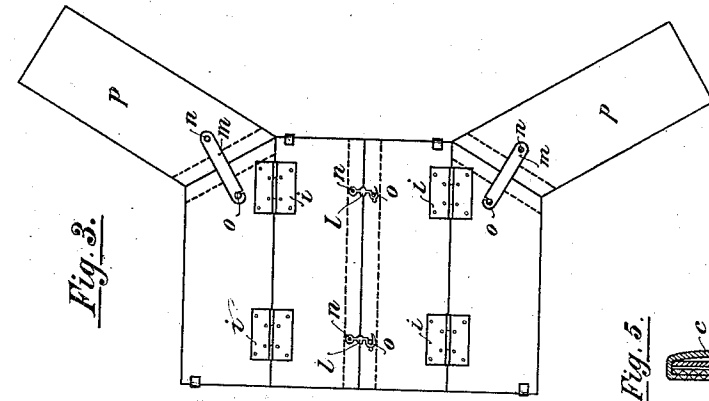
Patented Feb. 13, 1900.

H. SCHNELL.

READING OR WRITING DESK FOR HANGING OVER THE SHOULDERS.

(Application filed May 10, 1899.)

(No Model.)



Witnesses.  
 W. Marsille  
 C. Harpington

Inventor.  
 Heinrich Schnell

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HEINRICH SCHNELL, OF COLOGNE, GERMANY.

READING OR WRITING DESK FOR HANGING OVER THE SHOULDERS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 643,164, dated February 13, 1900.

Application filed May 10, 1899. Serial No. 716,283. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HEINRICH SCHNELL, justiciary, (retired,) a subject of the King of Prussia, Emperor of Germany, and a resident of Cologne, in the Province of Rhineland and Kingdom of Prussia, Germany, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Reading or Writing Desks for Hanging Over the Shoulders, of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

This invention relates to book-rests or desks of that class which are designed to be hung from the shoulders of a person; and it has for its object, among others, to provide an improved device of this character that can be folded into small compass when not in use, easily applied, and provided with an adjustable portion that can be set at the desired angles or inclination with relation to the eyes of the reader or user.

The invention is clearly illustrated in the accompanying drawings, which, with the letters of reference marked thereon, form a part of this specification, and in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing the application of the invention. Fig. 2 is a plan of the support. Fig. 3 is a reverse plan. Fig. 4 shows the support in its folded condition. Fig. 5 is a cross-section on the line  $y y$  of Fig. 2.

Like letters of reference indicate like parts throughout the several views.

The slab  $a$ , which serves as carrier of the actual desk—*i. e.*, of the reading and writing articles—and which is made of a strong and yet thin and light material, can be diagonally hung onto the upper body in front of and away from the same by tapes, straps, belts, and the like, so that it may rest with its front or lower edge against the breast or the waist in such a position as to be adapted for reading or writing—that is to say, across the neck or shoulders, as is represented in Fig. 1 of the drawings. The most practicable of these hanging-on contrivances is a strap, tape, or belt  $b$ , fastened with both ends to one upper and to one lower edge, respectively, of the desk-slab  $a$ , so that it forms a closed tie, whereby, having regard to the position of the slab  $a$  in respect of the body, the lower tie can be somewhat shorter than the upper.

Both ties can be fastened together at their centers—that is to say, where they go around the nape of the neck, for instance, by being sewed onto each other or other means. On the other hand, to make it as yielding as possible against vibration, as in the case of railway journeys, I employ two cross-bands  $c$  to one of the straps at a certain distance from each other, so as to serve as guiding ties or loops, as shown in Fig. 2 and on a larger scale in Fig. 5, and through which the other strap, lying on the first one, passes, so that both straps move across each other without, however, the one being entirely able at its center to separate from the other.

In applying the device all that is necessary is to grasp both ties and lift them over one's head, and then he has at once the desk before him in right position.

In order to regulate the distance of the desk from the eyes according to the bodily structure and visual power of the person, the straps are adjustable by means of belt or strap buckles  $d$  of any construction and at any place along them.

First, as the cord-belt strap is indispensable as a contrivance for hanging on the upper edge of the desk-slab, on account of the intervening space between the upper edge and the body, so, also, does one require some other suitable arrangement for supporting the under edge—such, for example, as a hook in each corner of the desk which can be hooked either in buttonholes in the jacket or waistcoat or directly into the waistcoat-pockets, or the arrangement in each corner of small strings or ribbon loops and the like, which can be hung onto higher-seated buttons. Instead of applying such a contrivance as hook and eye or a tape-made loop to each corner of the under edge of the desk-slab  $a$  it may be found sufficient to supply but a single one to the center.

In cases where the reader utilizes the desk solely in his room, house, courtyard, or garden this form of the invention, as above described, will fully suffice; but for those who desire to use the contrivance outside their own precincts, as in other people's houses, in their walks, and on their travels, this dragging about of a comparatively large desk-slab must prove cumbersome and that form of the invention as delineated in Figs. 2

to 4 must be given preference to. In this structure the desk-slab *d* is constructed of several separate pieces or strips *e f g h*, which can be folded together and in such wise that they are longitudinally fastened side by side to each other by hinges *i* or by pieces of band or leather strips *k*, acting as hinges, in such a manner that these hinges or bands are arranged alternately on the upper and lower surfaces of the desk-slab and so that the entire slab may be put together in a zigzag form. Fig. 4 shows this arrangement in its folded-up condition, whereas Figs. 2 and 3 exhibit the same in opened-out condition as seen from above and below. If after this the bands or straps *d* for hanging on are suitably wound or fastened around the rolled-together desk-slab, the entire forms a narrow parcel of such size as can be comfortably inserted in a coat-pocket. In order that separate parts of the slab *a*, which are fastened by hinges or hinge-acting strips of band, may have the necessary rigidity or stiffness to remain all in one plane when the apparatus is drawn out and that they do not of their own accord close together, especial fixing contrivances in the form of hooks *l* or steel strips *m* and the like are suitably placed on exactly the opposite side of the slab to the hinges at the point of junction of two neighboring parts, which said hooks or strips are so fastened at one end to one piece of the slab by rivets *n* or the like as to be able to turn, while their other ends are provided with a pot-hook or a notch or slit which lays itself over a little button provided with a broad flat head which is seated on the neighboring slab-piece. Of course this fixing can be otherwise carried out, as shown in Figs. 2 to 4. An additional slab *p* for resting the lower arm can be supplied on each side of the same, which, running out from the lower corners of the desk-slab, lays itself against the body. These resting-slabs can form one and the same piece with the desk-slab *a*; but for those slabs which can be laid together and which are made out of several strips it better serves the purpose to make them wing-like, correspondingly foldable, and as a continuance of the outer strips *e* or *h* of the desk-slab by special rivets or band-strips, and to make them fixable by means of hooks *l* or steel strips or sliding keep-

ers *m*, as is also represented in Fig. 4. In order to be able to append these wings *p* in the desired manner, it is advisable, as the drawings show, to give the lower corners above the outer slab-pieces *e* and *h* a beveled edge, so that the place of junction or seam between *e* or *h* and *p* runs diagonally. Of course should it be deemed necessary a hanging-on contrivance or tie running upward can be affixed to the outer ends of the arm-rests or wings *p*.

The apparatus can be constructed in any shape or size and of any suitable material, as wood, pasteboard, leather, sheet metal, and so on.

What I claim as new is—

1. A reading or writing desk consisting of a slab provided with a supporting device adapted to go around the neck of the wearer, and diagonally-disposed extensions hinged to the outer corners of the slab at the end adjacent to the body of the wearer to form supports for the arms, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

2. A reading and writing desk consisting of a supporting-slab in foldable sections with folding diagonal extensions hinged to the corners of the slab to form supports for the arms, and a neck-strap, as set forth.

3. A reading and writing desk consisting of a foldable slab with hinged side pieces and hinged extensions extending from the inner ends of the side pieces to form supports for the arms, means for holding the same in its distended position, and a neck-strap, substantially as described.

4. A reading and writing desk consisting of a support in hinged sections, diagonal lateral extensions hinged to the slab, means for holding the parts rigid in their extended position, pivoted bars for bridging the joint between the slab and the extensions for supporting the latter in their extended position, and a neck-strap secured to the slab, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my invention I have signed my name in presence of two subscribing witnesses.

HEINRICH SCHNELL.

Witnesses:

W. MARSEILLE,  
WILLIAM H. MADDEN.