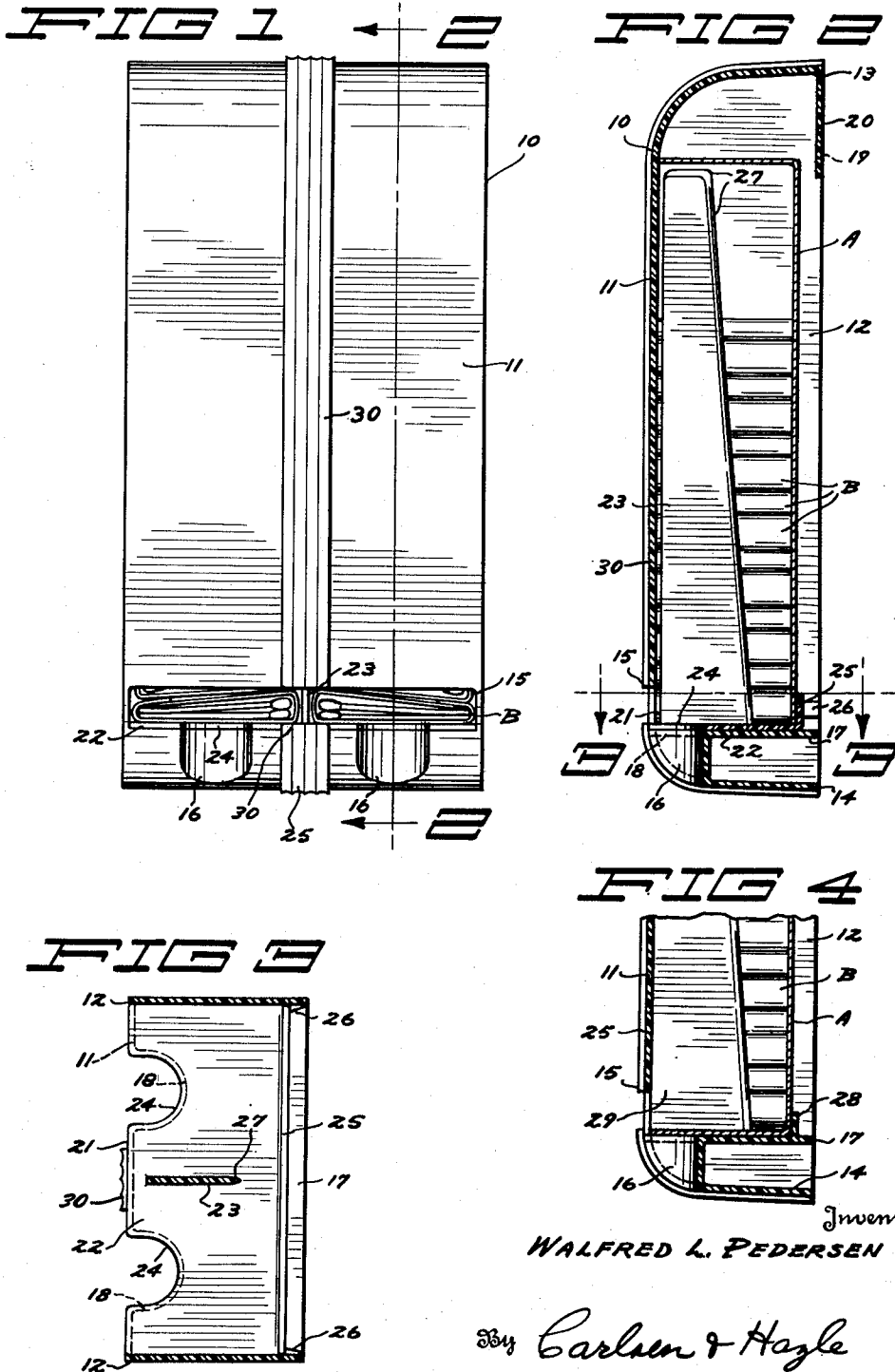


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MATCH BOOK DISPENSER

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MATCH BOOK DISPENSER

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1 Claim. (Cl. 312-42)

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This invention relates generally to dispensing devices and more particularly to devices adapted to hold and dispense small items such as match books or the like.

Paper matches fastened in a folder and commonly known as book matches have attained a wide usage because of their compact assembly, inexpensive manufacture, and adaptability to use as an advertising medium. These match books are generally packed for distribution in paper cartons being arranged flatly against one another in two or more rows within the carton. Because these cartons are not particularly sightly they are generally kept under cover and the books are indiscriminately removed therefrom as needed. Handling in this manner causes a jumbling of the books within the carton prohibiting instantaneous location and removal therefrom. Rapid dispensing is often highly desirable, particularly at cigarette counters, cafes, or the like.

It is the purpose of my invention to provide a dispensing device for these match books which is adapted to receive the entire carton and which allows withdrawal of all the books therefrom singly and through one delivery slot. Such a device would not only present a convenience in the distribution of the books, but could be constructed to afford them safe storage in an attractive manner so that the books might be readily accessible from a wall mounted holder in the home, factory, commercial establishment or the like.

It is therefore the primary object of my invention to provide a dispenser for receiving and holding a packing carton wherein small items are packed in rows or stacks and which allows selective withdrawal of the items from any stack without disturbance of the alignment of the items in any stack.

Another object of my invention is to provide a match book dispensing device adapted to receive and retain a carton of match books and having means whereby the books may conveniently be withdrawn only one at a time and all through a single delivery slot.

Still another object of my invention is to provide a small article dispensing device which is of sturdy construction, which may be manufactured at a low cost, and which readily lends itself to ornamentation or use as an advertising medium.

With these and other objects in view my invention broadly comprises a shell structure for housing a carton of match books arranged in two or more rows or stacks, the structure having an opening in the lower portion thereof through

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which the books may be singly withdrawn from the bottom of the stack, and a partition adapted to be inserted between the rows forming compartments in the housing to retain the books in stacked arrangement.

Further objects will be disclosed during the course of the following specification reference being made to the accompanying drawing in which—

10 Fig. 1 is a front elevation of my dispenser with match books arranged in two stacks therein.

Fig. 2 is a vertical section taken along the line 2-2 of Fig. 1 with the nearer stack of books removed.

15 Fig. 3 is a transverse horizontal section taken along the line 3-3 of Fig. 2 with the dispenser in an empty condition.

20 Fig. 4 is fragmentary vertical section, similar to the lower portion of Fig. 2, of a slightly modified form of my invention.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing and using reference characters, the numeral 10 denotes generally the housing or outer shell structure of the dispenser which may be formed of metal, plastic or any other suitable material. The shell has a front face or wall 11 joining the side walls 12 and the top 13 and bottom 14. For an attractive streamlined appearance the front wall may be arched rearwardly, as shown, along its upper and lower edge portions into the top 13 and bottom 14, respectively. The shell thus constructed forms a rearwardly opening vertically rectangular compartment of a width and depth adapted to snugly contain a match book magazine, here shown as a standard sized match book carton A.

The front wall 11 of the housing has a narrow delivery opening or slot 15 extending horizontally across the lower portion thereof. This slot is only slightly wider than the thickness of a matchbook B, a plurality of which are stacked in the carton A, so as to allow the passage of a book edgewise therethrough. A slot width of $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch is found to be very satisfactory for dispensing the conventional sized match book. On the front wall 11 and immediately under the slot 15 a pair of transversely spaced vertically extending recesses or finger grooves 16 are formed. These are to facilitate manual withdrawal of the books B through the slot.

An interior book supporting ledge 17 is rigidly mounted to extend horizontally between the side walls 12, the top surface thereof being coplanar with the lower edge of the opening 15. The front portion of the supporting member 17 has

U-shaped edge openings 18, as shown in Fig. 3, to allow the member to fit tightly around the finger grooves 16 in the front of the shell. A partial back plate 19 is mounted across the upper back side of the casing and has an aperture 20 therein for securing the dispenser to a wall or the like.

The carton A is held in position on end in the casing chamber by means of a removable retaining member, here designated generally as 21. Referring particularly to Figs. 2 and 3, the retainer comprises a base plate 22 for disposition between the end of the carton and the ledge 17 and a partition wall or blade 23 rigidly mounted on the plate 22, to extend vertically therefrom. The partition is of an elongated form and is mounted medially between the lateral edges of the base plate rising therefrom on a plane which is right angular to the front wall 11. It will be noted that the base plate 22 is substantially a counterpart in size and shape to the supporting ledge 17, being however slightly narrower to allow its insertion and removal from the chamber between the side walls 12. It will also be observed in Fig. 3 that the front edge of the plate has U-shaped edge opening 24 to fit over the upper ends of the finger recesses 16. The rear portion of the base plate is turned upwardly at a right angle to form a flange 25. A pair of catches 26 are provided, one on each of the opposing side walls 12, to rest against the flange to yieldably lock the retainer against rearward displacement from the shell.

The partition blade 23 is an important feature of my invention. As shown in Fig. 3, the partition lies on a vertical and longitudinal plane midway between the side walls 12 when the retainer is in position within the dispenser shell. The distal and rear edges of the partition are beveled from each side as at 27 to give the partition an appearance suggestive of a knife blade. Beveling of these edges facilitates disposition of the partition in the loading of the dispenser as will now be disclosed.

In loading the dispenser the retainer member is first removed from the dispenser housing by raising the base plate out over the catches 26. The end wall of a carton C containing two rows of match books is then torn off and the partition blade 23 inserted in between the rows with the base plate 22 being brought against the open end of the carton. Because of the sharpened or beveled edge 27 the partition may be easily slid into position. The base plate 22 closes off the open end of the carton with the flange 25 gripping around the bottom thereof.

As the carton and its retainer member are then introduced into the enclosure the match book in each row adjacent the base plate becomes aligned with the slot 15 in the front of the shell. It will be readily observed that said match book which has become the bottom book on its stack may be withdrawn from the dispenser by being gripped between the thumb and finger and pulled through the opening. The recess 16 exposes a small face portion of the bottom book to facilitate its withdrawal. As a book is removed from the dispenser the column or stack of books gravitationally descends whereby the next lowermost book rests upon the plate 22 in removable position.

It will be readily appreciated that if several

books were to be removed from one side of the dispenser while leaving the stack on the other side intact in such a manner that the one stack be left considerably higher than the other, the books in the higher stack would tend to slide toward the middle of the container causing eventually congestion as the books reached the delivery opening. In the interest of efficient operation is therefore becomes necessary to use the center partition 23 which jointly with carton and the front dispenser wall provides a pair of separate channels through which the books in each stack can move.

In Fig. 4 I have shown a somewhat simplified modification of my invention. In this construction the base plate 22 of the preferred embodiment has been eliminated and the ledge 17 is formed with an upwardly extending flange 28 so that the member 17 serves to retain the carton in the casing. The partition 29 is entirely independent of the retaining means. In loading the device so constructed the carton is left intact, the member 29 inserted between the book rows and the carton inserted into the casing.

In both constructions the outside casing is identical and readily lends itself to ornamentation as suggested by the decorative strip 30 which runs medially down the front wall.

I have thus provided a match book dispensing device which efficiently and economically carries out the aforementioned objectives. Of course, the device might be readily modified to accommodate items other than match books or to be used with various sizes or numbers of the cartons A. The all around convenience, simplicity, and durability of the dispenser will be readily appreciated.

It is understood that suitable modifications may be made in the structure as disclosed, provided such modifications come within the spirit and scope of the appended claim. Having now therefore fully illustrated and described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to protect by Letters Patent is:

A dispensing device for items arranged in two rows in a carton which comprises a casing having a discharge opening in the bottom portion thereof, a retainer member adapted to hold the carton in the casing, and means for locking the retainer member in the casing, said retainer member comprising a base plate adapted to support the carton with the rows extending vertically so that the items are in stacked relation, and a partition blade extending vertically upward from the base plate and between the rows for dividing the carton into separate compartments for each stack, the said retainer member being removable from the casing.

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