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(54) **Loose leaf binding**

(57) An insert 2 for a loose leaf binder has a hole pattern 4 of circular and elongate holes, which is asymmetrical about a centre line L of the pattern 4. The pattern fits a wide variety of ring binder configurations.

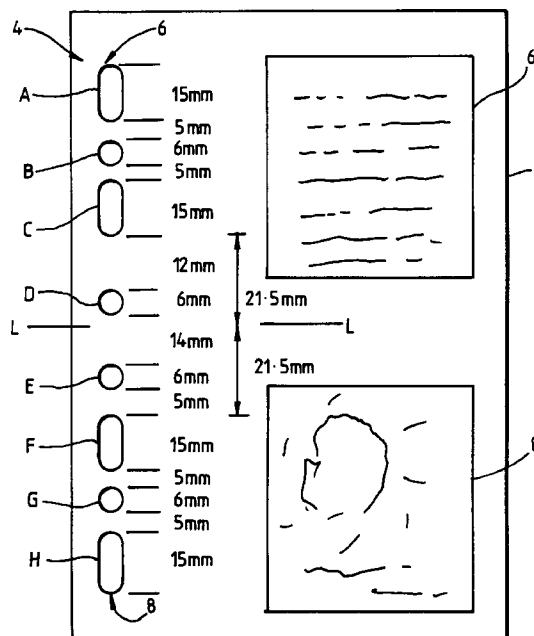


FIG.1

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Description

The present invention relates to loose leaf binding, and in particular to a loose leaf or insert which has a hole configuration adapted to fit a variety of binders.

There are many types of loose leaf binder, and most utilise rings, posts, prongs or the like which mate with holes drilled in the loose leaf or insert to be held in the binder. This wide variety of binder types does not adhere to any agreed standard on the size or spacing of the rings, posts, prongs etc., and hence it has been necessary to supply inserts having different hole patterns, or in the alternative to accept that an insert will not fit a substantial proportion of the market. This is particularly the case with personal organisers, where a popular type such as Franklin Quest (trade name) has a ring configuration which is incompatible with types such as Filofax (trade name).

Thus one aim of the invention is to provide a loose leaf or insert for a loose leaf binder, having a hole configuration which will fit a wide variety of binders.

There are many hole configurations proposed to fit two or more ring configurations, such as in US-A-4,402,585, US-A-4,629,070, US-A-4,925,720, US-A-4,997,089, US-A-4,972,952, GB-A-2,072,582, FR-A-1,165,258 and FR-A-982 421. These configurations all utilise a symmetrical arrangement of circular and elongate holes. GB-A-1,105,800 specifically addresses the problem of matching an insert to different configurations, but again proposes a symmetrical configuration of holes.

JP-A-1-230,993 to Okada uses a symmetrical pattern of holes based on uniformly spaced circular holes, with some holes omitted and some pairs of holes being merged to form an elongate hole.

After extensive trials and research I have found a hole configuration which will fit a very wide range of loose leaf binders.

One aspect of the present invention provides an insert for a ring binder, the insert having a plurality of holes along one edge for receiving rings of the ring binder, the holes comprising a plurality of elongate holes and at least one circular hole, wherein the pattern formed by the holes is asymmetrical about a centre line mid-way between the distal edges of the outermost holes, and at least one elongate hole is provided on each side of the centre line.

The insert of the present invention provides a unique degree of flexibility for the supplier and also the user by having an insert which will fit a wide variety of binders.

Preferably, a plurality of elongate holes is provided on each side of the centre line. Preferably, a plurality of circular holes is provided, at least one being provided on each side of the centre line.

Preferably on at least one side of the centre line there is provided a circular hole with an elongate hole on each side of the circular hole.

Preferably a circular hole is provided closest to the centre line on each side thereof, the said circular holes being spaced at different distances from the centre line.

In another preferred embodiment, an elongate hole straddles the centre line. Preferably the elongate hole extends to about 9mm above the centre line.

Preferably the elongate hole extends to about 9.5mm above the centre line and 5.5mm below it, and a circular hole is provided spaced about 5mm below the elongate hole.

Preferably the hole pattern is about 135mm long from its uppermost edge to the lowermost edge.

The insert may be of many materials, such as card, paper, plastic or metal. It may comprise a plain sheet, an index card, a wallet or pouch for example to hold a diskette or photograph, pre-printed information, etc.

The invention also provides a punch for punching the hole pattern of the insert.

Many ring binder systems, particularly personal organisers, are used for holding data or information such as maps, timetables, statistical or factual information. I have realised that it is possible to provide a loose leaf insert which combines such information, which the user will want to keep, with promotional or advertising material.

Another aspect of the present invention provides a loose leaf insert for a loose leaf binder or the like, having a first area containing information for use by the recipient, and a second area containing promotional or advertising material. Preferably the first and second areas are on opposite faces of the insert.

This aspect of the invention is particularly useful when combined with the loose leaf insert defined above. The advertiser can send out an insert to a wide range of potential customers, with a high probability that the insert will fit the personal organiser, loose leaf storage system etc. of the recipient.

Other aspects and preferred features of the invention will be apparent from the following description and the accompanying claims.

The invention will be further described by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows a first embodiment of the invention,

Figure 2 shows a second embodiment of the invention,

Figure 3 shows a third embodiment of the invention,

Figure 4 shows a fourth embodiment of the invention, and

Figure 5 shows a fifth embodiment of the invention.

Referring to Figure 1, there is shown a loose leaf insert 2 for a loose leaf binder system. The insert is of

slightly less than A5 size and is preferably about 160mm or less in height, which will suit the majority of personal organisers. A pattern 4 of holes A to H is drilled down the longer side of the insert, the holes being spaced about 5mm from the edge of the insert. The holes are in two shapes, circular holes of about 6mm diameter, and elongate holes about 6mm wide and 15mm long. Thus, the elongate holes are the equivalent of two circular holes spaced apart by 3mm.

The pattern 4 of holes A to H is asymmetrical about a centre line L between the upper and lower extremities 6, 8 of the outer holes A to H respectively.

In particular, hole D is spaced about 3.5mm above the centre line L, and hole E is spaced about 10.5mm below the centre line L. The remaining holes A to C and F to H are symmetrically spaced about the centre line L, starting about 21.5mm from the centre line. The patterns A to C and F to H each comprise elongate holes A, C; F, H spaced 4mm each side of a circular hole B, G. The patterns A to C, F to H are positioned with about a 12mm space between holes C and D, and about a 5 to 7mm space between holes E and F.

The holes C and F are each spaced about 21.5mm from the centre line L.

With this pattern of holes 4, it has been found that at least one of the circular holes, B, D, E, G is engaged by a ring or prong of a wide variety of binders, the remaining ring or rings etc. fitting through other holes as necessary.

The insert 2 will fit binders greater than A5 size. It may locate centrally in a standard A4 2-ring binder - using holes B and F, and a standard A4 3-ring binder - using holes A and G. Provided the insert locates on at least two rings or prongs, and one ring or prong engages a circular hole, or two rings or prongs are at opposite edges of two elongate holes, then the insert will be stably held. By not extending the height of the insert too far beyond the hole pattern the upper or lower edge will not interfere with adjacent unused rings. Alternatively, additional holes may be provided, as will be described hereinafter with reference to Figures 4 and 5.

The insert can also fit smaller ring binder configurations, such as the "Le Fax Soho" (trade mark) binder, when folded in two about the centre line L.

In a modification of this first embodiment, the holes D, E may be joined to form a single elongate hole.

Referring to Figure 2, this shows a hole configuration 4', in which the second pattern of holes F to H of the Figure 1 embodiment is arranged as two elongate holes F', G' and a circular hole H'. The hole spacings are otherwise as in the embodiment of Figure 1. This arrangement will again fit a very wide range of binders, save for the "Franklin Quest Classic" (trade mark) A5 binder.

Referring to figure 3, this shows a particularly preferred embodiment, and has a hole configuration 2" similar to the embodiment of Figure 1, save that the hole D" is elongate and it extends about 9mm above the centre line L, and 6mm below it.

Figure 4 shows a modification of the embodiment of Figure 3, which is suitable for a longer insert or sheet which will fit all the rings etc. in most A5 binders. In this embodiment the sheet 2 is about A5 size (148mm x 210mm) and an elongate hole J, about 15mm long, is positioned about 15mm below the hole H.

Figure 5 shows a further modification of the embodiment of Figure 3, which is suitable for a longer insert or sheet which will fit all the rings etc. in most A4 binders.

In this embodiment, the sheet is about A4 size (210mm x 297mm) and hole J is about 15mm long and positioned about 15mm below hole H. Three elongate holes K, M, N about 15mm long are positioned at spacings of about 5mm, 10mm and 5mm respectively, and a circular hole P of about 6mm diameter is positioned about 16mm below hole N.

The inserts of Figures 4 and 5 may have perforations, or markings 10, so that the larger A5 or A4 sheet can be easily reduced in size to fit a smaller binder.

It will be appreciated that the holes J to P may also be used with larger sheets incorporating the hole patterns of Figures 1 and 2.

It will be appreciated that the holes need not be circular per se, but may be squared off, for example, the term circular being used to indicate a hole which is about as broad as it is long. Also, the holes are limited in width, as is common to avoid lateral movement of a sheet. A "circular" hole could be elongate laterally if other holes prevent lateral movement in use. Also some variation in hole size and spacing is possible, say + or - 1mm. It will be appreciated that if the hole sizes are made too large, the insert will move around too much in the binder.

As seen with reference to Figure 1, the sheets 2 may carry factual or other useful information 6, and advertising material 8. The advertising material 8 may be on the reverse face of the sheet 2.

Claims

1. An insert for a ring binder, the insert having a plurality of holes along one edge for receiving rings of the ring binder, the holes comprising a plurality of elongate holes and at least one circular hole, wherein the pattern formed by the holes extends from an upper edge of the insert and is asymmetrical about a centre line mid-way between the distal edges of the outermost holes, and at least one elongate hole is provided on each side of the centre line.
2. An insert as claimed in claim 1, wherein a plurality of elongate holes is provided on each side of the centre line.
3. An insert as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein a plurality of circular holes is provided, at least one being provided on each side of the centre line.

4. An insert as claimed in claim 2 or 3, wherein on at least one side of the line there is provided a circular hole with an elongate hole on each side of the circular hole. 5
5. An insert as claimed in claim 2, 3 or 4, wherein on one side of the line there is provided a pair of adjacent elongate holes, with a circular hole outside of the elongate holes, relative to the centre line. 10
6. An insert as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein a circular hole is provided closest to the centre line on each side thereof, the said circular holes being spaced at different distances from the centre line. 15
7. An insert as claimed in claim 6, wherein one said circular hole is about 3.5mm above the centre line and the other said circular hole is about 10.5mm below the centre line. 20
8. An insert as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein an elongate hole straddles the centre line.
9. An insert as claimed in claim 8, wherein the said elongate hole extends to about 9.5mm above the centre line. 25
10. An insert as claimed in claim 8, wherein the said elongate hole extends to about 9.5mm above the centre line and 5.5mm below it, and a circular hole is provided spaced about 5mm below the said elongate hole. 30
11. An insert as claimed in any preceding claim, having two patterns of two elongate holes and a circular hole spaced about 21.5mm from a centre line, the overall pattern extending over about 135mm. 35
12. An insert as claimed in any preceding claim having circular holes of about 6mm diameter, and second, elongate holes of about 15mm long. 40
13. An insert as claimed in claim 1, having one or more additional holes below the pattern of holes. 45
14. An insert for a plurality of ring binders having different ring spacings, the insert having circular holes and elongate holes arranged so that for any one of the ring binders a circular hole engages one of the rings, or proximal edges of two elongate holes engage respective rings, or distal edges of two elongate holes engage respective rings. 50
15. An insert for a ring binder, the insert being adapted to fit a plurality of ring binders which have different spacing between their rings, characterised in that the insert has a plurality of holes for receiving the rings of the ring binders; a plurality of the holes being circular and a plurality of the holes being elongate, wherein the holes are arranged so that in any one of the ring binders at least one of the circular holes receives a ring. 55
16. A loose leaf insert for a loose leaf binder or the like, having a first area containing information for use by the recipient, and a second area containing promotional or advertising material.
17. An insert as claimed in claim 15, wherein the first and second areas are on opposite faces of the insert.
18. A punch for punching the hole pattern of the insert of one of claims 1 to 15.

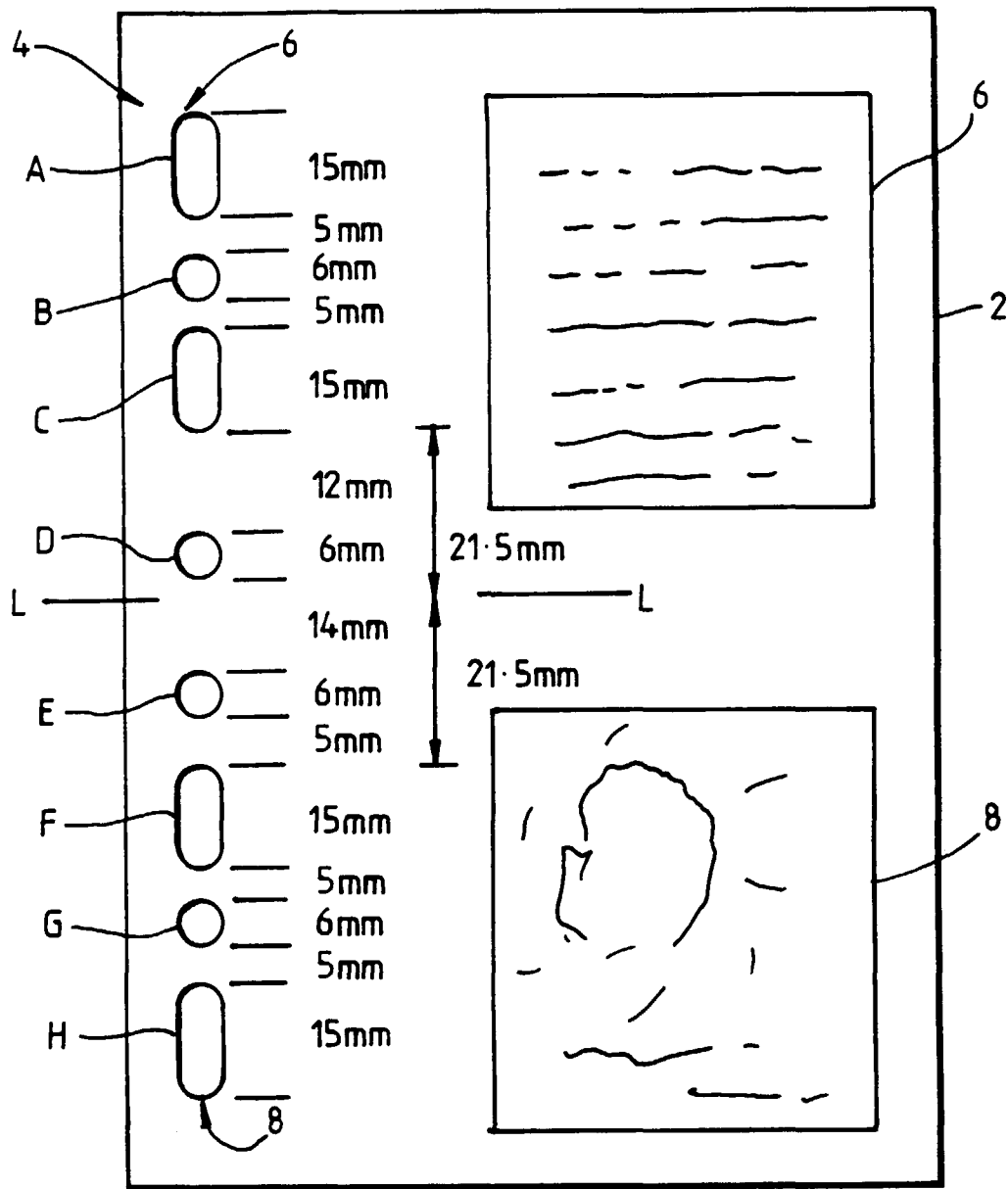


FIG. 1

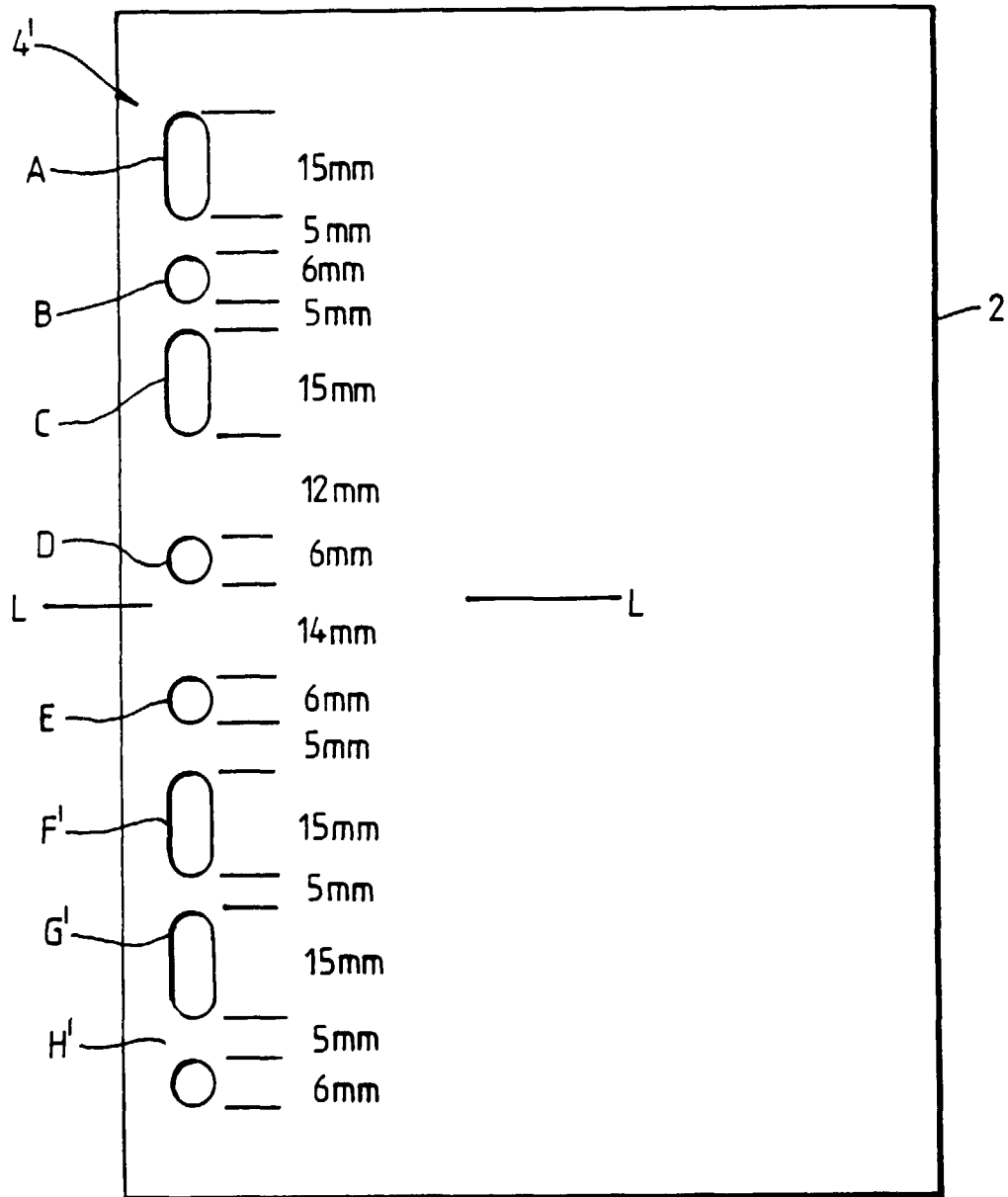


FIG. 2

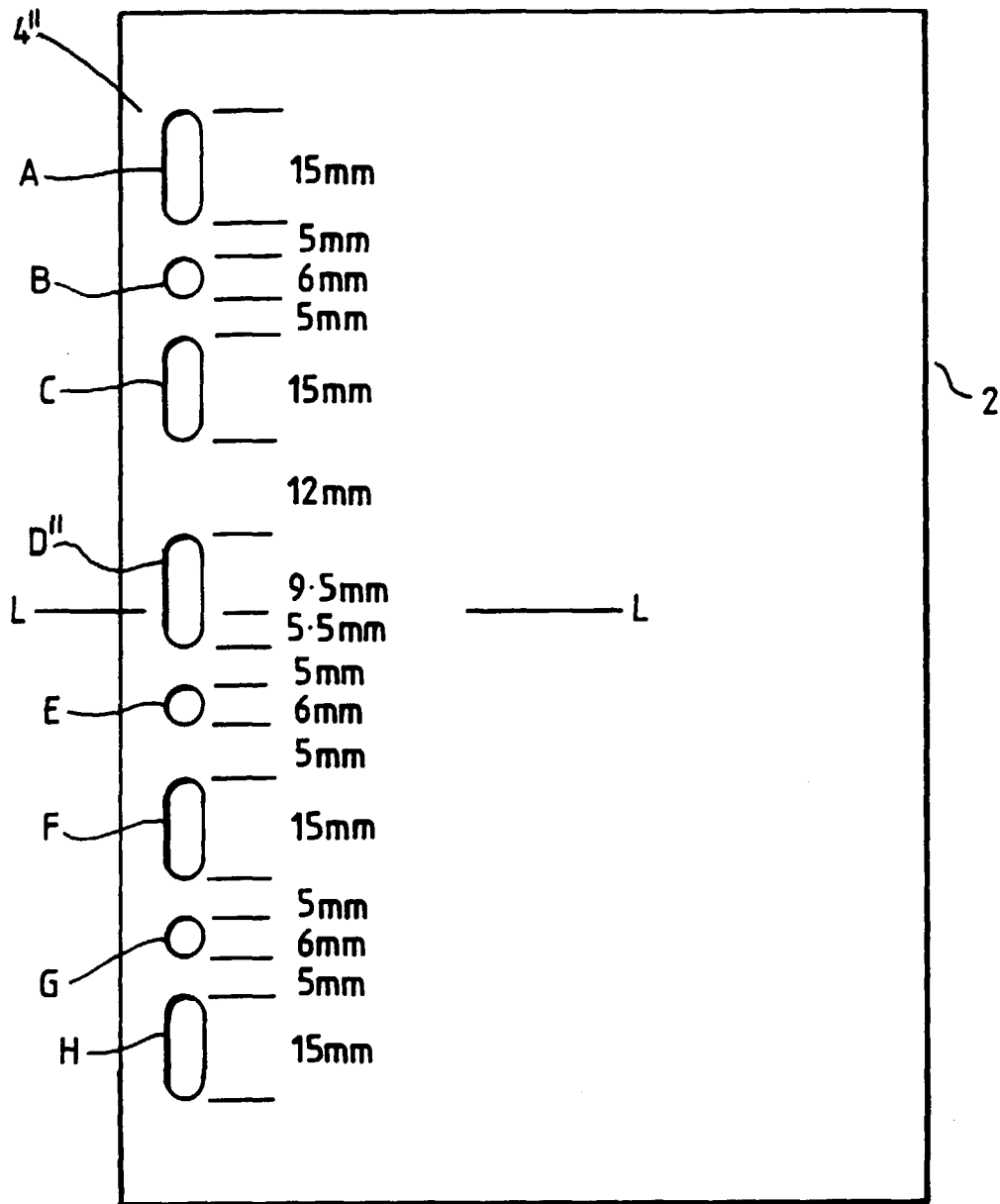


FIG . 3

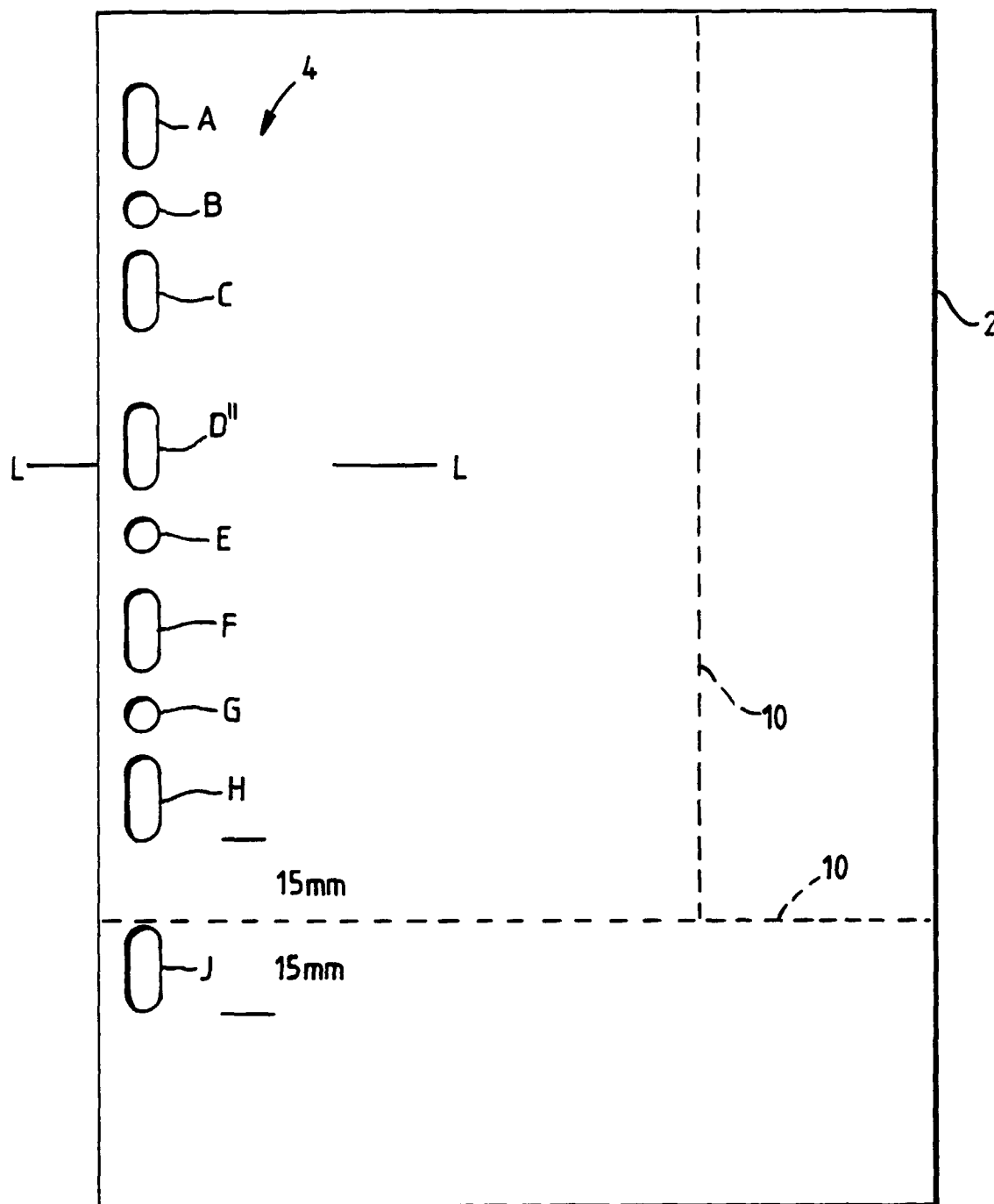


FIG. 4

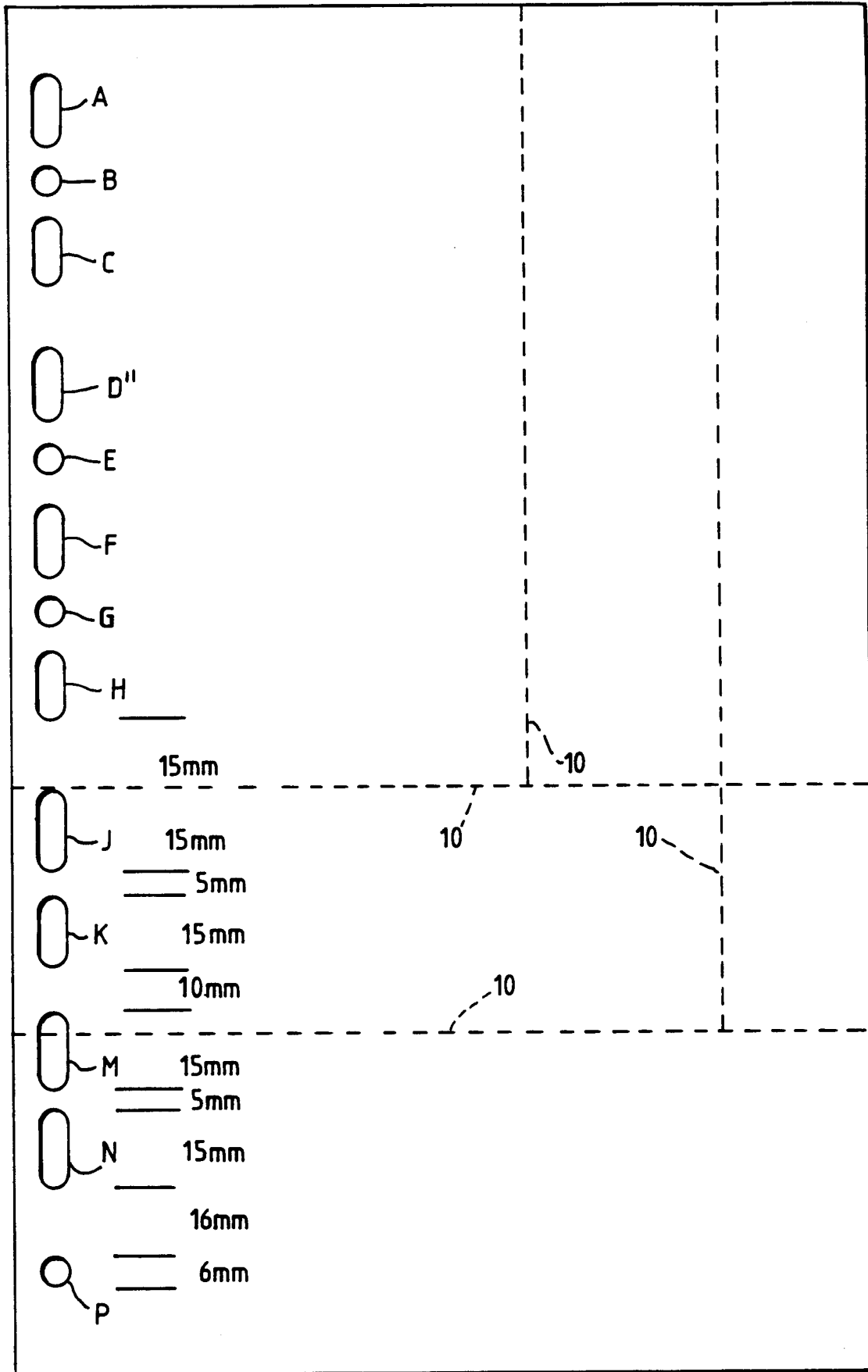


FIG. 5