When beer is sold in barrels the internal revenue stamp is applied by the manufacturer over the so-called "tap" in one of the barrel heads; the beer pump being plunged in through this tap and so mutilating the stamp, if it happens to be there, that there is no danger that the stamp will again be used. Hence there has been considerable difficulty in so securing the revenue stamps over the taps as to insure against accidental loss of the stamps or their removal for further unauthorized use.

The object of the present invention is to provide simple and novel means for effectively securing and holding revenue or other stamps or the like to barrel taps or similar devices. Since it is desirable to reduce to a minimum the possibility that a revenue stamp can be unlawfully removed from a barrel without being mutilated sufficiently to prevent its re-use, the present invention may be said to contemplate holding and securing means for such a stamp that will mutilate the latter during the process of securing it to the barrel; so that, if the stamp should be unlawfully removed, it shall be in a mutilated condition that can readily be detected.

The various features of novelty whereby our invention is characterized will hereinafter be pointed out with particularity in the claims; but, for a full understanding of the invention and of its objects and advantages, reference may be had to the following detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a side elevation of a securing and holding device embodying our invention in one of its many forms; Fig. 2 is a top plan view of the device applied to a barrel tap without, however, having a revenue stamp present; Fig. 3 is a section on line 3—3 of Fig. 2, on an enlarged scale, there being a revenue stamp interposed between the tap and the holding device; Fig. 4 is a view similar to Fig. 2, showing a modification; and Fig. 5 is a section on the same scale as Fig. 3, on line 5—5 of Fig. 4.

In the drawing there is illustrated a tap of the type adapted to be screwed into a wooden barrel head, but the invention is not limited to a tap adapted to be fastened to a barrel in this way, or even to a tap which is separable from a barrel or formed as a separate part. In its broad aspect a tap may be regarded as any part of a barrel having an opening through which a discharge conduit or element may be inserted and having a depression adjacent to such opening for the reception of holding means on a device adapted to secure the discharge conduit or the like to the barrel. The particular tap illustrated consists of a plug 1 having an axial bore 2 extending through the same. Surrounding the bore and spaced apart therefrom by an annular wall or shell 3 is a deep annular recess or chamber 4 that opens out through the top of the plug. Around the top of the central cylindrical tubular part 3 is an outwardly-projecting flange 5 cut away at diametrically opposed points to provide notches 6, 6. This is simply a common form of tap.

In accordance with our invention an internal revenue stamp A or the like, lying on top of the tap, is secured and held in place by means overlying at least a portion of the top face area of the tap, above the stamp, and extending down into the recess or chamber 4, through the stamp and suitably engaged with the material of the tap to hold it down. Since the particular tap illustrated has at the top two face areas in the form of comparatively narrow annular bands, one of these bands forming the upper edge face of the central cylindrical part 3, the securing and holding device may lie on either or both of these annular surfaces and cover either or both to any desired extent. Furthermore, the number of elements that extend down from any single securing and holding device into the annular recess or chamber is simply a matter of choice or selection, depending upon the judgment of any particular user or manufacturer. Since they will satisfactorily illustrate the various features of the invention, we have shown two forms of holding and securing devices, each consisting of an annular part and each having a plurality of projecting portions or fingers, and the detailed description will be confined to these particular forms.

In the form of device shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3 there is a flat sheet metal ring 7 of about the same diameter and radial width as the outer annular upper surface 8 of the tap. When this ring is laid on a revenue stamp the latter is gripped more or less firmly between two opposed annular faces. The ring 7 is provided with radial fingers 9, 9 extending inwardly toward the center far enough to permit the free ends of these fingers to overlie the flange 5. These fingers serve to press the stamp down on top of the upper edge of the central cylindrical part 3 of the tap. The ring is also shown as being provided at the inner edge with two additional sets of fingers, both being preferably wider and much more rugged than the fingers 9 which may be comparatively slender. Each finger of one of these additional

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REVENUE STAMP SECURING DEVICE

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sets is composed of a downwardly-extending stem 10 terminating in an inwardly and upwardly bent hook portion 11. When the holding and securing device is set on the tape these hook-shaped fingers extend down into the recess or channel 4, the depending portions or stems preferably resting against the outer annular wall of the tape and the free or hook ends extending underneath the flange 5 so that, if it be attempted to lift the ring, the hooks will catch on the flange. The third set of fingers may be simple flat strips 12 extending downwardly and each having a prong 13 struck therefrom; the prongs 13 being pressed outwardly away from the central axis of the device and the polished surface of the prongs being upwardly directed. When the device is applied to the tap the pointed ends of the prongs engage with the normally rough inner surface of the outer annular wall of the tap and act as catches or dogs to hold the holding and securing device down. The securing and holding device as a whole is conveniently made from spring metal so that the hooks on the hooked fingers may be partially closed in the act of forcing these fingers down past the flange 5 and then springing back to the normal positions so as to underlie this flange at their free ends. Also, when the fingers 12 are made from spring metal they may be caused to act as springs to press the paws or catches 13 against the surrounding annular wall.

In using the device, the revenue stamp is first laid on the tap and the device, properly centered with respect to the tap, is then forced down into interlocking engagement with the latter, puncturing the stamp at each of the downwardly-extending fingers. Thus the stamp is mutilated at as many points as there are downwardly-extending fingers, the mutilation caused by the hook-like fingers being considerable, as distinguished from mere punctures; and, if the holding and securing device is pried out, further mutilation of the stamp will inevitably occur.

In the arrangement shown in Figs. 4 and 5, the holding and securing device is in the form of a flat annular plate or ring 15 of the same diameter and radial width as the flanged upper end of the central cylindrical part or shell 3. Fingers 16, corresponding to the fingers 9 in the other form, extend radially in the outward direction so that their free ends overlie the outer annular surface area 8 of the tap. The ring 15 is shown as being provided with wide, strong fingers 17 more or less like the hooked fingers in the other form, but projecting outwardly in the manner of the spokes from the hub of a wheel. In addition to projecting outwardly, the fingers 17 also extend in the downward direction and have their free ends bent inwardly and upwardly to form hooks 18 adapted to underlie the flange 5 on the tap when the device is pressed down into operative relation to the tap.

Each of the two devices illustrated obviously discloses what may be regarded as the simplest form of the invention, namely, an element of any desired size and shape adapted to overlie a stamp and a part extending down into a recess in the tap and interlocked with the tap to hold said element in place. Such downwardly-extending part preferably passes through the stamp and may, for example, take the form of any one of the three different types of fingers for the purpose shown in the drawing, although not limited there.

A multiplicity of catch fingers or holding fingers, of course, provides greater security than does only a single finger and, where a plurality of catch fingers or holding fingers are employed, they may conveniently be connected together in the manner shown, or otherwise. Fingers such as these not only assist in securing the stamp and add to the effectiveness of the more highly developed forms of the invention, but may be omitted in simpler or other forms.

Although our improved devices will ordinarily be made from metal, any other suitable material may be employed.

While we have illustrated and described with particularity only a single preferred form of our invention, we do not desire to be limited to the exact structural details thus illustrated and described, but to such modifications and arrangements which come within the definitions of the invention constituting the appended claims.

We claim:

1. The combination with a barrel tap having in the top a deep recess adapted to receive a coupling element associated with a member through which the contents of the barrel are to be discharged, and the said recess containing shoulders adapted to interlock with complementary parts on such coupling element, of an annular member adapted to rest on top of said tap over a stamp, said annular member adapted to penetrate the stamp and enter said recess, and means on said fingers adapted to interlock with the shoulders in the tap to hold said annular member to the tap, said annular member having additional fingers lying in the plane thereof and long enough to span said recess.

2. The combination with a barrel tap having in the top a deep, open recess adapted to receive a coupling element associated with a member through which the contents of the barrel are to be discharged, the recess containing shoulders adapted to interlock with such coupling element; of a stamp-securing device comprising an annular member adapted to rest on top of the tap over a stamp and leave that part of the stamp registering with the recess exposed, said projecting from one face of the annular member in position to pass through the stamp and enter said recess when pressed down, the lower ends of said fingers extending laterally and upwardly in the form of large hooks adapted to interlock with said shoulders and to cause mutilation of the stamp in forcing their way down through the same.

3. The combination with a barrel tap having in the top a deep, open recess adapted to receive a coupling element associated with a member through which the contents of the barrel are to be discharged, the recess containing shoulders adapted to interlock with such coupling element; of a stamp-securing device of resilient sheet metal comprising an annular member adapted to rest on top of the tap over a stamp and leave that part of the stamp registering with the recess exposed, fingers projecting from one face of the annular member in position to pass through the stamp and enter said recess when pressed down, the lower ends of said fingers extending laterally and upward in the form of large hooks adapted to interlock with said shoulders and to cause mutilation of the stamp in forcing their way down through the same.

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