Nov. 12, 1957 W. O. KINNEBREW 2,812,851

TIME-CONTROLLED CIGARETTE CASE

Filed Sept. 17, 1954

Fig. 1.

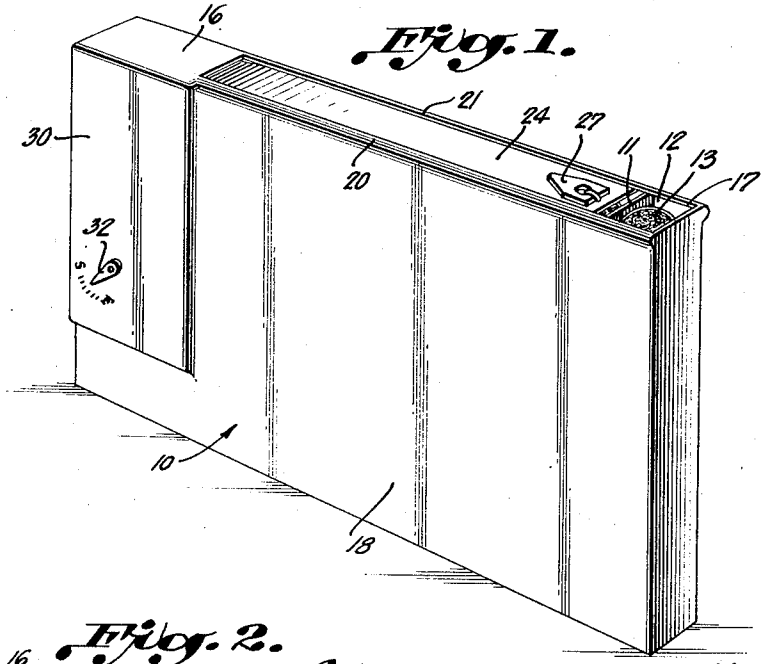


Fig. 4.

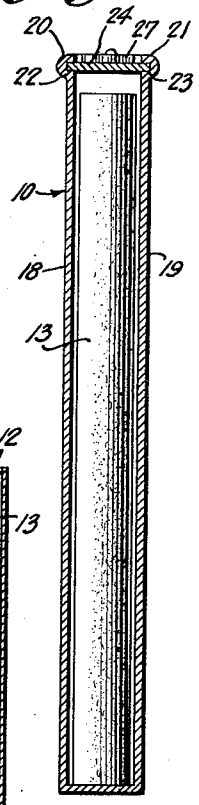
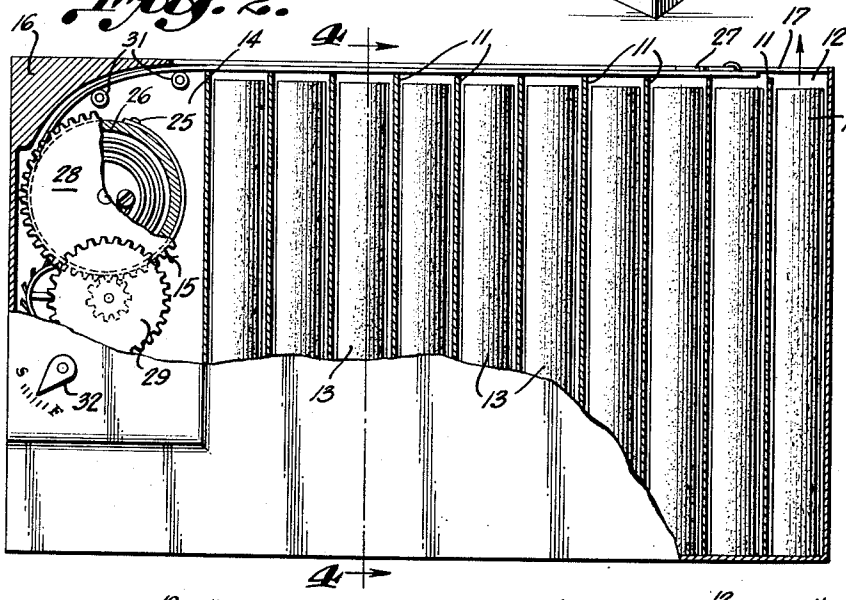


Fig. 2.



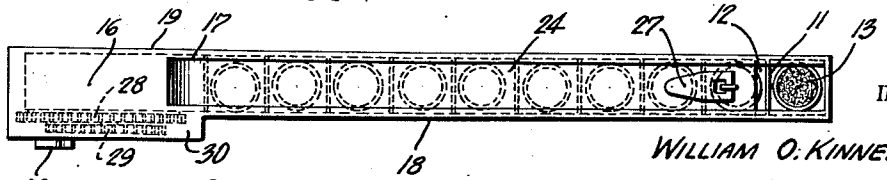


Fig. 3.

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TIME-CONTROLLED CIGARETTE CASE

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6 Claims. (Cl. 206—41.2)

The present invention relates to a cigarette case having a time-controlled means for permitting access thereto upon the lapse of a predetermined interval of time.

It is known that cigarette smoking tends to become a fixed habit and as with any ingrained habit, the act of reaching for and lighting the next cigarette tends to become automatic and to be carried out without conscious attention. It is very difficult for a person having this ingrained habit to decrease his consumption of cigarettes as long as there is a supply of cigarettes readily available to him. It has been found that the best method of overcoming excessive smoking is to present a hindrance to smoking which causes the lighting of a cigarette to be a matter of conscious choice, and then to gradually space out the smoking of cigarettes over intervals of time of increasing length.

Numerous attempts have been made to solve the aforesaid problem by providing a cigarette case which will normally remain locked, but which will become unlocked at spaced intervals of time in order that a smoker who desires to decrease the number of cigarettes smoked will be hindered from automatically lighting a cigarette without conscious attention. In all prior art devices of this type, the unlocking device includes a timing mechanism which permits the lid of the cigarette case to be opened at periodic periods and access had to the interior of the case enabling the smoker to remove one or more cigarettes.

The device of the present invention differs over the prior art cigarette cases in providing a case having a plurality of individual compartments, each compartment housing a cigarette and a flexible closure member adapted to progressively uncover each of the compartments upon the lapse of a predetermined period of time.

Thus, a primary object of the present invention is the provision of a time-controlled cigarette case which permits the removal of a single cigarette at a time.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a timing mechanism which will automatically rewind itself during movement of the cover to closed position.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a timing mechanism which may be readily adjusted in accordance with the user's desires to vary the rate of the opening movement of the closure member.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a portable automatic time controlled cigarette case which is light in weight, attractive in appearance, relatively simple in construction and which may be easily and economically manufactured.

Other objects and advantages of this invention will be apparent upon consideration of the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment thereof in conjunction with the annexed drawing, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a cigarette case according to this invention.

Figure 2 is a front view of the cigarette case shown in Figure 1 with portions of the front wall broken away to show the interior of the case.

Figure 3 is a top plan view thereof, and

Figure 4 is a vertical sectional view taken on the line 4—4 of Figure 2.

Referring in greater detail to the drawing, numeral **10** generally designates a cigarette case, the interior of which is provided with a plurality of partitions **11**, dividing the interior of the case into a plurality of individual compartments **12**, each of which is of such size as to house a single cigarette **13**. As seen in Figure 2, the individual cigarette compartments occupy the major portion of the case with the rear of the case defining a compartment **14** for housing the closure operating mechanism indicated generally by the numeral **15**. The compartment **14** is closed at the top by the wall **16** and the remaining portion of the top wall is open at **17** to permit removal of the cigarettes from the compartments **12**.

The side walls **18** and **19** of the case terminate at their upper ends in inturned flanges **20** and **21** to define grooves **22** and **23** for receiving a sliding closure member **24**. The closure member **24** is formed of thin flexible metal and has one end anchored at **25** to a drum **26** rotatably supported in compartment **14**. A collapsible handle **27** is secured to the opposite end of the closure to permit the closure to be pulled to closed position.

The timing mechanism **15** for controlling the opening of the flexible closure member may consist of any suitable clockwork including the usual gears and springs for imparting to the drum **26** a constant tendency to rotate in a direction which will withdraw the closure **24** along the top of the case and expose such cigarettes as have been previously placed in the individual compartments. As seen in Figure 2, the gear **28**, which is mounted on the drum **26**, meshes with gear **29** and suitable other clockwork mechanism to regulate the speed of rotation of the drum to prevent the withdrawing of the closure member across the top of the cigarette case faster than a predetermined rate, thus making the cigarettes placed therein available only at predetermined intervals of time, depending on the diameter and revolutions per minute of the drum **26**.

As seen in Figure 1, the wall **18** is slightly enlarged at **30** to accommodate the clockwork mechanism in order that the drum may extend substantially the full width of the case to accommodate the width of the flexible closure member. Rollers **31** are mounted in the compartment **14** to guide the closure member in its movement onto the drum. Numeral **32** indicates a control mechanism for regulating the speed of the clockwork.

In assembling the clockwork mechanism within the case, the clockwork mechanism is fully wound and requires very little manipulation to keep wound. When the closure member is retracted by the clockwork mechanism to uncover each of the individual compartments at predetermined intervals of time, the clockwork becomes slightly unwound. However, movement of the closure member to closed position will cause sufficient winding of the mechanism to insure continuous winding and operation.

From the foregoing description, it is readily apparent that the relatively simple mechanism shown and described is well adapted to accomplish the objects and advantages of the present invention. While a preferred embodiment of the invention has been shown, it will be understood that minor changes in the details of construction may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention except as may be required by the scope of the following claims.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. A cigarette case comprising a container having a plurality of open ended compartments for receiving cigarettes, a sliding closure for said compartments and a

timing mechanism within said container for moving said closure to uncover each of said compartments at predetermined intervals.

2. A cigarette case as defined in claim 1, said sliding closure being formed of flexible metal.

3. A cigarette case as defined in claim 2, said timing mechanism including a rotatable drum upon which said flexible closure is adapted to be wound.

4. A cigarette case having a time-controlled locking means, comprising a case having a plurality of individual compartments, a single closure for said compartments, said closure being formed of flexible material, a rotatable drum within the case, clockwork mechanism for rotating the drum, and means connecting one end of the flexible closure to the drum.

5. A cigarette case as defined in claim 4, said clockwork mechanism adapted to be wound by closing movement of the closure.

6. A cigarette case as defined in claim 5, and means for regulating the speed of rotation of the drum.

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