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W. J. FITTALL

CHECK


Filed Aug. 21, 1924

INTERLINE  CHECK

WESTERN, R. R.  
OKLAHOMA  
TO  
*London, Ont.*  
ROUTE (STATE) JUNCTION POINTS  
DESTINATION

**A A A**  
**6-67-56** (OVER)

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WESTERN, R. R.  
DUPLICATE  CHECK  
OKLAHOMA  
TO  
*London, Ont.*  
ROUTE (STATE) JUNCTION POINTS  
DESTINATION

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 192\_\_  
Description and condition indicated by PUNCH MARKS

TRUNK	HAND BAGGAGE	SAD ORDER	WET	LOCK BROKEN	NOT LOCKED
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**A A A**  
**6-67-56** (OVER)

WITNESSES:  
*James H. Bell*  
*Alfred E. Schinger*

INVENTOR:  
*William J. Fittall*,  
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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILLIAM J. FITTALL, OF LANHAM, MARYLAND.

## CHECK.

Application filed August 21, 1924. Serial No. 733,299.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, WILLIAM J. FITTALL, a resident of Lanham, county of Prince Georges, and State of Maryland, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Checks, whereof the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings.

My invention relates to identifying checks for baggage, parcels, etc., such as used on railroads. At the present time, many checks are distinguished by groups of digits distinctively arranged (e. g., "6-67-56"), and are read according to such grouping,—in entire disregard of any numerical significance of the aggregate of digits regarded as one number. Usually, the groups consist of but one or two digits each, because the numbers below a hundred represented by such groups can be read and called much more easily and quickly than numbers exceeding a hundred: e. g., 66-67-56 as "sixty-six, sixty-seven, fifty-six" is easier and quicker to read and call correctly than 666-756 as "six hundred and sixty-six, seven hundred and fifty-six". Sometimes, the series of groups is preceded by a letter as a further means of distinction: e. g., "A6-67-56".

Whatever the digit grouping, however, and even without any grouping at all, there is an unconscious tendency amongst baggage men to overlook or disregard serial letters and other matter outside the numbers on checks: in other words, to match numbers merely. As checks bearing like numbers may readily be received at large terminals from several railroads at the same time, disregard of letters occasionally results in most troublesome crossing or mismatching of checks.

I aim to minimize the risk of mismatching by associating serial letters or other distinctive symbols with check numbers or digit groups in such a way that they will naturally be noticed when the numbers are examined. Instead of simply prefixing such letters or symbols to check numbers, I arrange them in lateral relation thereto; or, when digit groups are used, I associate the symbols with such groups individually, preferably in lateral relation to the series of groups. In other words, I preferably arrange groups and associated symbols along

lines at an angle or (more or less) at right angles, so to speak, to the sequence of groups. The symbols thus employed may be of any character desired: they may be numbers, letters, or anything else of a distinctive nature. They may be associated with any one or more digit groups; and they may be the same for all the digit groups of a check, or different. In the latter case, they may consist of distinctive letters from the name of the company issuing the check.

The drawing shows an ordinary type of cardboard baggage check conveniently embodying my invention in a very simple form. As illustrated, the check consists of initially integral sections 3, 4 with a series of perforations 5 along their intended line of division to enable them to be torn apart easily. Each section 3 or 4 bears the same identical number or sequence of digit groups: e. g., "6-67-56". As shown, also, the digit groups are not only set off distinctly by spacing, but also separated by dashes. The sequence is shown arranged, as usual, according to the direction in which the individual groups naturally read: i. e., the groups read horizontally and are arranged in a horizontal line.

Besides the number or sequence of digit groups, the checks 3, 4 bear identical symbols associated with them,—in this instance, the letter "A" with each digit group. In accordance with the arrangement of digit groups mentioned above, the groups and their corresponding "A's" are arranged one over the other. As shown, the letters are over the digit groups, which makes them very conspicuous. In the present instance, the letters are very prominently displayed, as well as the numbers: indeed the letters are substantially as heavy faced as the numbers, and almost equally conspicuous, though not so high.

The psychological effect of such use of symbols is such that the baggageman naturally regards the letters as well as the numbers, and instantly detects a mis-match in either; for instead of regarding simply the sequence of numbers, he looks at each digit group and its corresponding symbol as one unit, and is instantly and unconsciously struck by a variance in the top element. Indeed, there is a strong tendency to see and ocularly compare triangular groups as such

without conscious reading, which reduces the likelihood of error in respect of numbers as well as in respect of symbols.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. A baggage check comprising initially integral but separable sections having thereon identical sequences of digit groups and also identical symbols prominently displayed in association with corresponding groups, such groups and their associated symbols being arranged laterally with reference to the sequences of groups.

2. A baggage check comprising initially integral but separable sections having thereon identical numbers each comprising one or more distinct groups of digits, and also identical symbols prominently displayed in association with corresponding groups, such groups and their associated symbols being arranged one over the other.

3. A baggage check comprising initially integral but separable sections having thereon identical numbers each comprising distinct groups of digits, and also identical letters prominently displayed over corresponding groups.

4. A baggage check having thereon an individually distinctive sequence of distinct digit groups, and also a distinctive symbol prominently displayed in association with

one or more of the groups, such groups and their associated symbols being arranged laterally with reference to the sequence of groups.

5. A baggage check having thereon an individually distinctive number comprising one or more distinct groups of digits, and also a distinctive symbol prominently displayed in association with one or more of the groups, such groups and associated symbols being arranged one over the other.

6. A baggage check having thereon an individually distinctive number comprising distinct groups of digits, and also a distinctive letter prominently displayed over each of such groups.

7. A baggage check having thereon an individually distinctive sequence of distinct digit groups, and also a distinctive letter associated with each of the groups, such groups and their associated letters being substantially correspondingly heavy faced.

8. A baggage check having thereon an individually distinctive sequence of distinct digit groups, and also a distinctive symbol prominently displayed in association with the last of such digit groups in the sequence.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto signed my name, at Washington, D. C., this 18th day of August, 1924.

WILLIAM J. FITTALL.