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V. C. TENEAU

PLAYING CARD HOLDER

Filed Feb. 23, 1927

Fig. 1

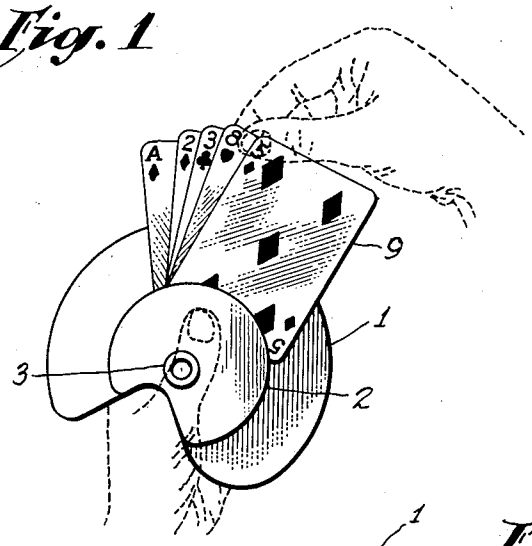
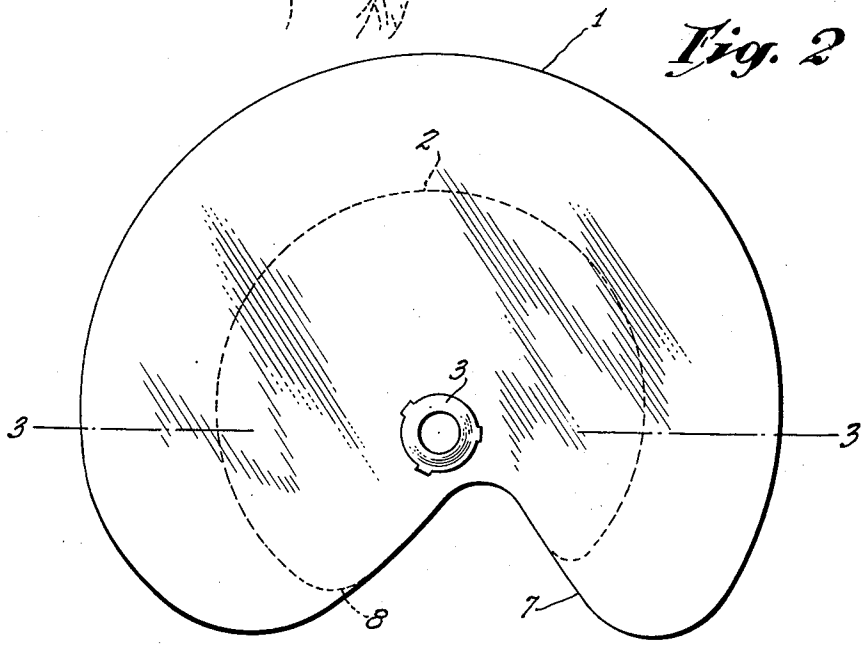


Fig. 2



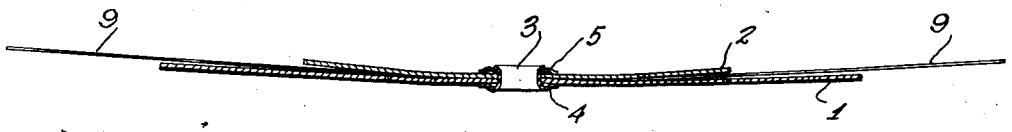
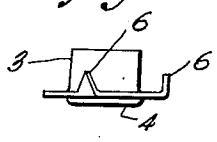


Fig. 3

Fig 4



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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PLAYING-CARD HOLDER.

Application filed February 23, 1927. Serial No. 170,128.

This invention is a holder for playing cards, and the object of the invention is to provide simple and efficient means whereby playing cards may be held in the player's hand in separated or fanned out relation to one another and through the employment of means for maintaining them in this relation by a grip exerted thereon independently of the player's fingers.

Playing card holders have been heretofore suggested, but they have been bulky in practical constructions which would not permit the proper separation or fanning of the cards or are of such unsightly and awkward shape and appearance as to render them unpopular with card players.

The structure of the present invention, in contradistinction, is such that the device will fit comfortably in the player's hand and allow of unrestricted fanning or separation of the cards.

The holder of this invention embodies two plates of relatively stiff material, such as celluloid, cardboard or the like of substantially palette shape. The plates are superimposed upon one another with their axes coinciding and they are secured together by a single rivet, grommet, eyelet, or other attaching device positioned coaxially of the plates. The upper plate is of less radius than the under plate, so that, when playing cards are introduced between the plates in such manner that the lower portions of the cards project between the respective plates, the greater portion of said cards will be uncovered and exposed to view.

I wish to call particular attention to the securing of the plates together axially. The advantage inherent in such a construction is that it permits the cards to be fanned or separated, uniformly at all sides of the axis of the device. In other words, when the cards are fanned out, they pivot about a common axis and thus separate uniformly. This feature of the invention would not result if the plates were secured together at widely spaced apart points, since with such latter construction, there would result a tendency of the cards to pivot on two distinct axes which would cause ununiform fanning of the cards and a tendency of the cards to disengage from the holder during the fanning operation. It is also important that the coacting faces of the respective plates be smooth and uninterrupted, so that when the cards are introduced into the holder and fanned out, there will be no projections or uneven parts to interfere with this operation. The utilization of plates of palette shape causes the device to fit easily into the hand of the player and to rest easily in that re-entrant portion of the hand between the thumb and forefinger, with the fingers of the hand engaging with the back plate and the thumb engaging with the front plate. The natural tendency of the player is to apply a slight pressure through the thumb and this pressure, in practice, tends to transversely bend the two plates and cause them to very tightly grip the cards, so that the inadvertent release of the cards is absolutely precluded when the device is held in the player's hand.

The tendency of the device to bend as described is facilitated by the employment of the axial connection between the plates, which permits the bending of the plates in all directions and on any radii without crimping or undue strains at the point of connection.

The plates are, in practice, secured against relative rotation in order to maintain the plates against shifting relative to one another. Thus, the superimposed plates of palette form are held in proper cooperative relation at all times, so that the re-entrant portions of said plates are maintained in register to allow the device to rest easily between the thumb and forefinger of the player's hand.

Features of the invention, other than those specified, will be apparent from the hereinafter detailed description and claims, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

The accompanying drawings illustrate one practical embodiment of the invention, but the construction therein shown is to be understood as illustrative, only, and not as defining the limits of the invention.

Figure 1 shows the card holder of the present invention in front elevation and illustrates the manner in which it is held in the player's hand, while the cards are maintained in fanned relation to permit them to be individually withdrawn from the holder.

Figure 2 is a back view of the holder.

Figure 3 is a section on the line 3—3 of Figure 2, showing the plates slightly bent and as they appear when held in the player's hand.

Figure 4 is a side elevation of the male member of the grommet employed in the construction of Figures 1 to 3.

Referring to the drawings, 1 designates the back plate and 2 the front plate, both of these plates are of the same shape, but the front plate is preferably considerably smaller than the back plate. As clearly shown in the drawings, the plates are coaxially arranged and are held together by axial fastening means shown as a grommet or eyelet 3. This grommet embodies male and female members 4 and 5, respectively, and the flange of the male member is preferably provided with spurs 6, which, during the introduction of the eyelet, penetrate the two plates in order to secure them against relative rotation.

The plates 1 and 2 are in the main of circular configuration, but at corresponding sides of said plates, they are provided with re-entrant portions 7 and 8, respectively, so that said plates are of a contour substantially corresponding to a painter's palette. It will be noted from the drawings that the re-entrant portions 7 and 8 register with one another and extend from the outer peripheries of the plates into close proximity to the grommet 3.

The purpose of this construction is to allow the device to be readily grasped by the player's hand, and as shown in Figure 1, the re-entrant portions 7 and 8 are adapted to rest easily between the thumb and forefinger of the hand, so that the thumb may extend well over the grommet 3 and overlie the playing cards 9, which are adapted to be inserted between the respective plates. It will be apparent that while the thumb overlies the front of the playing cards, the fingers overlie the backs of said cards and extend, in practice, substantially to the outer periphery of the back plate 1.

I find it convenient to construct the plates of celluloid, imitation tortoise shell, paper or other suitable, fairly rigid, but resilient material, and when such material is employed, the natural configuration of the hand will cause a slight bending of the plates when they are grasped, as shown in Figure 1, this bending being clearly illustrated in Figure 3.

When playing cards are introduced between the respective plates and fanned out, the plates will be forced apart slightly because of the thickness of the cards and as the device is bent transversely, as stated, the plates are caused to tightly grip the cards, so as to positively preclude any tendency of the cards to inadvertently slip or shift. The grip of the plates, however, is such that the cards may be individually removed without dislodging the other cards.

I call particular attention to the fact that the plates are in face abutting relation to the grommet, so that the cards are held in place irrespective of the grip of the player's hand. This permits the device to be laid upon a table, while maintaining the hand in the desired fanned condition and without permitting inadvertent displacement of the cards. The attachment of the plates in face abutting relation at the center is of further importance in that it provides a tapering clamping action between said plates and the utilization of a unitary fastening device functioning in combination with the tapering engagement of the plates with the cards, provides, in effect, a floating pivot about which the cards are fanned out. In other words, when the cards are introduced between the plates, they do not engage the grommet, but simply enter between the plates until the gripping action arrests their further movement.

Inasmuch as there is but a single grommet to hold the plates together, this gripping force will be uniform at all sides of the pivot, so that when it is attempted to fan the cards, they will pivot on the point of the maximum gripping action exerted on each card, which, in practice, will be at a substantially uniform distance from the grommet for all of the cards. As a result, there will be a uniform pivotal movement of all of the cards and the pivotal action to which I have referred will be very smooth. Furthermore, the cards will not become loosened by the fanning operation, but will be held at such points of maximum gripping action to fan about the common axis of the grommet 3 on what may be termed shifting or floating pivots.

The device is extremely simple in construction, may be economically manufactured, and provides an efficient means for holding cards in a player's hand or for maintaining the cards in proper fanned relation when they are laid upon the table. The plates in practice may be highly ornamented or may, if desired, carry suitable advertising matter.

The device may be employed in the playing of any card game, but is of particular utility in the playing of such games as bridge, hearts, pinochle, and similar card games, where quite a number of cards constitute a playing hand.

The foregoing detailed description sets forth the invention in its preferred form, but the invention is to be understood as fully commensurate with the appended claims.

The device of this invention has numerous advantages. That is to say, the cards are kept clean, there is no appreciable bending of such cards as is frequently the case when cards are handled by nervous players. Moreover, they can be readily fanned and arranged in the device to produce either a large or small spread as may be desired.

The player has a full view of the cards at all times and a relatively large number of cards may be comfortably held in the hand without necessitating such pressure as would result in cramping of the hand. Furthermore, cards are maintained at all times in order and can be placed face down in assembled relation upon the table and will remain in such order, when the player leaves the table for any purpose, or, when freedom of both hands is desired as for lighting cigarettes.

The device can be made of a wide variety of materials, such as celluloid, cardboard, fibre, etc; the best result being obtained by the use of materials which are sufficiently rigid to hold the cards in place and yet sufficiently flexible to assume a slight concavity when held in the hand. In practice, the holder is susceptible to a wide variation in decoration, design, etc., and slight difference in peripheral contour may be made without departing from the spirit of this invention.

Having thus fully described the invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. In a playing card holder, a pair of plates axially secured together in direct face abutting relation, said plates being provided at corresponding sides with registering re-entrant portions, whereby the device is adapted to fit between the thumb and forefinger of the player's hand with the axis of the device adjacent the base of the thumb, said plates being resilient whereby playing cards may be introduced between the plates to be gripped thereby.

2. In a playing card holder, a pair of substantially palette shape plates directly superimposed in coaxial relation and axially secured together with re-entrant portions of said plates registering with one another, said plates being of resilient material, whereby playing cards may be thrust between the plates to be gripped thereby and held against inadvertent displacement by the inherent resiliency of the plates.

3. In a playing card holder, two superimposed plates of substantially palette shape positioned coaxially with respect to one another and axially secured together in face abutting relation with the re-entrant portions of said plates in registration, said plates being of resilient material whereby playing cards may be thrust between the plates to be retained in position by the inherent resiliency of said plates, the front plate being of smaller size than the back plate to provide for maximum exposure of the faces of the playing cards.

4. In a playing card holder, a substantially palette shape back plate, a similarly shaped front plate of smaller size than the back plate, unitary means for securing said plates in face abutting coaxial relation with one another and with the re-entrant portions of the respective plates in registration, said plates being of springy material, whereby playing cards may be thrust between the front and back plates to be frictionally gripped between the plates and held by the inherent resiliency of said plates against inadvertent displacement.

In testimony whereof I have signed the foregoing specification.

VALENTIN CONSTANT TENEAU.