March 12, 1935. W. D. OWEN 1,994,088

PLAYING CARD

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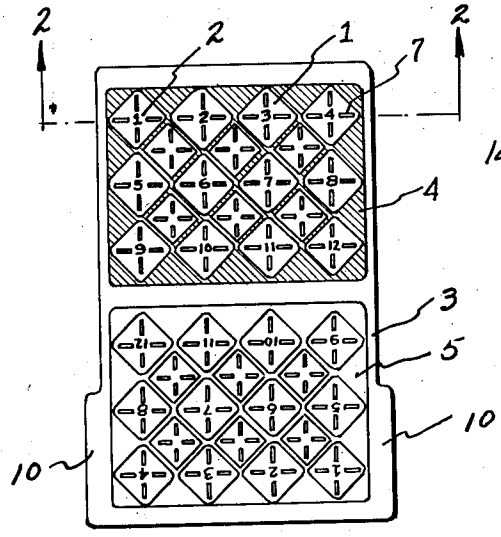


Fig. 1.

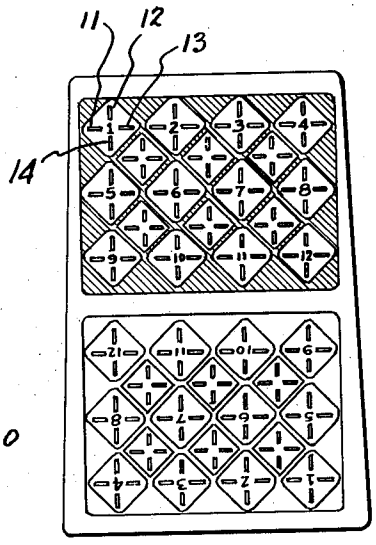


Fig. 3.

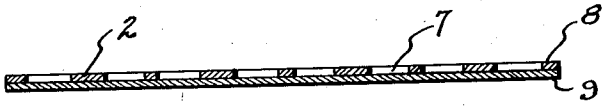


Fig. 2.

INVENTOR.
William D. Owen
BY Allen & Allen
ATTORNEY.

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PLAYING CARD

William D. Owen, Cincinnati, Ohio

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8 Claims. (Cl. 273—152)

My invention relates to a deck of playing cards with backs which will greatly assist in the playing of card games where it is desirable to duplicate the hands.

The playing of whist, auction bridge and contract bridge in duplicate form is a well known practice, the object of duplicating the hands being to eliminate the element of chance as to relatively good or poor hands dealt to the two sets of partners, thus making the issue entirely one of skill alone. Broadly, in foresome play, the system consists of two sets of partners playing a given number of hands, and then, at the same sitting or on a later date (usually the latter and so described hereafter) replaying the same hands with the partners holding the hands their opponents held at the first sitting. The difference in score between the two sittings determines which set of partners played the better, since both sets had exactly the same chances at the same hands, and thereby the element of luck is entirely eliminated.

The method of play in use when following this system is rather complicated and confusing, and consists of the following procedure: To avoid getting the several hands mixed during the play, each player plays his card on each trick, not to the center of the table, as is usual, but immediately in front of him. When it is ascertained who has taken the trick, each player turns his card face down in front of him. The winner of the trick may place his card at an angle to the other cards he has turned down in order to designate the tricks he has won. At the completion of the hand the thirteen cards played by each player, which also comprises the thirteen cards making up the hand dealt to him, are kept intact by placing them in the proper compartment of a receptacle known as the board, which has four compartments marked in order, North, East, South and West. Another deck is used for the second hand and when played it is stored away in a second receptacle as was the first. This procedure goes on, using a separate deck for each hand together with a separate receptacle. Therefore, it is apparent that as many decks and receptacles are used as there are hands played.

After the agreed number of hands have been played and preserved in this way, they are stored away until such time as the same players wish to play back the hands. The receptacles are numbered from one on indicating the play number of the hands held in the receptacle, and thereby maintaining their chronological order.

When the same players decide to play back the hands, number one receptacle is produced and from it are distributed the four hands contained, but with the sets of partners receiving hands previously held by their opponents. This procedure is continued using the receptacles in their chronological order until all of the receptacles heretofore used have been played. The scores resulting from the two meetings may now be compared, and the better set of partners determined.

Under this procedure a foursome consisting of two sets of partners requires one half as many decks of cards and one half the number of receptacles as there are hands to be played in the contest. After the original hands are played, these receptacles and decks are stored away and cannot be used until the second meeting and the playing back of the hands.

Another objection to this method is that during the play of the hands, a player must look at four different places on the table in order to determine the cards played, since each player plays his cards directly in front of him. It is also difficult to determine the tricks taken during the play, since it is necessary to look at all four players' tricks to determine the number won and lost.

Numerous players who are unused to duplicate play have an ingrained habit of gathering up the cards if they should win the trick, and glancing over them before they turn them down. This habit is very difficult to break and is a constant source of confusion in the game, since it is very apt to mix up the cards.

Another objection to this method is that there is apt to be a mix up in the receptacles when they are stored. If the hands should fall from one receptacle and become mixed, it is almost impossible to re-arrange them again. These disadvantages are very important especially in tournament play.

It is an object of my invention to make possible the playing of duplicate games such as whist, auction or contract, with but one deck, and without the use of receptacles and their inherent disadvantages.

It is a further object of my invention to provide a deck of cards which makes it possible to play duplicate games without the necessity of storing the deck between the two sittings, but which permits the deck to be used for other games of any kind without in any way destroying the hands played at the first sitting, and the possibility of duplicating them.

Another object of my invention is to accomplish all the above, without requiring the players to depart from the usual manner of playing the

cards during the game. The winner of a trick gathers all the cards in as is usual, and in the playing, all the cards are thrown to the center of the table and gathered up by the winner as is ordinarily done.

It is also possible with my novel cards to rearrange any given hand at a later date for re-study, or for submission to an authority on the game.

It is an object of my invention to provide a deck of cards that will permit the playing in duplicate form of any card game in which all of the cards in the deck are dealt into four numerically equal hands, with merely the use of the deck and pens or pencils, and without the necessity of expensive and elaborate equipment such as a plurality of decks and receptacles.

It is an object of my invention to provide a deck of cards that will permit the playing in duplicate form of any card game in which most of the cards in the deck are dealt into four numerically equal hands with the remainder dealt to the table to constitute the blind, as is done in five hundred. The cards dealt to the four hands are marked as hereinafter described. Those going to the blind are not marked. In playing off the duplicate the dealers toss the unmarked cards of the deal to the table, thus assuring that the same cards will be in the blind as were there originally.

These and other objects of my invention which will be set forth hereinafter or will be apparent to one skilled in the art upon reading these specifications, I accomplish by that certain construction and arrangement of parts of which I shall now describe a preferred embodiment.

Reference is now made to the drawing which forms a part hereof, and in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the back of one of my novel cards.

Figure 2 is a cross section of the card shown in Fig. 1 taken on the cross section line 2—2.

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the back of my modified card.

Briefly in the practice of my invention, I provide a deck of cards with the usual indicia on the face but with a back comprising a number of separate areas 1. Within each of these areas I provide a numeral 2. In my preferred form as illustrated in Fig. 1, I divide the back 3 of the card into two fields 4 and 5 of contrasting colors. The separate areas 1 in these fields may be in any design or form pleasing to the eye and symmetrical with the shape of the card. The numerals 2 are in progressive order from the numeral 1 to any numeral desired. In the preferred embodiment shown I have inserted twelve numerals in each field with the base of the numerals toward the center portion of the card so that the numerals in the upper field may be easily read when the deck of cards is held in the hand preparatory to dealing. While in the illustrations shown the numerals in the field 5 are upside down, it will be apparent that if the deck is turned in the hand, field 5 and the numerals in it will be upright and field 4 and the numerals will be reversed.

In the back of the card and projecting in four directions radiating from the numerals and parallel to the edges of the cards I place short grooves 7. These grooves may be made in the car back by pressing, but I prefer to make my card of at least two layers 8 and 9 and to cut apertures in the form of the grooves in piece 8 and to then superimpose the two pieces and paste them together. By this procedure the grooves are more uniform and are not apt to indent or form ridges on the face of the card.

In dealing duplicate hands with my novel deck it is necessary to have all the fields of the same color superimposed, as will be explained later. In order to facilitate the superimposing and to provide a means for easily accomplishing this, I place ears 10 on the sides of my cards opposite one of the fields. In the illustration shown in Fig. 1, these ears are opposite the field 5. The ears 10 project very slightly from the side of the cards and are considerably shorter in length than one-half the length of the card. It is now apparent that by holding the deck loosely between the thumbs and forefingers of both hands, with the fingers and thumbs between the ears 10, and gently pulling, the dealer is enabled to separate the cards into two portions with all the fields of a given color in each portion at one end. By then reversing one portion and placing it over the other portion, all the fields of a given color will be superimposed throughout the deck.

In the modification shown in Fig. 3, the cards are wedge shaped instead of having the projecting ears. The procedure of superimposing of the wedge shaped cards is similar to that used with the cards having the ears.

It is my intention to cover any shape differing from the conventional rectangle which makes possible the superimposing of portions of the backs of the cards which vary from other portions either in color or design or both.

Having thus described my novel cards I will now explain the method of using them in playing duplicate bridge or some other similar game.

The deck is shuffled, cut and dealt in the usual manner, but before any player has seen his hand the dealer places his hand on the table with the field selected for marking away from him. In other words if the dealer is South, and field 4 is selected, he places his cards in front of him with the field 4 on the North end of the card, and the field 5 on the South end of the card. The other three players place their cards on the table in such a position that they are parallel with the dealer's cards. With this set up all of the cards are placed with the field 4 at the North end of the cards. Then with a pencil or a pen, each player marks his cards in area number 1, by placing a mark in the groove that points toward him in that area. As an example, the dealer himself would mark all of his cards in the groove 14 (Fig. 3), his partner (North) in groove 12, the player on his left (West) in groove 11, and the player on his right (East) in groove 13. The grooves are placed in the cards to assist the marking of the cards and to insure that they are all marked uniformly so that there will be no cards that have a blot or peculiarly drawn line in order to indicate what they are on the face and to assist a player in remembering what the card is on its face from the marking on the back, when playing subsequent hands. These grooves also insure that the marking will be in the right direction and parallel to an edge of the card so as not to confuse the dealer at some subsequent deal. After all the cards have been marked by the players, the cards are taken up and the bidding and the play goes on as usual. In playing, the four cards of a trick are all thrown to the center of the table and the winner of the trick, or his partner, gathers all four of them in, as is usual in the game. The winner of the trick may stack his tricks in any manner that is convenient, and

not in any predetermined manner as is necessary with the use of boards.

When one hand is played, the same deck is shuffled and cut and dealt by the player on the immediate left of the first dealer. Again the new dealer (West this time) places his cards on the table face down with the field 4 they are using at the end of the card that is away from him. That is, the field 4 is at the East end of the cards. The players place their cards parallel to his, as was done in the first instance, and using the area designated by the numeral 2, all the players mark the grooves in that area that point toward them. The hands are then gathered up and the bidding and the play goes on as heretofore described. The deals and the play proceed in this manner until the number of hands desired to be duplicated later have been played. As an example, if the forty-eight hands of twelve deals are marked for later duplication, then, in the selected field 4, all the numbered areas on all the cards of the deck will have one of the four grooves in each distinguished by a deal directing mark.

When at some later date the original players desire to play back the hands in duplicate, but with the opposite set of partners holding the hands held by the original partners, the procedure is as follows: The two sets of partners take their original places at a table and the player to the left of the original dealer commences the deal. In this case the dealer will be West. Without shuffling, the dealer arranges the deck by the use of the ears 10 so that all the fields of the same color will be superimposed. Then the deck is placed in the hands of the dealer so that the 4 field is at the end of the cards opposite to him, that is, so that field 4 is at the East end of the cards. The dealer then throws the cards, not in clockwise rotation, but as the marked grooves in areas number one point. It is apparent that the cards held by North in the first play will have groove 12 marked. In this play-back, this mark 12 will point toward East, who will receive the cards held formerly by his opponent North; and South, West and North will now receive the hands formerly held by East, South and West. The bidding and the play is now the same as it was in the former play with the players throwing their cards to the center of the table as they play, and the winner of the trick taking in all of the cards played on the lead. When one hand has been played the deal goes to the left, as usual, and the new dealer uses area numbered 2 for the second deal, and so forth, until all twelve hands have been played back. It is therefore apparent that twelve sets of hands have been played, and that each set of the partners have held the same hands as their opponents at some point in the game.

The six areas in each field which are not numbered may be used in case it is desirable to play more than the twelve hands, or may be used if it is desirable to omit any hand that has been passed all around.

I do not intend to limit myself to the specific form or design of the backs of the cards, nor the form of the cards themselves. It may be desirable to place twenty-four or more areas on the backs of the cards all containing numbers in upright position, and to use some means similar to the ears 10 to position this one field in upright position. It may also be desirable to limit the deck to merely twelve or more hands, and to use two separate fields as is illustrated in the drawings, and have each player mark both of the areas numbered 1, etc., in opposite directions so that in the re-deal, the cards will always be in a position to guide the dealer as to the player to whom he should throw the card irrespective of the position of the cards in the deck, without the necessity of the ears or wedge shaped cards. It may also be found desirable to place ridges instead of grooves in the areas in order to guide the pen or pencil, or it may be that the grooves or ridges will be varied in shape or number, or both. It is also possible, if the players desire, to double the usefulness of my novel deck, by playing it through again, using a colored pencil (red preferred) to mark the cards. When one of the colored marks would fall over a black mark, it is omitted, and in the duplicate, the dealer therefore throws the card in the direction indicated by the colored mark unless there is no colored mark in an area, and in that case he throws it in the direction indicated by the black mark in that area.

It may be desirable to print the cards without grooves or ridges, and to provide stencils of any suitable material, designed to be placed over a card or a portion of a card, said stencils being provided with perforations for the guiding of any marking instrument, such as a pen or pencil. Or it may be desirable to provide stencils marked to designate one for the dealer, one for the dealer's partner, one for the opponent on the dealer's right, and one for the opponent on the dealer's left, in which case each stencil would have perforations only over those spots or spaces where its holder should mark, thus making it impossible for a player to mark in the wrong direction. With the last described stencils the stencils would be passed to the left with the deal, or, if the players preferred, the stencils properly distributed for the opening deal could each be retained by its possessor throughout the marking period of the contest, in which case all the dealing would be done by or from the viewpoint of the original dealer with only the opening bid rotating.

It is my intention to cover any means placed on the backs of cards which permit the marking by the individual players in such a way as to permit the duplicating of the hands after they have been played.

It is apparent that with my invention it is possible to reset up any hand at any later date for the consideration of an authority on the game, by merely selecting the hand number and dealing according to the marks on the backs of the cards.

With whatever modification of my invention that is desirable, it is apparent that the duplicating of hands is possible without the use of receptacles and a plurality of decks that necessarily remain idle during the interval between the original playing of the hands and the playing off of the duplicate.

It is understood that different forms of my preferred form may be made without departing from the spirit of my invention.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is:—

1. A deck of playing cards, each card having a back comprising a plurality of areas containing consecutive numbers, and grooves radiating from said numbers, said grooves extending in the direction of the edges of the cards.

2. A playing card having on its back a series of areas containing numbers indicating the number

of the deals, and indentations in said areas at the top, bottom and both sides of said numbers, for the purposes described.

3. A playing card having on its back a series of areas containing numbers consecutively arranged, with indentations in said areas radiating from said numbers in four directions parallel to the edges of the card, said indentations being of a width to accomodate a pencil lead.

4. A playing card composed of a front and a back portion fastened together, said front portion containing the usual face of a playing card, and said back portion containing a plurality of areas each containing a number and slits, said slits radiating from said number in four directions parallel to the edges of the card, said back portion being superimposed on said front portion in such a manner that the slits will determine the sides of indentations and the front portion will constitute the bottoms of the indentations, substantially as described.

5. A playing card having on its back a series of areas containing numbers consecutively arranged, indentations in said areas radiating from said numbers in four directions parallel to the edges of the card, and a series of areas containing the indentations but not the numbers.

6. A playing card having on its back an area representing a deal, and adapted to be marked selectively to indicate the direction of the deal, and having means within said area to confine a marking of said area to given direction indicia.

7. A deck of playing cards, each card having defined areas on the back permitting the insertion of indicia to indicate the distribution of the cards, said areas being indented.

8. A playing card having on its back a series of areas containing numbers indicating the number of deals, and indentations in said areas adjacent said numbers, for the purpose described.

WILLIAM D. OWEN.