June 24, 1924. 1,499,159

W. C. ELDER

RECORD CARD AND FINDER USED THEREWITH

Filed Nov. 6, 1920

Fig. 1.

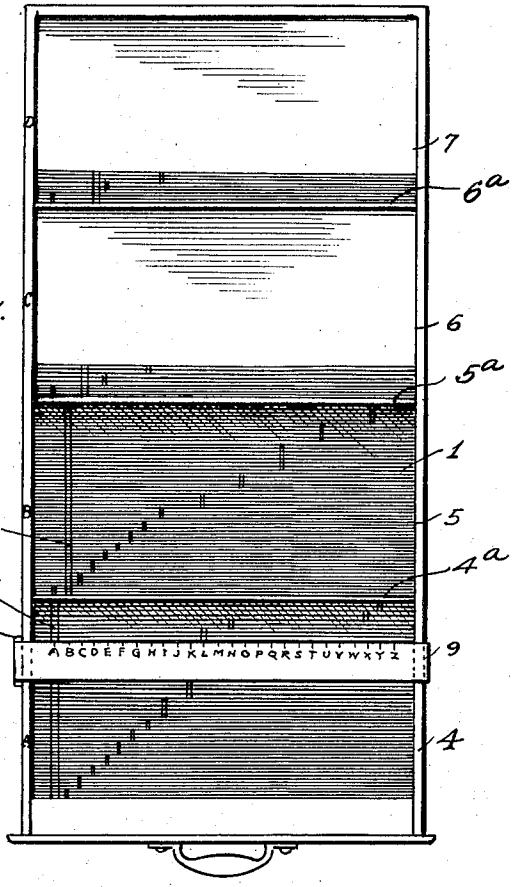


Fig. 2.

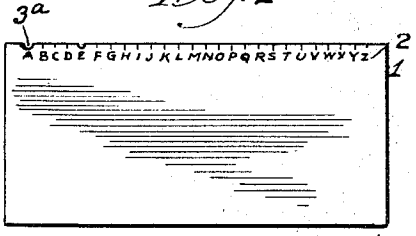


Fig. 3.

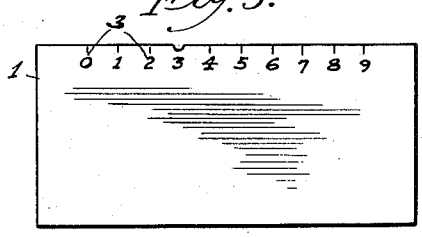
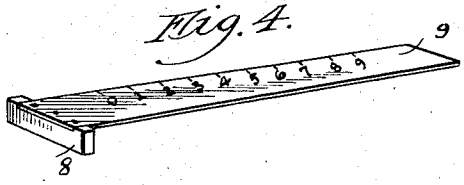


Fig. 4.



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By Frank L. Belknap. Atty.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILLIAM C. ELDER, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, ASSIGNOR TO ACME CARD SYSTEM COMPANY, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, A CORPORATION OF SOUTH DAKOTA.

RECORD CARD AND FINDER USED THEREWITH.

Application filed November 6, 1920. Serial No. 422,241.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM C. ELDER, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city of Chicago, county of Cook, and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Record Cards and Finder Used Therewith, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to improvements in filing record cards and refers more particularly to a method for filing index cards so that any misplaced card or cards will be obvious at a glance at the file.

Among its salient objects are to provide a method whereby the index cards, whether filed in alphabetical, numerical order, or otherwise, may be readily filed, the position of the cards being identified by a means such that a misplacement or misfiling is obvious at a glance at the filed cards; to provide a simple, effective means for identifying the position of the card in the file, said means being adaptable to any type or size of card now in use without the addition of objectionable identifying appendages or superfluous guide members; to provide a method for filing in which further provision is available for identifying the position of the cards under sub-heads of the larger divisions, such as alphabetical identification as to the second or third letters of a word, providing a more positive check upon the filing position of the card, and to provide a simple apparatus adaptable to be moved along the top edge of the cards whereby the positioning of each individual card may be positively identified, and in general to provide a method of the character referred to.

Figure 1 is a plan view of a drawer containing filed index cards.

Fig. 2 is a face view of one of the cards for alphabetical filing.

Fig. 3 is a similar card numbered for numerical filing.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the finder member used in numerical filing.

The most objectionable feature to filing index cards is the fact that the cards may be so easily misplaced in filing. Numerous attempts have been made to obviate this difficulty, but in each case the provision has been so cumbersome, due to the character of the card or so expensive that it has been almost prohibitive.

The present invention discloses a simple means by which any type of card now in use may be very simply changed to make the filing thereof a simple matter and at the same time this additional provision for simple filing will take up no substantial part of the card.

Referring to the drawings the card 1 may be of any common type of index card, such as the usual sizes 3 x 5, 4 x 6, 3 x 6, etc. Along the top edge of the card, if the filing is to be alphabetical, are arranged the letters A–Z, as shown at 2. If the filing is to be numerical, an arrangement of numbers, as shown in Fig. 3 at 3, is placed along the top of the card. It will be understood that the invention is not restricted to these two simple methods of filing, but any method used may be adapted to the system, these methods being chosen to disclose the detailed features of the invention.

The cards are filed in the usual manner in a drawer, box or container, as shown at 4, which may be carried in suitable cabinets according to the number of cards in the index or the method of filing. The section marked "A" of the drawer 4 contains all cards filed under the letter "A," the subsequent letters "B, C, D," etc. being filed in similar sections shown at 5, 6 and 7 divided by partitions 4^a, 5^a, and 6^a.

Describing now the method used in identifying each card with its individual group, for example all cards whose identifying name begins with the "A" group, I punch or cut out a portion of the upper edge of each card over the "A" marking as shown at 3^a. This cut-out portion may be of any desired depth or design, it only being essential that all of the cards of the "A" group are similarly cut and that the cut-out portions register exactly when the cards are filed.

Likewise with the "B" group, the cut-out portion as shown at 3^b is in the top edge of the card directly over the letter "B" so that when the cards are filed in the "B" compartment, the cut-out portions will register to form a distinct channel, running completely across the top of the cards. So with "C, D" and the other letters of the alphabet, the channels are similarly positioned above their respective letters.

It is obvious from this that when the

cards are misfiled in a wrong partition or group, the cut-out portion will not register properly with the cut-out portion of that group and the mistake may be quickly seen by a glance at the top edges of the cards in that compartment.

Having identified each card with its particular alphabetical group, further means of identification are supplied by cutting out a smaller portion of the card above the next letter appearing in the name identifying that card, that is, as shown in Fig. 2, the card is obviously of the "A" group as the larger cut-out portion is directly over the letter "A." The next cut-out portion appears over the letter "E" and it will be noted in this connection that this portion is of less relative depth and narrower than that cut-out portion over the letter "A." This card would then be filed in the "A" compartment or group and would be identified with similar cards whose second letter of the identifying name is "*e*" as the word "Aetna." If this mode of identifying the cards to lesser sub-divisions or sub-headings be carried on, the smaller cut-out portions may be carried to two or three or even four letters were it justified by the size of the filing system. The object in having the second letter identified by a smaller cut-out portion is in order that it will not be confused with the initial identifying letter.

In the explanation of this system I have restricted myself wholly to an alphabetical system of filing, but it will be seen that this visible check upon filing index cards is as adaptable to a numerical system or any other system used where headings and sub-headings are employed to identify the placement of the individual cards in the system.

In connection with this visible means of checking the filing of index cards I use a finder member, which may be permanently or detachedly mounted upon the edge of the filing drawer or card container. This finder comprises an abutting member 8, which fits along the side of the top of the card container and keeps the graduated extension 9 in position longitudinally of the cards and transversely of the container. The member 9 is similarly numbered or lettered along its upper edge to the numbering or lettering, which appears on the top of each card according to the filing system with which it is to be used, that is, if the cards are to be filed alphabetically, the alphabet will be printed along the top edge of the member 9, as shown in Fig. 1 and, if a numerical system is to be used, the finder will be marked as shown in Fig. 4. The purpose of this finder is to be moved along the top of the card container to any position and at a glance any card may be quickly identified both as to its group and sub-heading. This finder is important both in the filing or withdrawing of the index cards and facilitates to a marked extent the use of this filing system.

I am cognizant of the fact that heretofore various index systems have been in use in which the index cards have been slotted on their lower edges in position so that they cannot be filed unless these slots fit over wires or rods extending longitudinally of the containers or the individual compartments. The objection to such a system is that these slots take up a substantial amount of space on the surface of the card and, if the card is crowded into a wrong compartment, there is no visible means for identifying its misplacement. By the method of filing previously described not only can a misplaced card be readily perceived by the person filing, but also accurate filing is assured within very small limits, due to the different-sized cut-out portions identified with the heads and sub-heads of the filing system.

By using a finder above the record cards, guide or index cards may be dispensed with in the system. In a filing system where a large number of record cards are use', the space taken up by guide or index cards becomes a substantial item both in the horizontal space which they take up in the system and also the vertical distance from the top to the bottom of the card. The fact that the index or guide cards must project a small amount above the record cards in order to identify the headings or sub-headings necessitates that the drawers of the cabinets or holders be deep enough to accommodate this added height. By means of the present filing system it is unnecessary to use the guide cards and, therefore, the drawers or box containers may be made shallower in depth as they have only to accommodate the record cards. Another substantial item is the cost of the guide cards. This is eliminated by use of the present system.

I claim as my invention:

1. In a filing system, the combination with a plurality of record cards having cut-out portions for identifying their position in the file, of a slidable finder member adapted to be moved along the top edges of the cards and cooperating with the cut-out portions of the filed cards to designate readily the positioning of a card to be filed.

2. In a filing system, the combination with a plurality of record cards having cut-out portions for identifying their position in the file, of a graduated slidable finder member movable transversely along the top edges of the cards, said graduations adapted to cooperate with the cut-out portions of the cards in designating the respective positioning of the individual cards in filing.

3. In a filing system, the combination with a plurality of record cards, each card hav-

ing an enlarged cut-out portion and a smaller cut-out portion for identifying its position in the file, of a slidable finder member movable transversely along the top edges of the cards, said finder member adapted to cooperate with the cut-out portions of the cards in designating the respective positioning of the individual cards in filing.

4. In a filing system, the combination with a plurality of record cards, each card having a main cut-out portion and a plurality of smaller cut-out portions for identifying its position in the file, of a graduated slidable finder member movable transversely along the top edges of the cards, said graduations adapted to cooperate with the cut-out portions of the cards in designating the respective positioning of the individual cards in filing.

5. In a filing system, the combination with a plurality of record cards having cut-out portions of different depths for identifying their position in the file, of a slidable finder member adapted to be moved along the top edges of the cards and cooperating with the cut-out portions of the filed cards to designate readily the positioning of a card to be filed.

WILLIAM C. ELDER.