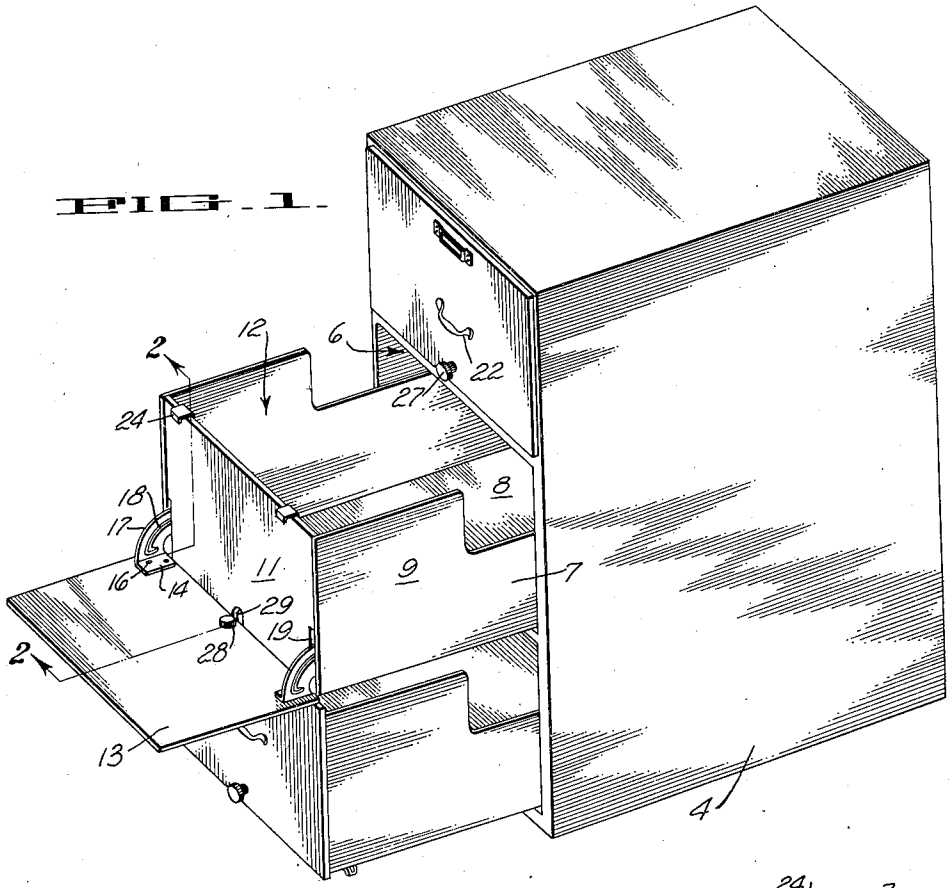
Nov. 1, 1949 W. C. MITCHELL 2,486,966

FILING CABINET UTILITY SHELF

Filed Nov. 12, 1947

FIG. 1.



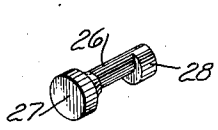


FIG. 4.

FIG. 2.

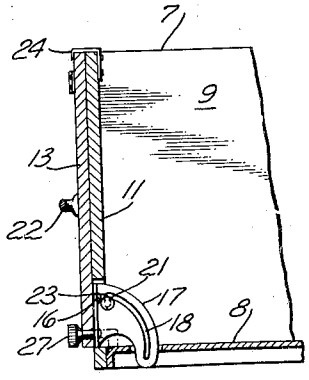


FIG. 3.

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FILING CABINET UTILITY SHELF

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3 Claims. (Cl. 311—17)

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This invention relates to cabinets for the files storage of letters or other sheet material and has particular reference to the construction of the drawers of such cabinets by means of which a portion of a drawer may be moved into a position wherein it may be made to serve as a supporting shelf, for the reception of papers or the like removed from the file, or as a writing desk.

An object of the invention is to provide, in a filing cabinet structure, a work-supporting shelf which when in folded non-use position becomes an inconspicuous portion of the drawer of such cabinet.

Another object of the invention is to provide a work-supporting shelf of the character described which, in its position of use, is entirely exterior of the cabinet drawer and preserves the utilitarian features of the drawer in preventing toppling over of the papers which may be arranged edgewise vertically in the drawer filing space.

A further object of the invention is to provide a shelf of the type referred to which may be readily incorporated in existing designs of filing cabinets without materially altering the cabinet structures or incurring excessive additional cost in the construction of the cabinets.

Still another object of the invention is to provide, in a filing cabinet structure wherein an adjustable work shelf is included as part of and cooperative with a drawer front of the cabinet, improved hinge and lock means connecting the work shelf and drawer front.

The invention possesses other objects and features of advantage, some of which, with the foregoing, will be set forth in the following description of the preferred form of the invention which is illustrated in the drawings accompanying and forming part of the specification. It is to be understood, however, that variations in the showing made by the said drawings and description may be adopted within the scope of the invention as set forth in the claims.

Referring to the drawing:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a filling cabinet showing the work-supporting shelf of my invention in extended position.

Figure 2 is a vertical sectional view taken in the plane indicated by the line 2—2 of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a view similar to Figure 2 showing the shelf in retracted position.

Figure 4 is an enlarged perspective view of the lock rotor.

In carrying out my invention, I utilize a base structure comprising a conventional filing cabinet or the like having a housing 4 containing one or more drawer recesses 6 for containing the slidable drawers 7. These drawers are more or less of conventional shape having the usual bottom 8, side walls 9, and front panel 11 defining the receptacle 12 in which the letters, folders or

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other papers may be arranged in edgewise vertical and horizontally parallel relationship.

Arranged exteriorly of and overlying the front panel 11, I provide a false front member 13 equal, at least, in area to the former panel. This front member forms the shelf of my invention and is arranged, by pivotal connection with the panel 11, to be moved between a position of non-use, shown in Figure 3, wherein it lies contiguous with the panel 11 and functions cooperatively therewith as the drawer front, and a position of use, shown in Figures 1 and 2 wherein it extends horizontally from the panel 11, preferably along the lower edge of the latter, to function as a shelf for the reception of papers removed from the file or as a depository for papers about to be inserted into the file. The shelf may also conveniently function as a desk for supporting the file papers as notations or other markings are being written or stamped thereon.

The manner of hinging the front shelf member 13 to the front panel 11 and for locking the former to the latter so as to form an inseparable front structure for the file drawer forms an important part of my invention. As here shown, I provide a pair of brackets 14, secured by screws 16 or by other suitable means to the shelf member 13 at opposite ends of the lower edge thereof, which are each provided with wings 17 extending therefrom which have therein arcuate slots 18 whose center of curvature substantially coincides with the lower edge of the member 13 facing the front panel 11 of the drawer. The wings 17 are passed through apertures 19 formed in the lower side portions of the panel 11 and headed pins 21, secured to the inner surfaces of the side walls 9, are slidably engaged in the wing slots 18. Thus the member 13 is mounted to pivot about its inner lower edge relative to the panel 11 from a vertical position contiguous with the latter to an extended position horizontally and angularly related to the panel. It will be noted that in its extended position, the bottom edge of the shelf member lies against the front of the panel 11 while the pins 21 occupy the distal ends of the slots 18 relative to the shelf member thus providing elevated anchor points above the contact point of the shelf and panel 11 and affording adequate stabilizing braces for the shelf member to withstand normal downward pressures which may be imposed on the shelf member.

Since the shelf member 13 forms the outermost front portion of the drawer structure and consequently carries the pull grip 22, it is essential that the shelf member, when in its edgewise vertical position of non-use, be securely locked to the panel 11 in order to prevent relative separation of the parts during the action of opening the file drawer. As here shown, I provide each of the wing slots 18, at the end thereof nearest the shelf member 13, with a radially-ex-

tending notch 23 adapted to be entered by the pin 21 upon slight upward movement of the shelf member when the latter is in its aforesaid edgewise vertical position. This locks the lower portion of the shelf member against horizontal outward movement away from the panel 11. I also provide the upper edge portion of the panel 11 with one or more downwardly-opening hooks 24 into which the upper edge portion of the shelf member may pass as the latter is vertically raised so as to thus lock the upper portion of the shelf member to the drawer panel 11. The means for raising and holding the shelf member may take one of several suitable forms but I have chosen to show, as illustrated in Figure 4, a lock element comprising a shaft 26, extending through and journaled in the lower portion of the shelf member, having an exposed knob 27 for rotating the shaft and further being provided at its inner end with an integral eccentric or similar cam 28 having a throw equivalent to the desired amount of vertical movement of the shelf member and adapted to enter an aperture 29 located in the bottom portion of the panel 11 and to bear, as shown in Figure 3, against the lower side of the latter aperture or against the upper surface of the drawer bottom 8 depending upon design. It will be seen that when the shelf member is moved to edgewise vertical position lying contiguously with the panel 11 and the knob 27 is manipulated to rotate the shaft 26, the eccentric or cam 28 will effect the aforesaid raising of the shelf member to engage the upper edge portion of the latter in the hooks 24 and to cause the pins 21 to enter the notches 23 thereby securely locking the shelf member in its position of non-use and permitting the normal strains of opening the drawer to be imposed thereon without danger of causing dislodgement of the shelf member. Placement of the locking cam 29 closely adjacent the hinged edge of the shelf member minimizes surface obstruction in the working area of the latter.

In reiteration, it will be seen that I have provided a shelf member for use with filing cabinets or the like which forms an inconspicuous part of the drawer structure, which may be easily and rapidly moved between operative and inoperative positions, which affords, with each drawer, an unobstructed work surface of the greatest permissible area, which may be securely locked to form, in effect, an integral part of the drawer structure and which does not add materially to the complexity of the drawer structure nor to the constructional costs of the file as a whole. In addition, it will be seen that by providing a solid and stationary front wall for the drawer, embodied in the panel 11, the drawer contents are kept from toppling over forwardly of the drawer which might occur if the shelf member 13 alone formed the drawer front.

I claim:

1. In a filing cabinet provided with a sliding drawer having a stationary front panel therein for holding contents of the drawer from movement beyond the forward end thereof, a shelf member substantially equal in area with said front panel means hingedly connecting said member with the drawer for movement between positions contiguous with and angularly related to said front panel, said hinge means providing a brace extending between the front panel and shelf member at points beyond the hinge axis when said shelf member is in its angularly related

position, and means operative upon parallel planar movement of said shelf member relative to said front panel when in said contiguously related position for locking the shelf member to said front panel.

2. In a filing cabinet provided with a sliding drawer having a stationary front panel therein for holding contents of the drawer from movement beyond the forward end thereof, a shelf member substantially equal in area with said front panel hingedly connected with the drawer for movement between positions contiguous with and angularly related to said front panel at an outer portion thereof, said hinged connection between said front panel and shelf member including a brace extending between the front panel and shelf member at points beyond the hinge axis, lock means carried by said front panel and said hinge means cooperative with portions of said shelf member and drawer structure operative upon vertical raising of the shelf member relative to the front panel when in its said contiguous position for locking the shelf member to the front panel, and cam actuated means for raising said shelf member and moving said lock means into and out of engagement with said cooperating portions of said shelf member and drawer structure.

3. In a filing cabinet provided with a sliding drawer having a stationary front panel therein for holding contents of the drawer from movement beyond the forward end thereof, a shelf member substantially equal in area with said front panel hingedly connected with the drawer for movement between positions contiguous with and angularly related to said front panel, said hinged connection being provided by brackets disposed adjacent opposite ends of an edge of said shelf member and provided with wings each having therein an arcuate slot having a center of curvature coinciding with said edge and being provided at one end with a lock notch, pins carried by said drawer structure slidably engaged in said arcuate slots and disposed to position said edge of the shelf member adjacent the lower edge of said front panel, hook members carried by said front panel and opening downwardly toward said hinged connection, and a cam member carried by said shelf member and engaging a portion of said drawer structure, said cam member being manually rotatable to urge said shelf member upwardly into engagement with said hook members and said lock notches into engagement with said pins to secure the shelf member to the front panel to preclude relative pivotal movement therebetween when said shelf member and front panel are in said contiguously related position.

WALTER C. MITCHELL.

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