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(71) Applicants  
International Standard  
Electric Corporation, 320  
Park Avenue, New York  
10022, State of New  
York, United States of  
America  
(72) Inventor  
Walter Herwig

(74) Agent  
P. G. Ruffhead, ITT UK  
Patent Department,  
Maidstone Road, Fooks  
Cray, Sidcup DA14 5HT,  
England

(54) Keyboard

(57) An instrument such as a data printer (1) has a keyboard (3) supported on a keyboard housing (2). Attached to the latter is a case (5) for pencils or the like which is provided with a hinged lid (6) whose upper surface forms a rest for the thumb-balls of the operator.

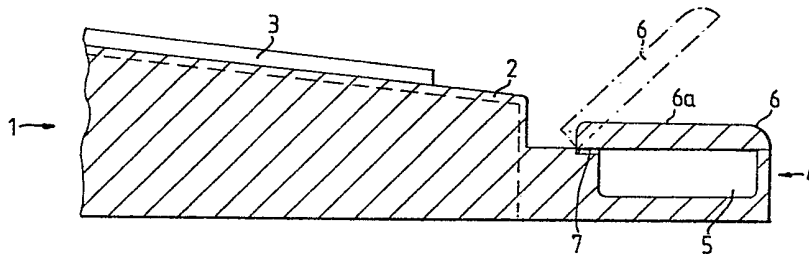
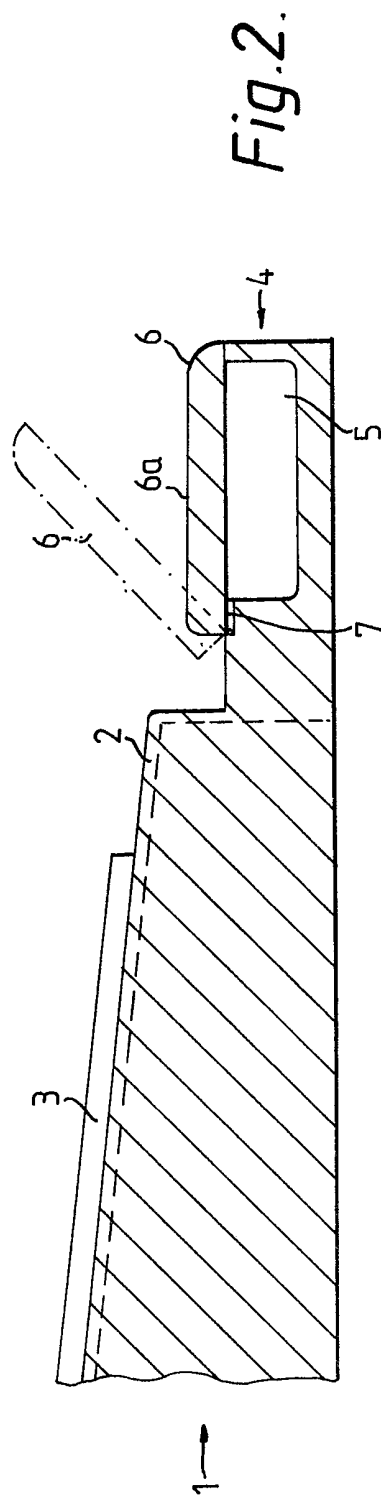
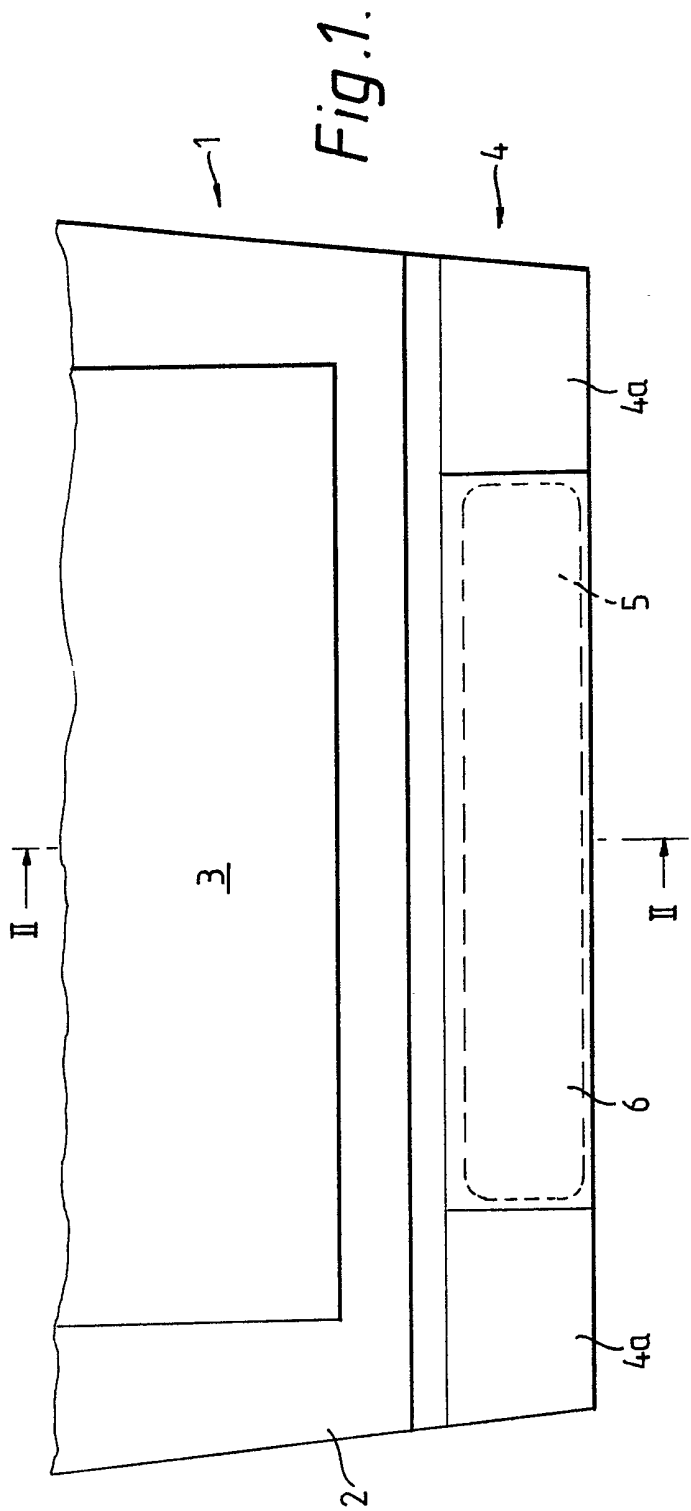
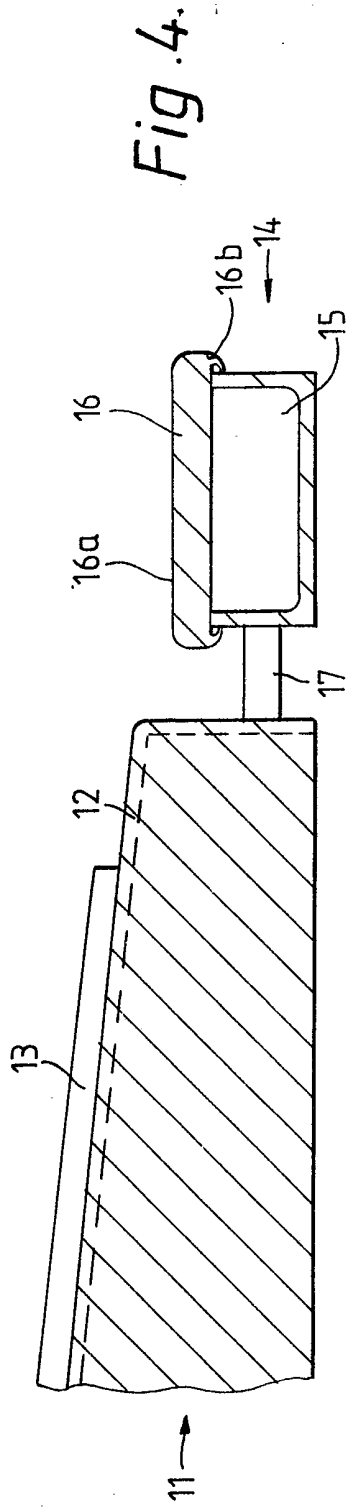
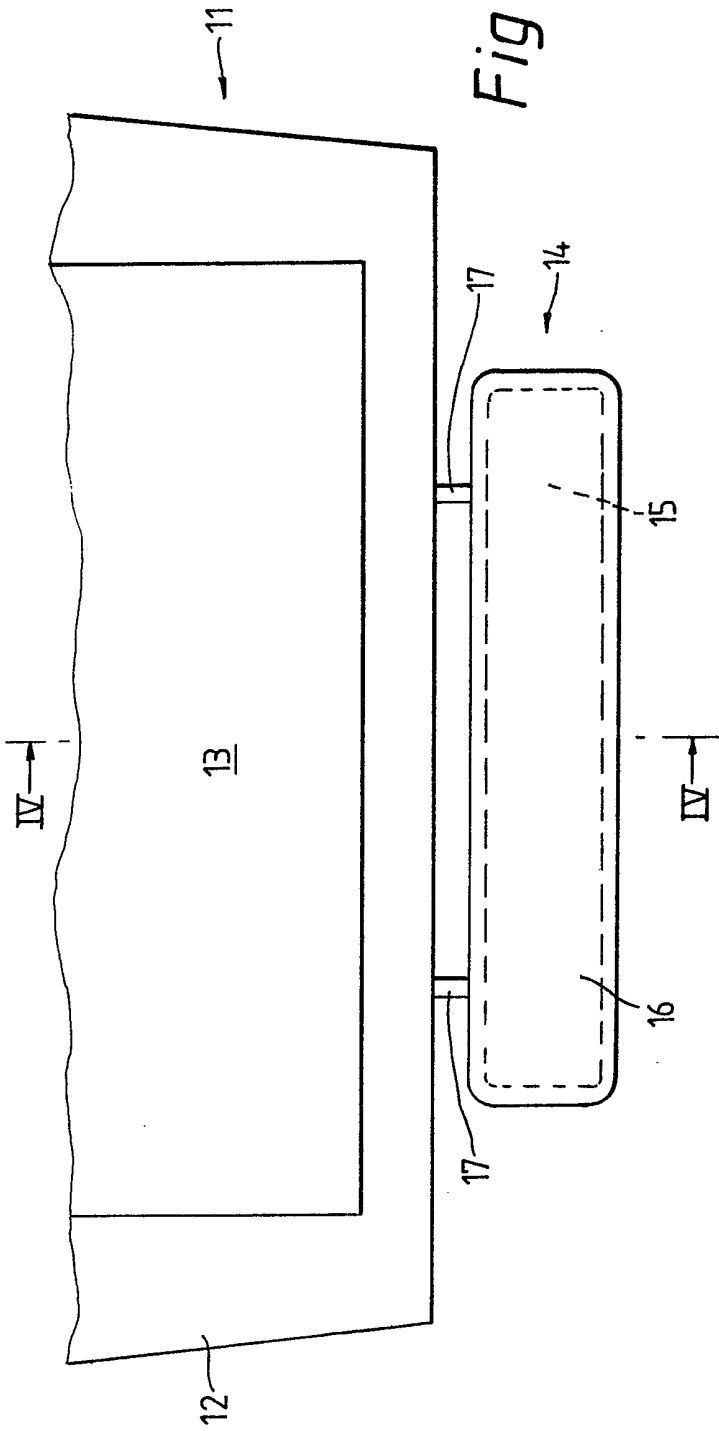


Fig. 2.

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## SPECIFICATION

### Keyboard

The invention relates to a keyboard for data terminal instruments and office machines, which is provided with a thumb-ball rest pointing towards the operator.

It is already known to provide thumb-ball rests as attachments to keyboards. They serve to relieve the operator's wrist joint in the case of longer-lasting input operations, and thus to prevent the operator from becoming fatigued prematurely.

In many cases, small items such as writing implements (pens, pencils) error-correcting means, paper clips, etc., are required at these working positions which, naturally, should be within easy reach. Often, however, the working positions lack the possibility of accommodating these small items in a way giving direct proximity of access.

It is an object of the invention, therefore, to provide a suitable receptacle for these small items adjacent the keyboard.

According to the invention in its broadest aspect, there is provided a keyboard for data terminal instruments and office machines, which is provided with a thumb-ball rest pointing towards the operator, characterised in that the thumb-ball rest either in its entirety or partially is provided with a case for items such as pencils which is closed by a lid with the top surface thereof forming the thumb-ball rest surface or being in the same plane as the latter.

Embodiments of the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to Figs. 1 to 4 of the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 shows a first embodiment of a keyboard with a thumb-ball rest designed according to the invention, in a schematic representation,

Fig. 2 shows the keyboard in a sectional view taken on line II—II of Fig. 1,

Fig. 3 shows a second embodiment of a keyboard with a thumb-ball rest designed according to the invention, in a schematic representation, and

Fig. 4 shows the keyboard in a sectional view taken on line IV—IV of Fig. 3.

Referring to Figs. 1 and 2, there is shown a keyboard 1 which is provided with a thumb-ball rest integrated into the keyboard housing 2. The thumb-ball rest 4 extends throughout the entire width of the keyboard. Symmetrically in relation to the set of keys 3, the thumb-ball rest 4 is provided with an oblong case 5 for pencils or the like which is capable of being closed by a lid 6. Both the case 5 and the lid 6 are let into the thumb-ball rest 4 in such a way that, in the closed state thereof, the surface 6a of the lid 6 forms one plane with the supporting surface 4a of the lateral parts of the

thumb-ball rest 4. Via a hinge 7, the lid 6 can be opened. A spring mechanism (not shown) effects the automatic closing of the lid 6.

Figs. 3 and 4 show a second embodiment of a keyboard 11 which is provided with a plug-in type thumb-ball rest 14. The thumb-ball rest 14 which is intended to be additionally attached, is provided on its rear side with two horizontally projecting bolts 17. The keyboard housing 12 is provided on its front side with correspondingly spaced-apart openings which are not shown in the drawings, and of a diameter corresponding to that of the bolts 17, in which the thumb-ball rest 14 is capable of being plugged. When arranged symmetrically in relation to the set of keys of the keyboard 13, the thumb-ball rest 14 is somewhat shorter than the width of the set of keys 13. As will be easily recognised from Fig. 3, the thumb-ball rest is provided with a pencil or other implement case 15 extending throughout the entire length of the thumb-ball rest. The case is capable of being closed by a removable lid designed as a cover 16. By virtue of its projecting rim portions 16b, the cover 16 snaps on to the lower part of the thumb-ball rest 14 and, with its surface 16a, serves as a support for the thumb-ball or the thumb-balls of the operator.

In the embodiment of Figs. 1 and 2 the lid 6 may also be designed as a cover 16 while in the case of the embodiment of Figs. 3 and 4, the cover 16 may be replaced by a hinged lid 6.

### CLAIMS

1. Keyboard for data terminal instruments and office machines, which is provided with a thumb-ball rest pointing towards the operator, characterised in that the thumb-ball rest either in its entirety or partially is provided with a case for items such as pencils which is closed by a lid with the top surface thereof forming the thumb-ball rest surface or being in the same plane as the latter.

2. A keyboard as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that the lid is connected along one longitudinal edge by means of a hinge with that part of the thumb-ball rest including the implement case.

3. A keyboard as claimed in claim 2, characterised in that the lid has a resilient locking mechanism.

4. A keyboard as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that the lid is in the form of a detachable cover.

5. A keyboard as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that the thumb-ball rest is integral with the keyboard housing.

6. A keyboard as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that the thumb-ball rest is provided with horizontally projecting bolts, and

that the keyboard housing is provided on its front side with correspondingly spaced openings for receiving the bolts.

7. A keyboard provided with a thumb-ball rest  
5 substantially as described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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