This invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in package opening devices and more particularly to a device for providing a hinged flap on the top wall of a cigarette package, of a size sufficiently large to permit grasping of a cigarette by the thumb and forefinger of the hand to withdraw the cigarette from the package, the flap serving as a cover after such withdrawal.

As such, the invention has for its principal object the provision for accomplishing the foregoing by a structure which is economical in manufacture and readily and easily adapted for its intended use and purpose.

It is the present practice to open a cigarette package by means of folded flaps to provide an opening to permit withdrawal of the cigarettes from the package. In so doing, it invariably results that the end flaps are completely detached from each other, thus providing an opening larger than necessary for the intended purpose, with the result that when the package is carried in the pocket or handbag, the cigarettes gradually work their way out of the package. My invention has for its object the provision of a hinged flap which, when not turned back for the purposes of permitting withdrawal of a cigarette from the package, may be pressed back into its normal position, thus closing the opening provided thereby when turned back. In such position the hinged flap prevents the cigarettes from working out of the package when carried in the pocket or handbag.

Other objects will appear hereinafter.

The invention consists in the novel combination and arrangement of parts to be hereinafter described and claimed.

The invention will be best understood by reference to the accompanying drawings showing the preferred form of construction, and in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a conventional cigarette package showing my opener associated therewith;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the cigarette package shown in Fig. 1, showing the hinged flap in open position;

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the package opener embodied in my invention;

Fig. 4 is a sectional detail view taken substantially on line 4—4 of Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of an opener similar to Fig. 4, but showing a modified form of construction.

Referring more particularly to the drawings illustrating my preferred form of construction, a conventional cigarette package is indicated at 10 in which the top and bottom walls are provided by flaps 11 folded upon themselves and adhesively secured together.

Within this package 10 is confined a predetermined number of cigarettes 12. My improved opener comprises a cap 13 of a size sufficiently large to snugly fit over the end portion 14 of the package 10 and comprises a top wall 10' and depending side walls 11', the latter adapted to embrace the upper end portion of the package 10.

This cap may be formed of any material suitable for the intended purpose, such as plastic or the like, and may be colored, if desired, for decorative effect.

Secured to the top wall 10' of the cap 13 on the underside 15 thereof, as by means of rivets 16 or the like, is a member 17 substantially arcuate in plan view with its opposite ends 17' located in close proximity to the adjacent side walls of the cap, the member 17 comprising a plurality of depending fingers 18 each adapted as at 19 and provided with knife edges 20 and 21.

By placing the cap upon the end portion 14 of the package and bearing down upon the same in the direction of the package 10, the fingers 18 will penetrate through the folded flaps 11, and as the cap moves down upon the package 10, the knife edges 20 and 21 will sever the folded flaps 11 thereby to provide, when the cap 13 is removed, a hinged flap 22 which may be turned back upon itself in the manner shown in Fig. 2, to expose certain of the cigarettes 12.

It is a known fact that in tearing the package open in order to extract cigarettes from the package before the advent of my invention, invariably one or more of the ends of the cigarettes is damaged. By the use of my opener, this cannot result, the fingers 18 being so arranged as to engage between adjacent cigarettes, thus preventing rupturing of the same.

As before stated and as shown in the drawings, the opening 22' provided when the flap 22 is turned back, is of sufficient size to permit the thumb and forefinger of the hand to be inserted through the opening 22' into contact with the adjacent cigarette for removing the latter from the package. After removal of the cigarette, the flap is turned back and by reason of the irregular edge portions 23 and 23' of the flap 22 and opening 22', the flap will be frictionally held in closed position.

The cap 13 itself may be replaced upon the package 10 after removal of a cigarette, or it may be placed in the user's pocket or handbag for further use.

In Fig. 5, I have shown a slightly modified form of construction. The difference between the structure shown in Fig. 5 and that shown in Fig. 3, resides solely in the shape of the perforating and cutting fingers 24. In the form shown in Fig. 5, these cutting fingers are substantially triangular in elevation and provide opposite cutting edges 25. The opener shown in Fig. 5 is otherwise identical to that shown in Fig. 3, and similar parts are designated by similar reference characters.

It will be noted that when the package 10 is provided with a hinged flap by means of my opener, the opener has severed the tax stamp 26, thereby rendering such stamp useless.

The opener is light in weight and of a size which will permit the same to be placed in a pocket or handbag, or, as before stated, the cap may be replaced upon the cigarette package after the hinged flap has been formed thereby.

The opener comprises relatively few parts and may therefore be manufactured at an economical cost.

While I have illustrated and described the preferred form of construction for carrying my invention into effect, this is capable of variation and modification without departing from the spirit of the invention. I, therefore, do not wish to be limited to the precise details of construction set forth, but desire to avail myself of such variations and modifications as come within the scope of the appended claim.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desirable to protect by Letters Patent is:

A device for forming a hinge flap in the top wall of a cigarette package comprising a cap of a size to snugly fit upon the top portion of the package, said cap having within its confines a perforating and cutting device carried by the top wall of said cap adjacent one of the sides walls thereof.
and shaped to conform to the shape of the flap to be formed in said package, said perforating and cutting device extending parallel to said side walls and of a length less than said side walls so as to be completely within the confines of said cap, said perforating and cutting device comprising a substantially arcuately shaped member having depending perforating and cutting fingers, with said fingers spaced with respect to each other in the side walls of said cap so as to be positioned between the cigarettes contained in said package when said cap snugly fits thereon.

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