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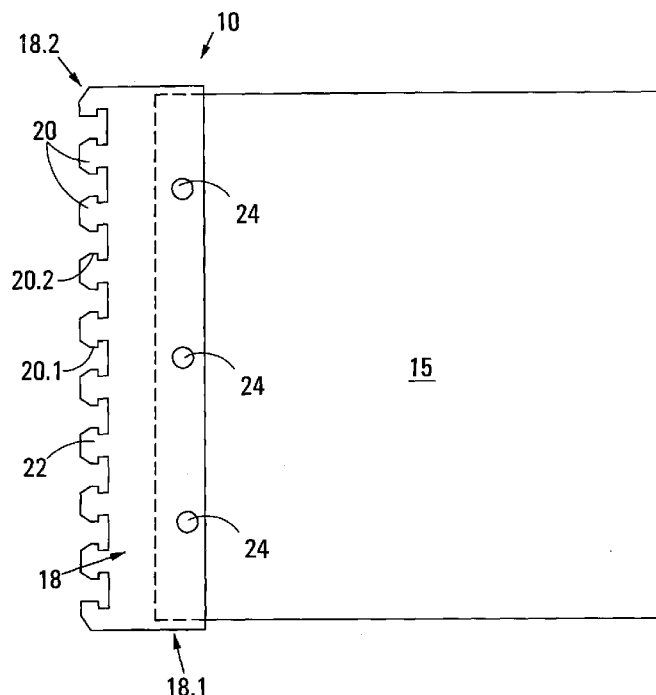
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(54) Title: FILE NOTE APPARATUS



(57) Abstract: This invention relates to a file note apparatus, a bound file and to a method of providing a note on a file. The file note apparatus in accordance with the invention is typically for use with stack of sheets bound together by way of at least one binding member disposed in substantially aligned apertures in the sheets, the file note apparatus comprising an apparatus body comprising an attachment zone for attachment to a planar note body and an engagement zone for attaching the body to the bound file. The engagement zone is located adjacent an edge portion of the apparatus body. The engagement zone comprises at least one pair of spaced apart teeth defining a binding member recess therebetween, wherein at least one tooth defines a retaining formation for removably retaining the binding member in the binding member recess, in use.

FILE NOTE APPARATUS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

THIS INVENTION relates to a file note apparatus, a bound file and to a method of providing a note in a file.

Planar sheets of writing material, such as paper, are often stacked and bound together to form a bound file or pad. It will be appreciated that binding of sheets may be achieved in a plurality of different ways including comb or wire binding.

For binding in the abovementioned fashion, a plurality of apertures is made at a predetermined zone on all sheets to be bound, for example, at particular corresponding edge portions of the sheets (typically the top or left sides thereof). Wire or comb binders are then attached to the stacked pages, for example, using one or more dedicated machines, or human operators thereby to bind the pages together via the comb or wire binders.

In particular, for certain types of comb or wire binders, binding members thereof are introduced into aligned apertures of the sheets to be bound and are operated such that the binding members bind the pages together. For some comb binders, the binding members are typically connected to a spine and are resiliently biased to curl towards the spine to bind the sheets together to the spine, in use.

In other comb binders, malleable or deformable binding members connected to a spine are deformed to move the binding members to bind the sheets together to the spine, in use.

In some example embodiments, the binders comprise a plurality of binding members in the form of malleable or deformable C-shaped rings which may be receivable in the aligned apertures of the sheets. Each C-shaped ring is then deformed to bring ends together to form a loop thereby binding the sheets together, in use.

In some cases, the wire binder comprises a single corkscrew-like binder which may be threaded through the aligned apertures to bind the sheets together, in use. In this case, individual loops of the corkscrew-like binder are effectively binding members which bind the sheets together, in use.

In summary, the binding members in the apertures typically bind the sheets together such that each binding member is flanked by other binding members. Once attached to the sheets, it is very difficult to remove the binders therefrom. In addition, once bound, it is very difficult for sheets to be removed or introduced into the bound file.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to address some of the difficulties associated with bound files of the type having a plurality of binding members which bind sheets of the file together.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a file note apparatus for use with stack of sheets bound together by way of at least one binding member disposed in substantially aligned apertures in the sheets, the file note apparatus comprising an apparatus body comprising:

- an attachment zone for attachment to a planar note body; and

- an engagement zone located adjacent an edge portion of the apparatus body, the engagement zone comprising at least one pair of spaced apart teeth defining a binding member recess therebetween, wherein at least one tooth defines a retaining formation for removably retaining the binding member in the binding member recess, in use.

The attachment zone may comprise attaching formations for attaching the apparatus to one or more planar note bodies, in use.

In particular, the attachment zone may comprise a pair of planar jaws, the jaws being displaceable between a first position in which the jaws are spaced apart wherein one or more planar note bodies are received therebetween and a second position in which the jaws are brought together thereby to removably clamp the one or more planar note bodies together, in use. The jaws may be hingedly connected to each other such that the jaws are hingedly displaceable between the first and second positions.

In one example embodiment, the jaws may frictionally clamp one or more planar note bodies together.

The jaws may comprise attaching formations to secure the file note apparatus to one or more planar note bodies.

The attaching formations may comprise complementary frictionally engaging hole and peg type locking formations on each jaw or complementary spigot-socket like locking formations on opposite inner surfaces of each jaw for securing, in the second position, one or more planar note bodies via apertures provided on the planar note bodies.

The attachment zone may comprise a row of spaced apart locking formations attachable to one or more planar note bodies via a row of correspondingly spaced apart apertures provided on the one or more planar note bodies.

The planar note body may be selected from a group comprising of a sheet of paper, cardboard, plastic, metal, composite material, and a planar electronic tablet computing device.

The engagement zone may comprise a plurality of teeth provided in a row between end teeth. The teeth may shoulder each other and may be spaced by the binding member recesses.

The planar note body may comprise one or more of cut away portions, indicia and patterning thereon. The cut away portions, patterning and/or indicia may comprise branding or logos.

The shape of the planar note body may comprise a logo.

The file note apparatus may be substantially the same size, or at least the length, as the sheet/s.

In other example embodiments, the note body is substantially the same size as the sheet/s. However, it will be appreciated that the size and or shape of the engagement zone may be different from the size and or shape of the note zone.

Each tooth may define one or two retaining formations which project or protrude transversely to a longitudinal axis of the tooth, toward adjacent teeth.

Each tooth between the end teeth may be symmetrical and may comprise a retaining formation on either side thereof, extending toward adjacent teeth, and wherein the end teeth are a-symmetrical.

The retaining formations may comprise flanges which project or protrude into the binding member recesses. The retaining formations may frictionally engage and retain the binding members in the binding member recesses.

In one example embodiment, each tooth may comprise guiding formations for guiding the binding members to the binding member recess.

The guiding formations may comprise chamfered edges adjacent the retaining formations for facilitating guiding the binding members between the pair of teeth.

Each tooth may comprise a body having a stalk connected to a substantially mushroom-shaped head with chamfered lateral edges to guide the binding member into the binding member recess, in use.

It will be noted that the retaining formations may comprise lateral end portions of the mushroom-shaped head.

The teeth may be resiliently deformable or displaceable relative to each other, to receive the binding members in the binding member recess, in use.

The file note apparatus may be laminated and/or constructed of one, or a combination of paper, cardboard, plastic, rubber, and metal.

The apparatus body may be substantially planar.

According to a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of providing a note on a file or stack of sheets bound together by way of one or more binding members disposed through substantially aligned apertures in the sheets, the method comprising:

providing a the file note apparatus comprising an apparatus body comprising an attachment zone for attachment to a planar note body; and an engagement zone located adjacent an edge portion of the apparatus body, the engagement zone comprising at least one pair of spaced apart teeth defining a binding member recess therebetween, wherein at least one tooth defines a retaining formation for removably retaining the binding member in the binding member recess, in use;

receiving at least one binding member in the binding member recess between a pair of teeth of the file note apparatus in response to urging of the binding member into engagement with the file note apparatus; and

retaining, removably, the at least one binding member substantially within the binding member recess.

The method may comprise deforming at least one of the pair of teeth to receive the at least one binding member in the binding member recess in response to urging of the binding member into abutment with the teeth.

The method may comprise providing guide means between the pair of teeth for guiding or locating the binding member between the pair of teeth.

According to a third aspect of the invention, there is provided a bound file comprising a plurality of sheets bound together by way of at least a plurality of binding members disposed in substantially aligned apertures in the sheets, the bound file comprising one or more file note apparatuses, wherein each file note apparatus comprises a planar apparatus body comprising:

an attachment zone for attachment to a planar note body; and

an engagement zone located adjacent an edge portion of the apparatus body, the engagement zone comprising at least one pair of spaced apart teeth defining a binding member recess therebetween, wherein at least one tooth defines a retaining formation for removably retaining the binding member in the binding member recess, in use.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 shows a top view of a bound file comprising a plurality of sheets and a file note apparatus in accordance with an example embodiment, illustrating the teeth thereof in greater detail;

Figure 2 shows a perspective view of the file note apparatus of Figure 1 in the first position with a planar note body adjacent the same in accordance with an example embodiment;

Figure 3 shows a perspective view of the file note apparatus of Figure 1 in the second position with a planar note body operatively engaging the same; and

Figure 4 shows a plan view of the file note apparatus in accordance with an example embodiment, operatively engaged with a planar note body.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In the following description, for purposes of explanation, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of an embodiment of the present disclosure. It will be evident, however, to one skilled in the art that the present disclosure may be practiced without these specific details.

Referring to Figures 1 to 4 of the drawings, a file note apparatus in accordance with an example embodiment is generally indicated by reference numeral 10.

The apparatus 10 is typically for use with a file 12 or pad of sheets 14, as illustrated in Figure 1, bound together by way of at least a plurality of binding members 16.1 of a binder 16, for example, a comb binder disposed in substantially aligned apertures in the sheets 14. The comb binder 16 may typically be a conventional binder of the type having a spine to which the plurality of binding members 16.1 is attached and resiliently curved toward the same thereby to bind the sheets 14 together.

It will be understood that the invention as described herein is not limited to use with binders 16. It follows that the binder may be selected from any number of binders which bind sheets together by way of binding members which are disposed in aligned apertures provided in the sheets 14 such that adjacent binding members shoulder each other once attached to the sheets 14. To this end, the binding members may be separate, individual members such as the C-shaped rings previously mentioned. Instead, the binding members may be portions of a corkscrew-like binder such that portions of the corkscrew-like binder are provided as binding members in the aligned apertures of the sheets 14. In any event, the binding members typically shoulder each other in attachment to the sheets and bind the sheets 14 together, in use.

The sheets 12 may be planar sheets constructed of any one or more of plastic, paper, cardboard, metal, and the like.

From the Figures, particularly Figures 2 to 4, it will be noted that the apparatus 10 comprises an apparatus body 18 having an attachment zone 18.1 for attachment to one or more planar note bodies or sheets 15 and an engagement zone 18.2 located at one edge portion of the body 18 for engagement with the file 12.

The apparatus 10 may be reusable and may be constructed of a durable material selected from a group comprising plastic, paper, rubber, metal, and a composite material.

The planar note body 15 on the other hand may be a planar sheet constructed from a material which may be written on, for example, one or more materials selected from a group comprising paper, cardboard, plastic, rubber, composite material, a tablet computing device, or planar mounting comprising an electronic display screen, and a transparent cellulose film.

Opposed planar surfaces of the note body 15 may be written on. In other words, the note body 15 may provide opposed writing surfaces. The note body 15 may be erasable and reusable. As alluded to above, in certain example embodiments, the note body 15 may comprise an electronic page configured to be written on by a corresponding electronic pen or stylus.

In some example embodiments, the note body 15 may comprise cut away portions or patterning and/or indicia such as branding or logos provided thereon (not illustrated). The cut away portions may be provided with perforations to enable selective tearing of the portions. Some note bodies 15 may be of different geometric or bespoke shapes (not illustrated).

It will be appreciated that the apparatus 10 is meant to be reusable and in this regard, the reusability of the note body 15 is of secondary importance as a new note body 15 may be inserted into the apparatus 10 in place of a used or soiled note body 15. For brevity, in the example embodiment under discussion, the planar note body 15 is a sheet of paper on which notes may be written and may be discarded if desired.

The apparatus 10 may be smaller than sheets 14 of the bound file 12. However, the apparatus 10 may be substantially the same size as the sheets 14. The apparatuses 10 with note bodies 15 attached thereto may be provided between sheets 14 of the file 12.

The attachment zone 18.1 may comprise attaching formations comprising spigots 24 receivable in corresponding alignable apertures 15.1 in the sheet 15 as well as mating alignable apertures 26 for attaching the apparatus 10 to at least one sheet 15. The apertures 15.1 of a plurality of sheets for attachment to apparatus 10 are typically stacked so that corresponding apertures 15.1 are axially aligned for receiving the formation spigot 24 therethrough. The spigots 24 may be frictionally receivable and retainable in the apertures 26 or corresponding sockets (not shown). The spigots 24 and the apertures 26 may therefore be attachable in a press-fit or spigot-socket fashion.

In one example embodiment, as best seen in Figure 2, the apparatus body 18 comprises two planar jaws 28 and 30 hingedly connected to each other adjacent the engagement zone 18.2. The jaws 28 and 30 are hingedly displaceable between a first position in which they are spaced apart to receive a body 15 therebetween (as can be seen in Figure 2) and a second position in which they are brought together (as can be seen in Figure 3) to secure the body 15 therebetween.

Attachment formations, particularly the spigot formations 24, are provided on an inner operative surface of one jaw 30 whereas the apertures 26 are provide on the opposite jaw 28. The sheet/s 15 may be receivable in a zone between the two jaws 28 and 30 such that the spigot formations 24 pass through aligned apertures 15.1 of the sheets/s 15. The jaws 28 and 30 may then be operated to be brought together such that they are secured to each other by way of frictional engagement of the spigot formations 24 and apertures 26 thus securing the sheets 15 therebetween.

Though not illustrated, it will be noted that in some example embodiments, the jaws 28 and 30 are not hingedly connected but are separate parts which connect together by way of the attachment formations.

Though also not illustrated, it will be further noted that instead of the spigot formations 24 and apertures 26, the attachment zone may comprise other attachment means, for example, complementary locking formations such as spigot-socket or press-stud formations, a frictional clamping means, or the like. In one example embodiment with frictional clamping means, the jaws 28 and 30 are usually held permanently in the second clamping position and sheets 15 may be inserted and held therebetween by friction, i.e., no attachment formation is passed through the note body 15 to secure the same to the apparatus 10. The jaws 28 and 30 may be held together by a spring loaded mechanism or by moulding/extrusion wherein the jaws 28 and 30 usually abut each other and may be separated by exerting force thereon. In this example embodiment, the jaws 18 and 30 are pried apart to the first position whilst the sheet 15 is inserted therebetween. The jaws 18 and 30 are then released to move back automatically to the second position thus clamping the sheet 15 frictionally therebetween.

Turning to the engagement zone 18.2, it will be noted that the engagement zone 18.2 typically comprises a plurality of spaced apart teeth 20 in a row defining binding member recesses 22 (Figure 1) between adjacent teeth 20 for receiving the binding members 16.1. In the illustrated example, recesses 22 are defined by straight edges to provide a roughly part-square or part-rectangular recess. However, in certain example embodiments, the recesses may be tear-drop shaped, part-circular, etc.

It will be appreciated that the teeth 20 may shoulder or flank each other and may be spaced by the binding member recesses 22. In addition, each tooth 20 conveniently defines or comprises one or two retaining formations 20.1 (Figure 2) which project toward adjacent teeth 20. In addition, it will be noted that the retaining formations 20.1 comprise flanges which project on each side of the teeth 20 into the adjacent binding member recesses 22. It will be understood that end teeth 20 may typically comprise only one retaining formation 20.1.

Differently defined, the retaining formations 20.1 may be protrusions which extend transverse to a longitudinal axis of each tooth 20. In addition, save for the end teeth 20, each tooth 20 may be symmetrical about its longitudinal axis.

Each tooth 20 may optionally define guiding formations 20.2 for guiding the binding members 16.1 to the binding member recesses 22. The guiding formations 20.2 may typically comprise chamfered edges adjacent the retaining formations 20.1. In some example embodiments, not illustrated, the guiding formations may comprise a guiding channel to assist in guiding the binding members to the binding member recesses.

The teeth 20 may be T-shaped. In one example embodiment, each tooth 20, bar the end teeth 20, may be roughly mushroom-shaped have a stalk 20.3 extending from between adjacent recesses 22 and a bulbous head with chamfered top flank edges to automatically channel the binding members 16.1 into the binding member recesses 22 when urged against the members 16.1. To this end, the teeth 20 may be resiliently deformable or displaceable relative to each other, to receive the binding members in the binding member recess.

Though they may be constructed of the same material, it will be appreciated that the attachment zone 18.1 and the engagement zone 18.2 may be constructed of different materials wherein the engagement zone 18.2 is constructed of a resiliently deformable material such as plastic, rubber, laminated paper/cardboard, or the like.

In use, referring to Figures 1 to 4, it will be appreciated that users desiring to include *ad hoc* notes in the form of written data on planar sheets to a bound file 12 often find difficulty in doing so as these notes will have to be affixed to bound sheets 14 of the file 12, by adhesion, staples, or the like. This is especially difficult as these notes often become dislodged from the file 12 and may be easily misplaced.

In most cases, to include the notes to the bound file 12, other than by attaching them to existing pages, the the comb binder 16 is operated (via specialised machinery, for example)

to release the same from the sheets 14. Aligned apertures are then provided in the *ad hoc* note substantially at an edge portion thereof similar to the bound sheets 14. The note is then placed at a desired location amongst the sheets 14 and apertures are aligned for the introduction of the binding members 16.1 therein (also via the specialised machinery). The binder 16 is then operated in a conventional fashion to bind the sheets 14 together with the note at the desired location therebetween.

Though ensuring attachment to the bound file 12, the above described procedure is both time consuming and tedious, especially for a single note.

To this end, the users may write down data on the note body 15 and may attach the note body 15 to the apparatus 10 by way of the attachment means 18.1 as hereinbefore described. The apparatus 10 is conveniently removably attached to the bound file by forcing the engagement zone 18.2 thereof into contact with the binding members 16.1 which shoulder each other. This may be done at a desired location between the sheets 14 of the file 16. In any event, when urged in a direction transverse to a longitudinal axis of the spine of the binder 16, toward the binding members 16.1, (in the direction of arrow A, Figure 1). Adjacent guiding formations 20.2 (next to each other) engage the binding members 16.1 and channel the same to the recess 22. To this end, it will be appreciated that adjacent teeth 20, may displace slightly to enable the binding members 16.1 to travel to the recess 22.

Once received in the recess 22 the binding members 16.1 may be retained therein by way of adjacent retaining formations 20.1 which project into the recesses 22 substantially to retain the binding members 16.1 in the recesses 22.

Since adjacent teeth are not attached to each other, removing the file note apparatus 10 from the file 16 typically entails operating the same to dislodge the binding members 16.1 from the recesses 22 either by force (by pulling the apparatus 10 in a direction of arrow B, Figure 1) or by manual manipulation.

Resilience and/or the configuration of the teeth 20 typically ensure that the engaging zone 18.2 is not damaged by attachment and detachment of the apparatus 10 from the file 12.

As the apparatus 10 is reusable, a note body 15 may be removed therefrom by dislodging the spigots 24 from the corresponding apertures 26 and a new fresh body 15 may be inserted and attached to the apparatus 10 as herein described. The used/soiled note body 15 removed from the apparatus 10 may be discarded or filed away.

The present invention provides a convenient way in which a note may be attached to a bound file retrospectively without the need to remove the binder. In addition, it also

conveniently provides a manner in which unwanted notes may be removed from the file easily.

CLAIMS

1. A file note apparatus for use with stack of sheets bound together by way of at least one binding member disposed in substantially aligned apertures in the sheets, the file note apparatus comprising an apparatus body comprising:
 - an attachment zone for attachment to a planar note body; and
 - an engagement zone located adjacent an edge portion of the apparatus body, the engagement zone comprising at least one pair of spaced apart teeth defining a binding member recess therebetween, wherein at least one tooth defines a retaining formation for removably retaining the binding member in the binding member recess, in use.
2. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the attachment zone comprises attaching formations for attaching the apparatus to one or more planar note bodies, in use.
3. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the attachment zone comprises a pair of planar jaws, the jaws being displaceable between a first position in which the jaws are spaced apart wherein one or more planar note bodies are received therebetween and a second position in which the jaws are brought together thereby to removably clamp the one or more planar note bodies together, in use.
4. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the jaws are hingedly connected to each other such that the jaws are hingedly displaceable between the first and second positions.
5. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 3 wherein the jaws frictionally clamp one or more planar note bodies together.
6. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the jaws comprise attaching formations to secure the file note apparatus to one or more planar note bodies.
7. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein the attaching formations comprise complementary frictionally engaging hole and peg type locking formations on each jaw or complementary spigot-socket like locking formations on opposite inner surfaces of each jaw for securing, in the second position, one or more planar note bodies via apertures provided on the planar note bodies.

8. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein the attachment zone comprises a row of spaced apart locking formations attachable to one or more planar note bodies via a row of correspondingly spaced apart apertures provided on the one or more planar note bodies.
9. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the planar note body is selected from a group comprising of a sheet of paper, cardboard, plastic, metal, composite material, and a planar electronic tablet computing device.
10. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the engagement zone comprises a plurality of teeth provided in a row between end teeth.
11. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the teeth shoulder each other and are spaced by the binding member recesses.
12. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the each tooth defines one or two retaining formations which project or protrude transversely to a longitudinal axis of the tooth, toward adjacent teeth.
13. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein each tooth between the end teeth is symmetrical and comprises a retaining formation on either side thereof, extending toward adjacent teeth, and wherein the end teeth are a-symmetrical.
14. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the retaining formations comprise flanges which project or protrude into the binding member recesses.
15. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the retaining formations frictionally engage and retain the binding members in the binding member recesses.
16. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein each tooth comprises guiding formations for guiding the binding members to the binding member recess.
17. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the guiding formations comprise chamfered edges adjacent the retaining formations for facilitating guiding the binding members between the pair of teeth.
18. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein each tooth comprises a body having a stalk connected to a substantially mushroom-shaped head with chamfered lateral edges to guide the binding member into the binding member recess, in use.
19. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 18, wherein the retaining formations comprise lateral end portions of the mushroom-shaped head.

20. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the teeth are resiliently deformable or displaceable relative to each other, to receive the binding members in the binding member recess, in use.
21. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the file note apparatus is laminated and/or constructed of one, or a combination of paper, cardboard, plastic, rubber, and metal.
22. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the apparatus body is substantially planar.
23. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the file note apparatus is substantially the same size and/or length as the sheet/s.
24. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the note body is substantially the same size as the sheet/s.
25. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the size and or shape of the engagement zone is different from the size and/or shape of the note body.
26. A file note apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the planar note body is laminated and/or constructed of one, or a combination of paper, cardboard, plastic, rubber, and metal.
27. A method of providing a note on a file or stack of sheets bound together by way of one or more binding members disposed through substantially aligned apertures in the sheets, the method comprising:

providing a file note apparatus comprising an apparatus body comprising an attachment zone for attachment to a planar note body; and an engagement zone located adjacent an edge portion of the apparatus body, the engagement zone comprising at least one pair of spaced apart teeth defining a binding member recess therebetween, wherein at least one tooth defines a retaining formation for removably retaining the binding member in the binding member recess, in use;

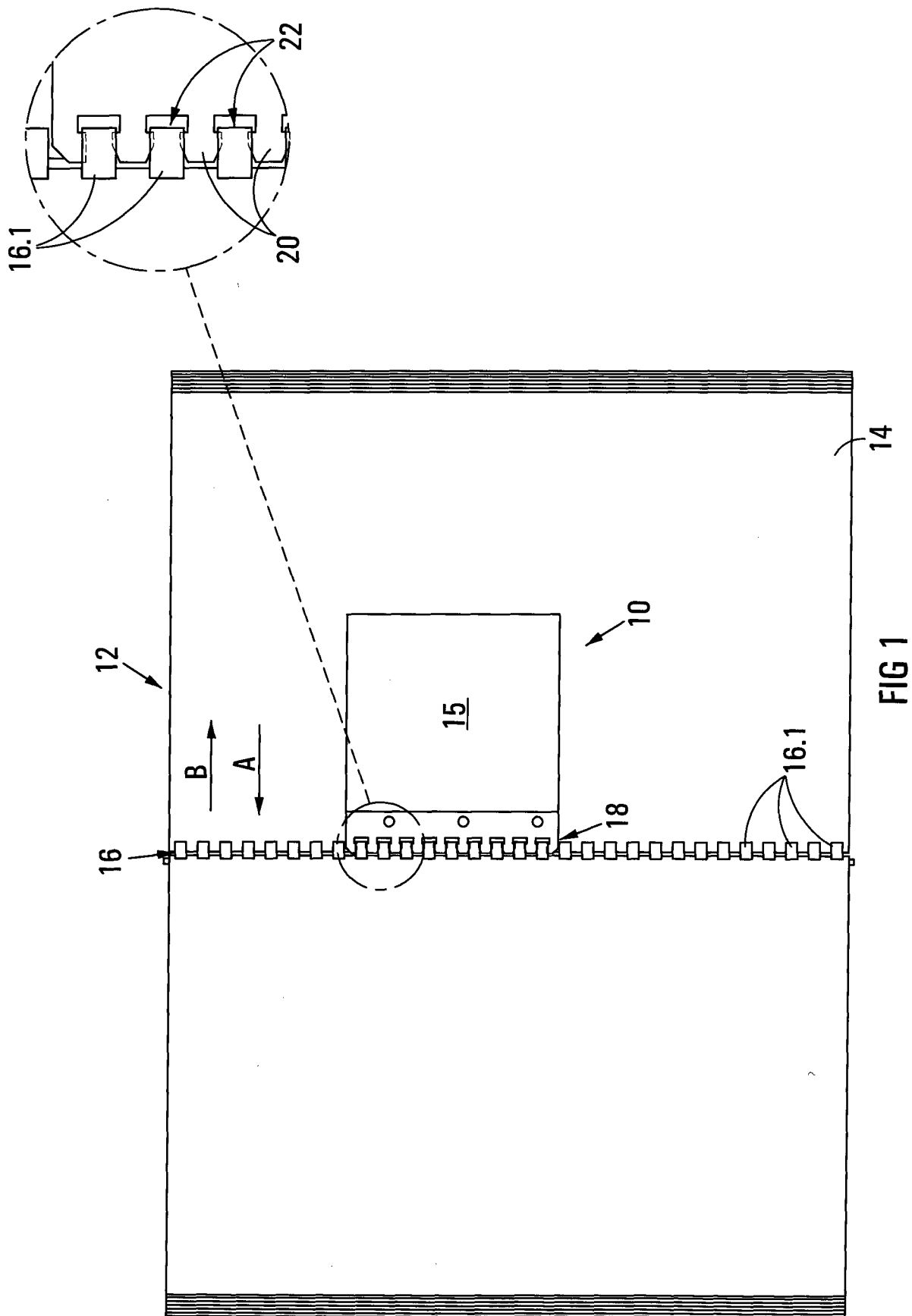
receiving at least one binding member in the binding member recess between a pair of teeth of the file note apparatus in response to urging of the binding member into engagement with the file note apparatus; and

retaining, removably, the at least one binding member substantially within the binding member recess.

28. A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein the method comprises deforming at least one of the pair of teeth to receive the at least one binding member in the binding member recess in response to urging of the binding member into abutment with the teeth.
29. A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein the method comprises providing guide means between the pair of teeth for guiding or locating the binding member between the pair of teeth.
30. A bound file comprising a plurality of sheets bound together by way of at least a plurality of binding members disposed in substantially aligned apertures in the sheets, the bound file comprising one or more file note apparatuses, wherein each file note apparatus comprises a planar apparatus body comprising:

an attachment zone for attachment to a planar note body; and

an engagement zone located adjacent an edge portion of the apparatus body, the engagement zone comprising at least one pair of spaced apart teeth defining a binding member recess therebetween, wherein at least one tooth defines a retaining formation for removably retaining the binding member in the binding member recess, in use.



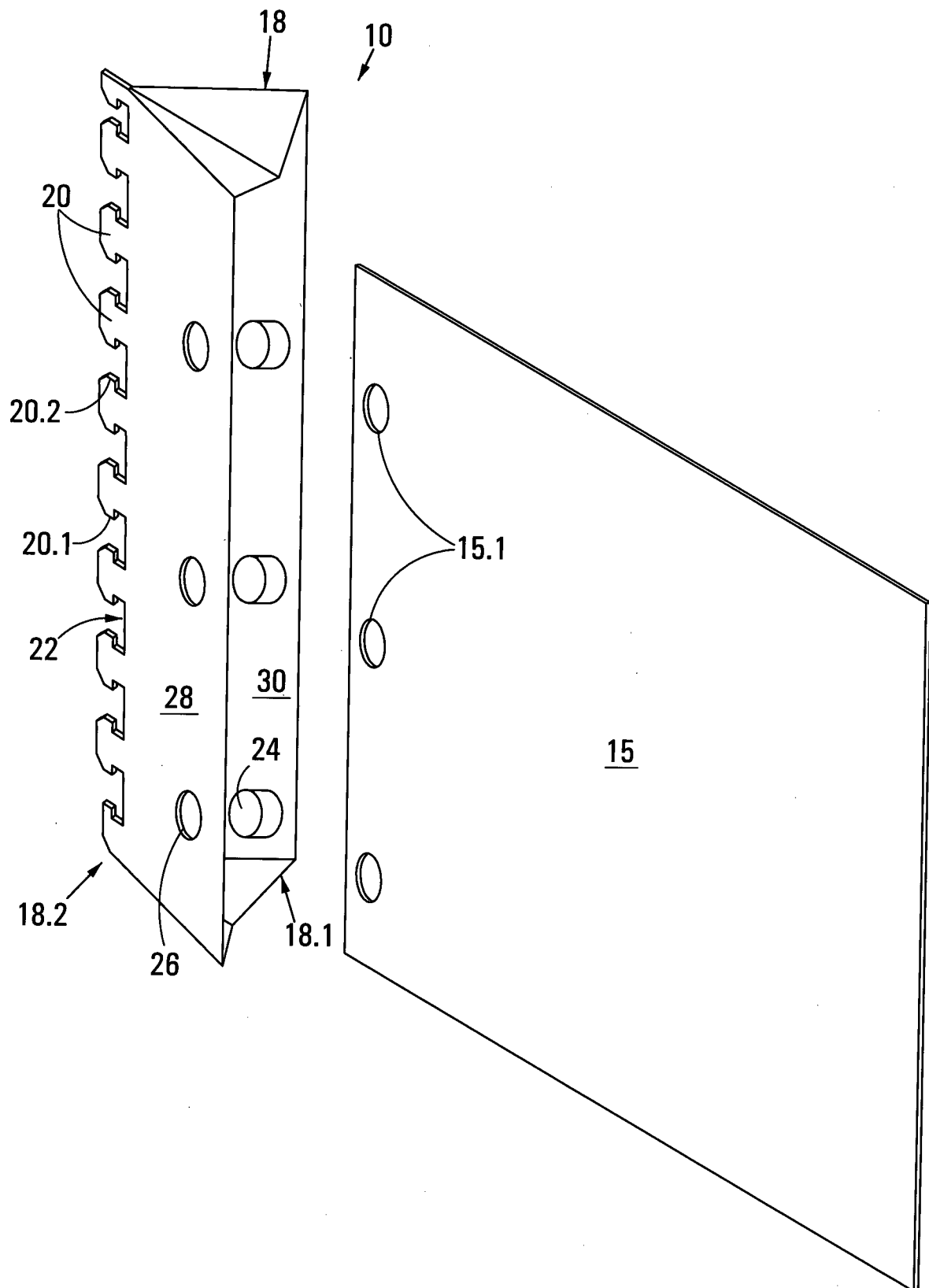


FIG 2

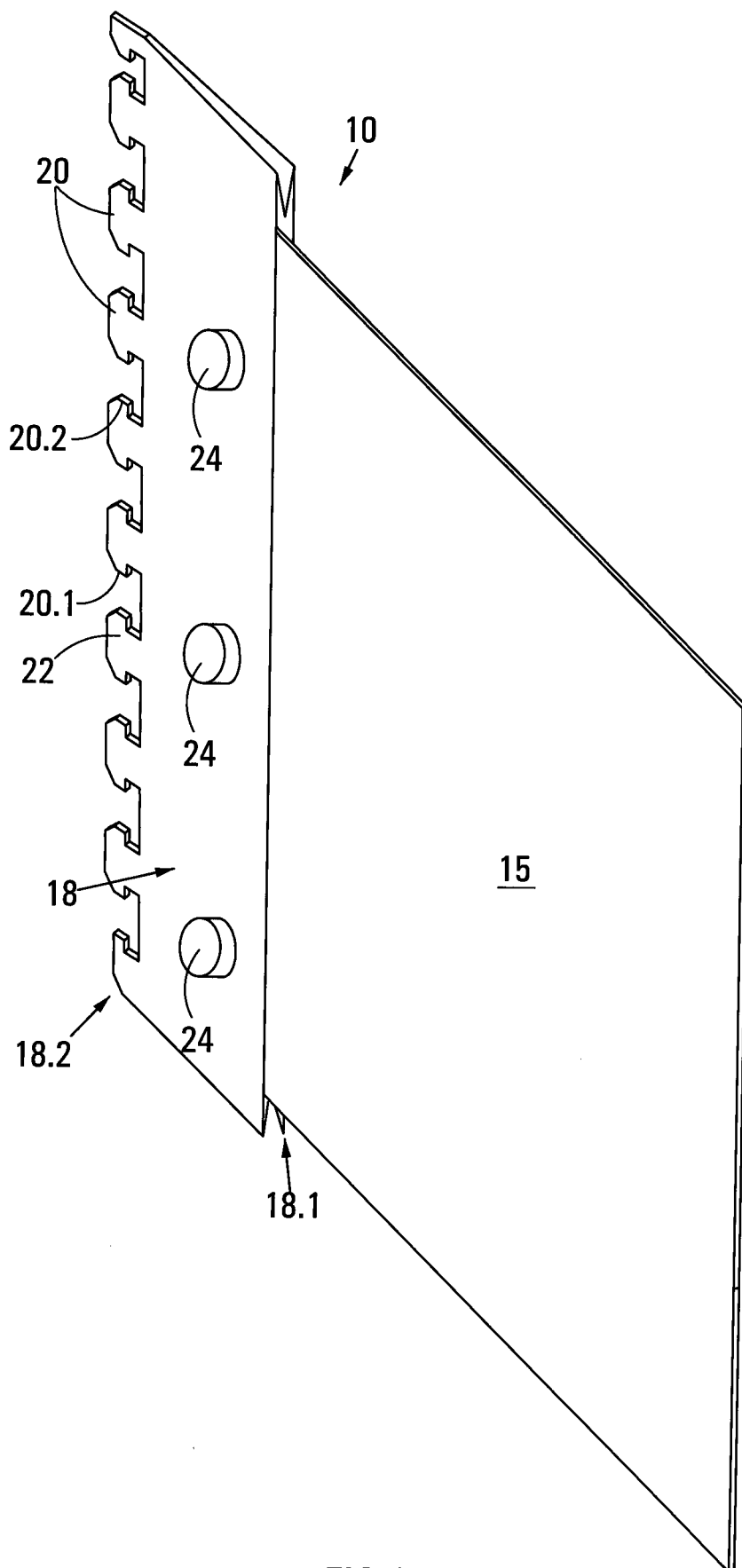


FIG 3

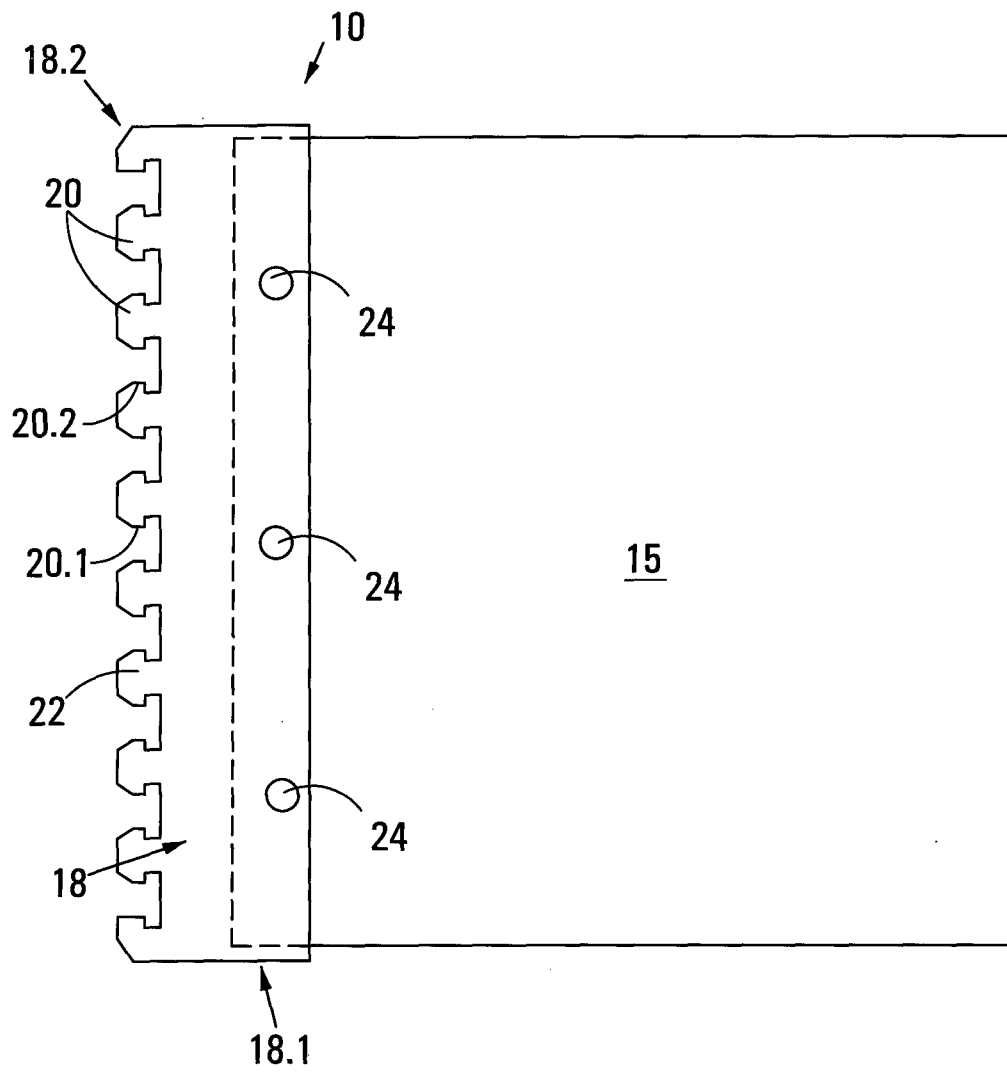


FIG 4