Nov. 25, 1924. 1,516,547

W. D. POWELL

METHOD AND MEANS FOR THE REGISTRATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Filed June 11, 1923

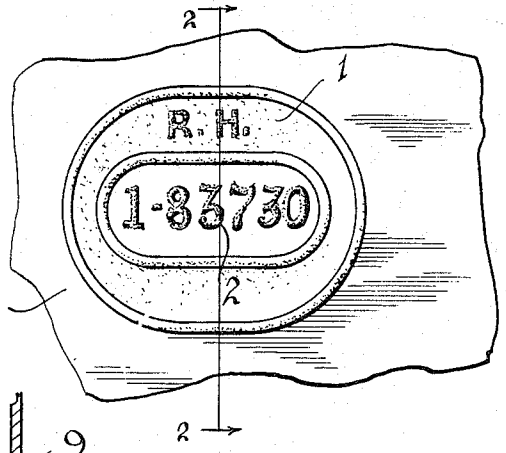


Fig. 1.

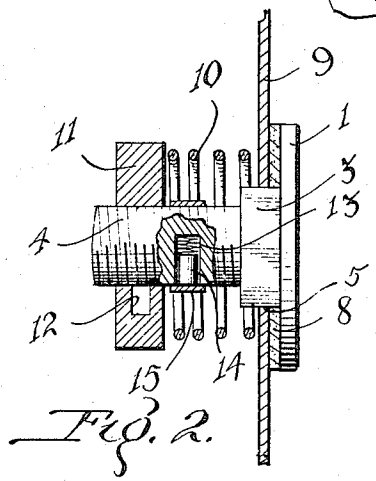


Fig. 2.

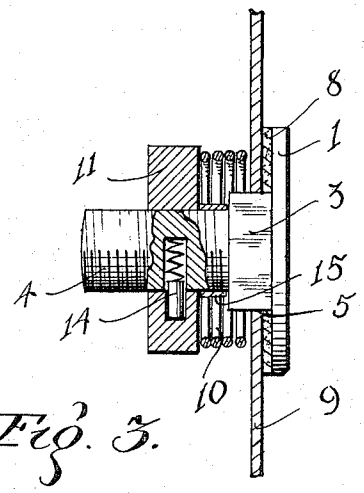


Fig. 3.

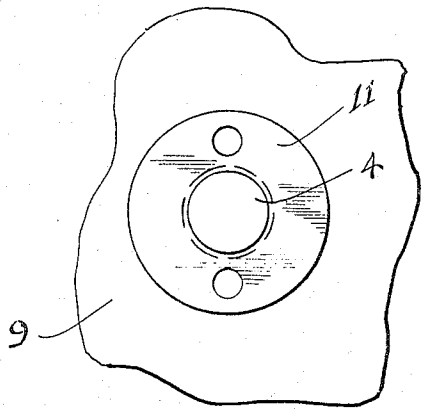


Fig. 4.

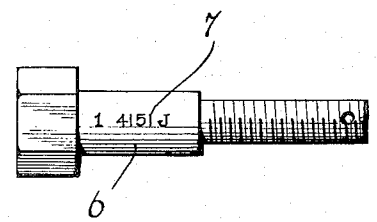


Fig. 5.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WALTER DUNNING POWELL, OF FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA.

METHOD AND MEANS FOR THE REGISTRATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

Application filed June 11, 1923. Serial No. 644,762.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WALTER DUNNING POWELL, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Fargo, in the county of Cass and State of North Dakota, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Methods and Means for the Registration of Motor Vehicles, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to improvements in methods and means for the registration of motor vehicles, and particularly to a process and means for registering motor vehicles so that the theft and subsequent alteration of the identification marks may be readily detected, and it consists in the steps hereinafter described, and the combinations, constructions, and arrangements herein described and claimed.

An object of my invention is to provide a method and means of the character described by means of which a central intelligence bureau may have complete record of the identification of all motor vehicles and the identification marks secretly recorded in the department.

A further object of my invention is to provide a method and means of the character described in which an identification tag is securely fixed to the motor vehicle in such a manner as to prevent its removal without mutilation of the vehicle of a character which would be readily noticed.

A further object of my invention is to provide in a method and means of the character described secret identification numbers which are placed upon certain obscure parts of the vehicle and which parts are supplied by the intelligence department to replace the original part after the vehicle has been sold by the dealer to a bona fide customer.

A further object of my invention is to provide a method and means of the character described in which an arrangement of records is used to immediately ascertain whether any of the identification marks, such as the license tag, serial number, or the engine number of the vehicle, have been altered since the vehicle has passed into the hands of the bona fide purchaser and of record in the intelligence department.

Other objects and advantages will appear in the following specification, and the novel features of the invention will be particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

My invention is partially disclosed in the drawings accompanying this application, in which—

Figure 1 is a front elevation of an identification tag secured upon the exterior wall of the cowl of a motor vehicle,

Figure 2 is a sectional view along the line 2—2 of Figure 1,

Figure 3 is a view of the mechanism illustrated in Figure 2 with the lock nut in place,

Figure 4 is a rear elevation of the mechanism illustrated in Figure 1, and

Figure 5 is a side elevation of a bolt for use on a motor vehicle on which the secret identification number is placed.

In carrying out my invention, I cooperate with the manufacturers of the motor vehicle. Each manufacturer is supplied with a pair of cardboard tags or forms printed upon a single sheet of cardboard and perforated so that the cardboard may be separated to form two separate tags. The first tag which I choose to number form Aa bears the following notation:

(Aa)
I–83730 Eng No 7341412
Special Touring
License Tag No_____Date_____
Signature of owner of car_____
Name of Agent_____
Town_____County_____State_____
Agency for_____
Motor Vehicle Dpt, insert tag No. and mail.

Directly on the back of form Aa is the address of the headquarters department or intelligence department through which I operate my improved means and method for registering motor vehicles. This portion of the cardboard may hereinafter be used as an ordinary mailing card and will be described at its regular time.

The lower portion of the cardboard is provided with a form which I choose to designate as form Ba and bears the following notation:

(Ba)
I–83730 Eng No 7341412
Special Touring
Name_____Town_____
County_____State_____
Dealer_____Date_____
Mfr represented_____
See other side for owner's signature.

On the back of this form Ba is a second form which I choose to call form Bb. Form Bb bears the following notation:

(Bb)
I hereby delegate to_____
_____of Registration Headquarters
of_____my power of attorney, to
act for me in any manner necessary
should my car registered under se-
rial No. I–83730 be stolen.
Signed_____
Witness_____ Date_____

The essence of the notation on the form Bb is a power of attorney, delegating the registration or intelligence headquarters to act as the attorney for the customer buying the motor vehicle in case the vehicle is stolen.

At the time the manufacturer disposes of the vehicles, he sends them to his representative or vehicle dealer. The engine number of the car is place on each of the forms Aa and Ba. These forms also each bear a serial No. I–83730 in the present case, which is the number used by the intelligence department for identification. The dealer receives the motor vehicle with the tags attached to one another and comprising a single piece of cardboard perforated at their dividing point. When the customer purchases a car, the dealer will fill in form Aa with his name, the town, county, and State in which the sale was made, and the name of the principal of the agent. He will thereupon tear the part Aa from the form Ba and forward the form Aa directly to the Secretary of State, along with the necessary money which the purchaser will pay for the registration of his vehicle in accordance with the statutes for his license tag.

The Secretary of State when issuing the license tag will insert the number of the license tag upon the form Aa, and thereupon drop the form Aa—Ab into a mail box, whereby it will actuate as a mailing card and be received by the intelligence department whose address is on the opposite side.

The dealer will fill in the form Ba with the name of the purchaser, his own name, and the manufacturer represented. The owner will execute the power of attorney on form Bb and this portion of the tag will be mailed directly to the intelligence department whose address appears also on the reverse side of form Aa.

In order that the information which is given on the forms Aa and Ba may also be permanently fixed to the motor vehicle, the dealer is supplied with a plurality of tags 1 having numbers 2 thereupon corresponding with the serial number appearing on the forms Aa and Ba. This tag 1 is of metal and has a substantially square boss 3 on each side from which projects a threaded bolt 4. A quadrangular opening 5 is provided through the cowl of the vehicle which may be plainly seen by the dealer, and the tag 1 placed through the opening so that the portion 3 may closely fit and fill the opening. A felt washer 8 is disposed on the outer side of the cowl 9 and a compression spring 10 is disposed concentric with the bolt and arranged to bear upon the cowl 9. A spanner nut 11 is threaded upon the bolt 4, there being an annular recess 12 on the inner wall of the nut 11.

The bolt 4 is provided with a recess 13 adjacent its inner end in which a spring pressed plunger 14 is disposed and a small annular sleeve 15 is carried on the outer wall of the bolt 4 to prevent the plunger 14 from projecting beyond the peripheral wall of the bolt.

In permanently fixing the tag 1 upon the motor vehicle, the dealer has only to tighten the spanner nut 11 from the position shown in Figure 2 to that position shown in Figure 3 and at that time the sleeve 15 is tightened out of engagement with the plunger 14 and the nut 11 permitted to move over the plunger until the plunger is forced into the recess 12, at which time the nut will be positively locked against dislodgment upon the bolt 4.

It will be noted that great force will be required to remove the identification tag from the vehicle and that its removal will leave an opening through the cowl of the vehicle which will be readily noticed by members of the police department who will be on the lookout for such indications of tampering.

Upon receipt of the form Aa and the form Bb from the dealer, the intelligence department or registration headquarters will mail the bill of sale, which contains the following notation to the dealer:

(C)
Bill of Sale,
Registration Headquarters Form,
R. H. Fargo, N. D., U. S. A.
Special Touring

Serial
I–83730 Engine No.
7341412
Sold this____day of____to____State
of_____County of_____
automobile as described above, with
a guarantee of title to same.
Signed_____
Witness_____ Date_____
Witness_____

This bill of sale will be properly executed and given to the owner to carry about with him. The registration headquarters will mail directly to the owner a bolt 6 having a secret number 7 (see Figure 5) thereupon, and a card or form Ea is also sent. The form Ea bears the following notation:

(Ea)

I–83730–41 sent on receipt of No. 1b. The bolt enclosed holds the fan bracket. As you will note in the illustration marked. You will exchange the bolts and after acknowledge is made on the reverse of this card you will mail the bolt removed together with this card to, R. H. Fargo, N. D., U. S. A.

Is serial number plate on your car? Yes. No. (Illustration)

See other side.

The form Ea contains instructions for the owner and states that the bolt enclosed (see Figure 5) holds the fan bracket as he will note in the illustration (the illustration is pasted directly to form Ea and consists in a picture of the fan belt). The instructions further state that the owner shall exchange the bolt forwarded to him for the one upon the motor vehicle and return the original bolt to the headquarters or intelligence department. The instructions further state that the owner shall execute an affidavit on the opposite side of the card having the form Ea, which form I have designated below as Eb.

(Eb)

This is to certify that I_____ of_____ Co._____ State_____ have carried out the instructions requested on the opposite side of this card.

Signed_____

Acknowledgement.

The owner will thereupon exchange the bolt illustrated in Figure 5 and containing the secret code number for the bolt already upon the vehicle, and will return the bolt originally provided by the registration headquarters or intelligence department, with the executed form Eb.

Upon receipt of the form Eb, the registration headquarters or intelligence department will issue a certificate bearing the following notation and which I choose to designate as form F.

(F).

Registration Headquarters,
R. H. Fargo, N. D., U. S. A.

This is to certify that_____ of_____has complied with all the provisions of registration of,

Serial Special Touring. Engine No.
I–83730 7341412

Date_____

This certificate is one which certifies that the registrant has complied with all of the provisions for the registration of his vehicle and is therefore entitled to the benefits derived therefrom. It will be noted at this time that the secret number 7 which is stamped upon the bolt or part 6 is merely a mutilation of the serial No. I–83730 and that a code key must be employed to decipher the secret number 7, which code key is in possession of the registration headquarters alone. It will be noted that the number 41 has been added to the serial number of the car on form Ea. This number 41 designates what part the bolt 6 is. I choose to employ a large number of parts which may be readily sent through the mail and therefore while one owner may receive a fan bracket bolt, the next owner may receive a bolt for the crank case or the cylinder head, each of which will have its own number identifying the bolt used in place of the number 41 added to the serial number at the registration headquarters.

It will be apparent that a large number of vehicle owners who are already in possession of a motor vehicle will desire the registration of their vehicle at this common registration headquarters or intelligence department. To this end I provide an identification card which I choose to designate as form D. This card bears the following notation:

(D).

Identification Card,
Registration Headquarters form,
R. H. Fargo, N. D., U. S. A.

Serial Special Touring Engine No.
I–83730 7341412

Issued this the_____day of_____ 192__to_____of_____ County of_____State_____.

Application recommended by
Agent_____

Dealer for_____

This card is sent directly to the dealer upon receipt of an application from the dealer in behalf of the owner, in place of the bill of sale. The forms Ea, Eb, and F would be sent directly to the owner from the information contained on the card made by the dealer in behalf of the owner.

From the foregoing description of the various parts of the device, the operation thereof may be readily understood. My improved method and means for registering motor vehicles is one in which a complete comprehensive record of the identity of the owner of the vehicle may be found at a single glance at the registration card, and if the engine number of the motor vehicle is tampered with, its identity may be still determined by communicating with the intelligence department who will have the serial number on the tag and will know on just what part of the car the number has been placed. This part can be removed and examined. The code number on that portion will check with the tag number if the

serial number has not been tampered with and the identity of the owner of the car at once established even though the engine number has been changed. If, however, the serial number and the engine number have both been changed, the representative or agent of the registration or intelligence department, may with little work, remove the parts of the vehicle on which the secret numbers are known to be placed until the part is found, at which time the secret number thereon will be deciphered and the serial number ascertained and therefore identity of the true owner of the car established.

It will be apparent therefore that thieves would hesitate to steal a motor vehicle on which it is known that such registration means is employed, and that the main advantage of my improved method and means for registering motor vehicles, is that it greatly diminishes the percentage of cars stolen in each year and therefore makes it possible for the principal insurance companies to decrease the premiums for insurance against theft.

I claim:

1. A method and means for marking a motor vehicle for identification which consists in the provision of an identification tag of metal arranged to be permanently locked in place in an opening provided through the body of said motor vehicle, and in the substitution of a part of said motor vehicle for the original part, said first named part having legends thereon in code corresponding with the legends on said identification tag.

2. Means for marking a motor vehicle for identification which consists of an identification tag arranged to be projected through an opening provided in the cowl of said motor vehicle, whereby said tag may be plainly visible on the exterior wall of said cowl, means for locking said tag against dislodgment from said cowl, said tag bearing legends designating a serial number peculiar to that of the motor vehicle on which the tag is placed, and in the substitution of a part of said motor vehicle for the corresponding original part of said motor vehicle, said substituted part having legends thereon in code corresponding with the legends on said identification tag.

3. Means for marking a motor vehicle for identification which consists in an identification tag having a number thereupon arranged for projection through an opening provided in the cowl of a motor vehicle, whereby that portion of the tag bearing a number is exposed on the exterior wall of the cowl and plainly visible to the observers, means for permanently locking the tag against removal, said means comprising a lock nut arranged to be threaded upon the exteriorly threaded portion of said tag member on the inner wall of said cowl, a compression spring fastened upon the inner wall of said cowl and said lock nut, a spring pressed plunger carried by said threaded tag member arranged to engage with the recess provided on the exteriorly threaded portion of said lock nut and means disposed concentric with the threaded portion of said tag member for holding said spring pressed plunger with its outermost end continuous with the wall of the threaded portion of the tag member when the lock nut is being moved into its final locked position.

WALTER DUNNING POWELL.