(No Model.)

L. W. MERRIAM.

CAN OPENER.

No. 563,937. Patented July 14, 1896.

Fig. 1.

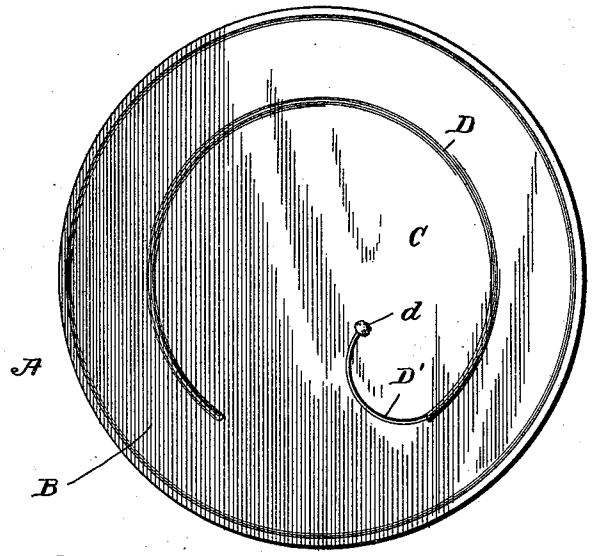


Fig. 3.

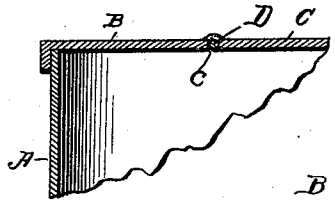
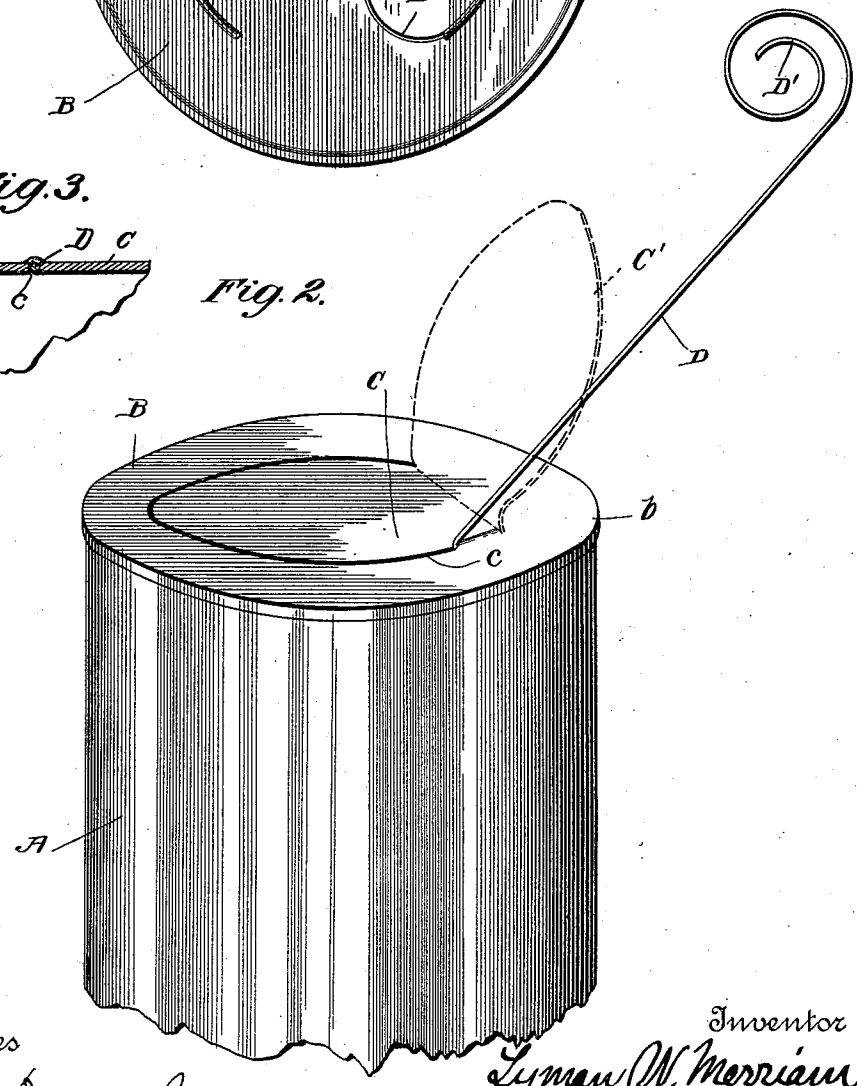


Fig. 2.



Witnesses
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

LYMAN W. MERRIAM, OF FITCHBURG, MASSACHUSETTS, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO GEORGE O. ALLEN, OF SAME PLACE.

CAN-OPENER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 563,937, dated July 14, 1896.

Application filed May 23, 1896. Serial No. 592,803. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, LYMAN W. MERRIAM, a citizen of the United States, residing at Fitchburg, in the county of Worcester and State of Massachusetts, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Can-Openers; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention relates to an improved means for opening cans and receptacles of tin or other similar metal or material, such as, for instance, fruit-cans, meat-cans, and similar packages, the object of the invention being to provide a cheap, simple, and efficient can-opening means.

The invention therefore consists, essentially, in the construction, arrangement, and combination of parts, substantially as will be hereinafter described and claimed.

In the accompanying drawings, illustrating the invention, Figure 1 is a top plan or end view of a can provided with my improved can-opening means. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the end portion of a can provided with my improved can-opening means, and shows the way in which the said means are operated in opening the end of the can. Fig. 3 is a cross-section of the head of the can.

Similar letters of reference designate corresponding parts throughout the different figures of the drawings.

In the present example of my invention, A denotes a tin can for fruit or other contents, the same being represented here simply by way of illustration, it being understood that my invention is applicable to all kinds of tin or metal receptacles or packages, it being especially adapted for ordinary tin cans, and that it is immaterial what the shape or character of the can may be, whether round, square, or other form, whether large or small.

In the particular example of can illustrated in the drawings for the purposes of explanation merely, said can is seen to consist of a cylindrical body, with a head or cover B at each end, each head comprising a circular disk and a peripheral flange *b*, which flange engages the edge or end of the cylinder and fits tightly thereover, as shown, being soldered to keep it in place.

In carrying my invention into practical effect I form in one or both of the heads—and it is immaterial which end of the can I take for this purpose, whether the bottom or the top—a slot, as *c*, which may be circular or partially so, that is to say, this slot *c* will be cut as a complete circle, thereby severing the interior circular disk C from the balance of the cover or head B, or it may be cut only a part of the way round, leaving the inner portion C attached by an integral connection of greater or less length with the cover B, so that it can be bent up into the position shown in dotted lines at C′ in Fig. 2, when the can is to be opened. I do not wish, however, to be restricted to making the slot *c* of circular form, as it may be of irregular form, or it may be square or cut on any other convenient lines. In the slot *c* thus formed I place a wire or filamentary body of some kind, as D, which is of sufficient size to enable it to neatly occupy the slot and to be situated flush with the face of the can-head, and the wire D is secured within this slot tightly and firmly by means of solder, the edges of the slot being thus firmly united to each other and to the intermediate wire D. This solder connection of the wire with the edges of the slot *c* will be strong and secure, sufficiently so that any ordinary force or weight acting upon the can-head will not break the central disk C from the cover B, and said central part C will be practically integral with the cover B for all ordinary purposes until it becomes necessary to open the can to obtain access to its contents.

The mode of opening the can will be very easily understood from the foregoing description of the arrangement and combination of the several parts. The user needs only to lay hold of the exposed end D′ of the wire D, which end while the can is not in use may be temporarily attached to a point on the can-head by means of a drop of solder at *d*, and by giving the wire a movement which will pull it out of the slot, as shown in Fig. 2, the

central disk of the cover B will be set free from the rest of the cover B so far as it has been connected therewith by means of the solder and the wire D, and the result will be that the can-head will be opened, the disk C being conveniently bent up into the position shown at C′, so that the contents of the can A will be easily removed through the opening thus afforded by the removal of the central part C of the can-head. The binder which I have thus far explained for the wire is simply ordinary solder, which is flowed along the slot and caused to firmly cement or connect the intermediate wire and the two edges of the slot, but it is evident that any other equivalent material which will accomplish the same result and will act as effectively for the purpose as a binder to unite the edges of the slot and the intermediate wire may be substituted in lieu of the solder.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

A can-opener, consisting in the combination with a flanged can-head having a circular slot cut therein, of a wire or filament soldered between the contiguous edges of the slot, so as to be substantially flush with the surface of the head, and adapted to be withdrawn from the slot to release the central part of the head.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

LYMAN W. MERRIAM.

Witnesses:

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