J. D. INGRAM.

NAPKIN DISPENSING DEVICE.

APPLICATION FILED MAR. 31, 1920.

1,407,156.

Patented Feb. 21, 1922.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1

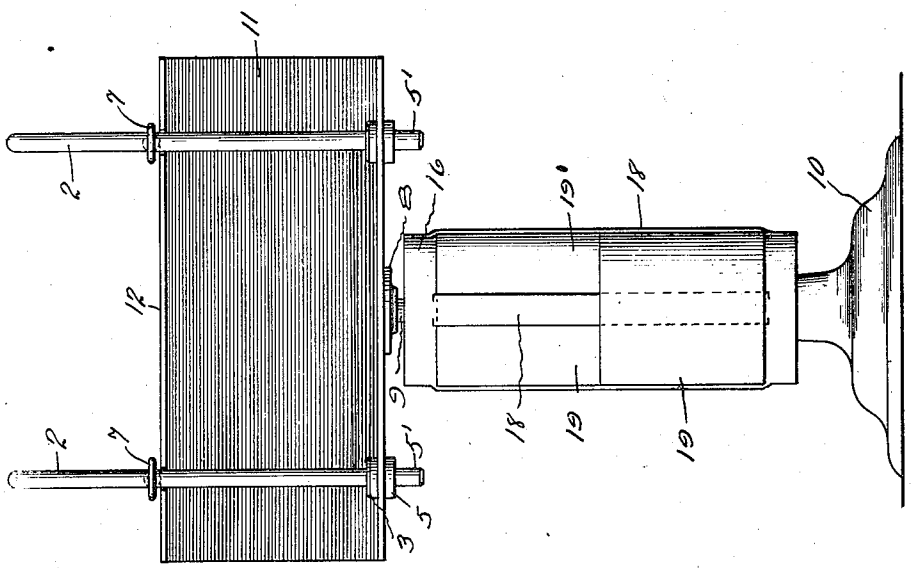
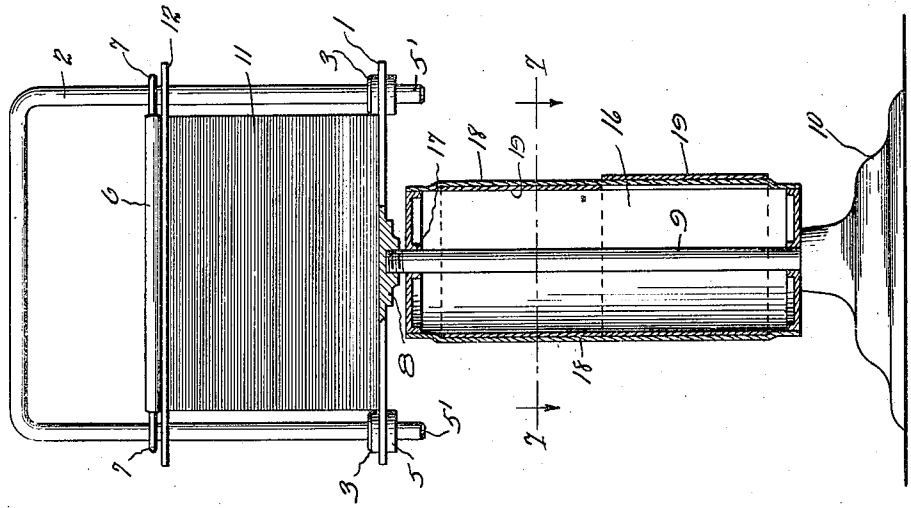


Fig. 2



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3 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 3

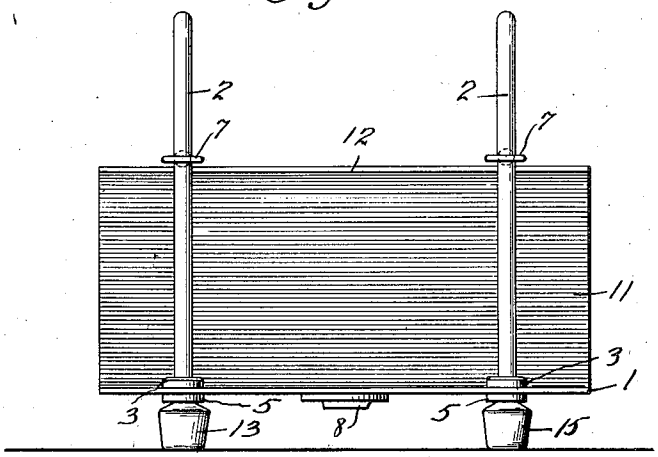


Fig. 4

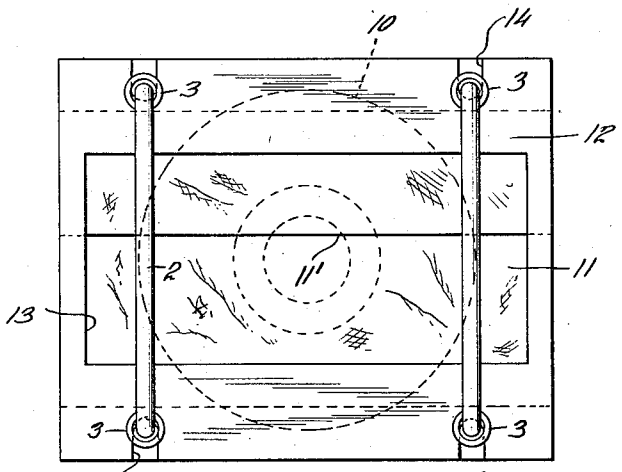
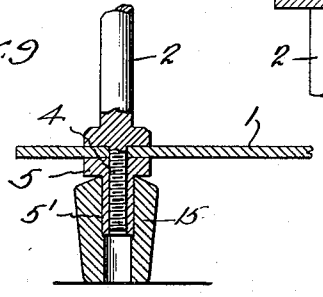


Fig. 8

Fig. 9



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3 SHEETS—SHEET 3.

Fig. 5

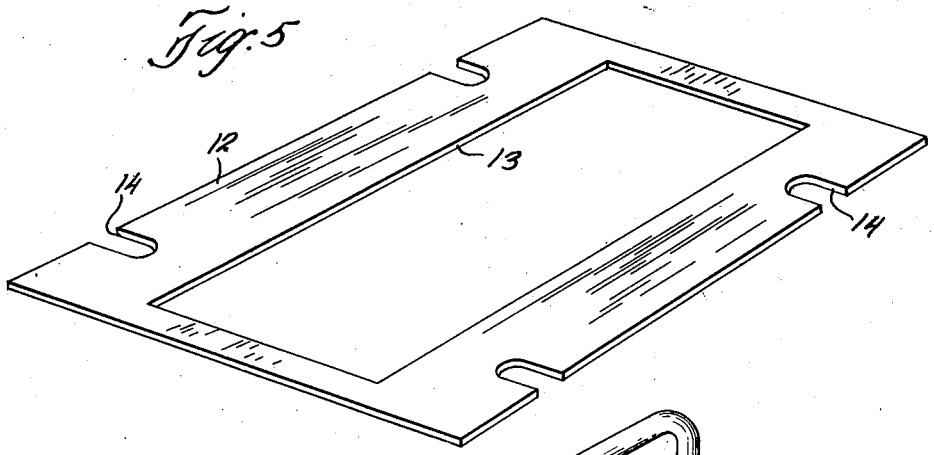


Fig. 6

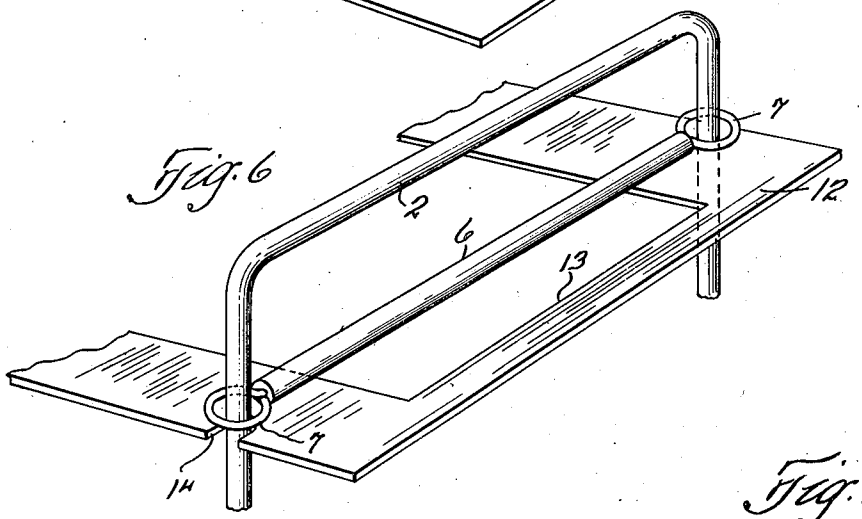
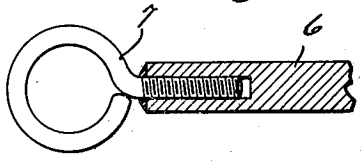


Fig. 10



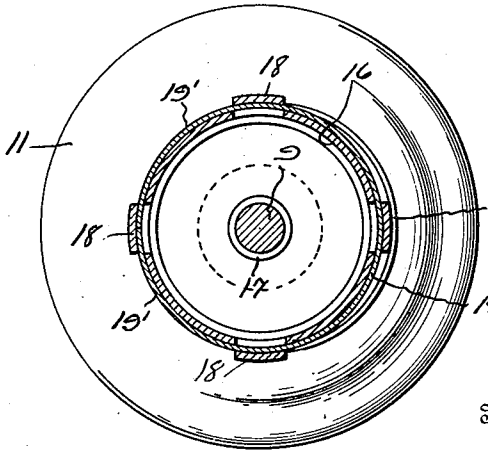


Fig. 7

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN D. INGRAM, OF TEXARKANA, TEXAS.

NAPKIN-DISPENSING DEVICE.

1,407,156. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Feb. 21, 1922.

Application filed March 31, 1920. Serial No. 370,245.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN D. INGRAM, a citizen of the United States, residing at Texarkana, in the county of Bowie and State of Texas, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Napkin-Dispensing Devices, of which the following is a specification.

The present invention relates to improvements in napkin holding devices for use generally in restaurants, cafeterias or elsewhere, for dispensing napkins to patrons.

The primary object of my invention is to provide a portable stand or support upon which is adapted to be arranged a quantity of napkins in easily accessible position for "self service," which napkins are held against accidental displacement, however, by drafts or electric fans, or from disarrangement due to carelessness in the removal of one or more of the napkins from the stack.

A further object is to provide a device designed to eliminate waste, or, more strictly speaking, to insure distribution or delivery of the napkins one at a time only.

Further objects are to provide a construction capable of being disassembled for the purpose of arranging the parts in compact form for storage or shipment, and to embody means for holding advertising cards in a conspicuous and attractive manner so as to be presented to the view of the diners, said holding means performing the additional function of a handle grip for conveniently carrying the device.

These and such other objects as may hereinafter appear are attained by the novel construction, combination and arrangement of parts to be hereinafter specifically described and claimed. Reference will now be had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification, wherein:

Figure 1 is a side elevation of a device constructed in accordance with my invention, showing the use of a pedestal or stand to support the napkins in a somewhat elevated position.

Figure 2 is an end elevation, partly in section to show more clearly the construction of the card holding element.

Figure 1 is a side elevation of a device with the pedestal portion removed and the napkins disposed in their lowered position.

Figure 4 is a top plan view of the napkin support.

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the napkin delivery control plate.

Figure 6 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view of the delivery plate and a follower bar coöperating with the guide or retaining means therefor.

Figure 7 is a horizontal sectional view on the plane indicated by the line 7—7 of Figure 2, looking in the direction of the arrows.

Figure 8 is a fragmentary sectional view showing the cooperation of the delivery control plate with the napkin pile, the napkins being depicted in somewhat enlarged form to disclose the peculiar folding thereof.

Figure 9 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view of a foot extremity for the napkin support, and

Figure 10 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view of the end of a follower bar, showing the manner of attaching the screw eyes therefor.

Throughout the following detail description and on the several figures of the drawings, similar parts are referred to by like reference characters.

Referring to the drawings, 1 designates a napkin support which may be of any configuration or size, but preferably of that size which will accommodate napkins in their folded position hereinafter more specifically referred to. It should be understood that the device herein described is designed especially for the dispensing of paper napkins, but it is obviously within the purview of my invention that the napkins may be of cloth or may be arranged in unfolded position, as found most convenient and desirable.

At each side the support 1 is provided with a substantially U-shaped upright 2 adjacent to the ends of which is formed an annular collar or flange 3 from which projects a threaded stem 4 adapted to pass through apertures in the corners of the plate 1 a sufficient extent to receive a clamping nut 5 having a hollow extension 5′ for purposes hereinafter stated. This construction and arrangement enables the uprights to be easily displaced from their position whenever it is desired to disassemble the parts of this device for packing them into containers as hereinbefore premised. Mounted upon each of the U-shaped uprights is arranged what I term a weighted follower bar 6 into the ends of which are secured

the screw eyes 7, which if desired may be soldered in place as shown more particularly in Figure 10, the uprights 2 extending through said screw eyes so that the bars may be moved upwardly and downwardly thereupon.

Centrally beneath the support 1 is provided a threaded boss 8 which is adapted to receive the upper end of the pedestal stem or upright 9, the lower end of which is also threaded and detachably secured in a base 10 which is preferably somewhat heavy so that it will form a substantial support for the device and prevent the same from being overthrown too easily.

Upon the support 1 the napkins 11 are adapted to be disposed in superposed relation and preferably, as stated, in folded condition, said napkins being held against accidental displacement by the weighted followers 6 which rest upon the pile or stack at each side thereof. I prefer to employ this form or arrangement whereby the napkins are held at each side because it tends to hold the edges from being upturned or disturbed by drafts or breezes which may be directed against said napkins and such arrangement may be used as thus described and will serve the purpose in a way quite adequately. But one of the objects of my invention is to overcome the tendency to remove more than one of the napkins from the pile at a time when more than one are not desired. For this purpose I employ what I term for the purpose of this description a delivery control element which is in the form of a thin plate 12, shown most clearly in Figure 5 of the drawings, said plate being cut out centrally so as to provide a relatively large opening 13 adapted to expose a considerable portion of the top napkin of the pile, that is within its borders. At opposite edges the plate is provided with notches 14 engaging about the uprights 2 and the plate in use is designed to be disposed upon the pile of napkins 11 either below the weighted followers 6 or above the same. I have shown the plate in the drawings, however, as arranged directly upon the top of the napkins beneath the bars 6, which latter give substantial weight to the plate so that the same will hold the napkins in compact condition, but will nevertheless permit the removal of said napkins one at a time without difficulty. If this position of the plate beneath the bars is inclined to render the removal of the napkins too difficult or results in the mutilation of them on account of the texture of the material, the plate may be arranged upon the bars 6 which thereby decreases the friction and enables the withdrawal of the napkins more readily. It should be furthermore understood that it is within the purview of my invention to employ the plate 12 as a follower without the bars 6 and to this end the plate may be made relatively heavier where this is found necessary to give the best results. By providing both the plate and the follower bars 6, the user may control the distribution of the napkins more readily in that he can arrange the parts so that more than one napkin may be displaced or a single delivery only effected.

The napkins themselves in carrying out this invention are adapted to be folded either in what is known as the square fold, the two and one-half fold, or the interfolded positions, these terms being well known to the trade. The object of the device is carried out best when the napkins are folded in the two and one-half position, which is shown most clearly in Figures 4 and 8, in which the overlying half designated 11′ presents its edge transversely of the opening 13 in the plate 12 so that when a napkin is to be removed this edge is easily accessible to permit the user to lift the uppermost napkin and pull it through the opening. The uppermost napkin having been removed the corresponding edge of the next napkin is exposed at the opening for removal. The size of the plate 12 is such that the edge portions thereof surround the edge portions of the napkins and renders such edges more or less inaccesible, tending to prevent the user from displacing the napkins by means of the outer edges where the likelihood of removing more than one is usually present. This forms an important feature of my invention and the fact that the parts are so arranged enables the proprietor to always see at a glance the condition of the supply, which is not usually the case where the supply is disposed within cabinets or containers.

The napkin support may, as hereinbefore described, be supported by the pedestal or stand which raises the pile of napkins from the table into a somewhat elevated and convenient position but the pedestal may be dispensed with without in any way detracting from the utility of the device, as shown most clearly in Figure 3. When the pedestal is not used, I contemplate that suitable cushion members of rubber or like material, designated 15, having central openings be slipped upon the extensions 5′ of the clamping nuts 5. These nuts are preferably finished with the same finish as the balance of the parts, that is highly nickled, so that when such cushion members 15 are not employed they really form a decorative feature of the device.

Passing now to another important feature of the device, it will be observed from Figures 1 and 2 that I contemplate disposing a relatively large tubular cylinder or drum 16 upon the stem 9 of the pedestal. This element performs a dual function. In devices of this character it is rather unhandy to

grasp a small rod such as the upright 9 for carrying or moving the device from place to place. With the enlarged diameter afforded by the drum 16 the conveying is much easier. This drum is provided centrally of its ends with bearings 17 so that it is revolubly mounted upon the rod 9 and the material of said drum is preferably sufficiently thin to enable the same to be slit longitudinally and the slit portions pressed outwardly slightly to form retaining straps 18. Cards 19 or the like are adapted to be slipped beneath these retaining members and may bear advertising matter when desired. Since a series of the straps 18 are provided they divide the inner surface of the drum into a plurality of sections so that the advertising space circumferentially may be quartered, halved or in the whole depending upon how the card is slipped beneath all or certain of said retainers only. Thus as the upper of the two cards designated 19 is slipped beneath all of the retainers it is thereby divided into quarter section spaces 19′. The lower card, however, as shown in Figure 7 passes over one of the retainers so that at one side there will be two quarter spaces corresponding to 19′ and one half section space 19″. While awaiting the arrival of their meals the patrons will have these cards presented to their view and the complete card or advertising matter may be read by revolving this drum 16 upon its supporting stem.

It will be observed from the foregoing that the apparatus may be cheaply manufactured, will permit the self-service of napkins or the like as may be desired and yet will possess ornamentality, which is highly to be desired in articles of this character.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new is:

1. A napkin dispensing device of the class described comprising a support upon which the napkins are arranged in superposed relation, retaining means adapted to rest upon the napkins at spaced points to prevent accidental displacement thereof, and guide means at each side of the support with which said retaining means engage to hold the latter in cooperative relation to said napkins, said guide means having feet extensions projecting below the support aforesaid and connecting the guide means to the support.

2. A napkin dispensing device of the class described comprising a supporting plate upon which the napkins are adapted to be disposed in a stack, upright members arranged at each side of the plate between which the napkins rest, the lower ends of said upright members projecting through the plate and constituting feet.

3. A napkin dispensing device of the class described comprising a plate support upon which the napkins are disposed in a stack, a pedestal or stand for said support removably connected thereto, upright members carried by said support between which the napkins are arranged, the ends of said members projecting through the support, and fastening means on said ends forming feet for the support when the pedestal is removed, whereby the support may be sustained in elevated or relatively low positions.

4. A napkin dispensing device of the class described comprising a support upon which the napkins are adapted to be disposed in a stack, a plate resting upon the top of the stack of a size to slightly extend beyond the edges of the uppermost part thereof to substantially interfere with access to said edges while permitting the sides of the stack to be viewed, said plate permitting the topmost napkin to be gripped at a point within its boundaries away from its edges whereby but one napkin will be removed, and guide posts at opposite sides of said support constituting means to prevent lateral displacement of the napkins, said plate having means interlocking with the posts to permit sliding movement of the plate on the latter.

5. A napkin dispensing device comprising a support upon which the napkins are adapted to be disposed in a stack, a delivery control covering plate separably arranged over the top of the stack and having an opening exposing the topmost napkin for access at a point within its edges, and follower means disposable either upon the stack to provide a support for the plate or upon said plate to weight the same, whereby resistance to displacement of a napkin is more or less controlled.

6. A napkin dispensing device of the class described comprising a support upon which the napkins are adapted to be arranged in a stack, a plate arranged over the stack, said plate being cut away within its border to expose the inner surface of the topmost napkin whereby the latter may be removed without disturbance of the under napkins, and follower members below said plate at spaced points to hold said plate level and decrease friction during the removal of napkin therethrough.

7. A napkin dispensing device of the class described comprising the support upon which the napkins are adapted to be arranged, a plate resting upon the napkins, said plate being cut away within its border to expose the inner surface of the topmost napkin, whereby the latter may be removed without disturbance of the under napkins, a weighted follower adapted to be arranged above or below the plate, and retaining means with which the plate and follower are engaged to hold them in position upon the napkins.

8. A napkin dispensing device comprising a support, a stand therefor comprising a

base and an upright stem, said stem being detachably connected to the base support, means on said support for retaining the napkins against accidental displacement, said means including removable uprights, and detachable means beneath the support connecting said uprights thereto, said means constituting feet for the support when the stand is detached, the parts aforesaid being capable of disassembling for arrangement of the parts in compact position.

9. A napkin dispensing device comprising a base plate, a substantially U-shaped upright arranged at each side of said base plate and having threaded ends extending through said base plate, clamping nuts mounted upon said threaded ends, and cushion means detachably arranged upon said clamping nuts so as to constitute cushioned feet for the support.

10. A grip piece for napkin holders, comprising a tubular member having sides slit to provide retaining straps for cards, said straps dividing the surface into varying sized sections according to the application of the cards in said retaining means.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

JOHN D. INGRAM.