Oct. 14, 1958 C. A. BLOOM 2,855,711

SIGN CONSTRUCTION

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FIG. 1.

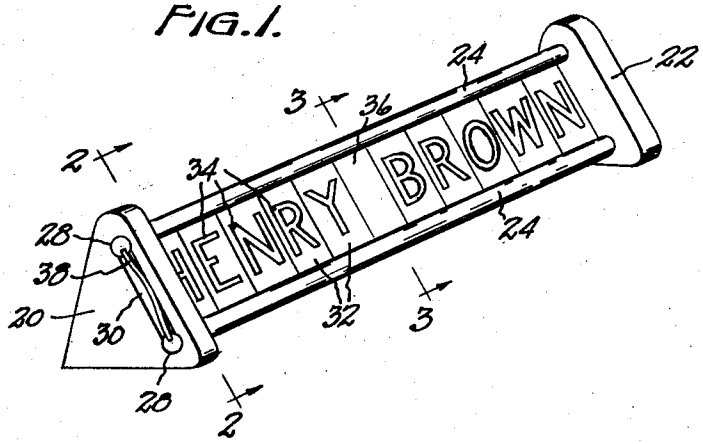


FIG. 3.

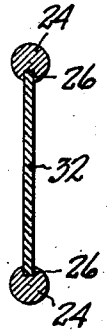


FIG. 2.

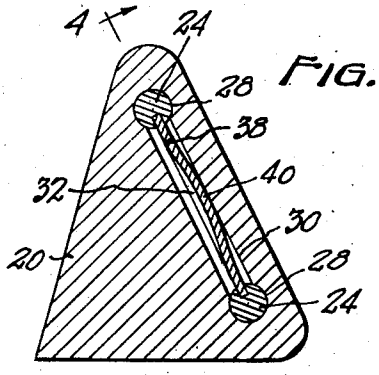


FIG. 4.

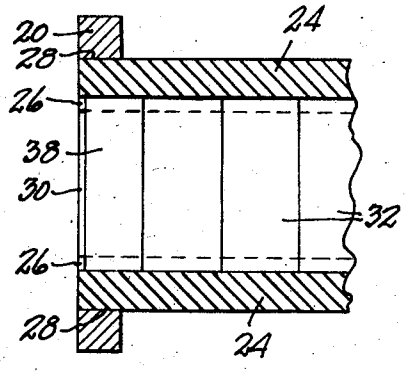
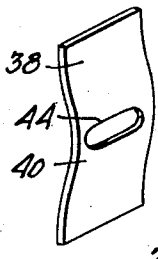


FIG. 6.



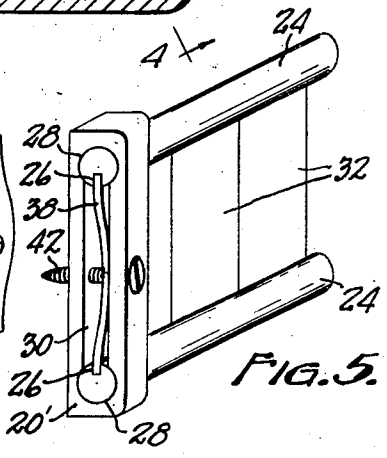


FIG. 5.

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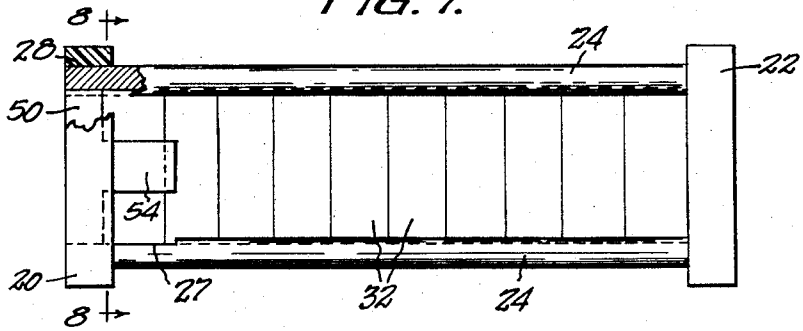
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FIG. 7.



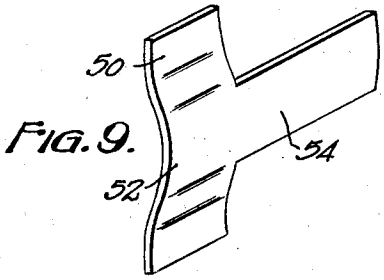
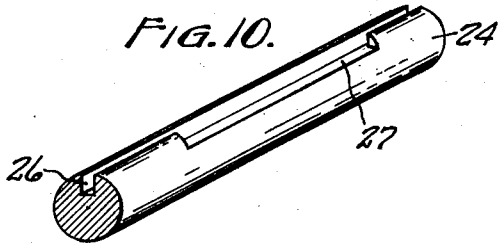


FIG. 9.

FIG. 10.



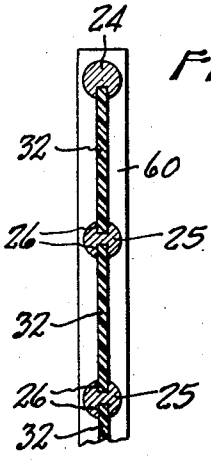
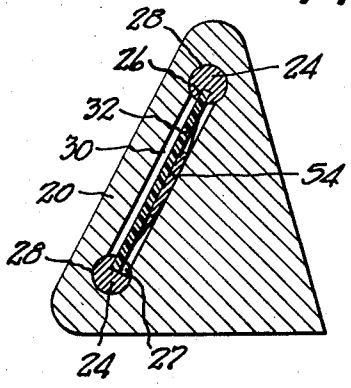


FIG. 11.

FIG. 8.



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United States Patent Office 2,855,711 Patented Oct. 14, 1958

2,855,711

SIGN CONSTRUCTION

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Application March 31, 1954, Serial No. 420,058

2 Claims. (Cl. 40—140)

This invention relates to improvements in sign constructions, and more particularly to signs which are used in offices upon desks and, in other business establishments, upon counters or mounted upon a wall or other support.

The primary object of this invention is to provide a novel, simple and inexpensive device which is attractive in appearance and in which sign characters are mounted interchangeably so that the information or name appearing upon the sign may be changed rapidly and easily.

A further object is to provide a device of this character wherein a pair of guide members detachably mount between them a plurality of small plates, each bearing one or more letters, figures or other indicia, cooperating to convey information, and held in selected position by novel detachable latching means.

A further object is to provide a device of this character having a pair of end members connected by a pair of guide bars to receive slidably small plate members spanning said guide members and attractively bordered thereby, wherein at least one of said end members has an opening therein between said bars to accommodate the insertion and removal of said plates and to receive and support a retainer adjustable to a position maintaining said plates in edge engagement.

A further object is to provide a device of this character having a pair of end members connected by a pair of spaced guide bars grooved to receive the marginal portions of indicia-bearing members, wherein one of said guide bars is notched to accommodate the lateral application of indicia-bearing members into interlocking engagement with said guide members, and wherein a resilient retainer cooperates with said parts to hold the same with said indicia-bearing members in edge engagement and to position the indicia-bearing members adjacent said notch in a manner to prevent the release of the indicia-bearing members through the slot.

Other objects will be apparent from the following specification.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a transverse sectional view taken on line 2—2 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a transverse sectional view taken on line 3—3 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary longitudinal transverse sectional view taken on line 4—4 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary perspective view of a modified embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of a spring-retainer member usable in the Fig. 1 and Fig. 5 embodiments;

Fig. 7 is a rear perspective view illustrating another embodiment of the invention and showing parts thereof in section;

Fig. 8 is a transverse sectional view taken on line 8—8 of Fig. 7;

Fig. 9 is a perspective view of the retainer used in the Fig. 7 embodiment;

Fig. 10 is a fragmentary perspective view of a guide bar used in the Fig. 7 embodiment; and

Fig. 11 is a vertical transverse sectional view of another modified embodiment of the invention.

Referring to the drawings, and particularly to Figs. 1 to 4, which illustrate one embodiment of the invention, the numerals 20 and 22 designate end members which are interconnected by spaced parallel guide members 24. The end members 20, 22 are formed of wood, metal, plastic, or any other material found suitable, and may be of any shape desired, it being understood that the shape of the two opposite end members will be substantially similar as far as overall outline thereof is concerned. The triangular form here illustrated is particularly well suited for use in signs which are to be mounted upon desks and counters and in which it is desired to have the legible face of the sign lie in a vertically inclined plane. The guide bars 24 are preferably of substantially uniform cross-sectional shape at all their length, and each thereof has a longitudinal groove 26 formed therein. Each of the end members 20 and 22 has a pair of apertures 28 therein to snugly receive the end portions of guide bars 24. The apertures 28 may receive the guide bars 24 with a snug or pressed fit such that the parts are held firmly in selected assembled position as is possible in cases where the end members are formed of substantial thickness. It will be understood, however, that the guide members may be secured in the openings 28 by any means found suitable, such as by set screws, escutcheon pins, cement or the like. Also, it will be understood that the openings in the end members 20 and 22 which receive the end portions of the guide bars 24 need not extend completely through said end members, and, instead, may simply constitute recesses to receive the end portions of said guide members. The end member 20 is additionally provided with a slot 30 extending therethrough and being of a width greater than the width of the groove 26 of the guide members 24 but preferably less than the overall width of the guide bars 24.

A plurality of rectangular rigid members 32, which preferably are vertically elongated, are provided for mounting in the structure between the guide members 24. The vertical or major dimension of each of the members 32 is greater than the spacing between the guide bars 24 and such that the opposite marginal portions thereof may fit slidably in the grooves 26. The members 32 will be of a thickness slightly less than the width of the grooves 26 as necessary to accommodate sliding, but preferably the play between these parts will be small enough to prevent disalignment or chattering or excessive looseness of the members 32. The members 32 need not be of the same width and, instead, may be formed in two or three standard widths. A plurality of the members 32 will be provided, making up a set or kit. Some of the members of this set will have indicia appearing thereon, as at 34. The indicia may consist of a letter of the alphabet, a numeral, a punctuation mark, a symbol, or an abbreviation. One or more indicia may appear on each of the plates 32, but I prefer to limit the number to one indicia per plate in most instances. The indicia 34 may be painted, impressed, cast, embossed, engraved, stenciled or otherwise applied to the plates 32, and will preferably be so positioned thereon as to be aligned with the indicia of the other plates when mounted in the frame, as shown in Fig. 1. The plates 32 are preferably of at least three selected sizes so that each character may be applied to a member whose width corresponds to the width of the character, and thereby

insure substantially uniform spacing between adjacent characters or letters employed to spell a word or to make up a number or other matter of information. It will be understood, further, that each set will preferably include a number of plain or blank plates **36** which may be employed to provide spaces between words, and which also may be of different widths if desired.

Retainer means are employed to hold the plates **32**, **36** in desired position and to retain them against release from the unit. As here illustrated this retainer means may consist of a resilient member or spring plate **38** of substantially rectangular shape whose vertical or major dimension is preferably slightly greater than the spacing between the bottoms or inner ends of the confronting grooves **26** of the guide members **24**, so that the central portion thereof at **40**, as illustrated in Fig. 2, is deflected out of the plane of the grooves and of the plate members **32** and preferably into engagement with the edge of the opening **30** when the spring member is inserted in the opening **30** with its margin seated in said grooves **26**. This arrangement is best illustrated in Fig. 2 and insures a sufficient frictional engagement of the spring at the grooves, and preferably also at the opening **30**, to resist displacement thereof accidentally but at the same time to accommodate removal thereof when it is desired to remove the members **32** for the purpose of changing the sign. It will be apparent that the member **38** may be positioned at any point or location desired at the end portions of the guide members **24**, so that variations in the total length of the assembled plates **32** and **36** required to set out selected information upon the sign may be accommodated. At the same time, if the end members, and particularly the member **20**, are of sufficient width or thickness, the spring member may be concealed within the overall width or outline of the member **20**, so as to be out of view and so as to avoid distraction from a uniform and attractive appearance of the sign when assembled. The spring action will, of course, be sufficiently strong to permit the sign to be handled for movement from place to place during normal usage without release of the members **32** from firm abutting relation. It will also be understood that in instances where openings **30** are formed in each of the end members **20**, **22**, spring members **38** may be provided at each end member. It is preferred, however, that only one of the end members will be provided with an opening, and that the other end member, such as the member **22**, will be continuous across the space between the ends of the guide bars **24** adjacent thereto so as to form a stop or abutment against which the endmost of the plate members **32**, **36** may abut and be positioned. It will also be understood that mechanical securing means may be employed of other forms than the form shown, such as set screws (not shown) mounted in the member **20** to bear against a member mounted in the opening **30** and bearing against the edge of the adjacent one of the plates **32**, **36**.

The device is well suited for use in connection with signs which are to be affixed to walls of buildings or the like, and a construction of this character is illustrated in Figs. 5 and 6. In this instance the end members **20'** are preferably of substantially rectangular shape. These end members are provided with openings or sockets **28** to receive the ends of the guide members **24** and may also have openings **30** therein or in at least one thereof between the members **24**. Indicia-bearing plates **32** are snugly and slidably received between the grooves of the guide members **24** to be firmly supported in coplanar relation by said guide members in the same manner as in the Fig. 1 embodiment. The spring **38** fits in the grooves **26** of the guide bars **24**, as previously explained. Means are provided to anchor the end members to a wall or supporting surface and are here shown as one or more screws **42** passed through suitable openings in the end members and adapted to secure anchorage in a wall or other supporting structure. The location of the screw holes in the end members may be varied at will. In one form, such screw holes may be formed in portions of the end members above and below the upper and lower guide rails **24**, respectively. I have selected for illustration, however, a construction in which the securing means is located between the guide bars **24**. In order to accommodate the screw at this location I prefer to provide the spring **38** with an elongated opening **44** to receive the screw with clearance. By this arrangement the indicia members **32** are positively confined in the sign structure and cannot be removed without releasing or removing the sign from its support or at least without removing one securing screw **42**. At the same time, the elongated opening **44** accommodates variations of the position of the spring **38** as required by the total length of the assembled plates **32** of different sign subjects. It will be understood, of course, that the central location of the screw **42** does not necessarily require slotting of the spring **38** and that the spring may be positioned in inwardly disposed relation from the screw. Alternately, the spring **38** may be omitted completely and any other spacer means found suitable may be employed to hold the plates **32** in edge abutment.

Another alternative construction is illustrated in Figs. 7 to 10. In this construction the spaced rigid grooved guide bars **24** are supported by and serve to interconnect the end members **20** and **22**, as above described, and also serve to receive and support in coplanar relation the rigid rectangular panels or plates **32**. At least one of the end members, such as the end member **20**, will have an access slot **30** therein. One of the guide bars may be cut away at **27** for a portion of its length greater than the width of the widest panel **32** at one only of the sides or ribs defining the groove **26**. This cut-away will preferably be formed adjacent to one of the two end members, and preferably adjacent to the end member **20**. By means of this arrangement it is possible to insert the members **32** into the guide bar grooves and to remove them therefrom without necessitating their passage through the end slot **30** in the end member. The cut-away will preferably be formed at the rear so that it is not visible when the sign is viewed normally. It will be understood that insertion of the panels **32** is accomplished by first inserting one marginal edge of the panel **32** in the groove of the unnotched guide bar **24** opposite the cut-away **27** and then swinging the panel in a direction transversely of the bar to cause the free end of the panel to swing into the cut-away **27** and thence into the groove **26**, whereupon it may be slid lengthwise of the guide bars to desired position.

In order to retain panel or panels located adjacent to the cut-away **27**, the retainer member illustrated in Fig. 9 may be employed. This retainer essentially consists of the rectangular spring plate **50** centrally offset at **52** and having an arm or extension **54** projecting perpendicularly therefrom at its offset **52**. The parts are so proportioned that the projection **54** may pass behind the panels **32**. Consequently, the projection **54** provides means to prevent the panels **32** registering with the cut-away **27** from moving into and through said cut-away and from being discharged or released from the guide bars. By the use of this construction the parts are held effectively in assembled sign-forming relation but can be disassembled by removing the retainer. After removal of the retainer through the passage **30**, removal of the remaining members **32** can be accomplished without passing through the opening **30** in the end member **20**.

In some instances it may be desirable to provide a sign in which a plurality of rows of panels are employed. Fig. 11 illustrates the manner in which that arrangement can be accommodated. In this instance the end members **60** will be of a dimension and shape long enough to mount a plurality of guide bars **24** and **25**. The guide bars **24** will be located at the top and bottom of the device. The guide bars **25** will be located between the top

and bottom bars. The bars **25** will be characterized by formation of two slots **26** therein, preferably in diametrically opposed relation as illustrated. This construction possesses all of the advantages of the construction previously described, and in addition presents a very attractive appearance, due to the separation of adjacent rows of panels **32** by the intervening guide rails **25**.

Each of the constructions provides flexibility and versatility by accommodating formation of any size indicia desired, and the ready change of that indicia. At the same time the device is very attractive in appearance. It will be understood that panels **32** and **36** will be supplied in kits and that these kits will include a number of blank panels **36** to accommodate centering of the displayed information in cases where only a portion of the length of the unit is consumed thereby. The blank panels also serve to space words in the sign. The individual panels will preferably be attractive in appearance and may be formed of metal, plastic, formica, or other compositions, such as those commonly used upon instrument panels in power plants and the like. The panels will be constructed with their upper and lower edges parallel and serving as guides for sliding of the panels in the guide bars, and the upright edges of the panels will be accurately fabricated for continuous edge abutment with like panels so as to avoid gaps or spaces between panels and to present a continuous surface when properly assembled. Rectangular panels are preferred but are not essential, and any other shape found suitable may be employed.

While the preferred embodiments of the invention have been illustrated and described, changes may be made in the construction within the scope of the appended claims without departing from the spirit of the invention.

I claim:

1. A sign comprising a pair of end members, a pair of spaced parallel rigid guide bars carried by and interconnecting said end members and each having a longitudinal groove, one end member having a slot extending between said bars and registering with said grooves, a group of rigid indicia-bearing panels snugly and slidably fitting in said bar grooves, and means releasably positioning said panels in said grooves including a bowed spring member slidably mounted in the slot of the end member, the central portion of the spring member engaging a wall of the slot and pressing the end portions of the spring member in engagement with the grooves to hold the spring member in selected position in edge abutment with the end panel of said group.

2. A sign comprising a pair of end members, a pair of spaced parallel rigid guide bars carried by and interconnecting said end members and each having a longitudinal groove, one end member having a slot extending between said bars and registering with said grooves, a group of rigid indicia-bearing panels snugly and slidably fitting in said bar grooves, and means releasably positioning said panels in said grooves including an arched spring plate whose central portion is offset from its end portions a distance greater than the spacing of a wall of said slot laterally relative to the plane of said grooves, whereby upon insertion of said spring plate in said slot and grooves frictional engagement of said central spring portion with a wall of said slot and of said spring end portions with said grooves holds said spring plate in selected position in edge abutment with the end panel of said group.

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