Sept. 21, 1954 E. R. WATKINS 2,689,571

FILE DIVIDER

Filed Oct. 11, 1950

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

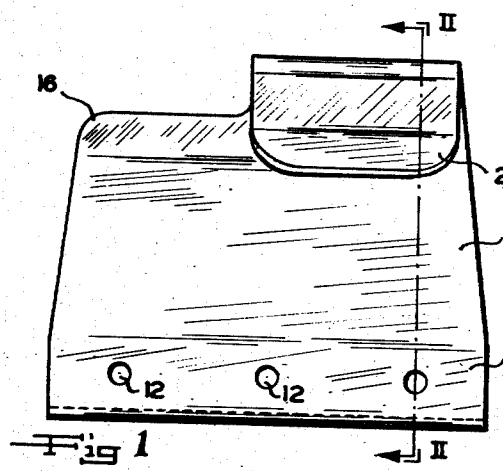


Fig 1

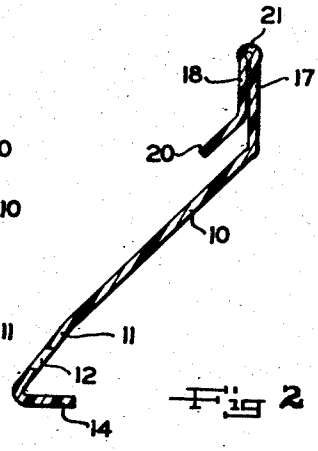


Fig 2

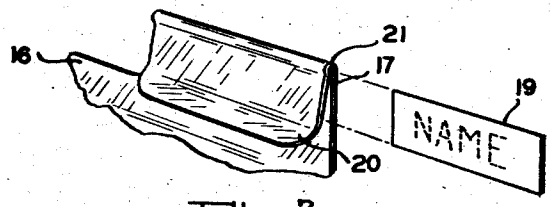


Fig 3

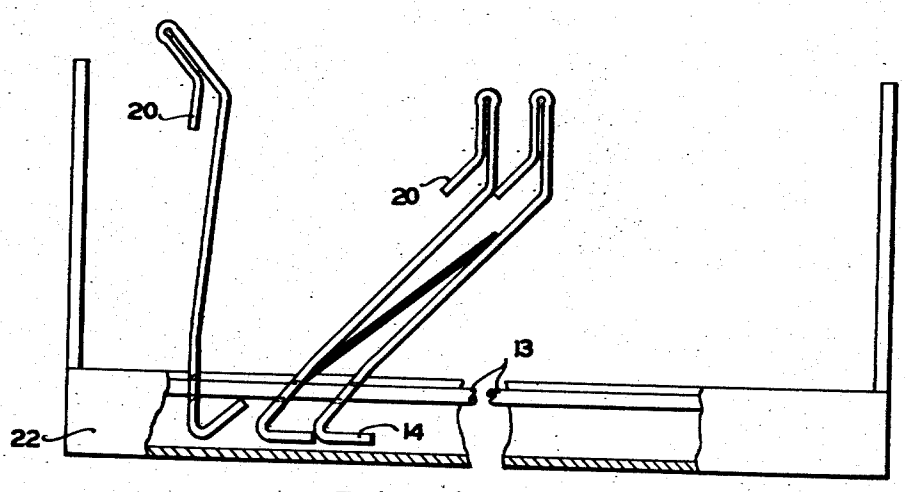


Fig 4

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FILE DIVIDER

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

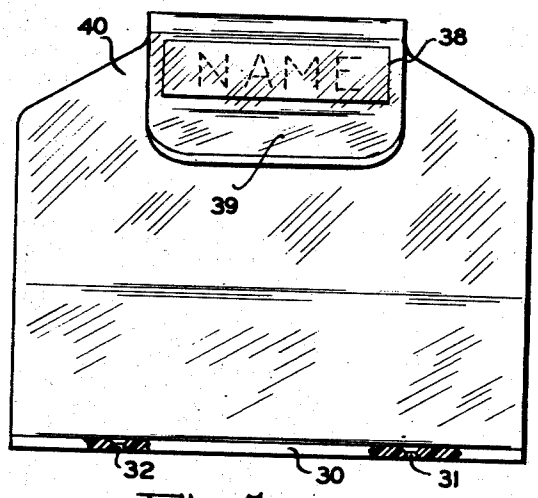


Fig 5

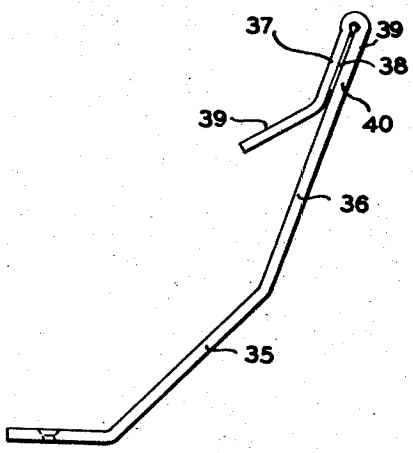


Fig 6

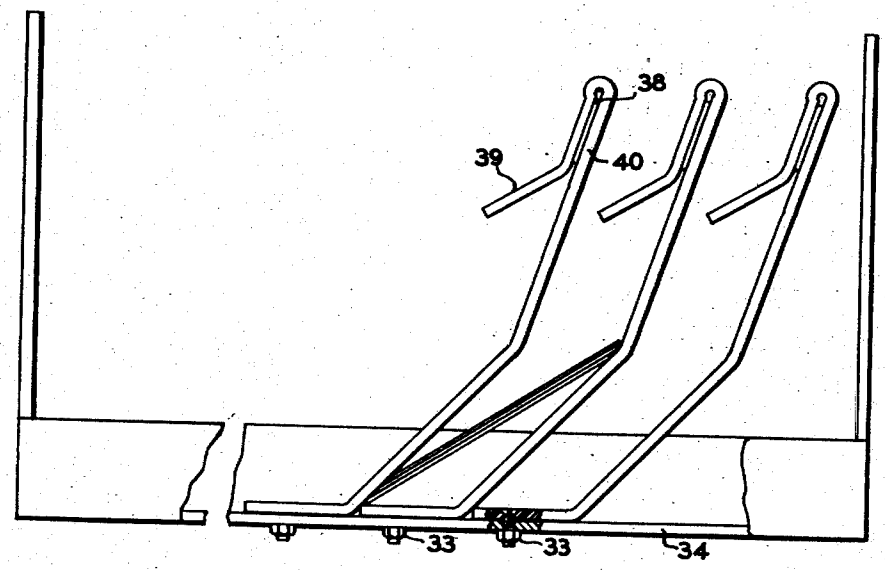


Fig 7

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FILE DIVIDER

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6 Claims. (Cl. 129—16.7)

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This invention relates to devices for filing and for sorting cards, papers and the like and more particularly to improved dividers for separating filing drawers or trays into various desired categories.

It is the primary object of this invention to provide an improved file dividing device which is formed of a single piece of material, preferably transparent plastic. Most file dividers of the prior art require, for purposes of proper identification, that a small window be attached near the upper edge of the divider. My device, being preferably of single piece construction using transparent material has such accommodations for identification, yet eliminates the need for an additional element and the additional costs concomitant therewith. My design is further advantageous in that it will accommodate identification tabs of odd sizes and irregular shapes, whereas, in general, the attached window type holder requires a standard-sized tab.

In the filing of certain types of papers, such as checks for example, which are likely to become wrinkled and bent in handling, considerable difficulty is often experienced since the irregular edges of the papers being inserted often engage the upper edges of those already in place. This necessitates considerable fumbling with the papers before they are properly positioned which is time consuming and costly. It is accordingly a secondary object of my invention to provide a file divider which is of such design that papers being inserted are prevented from engaging the edges of papers already in position. Furthermore, unless particular effort is made to do otherwise, all papers are filed in the order of their insertion rather than in a haphazard manner.

It is well known that essentially flat material when in contact with similar material is somewhat difficult to separate. It should be apparent then that should a particular section of a filing drawer become empty, or nearly so, it is often difficult to separate them to insert new papers. It is therefore a further object of my invention to provide means of insuring that my dividers will at all times be sufficiently spaced to allow separation to be readily made.

Another object of my invention is the provision of means whereby my dividers are normally seated in rearwardly inclined position, but may be easily raised to a vertical position for the insertion of papers. I further provide limiting means to allow the dividers to be raised no farther than the vertical position so that upon release they will fall to their normal inclined

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position. Thus, in filing papers, an operator may, with one hand, lift the divider, drop a paper into position, and release the divider to complete the operation, allowing the divider to fall back into proper position by gravity.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent upon consideration of the following detailed specification and accompanying drawing wherein there are disclosed certain preferred embodiments of my invention.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a front elevation of a file divider constructed in accordance with the principles of my invention;

Figure 2 is a cross section taken substantially along the line II—II of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a fragmentary perspective view of the file divider of Figure 1 showing the method of inserting identification tags;

Figure 4 is a side elevation showing several of the file dividers of Figure 2 in position in a filing drawer;

Figure 5 is a front elevation of a second embodiment of my invention;

Figure 6 is a side elevation of the embodiment shown in Figure 5; and

Figure 7 is a side elevation showing several of the file dividers shown in Figure 5 in actual operative position in a filing drawer.

Referring to Figures 1–4 which show one embodiment of my invention, the reference numeral 10 denotes the main backing plate of my divider, which is preferably formed of a single piece of transparent plastic or other suitable material. According to the principles of the invention the backing plate 10 is normally disposed in a rearwardly inclined relation at an angle of approximately 45 degrees. Depending downwardly from the lower edge of the backing plate 10 is a guide section 11 which, in the embodiment shown, is disposed somewhat more vertically than the backing plate 10. A plurality of horizontally spaced bores 12 are provided in the guide section 11 and are adapted to slidably engage guide rods 13 to position the divider as will be explained later. Extending rearwardly from the lower end of the guide section 11 is a short horizontally disposed separating element 14 which, as may be seen in Figure 4, serves to space the dividers at their lower edges as well as to limit the degree to which they may be tilted with respect to the guide rods 13.

For the purpose of permitting identification of the various dividers I have provided a tag clamp, the back section 17 of which extends

upwardly from, as a continuation of, a short vertically disposed section 16 which extends from the upper edge of the backing plate 10. A front section 18 extending downwardly from the upper edge of the back section 17, in substantially parallel relation thereto, forms a front face for the clamp. According to the invention the front section 18 presses against the back section 17 with a resilient force which enables it to yieldingly retain an identification tag such as shown at 19.

Extending downwardly and forwardly from the lower edge of the front window section 18, in spaced substantially parallel relation to the backing plate 10, is a short spacing tab 20. This tab is an important feature of the invention and, as may be observed in Figure 4, has three distinct functions, namely: in cooperation with the spacing element 14 to insure separation between dividers; to forwardly deflect sheet material inserted between adjacent dividers, to thereby prevent interference with material previously filed; and to facilitate the release of pressure between the adjacent sections 17 and 18 of the tag clamp for inserting and removing tags 19. As is shown clearly in Figure 3, the tab 20 may be lifted upwardly while pressing downwardly upon the top section 21 of the tag clamps to thereby separate the front and back sections 17 and 18. Release of the tab 20, of course, permits the section 17 and 18 to return to their normal position to yieldingly retain the tag 19. It should be noted that only the top of the tag clamps is enclosed so that substantially any size or shape of identification tag may be retained therein.

In normal use, my dividers are guided by a plurality of rods 13 which extend longitudinally along a filing drawer or tray 22 in spaced parallel relation to the bottom 23 thereof, and which are adapted to loosely and slidably engage the apertures 12 provided in the dividers. The individual dividers are retained in their normal angularly disposed position by the coaction of the rods 13 and apertures 12. The tab 20 and spacing element 14 serve as spacers to insure a minimum amount of separation between dividers. I prefer that the dividers be placed with identification windows on alternate sides to facilitate observation and to permit them to be more easily grasped.

When inserting papers into the file a divider is drawn forward until the supporting element 14 engages the underside of the guide rods 13, whereupon the divider is held in a substantially vertical position, leaving a considerable vacancy in which to insert the paper. As explained previously, the paper inserted is prevented from engaging the edges of papers previously filed by reason of the guiding function performed by the tab 20. It is therefore necessary to merely drop the paper into position and release the vertically retained divider to complete the operation. It should be understood that since the papers being inserted are prevented from engaging papers previously filed at any point near their upper edges, all papers will automatically be filed in the order of their insertion unless special effort is made to do otherwise. It should be further apparent that the operation of inserting papers between dividers may be accomplished while using only one hand since the papers may easily be dropped from the same hand which is used to draw back the divider.

Figures 5–7 show a second embodiment of my invention, which, as the first, is formed of a single piece of clear plastic. My second embodiment comprises a flat base section 30 which is apertured at 31 and 32 to receive retaining bolts 33 which are adapted to secure the base 30 to a filing tray or drawer 34. Extending upwardly and rearwardly from the base section 30 is a supporting section 35, from which extends upwardly a backing plate 36. The central upper portion 40 of the backing plate 36 forms the back section of a tag clamp while a front section 37 thereof extends downwardly from the upper edge of the central portion 40 in substantially parallel relation thereto. As in the first embodiment the front section of the tag clamp is adapted to bear against the central portion 40 to thereby yieldingly retain an identification tag 38 inserted therebetween. A tab 39 extends downwardly and forwardly from the lower edge of the front clamp section 37 and serves in this embodiment to deflect papers being inserted away from the upper edges of papers already filed, and as a means of relieving the pressure between the front clamp section 37 and the adjacent portion 40 of the backing plate 36 to thereby facilitate insertion or removal of tags 38.

The use of the second embodiment of my invention is somewhat different from that of the first in that the dividers are permanently secured in one position. A minimum separation is insured by the base sections 30 which act as spacers. Greater spacing may, of course, be utilized if desired. The filing operation using the second embodiment of my invention is somewhat simpler than that using the first since it is not necessary to draw back a divider before inserting a paper, but, as explained, the first embodiment may be spaced as desired. The particular requirements of the application should, therefore, govern the embodiment which may be most advantageously utilized.

It should now be apparent that I have provided certain improvements in the design and construction of file dividers which accomplish the objects initially set out above. Of primary importance is the utmost simplicity of the article—being readily constructed of a single sheet of preferably clear plastic material—while yet providing an article which is of substantially improved characteristics. I have found the spacing and guiding lip (20 in Figure 2 and 39 in Figure 6) in combination with the rearwardly inclined body portion 10 or 35—36 to be of great utility in maintaining the filing spaces in readily accessible condition at all times, and facilitating the sequential filing of papers and slips which may be crumpled, and in permitting instant visual verification of the spaces or pockets during filing or sorting operations.

It should be understood that certain novel features of the invention are retained even though the file dividers be made of opaque material, but by making the dividers of tough resilient and transparent plastic materials certain additional advantages accrue as, for example, the ability to read indicia directly through the material of the tag retaining clamps and the greater visibility of the slips or papers housed in the file. Also, such plastic materials require no finishing but have an inherent smooth surface which facilitates sliding movement of paper sheets between and on them. Such material also has the low coficient of friction, thus facilitating the sliding of the dividers along the mounting rods in the first described embodiment.

While in the normal use of the embodiments

illustrated the respective stacks of filed slips are arranged so that the slips last filed are on top, it should be readily apparent that by simply using the file assembly from the opposite or right end as viewed in Figures 4 and 7 the slips will be arranged so that the first filed will be on top of the stacks. This result is often desired as in sorting bank checks, for example. In normal use, however, the file assemblies will be used from the left end as viewed in Figures 4 and 7 to facilitate the viewing of the material previously filed.

The above specifically described embodiments of the invention should be considered as illustrative only as obviously many changes may be made therein without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. Reference should therefore be had to the appended claims in determining the scope of the invention.

What I claim is:

1. A file divider comprising as elements thereof a flat backing plate normally disposed in rearwardly inclined relation, a guide strip depending downwardly from the lower edge of said backing plate, said guide strip having a plurality of spaced apertures adapted to slidably engage suitable guide rods, a horizontally disposed spacing element extending rearwardly from the lower edge of said guide strip, said spacing element being operative to engage an adjacent divider to thereby insure minimum separation therebetween and said spacing element being adapted to engage guide rods to thereby limit the degree to which said divider may be tilted on said guide rods, a vertically disposed tag clamp extending upwardly from the upper edge of said backing plate, said clamp comprising a back section and a translucent front section depending from the upper edge of said back section and adapted to bear thereagainst, a spacing tab depending downwardly and forwardly from the lower edge of said front section, said spacing tab being operative to insure minimum separation between adjacent dividers, and said spacing tab being further operative to forwardly deflect material being inserted between said adjacent dividers.

2. A file divider comprising as elements thereof a flat backing plate normally disposed in rearwardly inclined relation, said backing plate having a plurality of spaced apertures along its lower edge to slidably engage guide rods, a horizontally disposed spacing element extending rearwardly from the lower edge of said backing plate below said apertures, said spacing element being operative to engage an adjacent divider to thereby insure minimum separation therebetween and to engage said guide rods to limit the degree to which said divider may be tilted on said guide rods, a tag clamp positioned substantially at the top of said backing plate and comprising front and back elements adapted to apply pressure to an object inserted therebetween, a separating tab depending downwardly and forwardly from the lower edge of said front element, said tab being operative to provide minimum separation between adjacent dividers and to forwardly deflect material being inserted between said adjacent dividers.

3. A file divider formed of sheet-like material and comprising as elements thereof a rearwardly inclined body portion having a horizontally extending leg at its lower edge to effect horizontal

spacing of a plurality of such dividers when mounted in parallel relation in a filing drawer or the like, a tag clamp positioned on the top edge of said body portion and comprising a back element and a translucent front element adapted to apply clamping pressure to a tag positioned between said front and back elements, and a separating tab depending downwardly and forwardly from the lower edge of said front clamping element, said separating tab being adapted to forwardly deflect sheet material when inserted vertically downward to filing position in front of said divider.

4. Apparatus according to claim 3 further characterized in that said body portion comprises a lower section which is rearwardly inclined at a substantial angle and a rearwardly inclined upper section which is inclined at a lesser angle, the arrangement being such that cards and other sheet-like objects which are deposited vertically between adjacent parallel dividers each have their lower edge diverted forwardly and are thus deposited in a rearwardly inclined stack with the last filed card or object always on the top of the stack.

5. A file divider formed of sheet-like material and having a horizontally disposed base section adapted to be rigidly secured to the bottom wall of a filing drawer and the like and forming means to control the spacing of a plurality of dividers in said drawer or the like, a body portion extending upwardly and rearwardly from one edge of said base section, a tag clamp positioned along the top edge of said body portion and having a front element overlying a rear element to apply yielding retaining pressure to a tag clamped therebetween, and a deflecting tab depending downwardly and forwardly from the lower edge of said front clamp element and operative to deflect forwardly a card or other sheet-like object being inserted vertically into position in front of said body portion, said tab also serving as a hand grip member to facilitate the opening of said tag clamp.

6. A file divider comprising as elements thereof a flat horizontally disposed base section, said base section having apertures therein adapted to engage bolts or other suitable retaining means, an angularly disposed backing plate extending upwardly and rearwardly from said base section, a tag clamp comprising a translucent front section depending downwardly from the upper edge of said backing plate in substantially parallel relation thereto and adapted to apply pressure thereto to thereby yieldingly retain an object inserted therebetween, and a tab depending downwardly and forwardly from the lower edge of said front section and adapted to forwardly deflect sheet material inserted between adjacent dividers.

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