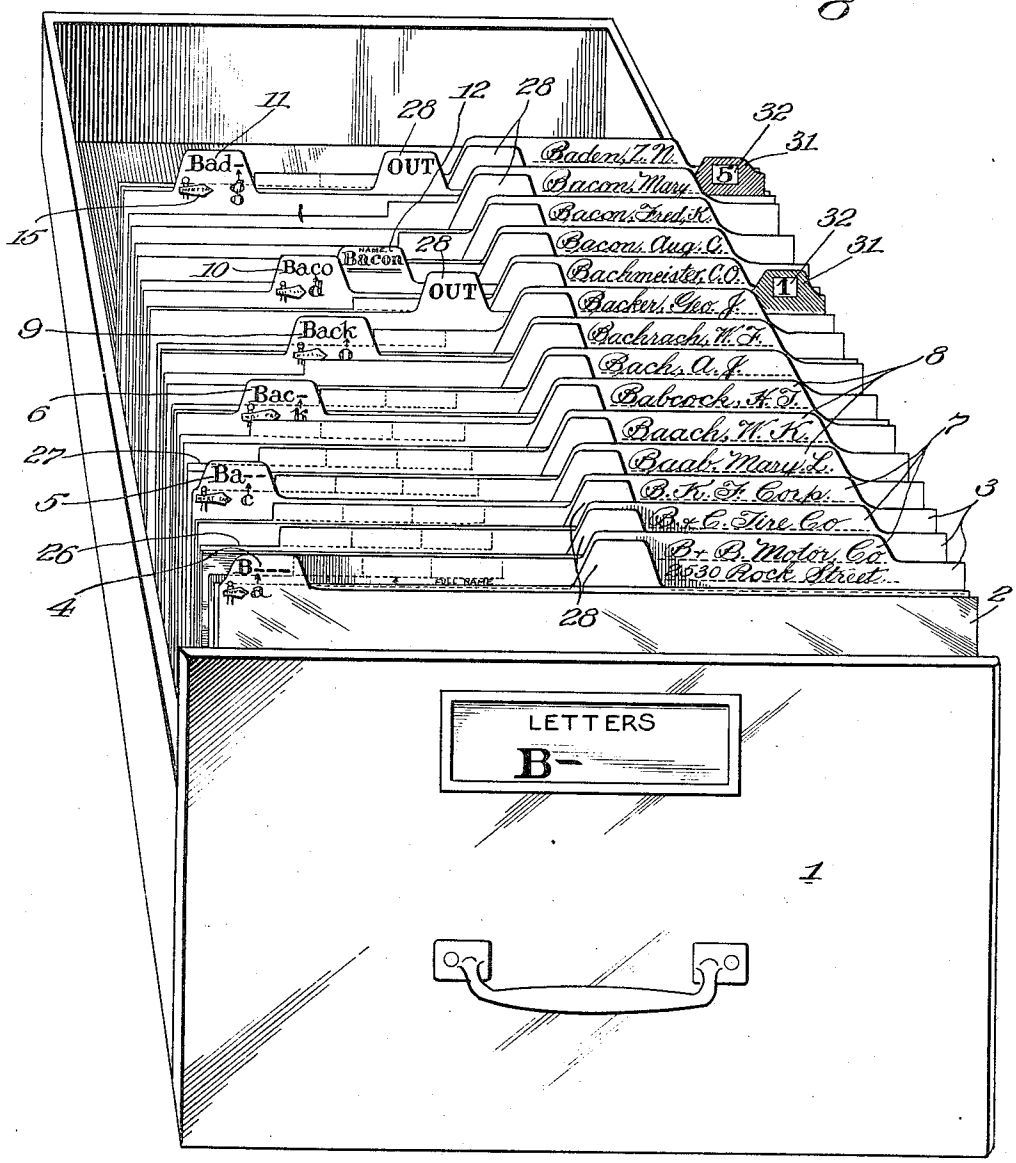
April 15, 1924. 1,490,344

A. N. POULIN

FILING SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT

Filed April 23, 1921 4 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.



Witness:
P. J. Gathmann

Inventor
Alexandre N. Poulin.
By Burton & Burton
his Attorneys:

April 15, 1924. 1,490,344

A. N. POULIN

FILING SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT

Filed April 23, 1921 4 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 2.

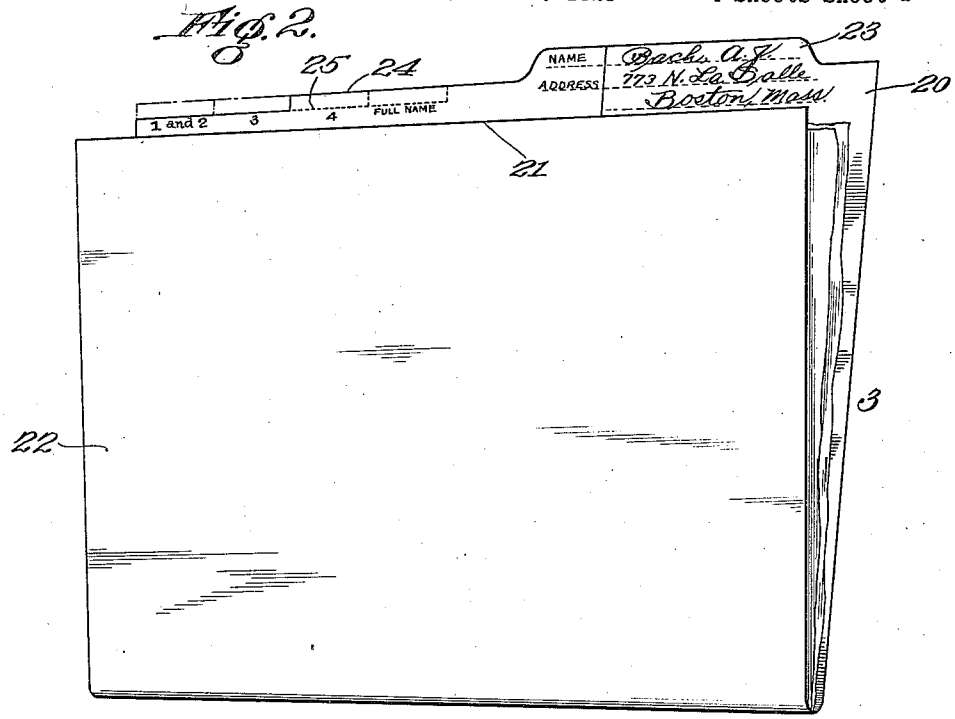
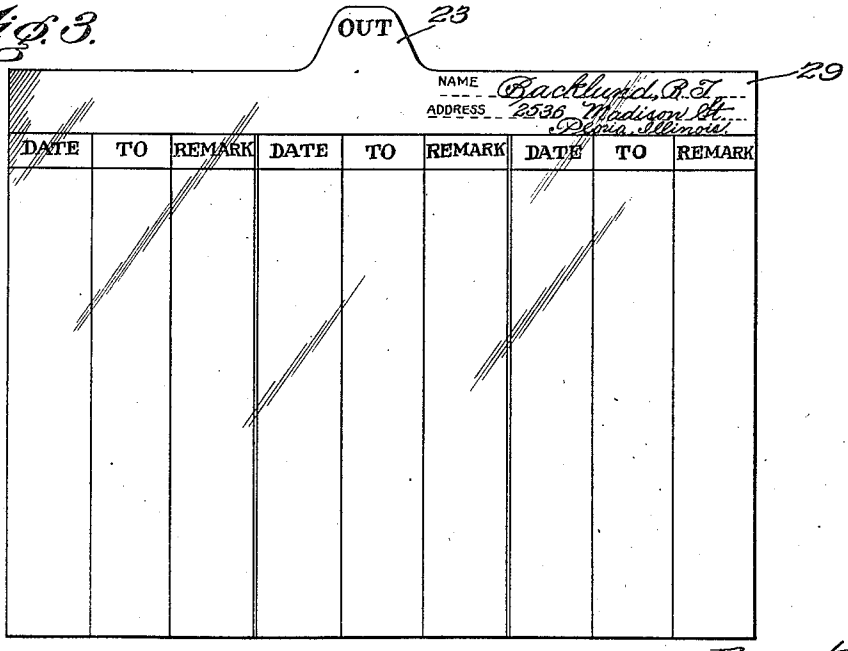


Fig. 3.



Witness:
F. J. Gathmann

Inventor:
Alexandre N. Poulin.
By Burton & Burton
his Attorneys:

April 15, 1924. 1,490,344

A. N. POULIN

FILING SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT

Filed April 23, 1921 4 Sheets-Sheet 3

Fig. 4.

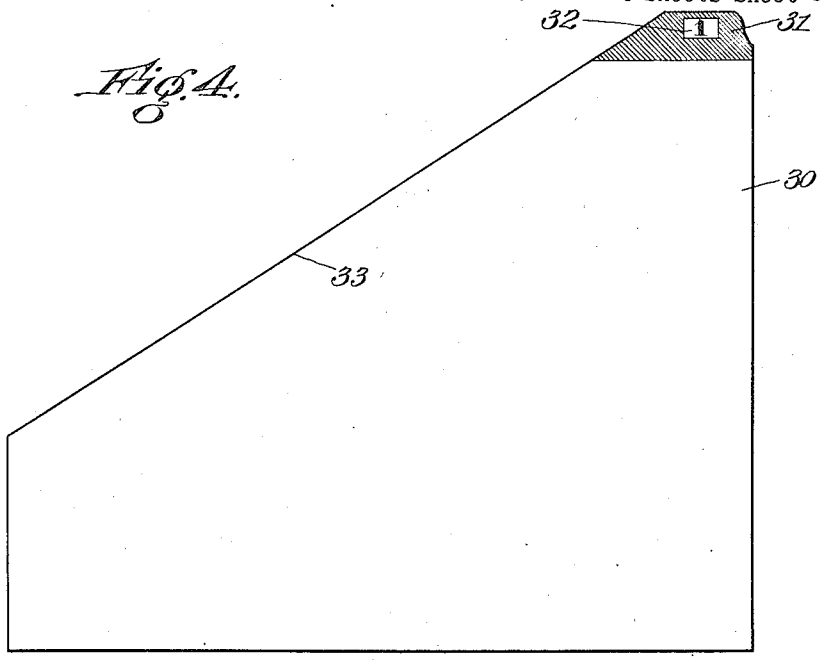
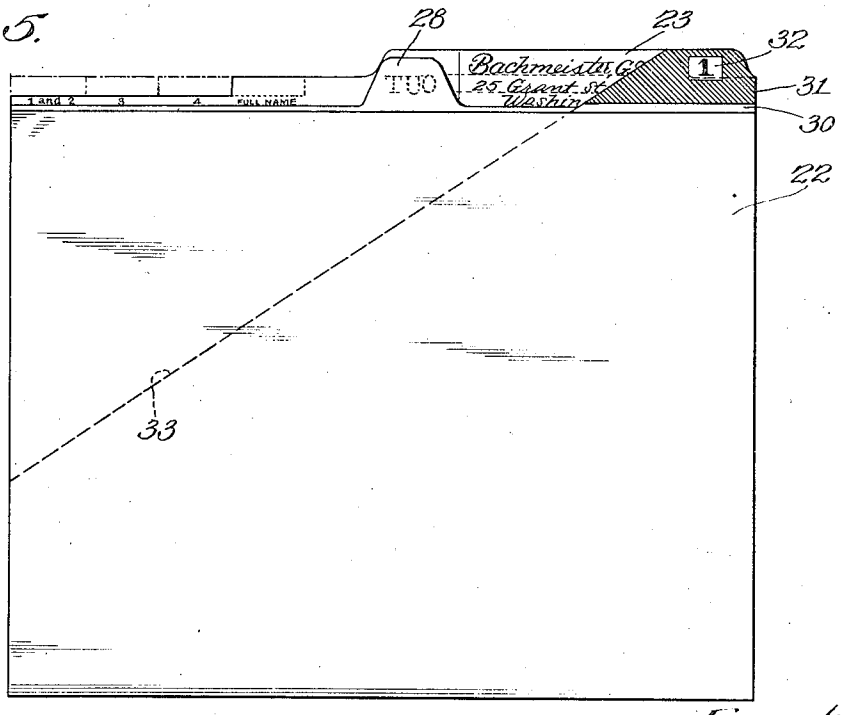


Fig. 5.



Witness:
F. J. Gathmann

Inventor:
Alexandre N. Poulin.
By Burton & Burton
his Attorneys.

April 15, 1924. 1,490,344

A. N. POULIN

FILING SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT

Filed April 23, 1921 4 Sheets-Sheet 4

Fig. 6.

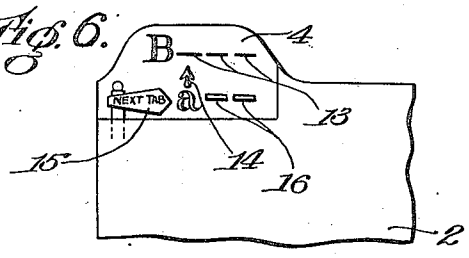


Fig. 7.

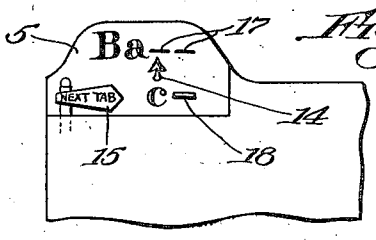


Fig. 8.

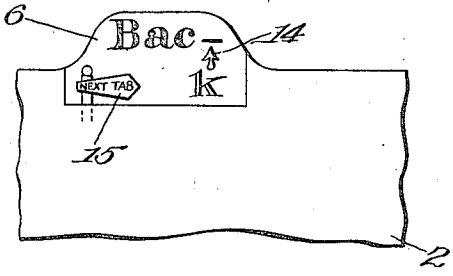


Fig. 9.

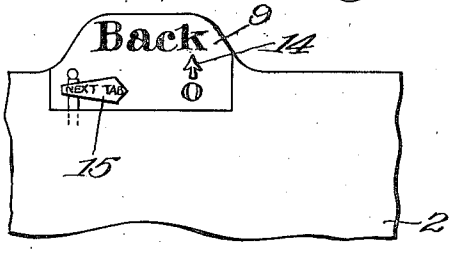


Fig. 10.

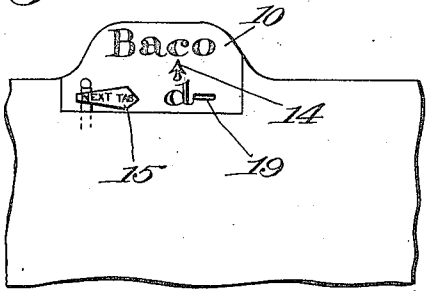


Fig. 11.

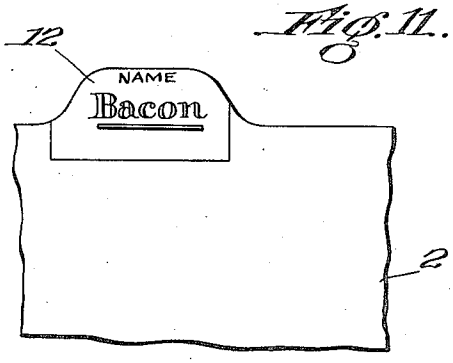
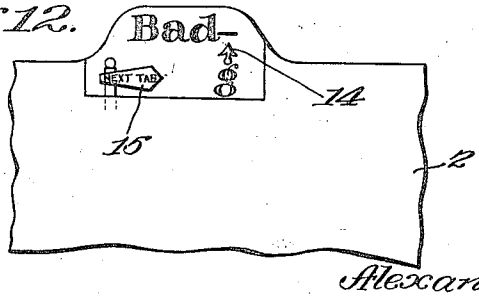


Fig. 12.



Witness:
P. J. Gathmann

Inventor:
Alexandre N. Poulin.
By Bowlin & Bowlin
his Attorneys:

Patented Apr. 15, 1924. 1,490,344

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALEXANDRE N. POULIN, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

FILING SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT.

Application filed April 23, 1921. Serial No. 463,850.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ALEXANDRE N. POULIN, a citizen of the United States, having residence in the city of Chicago, in the county of Cook and the State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Filing Systems and Equipments, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part thereof.

The invention relates to filing systems and its object is to provide indexing means including fixed guides in the file and certain related characteristics of the folders for enabling a file clerk to find and replace a folder in the file with accuracy and more promptly than is possible with existing systems. Another object of the invention is to furnish a special marker in the file for indicating the exact location of a folder to be replaced therein. A further object of the invention is to supply special means in the nature of signals for marking certain folders for special attention at predetermined times or by particular persons. With these objects in view, the invention consists in certain related features and elements of construction and their combinations as hereinafter described and shown in the drawings and as indicated by the claims.

In the drawings:—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a file drawer containing guides, folders, markers and signal devices constructed and arranged in accordance with this invention.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of a folder designed to co-operate as an element of the filing system constituting this invention.

Figure 3 represents the face side of an "Out" card or marker.

Figure 4 represents the face side of a "Signal" or "Tickler" card.

Figure 5 shows the "Signal" inserted in a folder.

Figures 6 to 12 inclusive are enlarged face views of the index tabs of the guide cards shown positioned in the file drawer in Figure 1.

As is well understood, a modern vertical filing system usually includes a set of guide cards formed with upstanding index tabs placed at intervals in the file drawer, and folders, one of which is usually provided for each correspondent or subdivision of subject matter,—the letters or other data being placed in the folders and the folders being positioned back of the respective guide cards in alphabetical arrangement. The present system follows this general plan.

Figure 1 shows a typical file drawer, 1, containing a number of guide cards each designated by the numeral 2, with folders, 3, interposed between them. For a small or simple filing system the guide cards, 2, might consist simply of 26 individual cards having their respective tabs labeled with the 26 letters of the alphabet. In the example chosen for illustration, however, it is assumed that the file is of such proportions as to require closer subdivision than this and the guide cards illustrated represent only the initial portion of the section of the file assigned to names beginning with the letter "B". Therefore the first guide card, 2, in the drawer displays the initial "B" on its tab, 4; the next guide tab, 5, is marked "Ba", while the following tab, 6, is marked "Bac". As shown, the folders filed behind the guide "B" bear on their label tabs, 7, names beginning simply with the initial letter "B" and these are arranged in alphabetical order determined by the next following initial letter of the name. Following the guide tab, "Ba", the label tabs, 8, of the folders carry names beginning with the letters "Ba"; but it being found necessary to further subdivide this class of names on account of their large number in the file, the system provides the guide tab, 6, labeled "Bac" which indicates that the third letter of the name is also taken into account in determining the arrangement of folders in the file drawer. A still further subdivision utilizes the fourth letter of the name as shown by the guide tab, 9, marked "Back" and the following guide tab, 10, marked "Baco". In the example shown in Figure 1, it is assumed that from this point no further subdivision of the names beginning with "Bac" is necessary and the next following tab, 11, is marked "Bad". However, it being found that within the group of names beginning with "Baco" there is a large group of folders bearing the same surname "Bacon", a special guide whose tab, 12, carries this name may be inserted to mark the location of this group of folders. The folders are then arranged in an order determined by the initial letter of the christian name as shown in Figure 1.

The alphabetical system thus far described corresponds substantially with the arrangement of names used in dictionaries and di-

rectories. However, the extent to which the subdivision of a file is carried will be determined entirely by the number of folders to be accommodated in the file and it is hardly possible for a file clerk to carry in mind all the individual guide tabs which govern the location of the folders. Therefore as an aid in either finding or replacing a folder in the file, each guide tab carries in addition to its primary marking, a secondary marking which indicates what is the primary marking of the next following guide. Thus the range of names to be accommodated between a particular guide and the next following one is shown by the first guide so that by reading the primary and secondary markings of the first guide the clerk can determine whether or not a given file should be located between it and the next following guide; it is not necessary to look at the following guide for this information.

For example, as indicated in Figure 6 which is an enlarged view of the tab, 4, of the first guide card shown in Figure 1, the primary marking "B" is supplemented by a secondary marking consisting of the letter "a" at a lower position on the tab. Following the letter "B" in the primary marking the tab displays three dashes, 13, which indicate to the file clerk that the file is subdivided so as to contain some guide tabs which display the first four letters of the names on the folders. The secondary marking "a" is placed directly below the first of these dashes, 13, indicating that on the next following tab the marking consists of the letter "a" placed after "B." Associated with the letter "a" there may be an arrow or pointer, 14, directed toward the first dash, 13, to more clearly indicate the significance of the supplemental marking. The tab may also carry an explanatory device of any suitable design such as the representation of the semaphore shown at 15 and marked with the words "Next tab." In the supplemental marking the letters of the next tab's primary marking are purposely omitted to avoid confusion. The primary marking stands out clearly as the principal feature of the guide and the secondary marking is not forced upon the attention though it is clearly enough displayed for instant reference when desired. On the tab, 4, the letter "a" of the supplemental marking may be followed by two dashes, 16, indicating the remainder of the next tab's primary marking as it actually appears.

Following the same rule the tab, 5, shown in detail in Figure 7, carries a primary marking "Ba" followed by two dashes, 17, as predicted by the two dashes, 16, displayed in the secondary marking of the tab, 4. Below the first of the two dashes, 17, is displayed a secondary marking "c" indicating that the next following guide, 6, is labeled "Bac" as shown in Figure 8. The meaning of the arrangement is further emphasized by an arrow or pointer, 14, and the explanatory device, 15, including the words "Next tab." A single dash, 18, follows the letter, "c" indicating clearly that the "c" will appear on the next tab in the third place while the fourth place or fourth letter of the name is not called into play at that position in the file.

An examination of Figures 8 and 12 will indicate the application of the same rule. In Figure 9 the primary marking is "Back" while the secondary marking consists of the letter "o" directly below the "k" indicating that on the following tab the primary marking is the same as that of the tab, 9, except that the "k" is replaced by "o." This is verified in Figure 10. It may also be noted that while the primary marking of the tab, 10, consists of four letters "Baco" the secondary marking indicates that the next primary guide consists of three letters only, "Bad,"—the "d" of the secondary marking being placed below the "c" and followed by a dash, 19, representing a blank fourth place.

If desired the typography of the primary and secondary markings may be made slightly different so as to further insure avoidance of confusion. As shown in the drawings the primary markings are made in solid black while the secondary markings are made with outline letters. Similarly the name tab, 12, shown in Figure 11 is made with outline letters since it is not strictly a part of the alphabetical guide system but is supplemental thereto.

As shown in Figure 1 the various guide tabs are formed at different positions laterally of the guide cards depending upon the degree to which their primary markings indicate the file is subdivided. For example the tabs, 4 and 5, containing respectively one and two letters in their primary markings are positioned at the extreme left hand side of the guide as viewed from the front; the tab, 6, is spaced away from the left hand edge of its card by about the width of the tab while the guide, 9, is spaced away in the same direction by approximately the width of two tabs. And finally the name tab, 12, is set over from the left hand margin still farther. This determines four lateral positions for the various tabs, the first position at the left being chosen for both the initial letters alone and the two letter subdivisions because the initial letters as shown on the tab, 4, do not occur frequently enough to justify a position by themselves. This offsetting of the various tabs of an index system is not in itself novel but in the present system the folders themselves are marked to correspond with the position of the tabs so as to further assist the clerk in placing them.

The rear wall, 20, of each of the folders, 13, projects normally a slight distance above the upper edge, 21, of the front wall, 22, and carries an additional projection, 23, which forms a label tab on which is written or printed the name of the correspondent or subject matter appearing on the papers filed in the folder. The name tab, 23, appears near the right hand margin of the rear wall, 20. Beginning at the left hand margin of said wall, a notch is cut in the upper edge, 24, corresponding in its lateral extent to the position of the guide tab behind which the folder should be located in the file. Preferably the folder is printed with a dotted outline, 25, which comprises a line parallel to the upper edge, 24, and a series of transverse lines laterally spaced apart as shown in Figure 2. Below the rectangular space thus defined may be printed the figures "1 and 2," "3," "4," and the words "Full name." If the folder is to be filed behind the guide tab whose primary marking consists of three letters as for example tab, 6, marked "Bac" the notch cut in the upper left hand corner of the folder wall, 20, will include the space marked "3" as shown in full lines in Figure 2. A folder to be filed behind the tab, 4, whose primary marking consists only of the initial "B" will be notched only in the first position as shown at 26 in Figure 1 and similarly a folder filed behind the tab "Ba" will be notched in the first position as seen at 27 in Figure 1. Preferably the width of the rectangles defined by the dotted outline, 25, will correspond to the width of the guide tabs so that the right hand edge of the notch in each folder will register approximately with the right hand edge of the guide tab behind which it belongs.

To make use of the notching of the folder the file clerk will simply observe the width of the notch and by reference to the number printed below it on the folder will know at once whether the folder is to be placed in the file in accordance with the first letter, first two letters, first three letters, or more of the name which appears on its tab, 23. In the example shown in Figure 2 the notch includes an area above the number "3" which indicates that the first three letters "Bac" of the name "Bach" represents the primary marking of the guide tab behind which this folder belongs.

As a still further aid to correct placing of the folders in the file, each folder is initially provided with an "Out" card such as that shown in Figure 3. While the folder remains in the file this card is kept in the folder facing backwards so that only the plain back side of its tab, 28, is visible. This tab is positioned immediately to one side of the vertical medial line of the card and the name or label tab, 23, of the folder is dimensioned to extend substantially to the vertical medial line of the folder so that normally the tabs, 28, of the "Out" cards overlap the left hand ends of the name tabs, 23, as seen in Figure 1. But when a folder is removed from the file for any purpose its individual "Out" card is removed from the folder, reversed, and replaced, in the file in the position normally occupied by the folder. The tab, 28, of the "Out" card being thus rotated about the medial vertical axis of the card appears out of registration with the remaining name tabs, 23, in a position preferably reserved for the "Out" tabs alone. The card remains in this position until its folder is returned to the file. Thus the file clerk having noted the notching of the folder and the portion of the name on its label tab which corresponds to the guide tab behind which it belongs, need only glance at that portion of the file behind the indicated guide tab. The presence of an "Out" card shows instantly and accurately the proper location of the folder. This is finally confirmed if the "Out" card is labeled as shown at 29 with the name corresponding to that on the folder to which it is assigned. The card may also bear a ruled form as shown in Figure 3 for the purpose of recording the movements of the folder, usually showing particularly the date on which it is withdrawn from the file and the initials of the person holding it.

For various purposes it is often desirable to provide for some mechanical reminder which will insure that a given file or matter will be brought up for attention on a certain future date. Many systems auxiliary to a main file have been devised for securing this result. I find it convenient, however, to incorporate such means in the filing system itself and for this purpose I propose to provide for each desk worker to whose attention such files should be brought, a set of "Tickler" or "Signal" cards, 30, such as that shown in Figure 4. Each of these cards is substantially equal in width to a folder of the file and is of such height that when placed in the folder as shown in Figure 5, its signal tab, 31, will project above the forward flap or wall, 22, and substantially to the same height as the label tab, 23, of the folder. Preferably the label tabs, 23, do not extend quite to the extreme right hand margins of their folders, whereas the signal tabs, 31, are positioned at the extreme right hand corners of the cards, 30, so as to appear clearly in the file drawer without interference from the label tabs, 23. The desk worker is provided with a quantity of the cards, 30, which may bear different numerals such as the numeral "1" shown at 32, the numerals being ordinarily used to indicate the date of the month on which the folder should be withdrawn from the file for attention. When it is delivered to the desk worker

and the matter has had proper attention the tickler or signal card, 30, is removed from the folder and the latter is returned to the file clerk for replacement in the file. Or if another future reminder is desired, a different signal card is placed in the folder bearing a different numeral at 32. Thus by rapid inspection of the files each day the file clerk can readily withdraw all those folders displaying signals corresponding to the immediate date. If desired, each desk worker may have the tab, 30, of his allotment of signals printed with an individual color so that the signal itself will thus designate the person to whom the folder should be delivered. As shown in Figure 1, the two signal tabs displayed in the file are marked with different numerals at 32 and are also shaded to indicate different colors in accordance with this feature. Preferably the signal cards, 30, need not be rectangular since considerable stock may be saved by cutting off the upper edges obliquely as shown at 33. Sufficient stock remains for holding the card firmly in the proper position in the folder to display its signal tab, 31.

From the foregoing it will be seen that my system will tend to greatly increase the rapidity with which folders may be found and replaced in the file. Almost automatically the file clerk will learn to know the secondary marking of the guide tabs as well as the primary markings and will thus follow along the guides in one direction to the desired point for locating a given folder. Especially by the use of the "Out" cards corresponding to the individual folders is it possible to eliminate errors and increase the speed of handling the files while the signal cards above described will be found far superior to signal clips heretofore devised for attachment to the edges of folders or to auxiliary reminder files of cards. Such clips tend to create excessive wear and tear on the folders; and while auxiliary card files may serve to effect the reminder when desired they do not automatically locate the folder as does the presence of my signal card in the folder itself. This feature alone will save much time in withdrawing folders for follow-up and like purposes.

I claim:—

1. In an indexing system, an index guide bearing a primary marking which denotes the subdivision of the index adjacent the guide and a secondary marking which denotes the primary marking of the next following guide.

2. In the index guide defined in claim 1, the secondary marking displayed thereon comprising only that portion of the primary marking of the next guide in which it differs from the primary marking of the first mentioned guide.

3. In the index guide defined in claim 2, said secondary marking being positioned directly opposite the portion of the primary marking from which it differs.

4. In the index guide defined in claim 2, said secondary marking being located below the primary marking and positioned directly under the portion of said primary marking from which it differs.

5. In the index guide defined in claim 1, said primary and secondary markings of the guide being displayed in different typography.

6. In the index guide defined in claim 1, the primary marking being displayed in bolder typography than the secondary marking.

7. In the index guide defined in claim 2, the secondary marking being supplemented by a symbol directing the attention therefrom to the portion of the primary marking from which it differs.

8. In the index guide defined in claim 1, an explanatory symbol associated with the secondary marking to indicate the relation of said secondary marking to the primary marking the next following guide in the system.

9. In a filing system a series of index guides for defining subdivisions of the file and formed with upstanding tabs bearing index markings and file folders formed with upstanding portions labeled with individual names or words which determine their proper location in the file, the upstanding portion of each folder being marked to denote how much of its label name or word corresponds to the marking of the guide tab for the subdivision of the file in which said folder belongs.

10. In a filing system a series of index guides for defining subdivisions of the file and formed with upstanding tabs bearing index markings, certain tabs being positioned at different locations in the width of the file in accordance with the degree of subdivision indicated by their respective markings; and file folders formed with upstanding portions labeled with individual names or words which determine their proper location in the file, the upstanding portion of each folder bearing a mark which denotes the location, laterally in the file, of the index tab for the subdivision in which such folder belongs.

11. In the filing system defined in claim 10, the mark on each folder consisting of a notch cut in its upstanding portion.

12. In the filing system defined in claim 10, the mark on the upstanding portion of each folder comprising a notch and the respective folders having notches of different widths corresponding to the different locations of the index tabs for the respective subdivisions.

13. In the filing system defined in claim 10, the mark on the upstanding portion of each folder comprising a notch in the upper edge extending from one lateral margin of the folder and terminating substantially in alignment with one edge of the index guide tab of the subdivision in which such folder belongs.

14. In the filing system defined in claim 9, the mark on the upstanding portion of each folder being a notch whose lateral extent corresponds to the number of letters of the label name or word which agree with the marking of the guide tab for the subdivision of the file in which said folder belongs.

15. In a filing system in combination with a plurality of folders, a signal card removably carried in each folder and labeled to correspond therewith, said card being adapted to replace the folder in the file when the latter is removed therefrom and being formed with an upstanding signal tab marked to indicate the absence of the folder.

16. In the combination defined in claim 15, said upstanding tab extending to one side of the medial vertical axis of the card and bearing its said marking on one face only so that rotation of the card about said medial axis serves to display the marking and to offset the tab laterally in the file from the position which it occupies when the card is faced oppositely.

17. In the combination defined in claim 16, the folder having an upstanding label tab which extends substantially from the medial vertical axis of the folder toward one side so as to lap behind the tab of said signal card when the latter is carried in the folder.

18. In a filing system comprising a plurality of folders, and individual "Out" cards removably associated respectively therewith, each folder having an upstanding label tab which extends substantially from the medial vertical axis toward one side of the folder and each signal card having a shorter upstanding tab positioned adjacent its medial vertical axis and at one side of the same whereby said top of the card overlaps one end of the folder tab when the card is carried in the folder; the tab of the card being offset at the opposite side of its medial axis when the card is placed oppositely in the file and the face of the tab displayed in this position being marked to indicate the absence of the folder.

19. In a filing system in combination with a folder, a signal device comprising a card adapted to stand in said folder and being substantially equal thereto in width and height, said card being formed with an upstanding tab dimensioned to project above the front wall of the folder for display in the file, said tab being marked to serve as a signal for the purpose desired.

20. In a filing system in combination with a plurality of folders, a number of signal cards substantially equal in width and height to said folders and formed with signal tabs dimensioned to project for display in the file when the cards are inserted in the various folders, said tabs bearing various different markings for use selectively with any of the folders as desired.

21. In the filing system defined in claim 20, said signal tabs being marked with different numerals for denoting dates for giving the respective folders attention.

22. In the filing system defined in claim 20, said tabs being marked in different colors for the purpose indicated.

23. In a filing system in combination with a folder having an upstanding label tab which stops short of one side of the folder, a signal card of approximately triangular form substantially equal to the folder in width and height and formed with a signal tab projecting from its upper apex to register in the space between the end of the folder tab and the side of the folder.

24. In a filing system in combination with a folder, a signal card substantially equal to the folder in width and height having an upstanding signal tab positioned to project from the folder at one upper corner thereof, the upper outline of the card extending obliquely downward from said tab in the general direction of its opposite lower corner.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand at Chicago, Illinois, this 22nd day of April, A. D. 1921.

ALEXANDRE N. POULIN.