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England

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[54] **LOCKING DEVICE FOR A MULTI-DRAWER CABINET**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **312/216**

[51] **Int. Cl.²** **E05B 65/46**

[58] **Field of Search** 312/216, 222

[56] **References Cited**

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A locking device for a multi-drawer cabinet with a structural frame mounting a plurality of movable drawers, the locking device having a mounting plate attachable to a part of the structural frame laterally of the drawers, a locking bar pivotally mounted to said mounting plate for movement between an inactive position, clear of the path of movement of the drawers, and a locking position, obstructing the opening movement of the drawers, and coacting means on the mounting plate and locking bar for holding the locking bar in drawer-locking position.

3 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures

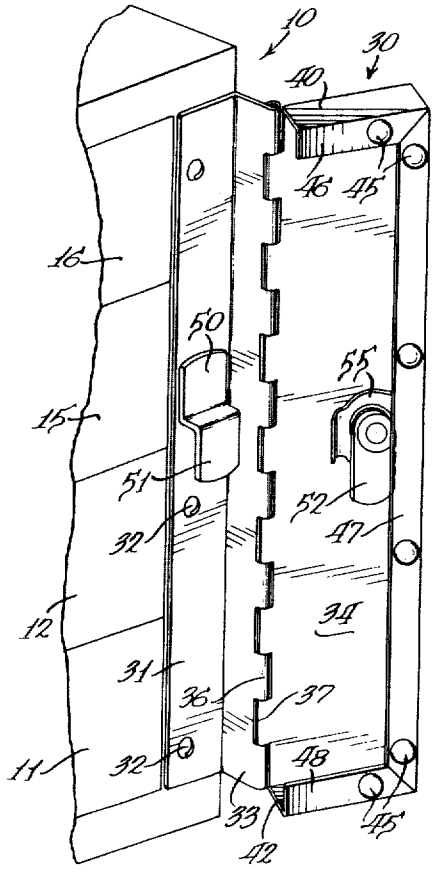


Fig. 1.

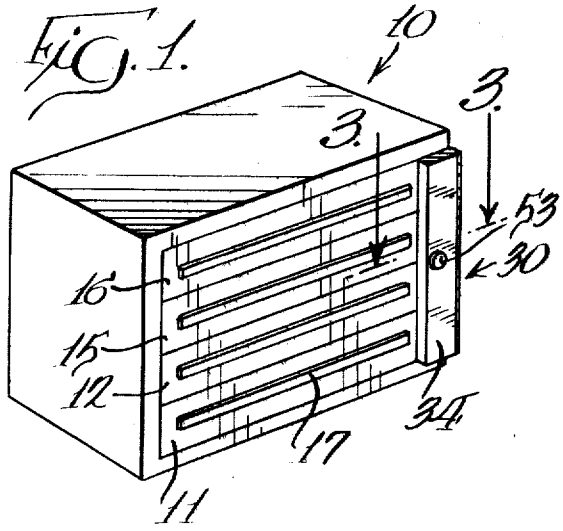


Fig. 2.

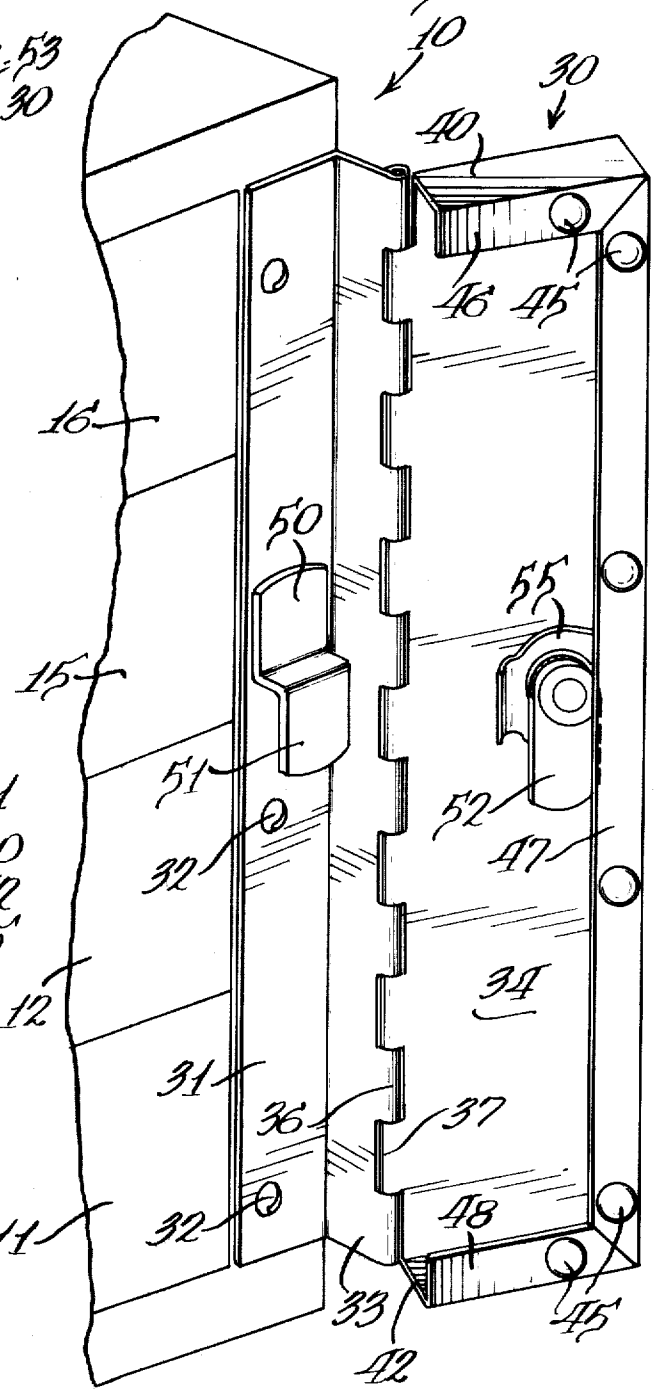
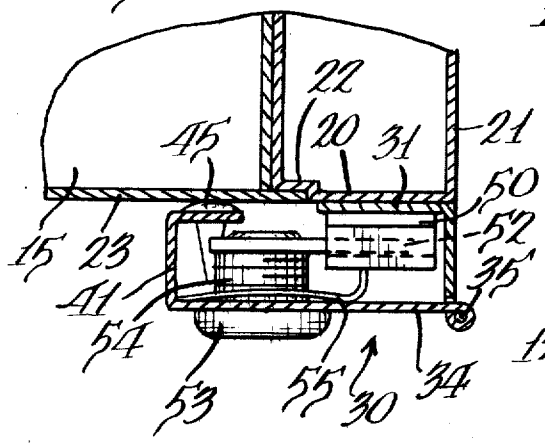


Fig. 3.



LOCKING DEVICE FOR A MULTI-DRAWER CABINET

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention pertains to a locking device for a multi-drawer cabinet wherein a single locking device may lock a plurality of drawers of varying sizes and by means of attachable structure which may be permanently affixed to the cabinet. With the drawers of the cabinet used for storage of valuable material, the locking device provides a visually obvious indication as to the locked or unlocked condition of the drawers.

Conventionally, cabinets having drawers to be locked are provided with an internal lock system operable by a key member associated with one of the drawers or with each drawer having a key-operated lock. Additionally, file cabinets have been locked by the use of a removable bar or strap which may be inserted into a retainer and placed in obstructing relation with the drawers to prevent opening thereof. The utilization of a lock with each drawer or internal lock structure for a plurality of drawers is a relatively expensive locking system for the drawers and the use of separate elements to be inserted for locking of the drawers is a cumbersome operation.

SUMMARY

A primary feature of the invention disclosed herein is to provide a locking device for a multi-drawer cabinet capable of locking multiple drawers of either uniform or differing sizes and which is available as an attachment and, therefore, can be added to the cabinet at any time if it is desired to lock the drawers of the cabinet.

Another feature of the invention is to provide a locking device as defined in the preceding paragraph wherein the locking device is in the form of an attachment which can be secured to a part of the cabinet structural frame disposed laterally of the drawers and has a locking bar pivotally mounted for movement between an inactive position, out of the path of the drawers, wherein the unlocked condition of the drawers is visually obvious and which may be moved to a locking position in the path of the drawers to prevent opening thereof. Key-operated lock structure includes coacting elements which are inaccessible when the locking device is in locked position.

More specifically, the locking device includes a mounting plate which may be easily installed on a part of the cabinet structural frame laterally adjacent the drawers and a locking bar extending for the height of the drawers to be locked and pivotally mounted to the mounting plate for pivotal movement between the inactive position and a drawer-locking position wherein the locking bar is positioned in front of the drawers and with the mounting plate and locking bar having coacting lock elements. The mounting plate and the coacting lock elements are enclosed within the locking device by a series of flanges carried by the locking bar which coact with a flange on the mounting plate and to which the locking bar is pivoted to define a closure preventing access to the interior thereof. The series of flanges carry plastic buttons positioned for engagement with the fronts of the drawers to prevent movement of the drawers and without damage to the drawer fronts.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. **1** is a perspective front elevational view of a multi-drawer cabinet showing the locking device in association therewith and in locked position;

FIG. **2** is a fragmentary front elevational view of the cabinet shown in FIG. **1** on an enlarged scale and with the locking device shown in open inactive position; and

FIG. **3** is a plan section taken generally along the line **3—3** in FIG. **1** and on an enlarged scale.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The multi-drawer cabinet is indicated generally at **10** and has a structural frame mounting a vertically-disposed series of linearly movable drawers **11, 12, 15** and **16** for movement outwardly of the cabinet for access to the interior thereof and with each of the drawers having a handle member, such as member **17** for drawer **11**, to facilitate opening movement thereof. The drawers may be of uniform height or, as shown in FIG. **1**, are of varying height.

A portion of the drawer **15** is shown in FIG. **3** in association with a front corner of the supporting frame including a vertical panel **20** of a side wall **21.** The vertical panel **20** is provided with a slight offset **22** whereby a front panel **23** of the drawer **15** may fit flush with the front face of the vertical panel **20** of the structural frame.

The locking device is indicated generally at **30** and has a mounting plate **31** having a width generally corresponding to that of the vertical panel **20** of the structural frame for flush engagement thereagainst and for attachment thereto, as by a series of fastening elements **32.** A flange **33** extends outwardly at a right angle from the mounting plate **31** and pivotally mounts a locking bar **34** to the mounting plate **31.** The pivotal mounting is defined by a hinge pin **35** extending through generally cylindrical-shaped and aligned parts **36** and **37** of the outwardly extending flange **33** and locking bar **34,** respectively.

The locking bar **34** is generally planar, with a series of flanges **40, 41,** and **42** at an angle thereto defining three sides of an enclosure. The locking bar is shown in an inactive, open position in FIG. **2,** wherein the drawers are free for opening movement and the unlocked condition thereof is visually obvious because of the position of the locking bar. The locking device is shown in locked position in FIGS. **1** and **3** and with the locking bar **34** moved to a drawer-locking position disposed in front of the drawers. In this position a series of plastic buttons **45** are positioned to lie closely adjacent to the front panel of each of the drawers, as shown with respect to front panel **23** in FIG. **3.** These plastic buttons are inserted into openings in inturned ends **46,** 47, and **48** of the series of flanges **40–42** and with said ends defining a plane which is in spaced parallel relation to the front panels **23** of the drawers when the locking device is in locked position.

The locking bar **30** is maintained in drawer-locking position by key-operated locking means including a catch member **50** secured to the exposed face of the mounting plate **31** in a suitable manner, as by welding, and having an end **51** spaced from the mounting plate to receive a locking member **52** rotatably mounted on the locking bar **34** and forming part of a key-operated locking structure. The key-operated locking structure

has an outer exposed part **53** for receiving a key with a barrel insertable through an opening in the locking bar **34** and with a retention clip **55** engaging the barrel and the inner face of the locking bar to retain the keyoperated locking structure in association with the locking bar.

Either at the time of purchase of the cabinet or subsequently, the locking device may be associated with the cabinet by attaching the mounting plate **31** to the vertical panel **20** by the fasteners **32.** The locking bar **34** has a height of sufficient extent to span the vertical height of the number of drawers to be locked. Once the locking device is associated with the cabinet, there is a permanent association of all of the structure of the locking device with the cabinet and with the locking device being positionable in either of the positions shown in FIGS. **1** or **2.** When the locking device is in the position shown in FIG. **2,** the drawers may be opened and the unlocked condition thereof is visually obvious. When the drawers are to be locked, the locking bar **34** is pivoted to the position shown in FIG. **1** and a key inserted to swing the locking member **52** behind the end **51** of the catch member. With the parts in locked relation, the coacting locking elements are inaccessible, as are the attachment members **32** for securing the mounting plate to the cabinet whereby the locking device is secure against tampering.

The locking device may be offered in a variety of sizes having various height locking bar usable dependent upon the height of the total number of drawers that are to be locked.

I claim:

1. A locking device for a multi-drawer cabinet having a structural frame mounting a plurality of vertically stacked drawers individually movable forwardly to an open position, comprising: an elongate mounting plate having a relatively narrow width for attachment to a part of the structural frame laterally adjacent said drawers; a flange on said mounting plate extending outwardly from an edge of said mounting plate and spaced laterally from said drawers; an upright locking bar having a length to cover a forward portion of each of the number of drawers that are to be locked against movement and pivotally connected at an edge thereof to an edge of said outwardly extending flange of said mounting plate for pivotal movement between an inactive position out of the path of movement of said drawers and a drawer locking position in front of said drawers, said locking bar in drawer locking position and said flange afford a lock protecting chamber with said mounting plate; and keyoperated lock means including coacting elements on said mounting plate and locking bar positioned entirely within the chamber for holding said locking bar in drawer locking position.

2. A drawer locking device as defined in claim **1** wherein said locking bar has a top, a bottom and a side flange joined together and projecting rearwardly from said bar to coact with said outwardly extending flange when the locking bar is in drawer-locking position to form a lock protecting chamber for enclosing and preventing access to said mounting plate and the coacting elements of said lock means.

3. A drawer locking device as defined in claim **2** wherein said top, bottom and side flanges have integral planar members carrying plastic buttons to define contacting elements for the fronts of said drawers.

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