Nov. 15, 1966 F. W. HEWETT 3,285,685

FURNITURE

Filed July 30, 1964 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

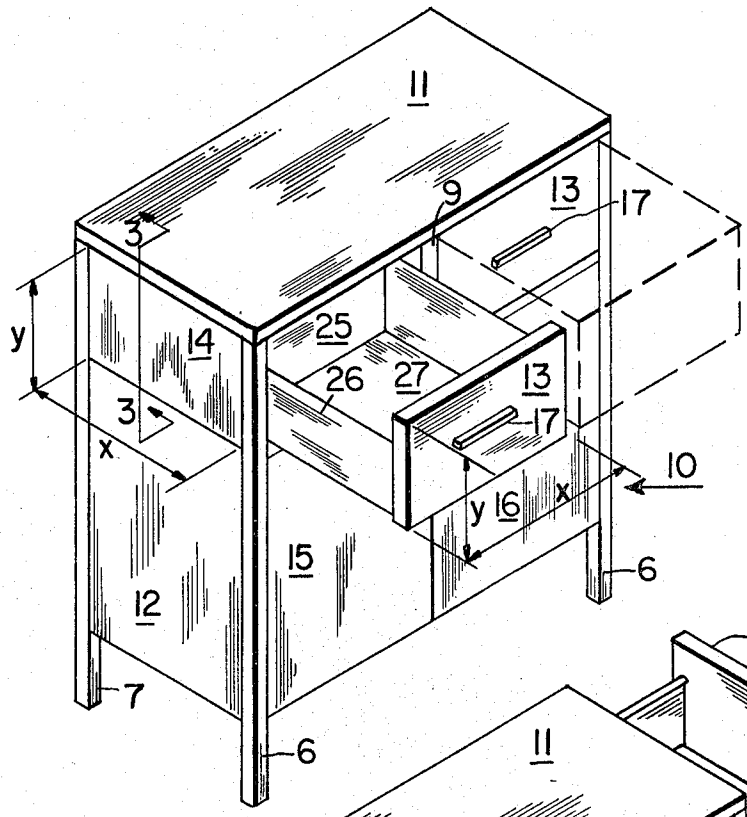


FIGURE 1

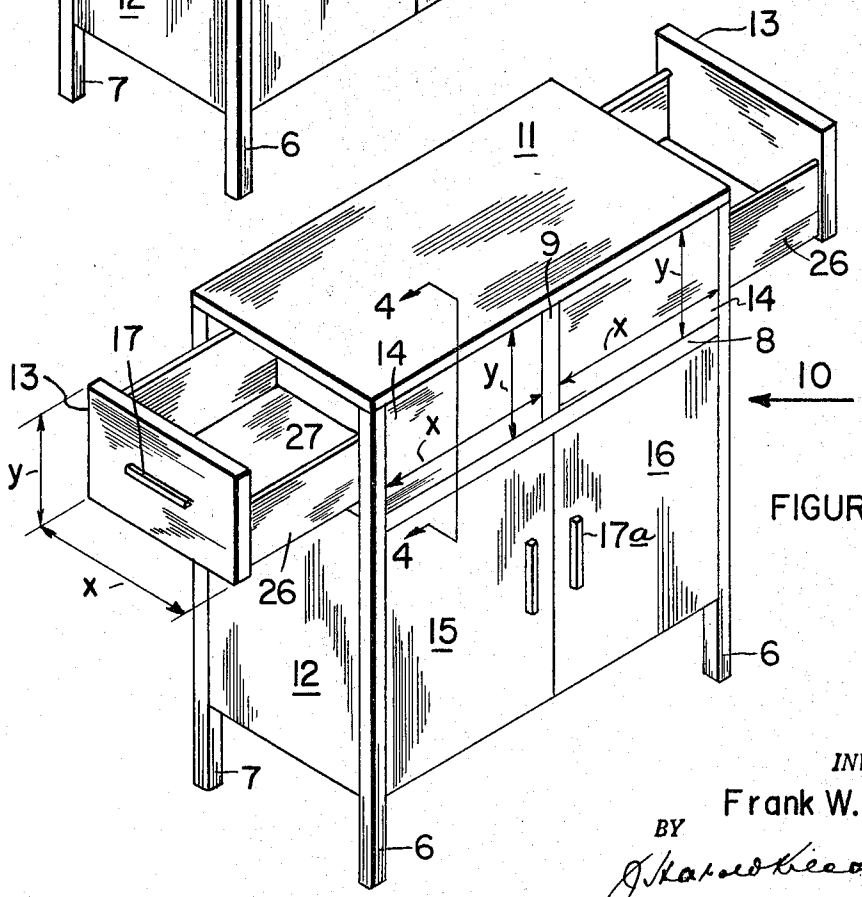


FIGURE 2

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FURNITURE

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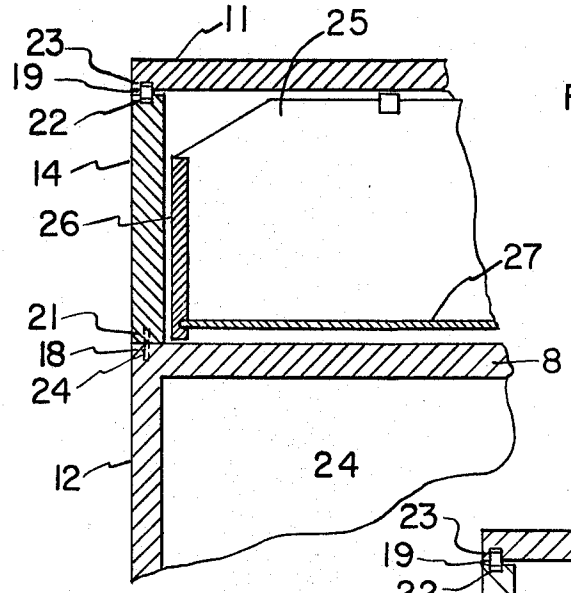


Fig.3

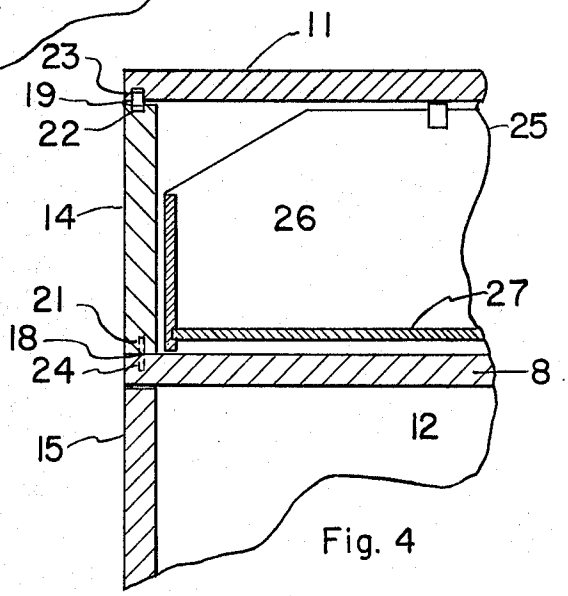


Fig. 4

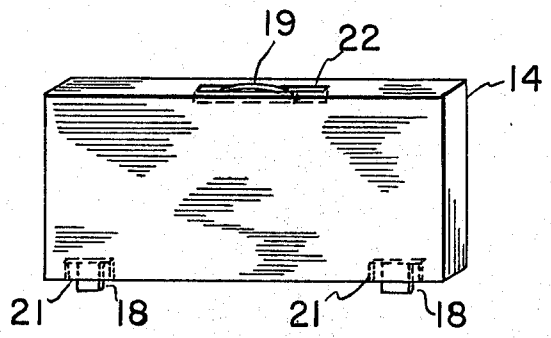


Fig. 5

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FURNITURE

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2 Claims. (Cl. 312—287)

This invention relates to improvements in furniture of the type provided with a drawer or drawers, and more particularly to an improved cabinet, dresser, chest, desk and the like, characterized by one or more plural-position, pull-out drawers.

As conducive to a proper understanding of the present invention, it is explained that while furniture of the type having pull-out drawers is very well known, the position of said drawers is invariably fixed; that is to say, the drawers thereof are so mounted as to pull out only from the front of the furniture piece or, in the case of a corner dresser or the like, to pull out from the two right-angularly related front sections thereof.

A major object of the present invention is to provide a piece of furniture having a drawer or drawers, characterized in that the position of said drawer or drawers may be changed to best suit the wishes or the needs of the person or persons using the same.

More particularly, the invention contemplates and aims to provide a piece of furniture such as a cabinet, chest, dresser or the like having a drawer or a plurality of drawers, wherein the drawer or drawers are so mounted as to be openable from either the front or from one or both ends thereof.

Another important object of the present invention is the provision of interchangeable drawer and panel means for a piece of furniture having a drawer or drawers, such as a cabinet, chest, dresser or the like, which is so constructed and arranged as to enable the drawer to be positioned so as to be opened from either the front or from an end or from either end of the furniture piece and said panel to be fitted into and retained in the opening in the front or end of said piece not then being used for drawer operation.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a simple yet practical removable-panel retaining means for retaining a panel in place within a drawer opening of a piece of furniture, through which a pull-out drawer may also operate.

The above and other objects and features of advantage of a piece of furniture having a plural-position pull-out drawer, or a plurality of such drawers, and a panel or panels interchangeable therewith according to the invention will appear from the following description, wherein reference is had to the accompanying illustrative drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a cabinet-type piece of furniture incorporating the plural positioning drawer and the interchangeable drawer and panel features of my invention, the view showing a two-drawer cabinet whose two drawers are positioned so as to be opened from the front side of the cabinet;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view similar to FIG. 1 but illustrating the same two drawers mounted so as to be opened from the ends of said piece of furniture, and the front drawer-openings closed by panels which previously closed the drawer openings in the ends of a furniture piece;

FIG. 3 is a broken-away section taken along line 3—3 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a broken-away section taken along line 4—4 of FIG. 2; and

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of one of the panels employed to close a drawer opening as proposed shown separate from the piece of furniture with which it is to be used.

Referring to the drawings in greater detail, such illustrate the drawer and removable panel construction of the invention applied to a cabinet-type piece of furniture **10**, characterized by an upper drawer section and a lower, usually shelved, storage section provided with outwardly swinging access doors. It is to be expressly understood, however, that the invention is also applicable, without substantial modification, to other pieces or forms of furniture having one or more pullout drawers, such as chests, dressers, bureaus and the like.

The cabinet **10** has rectangular configuration in plan and is shown to be of a type having upright front legs **6** and rear legs **7**, all extending upwardly to a horizontal top **11**. A horizontal partition **8**, also supported from said upright legs and spaced downwardly from said top **11**, separates the upper drawer section from the lower storage section. Said drawer section is shown to be subdivided into two front-opening drawer spaces by a vertical stile **9**. Fixed end panels **12** extending between the front and rear legs **6** and **7** terminate at the upper horizontal line of the intermediate partition **8**, thereby leaving end openings to said drawer spaces.

The cabinet being of the two-drawer type as aforesaid, two drawers are provided, each comprising a front **13**, a back **25**, sides **26** and a bottom **27** (FIGS. 1 and 2 but also see FIGS. 3 and 4), and its lower storage compartment is adapted to be closed and rendered accessible by swinging doors designated **15** and **16** shown in their closed positions in FIGS. 1 and 2. The aforesaid drawers are shown to be provided with horizontal pull handles **17** and said doors with vertically arranged pull handles **17*a***.

According to the invention, the aforesaid drawers are openable either from the front or from the ends of the cabinet **10**. This is achieved, in the first instance, by dimensioning the openings in each of the cabinet ends identically to the drawer openings in the front side of the cabinet, whereby each end may accept a drawer just as the cabinet front is adapted to accept a drawer in the conventional manner. More particularly, the spacing x between the inner facing sides of each side pair of supporting legs **6** and **7** of the cabinet and between the facing sides of each front leg and the stile **9** equals (with suitable clearance) the width of each drawer front **13**, and similarly, the spacing y between the under face of the cabinet top **11** and the upper face of the intermediate horizontal partition **8** equals the vertical height of each drawer front **13**. Of course, the depth dimension of the cabinet **10**, i.e., its front-to-rear dimension, is such that the drawers can be readily accommodated therein when positioned to open from the cabinet front, and the width dimension of the cabinet **10** will necessarily be somewhat more than twice the depth dimension of the drawers, so that both drawers can be accommodated back-to-back within the cabinet when they are positioned so as to be operated through the ends thereof.

Secondly, the plural-positionable drawer feature as explained above is made possible, particularly from the appearance standpoint, by the provision of removable panels **14** which are mounted in the end drawer openings so as to completely fill said openings when the drawers are positioned to be opened from the front of the cabinet, and in the front drawer openings so as similarly to completely fill said openings when the drawers are positioned to be opened from the ends of the cabinet. Such follows from the fact that the panels **14** have the same height and width dimensions x and y as the drawer fronts, and thus they are adapted to substantially completely fill the drawer openings, just as the drawer fronts do.

To retain the removable panels 14 in the front or end drawer-openings in which they are selectively positionable as aforesaid, and also to permit of ready mounting in and demounting of the panels from said openings, the invention further provides that each removable panel carriers along its bottom edge a spaced pair of depending tongues or keys 18 which are fixedly set into slots 21 therefor formed in said bottom edge, and along its top edge an upwardly bowed retaining spring 19 set into a slot 22 formed in said top edge, preferably centrally of its length dimension. The aforesaid keys 18 are adapted to be received in upwardly opening slots 24 provided along both the front and end edges of the intermediate partition 8, and said bowed retainer springs are adapted to be similarly received in downwardly opening slots 23 provided in the under face of the cabinet top 11 along both its front and end edges, which latter slots are positioned to register with the springs 19 carried by the panel top edges as aforesaid.

By the aforesaid arrangement, the removable panels 14 are each adapted to be retained in a front or end opening of the upper drawer section of the cabinet. However, when it is desired to demount a panel for the purpose of changing its position from one drawer opening to another, such can be readily effected by inserting a thin-bladed tool or the blade of a pen-knife or a nail file, into the crack-like space between the upper edge of the panel to be removed and the under face of the cabinet top 11 in a position as to effect depression of the bowed retaining spring 19. When such has been effected, the panel can be tilted forwardly about its still retained lower edge to a position such that its ends can be grasped by the hand and withdrawn from the front or end opening of the cabinet into which it previously fitted. Thereupon the panel can be repositioned in the other opening simply by first depressing the bowed retaining spring 19, then while the spring is so held and with the panel positioned forwardly of said other opening, inserting the tongues or keys 18 in the edge slot 24 of the partition, and finally swinging the panel relatively inwardly about its now fixed bottom edge, until the retaining spring 19 snaps home in its slot 23.

The advantages of a cabinet, drawer, bureau or like piece of furniture having pull-out drawers of a drawer mounting which permits one or more of the drawers to be opened from either the front or end of the cabinet as desired or as best suited to the needs of the user of the cabinet are manifest. For example, if the chest, by virtue of space limitation, is required to be placed in a location within a room in which the space forwardly of the chest is cramped but ample space is provided to both ends of the cabinet, the drawers may be disposed and operated from said ends to the convenience of all concerned with the use of the cabinet. The plural-position drawer feature is also of advantage for cabinets of the type used by two persons, such as a man and wife, which is not always the case when the cabinet drawers must be opened and closed only from the front of the cabinet.

Another advantage of a cabinet having a drawer arrangement according to the invention is that it permits the cabinet to be placed in limited corner spaces wherein drawers opening through the front of the cabinet only would mean inconvenience to the user or users. Thus, for example, the invention makes possible, when a cabinet is disposed in the corner of a room, that the drawer nearest the side wall of the room may be positioned to open from the front, and the drawer to the side of the cabinet remote from said side wall may be positioned to open through the end of the cabinet similarly remote from said side wall and which is assumed to be accessible.

The feature of removable panels which are interchangeable with the drawers is also a feature of importance since it goes hand-in-hand with the plural-position drawer feature. That is to say, a removable panel which fills the drawer opening of a piece of furniture, in which the drawer is not then positioned, makes the plural-position drawer feature acceptable esthetically, which it possibly would not be if the sides of a drawer were viewable through the drawer opening not then in use.

While the drawings show a drawered piece of furniture having drawer spaces and openings thereto which are disposed in the same horizontal plane, the plural positionable drawer and the interchangeable drawer and panel features of the invention may be applied also to drawered pieces of furniture wherein it is desirable, for example, to have front opening drawers operating at one level and end opening drawers operating at another level, and such alternate arrangement is within the scope of the present invention.

As many changes could be made in carrying out the above constructions without departing from the scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description or shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

I claim:

1. A piece of furniture having a pull-out drawer, said piece of furniture being provided with a drawer-receiving opening to interior drawer space therein in each of the front and an end thereof, said openings having the same dimensions and said dimensions being the same as those of the front of said drawer whereby said drawer may be selectively mounted in either one of said openings for pull-out operation therethrough and when so mounted the front thereof serves as a closure for said opening, and a panel physically separate from said piece of furniture and drawer and also having the same dimensions as said opening whereby it may be inserted in an opening not occupied by a drawer, and coacting means on the opposite edges of the panel and on corresponding edges of said openings for detachably retaining said panel in opening-closing position in the opening in which it is inserted as aforesaid.

2. A piece of furniture of rectangular configuration having a two-drawer section including a front and spaced-apart ends, said front being provided with side-by-side drawer openings and said ends being each provided with a drawer opening, all said openings providing access to a common drawer space within the section, two drawers adapted for selective positioning in two of said openings, all said openings and the fronts of said two drawers having the same height and width dimensions, two physically separate panels which also have the same height and width dimensions as said openings and drawer fronts, and coacting means on the opposite edges of said panels and on corresponding edges of said openings for detachably retaining said panels in opening-closing position in any two of the openings which have not been occupied by said two drawers.

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