July 2, 1940. M. M. RICHARDSON 2,206,049

SELF-LOCKING CONTAINER

Filed Oct. 1, 1938

Fig. 1.

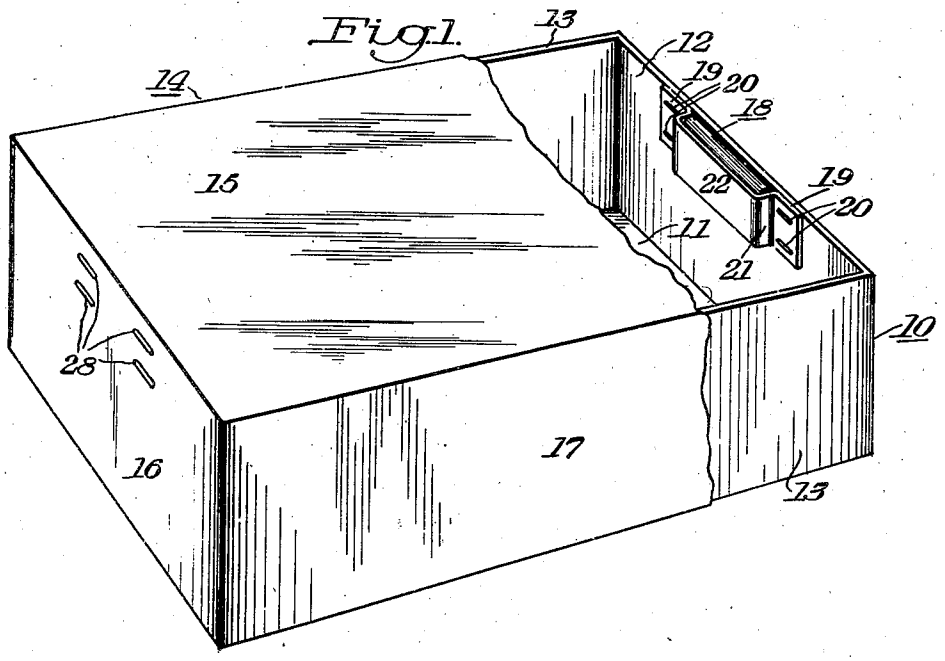


Fig. 2.

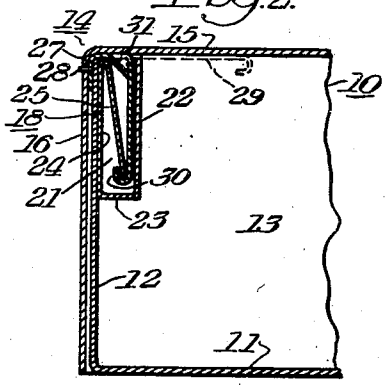


Fig. 3.

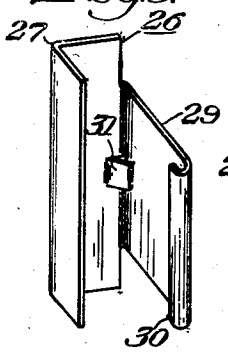
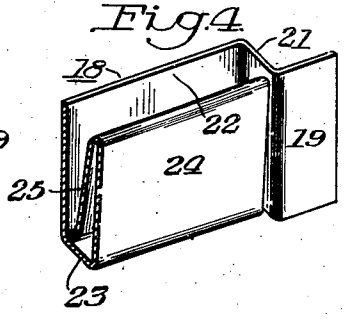


Fig. 4.



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SELF-LOCKING CONTAINER

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Application October 1, 1938, Serial No. 232,810

2 Claims. (Cl. 292—80)

My invention relates to new and useful improvements in self-locking containers especially intended for use for the mailing or otherwise transporting of bonds, stock certificates and other valuables, and which are so constructed that the container must be mutilated beyond the possibility of reuse before access may be obtained to the interior of the container or its contents removed.

More particularly, the present invention is a further improvement in the type of container disclosed in Letters Patent of the United States No. 1,497,879 issued to David J. Richardson on June 17, 1924.

Among the objects which I have in view are the following:

The provision of a self-locking container which, after receiving its contents, may be locked by the telescoping of the lid onto the box, and which will remain tightly closed and locked until the lock member carried by the lid is cut or torn loose from its anchorage, which operation involves the material mutilation of the lid and prevents it being relocked to the box.

Another object is the provision of means for preventing the accidental locking of the lid to the box before the container receives its intended contents. Thus the empty containers may be stored, ready for use, with the lids assembled on the boxes but not locked thereto.

Another object is the provision of an efficient container of this character that may be manufactured and sold at a relatively low price; a container of this kind being a "one-use" article which after it has been opened by mutilation at its destination loses its value.

Other objects will appear from the following description.

In the accompanying drawing, wherein I have illustrated a practical embodiment of the principles of my invention, Fig. 1 is a partially broken away perspective of the closed container, showing the socket member of the locking means mounted on the interior of the box element of the container.

Fig. 2 is a partial vertical longitudinal section of the closed container.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged perspective of the hook member of the lock, and Fig. 4 is a broken perspective of the socket member of the lock.

Referring to the drawing, 10 represents the box element of the container comprising the bottom 11, the vertical end walls 12 and the vertical side walls 13. 14 represents the lid element having a top wall 15, end walls 16 and side walls 17.

Any suitable material may be used for the box and lid elements but I prefer to employ a good grade of relatively heavy cardboard or fibre board.

The dimensions of the lid element are such that it may be snugly telescoped down over the box element as illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2.

18 represents one of the socket members which is formed by bending up a sheet metal blank to form a flange 19 at each end, which flanges are adapted to be fitted against the inner surface of an end wall 12 of the box 10 adjacent the upper edge of the latter and to be anchored thereto as by means of the metal staples 20. At the inner ends of the flanges 19 the metal of the blank is bent inwardly to form the end walls 21 of the socket, and such walls have their inner ends connected by the front wall 22 which is parallel to but spaced from the wall of the box. At the lower edge of the front wall 22 the metal of the blank is bent horizontally to form the floor 23 of the socket member; then upwardly as at 24 in the plane of the flanges 19, and then downwardly within the socket member to form the depending and outwardly inclined tongue 25.

26 represents the hook member which is anchored to the lid element 14, and which is formed by cutting and bending up a sheet metal blank. Thus 27 represents a right angular bracket which fits up into the angle formed by the top wall 15 and the end wall 16 of the lid element and is secured in place to the wall 16 by any convenient means, such as the wire staples 28.

29 represents a hook integral with the bracket 27 and when in its retracted or inoperative position disposed parallel with the inner surface of the top wall 15 of the lid element. The free end of the hook 29 is provided with an arcuate hook flange 30. The hook 29 is of proper width to enter the socket 18 when properly disposed.

31 represents a lip cut and bent from the material of the bracket 27 to form a stop to limit the degree to which the hook 29 may be bent.

In Fig. 2 I have shown in dotted lines the hook 29 disposed in its retracted position parallel with the wall 15, while in Fig. 3 and in full lines in Fig. 2 the hook is shown bent at right angles into its operative position and against the stop 31. When the hook is retracted the lid element may be telescoped down over the box element into closed position without locking and may be freely removed. Thus the container may be shipped by the manufacturer and stored by the purchaser

until used without danger of accidentally locking the lid on the box. When the container is to be used the desired contents are placed in the box, the hook **29** is bent into its operative position and the lid is telescoped down over the box, the hook **29** entering the socket **18** between the front wall **22** and the depending inclined tongue **25** and as the lid moves into its closed position the arcuate flange **30** engages with and snaps over the free end of the tongue **25**, thus automatically locking the lid on the box and preventing its removal until the hook member **26** is torn or cut loose from the wall **16** of the lid member **14**. The stop **31** prevents the hook **29** from being bent over too far so as to interfere with its proper engagement with the tongue **25**.

It will be noted that when the lid is locked in place, the bracket **27** overlies the socket and thus prevents access thereto through the top of the lid. Such mutilation at once renders obvious the fact that the lock has been destroyed and therefore when the container is received in such condition by the consignee, there is evidence that the container has been tampered with by unauthorized persons.

I prefer to provide each end of the container with locking means, and where the container is large or of relatively great length the sides of the container may also be provided with locking means.

It is evident that my improved container is inexpensive to manufacture and thus its use involves but little greater cost than a like container unprovided with locking means. The fact that the container may be delivered to purchasers and may be stored by them without danger of accidentally locking the lid to the box is important because in prior devices of this character accidental locking of a lid on an empty box has been a frequent occurrence, thus causing the loss of the container as it could not be opened without destroying its future usefulness.

I claim:

1. In a hook member for use with a socket in locking the members of a box, the combination of a base having two portions disposed at right angles to one another and arranged to be secured in the angle formed between the top and side walls of the lid of the box, an integral extension of one of the base portions projecting away from the angle of the base and parallel with the top of the box, and a hook formed on the free end of the extension, said extension arranged to be bent down substantially parallel with the wall of the lid to position the hook to automatically interlock with the socket when the box is closed, the angularly disposed base reenforcing the material of the lid against rupture when the extension is bent down.

2. In a hook member for use with a socket in locking the members of a box, the combination of a base having two portions disposed at right angles to one another and arranged to be secured in the angle formed between the top and side wall of the lid of the box, a tongue integral with one of said base portions and extending from said base portion away from said angle and parallel with the top of the lid, a hook formed on the free end of the tongue, and means defining an abrupt change in cross section at the juncture of the tongue and the base to provide a bending axis to position the hook member to automatically interlock with the socket when the box is closed.

MARGUERITE M. RICHARDSON.