(No Model.)

G. FORTESCUE.

MATCH SAFE.

No. 589,206. Patented Aug. 31, 1897.

Fig. 1.

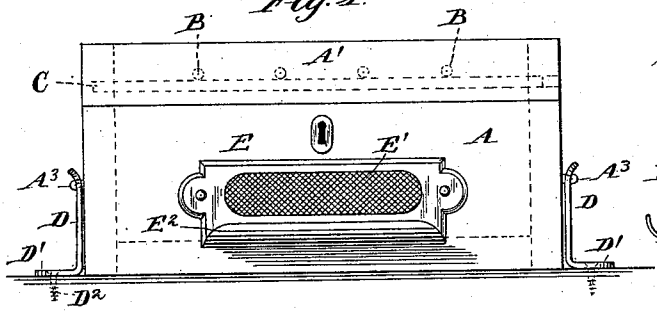


Fig. 2.

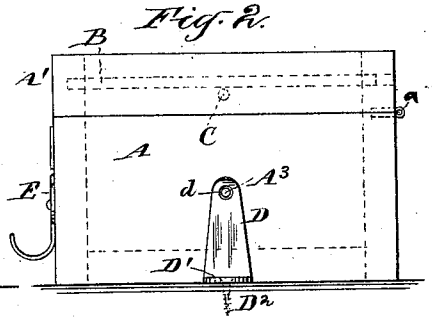


Fig. 3.

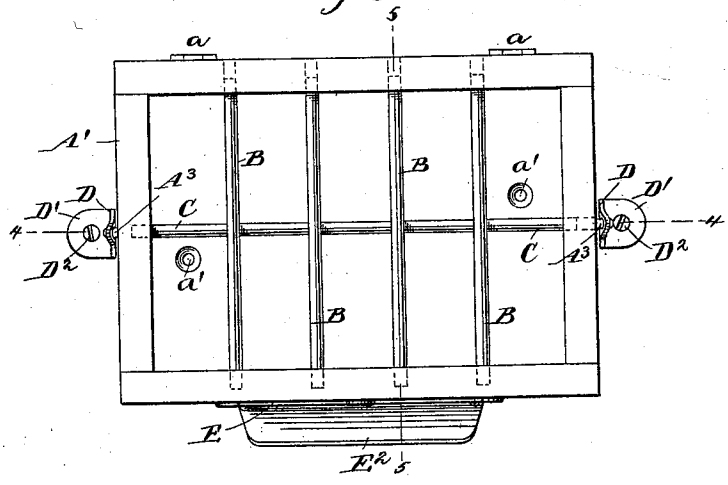


Fig. 4.

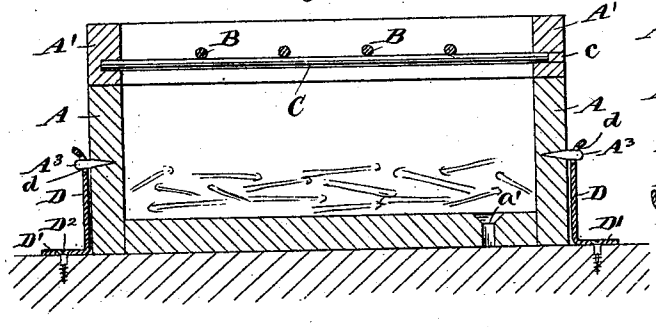
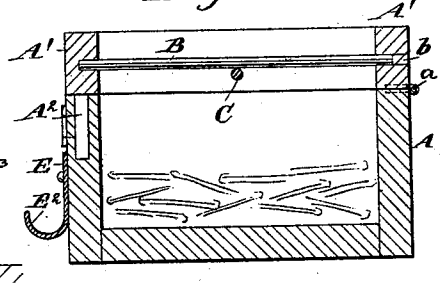


Fig. 5.



Witnesses:
E. Mellone
Edw. A. Hencky

Inventor:
George Fortescue,
by his attorney
Charles R. Searle.

THE NORRIS PETERS CO., PHOTO-LITHO., WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GEORGE FORTESCUE, OF LYNDHURST, NEW JERSEY.

MATCH-SAFE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 589,206, dated August 31, 1897.

Application filed February 16, 1897. Serial No. 623,602. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, GEORGE FORTESCUE, a subject of the Queen of Great Britain, residing at Lyndhurst, in the county of Bergen and State of New Jersey, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Match-Safes, of which the following is a specification.

The invention relates to receptacles intended to contain matches or analogous small articles conveniently presented for use.

The proprietors of shops, restaurants, and other places in which it is customary to furnish matches for the use of patrons are subjected to considerable annoyance and some loss by persons taking advantage of the opportunity and removing many more than are required for their immediate use and thus rapidly depleting the supply.

The object of this invention is to provide a match-holder in which the contents are plainly visible and presented in apparent profusion, but are so protected that one, or, at most, but few, may be removed at once.

The invention consists of an open shallow box having bars so arranged across the top as to form a horizontal grating, the meshes or openings between the bars being just sufficient to admit the finger and thumb in grasping a match and so narrow as to interfere with the withdrawal of more than one unless they chance to lie very favorably disposed.

In the most complete form of the invention one or more longitudinal bars are introduced, crossing the others at right angles and still further reducing the openings. Means are provided for holding the box removably to the table or counter to facilitate refilling, or the upper portion is hinged, so that it may be turned back and the box replenished without passing the matches through the grating.

It also consists in certain novel details of construction and arrangements of parts to be described.

The accompanying drawings form a part of this specification and represent what I consider the most complete manner of carrying out the invention.

Figure 1 is a front elevation; Fig. 2, an end view; Fig. 3, a plan view. Fig. 4 is a longitudinal vertical section on the line 4 4 in Fig. 3, and Fig. 5 is a corresponding cross-section on the line 5 5 in the same figure.

Similar letters of reference indicate the same parts in all the figures.

A is the body of the box, of hard wood or other material capable of receiving a fine finish, suitably joined and forming a shallow rectangular receptacle longer in one direction than the other, and A′ is a frame, of similar material and dimensions, but of less depth, hinged to the body at the rear at *a a* and provided with a loop or keeper (not shown) received and held in the lock A^2 on the front of the body A.

B B are bars of heavy wire, preferably brass of about 12 gage, extending transversely of the frame near its upper edge through holes drilled through the back face into and partly through the front. The bars are shorter than the extreme width of the frame, and when inserted and driven home leave unfilled holes on the back face, which are subsequently stopped by plugs *b*, of the same material as the frame, driven tightly and the surplus cut off flush with the surface. By this method the front face is plane and unmarked, while the rear face shows only the almost imperceptible ends of the plugs.

A longitudinal bar C extends along the central line of the frame, lying just below the transverse bars and inserted in a similar manner, the hole at the end being closed by a plug *c*, as above.

The bars B and C divide the space within the frame into a number of small openings, large enough to easily admit the finger or thumb. I have in practice set the bars B about one inch apart in a frame three and one-half inches across inside. The bar C divides this dimension on the central line, making the openings about one inch by one and three-quarters inches, and I believe this to be about right for general use.

D D are upright pieces of spring-brass secured to the table or counter by screws D^2, extending through feet D′. They are set far enough apart to receive the body A between them, as shown, and each is provided with a small hole *d* near the top adapted to receive the rounded end of a spur A^3, driven into the body on the center line at the end. The

extreme upper ends of the springs D are bent outward oppositely to facilitate the entrance of the spurs, which when engaged are held by the springs and prevent the accidental removal or inversion of the box. Screw-holes a' a' are provided in the bottom of the box, by which the latter may be permanently secured to the counter, if preferred.

E is a plate fastened to the body on the front, having a roughened surface E′, on which the matches may be struck, and a trough-like flange E^2, intended to receive the waste.

The matches lie indiscriminately distributed upon the bottom of the box in a layer of greater or less thickness.

In taking a match the finger is introduced through one opening and the thumb through the adjacent opening on the opposite side of the bar C, and several matches are grasped. On withdrawing the hand it will be found that owing to the smallness of the openings only one or two will be retained in the fingers, the others being stopped by the bars.

In filling the box it is preferable to remove it from the spring-catches D by springing one of the uprights back far enough to free the spur A^3. The matches are then spread upon the upper face of the grating, and by a sifting motion are passed through to the interior. If the box be permanently fastened, or if for any reason it be undesirable to move it, the frame A′, carrying the bars, may be unlocked and turned back on the hinges a and the matches introduced directly to the interior.

The device is attractive in appearance, is strong and durable, and is inexpensive. Its main advantage, however, is the free display allowed of its contained matches, while protecting them against being taken in large quantities. In the devices for this purpose before known to me the matches were either too freely exposed or were so protected that they could be extracted with difficulty.

Modifications may be made in the forms and proportions. The box may be longer and wider than here shown, and may be equipped with two or more of the bars C. The dimensions above given for the openings between the bars may be varied.

Parts of the invention may be used without the whole. The springs D may be dispensed with and the box held to the counter by screws or may be left unfastened, depending upon its weight and friction to hold it in place. The frame may be held to the body by flat springs analogous to the springs D, engaging spurs set in the frame, in which case the body may be permanently fastened by screws extending through the holes a'.

The frame A′ may be omitted and the bars B and C inserted through the sides and ends of the body near the upper edges. This form is cheaper than that described and will serve well. I prefer the whole as shown.

I claim—

1. In a match-holder, a box closed on the sides and bottom and adapted to contain matches, in combination with a protecting-grating consisting of a series of parallel bars extending across the open top, each of the spaces so formed being so small as to allow the introduction of one finger or thumb only therethrough in grasping the matches, and allow the withdrawal of such only of the latter as are presented in proper relation to said spaces, all substantially as herein specified.

2. In a match-holder, a box closed on the sides and bottom and adapted to contain matches, in combination with a protecting-grating consisting of parallel bars extending across the open top, each of the spaces so formed being so small as to allow the introduction of one finger or thumb only therethrough in grasping the matches, and allow the withdrawal of such only of the latter as are presented in proper relation to said spaces, and a bar extending transversely of said parallel bars, all substantially as herein specified.

3. In a match-holder, a box closed on the sides and bottom and adapted to contain matches, in combination with a frame corresponding to said box, removably secured thereto and forming the upper portion thereof, and a series of parallel bars extending across said frame, the spaces between said bars forming long and narrow rectangular openings of sufficient width to admit the finger and thumb in grasping the matches, and allow the withdrawal of such only as are presented in proper relation to said openings, all substantially as herein specified.

4. The body A, and frame A′ matching thereto and secured movably thereon by the hinges a, in combination with transverse bars B mounted in said frame and the longitudinal bar C crossing the said bars at about the mid-length, the spaces between the several bars forming long and narrow rectangular openings adapted to allow the insertion of the finger and thumb in grasping the contained matches, and allow the withdrawal of such only of the latter as are presented in proper relation to said openings, all substantially as herein specified.

In testimony that I claim the invention above set forth I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

G. FORTESCUE.

Witnesses:
EDW. A. HENCHY,
PATRICK MCINERNEY.