

Feb. 10, 1925.

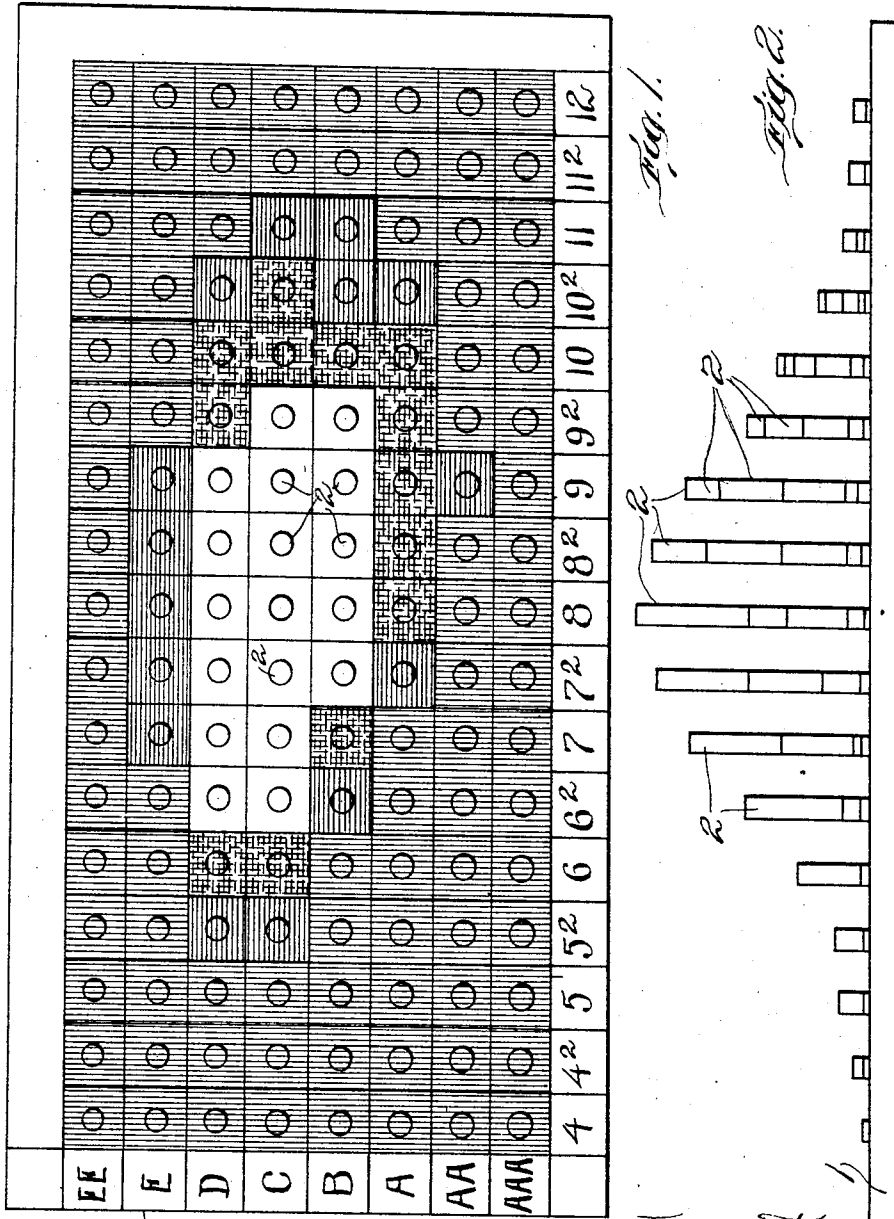
E. J. BLISS

1,525,795

INDICATOR FOR MERCHANDISE STOCKS

Filed Jan. 18, 1923

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

fig. 3.

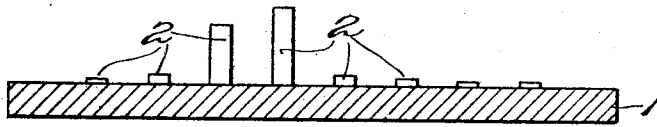


fig. 4.

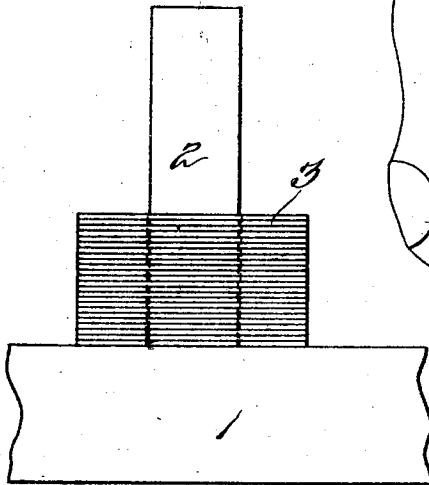
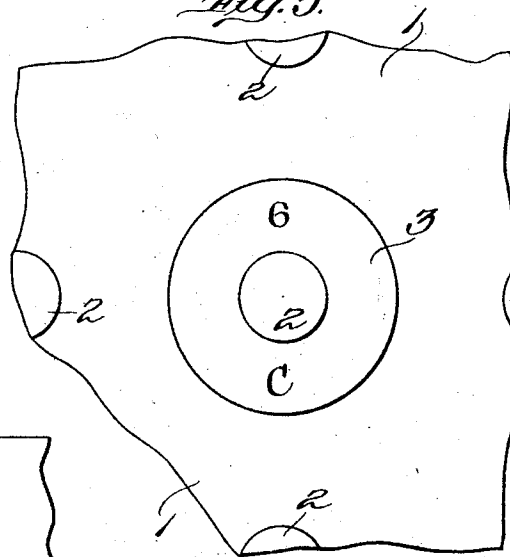


fig. 5.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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INDICATOR FOR MERCHANDISE STOCKS.

Application filed January 18, 1923. Serial No. 613,527.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ELMER J. BLISS, a citizen of the United States, and resident of Boston, in the county of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Indicators for Merchandise Stocks, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to that department of merchandising that is concerned with keeping count of the merchandise in stock, and is intended to provide a visual indicator device from which a store manager can tell at a glance both the number of different kinds of articles that are on hand, and also whether any particular class of such article is becoming over-stocked or depleted.

It is a well known fact that large losses in retail stores, such for example as shoe stores, are incurred from failure to carry a properly proportioned quantity of the different kinds of merchandise or the different sizes of shoes handled. In a single shoe store it might be that fifty pairs of shoes of a certain size may be inadequate to properly meet normal demands of stock, while five pairs of another size, in view of the infrequency of sales, might constitute a very substantial over-stock.

The present invention meets this difficulty by providing a simple and reliable means for visualizing the state of the stock as a whole and as to any particular sizes or kinds without resort to an extended survey of shelves and storage to ascertain such important information. The invention is based primarily upon the use of a series of individual counter-holders or containers one for each different unit of stock, that is, one for each particular size in the case of a shoe store, which holders are so proportioned as to their holding capacity as to correspond with the relative numbers or quantities of the different merchandise units that constitute a normally full or complete stock, the removal of the counters from the particular holders indicating visually the extent of depletion of the stock below normal. Furthermore, to prevent overstocking on unusual sizes the holders may be differentiated from each other by means of a color or other distinguishing scheme as a further warning against over-stocking on sizes for which there is but little call.

In the accompanying drawings I have il-

lustrated a simple device embodying the principles of this invention, in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view.

Figure 2 is a front elevation.

Figure 3 is an end elevation in cross section.

Figure 4 is an enlarged detail view in side elevation showing one of the holders carrying a number of stock-indicating counters.

Figure 5 is a plan view of one of the holders with counters as shown in Figure 4.

In the practice of this invention, according to the form illustrated in the drawings, I provide a platform or base 1, on which are mounted a series of upwardly projecting posts 2 forming holding members for containing or carrying the individual counters 3, which in this case are made in the form of a washer or ring and which may be of cardboard, fibre, metal or other material, and which will bear size-indicating characters corresponding to the different sizes of shoes to be carried in stock.

On one end of the board a series of width-indicating letters from A A A to E E are arranged in sequence opposite or in line with each longitudinal row of counter-holders or posts 2.

On the front or longitudinal edge of the board the lengthsize numerals are arranged in sequence, in this case running from 4 to 12. It will, therefore, be seen that each individual post represents or indicates a single size of shoe which is designated by the intersection of the letter-designated longitudinal row and the number-designated transverse row to give both width and length sizes. For example, having reference to Figure 1, the post in the lowermost extreme right hand corner of the white squares indicates size 9½B.

The height or the counter-carrying capacity of each post is so proportioned as to constitute an indication of a normal stock for each individual size. For example, size 8C in men's shoes is the most popular or largest selling size and, therefore, is indicated by the middle or highest post in Figure 2. On the other hand, size 4AAA is a size for which call is very seldom made in a normal shoe store. One or two pairs of this latter size would be an ample supply, while fifty pairs of 8C might not be more than sufficient for a good normal working stock.

The device is used as follows. When the store is stocked up, a counter representing each pair of shoes in stock is placed on the appropriate size post or holder until the number of counters on the various posts corresponds with the number of pairs of shoes of different sizes that are in stock. If the stock is a normal one, according to the indications of the device, each post or holder will be filled with counters.

As each sale is made the clerk, when wrapping up the pair of shoes and turning in the sales slip, removes a counter from the corresponding size post or counter-holder and turns it in with the sales slip.

As new shoes are added to the stock, additional counters are placed on the appropriate holders of the indicator so that the latter always constitutes a complete visual record of the quantity and sizes of shoes actually in stock. Furthermore, if any individual post is uncovered for half its height, that of itself indicates that only half of the normal stock is being carried in that size, and is a warning to the store manager to replenish.

It will, therefore, be seen that the device constitutes not only a visual record for easily ascertaining the actual stock carried, but also indicates the extent of depletion of the various sizes in the stock and thus serves as a guide for re-orders. It also serves to warn the store manager, when giving his orders, to be very cautious about ordering odd or unusual sizes.

This warning may be further accentuated by giving the different squares and size posts therein a characteristic color or other distinguishing mark as shown. For example, the counter-holders representing the sizes most in demand may be left white; those next in demand may be colored blue; those still less in demand may be colored yellow, while those least in demand and, therefore, most dangerous to carry in stock may be colored red in order to warn the store manager to be extremely careful in giving orders for sizes characterized by that color.

Of course, other distinguishing marks than color may be used for the same purpose. Furthermore the construction and contour of the counter-holders may be varied so long as the principle is observed of correlating the capacity of the holders to the volume of stock constituting a normal supply.

While plain counters may be used it may be found advantageous to mark the counters by stamping or otherwise with size-designating characters so that the counters, when removed from the stock-indicating board and turned in at the cashier's desk, will constitute a record not only of the number of shoes but of their sizes actually sold each day. The concealing or exposure of the size post to different degrees by the use of the

counters or equivalent devices serves, therefore, as an index both of the quantity of stock on hand and of the extent of depletion of stock below normal.

For convenience I have illustrated and described a form of device especially adapted to indicate stock for a shoe store, but it will be obvious that the same underlying principle is applicable for keeping stock of other units of merchandise besides shoes and the like.

What I claim is:

1. A merchandise stock-indicator embracing in combination, a supporting base, a series of counter-holders each indicating an individual unit of merchandise and having a counter capacity in proportion to the quantities of such units as are requisite for a full normal stock, merchandise-indicating characters arranged to identify and designate the individual counter-holders, and a series of counters corresponding to the units of merchandise adapted to be placed on said holders, substantially as described.

2. A merchandise stock-indicator embracing in combination a series of counters corresponding to the number of units of stock merchandise on hand, a series of counter-holders one for each kind of stock unit, each holder being proportioned in its capacity to the number of stock units of that kind which constitutes a full normal stock the counters being distributed in the different holders in correspondence with the number of different stock units on hand, and being removable therefrom to visualize the actual depletion of units of stock below normal, substantially as described.

3. A merchandise stock-indicator embracing in combination a base, a series of counter-holding members projecting therefrom, each designated to represent a single size and width of shoe, said holders having their heights proportioned to the relative numbers of shoes of corresponding sizes requisite to constitute a complete normal stock for the store, and a series of counters corresponding to the number of shoes of different size in stock carried by said holders and removable therefrom to indicate actual depletion of stock, substantially as described.

4. In a merchandise stock-indicator the combination of a base, series of upwardly projecting counter-holders arranged in rows longitudinally and transversely of the base, width indicating characters placed in line with the longitudinal rows, and size-indicating numerals arranged in line with the transverse rows in order to designate a certain size and width for each holder, the holders being proportioned in height according to the relative quantities of individual sizes requisite to form a complete stock, substantially as described.

5. A merchandise stock-indicator embracing in combination a supporting base, a series of size designated counter-holders projecting above said base to different heights in order to receive such number of counters as will correspond to a full normal stock for the indicated size, a series of removable counters carried by said holders the removal of which in conjunction with the holder serves to visualize the extent of depletion of stock on hand, substantially as described.
6. In a merchandise indicator for shoe stores, the combination with a base, of size-designated posts projecting therefrom to different heights in proportion to the number of shoes of the different sizes requisite to a complete stock, and means by which the size posts may be concealed or exposed to sight to a greater or less extent according to the indication of the stock in respect to the various sizes carried, substantially as described.
7. In a merchandise indicator, the combination with a base, of a series of projecting size-designated posts, and means cooperatively associated with said posts to indicate the quantity of merchandise articles of different kinds carried in stock and the extent of depletion of said stock below normal, substantially as described.
- In witness whereof, I have subscribed the above specification.

ELMER J. BLISS.