May 17, 1927. 1,629,371

D. F. YOUNGBLOOD

OBSERVATION AND COMMUNICATION PERMITTING DEVICE FOR JAILS, ETC

Filed Aug. 4, 1926 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

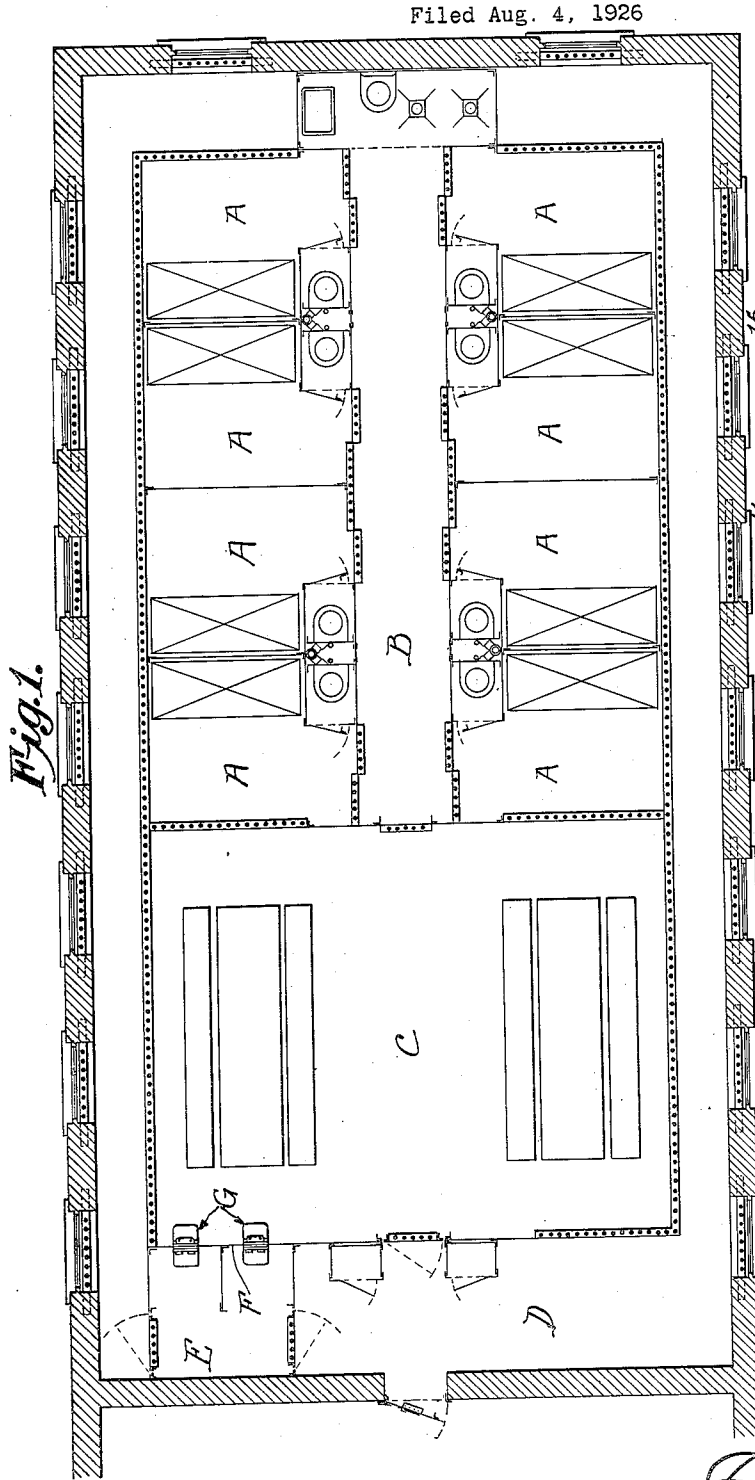


Fig. 1.

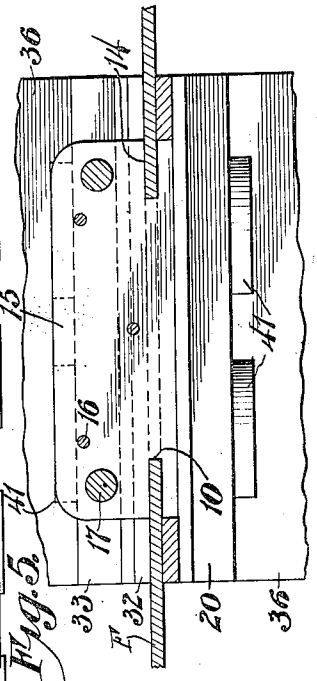


Fig. 3.

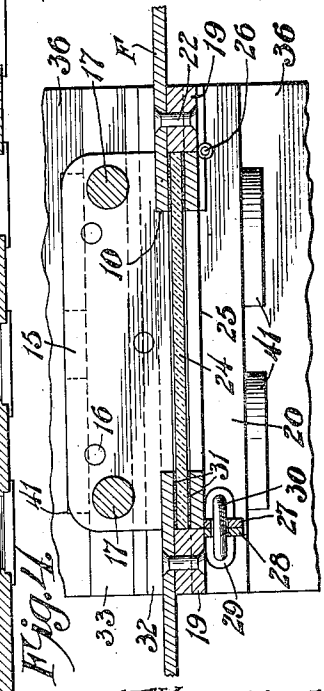


Fig. 4.

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Fig. 3.

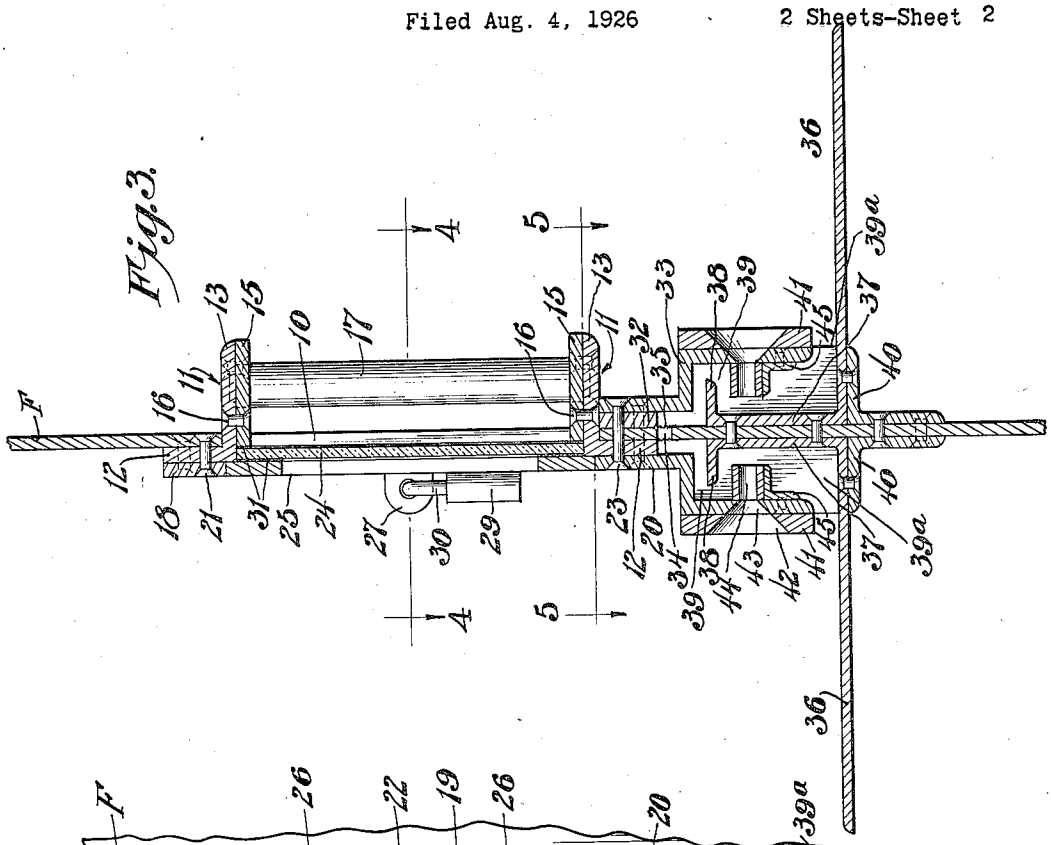
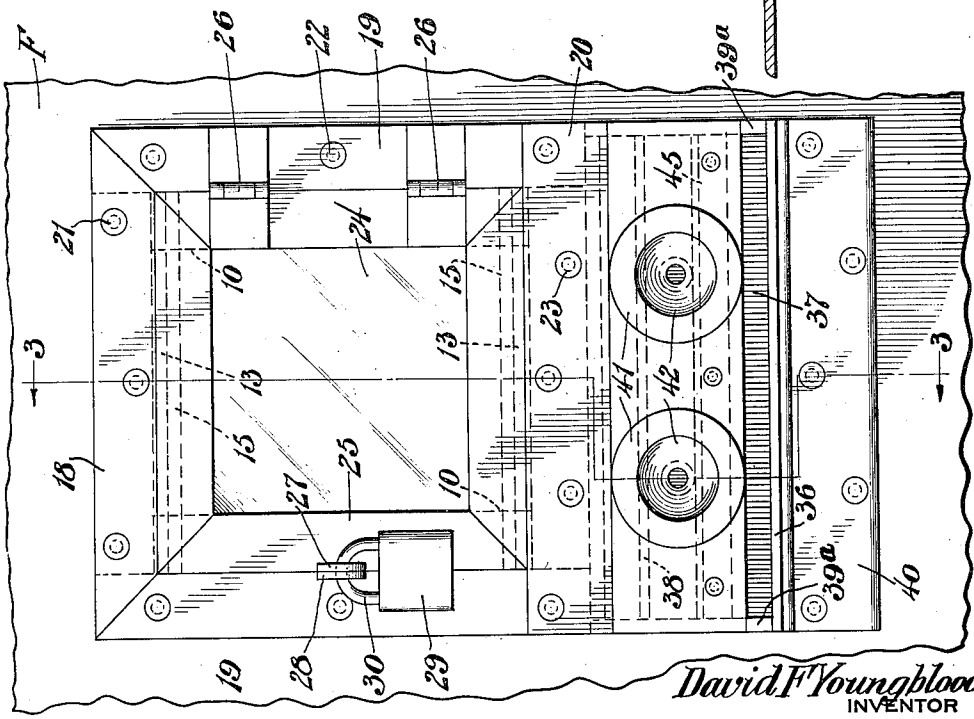


Fig. 2.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

DAVID FRANKLIN YOUNGBLOOD, OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

OBSERVATION AND COMMUNICATION PERMITTING DEVICE FOR JAILS, ETC.

Application filed August 4, 1926. Serial No. 127,137.

This invention relates to devices used in and forming a part of a building where persons are confined for some reason or other, and has special reference to a combination observation window and means of communication between visitors and the inmates.

In institutions such as asylums, jails, prisons, etc. it is necessary that a safe means of communication be provided whereby attorneys, friends, relatives, newspaper men, officials and the public in general may visit the inmates and converse with them in a confidential manner without disturbing other occupants and yet in such a way as to maintain absolute security of inmates and at the same time prevent visitors from passing to them such articles as firearms, tools, poisons, narcotics, liquor, secret messages, etc. It is also sometimes necessary that visitors be separated from the inmates to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

I am aware that devices have been designed for this general purpose but such present structures are open to serious criticism inasmuch as they readily accumulate dust, dirt and trash and are of such construction that articles which the visitors may attempt to pass through to the inmates fall into the bottom of the device where they remain until the entire device is cut out, cleaned and replaced.

It is with the above facts in view that I have designed the present invention which has for its principal object the provision of a device which I have chosen to designate by the coined descriptive word "visaphone" and which fulfills all the purposes set forth above, in that it permits communication between visitors and inmates of an institution and at the same time allows the parties to see each other while positively preventing the passing in of any prohibited articles, in addition to insuring physical separation, so that there would be no likelihood of the spread of contagious diseases in case there is any danger of such.

Another object of the invention is to provide a device or structure of this character embodying a combined sounding board and writing table at each side of the partition or wall where the device is mounted, the sounding board feature insuring ease in communication and the table being desirable as it permits the taking of notes, dictation and the like.

A more specific object is to provide a device of this character embodying a glass panel or pane permitting the visitor and inmate to see each other, the glass being so mounted as to be readily capable of replacement in case it becomes broken from any cause.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a device of this character in which certain of the structural elements are interlocked with the steel wall or partition in which the device is located, the interlocking feature preventing tearing out of the structure even though the securing rivets themselves might be removed.

Another object is the provision of a structure of this character so arranged that any articles which the visitor or inmate may attempt to pass will drop out at the side from which they were inserted, it being therefore manifestly impossible for the device to clog or become choked with such matter.

An additional object is to provide a device of this character which will be comparatively simple and inexpensive to manufacture and install, easy to keep in repair, positive in action, efficient and durable in service, and a general improvement in the art.

With the above and other objects and advantages in view, the invention preferably consists in the arrangement and combination of parts and detailed structural features to be hereinafter more fully described and claimed, and illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which:—

Figure 1 is a floor plan of a jail or the like showing a convenient location of the parts thereof and illustrating a visitor's booth where the device forming the subject matter of the invention is located.

Figure 2 is an elevation of the device looking at it from the visitor's side.

Figure 3 is a vertical cross section taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 2.

Figure 4 is a cross sectional view taken on the line 4—4 of Figure 3, looking downwardly.

Figure 5 is a cross sectional view on the line 5—5 of Figure 3, looking downwardly.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, and especially Figure 1, it will be seen that I have disclosed a jail here represented as including a plurality of cells A opening out onto a corridor B which, in turn, leads

into an assembly room C within which the inmates may congregate at certain periods, and into which they are brought when permitted to receive visitors. The letter D designates the entrance hall in which or adjacent which is provided a booth E for visitors, the booth in the present instance being shown as double, though it should be distinctly understood that it may be formed to accommodate a fewer or greater number of persons, if desired. The device, which I call a "visaphone" and which forms the subject matter of the present invention is located in the booth E or, rather, in the wall F between this booth and the assembly room C, and is designated in general by the letter G.

In carrying out the invention, the wall F is formed with a preferably rectangular opening 10 of suitable size, and within the top and bottom of this opening are angle bars 11 arranged with their vertical flanges 12 secured against the outside of the wall or the side toward the booth, and with their horizontal flanges 13 extending beyond the other side of the wall. The horizontal flanges are slotted at 14 so as to interlock with the wall F at the side edges of the opening 10 therein, for a reason to be explained. Obviously, to effect installation, the angle bars must be canted or tilted to get them into place, but this is a mere detail in the actual building operation. Disposed against the under and upper surfaces of the horizontal flanges of the upper and lower angle bars 11, respectively, are strips or battens 15 suitably secured to the angle bars as by rivets 16 or the like. Extending between the angle bars and battens or strips are vertically arranged bars 17 which extend through suitable holes and which are upset at their ends, riveted or otherwise secured in place.

Located at the front or booth side of the wall is a frame which may include an upper strip 18 secured against the outer face of the vertical flange 12 of the upper angle bar 11, vertically arranged strips 19 of greater thickness disposed against the outer face of the wall, and a Z-bar 20 secured against the outer face of the vertical flange 12 of the lower angle bar 11. While it is conceivable that the elements 12 and 18 may be welded together and to the wall, I have shown rivets 21 for effecting the securing action, these rivets passing through the wall and through these members. Similarly, the vertical strips 19 may be held in place by rivets 22. The securing means for the Z-bar 20 may consist of rivets 23. However, these are mere structural details which may readily be varied within the scope of the invention.

The battens or strips 15 have their forward edges terminating flush with the outer or booth side of the wall F so as to constitute abutment means for a glass panel 24, which also abuts against the face of the wall at the sides of the opening 10 therein. This glass panel is itself preferably unprovided with any securing means, as it is held in place by a preferably rectangular open frame 25 which fits within the stationary frame formed by the parts 18, 19 and 20, and which is hinged at 26 upon one of the members 19. This hinged frame is shown as carrying an apertured ear 27 registering with a similar ear 28 on the other upright member 19, a suitable padlock 29 having its shackle 30 engaged through these ears for the purpose of holding the frame 25 in its glass retaining position. The advantage of this particular construction is that if the glass panel becomes broken from any cause, it may be easily replaced by another. It is preferable that felt or other cushioning material 31 be provided at the areas of contact of the metal parts with the glass panel.

Disposed at the inner side of the wall F immediately beneath the lower angle bar 11 is a filler member or strip 32 against which, in turn, is located a Z-bar 33 which is preferably of the same shape as the Z-bar 20. The above described rivets 23 operate to hold both Z-bars, the filler member 32 and the lower angle bar 11 in proper position or assembled relation. Below the filler 32 the wall is provided with an opening 34 covered by wire screens 35.

Located at opposite sides of the wall F in slightly spaced relation to the lower edges of the Z-bars 20 and 33 are angular plate members 36 which are horizontally arranged and which serve not only as writing tables but also as sounding boards. These angular plate members have vertical portions 37 riveted or otherwise suitably secured to the wall, and these vertical portions terminate in horizontal flanges 38 which extend away from the wall and which constitute baffles. The flanges are spaced from the Z-bars as clearly illustrated in Figure 3 so as to leave sound passages 39 which communicate with the opening 34, said passages 39 being closed at the ends by walls or plates 39a as clearly shown in Figures 2 and 3. It is preferable to provide angle bars 40, which are riveted or otherwise secured to the wall and to the undersides of the members 36 for reinforcing purposes.

Mouth piece members 41 are mounted on the lower portions of the Z-bars 20 and 33 and have flaring openings 42 therein forming a continuation of similarly flaring openings 43 in the Z-bars. Tubular members 44, held by brackets 45, are mounted on the inner sides of the Z-bars at the openings 43 and extend toward the vertical portions 37

of the combined table and sounding board members, though terminating in spaced relation thereto.

In the use of the device, it will be seen that a visitor within the booth E may converse with an inmate and at the same time, both will be clearly visible to each other owing to the provision of the glass panel. The mouth piece structure provides ample means for communication as sound waves may pass through the mouth pieces, tubular members 44, passages 39 and opening 34. The small spaces between the lower edges of the Z-bars and the table members 36 will also permit passage of sound. The members 36 serve not only as writing tables, but act as sounding boards so as to insure a sufficient volume of sound to be readily intelligible or audible. However, it will be observed that the tubular members 44 and baffle flanges 38 make the sound passages of such serpentine form that it is manifestly impossible for any articles whatsoever to be passed between the visitor and the inmate. If any attempt is made to insert an object through the mouth piece structure, it will drop down onto the member 36 at the opening between the latter and the lower edge of the Z-bar at the same side of the wall from which insertion is attempted. It will therefore be impossible for any matter to accumulate within the device and choke it up. In describing the angle bars 11, it was specified that the horizontal flanges thereof are preferably slotted or notched to interlock with the wall at the edges of the opening. The reason for this is that even though the rivets holding the angle bars in place were removed, it would still be impossible to withdraw the angle bars. It is consequently clear that the most strenuous efforts to defeat the purpose of the device will be fruitless. It is mentioned above that a broken glass panel may be easily taken out and replaced by a new one, and it is obvious that if a replacement part is unavailable a metal plate may be substituted, at least temporarily.

From the foregoing description and a study of the drawings it will be apparent that I have thus provided a combination device which is novel and highly useful in that it readily provides means whereby parties may see each other while engaged in conversation in addition to providing convenient means for supporting a note book or paper for writing, taking notes or dictation, etc., and which is proof against escape of inmates and also illicit traffic in and passage of forbidden articles therethrough.

While I have shown and described a preferred embodiment of the invention, it should be understood that I reserve the right to make such changes in the form, construction and arrangement of parts as will not depart from the spirit of the invention or the scope of the subjoined claims.

What is claimed is:—

1. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, angle bars secured within the opening at the top and bottom thereof, vertical bars extending between and secured to said angle bars, a glass panel covering said opening, means for securing said glass panel in position, and means associated with the bottom angle bar and defining serpentine sound conducting passages for permitting communication through said wall.

2. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, angle bars secured to the wall at the top and bottom of the opening and extending through the opening, vertical bars located between and secured to said angle bars, a stationary frame secured upon one side of the wall, a glass panel covering said opening, abutment means engaged by one side of the glass panel, and a movably mounted frame carried by said stationary frame and abuttingly engaging against the other side of the glass panel for maintaining the same in position.

3. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, angle bars secured to the wall at the top and bottom of the opening and extending through the opening, vertical bars located between and secured to said angle bars, a stationary frame secured upon one side of the wall, a glass panel covering said opening, abutment means engaged by one side of the glass panel, and a movably mounted frame carried by said stationary frame and abuttingly engaging against the other side of the glass panel for maintaining the same in position, the movable frame being hinged upon the stationary frame and equipped with locking means.

4. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, angle bars secured to the wall at the top and bottom of the opening and extending through the opening, vertical bars located between and secured to said angle bars, a stationary frame secured upon one side of the wall, a glass panel covering said opening, abutment means engaged by one side of the glass panel, and a movably mounted frame carried by said stationary frame and abuttingly engaging against the other side of the glass panel for maintaining the same in position, said stationary frame including a Z-bar having openings therein, a Z-bar secured upon the wall at the side opposite said first named Z-bar and provided with openings, the wall having a hole therein permitting passage of sound, and said Z-bars defining passages leading to said hole.

5. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, angle bars

secured to the wall at the top and bottom of the opening and extending through the opening, vertical bars located between and secured to said angle bars, a stationary frame secured upon one side of the wall, a glass panel covering said opening, abutment means engaged by one side of the glass panel, and a movably mounted frame carried by said stationary frame and abuttingly engaging against the other side of the glass panel for maintaining the same in position, said stationary frame including a Z-bar having openings therein, a Z-bar secured upon the wall at the side opposite said first named Z-bar and provided with openings, the wall having a hole therein permitting passage of sound, and said Z-bars defining passages leading to said hole, and means within said passages acting as baffles to prevent passage of articles therethrough.

6. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, angle bars located within the opening at the top and bottom thereof, said angle bars having vertical flanges disposed against one side of the wall and having horizontal flanges extending through the opening, the horizontal flanges having their ends slotted and interlockingly receiving the wall at the side edges of the opening, and spaced vertical bars located between and secured to the horizontal flanges of the angle bars.

7. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, angle bars secured to the wall at the top and bottom of the opening and having horizontal flanges extending through the opening, strip members secured to the confronting faces of the angle bars and terminating flush with one face of the wall, a transparent panel covering the opening and abutting against said strip members and against the wall at the sides of the opening therein, and a hingedly mounted open frame abutting against the other side of the glass panel for retaining the same in position.

8. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, a transparent panel covering said opening for permitting vision through the wall, Z-bars secured upon opposite sides of the wall beneath said opening and forming a portion of the frame about the same, said Z-bars having openings therethrough, said wall having a hole therein within the confines of the Z-bars, members secured to said wall and cooperating with the Z-bars to define passages leading from the openings in the Z-bars to the hole in the wall to permit the passage of sound from one side of the wall to the other.

9. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, a transparent panel covering said opening for permitting vision through the wall, Z-bars secured upon opposite sides of the wall beneath said opening, the wall having a hole therein within the confines of the Z-bars, said Z-bars having openings therethrough and defining passages leading from said openings to the hole in the wall, members having vertical portions secured to opposite sides of the wall within the confines of the Z-bars and terminating in horizontal flanges projecting away from the wall, and tubular members within the Z-bars and leading from the openings in the Z-bars and cooperating with said flanges to render said passages serpentine in form.

10. In a device of the character described, a wall having an opening therein, bar elements secured to the wall at the upper and lower edges of the opening, spaced vertical bars secured to said first-mentioned bars, a stationary frame secured upon one side of the wall and including an angular bar member, a transparent panel covering said opening, means within said frame for holding said panel in position, an angular bar member secured upon the opposite side of the wall, means secured to the wall and overhanging said angular bar members in spaced relation thereto and provided with mouth pieces, said overhanging means cooperating with said angular bar members to define serpentine passages, and said wall having a hole therethrough connecting said passages, so as to permit passage of sound from one mouth piece to the other.

In testimony, that I claim the foregoing as my own, I have hereto affixed my signature.

DAVID FRANKLIN YOUNGBLOOD.