May 11, 1937. F. L. LOWMASTER 2,080,325

DISPLAY MEANS

Filed April 25, 1935

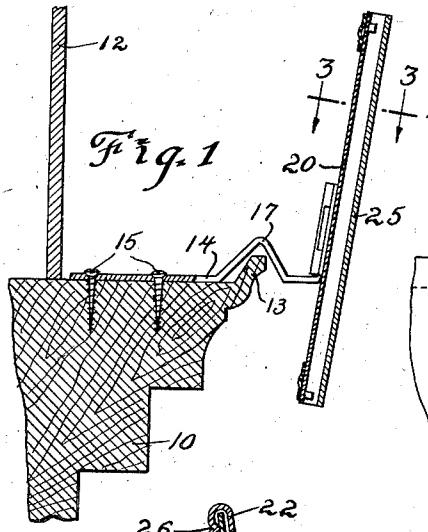


Fig. 1

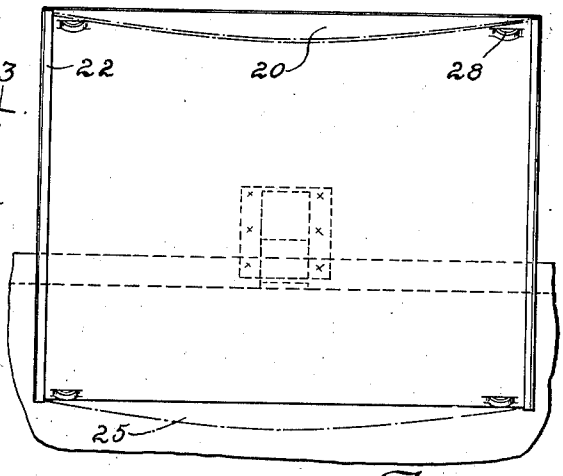


Fig. 2

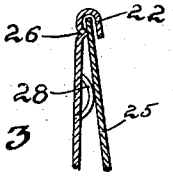


Fig. 3

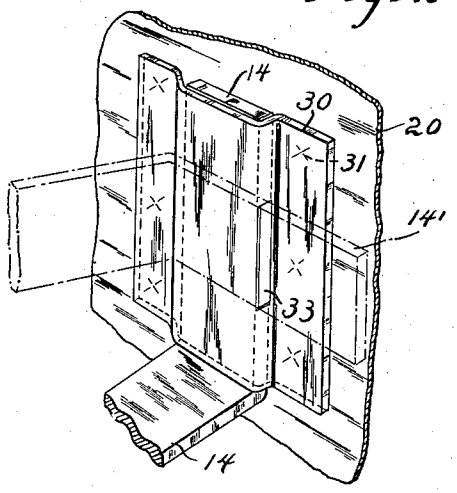


Fig. 4

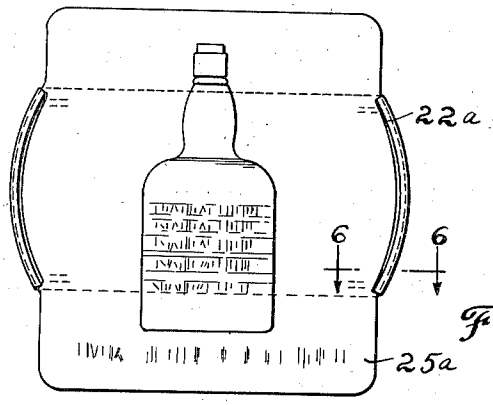


Fig. 5

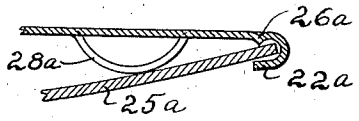


Fig. 6

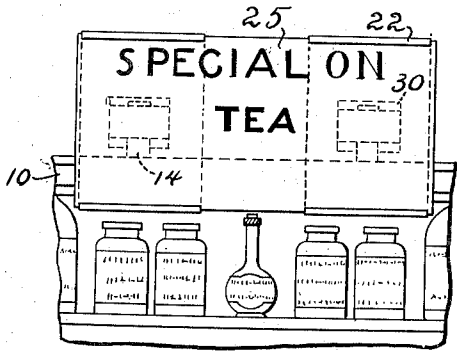


Fig. 7

INVENTOR.
Frank L. Lowmaster
BY
Sarin, Tyler & Hardesty
ATTORNEYS.

Patented May 11, 1937 2,080,325

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,080,325

DISPLAY MEANS

Frank L. Lowmaster, Detroit, Mich.

Application April 25, 1935, Serial No. 18,162

3 Claims. (Cl. 40—10)

This invention concerns display supports for changeable signs of the (ordinarily temporary) character used in stores and places of business for advertising and other purposes. The invention aims particularly to so construct and arrange such novel supporting means of the character indicated that when installed upon fixtures, display cases or other equipment in a store or place of business in the intended manner, no interference with free access to and use of the fixtures is created, nor is the visibility of objects displayed in or upon such fixtures obstructed. An important object of the invention accordingly lies in the construction of a sign support which considerably increases the space available for display advertising within a store or the like.

In the latter connection it should be noted that as they are commonly constructed and arranged, certain portions of retail stores have been found more effective locations for advertising matter than others; while in many instances different parts of a store are preferable for the advertising of different classes of goods. It is therefore highly desirable that in certain portions of such stores, as much advertising of a particular character, or as much advertising as can be effectively displayed be used, while in other locations such advertising may be omitted as of little or no value.

The room available for advertising signs and the like is usually quite limited, by reason of the consumption of floor and wall space by counters and shelves.

For reasons of accessibility the shelves of many and perhaps most stores are not extended to the ceiling, however, so that it has become common practice to arrange signs and other display advertising along the tops of the shelves. In fact in such stores as drug and chain stores, frequently all of such available sign space is contracted for by one or more prominent manufacturers, so that little or no room is left the storekeeper to erect other signs or signs of his own, since it is impracticable to allow any interference with visibility or accessibility of the stock on the shelves. The room available on the low counters and showcases themselves for such purpose is of course strictly limited. My present invention, therefore, aims to provide means whereby additional signs, pictures and the like may be displayed in prominent positions in retail stores, supported if desired by the wall cases and shelves, yet so arranged as neither to obstruct the interior of the store, the counters or shelves, nor interfere with visibility of signs or wares displayed upon the shelves, or access thereto.

Another object comprises the provision of an improved sign support adapted to hold cards or other flat signs in either of two relatively perpendicular positions, regardless of the shape or outline of the sign.

A still further object is the provision of an improved card holding construction so designed that a plurality thereof may be used cooperatively to support a single elongated card or sign.

Still another object is the incorporation in such a sign support of means preventing or making difficult the insertion of signs of different proportions or configuration than intended.

Other objects and advantages will be apparent from the following description, wherein reference is made to the accompanying drawing illustrating preferred embodiments of my invention, and wherein similar reference numerals designate similar parts throughout the several views.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a vertical sectional view taken substantially centrally through a sign support incorporating the principles of my invention, showing a sign arranged therein, and fragmentarily indicating the top of a display case by which the device is in turn carried;

Figure 2 is a front elevation;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary detailed section taken substantially on the line 3—3 of Figure 1 and looking in the direction of the arrows;

Figure 4 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view of the rear of the frame, showing the supporting bracket and its cooperating socket;

Figure 5 is a front elevation of a somewhat modified construction;

Figure 6 is a detail section taken substantially on the line 6—6 of Figure 5; and

Figure 7 is a front elevation showing a method of using a plurality of my improved supports to carry a large sign.

Referring now to the drawing, reference character 10 indicates the top portion of a display case of the shelved variety commonly used in stores for holding merchandise in displayed and accessible position. Ordinarily such cases are positioned against a wall, and usually consume virtually all of the wall space within the store, while upon their tops may be arranged one or more large advertising signs, as indicated at 12. A moulding as 13 usually projects upward from the front top edge of such shelf cases. It is of

course desirable that neither the visibility of such signs as may be mounted on top of the shelves, nor access to the shelves themselves be obstructed by additional signs. In order to nevertheless enable the provision of additional signs in attractive and non-interfering manner, I provide a supporting bracket as 14, formed of strap sheet metal and contoured in the manner best shown in Figure 1. The bracket comprises a flat attaching portion apertured to receive the screws 15 by which it is secured to the top of the case, and a forwardly projecting portion angularly bent as at 17, not only to clear the moulding 13 but to provide an excess of the metal, thereby enabling the storekeeper or person erecting the sign to change its position to suit his desires or the conditions of use by bending the strap.

The sheet metal frame 20 is preferably inbent at its sides, as at 22, to provide channels within which a sign or other display card or panel, as 25, may be fitted and held. The back of the frame portion is preferably punched in as at 26 near the channel edges to provide within the channels sharp prongs adapted to hold the card in place.

It has been found that undesirable reflections are apt to occur which interfere with free visibility of the sign from some angles, unless the card is somewhat bowed outwardly, and that such bowing eliminates reflection difficulties. It is, therefore, desirable that the card itself be somewhat longer than the distance between the channels 22, and bowed when inserted. In order to discourage the insertion of any card which is not of sufficient length to require a proper degree of bowing in order to insert it, I provide in the surface of the frame and adjacent the channels, a plurality of struck-in tongues as 28. These are preferably as high as the channels, and provided with vertical or steep sides perpendicular and extending to points quite close to the channels, thereby preventing the sliding of a flat card into the frame and channels from the (unchanneled) end. It is thus necessary in order to insert a sign, to bow it convexly and insert its edges directly in the channel perpendicularly to the direction of such channels. If it is attempted, however, to so insert a sign of no greater length than the distance between the channels, by first bowing it and then fitting its edges perpendicularly into the channels in the manner in which the signs of the proper length are intended to be inserted, tongues 28 deflect such edges upwardly and prevent their being fitted thereinto, because of the low angle which the edge portions of a short sign must assume, with the flattening of the sign, before they can approach and enter the relatively shallow channels.

Carried by the back of the frame is a double bent sheet metal bracket, as 30, proportioned to receive the supporting strap 14 and having its flanges welded or otherwise suitably secured to the back of the frame, as at 31. Aligned openings proportioned to receive the supporting strap are also preferably provided as at 33 in the sides of the channeled strap socket formed by the bracket. The frame may accordingly be positioned upon the strap in a position perpendicular to that in which it is carried when the strap is inserted in the manner indicated in full lines in Figure 4. Such other direction in which the strap may be inserted is indicated in dot-dash lines at 14'. It will be observed that when the strap is inserted in the perpendicular position through the openings 33, the sign is carried with the channels 22 extending along its top and bottom, and as indicated in Figure 7, when two or more of the supports are so arranged in aligned relation as to their channels 22, either horizontally or vertically, a single elongated sign or card as 25' may be carried thereby.

A modified structure shown in Figures 5 and 6 is provided with rounded but similarly channeled end portions 22*a*, which are preferably also guarded by struck-up tongues as 28*a*, while pointed holding portions as 26*a* may be provided to similarly prevent dislodgement of a sign positioned therein. It will be seen that by rounding the edges in the fashion indicated, it becomes impractical to use in the frame signs of any but a special configuration. Thus if the frame is supplied to a store operator with an understanding or intention that only signs of the supplier or of a particular character be used, fulfillment of this intent is promoted by the difficulty of substituting other signs. The rounding of the end channel will also be seen to completely safeguard against the insertion of unbowed signs, since they cannot possibly be slid in from the open end, while the tongues 28*a* in like fashion prevent the insertion, even by bowing, of signs which are too short to remain bowed after insertion. A sign of special configuration is indicated at 25*a*, and it will be appreciated that various modifications of the shown shape may be indulged in, so long as the central curved or specially contoured portions are provided.

While it will be apparent that the illustrated embodiments of my invention herein disclosed are well calculated to adequately fulfill the objects and advantages primarily stated, it is to be understood that the invention is susceptible to variation, modification and change within the spirit and scope of the subjoined claims.

What I claim is:

1. A support for signs and the like comprising a sheet metal frame member having edge portions infolded over but spaced from one face thereof to form channels adapted to embrace opposite edges of a relatively flat object to be supported by the frame, a bent sheet metal bracket secured to the opposite side of the frame member, the bent portion of which forms a channel projecting from the body of the frame, said channel being open at least at one end, and the bracket being laterally apertured to provide another opening transverse to the channel and of substantially as great cross sectional area, whereby a supporting element is projectable into said bracket portion in either of two directions to support the frame.

2. Display means including a support for signs and the like and comprising a sheet metal frame member having opposite edge portions infolded over but spaced from one face thereof to form channels, a bowed display sheet carried by said support and having opposite edges embraced by said opposite infolded edge portions, the latter portions being non-parallel and having intermediate portions farther from each other than other portions thereof nearer the ends, and deflecting means comprising a plurality of spaced upstanding portions carried by the frame adjacent but spaced from each channel, and between the channels, and substantially as high as said channels, for preventing the insertion of a display sheet which is of insufficient length to require a predetermined degree of bowing thereof.

3. A support for signs and the like comprising a

sheet metal frame member having edge portions infolded over but spaced from one face to form channels adapted to embrace opposite edges of a relatively flat object to be supported by the frame, and deflecting means carried by the frame comprising a plurality of spaced projecting portions lying close to but spaced from each channel and arranged between the opposed channels, such projecting portions being substantially as high as said channels and high enough to force such a flat object to be bowed sufficient to prevent engagement thereof with one channel unless the width of such object when flat is greater than the distance between the bottoms of the channels, and at least some thereof being arranged near the ends of the channels, each of said projecting portions having an inclined portion of increased height as it approaches, but stopping short of, the appurtenant channel, and having abrupt portions substantially perpendicular to the channel, whereby such inclined deflecting portions tend to prevent the insertion of a flat object into the channels if such object is of insufficient length to require a predetermined bowing thereof, and the abrupt portions prevent sliding a flat object into the channels from the ends thereof.

FRANK L. LOWMASTER.