

Oct. 10, 1939.

R. E. KORTUM, JR  
AUTOMATIC CORN POPPER

2,175,531

Filed March 7, 1938

4 Sheets-Sheet 1

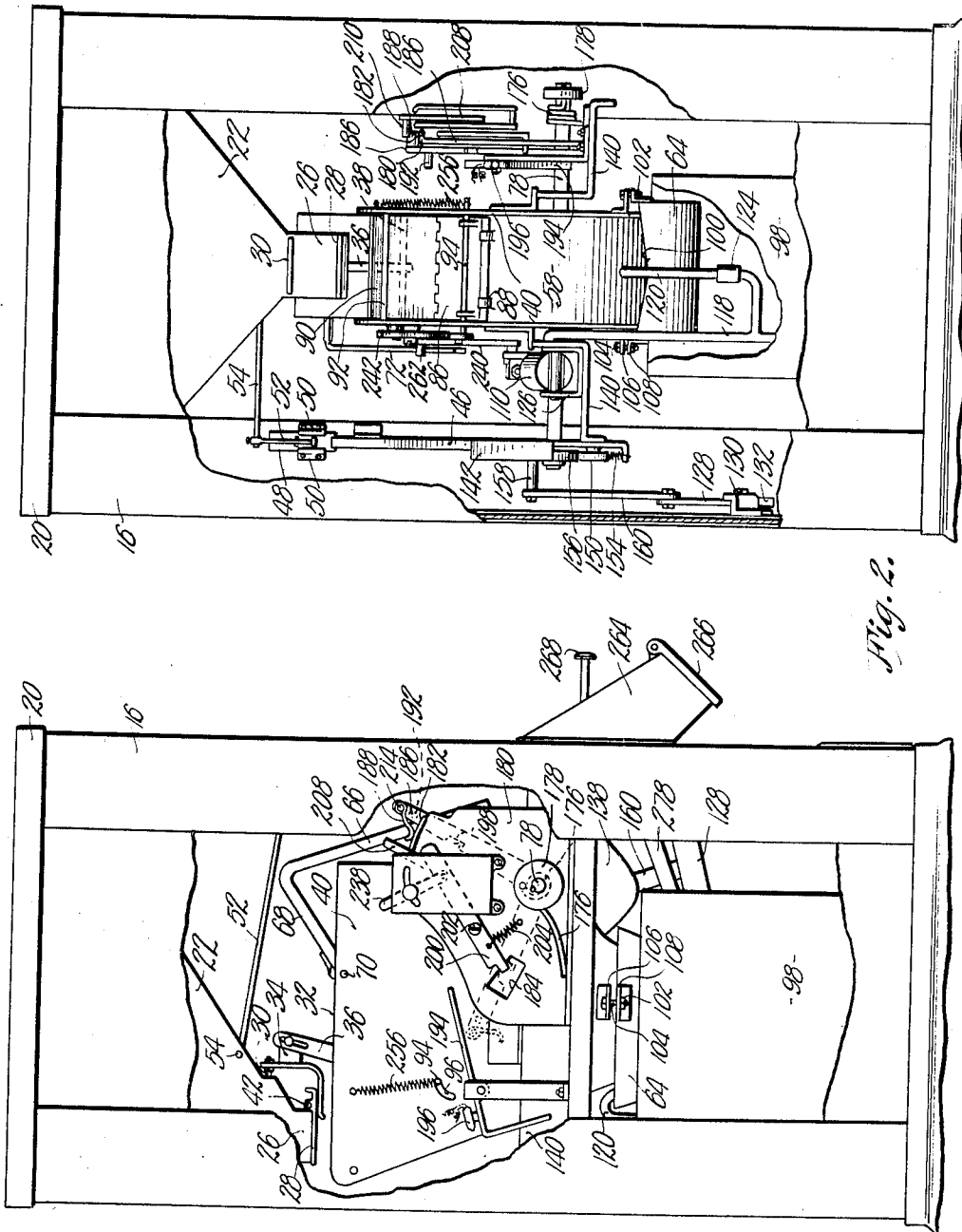


Fig. 2.

Fig. 1.

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4 Sheets-Sheet 2

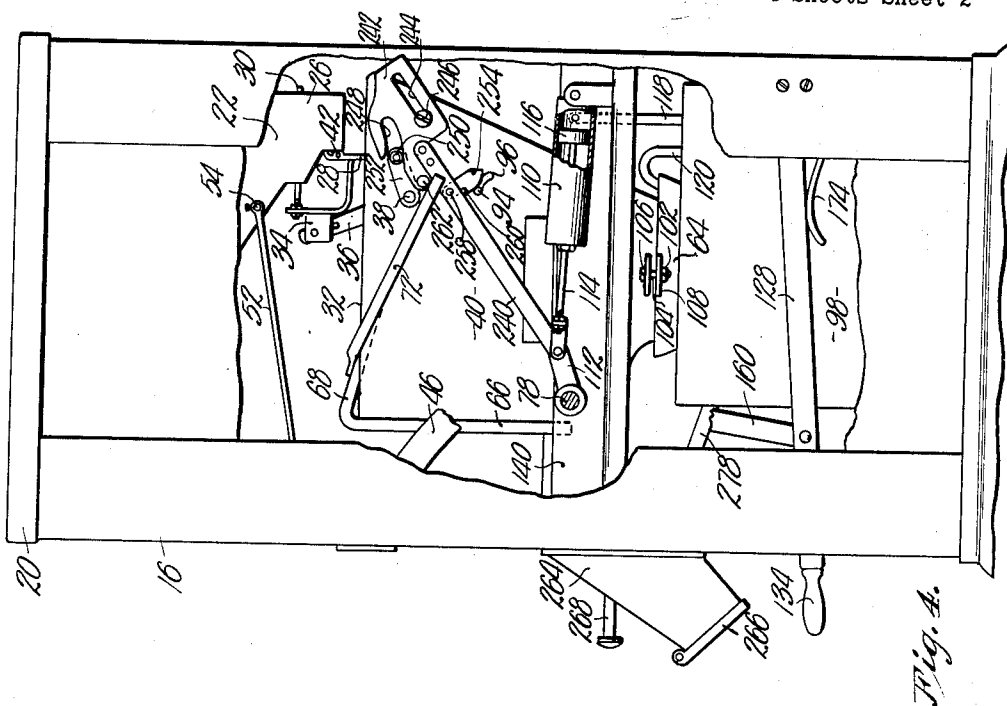


Fig. 4.

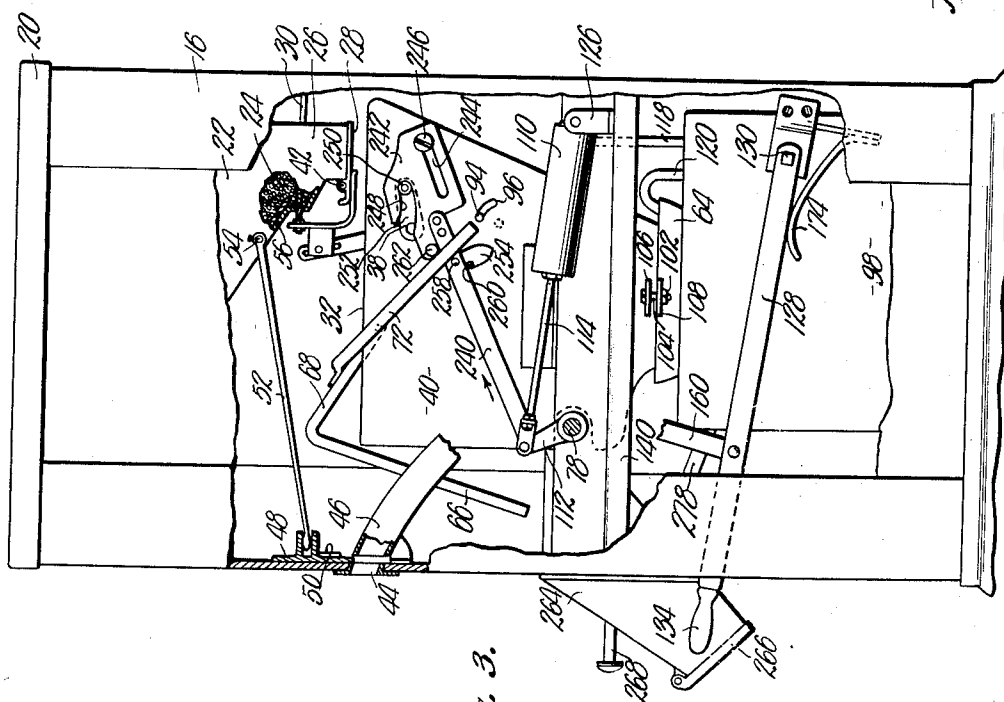


Fig. 3.

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4 Sheets-Sheet 3

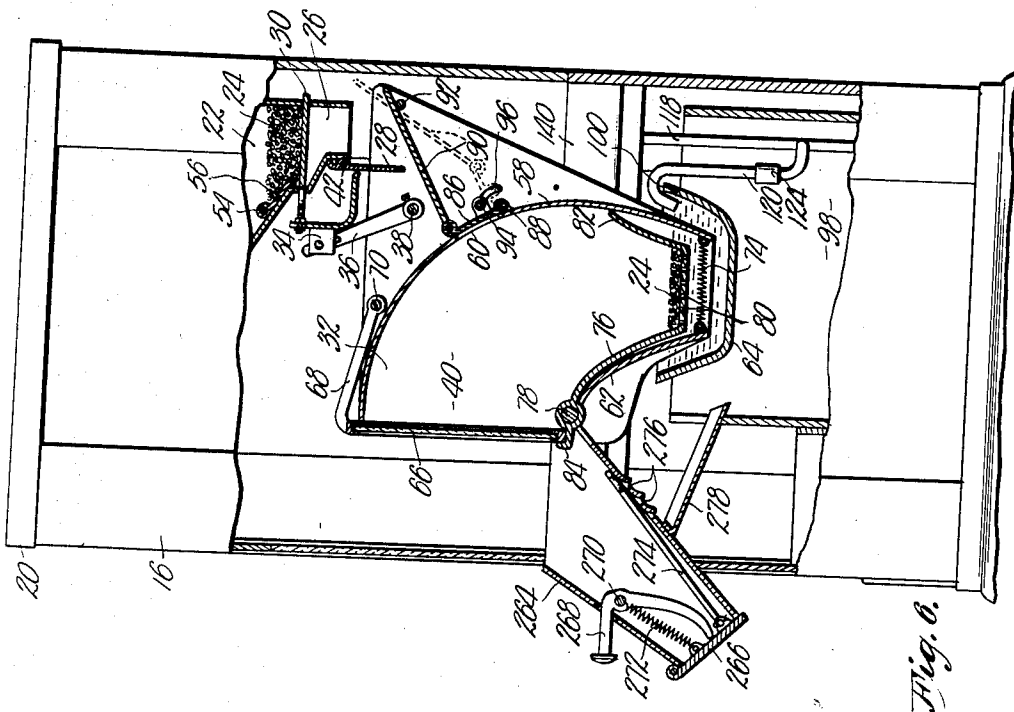


Fig. 6.

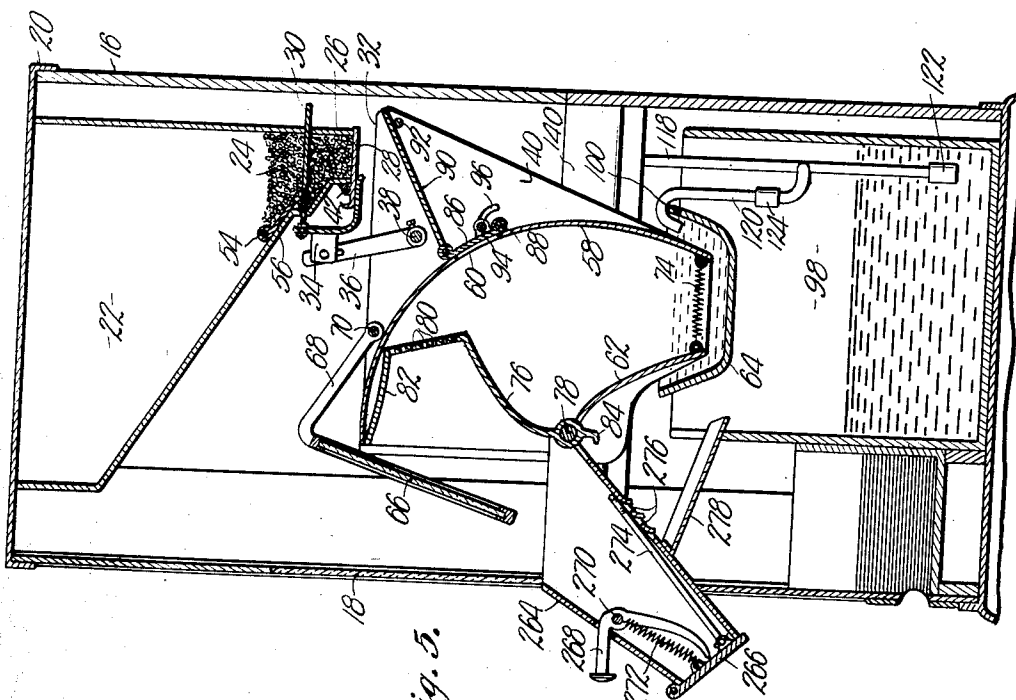


Fig. 5.

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4 Sheets-Sheet 4

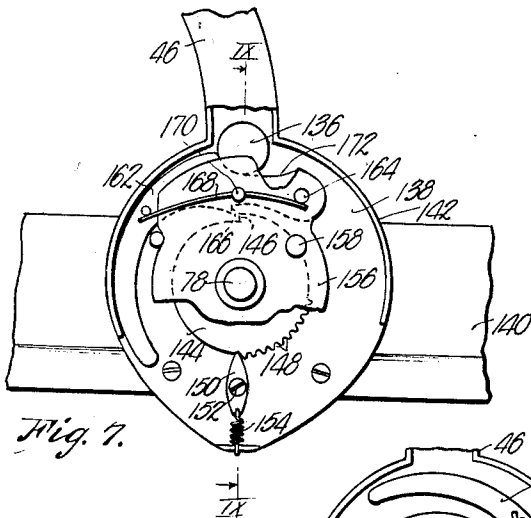


Fig. 7.

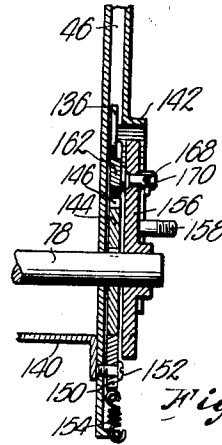


Fig. 9.

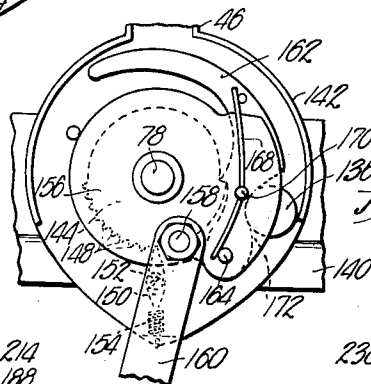


Fig. 8.

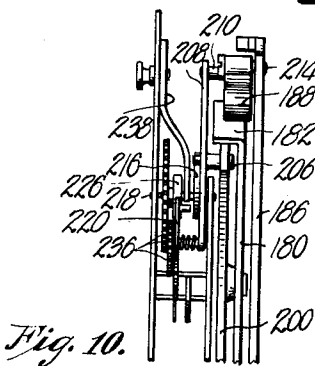


Fig. 10.

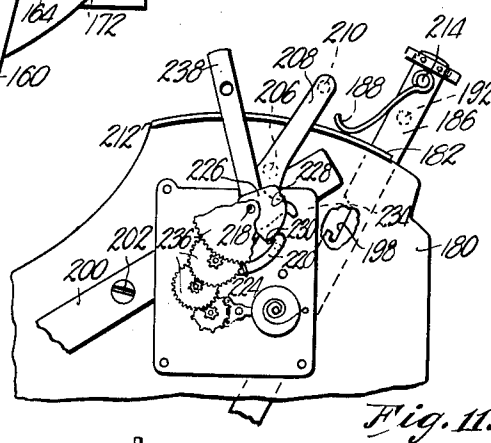


Fig. 11.

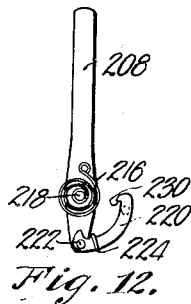


Fig. 12.

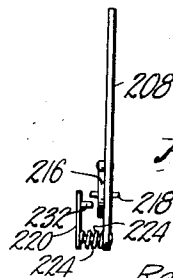


Fig. 13.

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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,175,531

## AUTOMATIC CORN POPPER

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Rudolph Greenbaum

Application March 7, 1938, Serial No. 194,393

## 10 Claims. (Cl. 53—4)

This invention relates to corn poppers of the coin control type and has for its primary object the provision of a machine of that character wherein after the coin is inserted in the coin slot, manually operable mechanism may be actuated to feed a charge of unpopped corn into a swingable holder, close an electric circuit supplying energy to heating elements submerged in a volume of popping oil, and inject an additional supply of popping oil in the oil pan—all in the proper sequence and in timed relation with respect to other parts of the machine.

Another aim of this invention is to provide a corn popper having the aforementioned characteristics and having a specially formed housing that is provided with an inlet port for the unpopped corn and a cover for an open side thereof, which inlet port has a flap to close the same when the cover is in the closed position to the end that the popping action takes place in a closed compartment, the lower portion of which is submerged in popping oil.

A yet further object of the invention is to provide in a popcorn machine, having the foregoing characteristics a holder and an ejector for the popcorn, which holder is swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is submerged in the popping oil.

A further object of the invention is to provide a corn popper that has a delivery chute extending exteriorly of the case thereof, which chute has a cover over the extended end, and a manually operable trigger for moving the cover to the open position, there being an ejector associated with the cover for assisting the movement of the coin through the chute as the cover is moved by the trigger.

A still further object of the invention is the provision of a coin controlled corn popper that has a coin slot formed in one side of the case and a closure for the coin slot which is held inoperative so long as there is a volume of unpopped corn in the hopper of the popper, said closure being automatically released to cover the coin slot when the volume of corn in the hopper is reduced to an amount where operating the popper may be unsatisfactory to the customer.

Corn poppers of the nature employing the method of completely submerging the charge of unpopped corn in a volume of popping oil are well known and an example of such a machine is disclosed in the Roach Patent No. 2,078,719, issued April 27, 1937 for Corn popping machine. The demands of the trade however, had to be met through the devising of simple, rugged and positively acting mechanism which included mechanism for allowing the popcorn holder to remain in a lowered or partially submerged position during a fixed predetermined length of time and

therefore, this invention contemplates the provision of such structures and mechanism, the specific natures of which form minor objects of the invention.

The accompanying drawings illustrate one preferred form of the invention; and,

Figure 1 is a side elevation of a corn popper embodying the invention, parts of the case being broken away to reveal certain mechanism.

Fig. 2 is a rear elevation of the corn popper having parts broken away for clearance.

Fig. 3 is an elevational view of the other side of the popper showing the parts in a normal position.

Fig. 4 is a view similar to Fig. 3 but with the parts of the popper moved to a position where the machine is set in operation.

Fig. 5 is a vertical central sectional view through the popper with the parts thereof, set as illustrated in Fig. 3.

Fig. 6 is another vertical central sectional view through the popper with the parts thereof, set as illustrated in Fig. 4.

Fig. 7 is an enlarged detailed fragmentary view of the coin clutch employed in the popper.

Fig. 8 is a similar view of the coin clutch showing the parts thereof in a position where the coin is about to be released.

Fig. 9 is a fragmentary detailed sectional view through the coin clutch taken on line IX—IX of Fig. 7.

Fig. 10 is a fragmentary edge elevation of the time clutch mechanism employed in the popper.

Fig. 11 is a detailed view of the time clutch parts being broken away for clearance.

Fig. 12 is a view of one of the operating levers of the time clock mechanism; and,

Fig. 13 is an edge view of said lever shown in Fig. 12.

The corn popper case 16 may be made of any suitable material and provided with panels of glass 18 where desired so as to afford the operator a view of the popping corn.

A removable top 20 affords access to the interior of case 16 and when removed, permits filling hopper 22 with unpopped corn 24, the weight of which plays an important part, as will more fully be hereinafter set down. Hopper 22 terminates at its lower portion in a throat 26, the depending end of which is opened and closed by a flap 28 and a perforated slide 30. The space provided in throat 26 between flap 28 and slide 30 serves as a measuring compartment to determine the charge of unpopped corn 24 that is to be fed into housing 32.

A bracket 34 secured to slide 30 is in connection with arm 36 mounted upon shaft 38. This shaft 38 is journaled in spaced apart side walls 40 of housing 32, and is oscillated when the machine is operated. Bracket 34 swings flap 28

about its pintle 42 in a manner clearly shown in Figs. 5 and 6.

Case 16 has a coin slot 44 provided through one wall thereof, which is in communication with coin chute 46 leading to the hereinafter described coin clutch assembly.

To overcome the undesirable patron reaction, as a result of a coin being inserted in the popper without result, this machine is equipped with a safety device in the nature of slidably mounted closure 48 that is movable to and from a position across slot 44. This closure is reciprocally mounted against the inner face of case 16 adjacent to slot 44 through the medium of guides 50 and a link 52 joins closure 48 and shaft 54, which is journaled in the sides of corn hopper 22. A plate 56 lies in the position shown in Figs. 5 and 6 when a sufficient amount of corn 24 is present to overcome the action of gravity upon closure 48, but when the amount of corn 24 in hopper 22 is reduced to a point where the weight thereof is not sufficient to overcome the action of gravity on closure 48, said closure will move downwardly across coin slot 44 to close the same and thereby prevent the introduction of a coin by the customer or operator. When a fresh supply of corn 24 is introduced into hopper 22, plate 56 will be depressed again and closure 48 will be lifted where a coin may be introduced with assurance that there is a supply of corn available.

Holder 32 may be made of sheet metal and formed as shown in the illustrated embodiment of the preferred form of the invention. Side walls 40 are planar and in parallel spaced apart relation, while the arcuate wall 58 sets off a part of the space between walls 40 so that the popping of the corn may occur within a closed oven-like receptacle. Wall 58 has an inlet port 60 provided therethrough for the reception of corn 24, and this port 60 extends transversely and substantially entirely across wall 58. Another wall 62 cooperates with wall 58 and walls 40 in presenting an open-bottom housing, the lower portion of which extends into an oil pan 64. The open side of this housing 32, which is so formed, is closed by a cover 66 which should have a sheet of transparent material therein so that the operator might view the popping action through said sheet of transparent material and aforementioned window 18.

Cover 66 is substantially L-shape in that it has a laterally extending portion 68 at the upper edge thereof which is joined at its one end to shaft 70, journaled in walls 40 of housing 32. Cover 66 is free to move about the axis of shaft 70 as the hereinafter mentioned mechanism acts upon the same, and an arm 72 is carried by portion 68 into the path of travel of the manually operated mechanism.

Heating elements 74 are provided for raising the temperature of the popping oil in pan 64 to a point where unpopped corn 24 will be popped. These elements 74 may be submerged directly in the popping oil within pan 64 and are carried by the lower portion of housing 32.

A holder 76 is swingably mounted within housing 32 by main shaft 78. The lower portion or bottom of holder 76 is provided with perforations 80 and when holder 76 is in the normal position, the perforated portion is below the level of the popping oil in pan 64. This holder is U-shaped in cross section and extends transversely across holder 32 from one wall 40 to the opposite wall 40. The edges of holder 76 should be very close to walls 40 so that as it is swung to and

from the normal position, shown in Fig. 6, the corn, either popped or unpopped, will not escape therefrom.

The free edge of leg 82 moves along in close proximity to the inner face of wall 58 as holder 76 moves from the normal position shown in Fig. 6, to the ejected position illustrated in Fig. 5. Holder 76 is extended outwardly from main shaft 78 and formed to present a channel 84 into which the lower end of cover 66 is nested during the popping interval.

Inlet port 60 is opened and closed through the medium of a flap 86 hingedly supported as at 88 by arcuate wall 58. Flap 86 is between walls 40 and length is imparted thereto by the addition of a plate 90 which is hingedly attached to the free edge of flap 86. A guide rod 92 supports plate 90 as it is moved to and from the full line position illustrated in Fig. 6. A rod 94 carried by flap 86 projects beyond walls 40 through the arcuate slots 96 provided therein. One end of rod 94 lies likewise in the path of travel of a manually operated mechanism so that flap 86 is moved at the proper time. Obviously, flap 86 and its associated plate 90 are in the position shown in dotted lines of Fig. 6 when unpopped corn 24 is dumped from throat 26 through port 60 and thence into holder 76 in housing 32.

An oil reservoir 98 is provided in the bottom of case 16 and immediately below pan 64. This reservoir 98 is relatively large and any popping oil dropping from the lowermost portion of edge 100 of pan 64 will fall back into reservoir 98. The level of the popping oil in pan 64 may be maintained, therefore, at the lowermost point on edge 100 and if a greater or lesser portion of housing 32 is desired to be submerged in the popping oil, pan 64 may be raised or lowered through the medium of an adjusting nut 102 threaded on bolt 104, which passes through ears 106 and 108 provided on holder 32 and pan 64 respectively.

The supply of popping oil in pan 64 is maintained at the desired level through the medium of a pump 110 which is operably connected to main shaft 78 by arm 112. Pump rod 114 has the conventional piston 116 mounted on the inner end thereof and a tube 118 is in communication with pump 110 and the lower portion of reservoir 98. A branch tube 120 has one end in communication with tube 118 and the other end thereof, projecting into pan 64. Conventional type check valves 122 and 124 are provided in tubes 118 and 120 respectively, so that as pump 110 is operated, oil is withdrawn from reservoir 98 and forced into pan 64. The end of pump 110 must be pivotally supported by a fixture 126 so as to permit freedom of movement as main shaft 78 is rotated.

An operating lever 128, pivotally mounted to a portion of case 16 as at 130, extends outwardly through a slot 132 and terminates in the form of a handle 134 which may be grasped by the operator after coin 136 has been inserted into chute 46 through slot 44. The coin 136 serves as a part of the coin clutch and unless the coin be present in the clutch mechanism, main shaft 78 cannot be rotated by operating lever 128. Figs. 7 to 9 inclusive illustrate in detail the manner of employing a coin 136 to establish connection between lever 128 and main shaft 78.

Plate 138 is rigidly secured to a member 140 which forms a part of case 16. Shaft 78 extends through plate 138 and the laterally extending arcuate flange 142 integral with plate 138 is con-

centric with shaft 78. This flange 142 terminates just below the plane of the horizontal axis of shaft 78 so that when coin 136 reaches the end of flange 142, the coin will drop by gravity into a suitable receptacle, not here shown, or into the bottom of case 16.

Disc 144 is keyed to shaft 78 and provided with a shoulder 146 as well as with a series of teeth 148 along a portion of its periphery. A dog 150 pivotally mounted as at 152 to plate 138 has one end thereof in engagement with the periphery of disc 144. Spring 154 yieldably maintains dog 150 in the position shown in Fig. 7 so that as disc 144 is rotated about the axis of shaft 78 in either direction, the full stroke must be completed before a reversal of the movement can take place. A flat irregular oscillating plate 156 is loosely mounted upon shaft 78 so that disc 144 lies between plate 138 and oscillating plate 156. Pin 158 projects laterally from oscillating plate 156 and receives one end of link 160, the other end of which is secured to lever 128 intermediate its ends.

A pawl 162 pivotally mounted upon the back side of oscillating plate 156 by pin 164 is substantially the same thickness as disc 144, lies in the same plane therewith and partially circumscribes the same as illustrated in Figs. 7 and 8. This pawl 162 has a shoulder 166 which engages shoulder 146 during the operation of the machine. Spring 168 carried by pin 170 on oscillating plate 156 yieldably urges pawl 162 to the inoperative position.

When coin 136 reaches the position shown in Fig. 7, it rests upon an arcuate face 172 formed on the outer edge of pawl 162. Downward pressure on handle 134 of lever 128 overcomes the force of spring 174 and draws oscillating plate 156 with pawl 162 around the axis of main shaft 78. As coin 136 is forced beneath flange 142, pawl 162 is depressed and moved inwardly around pin 164 against the force of spring 168 to a point where shoulders 146 and 166 are interengaged. Continued downward movement therefore, of lever 128 will rotate shaft 78 because of the aforesaid interconnection and because disc 144 is keyed thereto. As coin 136 approaches the end of flange 142 main shaft 78 will be turned in one direction. When coin 136 is released by the termination of flange 142, shoulders 146 and 166 are disengaged and lever 128 together with link 160 and plate 156 are free to move without affecting the machine. As will be hereinafter set down, a lock will come into play immediately prior to releasing coin 136 so that the machine may remain in the popping position for a predetermined period of time.

Main shaft 78 extends across the machine and is journaled in two spaced apart sills 140. The coin clutch mechanism just described is mounted upon one end of shaft 78 and a spring 176 is coiled about the other end. This spring has one end secured to collar 178 adjustably secured to shaft 78, while the other end thereof rests against a portion of sill 140. When shaft 78 is rotated a part of a turn, while coin 136 travels beneath flange 142, spring 176 is having energy stored therein so as to be able to turn shaft 78 back to the point of beginning when the latch which holds the shaft against movement is released.

A supporting plate 180 mounted upon member 140 has an out-turned lip 182 along the upper portion thereof and an opening 184 formed there-through, as illustrated in Fig. 1. Arm 186 secured to shaft 78 extends upwardly and radially there-

from, and has a hook-shaped dog 188 pivotally attached to the free end thereof. The free end of dog 188 rides over flange 182 on plate 180 and as arm 186 approaches the position shown in dotted lines of Fig. 1, the laterally extending pin 192 engages rocker arm 194 to close the circuit supplying current to heating elements 74. A mercury switch 196 of conventional type is carried on rocker arm 194 and during the time arm 186 is in the position shown in dotted lines of Fig. 1, switch 196 will be tilted so that the points therein are closed in the well-known manner. When arm 186 is returned to the position shown in full lines of Figs. 1 and 11, rocker arm 194 will be drawn back to the position shown in Fig. 1, through the action of gravity. Arm 186 has a notch 198 formed in one edge thereof intermediate its ends for the purpose of receiving the intumed end of latch lever 200 that is pivotally mounted as at 202 to plate 180. A spring 204 yieldably urges latch lever 200 into engagement with notch 198 and one end of this lever 200 is in the path of travel of a pin 206 that is carried by arm 208 of a conventional time clock.

This arm 208 has a roller 210 overhanging flange 182 of plate 180 and in the path of travel of dog 188. Arm 208 is merely the setting arm of the time clock and as it is moved to the left from the position shown in Fig. 11, the time clock is set in motion. Arm 186 is moved from the position shown in full lines of Fig. 1 to the position shown in dotted lines thereof as lever 128 is depressed and after coin 136 has been fed into the machine. When arm 186 is so moved, dog 188 will move setting arm 208 to the left (Fig. 11) until dog 188 drops down over the end 212 of flange 182, dog 188 will then swing around its pivotal connection 214 out of engagement with roller 210. Arm 186 will continue on down to the position shown in dotted lines of Fig. 1, where engagement with the intumed end of latch lever 200 will cause it to remain. Moving pin 206 out of engagement with lever 200 permits it to be drawn into engagement with notch 198.

After the time clock runs the predetermined period of time for which it has been set, arm 208 will be released and its spring 216 will snap it back to the position shown in Fig. 11, where pin 206 will strike latch lever 200, overcome the tension of spring 204 and withdraw the end thereof from notch 198. This action will release the retaining hold on shaft 78 and spring 176 will rotate shaft 78 back to the point of beginning. The strength of spring 176 is great enough to move all parts associated with shaft 78 back to a normal position.

When arm 186 is returned to the position shown in Fig. 11, dog 188 will ride over roller 210. Arm 208 of the time clock is pivotally mounted on shaft 218 to which one end of spring 216 is secured—the other end of spring 216 is fastened to arm 208. A catch 220 is pivotally secured as at 222 to the lower end of arm 208 and a spring 224 urges the free end of catch 220 against the face of cam 226. A notch 228 formed in the face of this cam is engaged by shoulder 230 of catch 220 when arm 208 has been moved to the left and to the set position by arm 186 and dog 188. Pin 232 carried by the free end of catch 220 rides along the inclined face 234 of a stationary part of the time clock as cam 226 and catch 220 are moved about the axis of 218 by the train of gears 236 that are driven by spring 216. When pin 232 is drawn over the high portion of face

234, shoulder 230 is withdrawn from shoulder 228 of cam 226 and arm 208 is released.

What has been described with respect to a time clock is well known in the art, and it is also understood that the movement of setting arm 238, upon which face 234 is formed, will vary the length of time which arm 208 will remain fixed after being moved to a set position by arm 186.

As main shaft 78 is rotated to set the time clock and to move coin 136 to a released position, bar 240 is moved in the direction of the arrow shown in Fig. 3. Bar 240 has one end thereof attached to arm 112 and has a head 242 on the other end thereof which is slidably mounted upon the adjacent side wall 40 of housing 32. A slot 244 accommodates pin 246 that is stationary upon wall 40. Head 242 has a cam slot 248 formed therein for the reception of a roller 250 mounted upon the free end of arm 252, the other end of which is secured to shaft 38. As bar 240 is moved from the position shown in Fig. 3 to the position shown in Fig. 4, shaft 38 is rotated so as to withdraw bracket 34 from beneath flap 28.

As bar 240 is moved, as just indicated, rod 94 will be struck by finger 254 and moved along slots 96 to open flap 86 against the force of spring 256. Finger 254 is pivotally secured as at 258 to bar 240 and is free to move about said pivotal connection in one direction only. Ear 260 precludes movement in the opposite direction and therefore, as bar 240 is moved in the direction of the arrow, rod 94 will be moved downwardly along arcuate slots 96 to carry flap and plate 86 and 90 respectively, to the position shown in dotted lines of Fig. 6 where unpopped kernels of corn 24 may pass into housing 32 through port 60.

A pin 262 is carried by head 242 so that as shaft 78 is returned to the position shown in Fig. 3 through the action of spring 176, arm 72 on cover 66 will be forced downwardly to the position illustrated in Fig. 3 to open cover 66. Such action upon cover 66 occurs as holder 76 is moved upwardly by main shaft 78 to eject the popped corn into chute 264, which is disposed with respect to housing 32 as illustrated in Figs. 5 and 6. Chute 264 extends exteriorly of case 16 and its extended end is closed by a swingable cover 266. A manually operable trigger 268 is pivotally mounted in chute 264 so that one end thereof engages cover 266 in a manner as to open said cover when the trigger is moved about pivotal support 270. Spring 272 yieldably maintains cover 266 in a closed position and an agitator 274 has one end secured to cover 266 and the other end thereof, positioned close to the inner end of chute 264. As cover 266 is opened, agitator 274 will move along the inner face of the lower inclined wall of chute 264 and assist in expelling the popped corn which has been dumped into chute 264 by holder 76.

Transverse slots 276 are formed in the said lower wall of chute 264 directly above an inclined apron 278 which is positioned so as to return any collected popping oil to reservoir 98. If holder 76 should empty any popping oil into chute 264, it will therefore be discharged through slots 276 onto apron 278 and thence back into reservoir 98.

While the operation of the various groups of mechanism has been made clear during the course of the foregoing specifications, it re-

mains to be noted that the timing of these various groups and the parts described, is such as to cause freedom of movement and quick and efficient operation of the machine after the coin has been inserted into slot 44. As lever 128 is depressed, main shaft 78 is rotated to perform the following functions: First, pump a charge of oil into pan 64 from reservoir 98; second, move flap 86 to open port 60; third, discharge unpopped corn that is in throat 26; fourth, close port 60.

While these steps are being performed, switch 196 is being closed and the time clock is being set so as to release main shaft 78 at the end of a predetermined interval of time. When the shaft is released and spring 176 returns all the parts associated therewith to the normal position, pump 110 will serve as a dampening member to cushion and relieve any undesirable force that might be exerted at that time.

The illustrated embodiment of the invention shown in the drawings and described in the foregoing specification, is sufficiently clear to permit one skilled in the art to understand this invention, and since detailed limitations have been used merely to describe the operation of the form illustrated, it is desired to be limited only by the scope of the appended claims.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. In a corn popper of the character described, an oil pan; popping oil in said pan; an open-bottom housing having the lower portion thereof extending into said oil in the pan; means for heating the popping oil; a perforated holder for popcorn swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is below the level of the popping oil; means for swinging the holder from its said position; and a time clock for rendering operative said last mentioned means after the holder has been in said position a predetermined length of time, said pan being supported by the housing by adjustable elements adapted to raise and lower the pan to submerge a predetermined amount of the housing below the level of the popping oil contained in the said pan.

2. In a corn popper of the character described, a stationary oil pan; popping oil in said pan; a stationary open bottom housing having the lower portion thereof extending into said oil in the pan and provided with an open side and an inlet port through one wall thereof; means for heating the popping oil; a perforated holder for popcorn swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is below the level of the popping oil; means for swinging the holder from its said position; a cover for the open side of the housing; and means for swinging the cover to the open position as the holder is moved from its position below the level of the popping oil to eject the popped corn from the holder through its open side.

3. In a corn popper of the character described, a stationary oil pan; popping oil in said pan; a stationary open bottom housing having the lower portion thereof extending into said oil in the pan and provided with an open side and an inlet port through one wall thereof; means for heating the popping oil; a perforated holder for popcorn swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is below the level of the popping oil;

means for swinging the holder from its said position; a cover for the open side of the housing; and means for swinging the cover to the open position as the holder is moved from its position below the level of the popping oil to eject the popped corn from the holder through its open side, said cover being disposed in the closed position when the holder is in its said position below the level of the popping oil.

4. In a corn popper of the character described, a stationary oil pan; popping oil in said pan; a stationary open bottom housing having the lower portion thereof extending into said oil in the pan and provided with an open side and an inlet port through one wall thereof; means for heating the popping oil; a perforated holder for popcorn swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is below the level of the popping oil; means for swinging the holder from its said position; a cover for the open side of the housing; means for swinging the cover to and from a position closing the open side of the housing as the holder is moved to and from its position below the level of the popping oil respectively; and a flap to cover the inlet port when the holder is in its said last mentioned position and when the cover is closed.

5. In a corn popper of the character described, a stationary oil pan; popping oil in said pan; a stationary open bottom housing having the lower portion thereof extending into said oil in the pan and provided with an open side and an inlet port through one wall thereof; means for heating the popping oil; a perforated holder for popcorn swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is below the level of the popping oil; means for swinging the holder from its said position; a cover for the open side of the housing; means for swinging the cover to and from a position closing the open side of the housing as the holder is moved to and from its position below the level of the popping oil respectively; and a flap to cover the inlet port when the holder is in its said last mentioned position and when the cover is closed, said flap being interconnected to the holder by means for moving the flap to uncover the port for an interval of time just before the holder reaches the position below the level of the popping oil.

6. In a corn popper of the character described, a stationary oil pan; popping oil in said pan; a stationary, open bottom housing having the lower portion thereof extending into said oil in the pan and provided with an open side and an inlet port through one wall thereof; means for heating the popping oil; a perforated holder for popcorn swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is submerged below the level of the popping oil; manually operable means for swinging the holder to its said position; a spring for swinging the holder from its said position; a cover for the open side of the housing; means connecting the cover with said manually operable means for permitting its movement to a position closing the open side of the housing when the holder is moved to said submerged position; a flap for the inlet port; means interconnecting said manually operable means and the flap for moving the flap to the port opening position as the holder approaches its said submerged position; a hopper

for unpopped corn; means for feeding a charge of unpopped corn from the hopper; and structure interconnecting the manually operable means and said feeding means for feeding unpopped corn through the inlet port when the port is open.

7. In a corn popper of the character described, a stationary oil pan; popping oil in said pan; a stationary, open bottom housing having the lower portion thereof extending into said oil in the pan and provided with an open side and an inlet port through one wall thereof; means for heating the popping oil; a perforated holder for popcorn swingably mounted in the housing for movement to and from a position where a portion thereof is submerged below the level of the popping oil; manually operable means for swinging the holder to its said position; a spring for swinging the holder from its said position; a cover for the open side of the housing; means connecting the cover with said manually operable means for permitting its movement to a position closing the open side of the housing when the holder is moved to said submerged position; a flap for the inlet port; means interconnecting said manually operable means and the flap for moving the flap to the port opening position as the holder approaches its said submerged position; a hopper for unpopped corn; means for feeding a charge of unpopped corn from the hopper; and structure interconnecting the manually operable means and said feeding means for feeding unpopped corn through the inlet port when the port is open, said means interconnecting the flap and manually operable means being adapted to allow the flap to close the port immediately after the charge of unpopped corn is fed into the holder through the inlet port and prior to the popping of said corn.

8. In a corn popper of the character described, a case having a coin slot formed therein; a hopper for unpopped corn; means for feeding a charge of said corn from the hopper as coins are introduced into the case through said slot; a closure for the slot; and means interconnecting the closure with the hopper, said means being held in a position to maintain the closure inoperative by the corn in said hopper.

9. In a corn popper of the character described, a case having a coin slot formed therein; a hopper for unpopped corn; means for feeding a charge of said corn from the hopper as coins are introduced into the case through said slot; a closure for the slot; and means interconnecting the closure with the hopper, said means being held in a position to maintain the closure inoperative by the corn in said hopper, the said interconnecting means being released to cause the closure to cover the coin slot when all of the corn in the hopper has been fed from the hopper.

10. In a corn popper of the character described; a case; means for popping corn within the case; a delivery chute extending from the case and adapted to receive the charge of popped corn from the corn popping means; a cover for the outer end of the chute; a trigger for moving the cover to the open position; and an agitator connected to the cover, said agitator being extended into the chute and movable therein to promote movement of popcorn therethrough as the cover is opened by the trigger.

ROBERT E. KORTUM, JR.