March 2, 1971 P. A. LA VIOLETTE 3,566,526

DISPLAY CASE WITH MAGNETIC HOLDING MEANS

Filed Jan. 6, 1969

FIG. 1

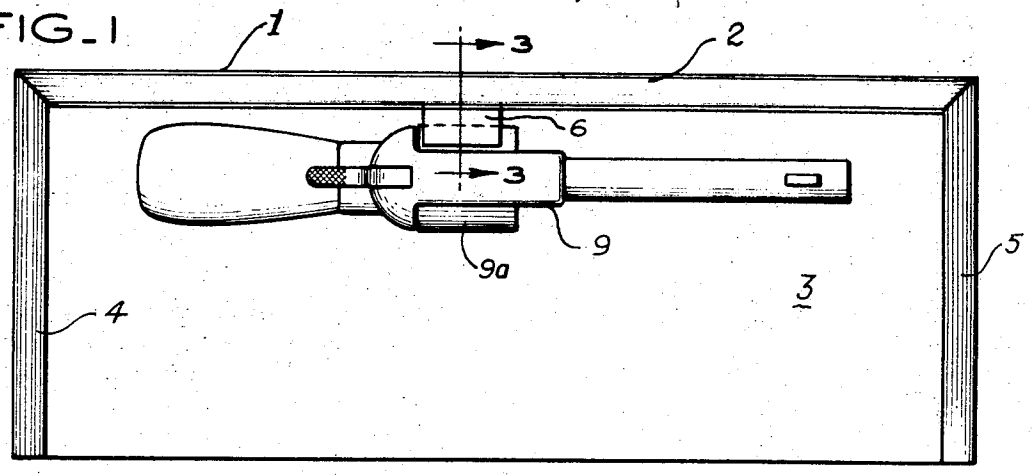


FIG. 2

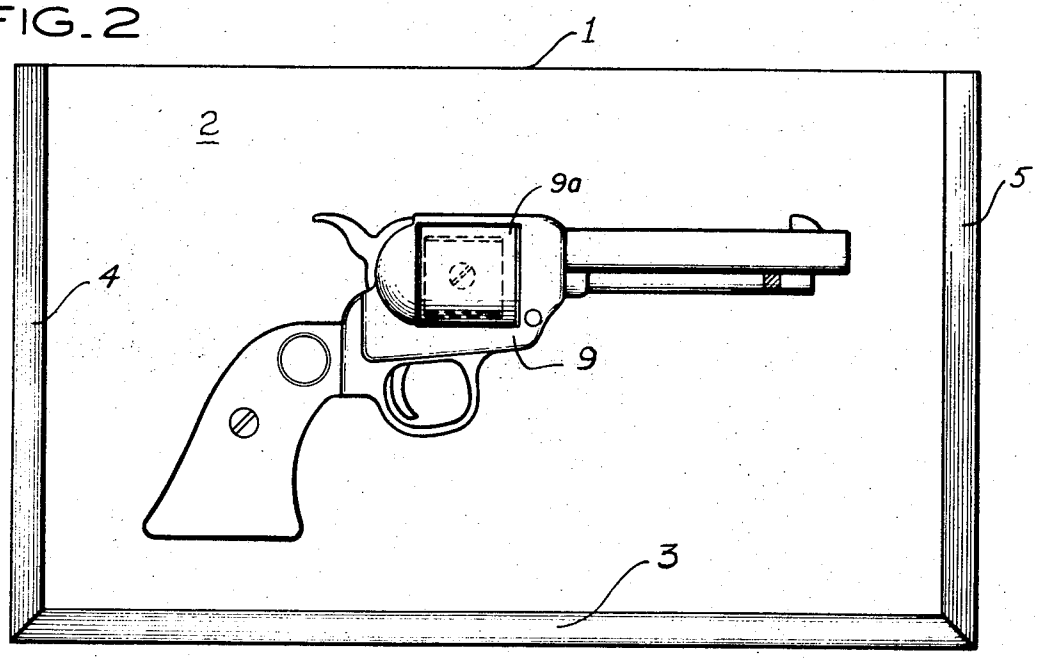


FIG. 3

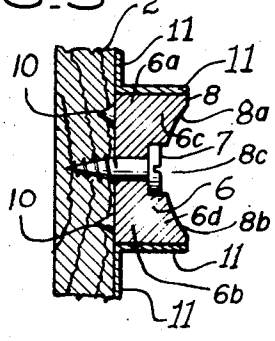
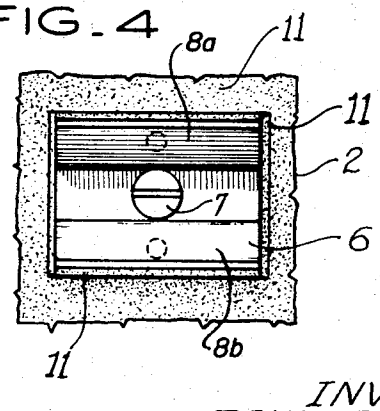


FIG. 4



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DISPLAY CASE WITH MAGNETIC HOLDING MEANS

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A device, including a box-like structure, for displaying a variety of objects, either singly or plurally, said device having a support or backboard member to which is attached a magnetic member contoured to receive a selective portion of the item or items to be displayed to magnetically support each item in a spaced apart relation to the face of the support or backboard member to thereby create the illusion of an item suspended in space without visible means of support.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

(1) Field of the invention

This invention relates to display devices. Particularly, the present invention is directced to a display case utilizing magnetic means to maintain the article being displayed in a spaced apart relation to a support member. It is primarily for use by gun collectors and the like to enhance the esthetic qualities associated with the permanent display of commemorative and antique firearms and the like.

(2) Description of the prior art

The known prior art display devices are of the support type having a recess therein shaped to fit the item being displayed, or are of the bracket type in which the displayed item, such as a firearm, is rested thereon or suspended therefrom. A display case utilizing a recess to support the item being displayed restricts the three-dimensional viewing capabilities of the entire display. Another problem with the prior art display devices is that they do not permit the displayed item to be readily removed from the display case for inspection and subsequently returned without the likelihood of damaging the display case and hence its decorative appeal.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Generally speaking, the display case that is the subject of the instant invention comprises a support or backboard member to which is affixed a magnetic member for holding the device to be displayed in a spaced apart relation to the face or the support member to thereby produce the illusion of a device suspended free in a display case without a visible means of support. The device being displayed, particularly a firearm such as a revolver, having a curved cylinder, is received in a magnet having a pole face surface contoured to mate with the curved surface of the cylinder of the firearm. The magnet is in turn secured to the face of the support member or backboard such that the magnetic attraction between the magnet and the firearm supports the firearm in a spaced apart relation to the face of the backboard.

It is, therefore, the primary object of the present invention to provide a display case having a magnetic holder that is secured to the interior face of a display case with the magnetic holder contoured to fit the cylinder of a firearm to thereby maintain the firearm in a spaced apart relation to the face of the backboard to produce the illusion of a gun suspended in a display case without a readily visible means of support.

A further object of this invention is to provide display apparatus having a plurality of magnetic holders that are secured to the interior face of the support member of said display apparatus wherein said magnetic holders are contoured to receive selected magnetically responsive portions of a plurality of items to be displayed to thereby support said items in a spaced apart relation to the interior face of said support to produce the illusion of a plurality of items suspended without a readily visible means of support.

A still further object of this invention is to provide a display case having magnetic means for holding the displayed item such that the displayed item may be removed by overcoming the force of the magnetic flux of the magnet supporting the displayed item and may be subsequently repositioned in the display case without injury to the decorative appearance of the display case.

A still further object of this invention is to provide a display case having a support or backboard to which is attached a base and upstanding sides surrounding the backboard to provide a box-like display case enclosure to which decorative sheet material may be applied covering the interior surface or surfaces of the display case and a portion of the magnetic means attached to the backboard of the display case thereby providing a support such that the item being displayed is viewed in a three-dimensional aspect, and the esthetic appearance of the display is enhanced.

These and other objects will be apparent to those skilled in the art of displaying firearms and the like.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above-mentioned features and objects of this invention and the manner of attaining them will become more apparent, and the invention itself will be understood best by reference to the following description of an embodiment of this invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a top view of a display case incorporating the instant invention showing a firearm in position therein.

FIG. 2 is a side view of the arrangement shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a detailed vertical section taken along the line 3—3 showing the attachment of the magnetic holding element to the backboard or support.

FIG. 4 is a detailed view of a portion of a display case showing a preferred form of magnetic holding device in accordance with this invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Even though described herein for utilization in connection with a firearm, and particularly the revolver form of handgun, it is to be understood that the present invention is applicable to any object constructed of material that is capable of being supported by magnetic attraction, wherein the display of such object is enhanced by having a magnet secured to the back face of the display case with the pole face curved to fit an irregularly shaped display object to thereby maintain the object in a spaced apart relation to the back face of the display container to thereby produce the illusion of an object suspended in space without a visible means of support.

Referring to FIG. 1, there is shown generally at **1** an elongated display case having a support or backboard **2** to which is secured a base **3** and upstanding sides **4** and **5** to form a box-like structure with the top side open. To this box-like structure or display case is secured a magnet **6**. The magnet **6** is secured to support or backboard **2** by means of screw **7**. One surface of magnet **6** is contoured to conform to the contour of displayed item **9** (in the instant illustration, a revolver, the cylinder por-

tion 9*a* of which projects sidewise thereof and is made of a magnetically attractable material) such that the pole face surface 8 of magnet 6 mates with the contour of the cylinder of displayed item 9 to thereby hold displayed item 9 in a spaced apart relation to the interior surface of support or backboard 2.

As is shown in FIG. 3, the magnet 6 comprises an upper portion 6*a* and a lower portion 6*b* respectively including horizontally extending spaced arms 6*c* and 6*d*, the ends of which define contoured pole faces 8*a* and 8*b* remote from the support 2. A trough 8*c*, defined at the pole face end of the magnet 6 by the contoured pole faces 8*a* and 8*b*, has a horizontal axis parallel to the support and receives the cylinder portion 9*a* of item 9 so as to mate therewith. It will be noted that pole face 8*b* extends under cylinder 9*a* to assist in supportion item 9.

FIG. 2 illustrates a displayed item 9 held by magnetic means 6 secured to the interior face of the support or backboard 2 of the box-like structure of the display case shown generally at 1 in a manner such that the displayed item appears to be suspended in space without any visible means of support. This illusion is effected not only by the remote spacing of the item 9 from the support 2, but also by virtue of the magnetic structure's projected side area (encompassed by the dashed lines of FIG. 2) being smaller than and covered by the projected side area of item 9. Because of this geometry, the magnetic structure is hidden in a side view of the display device.

FIG. 1 illustrates the displayed item 9 supported in a spaced apart manner in relation to the interior face of back-board 2 by means of magnetic member 6 secured to the interior face of backboard 2.

FIG. 3 shows magnetic member 6 secured to the interior face of backboard 2 by means of screw 7. It is to be noted that points 10 integral with magnetic member 6 are impressed into the interior face of backboard member 2 to thereby prevent rotation or movement of magnetic member 6 in relation to backboard 2 that might otherwise be caused by the utilization of a single fastening member 7. Further, it is to be noted the interior surface of backboard 2 and the exposed side and end surfaces of magnetic means 6 are covered with decorative sheet material 11.

FIG. 4 is a front view that shows magnetic means 6 secured to the interior face of the backboard 2 by means of screw 7 with the side and end surfaces of magnetic means 6 and backboard 2 having a contiguous covering of decorative material 11.

It is to be understood that there are many types of objects that can utilize the construction of the display case of the instant invention. The revolver described in the instant embodiment is but one form of display object and is intended to be illustrative of the broad category of devices that fall within the purview of displayed objects of the instant invention.

I claim:

1. A display device comprising:
- a generally vertical support;
- a firearm having a portion projecting sidewise of said firearm made of a magnetically attractable material;
- a magnet extending horizontally outwardly from said support and having a pair of horizontally extending spaced arms, the ends of said arms defining respective pole faces remote from said support and contoured to provide a trough having a horizontal axis parallel to said support, said trough mating with said projecting portion and extending thereunder to automatically support said firearm in a predetermined vertical position spaced outwardly from said support, support the entire weight of said firearm, and hold said firearm against rotation, said magnet having a projected side area which is smaller than and covered by the projected side area of said firearm so as to be hidden by said firearm when said firearm is supported on said support and create the illusion of said firearm being suspended free in space;
- means to secure said magnet to said support; and
- means to prevent rotation of said magnet with respect to said support.

2. A display device as defined in claim 1 further including:
- a base;
- two upstanding sides, the base and sides surrounding said support to provide a box-like enclosure; and
- decorative sheet material covering the interior surface of said support and a portion of said magnet.

3. A display device as defined in claim 2 wherein said firearm is a revolver having a rotatable shell carrying cylinder, and the magnet is a permanent magnet and wherein said projecting portion is said cylinder.

4. A display device comprising:
- a generally vertical support;
- a firearm having at least one magnetically attractable portion;
- a magnetic structure having an upper portion and a lower portion respectively including two spaced pole faces remote from said support in contact with said attractable portion, said structure extending horizontally outwardly from said support, supporting the entire weight of said firearm and creating the illusion that said firearm is suspended free in space, said magnetic structure being contoured to define a trough having a horizontal axis parallel to said support and mating with said attractable portion, said lower portion of said magnetic structure extending partially under said attractable portion to assist in supporting said firearm, said magnetic structure having a projected side area which is smaller than and covered by the projected side area of said firearm so as to be thereby hidden in a side view of said device, said magnetic structure serving to position said firearm parallel to said support and prevent rotation thereof;
- means to secure said magnetic structure to said support; and
- means to prevent rotation of said magnetic structure with respect to said support.

5. A display device as defined in claim 4 further including;
- a base;
- two upstanding sides, said base and said sides surrounding said support to provide a box-like enclosure; and
- decorative sheet material covering the interior surface of said support and a portion of said magnetic structure.

6. A display device as defined in claim 5 wherein said firearm is a revolver having a rotatable shell carrying cylinder, and said magnetic structure is a permanent magnet and wherein said attractable portion is said cylinder.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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