Sept. 11, 1928.

1,684,188

S. A. MERRIN

DISPENSING CONTAINER

Filed Aug. 23, 1926

Fig. 1.

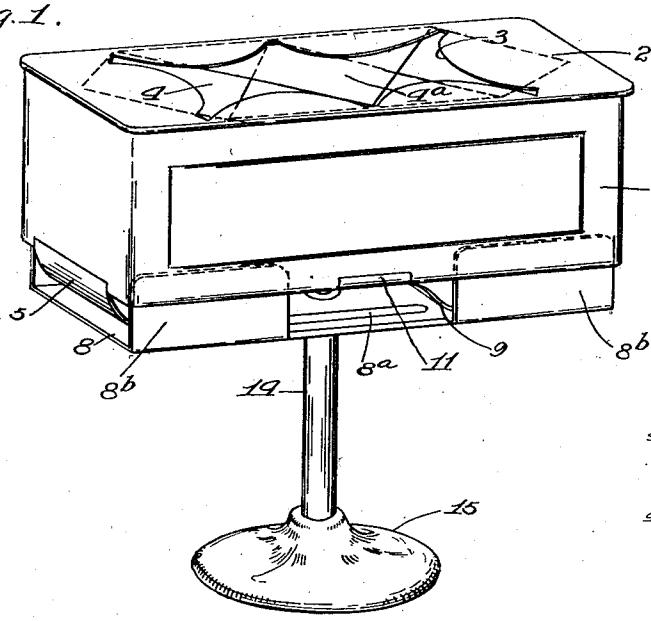


Fig. 5.

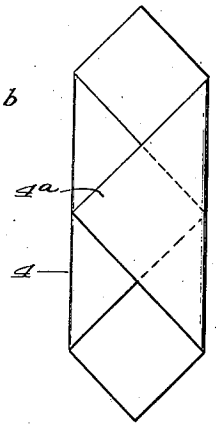


Fig. 2.

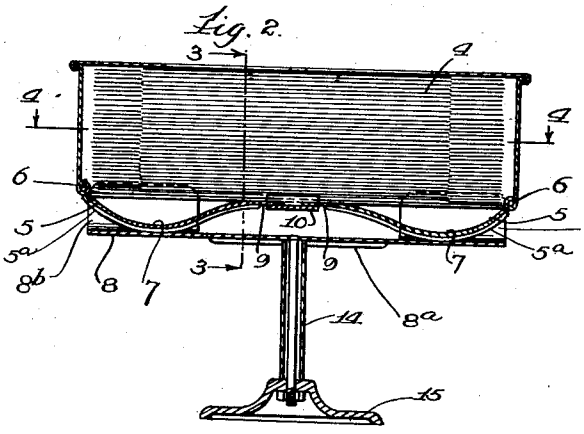


Fig. 3.

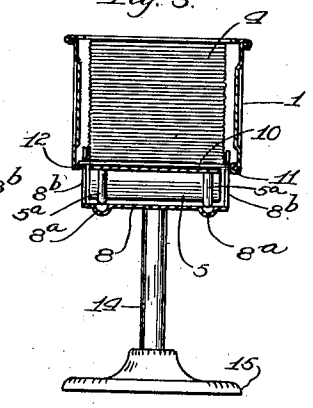
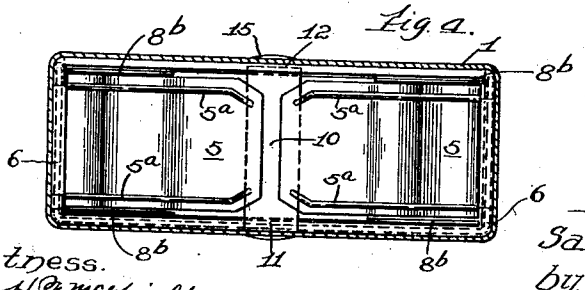


Fig. 4.



Witness.
H. C. McKnight.

Inventor.
Samuel A. Merrin.
by Brown & Brown
his Attorneys.

Patented Sept. 11, 1928. 1,684,188

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

SAMUEL A. MERRIN, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, ASSIGNOR, BY MESNE ASSIGNMENTS, TO MARATHON PAPER MILLS COMPANY, OF ROTHSCHILD, WISCONSIN, A CORPORATION OF WISCONSIN.

DISPENSING CONTAINER.

Application filed August 23, 1926. Serial No. 130,856.

The purpose of this invention is to provide a container and dispenser for paper napkins, paper towels, and the like, which shall be economical to manufacture, simple to load, and positive in its feed operation. It consists in certain features and elements of construction in combination as herein shown and described, and as indicated by the claims.

In the drawings:—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a dispensing container designed for napkins and embodying this invention.

Figure 2 is a vertical, longitudinal section of the structure shown in Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a transverse, vertical section taken as indicated at 3—3, on Figure 2.

Figure 4 is a plan section taken as indicated at line 4—4, on Figure 2, but omitting any showing of the napkins.

Figure 5 is a view illustrating the manner of folding the napkin for use with the dispenser.

The device illustrated in the drawings is designed primarily as a dispenser for paper napkins, as used in restaurants, but it will be evident that the principles involved are equally applicable to the dispensing of other paper articles in folded form. As shown in Figure 1, the container is in the form of a rectangular box, 1, having a top wall, 2, provided with an opening or window, 3, through which a folded edge or corner of the napkin, towel or other folded unit, is accessible for withdrawing the uppermost unit from the container. For purposes of illustration I have shown the napkins, 4, each folded to present a triangular tab, 4^a, within the area of the opening, 3. The pile of napkins, 4, within the container, is supported by an upwardly movable bottom, comprising two members, 5, 5, each hinged at 6, to the lower edge of one end wall of the box, 1. From the hinge axis the member, 5, is curved downwardly and then upwardly, forming a downwardly facing convex portion, 7, adapted to rest upon a table or counter, or preferably, as shown in the drawings, upon a base plate, 8, which is the upper member of a pedestal provided for the device. The free ends, 9, of the members, 5, 5, extend adjacent each other at about the middle of the box where they engage the bottom napkin of the pile therein. The weight of the napkins, 4, and the box, 1, thus rests upon the convex portions, 7, 7, of the members, 5, 5, and the weight of the box tends to swing the free ends, 9, 9, upwardly, thus pressing the pile of napkins toward the dispensing opening at 3.

When the box, 1, is loaded with napkins it is turned upside down, and when the napkins have been placed therein the members, 5, 5, are folded down with their terminal portions, 9, engaging the napkins. A retaining strap, 10, which is hinged to the lower edge of one side wall of the box at 11, is then swung across the parts, 9, 9, overlapping them, and its free end is engaged under a marginal flange on the other side wall at 12. The container is then reversed so that it rests upon the portions, 7, 7.

The pedestal which supports the base plate, 8, includes also a hollow post, 14, and a foot flange, 15, and the plate, 8, is formed with stiffening ribs at its middle portion, as shown at 8^a. At both sides near the ends of the plate, 8, I provide upstanding lugs or flanges, 8^b, which extend past the edges of the bottom members, 5, and into the box, 1, between its side walls and the sides of the pile of napkins, 4, therein. These flanges, 8^b, thus serve as guides to properly position the box, 1, on the base plate, 8, while allowing the box to move downwardly as the napkins are gradually withdrawn from it. This downward movement causes the members, 5, 5, to swing about their hinges, 6, 6, requiring said members to slip slightly on the base plate, 8; therefore, I prefer to form the members, 5, with downwardly facing ribs, 5^a, for stiffening them and at the same time reducing friction between them and the base plate, 8.

It will be evident that with the structure described there is nothing in the feeding operation to disturb the arrangement of napkins in the container, 1, and the feeding pressure by which they are presented at the dispensing opening, 3, will remain almost uniform, since it is due principally to the weight of the box, 1.

In Figure 5 I have shown the outline of a napkin folded in proper form to fit this dispenser. The generally oblong shape includes a triangular tab, 4^a, lying across one face so as to provide a part which may be readily grasped for withdrawing the napkin from the dispenser. I have found that in order to hold the napkins in neatly flat shape at the dis-

pensing opening it is preferable to have the margins curved or scalloped to form lips projecting inwardly while leaving slots or openings between the lips which will assist in relieving the napkin as its middle portion is withdrawn by means of the tab, 4^a. Such a dispensing opening is shown in Figure 1, and its relation to the shape of the napkin is indicated by the dotted outline of the latter in the same figure.

It should be understood, however, that it is not essential that the napkins or other folded articles be of the exact form shown in the drawings. It is only necessary that the area of the folded form of the unit should be slightly larger than that of the opening or window, 3, and that within the area of this window the napkin or other unit should present a folded edge or corner by which it may be grasped. It may also be understood that in the appended claims the term "napkin" is used in a generic sense, signifying any folded article of paper or other fabric adapted to be handled in a dispenser of this character.

I claim:—

1. A dispenser comprising a box like structure having a top wall formed with a delivery opening and a bottom consisting of two members hinged respectively to opposite vertical walls of the box and extending toward each other, the free ends of said members being adapted to swing upwardly toward the delivery opening, and said members having downwardly extending parts between their hinges and said free ends on which the weight of the dispenser is carried.

2. A dispenser comprising a box like structure having a top wall formed with a delivery opening, a separate bottom to which said box-like structure is movably attached for support thereby, said bottom having a part adapted to be urged upwardly by the weight of the box structure, and a support for the bottom extending normally below the vertical walls of the box, the top wall and bottom being arranged to have a pile of folded paper napkins or the like, disposed therebetween for presentation of the upper-most napkin at the delivery opening, whereby the box-like structure moves downwardly as the pile is reduced by withdrawal of the napkins.

3. A dispenser comprising vertical walls and a top wall formed with a delivery opening, together with a bottom consisting of two members hinged respectively to opposite vertical walls and extending toward each other, the free ends of said members being adapted to swing upwardly toward the delivery opening with a quantity of folded paper napkins, or the like, disposed between said members and said opening, supporting means on which the weight of the dispenser is carried and extending downwardly from portions of the bottom members nearer to their hinges than said free ends which engage the napkins.

4. A dispenser comprising a box like structure having a top wall formed with a delivery opening, and a bottom consisting of two members hinged respectively to opposite vertical walls of the box and extending toward each other with their free ends adjacent, said members having downwardly convex portions, intermediate said free ends and their hinges on which the weight of the dispenser is carried.

5. In the combination defined in claim 4, a support including a base plate with upstanding guide flanges which extend laterally past the convex portions of the bottom members for loosely engaging the side walls of the box.

6. In the combination defined in claim 4, a support for the dispenser comprising a base plate with upstanding guide flanges which are adapted to extend laterally past said hinged bottom members into spaces between the side walls of the box and the sides of a pile of napkins therein.

7. A dispenser for a folded paper napkin, or the like, said napkin having one or more edges of a limited area over-lying a larger area, the dispenser having an opening at which parts of both areas are presented, said opening being smaller than the larger area of the napkin, and its outlines including inwardly curved portions forming lips overlying said area with slits or vents extending adjacent to the marginal portions of the napkin area.

8. A dispenser for a folded paper napkin or the like, said napkin having one or more edges of a limited area disposed within the outlines of its folded form; said dispenser having an opening at which said edge or edges of the limited area of the napkin are presented, said opening being smaller than the larger area of said folded form.

9. In the combination defined in claim 4, a strap secured at one end to a vertical wall between the first mentioned vertical walls, and extending across the bottom of the dispenser below the free ends of the bottom members for retaining the same in the dispenser.

SAMUEL A. MERRIN.