No. 872,011. PATENTED NOV. 26, 1907.

G. A. PHILLIPS.

MEAL CHECK SYSTEM.

APPLICATION FILED JAN. 14, 1905.

Fig. 3.

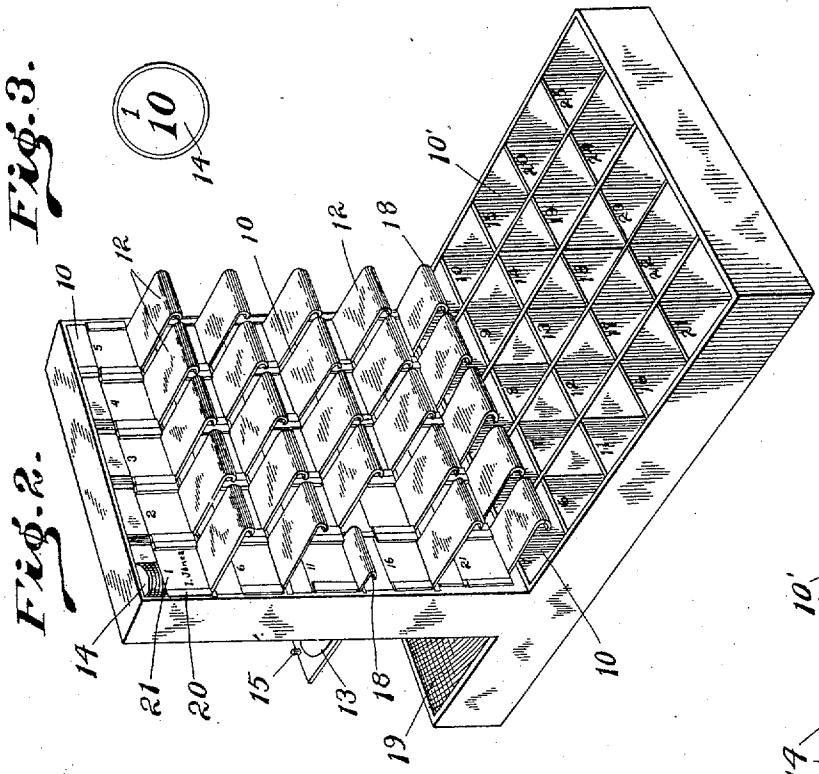


Fig. 2.

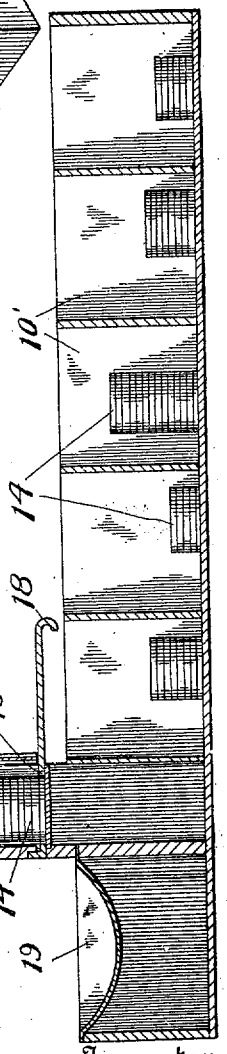
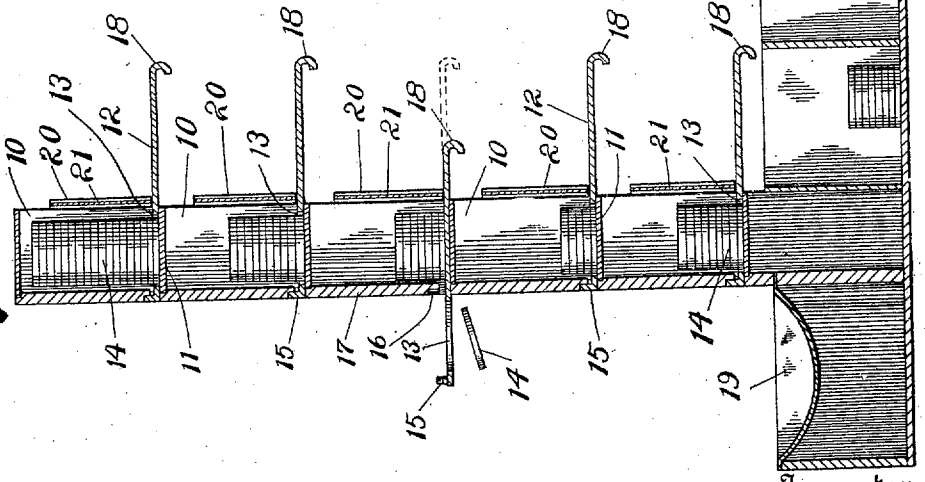


Fig. 1.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GEORGE A. PHILLIPS, OF MARION, INDIANA.

MEAL-CHECK SYSTEM.

No. 872,011. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Nov. 26, 1907.

Application filed January 14, 1905. Serial No. 241,050.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, GEORGE A. PHILLIPS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Marion, in the county of Grant and State of Indiana, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Meal-Check Systems, of which the following is a specification.

In the operation of restaurants having regular customers it is common to provide the customer with a ticket entitling him to a given number of meals, and the ticket is punched from meal to meal to indicate the number of meals consumed. In practice in many restaurants these tickets are retained by the cashier, and the tickets are punched as the individuals come in and get their meals. In such a system disputes arise between the customer and cashier as to whether the cashier has punched the ticket more than it should be punched, and the customer has no means of checking accurately the action of the cashier.

The object of my present invention is to provide a system, and apparatus for carrying the system out, by which the customer may be able to maintain at all times a check upon the cashier.

The accompanying drawings illustrate a mechanism by means of which my system may be employed.

Figure 1 is a central vertical section; Fig. 2 a perspective view, and Fig. 3 is a plan of one of the tokens.

In the drawings, 10, 10, indicates a plurality of token receptacles, each having a bottom 11. Resting upon the bottom 11 is a slide 12 provided with an opening 13 which lies normally immediately above the bottom 11. The opening 13 is of a size a trifle larger than the tokens 14, and the thickness of the slide 12 is slightly less than any one of said tokens. Each slide 12 is provided at one end with suitable means, such as a pin 15, adapted to enter a socket 16 formed in the back 17 of the casing forming the receptacles 10 in order to prevent too great movement of the slides 12 in one direction, and said slides are provided at the opposite end with any suitable means, such as a down-turned end 18, or a push-button, by which it may be readily grasped by the cashier. The back 17 of the receptacle casing faces the customer, and at its bottom I provide a token till or basin 19 into which the tokens may fall as they are ejected from their various receptacles. Upon the cashier's side of the casing forming receptacles 10 is a casing divided into a series of compartments 10′ corresponding in number and arrangement to the receptacles 10. The receptacles 10 and the compartments 10′ are numbered or otherwise distinguished, so that one set of receptacles corresponds with the other set of receptacles, and each of the receptacles 10 is provided with a card-holder 20 in which may be inserted a card 21 bearing the number of the compartment and the name of the customer.

The operation is as follows: The apparatus is set up, with the basin 19 toward the customer, and the cashier provides himself with as many sets of tokens 14 as there are compartments 10. Each set of tokens may consist of any desired number, as twenty-one, each of which is provided with a number or other mark to indicate to which compartment it belongs, and with another number or designating mark which will indicate its position in its series. For instance, the tokens of each set would be numbered consecutively from one to twenty-one inclusive, and would also be each numbered with a compartment number, as, for instance, 1, or 2, &c. Suppose then that a customer buys from the cashier a set of tokens, twenty-one in number, enough for meals for a week. These tokens are then placed in regular order in the receptacle 10 corresponding to the number of the set, number one being given to the customer, and the others, from two to twenty-one, being arranged in regular order in the compartment, number two lowest. In this position said number two of the set would lie in the opening 13 of the slide corresponding to the compartment 10. When the customer has consumed a meal he hands to the cashier his check number one, and the cashier deposits it in the corresponding compartment 10′. He then pushes upon the slide 12 corresponding to the set number of the customer and thus ejects token number two of that set, and it falls into basin 19, where the customer can take it and carry it with him. When he returns for another meal the operation is repeated. If at any time (by reason of improper manipulation or otherwise), a token has been ejected from any compartment to a person other than the customer to whom it belongs, then, when the customer presents the preceding token and the next token is ejected from his compartment 10, he will immediately notice

that there is a hiatus between the numbers of the two tokens, *i. e.*, the one he has returned and the one which has been ejected to him, and he is thus able to positively represent to the cashier that an error has been made.

By means of this apparatus it no longer becomes necessary for the cashier to keep a large number of current meal tickets in hand, nor is it necessary for the customer to be bothered with a ticket good for a large number of meals, which ticket he may lose. Instead the customer merely carries with him at all times a single token, and this token is of such character as to enable him to keep a positive check on the cashier. When a set of tokens has been exhausted the customer will be again required to pay for the set, whereupon they are arranged in the same order in the proper compartment 10.

If desired, the tokens as returned may be placed by the cashier on the top of the set in one of the compartments 10, instead of putting them into the corresponding compartment 10′, but in such case there is not so good a check upon the account of the customer.

While I have designed this invention especially for the use stated, I desire to be understood as claiming it for all uses to which it is or may be found to be applicable, such as handling admission checks or tickets at fairs, places of amusement and the like.

I claim as my invention:

1. A ticket-system apparatus, consisting of a casing, one member of which is divided into a plurality of token-receiving compartments and another member of which is divided into a corresponding plurality of token-receiving compartments, a plurality of sets of tokens adapted to be placed in said compartments in sets, the compartments being distinguished, the tokens of each set being distinguished from each other in succession, means for ejecting tokens in succession from any one of the compartments of the second member, the compartments in the first member serving to receive in succession tokens previously ejected from the corresponding compartments of the second member.

2. A ticket system apparatus consisting of a substantially L-shaped casing, the horizontal arm of which is divided into a plurality of token receiving compartments and the vertical arm of which is divided into a corresponding plurality of token receiving compartments, a plurality of distinguished sets of tokens adapted to be placed in said compartments in sets, the compartments being distinguished correspondingly to the token-sets, the tokens of each set being distinguishable from each other in succession, means for ejecting tokens in succession from any one of the compartments in the vertical arm of the casing, the compartments in the horizontal arm serving to receive in succession the tokens ejected from the corresponding compartments of the vertical arm.

In witness whereof, I, have hereunto set my hand and seal at Marion, Indiana, this 6th day of January, A. D. one thousand nine hundred and five.

GEORGE A. PHILLIPS. [L. S.]

Witnesses:

CHAS. M. MCCOY,

E. W. BOWMAN.