Nov. 16, 1948. M. G. RAPP 2,454,088

REGISTRATION DESK WITH MAIL INDICATING SYSTEM

Filed Dec. 15, 1945

Fig. 1.

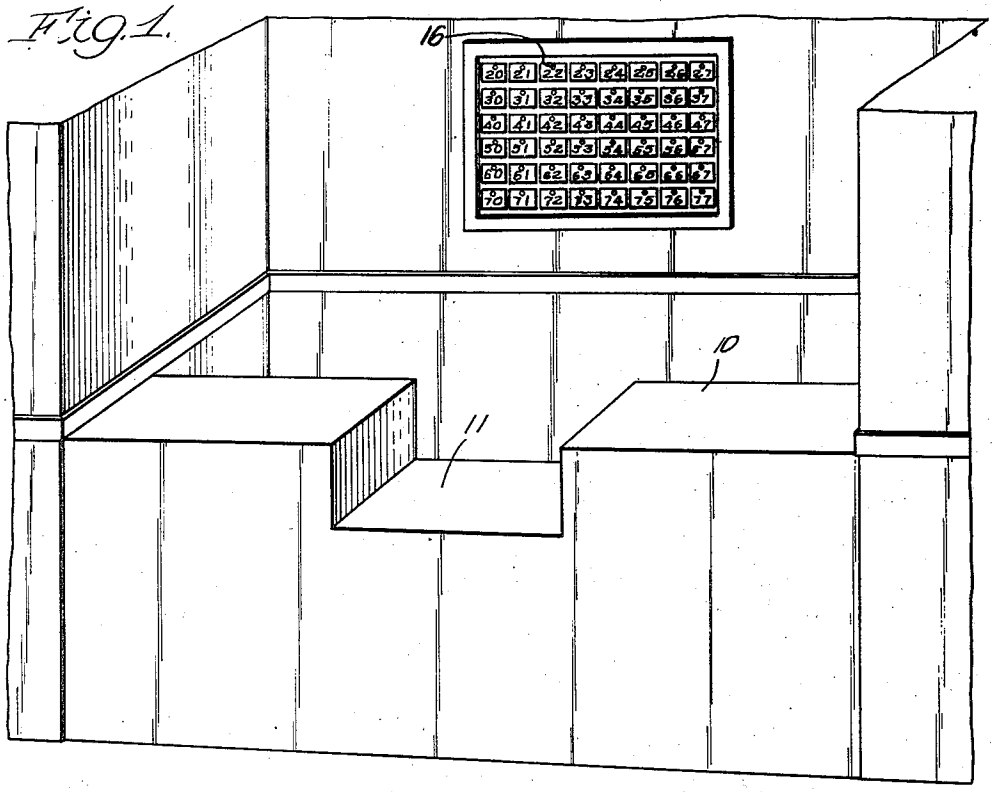
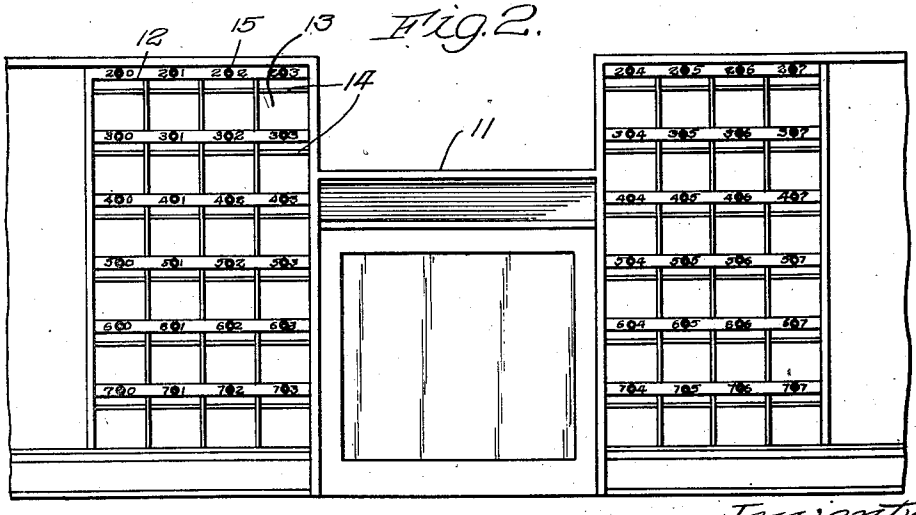


Fig. 2.



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REGISTRATION DESK WITH MAIL INDICATING SYSTEM

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1 Claim. (Cl. 177—311)

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This invention relates to a registration desk, and more particularly to a registration desk for hotels and the like.

It is well known that hotels uniformly have registration desks at which the guest may register, leave his key or receive it, and at which he may also receive his mail. The desk clerk in charge of the registration desk is expected, as part of his duties, to keep watch of the lobby at all times.

At the present time mail cubicles are normally placed in spaced position at the rear of the desk so that the clerk has to reach backward for the mail. Since he is not supposed to turn around to look for the mail more than an instant the location of the board is inconvenient for him. On the other hand, it is necessary to have a convenient means for notifying the guest whether there is any mail in his box. Likewise, the mail receptacles must be kept sufficiently remote from the front of the desk so that mail cannot be abstracted therefrom by a person at the front of the desk.

The present invention solves all of these problems by providing a registration desk having the usual registration platform at proper writing height, numbered mail receptacles adjacent this platform, and a flashboard correspondingly numbered and provided with an electric signal device adjacent each number. A switch is then provided at each mail receptacle so that when mail is inserted or removed the clerk may, with a single motion, flash the switch to the proper position without taking his eyes off the front of the desk.

The invention is illustrated somewhat diagrammatically in the drawings in which,

Fig. 1 is a perspective view from the front showing the desk and the flashboard; and

Fig. 2 is a corresponding view showing the rear of the desk.

The desk 10 comprises a registration platform 11 at a lower level than the rest of the desk and, of course, at suitable registration height. Adjacent the platform 11 and on either side thereof, are numbered mail receptacles 12. These receptacles are, of course, numbered correspondingly to the numbers of the rooms of the hotel. For example, as is well known, a guest in room 23 will receive his mail in receptacle 13, and his key will be kept on a shelf 14 therein, or sometimes the shelf may be omitted. Mail cubicles may also be provided underneath the desk, if desired. The size and number and position of the various receptacles will, of course, depend upon the number of rooms in the hotel.

If the number of such receptacles is so great that the side portions of the desk must be built up above the eye level of the clerk, then care must be taken so that the registration platform is of sufficient width as to provide a complete view of the hotel lobby.

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Each receptacle is provided with a switch 15 which may be of button or toggle, or other form. A toggle switch is preferred since this is most easily operated when inserting or withdrawing mail from the box. This switch is electrically connected to an electric signal 16 appearing on the flashboard in connection with the identical number thereon. For example, the switch 15 is shown as being on box 22 and the light 16 is shown over the number 22 on the flashboard.

The operation of the desk is obvious. When mail is inserted in a box, as for example, 22 the check flips the switch and illuminates light 16. A guest, therefore, knows instantly that mail is in his box for him. Upon removal of the mail the clerk flips the switch again and turns out the light.

It will be noted that the mail receptacle is not normally exposed to the view of the guest. This is normally an advantage since if there is any attempt at theft, a thief will normally call for mail which appears to be of some value. With the present system a thief would be unable to tell whether the box contained a message slip or a letter, or whether, if it did contain a letter, the letter had any apparent value. If these factors are not considered important, however, it is possibly to put a glass front on the desk and permit the contents of the various boxes to be observed from the front.

The foregoing detailed description has been given for clearness of understanding only, and no unnecessary limitations should be understood therefrom.

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

In combination, a registration desk having a registration platform, numbered mail receptacles adjacent the platform within reach of an attendant behind the desk and invisible and out of reach from a position in front of the desk, a correspondingly numbered flashboard in spaced relationship at the rear of the desk and visible from a position in front of the desk, an electric light adjacent each number on the flashboard and a switch electrically communicating with each such light and located adjacent the correspondingly numbered receptacle in the desk.

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