S. W. McKEE.

FOLLOW-UP INDEX OR FILING SYSTEM.

APPLICATION FILED MAR. 27, 1919.

1,369,255. **Patented Feb. 22, 1921.**

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1

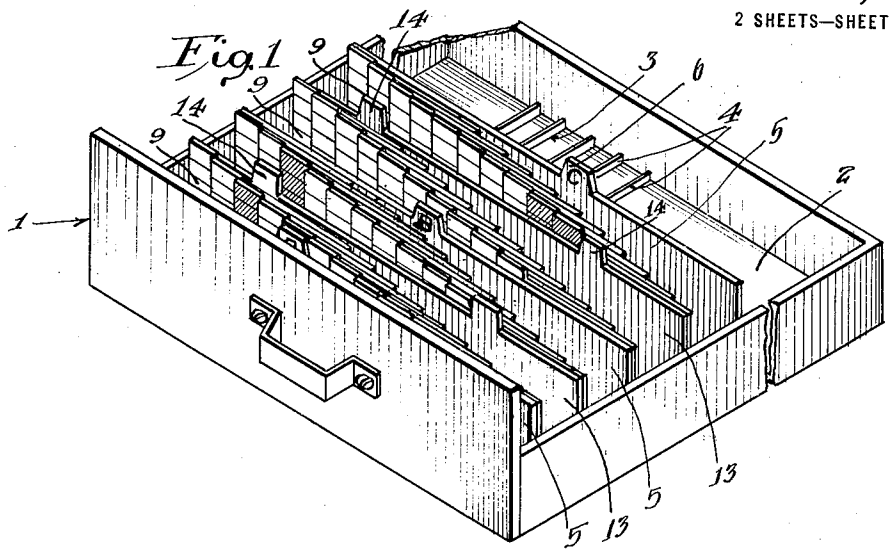


Fig. 2

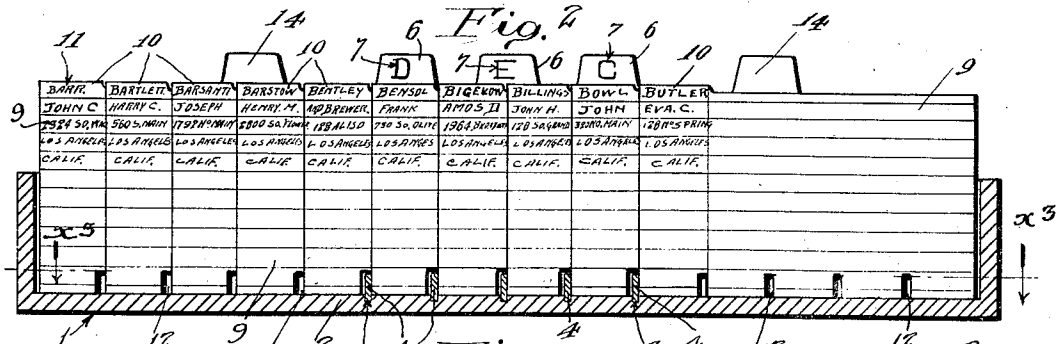


Fig. 3

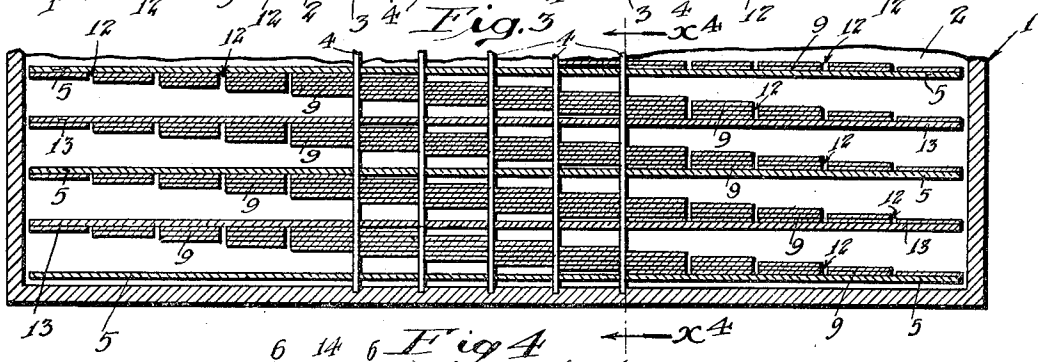
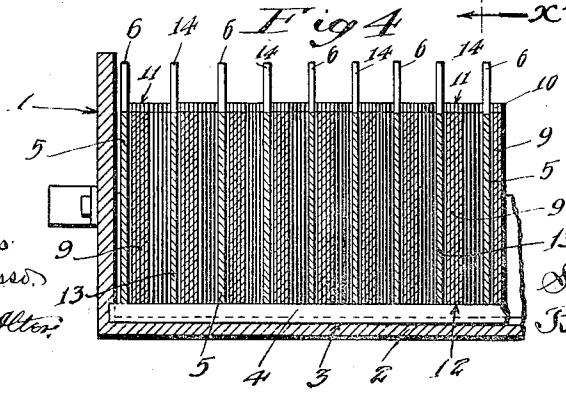


Fig 4



Witnesses
Sully Russo.
Lulu A. Allen.

Inventor
Stillman W. McKee
By Frederick P. Fish
Atty

S. W. McKEE.

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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 10.

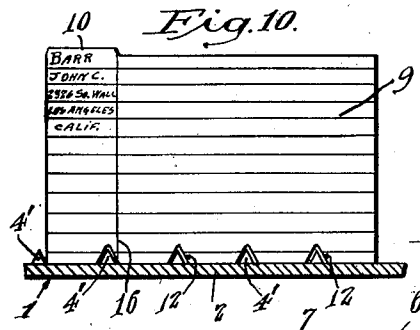


Fig. 5

Fig. 6

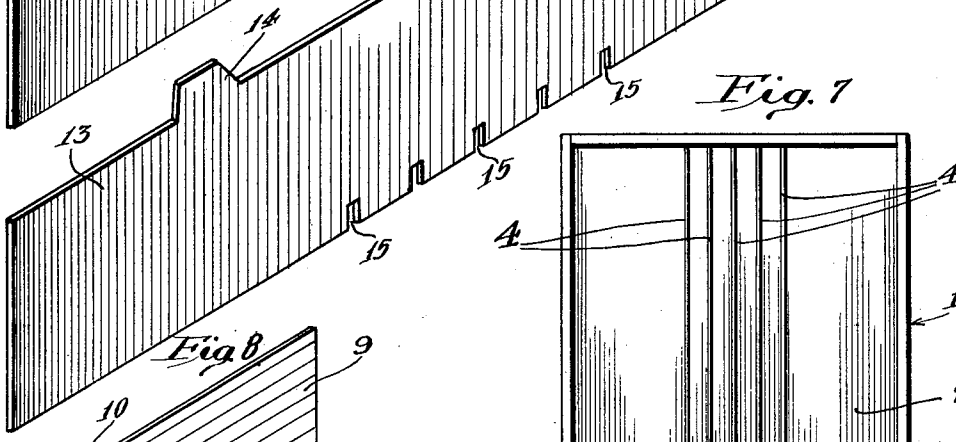


Fig. 7

Fig. 8

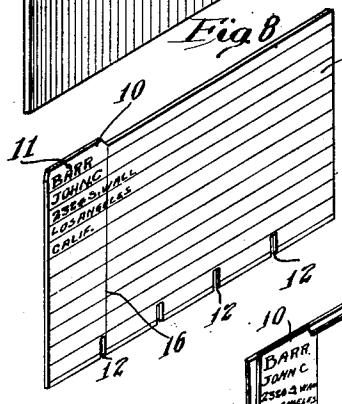
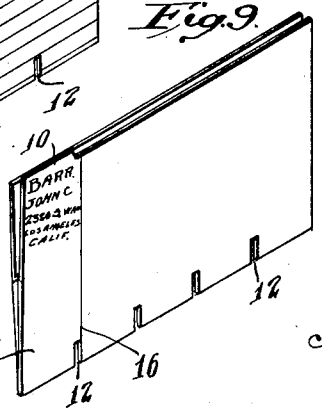


Fig. 9.



Witnesses:
Sully Russo
Lillie S. Alter

Inventor
Stillman W. McKee
By Frederick F. Ryon atty

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

STILLMAN W. McKEE, OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

FOLLOW-UP INDEX OR FILING SYSTEM.

1,369,255. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Feb. 22, 1921.

Application filed March 27, 1919. Serial No. 285,466.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STILLMAN W. McKEE, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city of Los Angeles, county of Los Angeles, State of California, have invented a certain new and useful Follow-Up Index or Filing System, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to filing systems in which an index is employed so that the various cards or other papers filed away for future reference can be readily found when it is desired to refer to them.

It will be understood in this specification that the term "index character" signifies any suitable character employed as a guide for arrangement of the various elements of the system, and that said index characters may be letters of the alphabet forming an alphabetical index, figures forming a numerical index, figures representing dates for an index by dates or any other arrangement of figures for any purpose whatsoever. It is also understood that the letters and figures may be arranged in various combinations, if desired.

An object of the invention is to make it possible to quickly file and subsequently refer to any particular card or paper desired.

This system relates more particularly to "follow up" index or filing systems, under which system matter is filed in accordance with index characters,—alphabetically, numerically or by days of the month, or by combinations of the alphabet and dates. Assuming that matter has been filed away under a given index and that it is desired to refer to the same on a given date, under the old filing systems it is difficult to find the matter desired. By this system matter may be filed under a suitable index character and it is so arranged that when the tray or other holder for the matter is open to expose to view the contents thereof any particular matter, which it is desired to abstract from the file, can be readily seen without leafing over, one by one, a large number of the cards in the filing tray or other holder.

Another object is to make provision for shifting the sub guide members to different positions transversely of the holder so that they can readily be rearranged alphabetically, numerically, or otherwise when it is desired to insert another sub guide member or abstract one or more of the sub guide members from the holder.

Other objects and advantages will appear in the subjoined detailed description.

The accompanying drawings illustrate the invention:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of an index system constructed in accordance with the provisions of this invention, portions of the holder being broken away to contract the view;

Fig. 2 is a front elevation of Fig. 1, the front of the holder being broken away so as to expose to view the lower portion of the foremost series of sub-guide members.

Fig. 3 is a plan section on line indicated by x^3—x^3, Fig. 2, the rear end of the tray being broken away to contract the view;

Fig. 4 is a sectional elevation on line indicated by x^4—x^4, Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of one of the main guide members;

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of one of the throwing or separating members for separating two adjacent series of sub guide members from one another and for throwing all of the sub guide members of one series simultaneously;

Fig. 7 is a plan view of the holder;

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of one of the sub guide members;

Fig. 9 is a perspective view of a different form of sub guide member than that shown in Fig. 8;

Fig. 10 is a front view of a sub guide member and alining members of slightly different construction than those shown in Figs. 8 and 9, the bottom of the tray also being shown in section.

There is provided a holder 1 of any suitable construction and in this instance in the form of a tray or drawer, and the bottom 2 of the tray is provided longitudinally thereof with grooves 3 in which are seated alining members which may be in the form of flat strips 4, as in Fig. 2 or wedge-shaped in cross section as shown at 4′ in Fig. 10.

Main guide members 5 are provided, said guide members having upwardly projecting tabs 6 on which are placed suitable main index characters 7. In the instance shown in the drawings these main index characters 7 are letters of the alphabet, but it is understood that any other index characters may be employed in lieu of said letters. The main guide member 5 is provided in its lower edge with a series of notches 8 so spaced as to respectively receive the alining

members 4 when the main guide members are placed on edge in the tray as clearly shown in Fig. 2.

Between adjacent main guide members 5 are inserted one or more series of sub guide members, one form of which is clearly shown at 9 in Fig. 8 of the drawings and another form of which is shown at 9′ in Fig. 9 or 9′, as the case may be. The sub guide member 9 is provided with an upwardly projecting tab 10 at its upper edge and said tab or the space beneath it contains a sub guide character 11 which may be a numeral, a letter, names or any other suitable indexing terms. In the instance shown in Figs. 8 and 9 the character 11 is the proper name "Barr." The sub guide member 9 is provided in its lower edge with notches 12 so spaced as to receive the alining members 4 when the sub guide cards are positioned edgewise in the tray. Whereas the main guide members 5 may or may not extend substantially the full width of the tray, the sub guide cards 9 are much shorter than the width of the tray and it is therefore obvious that each of the sub guide cards can be selectively placed in any one of a number of different positions transversely of the tray, the number of such positions depending, of course, upon the length of the sub guide members and the width of the tray. The sub guide members 9 are arranged in any desired number of series. In Figs. 1, 2 and 3 each series of sub guide members comprises ten sub guide members. The sub guide members 9 of any given series may be placed edge to edge or may overlap one another as clearly shown in Fig. 3. At least one of the notches 12 of each sub guide member excepting the end ones of each series engages one of the alining members 4. For example when a sub guide member 9 is placed a slight distance from the left or right sides of the tray, but one of the notches 12 engages the left or right alining member, as the case may be. If the sub guide member 9 be placed mid-way between the sides of the tray, all of the notches 12 will be engaged with the same number of alining members 4. Five alining members are shown in Figs. 2, 3 and 7, but it is clear that more or less than this number may be employed if desired. From the foregoing it is clear that the alining members 4 and notches 12 prevent the sub guide members 9 from becoming accidentally displaced transversely of the tray after said sub guide members have been placed in position.

It is clear that where the main guide members occur they function as separating or throwing members between two adjacent series of sub guide members 9, so as to separate the adjacent series from one another and so that when moved against a series of sub guide members, all of the sub guide members of that series will be moved. If there are more than one series of sub guide members 9 between any two adjacent main guide members 5, there may be employed between said series a separating or throwing member 13 one of which is clearly shown in Fig. 6 of the drawings. The separating members 13 are each provided with one or more tabs 14 projecting upwardly at the upper edges thereof so that a person using the index can readily manipulate the separating members to throw an entire series of adjacent sub guide members by placing his finger on the tab 14 and throwing the same toward him. The same manipulation of the main guide members 5 by the finger produces the same results. The members 13 are provided with notches 15 to engage the alining members 4.

In Fig. 8 the sub guide member is in the form of a card on which may be written any desired data or information. In Fig. 9 the sub guide member 9 is in the form of a folder or envelop in which may be placed letters or other papers which it is desired to file under this system. This envelop or folder may be open at the ends but is preferably closed, or at least partly closed at the ends as shown to prevent the papers contained therein from being accidentally displaced endwise from the folder.

The system operates as follows: Assuming, for example, that the main guide characters 7 are letters of the alphabet, and that the main guide members are arranged in alphabetical order, sub guide characters 11, for example, proper names, will be placed on or below the tabs 10 of the sub guide cards 9 and whatever other data desired will be written on said sub guide members if they are of the form shown in Fig. 8. If the sub guide members are in the form of folders or envelops as shown in Fig. 9 letters or other papers may be filed in said folders or envelops. The sub guide members will then be inserted in the holder in alphabetical order in front or rear of the appropriate main guide members in accordance with the initial letter of the name, and also alphabetically in series from left to right or right to left in accordance with the other letters of the names. When the sub guide members are thus in order in the holder the names on all of the sub guide members of any given series are exposed to view by merely throwing forward the main guide member or the throwing member which happens to be in front of said series.

If the user of the system desires to refer to and remove a sub guide member containing a particular name, it is clear that by glancing along the series of sub guide cards he will readily see the member wanted and can then extract that particular member from the file without disturbing any of the

other sub guide members. When it is thus extracted a vacancy is left in the series of sub guide tabs, thus enabling the user to note exactly where to insert the sub guide member in returning said member to the file. If the sub guide member thus extracted from the file is to remain permanently out of the file, the sub guide members following in alphabetical order the removed member can readily be rearranged to fill the vacancy by simply shifting them to the left, in this instance, a distance equal to the space between the notches 12. If it is desired to insert a sub guide member in alphabetical order as one of a completed series of sub guide members the appropriate sub guide member in the series and the others to the right thereof will be shifted to the right a distance corresponding to the spacing of the notches 12, with the exception of the one at the extreme right which will be shifted to first place at the left in the next succeeding series of sub guide members and so on.

When several series of sub guide members are interposed between two adjacent main guide members, throwing members 13 may be inserted between the adjacent series of sub guide members, and the operator in hunting for any particular name on the sub guide members will then be enabled to throw forward an entire series of the sub guide members by placing his finger on the tab 14 of the throwing member 13 and pulling said tab toward him, thus spacing the series of sub guide members in front of the throwing member 13 from the series of sub guide members rearwardly of the throwing member.

If desired, the sub guide members 9 may be provided with vertical marks or lines 16, as clearly shown in Figs. 8 and 9, alining with one of the notches 12 so that when the operator is inserting a sub guide member in the file he can cause the left hand edge of the sub guide member which he is inserting to register with the line 16 of the sub guide member immediately rearward of the one being inserted in order that the notches 12 of the member which he is inserting will properly aline with the alining members 4 to permit the inserted member slipping properly into place with little expenditure of time in effecting registration of the notches 12 with the alining members 4.

In some filing systems it is important that some of the classification cards be of different color than others so that the operator can readily extract certain desired matter from the file in accordance with the color of the card containing said matter, a given color indicating a certain classification. In prior filing systems the colored card cannot be seen without leafing over all of the cards contained in the file and this of course is a time consuming operation. By this improved system it is clear that the colored sub guide members are always in position to be readily seen without disturbing any of the members of the file, thus enabling members of any particular color or colors to be quickly extracted from the file when it is desired to utilize the data on the colored members.

Various advantages of the above described system may be set forth as follows: Each sub guide member of each series is offset from every other sub guide member of the same series and thus exposes all or part of the name or other desired data on such member.

Drawers of sufficient width to hold the overlapping sub guide members will be less expensive to construct than a larger number of smaller drawers sufficient to take the cards when the cards are in register with one another.

The data contained in the file is readily accessible, no matter what the nature of said data is, since the data may be arranged alphabetically, numerically, chronologically, by subject, name of article, name of person and so on as may be desired, the different heads, under which the matter is filed, on the various sub guide members all being exposed to view at all times and the sub guide members all being shiftable to the right or left any desired number of steps to retain the order of filing when some of the sub guide members are permanently removed or others inserted.

Fewer alphabetical or other main guide members are required with this system than with prior systems for the reason that the sub guide card at either end of a series thereof will function as a guide for the eye so that the eye will read the end sub guide member of each series as each series is thrown forward, thus enabling one to quickly locate the series in which the information will be found.

In many cases the full name, address and other important brief information can be so placed on the sub guide members as to be exposed to view for each series as the series are separated from one another.

In the instance shown in the drawings each series of sub guide members, excepting the last one between any two main guide members is complete and contains ten members. In each incomplete series the last sub guide member may be a dummy card and left blank or may be of a particular color so as to denote that the series ends with the dummy or colored card and indicates that none are missing to the left of said dummy or colored card. From this it is clear that when the sub guide members overlap one another as in the drawings, if any of the sub guide members are missing the

fact is observable because of the space existing where the tab of the missing sub guide member should be.

Heretofore the different manufacturers of filing cabinets and card systems have standardized the sizes of the cards, said cards being made at present in sizes three inches by five inches, four inches by six inches and five inches by eight inches. If a user of the cards requires more area than is contained in one of the cards he must take the next larger size thus entailing a different height and width of drawer or tray for holding the larger card. With this improved system the length or width of the card may be increased and such longer card can be accommodated in the same size tray or drawer as contains the shorter cards. Thus cards of different lengths or widths may be employed together in the same tray or drawer in this system, the card selected for any given data being of sufficient length to receive all of said data.

In Fig. 10 the notches 12 of the sub guide members are triangular in shape to fit the triangular shaped alining members, the advantage of this construction being that it allows some variation between the spacing of the notches and spacing of the alining members and yet allows the notches to be engaged by the alining members sufficiently to prevent endwise displacement of the sub guide members.

In practice the series of sub guide members will preferably be left incomplete and whatever additional sub guide members are added may be positioned to start new series; in other words if each series when complete contains ten sub guide members only seven for example, may be placed in each series, at the beginning, so that later on when it is desired to place in order in the file a sub guide member having a name which the filing order requires filing between two of the sub guide members of the series only members of that particular series need be shifted to accommodate the new member in its proper place.

The tabs 10 can be omitted from the sub guide members 9 and in that event, if any of the said members are missing from their places their absence will be observable because of the blank space on the next rearward sub guide member appearing between the character 11 of said next rearward member and the character 11 of the adjacent sub guide member on the other side.

The usual means, such as a follower block, may be employed to hold the members 5, 9, 13 in upright positions regardless of the number of said members contained in the tray.

The sub guide members may overlap one another from right to left or from left to right, and the alphabetical or other order of arrangement of the characters 11 of the members of each series may be from right to left or from left to right.

I claim:

1. In a follow-up index or filing system, a holder, main guide members in the holder, sub guide members arranged in a plurality of series between adjacent main guide members, throwing members between adjacent series of sub-guide members, the sub guide members of each series being of less length than the width of the holder, and means in the holder shiftably engaged by the sub guide members to prevent accidental endwise displacement of said members.

2. In a follow-up index or filing system, a holder, alining members extending longitudinally of the holder, and sub guide members in the holder provided with a plurality of notches in their lower edges to selectively receive one or more of the alining members, the sub guide members being arranged transversely in successive series and the sub guide members being of less length than the width of the holder, there being a mark on each of the sub-guide members in alinement with one of the notches therein adapted to register with one end of the sub-guide member immediately in front thereof.

Signed at Los Angeles, California, this 21st day of March, 1919.

STILLMAN W. McKEE.

Witnesses:

GEORGE H. HILES,

L. BELLE WEAVER.