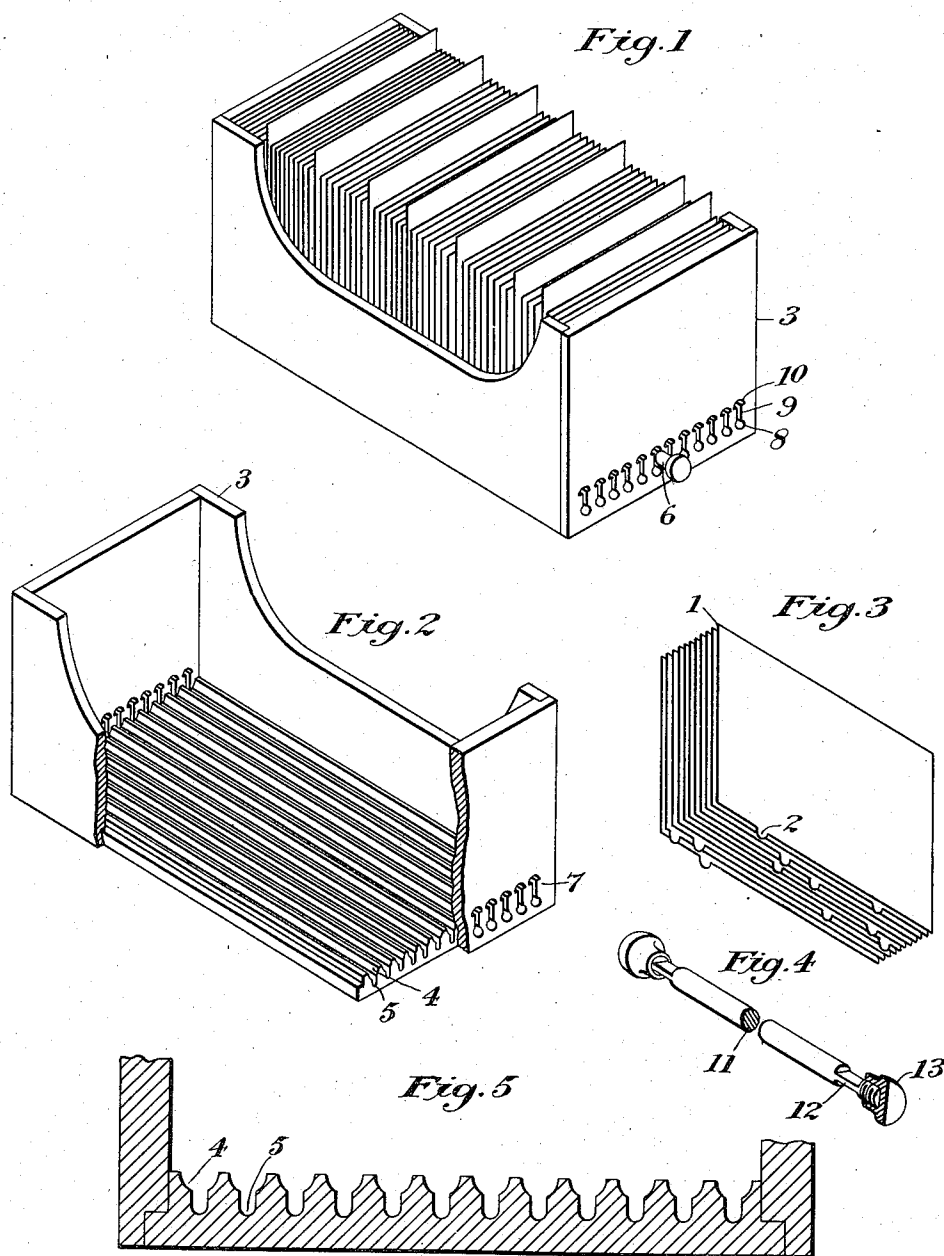


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PATENTED OCT. 8, 1907.

W. M. STRETCH.
CARD INDEX SYSTEM.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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CARD-INDEX SYSTEM.

No. 867,930.

Specification of Letters Patent.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM M. STRETCH, a citizen of the United States, residing in Mount Vernon, Westchester county, and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Card-Index Systems, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact specification.

My invention relates to card records or card indexes wherein are recorded in tabulated form, numerous items of information to which ready access is desired and relates to the same general character of device as is shown in a co-pending application filed by me, which is designated Sr. No. 229,189 and of which the present application is a division. Such cards are usually arranged in alphabetical or some other desired order and it is frequently desired to obtain all of those cards which contain information relating to the same subject. For instance, in case the cards are used for recording the subscription list of a periodical it is desirable to be able to obtain at one time all of the cards containing subscriptions which are about to expire. Such cards will be scattered indiscriminately throughout the mass or body of the cards which are usually arranged in such cases in alphabetical or geographical order for convenience of reference, and it is highly desirable to be able to simultaneously and accurately separate from the whole body of such cards all of those desired.

The object of my invention is to provide the said cards with distinguishing characteristics by means of which they may be separated. Such distinguishing characteristics are the same for related cards or cards belonging to the same group or class in the case supposed for those cards containing subscriptions expiring coincidentally, and the characteristics of each group or class differ from those of every other group or class. In connection therewith I provide an apparatus by means of which in cooperation with the said distinguishing characteristics, cards belonging to the same group or class may be simultaneously separated from the mass or body of the cards.

In carrying my invention into effect I have provided each card upon a portion of its contour, preferably either the side or the bottom of the card with a distinguishing characteristic, which, as shown, is in the form of a tab or projection, and the position of which determines the class to which the card belongs. Cards belonging to the same class or group will have their tabs or projections in like position and there will be as many lines of tabs as there are groups of cards.

An advantage following from my invention as illustrated in the drawing accompanying this application is that by the use of the same I am enabled to cause the cards which it is desired to select from the mass to be separated therefrom by projecting their upper edges

above the rest of the cards whereby they are brought into a prominent position, are easily extracted and not liable to be overlooked.

Said cards are illustrated in the accompanying drawing which also illustrates the receptacle used by me in connection with the same.

In the said drawing, Figure 1 is a perspective view of the card containing receptacle with cards therein, embodying one form of my invention and illustrating the same in use. Fig. 2 is a perspective view partly broken, of the card containing receptacle of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a small number of cards illustrating one manner of applying thereto the distinguishing characteristics, and which cards are adapted for use in connection with the card containing receptacle of Figs. 1 and 2. Fig. 4 illustrates partly in section a rod adapted for use in connection with receptacle of Fig. 1, and Fig. 5 is a cross section of the card containing receptacle of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 illustrates a small number of cards each of which has said distinguishing characteristic at its lower edge. I have designated the foremost card in this group as 1, and the distinguishing characteristic applied to the lower edge thereof, as illustrated is a tab or projection 2. The position of this tab, or projection 2 upon the card determines the class or group to which the said card belongs. Cards belonging to the same class or group will have projections 2 in line. For instance, it will be observed that the top card and the bottom card in the group of cards (Fig. 3) have the tab or projection 2 in line. This will insure these cards being simultaneously separated from the rest of the cards. The other cards in Fig. 3 have their projections in different lines.

The cards are shown in position in a box 3 in Fig. 1, wherein a number of the cards are shown as separated from the mass by being raised above the balance of the cards. The card containing receptacle 3 is provided on its inside at the bottom with a series of longitudinal grooves 4, which are so shaped as to receive and hold without injury, the tabs or projections 2 of the cards. There may be any required number of grooves 4, one being provided for each line of projection 2, therefore there should be as many lines of projections and grooves as there are groups or classes into which the cards are to be divided. At the bottom of each groove 4 is cut a channel or slot 5 adapted to receive a rod such as 6. The front and rear walls of the box 3 are provided in line with the ends of each groove 4 with slots 7 each of which has a rounded lower opening 8, a narrow passageway 9, and an expanded upper part 10 which has a flat base, and a rounded top.

The rod 6 has a rounded center portion 11 and flat-

tened end parts 12, and is provided on each end with removable knobs or finger pieces, 13. These may be held in place by friction or may be screwed on as shown in section in Fig. 4. The rods 6 normally rest in the channels or slots 5, and when it is desired to extract a certain group of cards a rod may be inserted in the proper opening 8 and turned so that the narrow part 12 of the rod will be in line with the restricted passageway 9. The rod can then be raised, carrying with it the cards whose projections 2 have been situated in the groove 4 lying immediately above the rod, and when the rod has passed into the opening 10 it may be turned and its flattened portions 12 will rest on the flat base of the opening 10 in which position it will retain the selected cards while they are being extracted.

It will be observed that the channel or slot 5 being below the groove 4 the rod 6 may be inserted in any of the openings desired without disturbing the cards. The box 3 as shown in Fig. 1 has one rod 6 in position. If the box is so used, the rear knob 13 would be omitted to facilitate the introduction and removal of the rod and the rear part of the rod may be raised by the fingers, but if desired each slot 4 may have an independent rod 6 when the rear knobs 13 of all of the said rods could be retained.

The operation of my invention will be fully understood from the foregoing description. When the cards 1 each having its appropriate tab or projection 2, are inserted in the box 3, with the said tabs or projections down each projection 2 will enter a corresponding groove 4 in said box, and the upper surfaces of all of the cards will be even. If it is desired to select from the said cards any particular group or body, the rod 6, the position of which in the box 3 corresponds to the position of the projections 2 upon the group of cards desired to be selected, will be turned so that its narrow part 12 will pass through the restricted passageway 9 into the opening 10, where it will be again turned and locked in the upper position. The cards desired to be selected will then be as raised as illustrated in Fig. 1 and may be consulted or removed if desired.

The flattened base of the opening 10 is about in line with that portion of the bottom of the box between the grooves 4, permitting the rod 6 to be raised without disturbing any cards except those which it is desired to separate. Should it be found necessary to select any other group of cards this may be done without interference with the group already selected.

It will be apparent that the tabs or projections shown may be applied to the cards at the time that they are manufactured or should the character of the use to which the said cards are put render this undesirable from the fact that it may not be known until after the cards have the desired information recorded upon them, to which class or group they will belong, the said tabs may be afterwards applied to the cards by pasting a strip on them which should project below the bottom of the cards and pass across the entire width of the cards to prevent catching, or such projection may be formed by cutting away the balance of the card and allowing a portion thereof to remain as a projection. I have shown the tab or projection as applied to the lower edge of the card and regard this as the most desirable. It may however be applied to the side edges of the cards.

While I have shown the projection as being rounded

it obviously may be made in other forms and it may be found desirable in case the said cards are to have the projection applied to them afterward, to indicate by printing or otherwise, the position thereof. It will be seen that an error in applying the projection to the card is easily corrected by pasting thereon a fresh strip of material having the projection in the corrected place. The use of the said cards and receptacle will insure certainty in the separation of the desired cards and will insure that none of the said cards will be overlooked by reason of the fact that the separated cards project above the rest of the cards and are thrust prominently before the eye of the person making use of the cards.

I have shown a box provided with grooves and channels therein and a rod cooperating therewith, and means for locking the rod in the raised position, but it will be apparent that this is only one means by which the cards may be separated from the mass by being raised above the same, and I do not wish to be limited to the particular construction of box illustrated by me.

What I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A series of record cards distinguished in groups, each card having a projection on an edge thereof, cards belonging to the same group having their projections in line and a receptacle for said cards provided with means whereby all of said cards belonging to any one group may be simultaneously separated from the mass of cards substantially as described. 90
2. A series of record cards distinguished in groups each card having a projection on an edge thereof, cards belonging to the same group having their projections in line, a receptacle for said cards provided with a series of grooves adapted to receive said projections, and a bar in said receptacle adapted to separate the cards whose projections are adjacent to said bar from the mass, substantially as described. 95 100
3. In a card indexing system, a receptacle for the cards, means therein for receiving projections on the lower edges of said cards and aligning same, selecting means in said receptacle underlying the whole body of said cards and said projection receiving means, and means for operating said selecting means, whereby all cards belonging to any desired group or class may be separated from the mass by being projected above the rest of the cards, substantially as described. 105 110
4. In a card indexing system, a series of cards distinguished in groups, provided with projections on the lower edge thereof, the position of which determines the character of the card, cards of like character having the said projections in line, and a receptacle adapted to contain said cards and provided with means underlying the mass of said cards and cooperating with said projections by the operation of which means all the cards of any desired group may be simultaneously raised above the rest of the cards substantially as described. 115 120
5. A series of record cards, distinguished in groups by projections on the lower edges of said cards, cards of the same group having their projections in line, a receptacle for said cards provided with means for holding the said projections in alignment and with means underlying all of said cards, and cooperating with said projections, upon the operation of which all cards belonging in a certain group may be separated from the mass by being projected above the rest of the cards, substantially as described. 125 130
6. A card receptacle provided on its inner lower surface with a series of grooves, a slot at the bottom of each groove, the said grooves and slots extending throughout the entire length of the box, said slots adapted to allow the passage of a selecting rod, and openings in the front and rear walls of the said receptacle through which said rod is adapted to pass, substantially as described. 135
7. A card containing and separating receptacle, provided with a series of grooves, in its lower wall, and a

channel in the bottom of each groove adapted to receive a selecting rod, the said grooves and channels extending from front to rear of the box, slots in the front and rear walls of the receptacle in line with each groove and channel, a selecting rod normally in one of said channels, and means whereby the said rod may be raised and locked in the raised position substantially as described.

8. A series of record cards distinguished in groups, each card provided with a projection upon the lower edge thereof, the position of which determines the group to which the card belongs, cards of the same group having their projections in line, a receptacle therefor provided with a support for said cards which permits free access to said projections, a selecting rod, underlying said projections and adapted to be lifted and cause the said cards whose projections are directly above said rod to be projected above the rest of the cards, substantially as described.

9. In a card index, a card provided with a bearing member extending below the normal edge of the said card.

10. In a card index, a card provided with a bearing member extending below the normal edge of the said card,

and means for supporting and raising the said bearing member and the attached card.

11. A selective card index device comprising a receptacle adapted to contain cards, selecting members adapted to engage the bottom edges of the cards at different points of their width, and index cards provided at their bottom edges with differently placed projections in positions corresponding to those which may be assumed by the said selecting members.

12. A selective card index device comprising a receptacle adapted to contain cards, index cards provided with differently placed projections at their bottom edges, and a selecting member movable to different points in the width of the cards and adapted, according to its position, to engage different projections of the cards.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

WILLIAM M. STRETCH.

Witnesses:

ADOLPH F. DINSE,
IRENE G. CORBALIS.