Patents Act 1977 **Opinion Number** **10/25**

OPINION UNDER SECTION 74A

Patent	GB 2621201 B
Proprietor(s)	Millbrook Mouldings Ltd., John Morrish Ltd. & E. Morrish Ltd.
Exclusive Licensee	
Requester	Jenner & Block London LLP
Observer(s)	SecuraIP Ltd.
Date Opinion issued	10 October 2025

The request

1. The Comptroller has received a request from Jenner & Block London LLP (the requester) to issue an opinion on the validity of GB 2621201 B (the patent).

2. The patent has a filing date of 12 April 2021 and a claim to an earlier priority date of 8 September 2020. It is of some significance that the patent application (GB2215341.5) was divided from an earlier application (GB2105215.4) which was granted as GB 2598652 B. The patent was granted on 14 May 2025 and it remains in force.

3. Observations were received from SecuraIP Ltd. The observations were accompanied by a request to amend the patent under Section 27. The observations were confined to reasons for staying the opinion pending the outcome of the amendment procedure (with the expectation that the opinion would be refused if the amendments were allowed). There were no observations on the substantive issue of the validity of the unamended claims.

4. Observations in reply were received from the requester addressing whether or not the opinion should be stayed. Following receipt of the observations in reply, several furthers rounds of correspondence were received regarding whether the opinion should be stayed. I deal below with the issue of staying the opinion.

5. The request questions the validity of the patent based on a lack of novelty or lack of inventive step in relation to six prior art documents:

    1. US Patent 4,129,953 (Eckert)
    2. US Patent 10,624,473 (Yu-Seng Tsai)
    3. Canadian Industrial Design Registration no.183415 (Mixtiles)
    4. Canadian Industrial Design Registration no. 183416 (Mixtiles)

5. US Patent 5,012.601 (Garland)
6. US Patent Application 2014/0237875 (Randall)

6. All the documents were published prior to the priority date of the patent.

7. The requester has only made arguments regarding the lack of novelty of claim 1 by way of claim charts comparing the features required by claim 1 with the features disclosed in each of the prior art documents. These claims charts are included as an annex.

Preliminary matters

8. The first issue I need to consider is whether the opinion should be stayed pending allowance of the proposed amendments under Section 27. If the opinion is stayed and the amendments are subsequently allowed, the opinion would then be refused as not being directed to the claims then in force. If the amendments are not allowed then the opinion would proceed, but with a significant delay.

9. If the opinion proceeds without any delay and the amendment is subsequently allowed, then the opinion is moot.

10. Without wishing to go into the detail of the proposed amendments, they appear to be directed towards a separate feature that could potentially result in the claim being a collocation, dependant only on whether or not there is synergy between the added feature and the original feature. For this reason it is considered that there is some utility in proceeding to issue the opinion as normal. It may help the requester decide whether a further opinion request on the amended patent is necessary, and the extent of such an opinion. In particular, if this opinion finds the current claims to be invalid, then any future opinion request need not reconsider the current citations, but may be directed to new citations relevant to the added feature and arguments relating to synergy.

11. I note also that in making the amendment the proprietor has not admitted that it is required to distinguish the invention from any prior art. I do not think that I can presume that the patent is invalid just because the proprietor is seeking amendment.

12. The observer has also suggested that the opinion be refused in view of ongoing court proceedings in relation to the parent patent. The proprietor has commenced infringement proceedings on the parent patent, which are being defended by way of a counter-claim for invalidity. The observer has suggested that the opinion be refused as the opinion may be able to be used in some way to allow the defendant to introduce further evidence into these proceedings, contrary to an order of the court. I do not consider that this is something I can take account of. There is no suggestion that the opinion request is frivolous or vexatious such that it could be refused under Rule 94(1)(a). It seems to me that whether or not the opinion provides support for admission of new evidence lies entirely at the discretion of the court and I should not pre-suppose what use may be made of it, nor refuse it in case the court should take some account of it. It should be noted that neither the requester nor observer is a party to the proceedings themselves.

13. A further issue arises in relation to one of the pieces of prior art. US 4129953 was cited as an X citation against the parent application. It was cited as an A-citation during pre-grant processing of the patent. Nevertheless, it seems that the applicant must have taken it into account when drafting the claims. Notably, no amendment of the claims was made between filing and grant.

14. The issue in relation to this opinion is whether or not I should refuse the opinion in relation to US 4129953 on the basis that there is no new question based on a document which was cited as X only on the parent application.

15. Normally, where a document is cited as an X citation or used in a novelty or standalone inventive step objection during pre-grant processing, it will not be reconsidered as part of an opinion. The opinions service is not intended to offer second opinions on documents considered by examiners during pre-grant processing. A number of office decisions[1] have held that opinions will be refused unless there is a *new question*. Typically, this means that where a document has already been considered pre-grant, then there is no new question and an opinion should be refused in relation to that document.

16. Basis for this is in part to be found at paragraph 35 of decision BL O/370/07, where the hearing officer stated:

> *35. My conclusion from the above is accordingly that a request for an opinion on validity which argues on the basis of prior art that was cited as category "X" or "Y" in the search report, or as part of a substantive objection at any other time in the examination procedure, is, other than in exceptional circumstances, unlikely to clear the hurdle of raising a new question or argument.*

17. US 4129953 was neither cited as “X” or “Y”, nor raised as part of a substantive objection in relation to the patent. Although it is not a new document as such, I nevertheless consider that I can consider it as part of the opinion.

The patent

18. The patent relates to a picture frame as illustrated in figure 1 of the patent reproduced below. The frame comprises a front frame portion (12) and a rear carrier portion (10) which are brought together to sandwich a picture member (4) between them.

[1] See for example Office decisions BL O/370/07, BL O/298/07 and BL O/289/07.

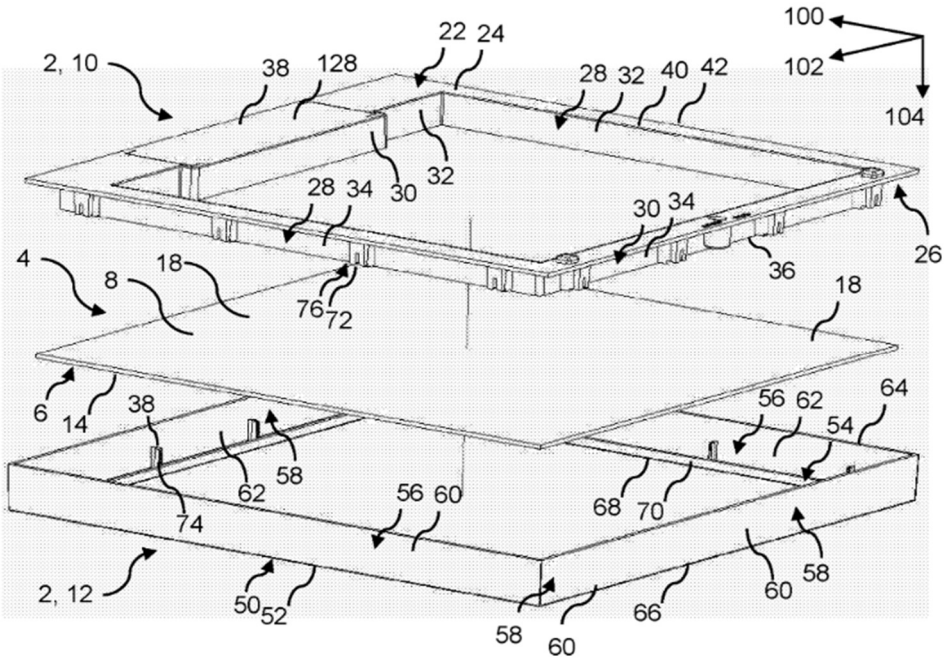


Figure 1

19. The front and rear portions of the frame are held together by cooperating protrusions and cut-outs. As illustrated, the frame portion comprises protrusions in the form of slats (74), which engage with cut-outs (72) provided on the carrier portion.

Claim construction

20. As a first step in determining validity I must correctly construe the claims. This means interpreting them in the light of the description and drawings as instructed by Section 125(1). In doing so I must interpret the claims in context through the eyes of the person skilled in the art. Ultimately the question is what the person skilled in the art would have understood the patentee to be using the language of the claims to mean. This approach has been confirmed in the decisions of the High Court in *Mylan v Yeda*[2] and the Court of Appeal in *Actavis v ICOS*[3].

21. There are two independent claims 1 and 25 to an apparatus and method of assembling an apparatus respectively. They share the same substantive features. The request refers only to claim 1.

22. Claim 1 reads:

> 1. *A picture frame comprising a frame portion and a carrier portion,*
>
> *one of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more coupling protrusions,*
>
> *and the other of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more complimentary cut outs to receive the coupling protrusion,*

[2] *Generics UK Ltd (t/a Mylan) v Yeda Research and Dev. Co. Ltd & Anor* [2017] EWHC 2629 (Pat)
[3] *Actavis Group & Ors v ICOS Corp & Eli Lilly & Co.* [2017] EWCA Civ 1671

wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are arranged to engage each other to locate the frame portion on the carrier portion in an assembled configuration, in which a picture member is supported therebetween,

wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut out,

and the tips face an interior surface of the frame portion or the carrier portion, and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof,

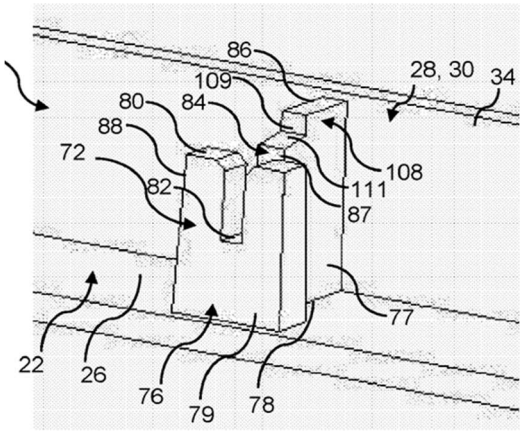
and the coupling protrusion and cut outs progressively engage each other as the carrier portion and frame portion are brought together in a depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture member.

23. There are a number of features of the claim which appear to require further consideration to understand how they should be construed.

24. Firstly, I need to consider how the skilled person would construe *cut-outs*. To an extent this might be considered a product-by-process definition, i.e. a cut-out is a feature formed by cutting something out, but I do not consider that the skilled person would construe the term on that basis. In any event, the method of forming the cut-outs is immaterial.

25. The cut-outs of the embodiments are defined in the description (page 18, lines 23-30), with reference to figure 2 (below), as follows (my underlining):

*The first wall **77** includes an <u>open-ended notch</u> to define the cut out **72** and the end surface **87** thereof The second wall **79** is **1**) perpendicular to the first wall **77**, and **2**) is perpendicular to the interior surface **26** of the back wall **22**. The second wall **79** includes a <u>notch</u> to define the cut out **72** and the opposed side walls **88** thereof. The <u>notches</u> of the first wall **77** and second wall **79** therefore adjoin each other to form the cut out **72**.*



26. The term *notches* is somewhat vague but I nevertheless consider that it is useful in understanding the scale and general form of the *cut-outs*. In particular, I consider the skilled person would understand that the *cut-outs* are open-ended and small.

27. The skilled person would I think construe *cut-outs* predominantly based on the figures, taking account of the use of the term notch, along with what I consider would be a normal interpretation of the term. That is, *cut-outs* require a removal of material such that a small open-ended aperture extending through the material is formed.

28. Consideration also needs to be given regarding the construction of *engage*. I consider the skilled person would normally interpret *engage* to require the parts to touch. Such an interpretation is reinforced by the description which specifies that (page 20, lines 13 to 22):

> *In the assembled configuration the tip **92** of the slats **74** engages the base **82** of the cut outs **72**. In this way there is a continuous structure in the depth direction **104**…*
>
> *In the assembled configuration the end surface **98** of the slats **74** engages the end surface **87** of the cut outs **72**. In this way there is a continuous structure in the longitudinal direction **104** /lateral direction **102**…*

29. The reference to a continuous structure requires parts to be touching.

30. However, there is a paragraph (page 20, lines 30 to 35) that casts some doubt on this interpretation by referring to non-continuous structures as follows:

> *In variant embodiments, which are not illustrated: none continuous structures are provide in one or more of the longitudinal direction, lateral direction and depth direction… the side walls of the cut outs do not engage the large cross-section portion of the slat….*

31. There are a number of paragraphs in the description referring to "*In variant embodiments…",* and it is apparent that not all the variants described in these paragraphs fall within the scope of the claims (some more clearly than others). I consider that the skilled person would not use the disclosures of these paragraphs for construing the claims where there is any inconsistency between them and the claims. The passage above is one example which appears to describe embodiments that do not fall within the scope of the current claim set. Accordingly, I do not consider that the skilled person would take account of this passage when construing the claims and *engage* should be given its normal interpretation, i.e. to require touching of parts.

32. The penultimate part of the claim requires that the tips of the coupling protrusions face an *interior surface* of the frame portion or carrier portion.

33. The requester appears in the claim charts to be arguing that *interior* relates to a volume defined by the whole of the frame, such that the only exterior surfaces would be the front and rear faces and the external perimeter of the assembled frame. Any other surfaces would be an interior surface. Based on this interpretation the internal perimeter of the frame, i.e. surrounding the picture member, would be an interior

surface. Such an interpretation is apparently supported by the description (page 17, lines 12-17) which refers to (my emphasis):

> *In particular, in the assembled configuration the side walls **28,30** of the carrier portion **10** are arranged opposed to the side walls **56**, **58** of the frame portion **12** and form respective interior and exterior side walls of the picture frame **2** and the back wall **22** of the carrier portion **10** is arranged opposed to the front wall **50** of the frame portion **12** and form respective back and front walls of the picture frame **2**. The picture frame **2** therefore has a hollow interior defined by the front, back and side walls.*

34. However, the description also appears to define an interior of the frame as being the internal cavity formed between the frame portion and the carrier portion when the frame is assembled. For example, the description (page 15, line 33) specifies that *"The side walls **28**, **30** include an exterior surface **32** and interior surface **34**."* From figure 1 above it can be seen that exterior surface (32) forms the internal perimeter of the frame surrounding the picture member, and the interior surface faces an interior surface (62) of a side wall of the frame portion.

35. Specifically in relation to the tips of the protrusions, the description (page 19, lines 8 to 10) states (my underlining):

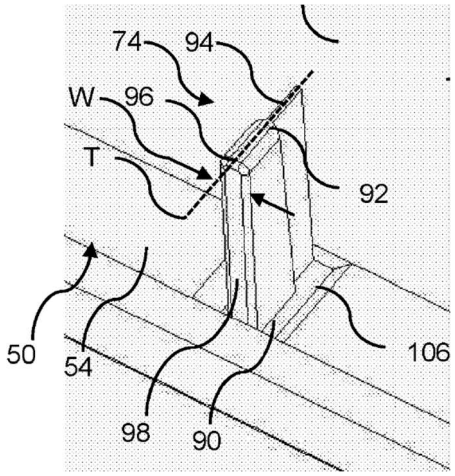
> *Referring to figures **1** and **3**, a slat **74** extends in the counter depth direction **104** from a base **90** at the interior surface **54** of the front wall **50** of the frame portion **12** to a tip **92** that faces the interior surface **26** of the back wall **22** of the carrier portion **10**.*

36. I consider that the skilled person, when reading the claims in the light of the description, would base their construction of the phrase "*the tips face an interior surface"* on the specific example of the tips above, read in the light of the drawings. I.e. they would construe the phrase on the basis of an interior surface defined by the internal cavity formed between the frame portion and the carrier portion when the frame is assembled. Construing the requirement in this way means that the tips will be located in the internal cavity.

37. The final part of the claim requires that:

> *… the coupling protrusion and cut outs progressively engage each other as the carrier portion and frame portion are brought together in a depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture member.*

38. The detail of the coupling protrusions (slats) are illustrated in figure 3 (reproduced below) and that of the cut-outs in figure 2 (see above).



39. The description provides the following detail regarding the progressive engagement of these parts:

Page 19, lines 28-30: *The tip (92) of the slat (74) is rounded along its edges, particularly those of the large cross-section portion 96 to aid **progressive** insertion of the slat 74 into the cut out 72.*

Page 20, lines 10-12: *The slats 74 **progressively** engage the cut outs 72 as the carrier portion 10 and frame portion 12 are brought together in the depth direction 104 to support the picture member 4 in the assembled configuration.*

40. There is no other detail regarding how progressively engage is to be interpreted. Based on the illustrated slats and cut-outs, I consider that progressive engagement requires that the slat moves deeper into the cut-out as the frame portion and carrier portion are brought into the fully assembled state. I.e. the amount of engagement (or touching) between the slat and cut-out increases as the portions are pushed together.

Prior art

41. The prior art documents generally disclose picture frames formed with a frame portion and a carrier portion between which a picture is sandwiched. In each case the frame and carrier portions are held together in the assembled state by cooperating elements.

42. The requester has provided claim charts comparing claim 1 with the features of each of the prior art documents. These claims charts are included as an annex.

US 4129953

43. The general arrangement of the unassembled frame of US 4129953 is shown in figure 3 reproduced below. The frame comprises a frame member (12) and a pair of

clamping members. The fact that there are two clamping members is inconsequential in relation to the claim. The frame member and clamping members are held together in the assembled state by tabs (66) extending rearwardly from the frame member passing through slots provided on the clamping members as shown in detail in figure 7 of this document.

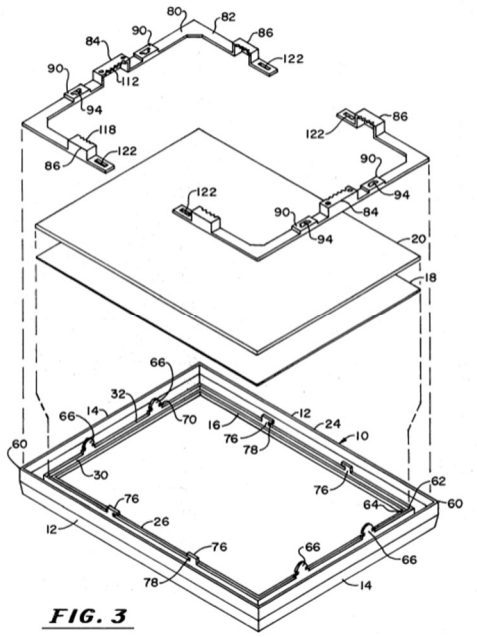


FIG. 3

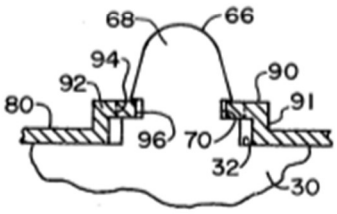


FIG. 7

44. Claim 1 requires that *"wherein the coupling protrusion and cut-outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut-out".* Claim 1 further clarifies what is meant by a tip of the coupling portion as follows *"and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof."*

45. I do not consider that the tip of the coupling protrusion is within the cut-out when the frame and carrier portion of US 4129953 are assembled. The tip of the protrusion passes through the cut-out upon assembly. There is only a waisted section and a base section of the coupling protrusion which remain within the cut-out.

46. The argument made by the requester in the claim chart is that "*protrusions 66 and 76 are at least partially within slots 94 and 122 respectively".* However, this appears inconsistent with the requirement that it is the tips that are within the slots.

47. The requester has also argued that the tips of the protrusion face the inside surface of the perimeter wall (14) of the frame portion. I have however construed the requirement that the tips face an interior surface as requiring that they face an interior surface of a cavity formed between the frame portion and the carrier portion, and that as a consequence the tips will be located in that cavity in the assembled state. As the tips pass completely through the clamping members they do not meet this requirement of the claim as I have construed it.

48. It seems to me that claim 1 was purposefully drafted to distinguish the invention from the disclosures of US 4129953.

49. The general arrangement of the frame and carrier portions, and the detail of the cooperating elements of the frame of this document are shown in figure 1 and figures 3, 4 and 5 respectively. These figures are reproduced below. Figures 3 and 4 are enlargements of the areas identified in figure 1. Figure 5 is an illustration of how the cooperating elements engage with each other when the frame is assembled.

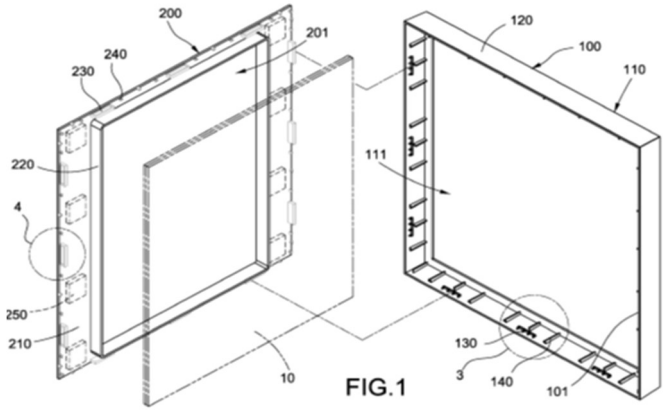


FIG.1

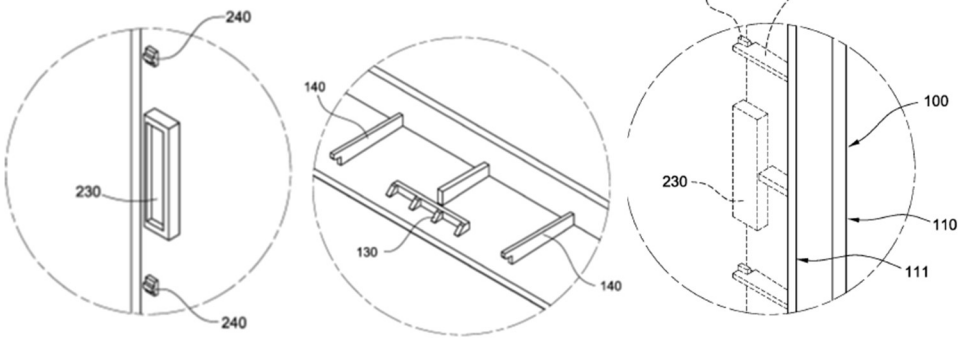


FIG.3 FIG.4 FIG.5

50. It will be noted that there are two sets of cooperating elements. Firstly, there is a slot (230) on the carrier portion which receives a hook part (130) of the frame portion. Secondly, there is positioning latch (240) on the carrier portion which engages with a corresponding positioning latch (140) on the frame portion. Figure 5 shows the assembled arrangement. The requester has suggested that the hook part (130) and slot (230) are the coupling protrusion and cut-out of the claim respectively. However, I do not consider that the slot (230) is a cut-out as I have construed that term.

51. Nevertheless, I consider that the pairs of positioning latches do form a relevant pair of cooperating elements for comparison with the claim. Firstly, an open ended notch type cut-out is formed in the ends of the positioning latches (140) and the other positioning latches (240) are formed as protrusions which engage with the cut-outs. The arrangement of the positioning latches is described at column 3, lines 25 to 38 as follows:

> *The inner side of the surrounding wall **120** and the edge of the rear cover **200** are provided with a plurality of positioning latches **140**/**240** which is disposed correspondingly. When the positioning latches **140** on the inner*

*side of the surrounding wall **120** are pressed against the corresponding positioning latches **240** on the edge of the rear cover **200**, the back plate **210** of the rear cover **200** is aligned with the rear opening **101** of the front cover **100** by means of the relative position determined between the front cover **100** and the rear cover **200**. Thus, the rear cover **200** is kept from further moving into the front cover **100**. In the current embodiment, preferably, the corresponding positioning latches **140/240** are pressed against each other to further be mutually embedded, but not limited to this.*

I have adapted the claim chart submitted by the requester to take account of the pair of positioning latches being the coupling protrusion and cut-out of the claim as follows:

GB 2621201	**US 10,624,473**
A picture frame comprising a frame portion and a carrier portion;	See Fig. 1 – frame portion 100, carrier portion 200.
one of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more coupling protrusions;	See Figs 1, 3, 4 and 5 – carrier portion is provided with coupling protrusions 240.
and the other of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more complimentary [*sic*] cut outs to receive the coupling protrusion;	See Figs 1, 3, 4 and 5 – complementary cut-outs in the ends of positioning latches (140) provided on the frame portion.
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are arranged to engage each other to locate the frame portion on the carrier portion in an assembled configuration, in which a picture member is supported therebetween;	See Figs 1 and 2 – picture 10.
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut out;	See Fig 5 and description col 3, ll. 25-38, describing the positioning latches *pressed against each other to further be mutually embedded.* Fig 5 shows the tip of the protrusion within the cut-out.
and the tips face an interior surface of the frame portion or the carrier portion, and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof;	See Figs 1, 2 and 5 – tips of protrusions face inside face of front side (110) of frame portion.
and the coupling protrusions and cut outs progressively engage with each other as the carrier portion and the frame portion are brought together in the depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture member.	See Figs 1, 3, 4 and 5 – protrusions move deeper into the cut-out as the frame portion and carrier portion are brought into the fully assembled state.

52. I consider that the frame illustrated in figures 1 to 5 of US 10624473 has all the features necessary to fall within the scope of claim 1. Accordingly claim 1 is anticipated by this document.

Canadian Design Registration nos.183415 & 183416 (Mixtiles Ltd)

53. Figures 1 and 2 from these designs are shown below. There are further figures but they show no more information. Both designs are titled *"Decorative Mountable Frame*" with both figures 1 identified as showing a front perspective view, and figures 2 showing a rear perspective view.

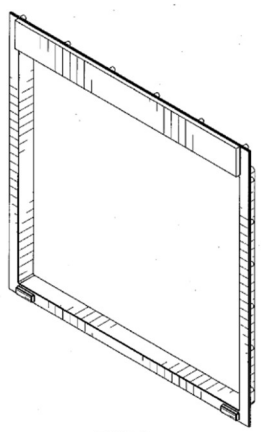


FIG.1

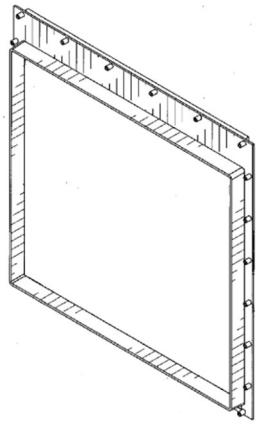


FIG.2

183415

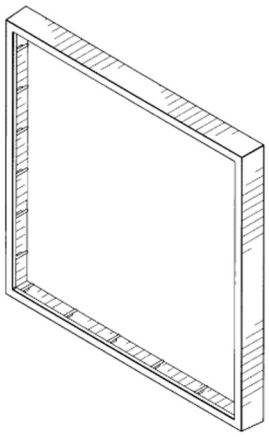


FIG.1

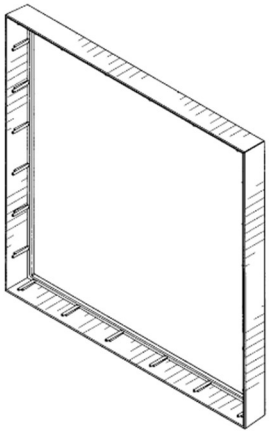


FIG.2

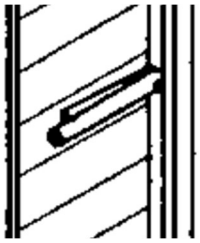
183416

54. Both designs consist of only a single element. Neither of them therefore comprises both a frame portion and a carrier portion. There is nothing in either of the designs to suggest that they are to be used together. Whilst it may be obvious to combine them to form a frame with a picture member is sandwiched between, I do not consider that it is implicit that they should be combined. In particular, both designs have the same title which does not suggest that one of them is a carrier portion. Additionally, both figures 1 are said to show a front view and if they are to be joined together I presume one of the figure 1 views would then become the rear of the combined frame. It is not clear which part would be the frame part and which would be the carrier part. Whilst this would not effect any comparison with claim 1, it reinforces my view that they are not implicitly to be used together. As I do not consider it implicit to combine the parts, claim 1 does not lack novelty based on them.

55. Although it is not entirely clear, the requester's claim chart appears to be based on

each of the designs showing two components. For example, in relation to 183415 the claim chart refers to the coupling protrusions as cylinders and the cut-outs as circular cavities. In relation to 183416 the claim chart states that the coupling cut-outs are clearly shown. Whilst it may be obvious to form a picture frame by engaging two similar frame elements together, it is not implicit in either of these documents.

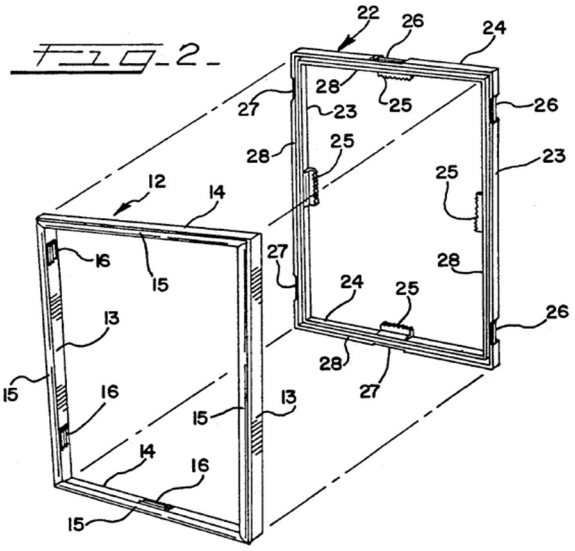
56. Careful inspection of figure 2 of 183416 (detail shown below) shows what I believe the skilled person would interpret as a pin spaced slightly from frame wall by a reinforcing web. It might be obvious to the skilled person to retain that pin in a cavity formed in the circular projection of 183415. However, I do not consider it implicit.



57. I do not consider that the Canadian designs 183415 and 183416 provide an anticipatory disclosure. The requester has not argued lack of inventive step based on a combination of these documents and, in the absence of argument from either party, I have not come to a view on that issue.

US 5012601

58. Figure 2 of US 5012601 is reproduced below.



59. The frame of this document comprises an inner frame member (22) with outward facing gripping teeth (26), and an outer frame member (12) with inward facing gripping teeth (16). The gripping teeth of the inner frame member are disposed in a recess (27). The gripping teeth cooperate to hold the inner and outer frame members in an assembled configuration.

60. I do not consider that either of the gripping teeth formations can be considered a cut-out as I have construed that term. The fact that the teeth of the inner frame member

are housed in a recess also does not make them cut-outs.

61. The claim chart provided by the requester refers simply to *"complementary gripping teeth (26) located on carrier portion (22)"* when referring to the cut-outs required by claim 1. There is no further argument concerning how these gripping teeth should be interpreted as cut-outs.

62. I do not consider that the frame of this document falls within the scope of claim 1.

US 2014/0237875

63. The overall arrangement of the frame of US 2014/0237875 is shown in figure 15 of that document as reproduced below.

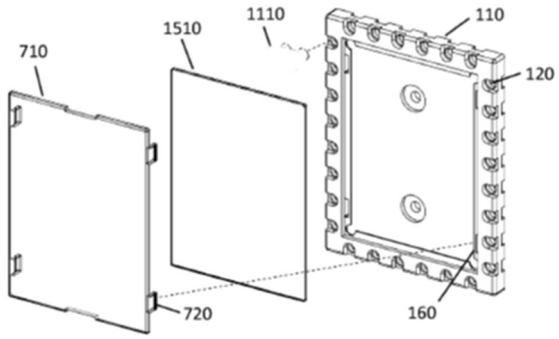
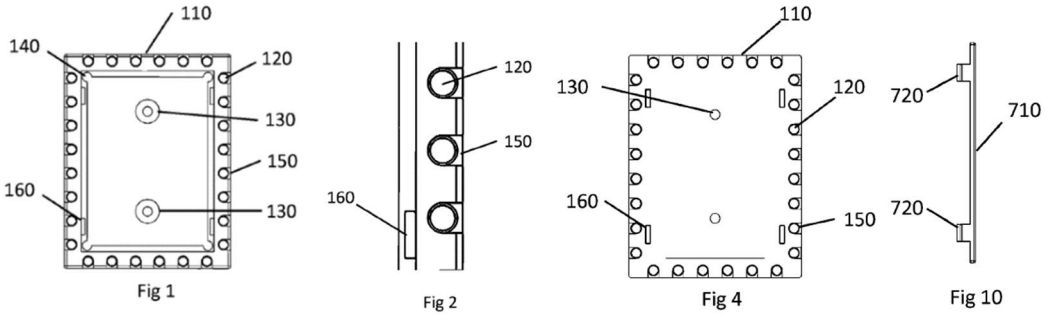


Fig 15

64. From the figure it can be seen that tabs (720) are provided on a cover part (710) which are received in channels (160) in a base part (110). Further details of the tabs and channels are shown in figures 1 to 4 and 7 to 10, the most relevant of which are reproduced below.



65. Figure 1 is a front view of the base part, figure 4 a rear view and figure 2 a detail of the edge of the base part showing a channel (160). Figure 10 is a side view of the cover part showing the tabs (720). It is apparent from the figures that the channel (160) extends completely through the base part by virtue of the fact that it is visible in both the front and rear views. Accordingly, the tabs when inserted into the channels will pass all the through the base part and the tips of the tabs will be located on the external facing side of the base part. The tips of the tabs are not therefore located within the channels nor facing an internal surface of either a frame portion or carrier portion as required by claim 1 as I have construed it. The display frame of this

document does not fall within the scope of claim 1.

Opinion

66. Based on the evidence and arguments provided, it is my opinion that claim 1 is anticipated by US 10624473 B1.

67. Accordingly, it is my opinion that the patent is invalid.

68. I do not consider claim 1 to be anticipated by any of the other documents referred to in the request.

Application for review

69. Under section 74B and rule 98, the proprietor may, within three months of the date of issue of this opinion, apply to the comptroller for a review of the opinion.

Matthew Jefferson
Examiner

NOTE

This opinion is not based on the outcome of fully litigated proceedings. Rather, it is based on whatever material the persons requesting the opinion and filing observations have chosen to put before the Office.

Appendix – Requester's Claim Charts

GB 2621201	**US 5,012,601**
A picture frame comprising a frame portion and a carrier portion;	See Figs 1 and 2 – frame portion 12 and carrier portion 22
one of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more coupling protrusions;	See Figs 2 and 3 – coupling protrusions in the form of gripping teeth 16 located on the frame portion
and the other of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more complimentary [*sic*] cut outs to receive the coupling protrusion;	See Figs 3 and 4 – complementary gripping teeth 26 located on carrier portion 22
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are arranged to engage each other to locate the frame portion on the carrier portion in an assembled configuration, in which a picture member is supported therebetween;	See Figs 2 and 3 - picture unit 32 is located between front frame member 12 and carrier frame member 22
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut out;	See Figs 2 and 3 -gripping teeth 16 are arranged to "snap into" gripping teeth 26 to provide a releasably secured engagement
and the tips face an interior surface of the frame portion or the carrier portion, and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof;	See Figs 2 and 3 – the tips of the gripping teeth 16 face the interior surface of carrier portion 22 and the tips of the gripping teeth 26 face the interior surface of the frame portion 12
and the coupling protrusions and cut outs progressively engage with each other as the carrier portion and the frame portion are brought together in the depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture member	See Figs 2 and 3 – the complementary gripping teeth progressively engage as they snap into each other when the frame portion and the carrier portion are brought together in the direction orthogonal to the plane of the picture.

GB 2621201	**US 10,624, 473**
A picture frame comprising a frame portion and a carrier portion;	See Fig. 1 – frame portion 100, carrier portion 200.
one of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more coupling protrusions;	See Figs 1, 3, 4 and 9 – coupling protrusion 130
and the other of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more complimentary [*sic*] cut outs to receive the coupling protrusion;	See Figs 1, 3, 4 and 9 – complementary (or corresponding) cut-outs 230

wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are arranged to engage each other to locate the frame portion on the carrier portion in an assembled configuration, in which a picture member is supported therebetween;	See Figs 1, 2 and 9 – picture 10
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut out;	See Figs 1, 3, 4 and 5 and description col 3, ll. 8-24 describing the tips 131 of coupling protrusions 130 entering the corresponding slots 230
and the tips face an interior surface of the frame portion or the carrier portion, and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof;	See Figs 9 and 10 and description col 3, l. 58 – col 4, l.4 describing tips 131 facing the insides of the two spaced apart rear frames 220 which form the carrier portion 200 of the picture frame.
and the coupling protrusions and cut outs progressively engage with each other as the carrier portion and the frame portion are brought together in the depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture member	See Fig 9 and description. The coupling protrusions 130 progressively enter and snap into the corresponding slots 230 as the two rear frames 220 that make up the carrier portion 200 are brought together in the direction orthogonal to the plane of picture 10.

GB 2621201	**Canadian Design Registration no.183415 (Mixtiles Ltd**	**Canadian Design Registration no.183416 Mixtiles Ltd**
A picture frame comprising a frame portion and a carrier portion;	Yes	Yes
one of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more coupling protrusions;	Yes The first paragraph on page 19 of GB2621201 expressly states that the coupling protrusions may be configured as a "cylinder"	Yes Coupling protrusions clearly shown
and the other of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more complimentary [*sic*] cut outs to receive the coupling protrusion;	Yes The first paragraph on page 19 of GB2621201 expressly states that the cut-outs may be configured as "a circular cavity"	Yes Coupling cut-outs clearly shown
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are arranged to engage each other to locate the frame portion on the carrier portion in an assembled configuration, in which a picture member is	Yes	Yes

supported therebetween;		
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut out;	Yes	Yes
and the tips face an interior surface of the frame portion or the carrier portion, and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof;	Yes	Yes
and the coupling protrusions and cut outs progressively engage with each other as the carrier portion and the frame portion are brought together in the depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture member	Yes	Yes

GB 2621201	**US 4,129,953**
A picture frame comprising a frame portion and a carrier portion;	See Fig 3 - frame portion 10, carrier portions 80
one of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more coupling protrusions;	See Figs.3 and 4 – protrusions 66 and 76
and the other of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more complimentary [*sic*] cut outs to receive the coupling protrusion;	See Figs 3 and 4 – slots 94 and 122
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are arranged to engage each other to locate the frame portion on the carrier portion in an assembled configuration, in which a picture member is supported therebetween;	See Fig 3 – picture 18 and back-up 20
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut out;	See Figs 3, 4, 6 and 7 – protrusions 66 and 76 are at least partially within slots 94 and 122 respectively
and the tips face an interior surface of the frame portion or the carrier portion, and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof;	See Figs 3, 4, 5, and 6 – tips of protrusions 76 face the surface of end wall 14. The tips of protrusions 66 pass through the slots 94 - this arrangement is in accordance with an embodiment of the invention described on p. 20 of the '201 Patent in which "…*the tips of the slats extend partially or fully through the protrusions/cut outs*."
and the coupling protrusions and cut outs progressively engage with each other as the carrier portion and the frame portion are brought together in the depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture	See Figs 6 and 7 – coupling protrusions and slots progressively engage as the frame members are brought together.

member	

GB 2621201	**US 2014/0237875**
A picture frame comprising a frame portion and a carrier portion;	See description and, e.g. Figs 15 and 18 -frame portions fr710 and 1710 and carrier portsiond160 and 1610 respectively
one of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more coupling protrusions;	See e.g. Figs 9, 10, 15 and 18, - protrusions (iabs) 720
and the other of the frame portion or the carrier portion comprising one or more complimentary [*sic*] cut outs to receive the coupling protrusion;	See e.g. Figs 15, 16 and 18 – cut-outs (channels)" 160
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are arranged to engage each other to locate the frame portion on the carrier portion in an assembled configuration, in which a picture member is supported therebetween;	See Figs 15 shows how tabs 720 will fit into channels 160
wherein the coupling protrusion and cut outs are configured in the assembled position with a tip of the or each coupling protrusion at least partially within the or each cut out;	See Figs 15 and 18
and the tips face an interior surface of the frame portion or the carrier portion, and a tip of the or each protrusion is defined as an end thereof;	See Figs 15 and 18 and Figs 19 and 20 – when tabs 720 are fully inserted in channels 160 the tips of each tab are not exposed beyond the plane of the backplate of the frame portion. The tips are adjacent the interior surface of the frame portion and appear to be covered by and facing the interior surface of backplate of the frame portion. Note that the penultimate paragraph on p.20 of the '201 patent describes a similar arrangement for the protrusions and cut-outs of a "variant embodiment" of the invention of the '201 Patent "….*the slats extend partially or fully through the protrusion/cut outs*"
and the coupling protrusions and cut outs progressively engage with each other as the carrier portion and the frame portion are brought together in the depth direction, which is orthogonal to the picture to support the picture member	See Figs 15 and 18 – the tabs 720 are inserted in the channels 160 progressively as the portions of the frame are brought together with the picture between them