

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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IMPROVEMENT IN BANK-CHECKS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **198,513**, dated December 25, 1877; application filed July 6, 1877.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, THOMAS G. HILLHOUSE, of the city of New York, in the county of New York and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Bank-Checks, of which the following is a specification:

The object of this invention is to obviate the possibility of successfully altering or tampering with checks and other instruments.

The invention consists in a check or other instrument provided with a combination of series of lines or spaces made to indicate decimal divisions, units, tens, hundreds, &c., and the numerals 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 entirely crossing the same, whereby, as will be hereinafter fully explained, provision is afforded for punching or marking the check so as to indicate definitely, and irrespectively of writing, the amount for which the check or other instrument was originally drawn. This combination of lines or spaces and numerals is preferably arranged so that the signature of the drawer will be made upon it, as by writing the signature on the line or in the space of the largest decimal of the amount intended to be drawn it is impossible to increase the amount another decimal division—for instance, from hundreds to thousands—without detection.

The invention also consists in the combination, with the aforesaid lines or spaces and numerals, of a secondary set of numerals, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, delineated so that a signature written across them may be easily discovered, whereby the signature may be commenced on the numeral corresponding with the first figure of the amount to be drawn, and will afford additional security against alteration.

The accompanying drawing illustrates my invention as embodied in a blank check. It is not, however, restricted to such instruments, but is advantageous for various others.

In general detail the check may be of any suitable kind, provided with spaces for the date, the name of the drawer, and the amount. Near the bottom a series of lines, broken or unbroken, are shown as extending entirely across from side to side, and which, by words, figures, or otherwise, indicate, respectively, units, tens, hundreds, thousands, &c. Cross-

ing the entire series of lines near the left end are the numerals 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9.

The advantage of this series of lines and numerals is as follows: In addition to writing in the usual way the amount which is to be drawn, the numerals may be punched or legibly marked on the several lines, so as to indicate unalterably the amount to be drawn. For example, suppose, as in the drawing, the amount of two hundred and fifteen dollars is to be drawn. To indicate this a hole is punched or a legible mark is made on the numeral 2, where the line indicating hundreds intersects it; a hole is punched or a mark is made in the numeral 1 where the line indicating tens intersects it; a hole is punched or a mark is made in the numeral 5 where the line indicating units intersects it.

I have only shown a combination of lines and figures indicating amounts in dollars; but it is obvious it may be extended to indicate cents, also, if desirable.

If desirable, other lines or marks may be made over the spaces between the lines indicating the decimal divisions, to preclude the possibility of any erasure without detection.

It may be noticed that in the drawing there is a secondary series of numerals, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, entirely crossing the aforesaid series of lines or spaces so far from the right-hand edge that there will be ample space for a signature begun on any one of them. This second set of numerals will be wire-woven, or engraved in such other manner that ordinary hand-writing may be easily discovered upon them. It is designed to write the signature upon the line denoting the highest decimal division of the amount desired to be drawn by the check, commencing upon the proper figure to designate the first figure of the amount, and the check will thus designate not only the decimal division, but the number therein, and thereby enable said signature to guard, by its position, two places of figures; so the punched holes indicate unalterably the amount to be drawn, and aid in providing absolute immunity from the danger of having a check altered or tampered with. This additional security may be afforded by punching the cipher of the primary set of numerals upon those lines or spaces

which are not used to indicate the amount of the check.

What I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A bank-note, bill of exchange, check, or other monetary instrument, provided with a combination of lines or spaces and numerals extending entirely across the same, substantially as described and shown, to afford provision for punching or marking, so as to accurately indicate, irrespectively of any writing, the amount for which such instrument is drawn, as specified, substantially as described.

2. A bank-note, bill of exchange, check, or other monetary instrument, provided with a combination of lines or spaces indicating units, tens, hundreds, a series of numerals, 0 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9, entirely crossing the same, and a secondary independent series of numerals, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, also crossing the said lines or spaces in a similar manner, and delineated so that writing may be discerned across them, substantially as described, whereby a twofold safeguard or protection is afforded and secured by the writing of the signature on the line or on the space formed thereby, and from the figure indicating the highest division, as set forth.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing I have hereunto set my hand this 5th day of August, 1876.

THOMAS G. HILLHOUSE.

Witnesses:

CHS. O. JOLINE,
FRANCIS C. BOWEN.