J. C. Bigelow,

Stencil Plate,

No. 25,481. Patented Sep. 20, 1859.

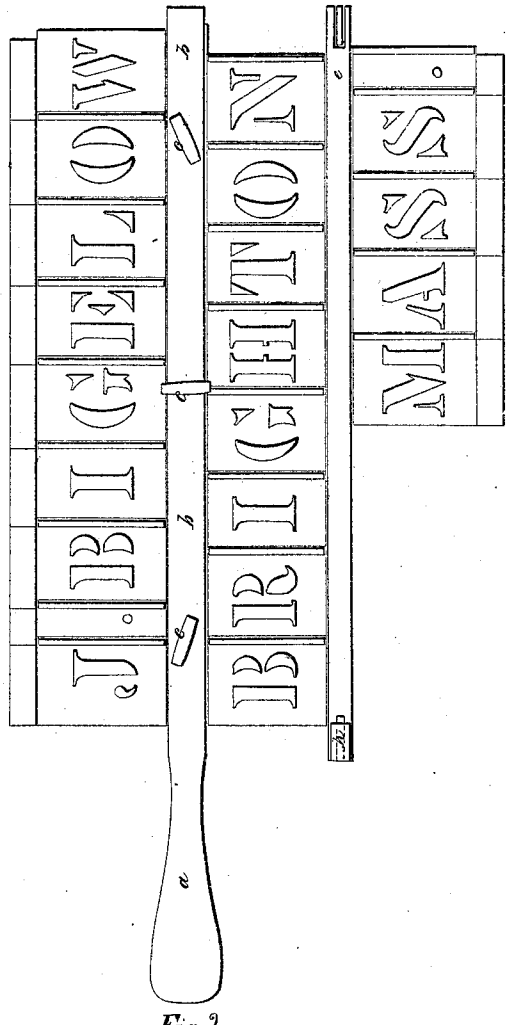


Fig. 1.

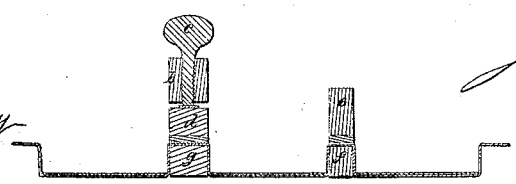


Fig. 2.

Witnesses:

J. B. Crosby

Lemuel McKay

Inventor:

Jon C. Bigelow

AM. PHOTO-LITHO. CO. N.Y. (OSBORNE'S PROCESS)

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

J. BIGELOW, OF BRIGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

CHANGEABLE STENCIL.

Specification of Letters Patent No. 25,481, dated September 20, 1859.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, J. BIGELOW, of Brighton, in the county of Middlesex and State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and Improved Changeable Extension-Stencil; and I do hereby declare that the following, taken in connection with the drawings which accompany and form a part of this specification, is a description thereof so full and exact as to enable those skilled in the art to practice my invention.

In the drawings Figure 1 is a plan and Fig. 2 a cross section (taken on line *x x* seen in Fig. 1) illustrating my invention.

Similar letters refer to similar parts in both figures.

It has long been a desideratum to produce a stencil which could be extended in lines parallel with each other to any desirable extent, while the separate plates forming the stencil should be capable of change to produce the necessary combinations of letters, figures and punctuation, the whole being formed in such a manner that the stencil should be as manageable as those in which the characters are unchangeably formed in one plate.

I am aware that a holder has been made to receive in succession plates in which characters are cut for the purpose of forming a stencil. Such a one was patented to Edwin Allen Sept. 4th, 1840. The simple arrangement and combination of a grooved frame with the perforated plates forming letters, &c., I disclaim, my invention being an improvement upon such a device whereby I am enabled to extend and contract the stencil to any number of lines, within practical limits, and to thus complete the whole of a direction or any other mark without change of the stencil. The separate plates in which the characters are formed to produce the stencil patented to the said Allen are bent at their ends to an angle much less than a right angle, which corresponds to the groove cut in the receiving frame, and they are not again bent to reverse angles with those first formed, as is necessary in my arrangement. In the construction of my stencil each end of each separate plate is first bent to a right angle, and these ends are again bent so as to be parallel with that part of the plate in which the character is cut. This arrangement is plainly shown in Fig. 2; but it will be obvious that if the lower parts of the supporting and holding frames were not rectangular the angles of the ends of the plates should be formed to correspond with the angles of the said lower parts of the frame.

The central or main holding frame is provided with a handle (*a*), for convenience, which is an extension of the top bar (*b*) through which the screws (*c*) act upon the follower (*d*) to press it firmly upon the different plates which are inserted between (*d*) and (*g*) and extend outward from either side of the main frame. The lower side of the follower is faced with some slightly yielding substance, such as leather or rubber, to insure a grip upon each character plate.

The auxiliary or side frames may be constructed as just described for the main frame, or as shown in the drawings, where the top bar (*e*) is hinged to the lower bar (*f*), (*e*) being faced as is (*d*), and both (*e*) and (*f*) being slightly convex on those faces between which the plates are pinched. The bars (*e*) and (*f*) are held together, clamping the plates between them, by means of the catch or latch (*h*).

It is evident that the lines of the stencil may be extended on either side of the main frame beyond what is shown in the drawings. One of the sides of each character plate, at right angles with the bent ends before mentioned, is swaged upward just sufficient to admit beneath the swaged part the thickness of the adjoining plate. This arrangement prevents in marking the formation of lines of ink at each joint of the stencil plate, and to a certain degree unites the whole of the stencil.

Plates with characters of any length or width may be used in combination with my holding frames, provided that the length of the plates in each line of the stencil between the bent ends is uniform and that the height of all the plates from their faces to the part where they are clamped is the same.

It is not expected that for many uses my stencil will be employed, as the solid plate is preferable to it on account of its lightness and compactness whenever the amount of one kind of marking is large enough to pay for the expense of such stencils. But for a direction plate in ware-houses from which at intervals packages are sent to different persons all over the country its value will

be appreciated, for in them it is well known how much plain marking insures from miscarriage.

Having described my invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States is:

The character plate formed at its ends as described, for the purpose specified, whether the same be swaged at one edge or not, also the stencil formed by the combination of said character plate and a frame or frames or clamps as described.

J. BIGELOW.

Witnesses:
J. B. CROSBY,
GORDON MCKAY.