

Sept. 7, 1954

H. D. LINDSTROM  
UTILITY COUNTER-DESK

2,688,525

Filed June 5, 1952

6 Sheets-Sheet 1

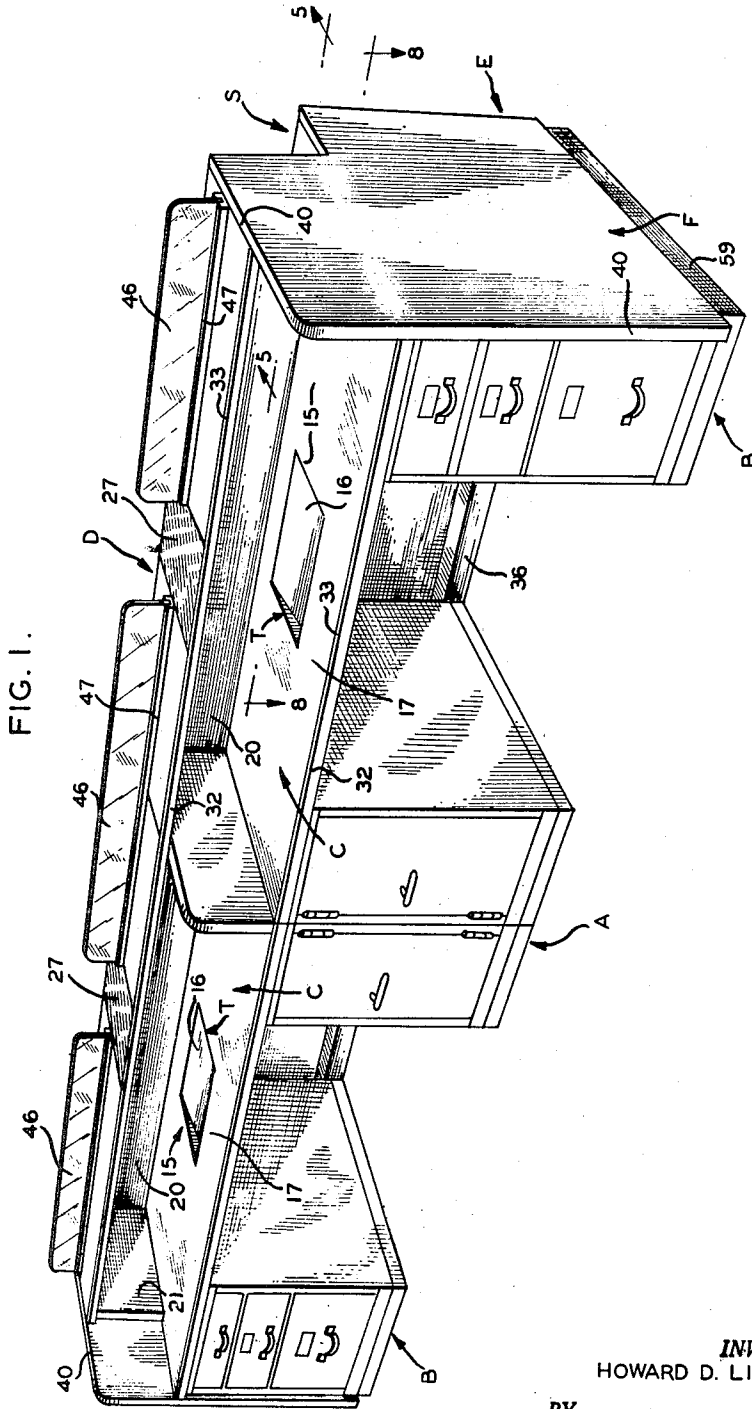


FIG. 1.

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6 Sheets-Sheet 2

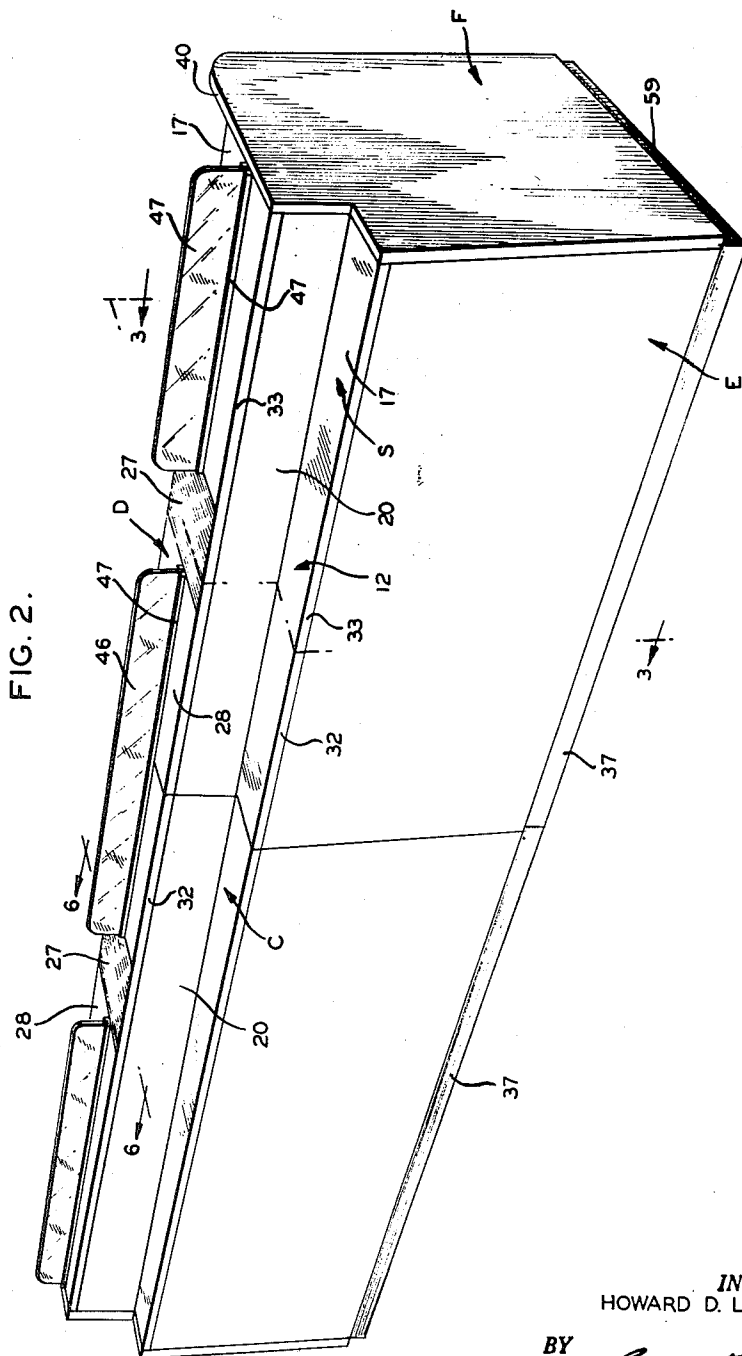


FIG. 2.

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6 Sheets-Sheet 3

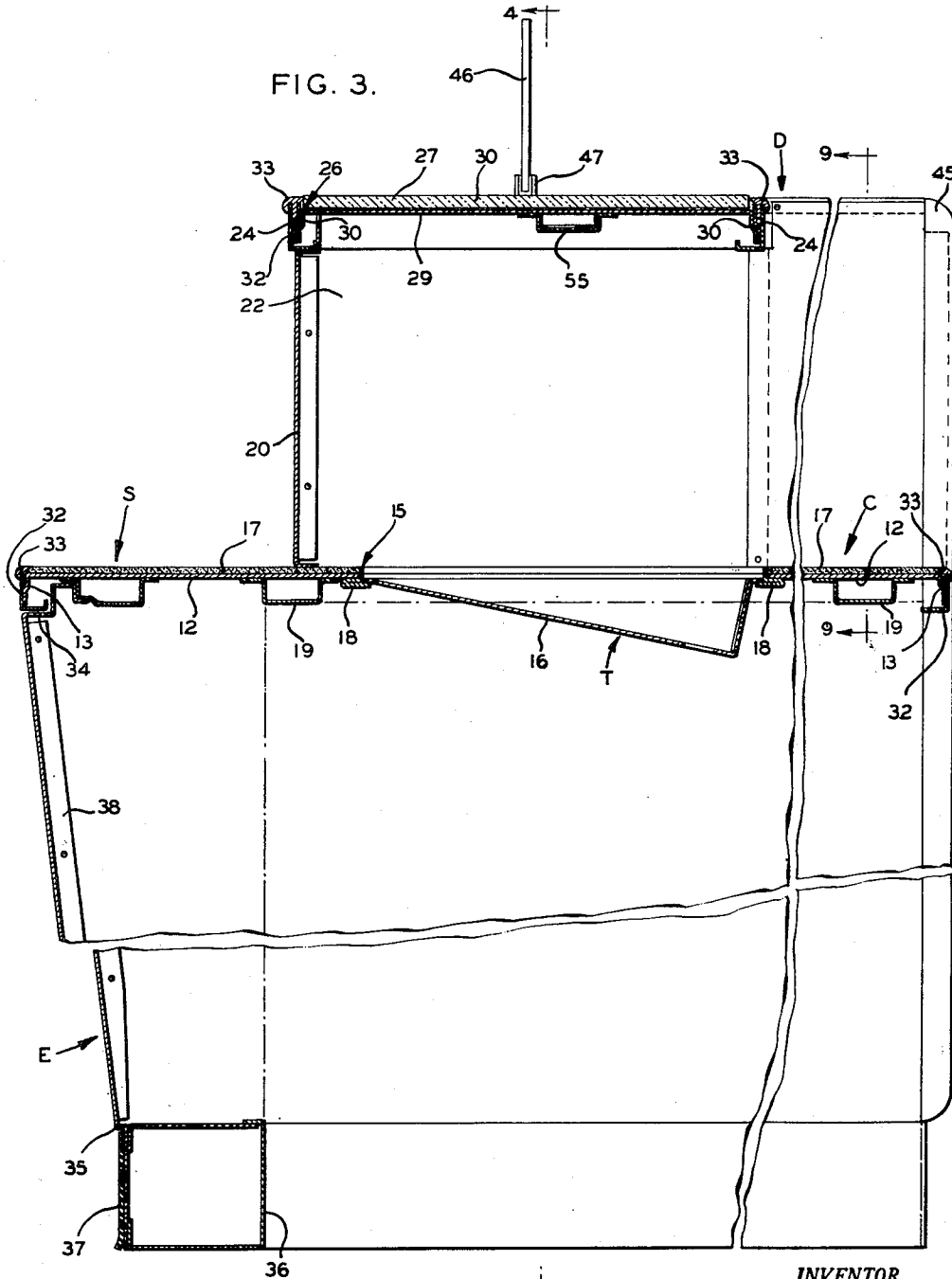


FIG. 3.

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6 Sheets-Sheet 4

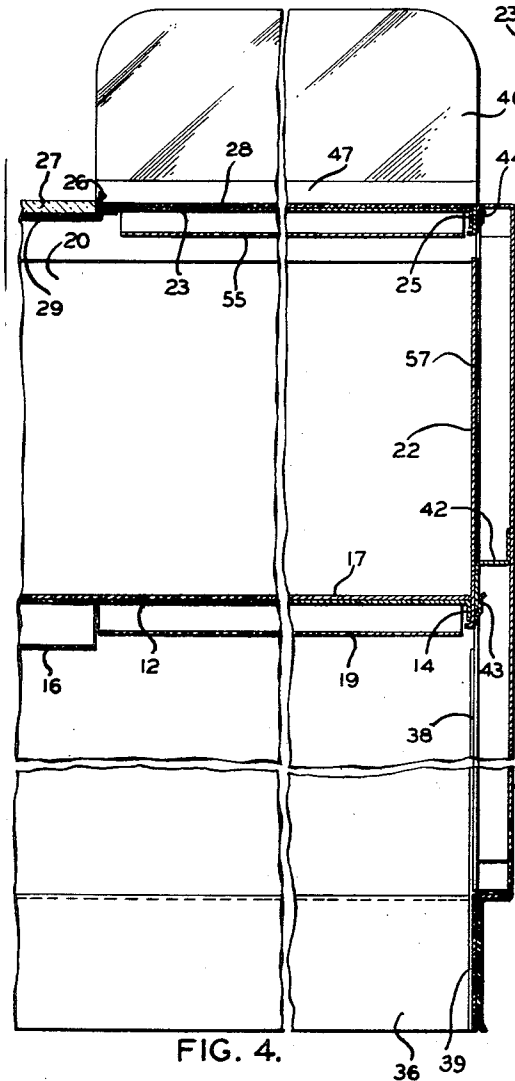


FIG. 4.

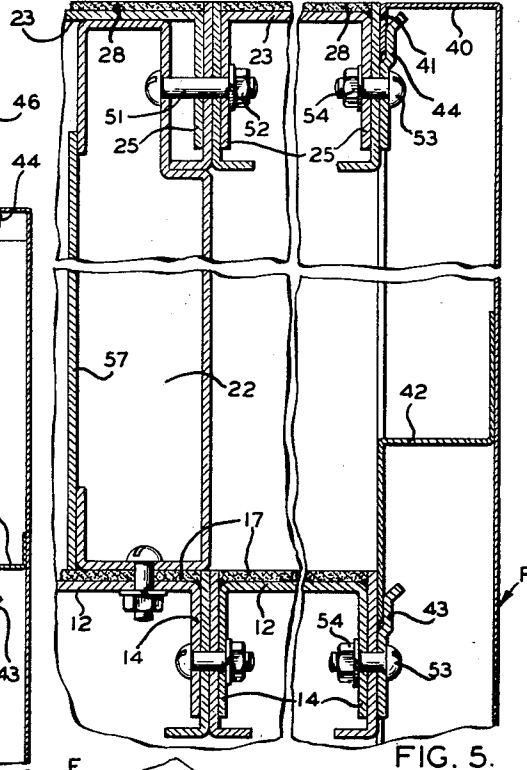


FIG. 5.

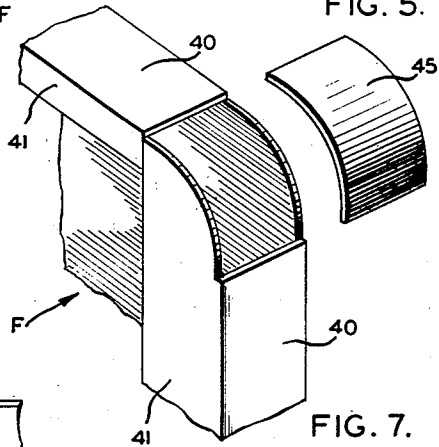


FIG. 7.

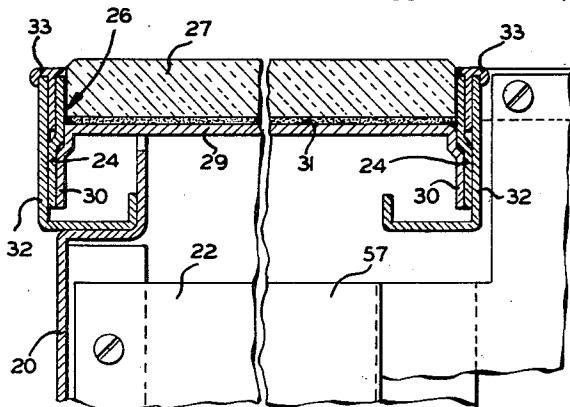


FIG. 6.

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6 Sheets-Sheet 5

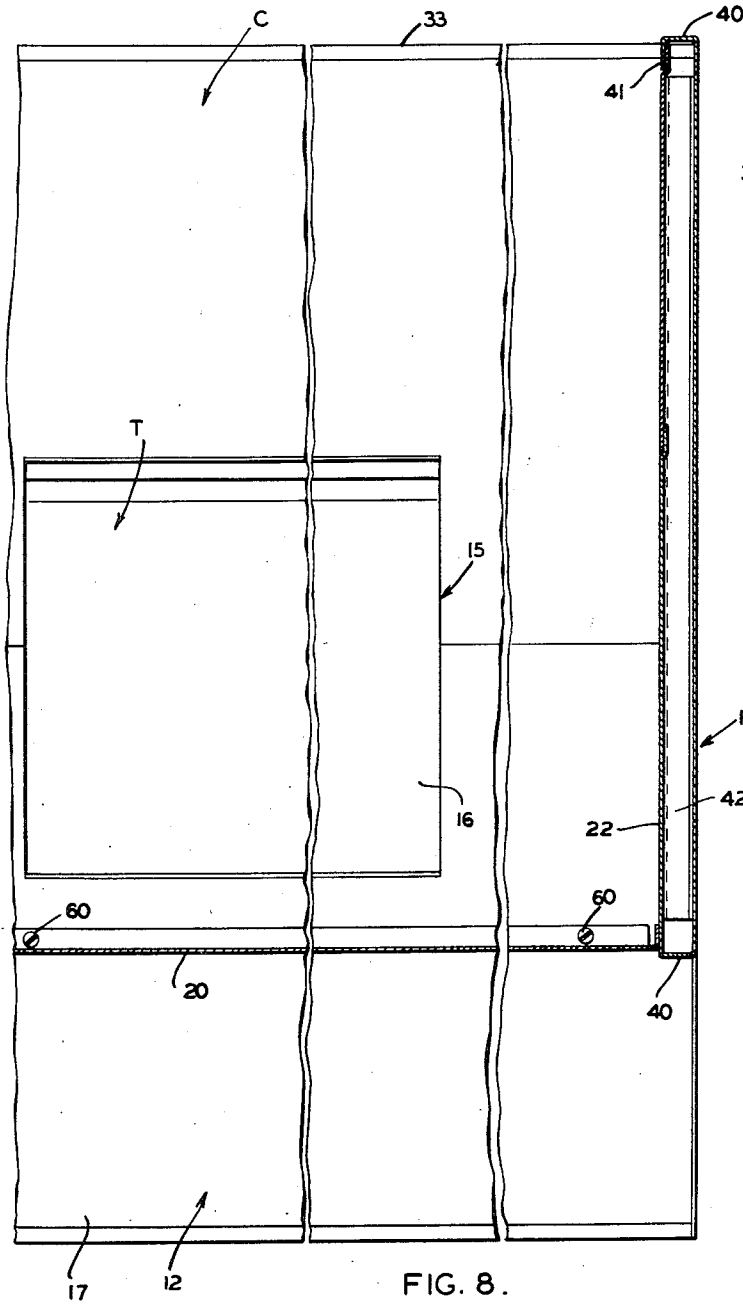


FIG. 8.

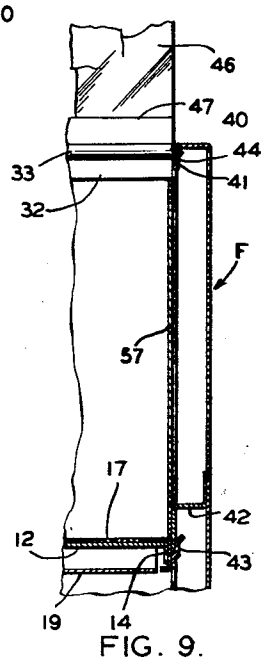


FIG. 9.

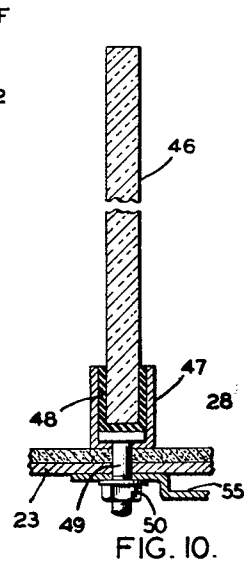


FIG. 10.

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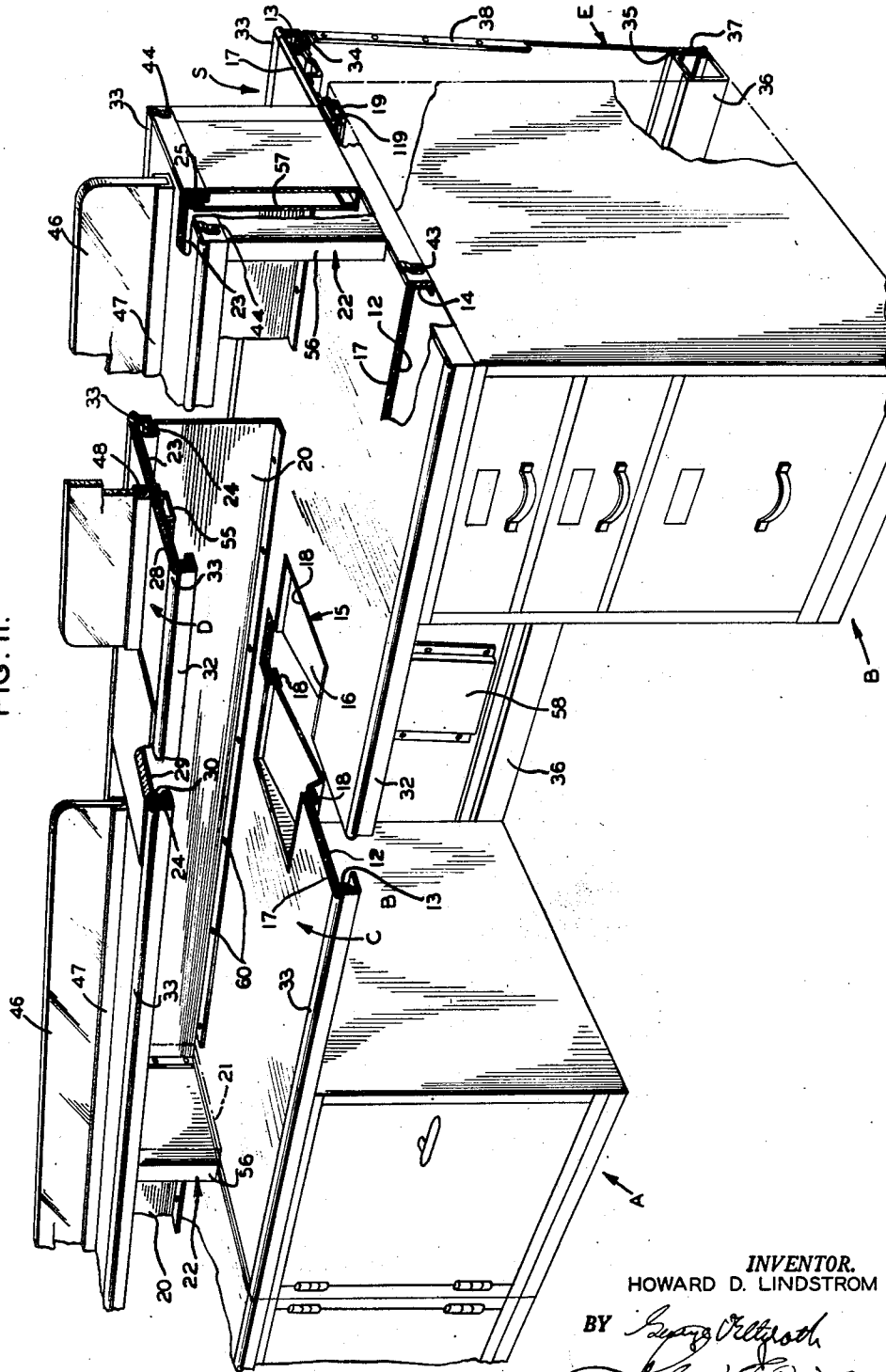
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6 Sheets—Sheet 6

FIG. II.



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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,688,525

## UTILITY COUNTER-DESK

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Application June 5, 1952, Serial No. 291,929

5 Claims. (Cl. 312—140.1)

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This invention relates generally to utility counter-desks of the type intended for public contact relations, such as might be encountered in various utility offices, and more particularly to a utility counter-desk designed on a unit basis so that it may be used as a single unit or combined into multiple installations.

According to the invention, the desk superstructure is designed to cooperate with and be supported by suitable filing equipment and/or safes of conventional design.

The invention contemplates the provision of a utility counter-desk having one or more of the following features: unit parts so constructed that the desk can be shipped in "knocked down" condition and readily assembled at the point of installation; a combination of parts designed so as to present like units having flush ends when assembled so that the units may be abutted, one to another, or to a wall as conditions may require; a utility counter-desk having a sloping panel front; novel translucent screen construction and manner of attachment; novel end and front panel attaching means; counter dimensions to fit a sitting clerk; built-in bill tray recess and interchangeable linoleum filler insert for use when the bill tray is not required; and various other novel features and structural details hereinafter described.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a rear perspective view of a two unit utility counter-desk constructed according to the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a front perspective view of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged broken vertical cross section taken along the line 3—3 of Fig. 2 looking in the direction indicated by the arrows.

Fig. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary longitudinal vertical section taken on a plan indicated by the line 4—4 of Fig. 3 to clearly illustrate the manner in which the end closure panels are attached.

Fig. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional detail of the joinder between two counter units taken substantially along the line 5—5 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary transverse vertical sectional detail through one of the deal plates on a plan indicated by line 6—6 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 7 is an isometric fragmentary detail view illustrating a corner construction for the end closure panel.

Fig. 8 is an enlarged fragmentary horizontal section taken substantially along the line 8—8 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 9 is a vertical sectional detail through the

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deal shelf and counter-desk top taken along the line 9—9 of Fig. 3.

Fig. 10 is an enlarged vertical cross section through the deal shelf screen, and,

Fig. 11 is a fragmentary rear perspective view of the right hand counter-desk unit shown in Fig. 1 with the end closure panel removed and various parts broken away to further illustrate the constructional details of the improved utility counter-desk parts, deal shelf, screen etc.

In the illustrated embodiment of the present invention, the superstructure of each utility counter-desk unit is mounted upon and supported by suitable filing equipment, such as drawer files or safes of conventional design, and since the structural details of all desk units are the same, a detailed description of one unit will suffice for all.

For the sake of simplicity a two unit utility counter-desk has been illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, and each unit includes spaced filing equipment, such as the drawer files A and B, which support the desk superstructure. The superstructure for each desk unit generally comprises a top C above which a deal shelf D is supported, a sloping front panel E, and end closure members or finish end panels F, it being understood that when an end of a desk unit is in abutting relation with another unit or with a wall, the end closure panel F on that end may be dispensed with, as will be clear from Figs. 1 and 2.

### Utility counter-desk top

As previously mentioned, each utility counter-desk unit includes a counter-desk top C. This top preferably comprises a rectangular sheet metal plate 12 the longitudinal marginal edges of which are bent downwardly to form off-set flanges 13 and the transverse marginal edges of which are bent downwardly to form flanges 14, as clearly shown in Fig. 11. Plate 12 is provided with a centrally disposed opening 15 to receive a bill tray well 16, and the plate is covered with suitable material 17 such as linoleum. The edge of opening 15 in top C, and the corresponding edge of the opening in linoleum 17 is covered by a trim strip 18, which strip is preferably welded or otherwise attached to the underside of plate 12, and bent upon itself to form a supporting ledge or flange for the bill tray well 16 as best shown in Fig. 3.

Plate 12 is further strengthened by a plurality of longitudinally extending reinforcing channels 19 which are suitably fastened to the underside of plate 12 as clearly illustrated in Fig. 3. In

addition to strengthening plate 12, channels 19 also serve an additional function in a manner presently described.

#### *Deal shelf*

As above pointed out, each utility counter-desk unit includes a deal shelf D spaced above top C, as clearly shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 11, by a front riser 29 and end deal shelf support panels 21 and 22 respectively. Shelf D preferably comprises a rectangular sheet metal plate 23 the longitudinal marginal edges of which are bent downwardly to form off-set flanges 24 and the transverse marginal edges of which are bent downwardly to form flanges 25. Plate 23 is provided with a centrally disposed opening 26 to receive the deal plate 27 (preferably of carrara glass or similar material) and the plate 23 is covered with suitable material 28, such as linoleum, in a manner identical to top C. The opening 26 in shelf D is preferably in vertical alignment with opening 15 in top C, and deal plate 27 is supported in opening 26 by a supporting plate 29, the down turned flanges 30, of which are preferably welded to the longitudinal flanges 24 of plate 23, as clearly shown in the sectional detail Fig. 6. A layer of felt 31, or like material, is placed between the glass deal plate 27 and its supporting plate 29 in order to cushion the glass and thus guard against breakage.

#### *Edge trim*

The marginal edges of the coverings 17 and 28, upon the plates 12 and 23 respectively, are covered by angular edge strips 32. The vertical wall of edge strips 32 for top C is secured (preferably by welding) to the flanges 13 and 14 of plate 12, and the vertical wall of edge strips 32, for deal shelf D, is similarly secured to flanges 24—25 of plate 23.

It will be recalled that the longitudinal flanges 13 and 24, of top C and deal shelf D respectively, are off-set, and as shown in Figs. 3, 6 and 11, this off-set provides a space between the flanges and vertical walls of edge strips 32 to receive the vertical portion of a T-shaped aluminum binding strip 33. It will be noted from Fig. 11 that the binding strips 33 are only on the longitudinal edges of top C and shelf D, as the transverse edges of the top and shelf are covered by the end panels F or the adjacent desk unit when the units are in abutting relation relative to one another, as illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2.

#### *Sloping front panel*

Referring now to Figs. 3 and 11, it will be observed that front panel E, for each utility counter-desk unit, is suitably formed from a substantially rectangular sheet metal plate the upper end 34 of which is bent to the cross sectional shape clearly illustrated in Fig. 3 for cooperation with front channel 19 and edge strip 32 when assembling panel F to top C. The lower end 35 of panel F is off-set and securely attached to the box-like back filler or anchor member 36. A rubber kick plate strip 37 is adhesively secured to the front face of off-set end 35 of panel E. The vertical sides of panel E are bent inwardly to form attaching flanges 38 for reasons presently explained.

#### *End closure panels*

The exposed end of any utility counter-desk unit is suitably covered by one of the end closure panels F, heretofore briefly referred to. These panels are made to fit either the right or left

hand ends of the utility counter-desk unit. Each panel is formed from sheet metal and its lower end is off-set to form vertical attaching member 39. The remaining marginal edges of the panel are bent to form narrow walls 40 and 41 thus giving width to panel as well as strengthening it. It will be noted from Fig. 7 that the rounded corners of panels F are formed by brazing an arcuate insert 45 to the edges of narrow walls 40—41.

In order to attach an end closure panel F to an exposed end closure of any desk unit, the panel is provided with a Z-shaped attaching member 42 which cooperates with clips 43 in the manner clearly illustrated in Figs. 4, 5 and 11. Similar clips 44 cooperate with the narrow wall 41 of panel F, as clearly shown in the sectional view Fig. 5. The vertical attaching member 39, of panel F, is attached to the lower end of filing equipment A or B as the case may be in a manner more fully explained hereinafter under assembly of the desk units and has a rubber kick plate strip 59 attached to its outer face.

Referring now to Figs. 1, 2, 10 and 11, reference numeral 46 denotes screens which are disposed longitudinally upon the top surface of deal shelf D. These screens are preferably made from plexiglass, but if desired they may be made from plate glass or other suitable material. The upper corner of the screens are rounded as shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 11, and the lower marginal edge of each screen is received within a U-shaped channel member 47. A rubber sealing strip 48 is fitted between each screen 46 and its associated channel 47 in the manner clearly illustrated in Fig. 10, and the channel 47 is removably secured to the deal shelf D by bolts 49 and nuts 50. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2 the screens extend from the ends of a desk unit to the deal plate 27, but when the utility counter comprises two adjacent desk units the center screen extends from one screen plate to the other as shown.

When two desk units are abutted end to end, as shown in Fig. 1, the left hand end panel 21 of the right hand unit may be dispensed with, as indicated in Fig. 5, and the units joined by bolts 51 and nuts 52 in the manner illustrated. It will also be clear from Fig. 5 that clips 43—44 are anchored to the edge strips 32 of top C and shelf D respectively, by bolts 53 and nuts 54. Deal shelf D may be further reinforced by longitudinally extending U-shaped channels 55 preferably welded to the underside of plate 23 (see Figs. 3 and 11) but the channels are interrupted below the deal plates 27. End panels 21 and 22 are completed when the short cover plates 56 are attached thereto. A second cover plate 57 is used to cover the exposed inner face of the finish end panels F, as clearly shown in Figs. 4, 5 and 6. The sloping front panels E may also be reinforced, particularly in that portion extending between the filing units A and B (see Fig. 11) by shallow reinforcing channels 58 preferably spot welded to the panels E.

#### *Assembly*

As previously stated, desk units made according to the present invention may be shipped in "knocked down" condition and assembled at the point of installation. Assembly of a two unit utility counter-desk such as that shown in Figs. 1 and 2 is as follows:

Set up the filing equipment, such as the drawer files A and B in the counter location desired so that measurement over the tops of the extreme



end files A and B is the same as the total length of the complete top C that is to be placed upon the files. Place top C upon the files A and B with two of the three channels 19 resting upon the files as shown in Fig. 3. Bolt or otherwise secure the two channels 19 to the tops of files A and B. Proper height for top C can be obtained by attaching filler channels 119 (Fig. 11) to channels 19 in the event the files A and B are lower than the standard height of  $30\frac{1}{8}$ ". Top C will now be projecting beyond the rear wall of file units A and B thus forming a customer shelf S.

Box-like filler member 36 is then anchored to the floor in a position directly behind the rear walls of the filing units A and B thus providing a full length and flush anchor for the bottoms or lower ends 35, of the sloping front panels E. Should filing equipment of greater depth be used, the filler 36 may be dispensed with and the lower end of panels E fastened directly to the rear walls of the filing equipment.

The abutting flanges 38 of the two sloping front panels E are then joined together by suitable fasteners and the upper ends 34 of the panels are then engaged and interlocked with the front edge strip 32 and front channel 19, as clearly illustrated in Fig. 3. The lower ends 35 of panels E are then screwed to the filler 36, or filing equipment as the case may be.

Deal shelf D is next placed upon top C with its front riser 20 substantially in vertical alignment with the rear walls of filing units A and B. Riser 20 and end panels 21-22 are then attached to top C by suitable screws or bolts 60. When two or more counter units are to be used the abutting ends of deal shelves D are connected by the bolts 51 and nuts 52 as previously explained in connection with Fig. 5. Assembly of the two unit utility counter-desk, shown in Figs. 1 and 2, is now completed by attaching a right and left hand end closure panel F to the extreme filing units A and B in the manner heretofore explained.

It may be pointed out that when the bill tray T (Fig. 8) is not used it may be removed from the well 16 and the opening 15 may then be closed by an appropriate filler section supported by the trim strip 18 to provide a flush counter top above the well.

It will now be obvious that any length utility counter-desk can be obtained by simply attaching the desired number of identical units in end to end abutting relation, and that the extreme ends of the counter can be closed either by the finish end panels F or by being placed against a wall. It will also be clear that the described utility counter-desk construction provides a novel arrangement of duplicate parts that can be economically manufactured and quickly assembled at the point of installation.

Although there has been described and illustrated a highly desirable embodiment of the invention, it will be obvious that many changes and modifications could be made without departing from the field of the invention. It is the intention therefore to be limited only as indicated by the scope of the following claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. A combined counter-desk unit wherein a pair of counter height document storage cabinets mounted in spaced parallel relation form a support, said cabinets having document storage closure means accessible at the rear of said unit and said unit has in combination: a counter-desk

top having opposite ends secured to the tops of said cabinets and bridging the space therebetween; said counter-desk top having its rear vertical edge substantially coplanar with said accessible closure means of said cabinets and its transverse vertical edges substantially coplanar with the outer side faces of said cabinets respectively, said counter-desk top extending beyond the rear walls opposite said accessible closure means of said cabinets; an anchor member extending throughout the length of said desk with its ends secured to said rear walls of said cabinets; a front panel secured along the upper edge with the front margin of said counter-desk top in longitudinally extending relation beyond said rear walls of said cabinets and having the lower edge secured to said anchor member; end deal shelf support panels mounted on said counter-desk top in upwardly extending relation, one at each end intermediate the front and rear edges of said top with their outer faces substantially coplanar with said transverse vertical edges of said top; a deal shelf mounted on the upper edges of said end panels; a front riser connecting the front edges of said end panels and secured to the deal shelf and counter-desk top at its upper and lower edges respectively; and a pair of end closure members secured to the ends of said deal shelf, counter-desk top and cabinets respectively for closing the ends of said counter-desk unit.

2. A counter desk unit as set forth in claim 1 wherein each end closure panel includes a horizontal Z-shaped member secured thereto, and operable with clips fastened to the ends of the counter top to secure said end closure panel in assembled relation with said desk unit.

3. A counter desk unit as specified in claim 1 wherein the means for securing said end closure members to the substantially coplanar ends of the deal shelf, end deal shelf support panels, counter-desk top and cabinets respectively includes a plurality of clips secured to said counter-desk top and deal shelf, certain of said clips having interlocking engagement with a Z-shaped attaching member secured to the inner surface of said end closure members and other of said clips engaged with flanges formed integral with said end closure members.

4. In combination with a pair of spaced filing cabinets or like filing equipment having accessible closure means, a combined counter-desk superstructure supported by said cabinets comprising: a substantially rectangular counter-desk top having opposite ends thereof secured to the tops of said cabinets and end deal shelf support panels mounted on said top at its outer edges and extending upwardly therefrom with the outer faces of said end panels and said outer edges of said top substantially coplanar with the outer side walls of said cabinets respectively; a deal shelf mounted on the upper edges of said end panels and extending continuously between said panels, the transverse ends of said shelf being substantially coplanar with said outer faces of said end panels; a front riser having its upper and lower longitudinal edges secured to the underside of said deal shelf and to said top respectively and its vertical edges secured to and abutting against vertical edges of said end panels, said deal shelf extending on both sides of said riser, a plurality of substantially U-shaped structural members secured to the underside of said top and an anchor member having its ends secured to the walls of said cabinets opposite said closure means; a front panel having its vertical edges formed with attaching

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flanges and its upper longitudinal edge formed for interengagement with means on the front margin of said counter top, said means comprising a downwardly depending, rearwardly extending flange portion and the proximate vertical and horizontal faces of one of said U-shaped members rearwardly spaced from said margin, and having its lower longitudinal edge secured to said anchor member; and end closure members detachably secured to the coplanar faces of said deal shelf, end panels and filing cabinets respectively, for closing the ends of said desk superstructure.

5. In a counter-desk unit of knock-down construction having a front, customer-service portion and a rear, employee-use portion, the combination of a substantially rectangular desk surface supported on and attached to a pair of spaced document storage units, said storage units comprising separate articles of manufacture usable apart from said combination and having storage closure means accessible at said rear portion of said unit; a riser panel longitudinally dividing said desk-height surface into a minor, front, counter portion and a major, rear, desk portion; deal shelf support panels attached to the transverse edges of said desk portion, rearwardly abutting the ends of said riser panel; a continuous, desk-length deal shelf, supported on the upper edges of said riser panel and support panels in upwardly spaced, parallel relationship to said desk surface, a portion at least of said deal shelf

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being accessible from each of said front and rear portions of said counter-desk unit; a front panel extending downwardly from the edge of said counter portion having means on its upper longitudinal edge interengaging with means on the front edge of said front counter portion and attaching it thereto and being attached along its lower longitudinal edge to said storage units; each transverse edge of said desk-height surface and the corresponding edges of said riser panel, front panel and deal shelf and the outer surface of the corresponding one of said support panels all being in substantially coplanar relation with the outer surface of the corresponding one of said storage units; and end closure panels attachable to said coplanar edges and surfaces.

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