No. 841,872. PATENTED JAN. 22, 1907.

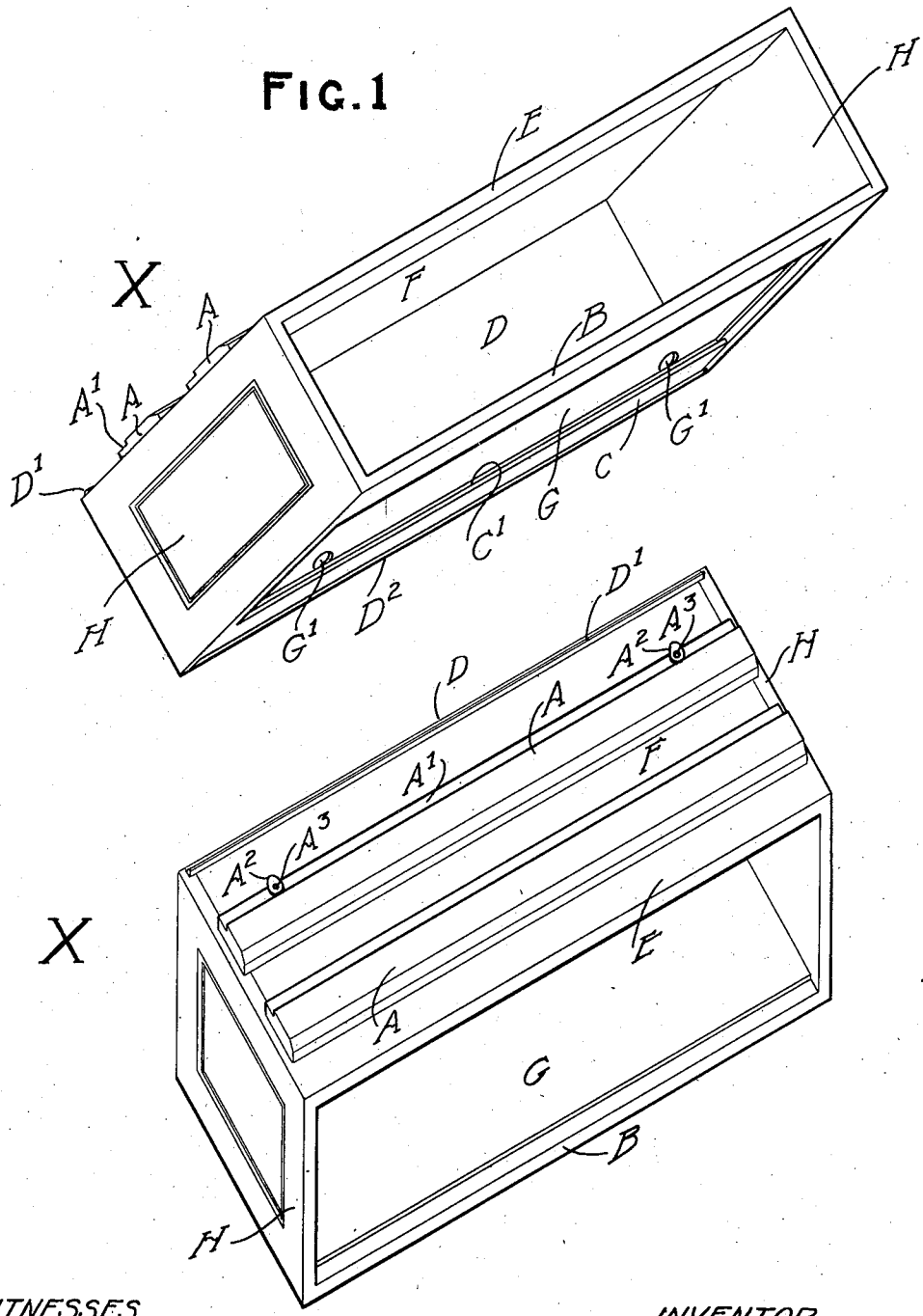
D. E. HUNTER.

INTERCHANGEABLE FURNITURE UNIT.

APPLICATION FILED MAY 2, 1905.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

FIG. 1



WITNESSES

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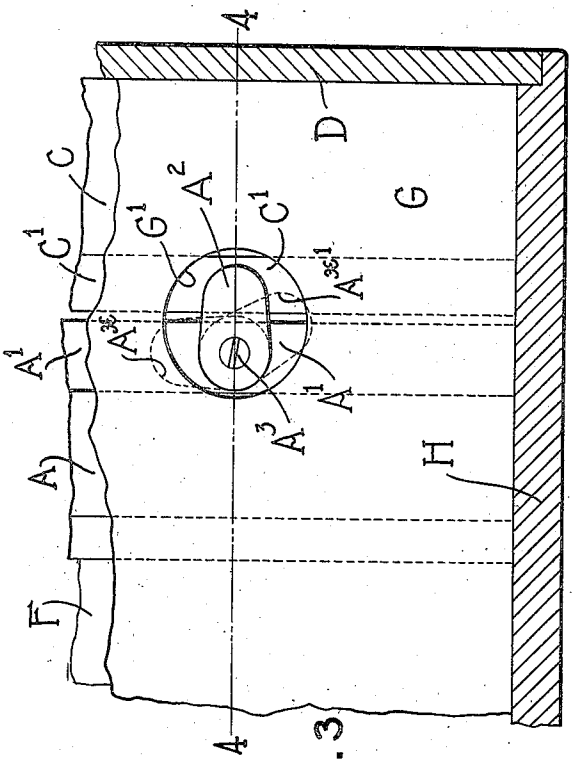


FIG. 3

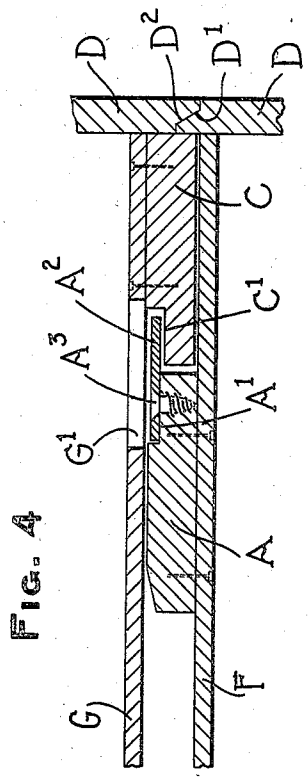


FIG. 4

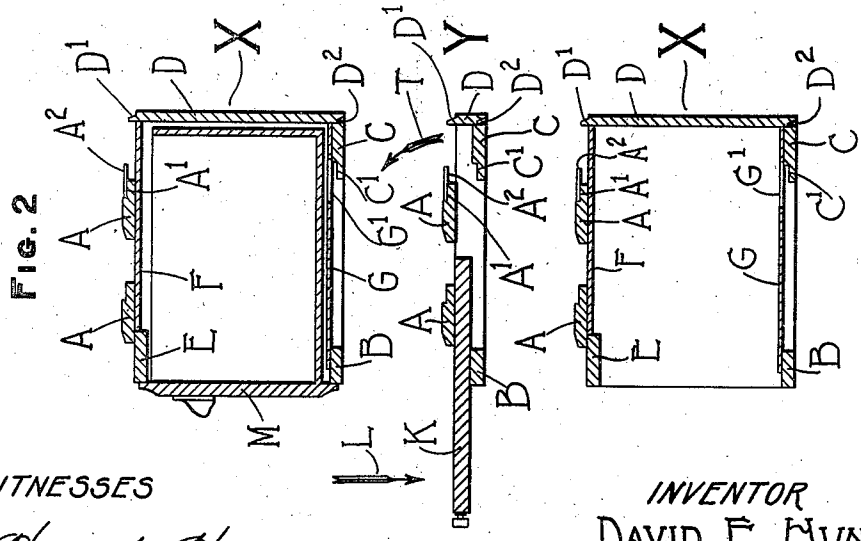


FIG. 2

WITNESSES

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

DAVID EDGAR HUNTER, OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, ASSIGNOR TO LIBRARY BUREAU, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, A CORPORATION OF NEW JERSEY.

INTERCHANGEABLE FURNITURE UNIT.

No. 841,872. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Jan. 22, 1907.

Application filed May 2, 1905. Serial No. 258,488.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, DAVID EDGAR HUNTER, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Cambridge, in the county of Middlesex and State of Massachusetts, have invented new and useful Improvements in Interchangeable Furniture Units, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to the construction of furniture composed of interchangeable units assembled according to the method now well known as the "unit" system.

The essential features which I believe are common to all unit systems of this general character are, first, uniformity of dimension as to width and depth of each unit, and, second, the uniformity of structure at the tops and bottoms of said units, such that the bottom of any unit will interlock into and engage the top of any other unit. The only component parts of such a system which do not conform exactly to these general rules of construction are the finished pieces which form the bases and caps for the assembled system, the bases being provided merely with tops which are uniform with the tops of the units and the caps provided with bottoms which are uniform with the bottoms of all the units.

The advantages of the unit system are such that they are availed of for many purposes, and quite often each box-like unit or unit-case is provided with slides or drawers, and, moreover, where the larger units are used as bookcases there are intermediate thinner units each containing a slide or wooden leaf to be pulled forward in order to support a book for purposes of convenience in consulting the same.

Heretofore, so far as I am aware, the makers and users of unit systems of this general character have relied upon the superincumbent weight of units and their contents to hold the entire system in its integrity; but as unit systems of this kind have been adopted for miscellaneous uses awkward situations have developed by reason of the lack of any positive unity of the system as a whole.

In cases where the furniture units contain drawers these have accumulated in them papers or other compact and heavy contents, and when such drawers are pulled forward, especially if they are provided with extension-slides, they bring their weight so to bear upon the supporting-unit that the upper section is liable to tip forward and precipitate the case-section and its contents upon the floor or possibly upon the unfortunate user. Accidents of this character have actually happened, and the danger of their recurrence constitutes a very serious drawback to the further employment of unit systems in situations such as I mention, and it is with the object of alleviating this difficulty and improving the structural character of the unit system as a whole that I have made the inventions and improvements which constitute the subject-matter of this specification.

In the drawings hereto annexed, which illustrate an embodiment of my invention, Figure 1 shows in perspective a pair of furniture units, the upper one lifted and tipped back, so as to expose its bottom to view. Fig. 2 is a vertical cross-section of three such units. Fig. 3 is a detail, and Fig. 4 a cross-section of Fig. 3 at the line 4 4.

I have selected for illustration furniture units or interchangeable cases of such shape and proportions that they represent either bookcase units or units adapted to receive sliding drawers.

The units shown in Fig. 1 are each composed of the paneled ends H, back D, top rail E, bottom slats B and C, and top slats A A. The interior of each unit is preferably sheathed with a bottom board G and an upper board F. The top slats A A of each section are rabbeted at A', while a rabbet C' is provided on the upper forward edge of the slat C. The slats A A are so placed and spaced apart that when a furniture unit is placed in position over the said slats the bottom slats B C of the superposed unit fit snugly before and behind the slats A A. In order to secure a good joint between the furniture sections or units, I bevel the back boards D at D' D^2, so that as the unit X, Fig. 2, descends upon the unit Y the bevel D^2 of unit X fits into the bevel D' of unit Y. In Fig. 2 I have shown a drawer M as included in the upper section X, and the section or unit Y is a thin one, containing only the slide K. If when such sections as X and Y are assembled the slide K be pulled out and a load placed thereon,

the load, bearing down in the direction indicated by the arrow L of Fig. 2, will tend to tip the unit Y in the direction indicated by the arrow T, and so also if in the upper section X the drawer M, whose contents may be heavy, is pulled out.

In order to guard against the accidental tipping of a unit or units in the above-described manner, I provide simple fastening means which secure the units together vertically, so that when assembled a series of such units will have practically the same unitary solidity as a case framed in the old-fashioned way. Within the rabbet A′ of the slat A, I place buttons A^2, secured to the slats by screws A^3 and so proportioned that they may turn in the rabbet A′ and lie wholly within the dimensions of the same, as indicated by the dotted-line position $A^\times$ in Fig. 3. When a pair of such units are assembled, the rabbets A′ and C′ are opposite each other, and the button A^2 may then be turned so as to extend over the edge of slat C in the rabbet C′. Then if there is any tendency of the upper one of two units to tip upon the lower the fastening-button A^2 will prevent this effectually.

In order to provide means for manipulating the fastening-buttons A^2, a suitable hole G′ is made in the bottom G of each unit, through which the person assembling or taking down the unit system may have access to the buttons.

In the manner above described all of the advantages of the unit system are conserved, and the assemblage of units is made to all practical intents and purposes a solid integer, possessing all the stability of a book or drawer case constructed with a single frame.

What I claim is—

The combination of two interlocking furniture-sections comprising the interengaging rabbeted slats at top and bottom, respectively, the fastening-button operating in said rabbeted portions, and a false bottom covering said slats and having an aperture therein for access to the fastening-button.

Signed by me at Boston, Massachusetts, this 1st day of May, 1905.

DAVID EDGAR HUNTER.

Witnesses:
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