J. S. BAKER.

BALLOT.

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1,350,914.

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Fig. 1.
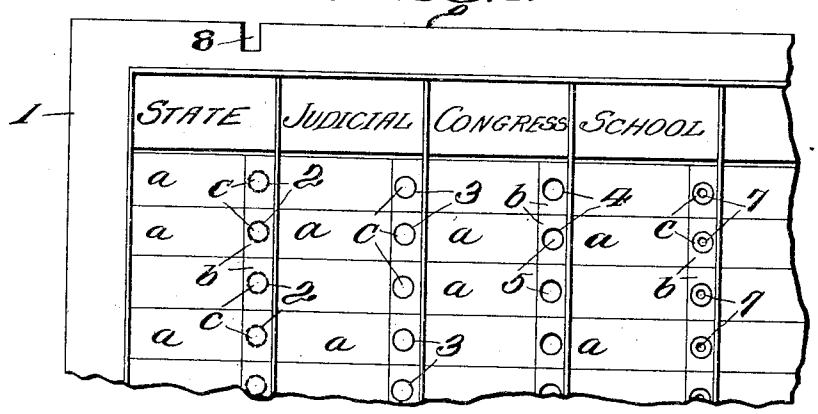


Fig. 2.

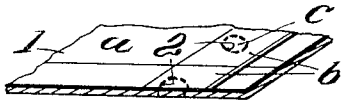


Fig. 3.

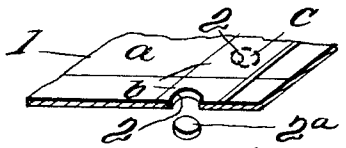


Fig. 4.

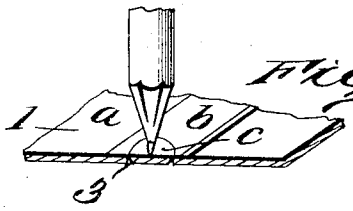
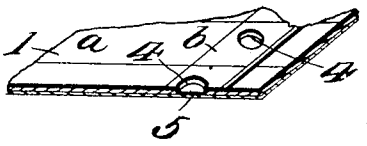


Fig. 5.



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BALLOT.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN S. BAKER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Los Angeles, in the county of Los Angeles and State of California, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Ballots; and I hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, which form part of this specification.

This invention relates to means for balloting or voting. The object of the invention is to obviate the use of voting machines and provide a ballot which the average voter can use as readily as he can the present marking system and with greater accuracy, so that the voter does not have to be taught anything as regards the manner of voting with such ballot, and does not have to handle any machinery for registering his vote.

The invention resides in a novel ballot, which is preliminarily weakened or partially perforated in such manner that the voter can readily complete the perforation opposite the name of each candidate for whom he desires to vote, and thereafter such ballot can be easily counted by suitable machines.

In general appearance the ballot is similar to the ordinary paper ballots, and the novel feature of the invention is a ballot so formed that it must and will be properly perforated when voted and all the perforations will be accurately located, but the voter can prepare his ballot without any special tools and without using any kind of machine or apparatus for locating the perforations; and can punch the ballot with a lead pencil as readily as he could mark it with such pencil.

My novel ballot is preliminarily weakened or partially perforated and is adapted for accurate final perforation by the voter without any special tools, so that the average voter can go into the booth and vote the ballot, and all the perforations which he makes therein will be properly located and properly sized because of the preliminary weakened or partial perforations and such ballots can be accurately registered and counted by a suitable machine.

I am aware that it has been heretofore proposed to have the voter punch a ballot to indicate his candidates instead of marking same; but merely punching the ballot is not the feature of my invention. The essential feature of my invention being providing an ordinary looking ballot having preliminarily weakened or partially perforated portions at the points where the ballot would ordinarily be marked by the voter, so that the voter instead of marking the ballot opposite candidates for whom he desires to vote simply completes the perforation.

In the preferred form, the ballot has a disk partly detached therefrom opposite each candidates name, and such disk can be readily detached and forced from its place by means of an ordinary lead pencil or pointed stick. Or the preliminary weakening can be formed in the ballot by materially thinning the material of the ballot at the points where it may be punched so that the thinned portion can be readily perforated by a pencil; or in another form, small perforations are made in the ballot at the proper points and can be enlarged by a lead pencil or pointed stick.

In either case the ballot is preliminarily weakened or partially perforated in such manner that when the voter completes the perforations they will form holes of such size and so exactly positioned in the ballot that when such ballot is run through the counting machine its detectors will find the holes and accurately count the votes registered on the ballot, and improper counting or registration by misplaced perforations will be prevented. It is important that the holes on the ballots be accurately located so that the counting machine pins will not strike the sides of irregularly placed holes; therefore the holes must be punched accurately.

My invention does not change the present system of voting at all. With my invention when the voter goes to the booth he is given an ordinary looking ballot, made of cardboard or heavier paper than is usually employed, and instead of stamping a cross on the ballot opposite the name of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote, he simply completes the forming of the preliminary or partially formed holes in the ballot opposite the names of the candidates for whom he votes with a lead pencil or pointed stick. After the polling booths are closed such ballots can be counted in a proper counting machine.

In the accompanying drawings I have

conventionally illustrated a ballot embodying the invention and will explain same with reference to the drawings, and summarize in the claims the essential novel features for which protection is desired.

In said drawings:

Figure 1 illustrates part of a ballot embodying the invention, the arrangement of matter on the ballot being common.

Fig. 2 is a detail section showing the at present preferred mode of forming partial perforations thereon.

Fig. 3 is a similar view showing the perforations completed.

Fig. 4 is a similar section showing another mode of forming the perforations.

Fig. 5 is a similar section indicating another modification of the ballot.

The ballot 1 is preferably made either of heavy paper or of cardboard, and of about the size commonly employed, and may have the same superficial arrangement of printed matter as the common ballots usually employed in voting by the so-called Australian ballot system.

On such ballots the candidates for "State", "Judicial", "Congress", and "School", etc., are usually arranged in columns, and a space is provided for the name of each candidate, such spaces being indicated at *a*, and adjacent each space *a* is a marking space, indicated at *b*.

In the preferred form of ballot (Figs. 2–3) made in accordance with my invention, in each space *b* is a circle, indicated at *c*, and the portion of the ballot material within the circle *c* is preferably partly severed from the blank 1 by perforating or otherwise, as indicated at 2 in the left hand column of Fig. 1, and in Figs. 2 and 3; and when the voter wishes to register a vote for any candidate he punches this blank or disk 2^a out of the ballot with a pencil or other instrument, leaving a hole therein as indicated in Fig. 3.

Instead of forming the ballot with partially detached disks 2^a, as in Figs. 2 and 3, the ballot might be weakened in the spaces *b* by thinning the ballots or partly punching the material therefrom as indicated at 3 in Figs. 1 and 4, leaving the ballot imperforate but thinned at the portion 3 in each circle *c*; such thin portions can be readily perforated with a pencil by the voter.

As shown in Fig. 5 the holes may be punched in the circles *c*, as indicated at 4 in Figs. 1 and 5; each hole so formed being closed by a thin sheet of paper 5 preferably applied to the back of the ballot, and which paper may be tinted so that it would be readily distinguished by the voter, and this thin paper could be punched by the voter inserting a pencil or similar instrument in the opening 4 in the block *b* opposite the name of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote, and punching the paper covering such opening.

In each case it will be seen that all the voter has to do is to take his ballot and instead of marking in the spaces *b*, he punches through the ballot within the circles *c* in the spaces *b* opposite the names of the candidates for whom he wishes to vote.

The ballots 1 may be provided with registering perforations or notches 8 at desired points, by which the ballots can be alined and properly positioned in the counting machine, (not shown), so that when the ballots are run through such machine, they will be properly presented beneath the detector pins with which the machine is provided in the manner well understood, and wherever a detector finds a hole of the proper size in the ballot it will cause registration of a vote for the candidate opposite whose name the hole in the ballot appears.

In practically utilizing my invention the ballot is preferably prepared by partially perforating or detaching disks at the points to be punched (as in Figs. 2 and 3); so that each disk may be readily punched out leaving a properly formed hole, and as the ballots are made of stiff paper or cardboard it would be difficult to make a hole any other place. Or instead of partially perforating the ballots as stated, the ballot could be partially punched, but not wholly perforated, as in Fig. 4, so as to leave only thin disk-like films at the points where the ballot should be punched for voting; or the holes might be previously punched in the ballot and then covered by thin paper, as in Fig. 5, which can be readily punched through by the voter.

In each case all the voter has to do is simply to force a pencil or pin through the ballot at the point indicated opposite the name of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote, at which point the ballot is already preliminarily weakened or partially perforated or punched, and the voter simply completes the perforation to form an opening of the desired size opposite the name of the candidate for whom he desires to vote; such holes in the ballot being properly located and properly sized without any further manipulation; and when such ballots are placed in the counting machine its detecting pins pass through the holes punched in the ballots and would not strike the sides of the holes but pass therethrough and insure proper registration of the candidates for whom the voter has voted.

What I claim is:

1. An electoral ballot displaying the names of the candidates thereon and having a part of the ballot adjacent the name of each candidate preliminarily weakened in such manner that the voter can readily complete the formation of a hole of proper size

in the ballot opposite the name of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote, such preliminarily weakened portions of the ballot being so located that the holes completed by the voter will be properly centered; and the ballot having registering portions whereby any number of such ballots when voted may be properly counted by a suitable machine.

2. An electoral ballot displaying the names of the candidates and having weakened portions adjacent the names of the candidates, to enable a voter to readily make a hole opposite the name of the candidate for whom he desires to vote by pushing a pencil or pointed instrument through the adjacent preliminarily weakened portion of the ballot; the preliminarily weakened portions in the ballot being so located that the holes completed by the voter will be properly centered; and the ballot having registering portions whereby any number of such ballots when voted may be counted by a suitable machine.

3. An electoral ballot bearing the names of the candidates and having an indicating space adjacent the name of each candidate, the material of the ballot being preliminarily weakened at such spaces so that the voter can readily punch such spaces to form holes in the ballot opposite the names of the candidates for whom he wishes to vote; such preliminarily weakened portions in the ballot being so located that the holes completed by the voter will be properly centered; and the ballot having registering portions to enable any number of such ballots when voted to be properly counted by a suitable machine.

4. An electoral ballot bearing the names of the candidates and having a part of the material of the ballot adjacent the name of each candidate preliminarily weakened by partially perforating the ballot to enable the voter to readily punch such weakened portion of the ballot opposite the name of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote; the preliminarily weakened portions in the ballot being so located that the holes completed by the voter will be properly centered; and the ballot having registering portions to enable any number of such ballots when voted to be properly counted by a suitable machine.

5. An electoral ballot for the purpose specified bearing the names of the candidates and having an indicating space adjacent the name of each candidate; the material in the ballot at such spaces being preliminarily weakened by partially detaching the portions of material of the ballot within such spaces from the ballot to enable the voter to readily punch such portions from the ballot opposite the names of the candidates for whom he wishes to vote; the preliminarily weakened portions of the ballot being so located that the holes completed by the voter will be properly centered; and the ballot having registering portions to enable any number of such ballots when voted to be properly counted by a suitable machine.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I affix my signature.

JOHN S. BAKER.