June 26, 1962 W. E. RANKIN 3,040,617

COIN VIEWING DEVICE

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Fig. 1.

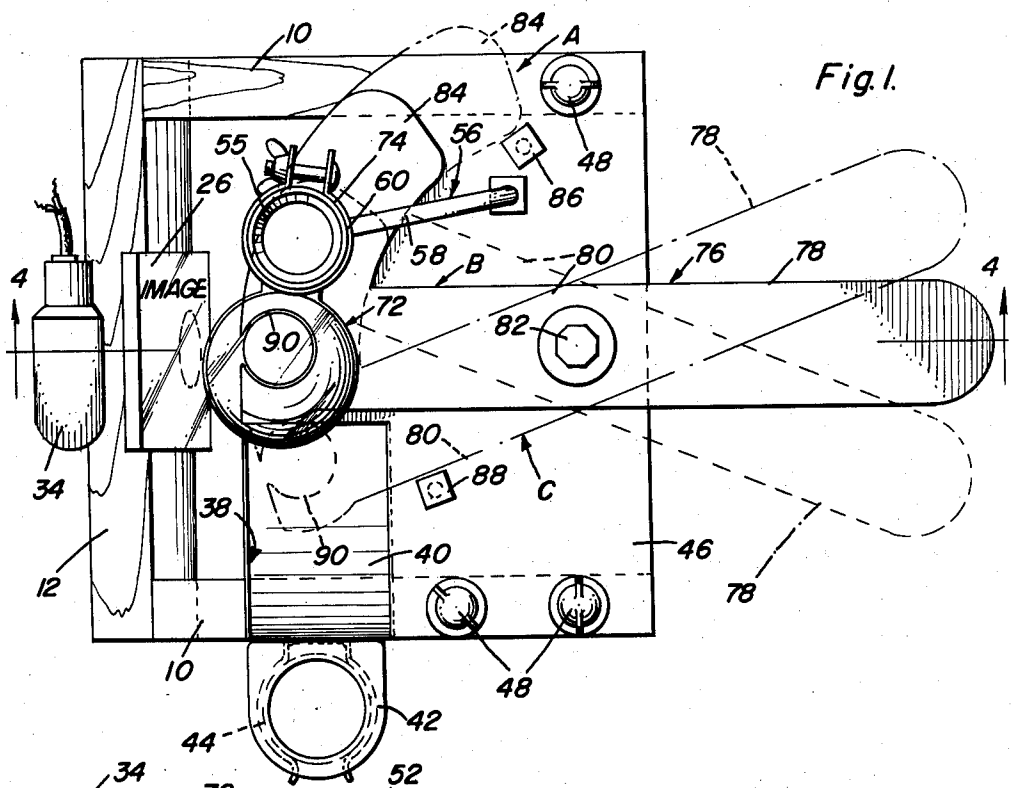
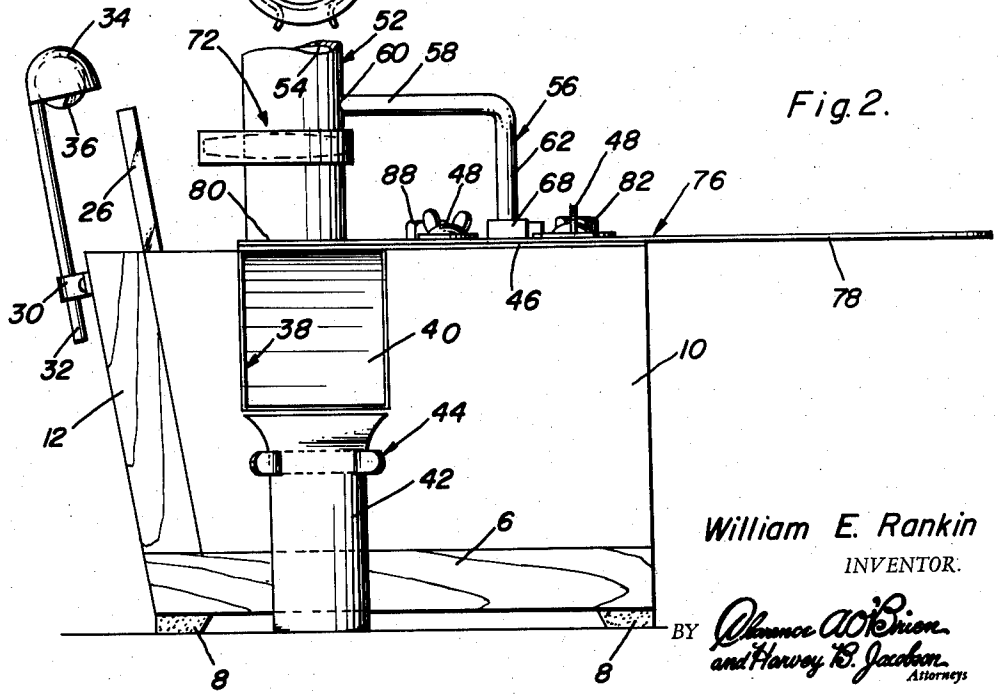


Fig. 2.



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Fig. 3.

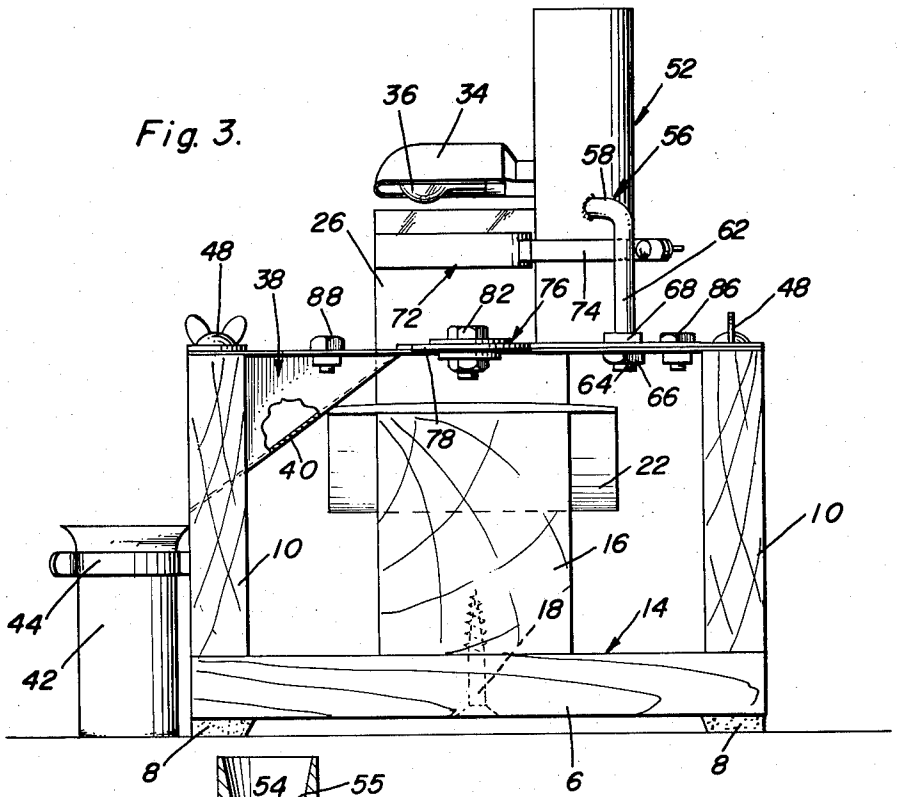
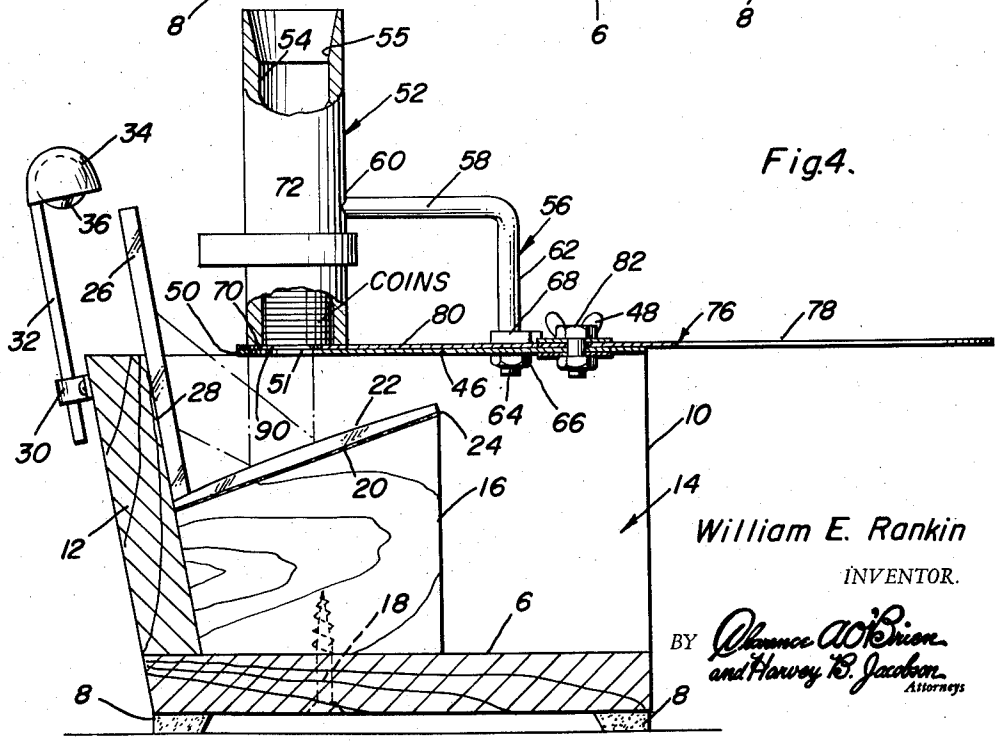


Fig.4.



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COIN VIEWING DEVICE

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This invention relates to an improved coin viewer for use primarily by numismatists.

As is generally well known, coin collecting is one of the oldest and most popular hobbies and is one that is growing each year. There are thousands of coin dealers and many coin clubs in the United States alone. According to practice, the numismatist must check thousands of coins before finding the particular coins which he wishes to retain and place in his collection. Manifestly, each coin must be checked for date, mint mark and condition. On some U.S. coins a mint mark and date appear on opposite sides of the coin. Therefore, the user of the device must inspect both sides of each coin.

An object of the invention is to provide a simple, practical, easy-to-use device, wherein a specially constructed handle-equipped lever enables the operator to pick up a coin from the discharge end of a conveniently located hopper-like coin stacking tube, move the coin to the left of the tube to assume a readily visible position. While in this viewing position, the observer with or without the aid of a suitably positioned magnifying glass, examines the exposed side of the coin.

As above mentioned, the viewer is of the utmost simplicity in construction and operation. It can be manufactured at a low cost and can be adapted easily to different kinds of coins.

In carrying out the principles of the invention, the construction is such that it is practical and easy to view both sides of the inspected coin at the same time. To this end, the construction embodies mirrors. These mirrors are fixedly mounted in the base of the machine in divergent relationship and the upstanding mirror is so positioned that it enables the viewer to obtain a direct view of the top side of the coin and a reflected image of the bottom thereof at the same time.

A further object of the invention is to provide a construction wherein the principal usable component parts are all mounted in proper relationship on a plate. This plate is equipped with an upstanding hopper-like coin receiving stacking and dispensing tube. If desired the tube may be provided with a suitably located and elevated magnifying glass which assumes a position over the coin checking station. The open bottom end of the tube is spaced a prerequisite distance above the underlying flat surface of the plate and it is in this space that a suitably constructed end portion of a readily operable lever is movable, said end portion having what is designated as a coin trapping slot.

Novelty is also predicated on providing limit stops to the left and right of the aforementioned tube and which cooperate with component portions of the specially constructed L-shaped lever. One stop to the right of the tube, constitutes the first or starting position and serves to align the coin slot with the open bottom of the tube to receive the bottommost coin. The stop on the other side of the tube limits the movement of the lever in this direction and this particular stop is located for cooperation with an inclined built-in chute which serves to retrieve the coins or, if desired, to collect the same in a receptacle provided therefor.

By having the essential component parts mounted on the plate and the plate removable from a supporting box-like base, the plate, as an assembly, may be removed and another plate positioned in its place, the last-named plate having a corresponding construction and arrangement of component parts but to serve the use of the device for other

size coins. It follows that this construction may be changed over quickly for viewing coins of different diameters. The majority of numismatists collect only one type of coin. However, because of the inexpensiveness of the machine and interchangeable parts the user will be greatly aided in handling, grading and sorting coins.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of a coin viewing device, constructed in accordance with the invention and showing the manner in which it is used;

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of the same;

FIG. 3 is a front elevational view with a portion broken away to show the coin retrieving chute; and

FIG. 4 is a section with parts in elevation taken on the section line 4—4 of FIG. 1, looking in the direction of the arrows.

The aforementioned base is a portable unit in the form of a simple hollow box-like stand or cabinet. As seen in FIG. 4, this cabinet comprises a horizontal bottom wall 6 provided on its underneath side with supporting pads or feet 8. The upstanding or vertical side walls are denoted at 10 and the slightly inclined back or rear wall is denoted at 12. The front 14 is open. Mounted within the confines of the hollow portion of the base is a suitable riser or elevating block 16 screwed and held in place by a fastener 18. The upper end 20 of this block is inclined downwardly and rearwardly and a first reflecting mirror 22 is mounted thereon and glued or otherwise fastened in place as at 24. The left hand end of the mirror 22 registers and cooperates with a second inclined image projecting or reflecting mirror 26. This mirror is glued as at 28 on the interior of the back wall and extends to a desired position above the top of the back wall as illustrated. There is provided a source of illumination on the base comprising a bracket 30 carrying a supporting member 32 which, in turn, is provided with a shade 34 constructed as shown in FIG. 1 to accommodate an electric lamp or bulb 36. Obviously, this light is optional.

With further reference to the base, it will be seen in FIG. 3 that the left-hand side wall is constructed to accommodate an open-ended inclined channel-like coin return or retrieving chute 38 the bottom of which is denoted at 40 and which may be positioned to empty into a collecting receptacle 42 held in position by clip means 44.

The applicable and removable assembly which is mounted atop the base comprises a coin receiving, stacking and dispensing tube carrying a magnifying glass and bracketed in place and having an open end terminating a prerequisite distance above support means therefor, and a manually actuatable unit to pick up and examine the coins one by one in conjunction with the reflecting mirrors. More specifically, this means comprises a flat plate 46 which is removably bolted in place by thumb screws or the like as at 48. The left end or rearward edge portion of the plate, as at 50, is spaced forwardly from the upwardly projecting mirror 26 so as to permit full use of the reflecting mirror. The top plan configuration of the plate is approximately that shown in FIG. 1 and may be said to be generally flat and rectangular. In any event, the central or median rear edge portion of the plate is provided with an opening 51 which is of a diameter less than the diameter of a coin which is usable in conjunction therewith. The aforementioned hopper-like feeder and holder comprises a metal or suitable vertically disposed tube 52 the bore 54 of which permits the coins to be stacked therein in the manner shown in FIG. 4. This tube is held in a position of use by a simple

angle bracket or fixture 56 the horizontal arm of which 58 is welded or otherwise affixed to the median portion of the tube. The vertical arm 62 is threaded as at 64 and provided with cooperating nuts 66 and 68 which permit the bracket to be removed and also adjusted so that the lower open discharge end 70 of the tube may be moved toward and from the top surface of the plate 46 to regulate the size of the space into which the coins are dropped by gravity one by one. The aforementioned magnifying glass 72 may be of any suitable construction and has a clip or bracket 74 (FIG. 3) whereby the glass may be positioned as shown above the checking station which may be identified as the opening 51.

The means for handling the coin comprises, specifically, a lever 76 which is generally L-shaped in plan. The long flat faced arm 78 has a median portion 80 removably bolted and pivoted in place as at 82 on the plate. The extending end portion at the right in FIG. 1 constitutes the handle. The short arm which is coplanar with the long arm and is also flat faced is arcuate in plan and is denoted at 84 and constitutes a cut-off and valving member as it operates back and forth in the coin discharge space, that is, between the lower open end of the tube and the underlying portion of the plate. This lever has three positions A, B, C shown in full and dotted lines in FIG. 1. The position A is maintained by a suitable limit stop 86 which is to the right of the tube 52. A similar limit stop 88 is positioned to the left of the tube. These stops facilitate properly lining up the coin receiving and trapping slot 90 with the openable and closable discharge end of the feeding tube 52. It will be noticed that when the lever is in the A position the coin slot 90 is in registration with the coin which is to be picked up. This is shown in dotted lines. When the lever is in the B position or the intermediate position as shown in full lines in FIG. 1 the trapped coin is, of course, in registration with the opening 51 and the cooperating mirrors. When the lever is in the C position the coin and slot register with the chute and the coin drops from the slot into the chute and is retrieved in an obvious manner.

In actual practice, the operator sits at a table and faces the handle and open front of the machine. He then opens one end of an entire roll of coins and empties them into the flared upper end 55 of the tube 52. Obviously, loose coins may also be dropped into the tube if desired. By moving the swingable arm 78 manually over the flat surface of the top plate in three different positions A, B and C the operator (1) picks up one coin from the bottom of the tube 52 (the coin being held in the slot 90), (2) places the coin in the position to be viewed by the operator and (3) discharges the coin into the retrieving chute, all as is evident from the several positions A, B and C illustrated. The operator can clearly read the date and other marking of each coin, regardless of which side of the coin is exposed to his direct view. This is to say, that the addition and use of the two mirrors on the interior of the box provide an image of the underside of the coin which is visible to the operator. In fact, this image is visible in front of the actual coin so that the operator can see both surfaces of each coin as he moves the handle to the several stated positions.

As already mentioned, the plate with the component parts thereon constitutes an assembly which can be changed over quickly for viewing different denominations or diameters of coins simply by removing the wing nuts 48. Actual use of the experimental devices shows that they serve, as presently designed, to hold 50 pennies, 40 nickles, 50 dimes, 40 quarters and 20 halves.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A coin viewer comprising a portable base having a flat horizontal top, a hopper-like coin stacking and feeding tube mounted vertically above said top, said tube having an open coin discharging bottom spaced a predetermined distance above said top to allow the lowermost coin to drop by gravity toward said top, a manually actuatable lever generally L-shaped in plan and embodying a long arm pivoted between its ends on said top, the outer end of said arm projecting outwardly beyond an adjacent side of the base and providing a handle, the short arm being interposed between the discharge bottom of the tube and said top and being movable in the space provided therefor and serving as a closure and preventing the lowermost coin from discharging into said space, the inner end of said long arm having a coin receiving slot which when brought into exact alignment with said open bottom serves to permit the coin to deposit itself in the slot, then moved relative to the tube and in a direction to one side of the tube for inspection, said top having a small coin exposing opening therein located at a given coin inspecting spot where the deposited coin is to be temporarily stationed for viewing, said opening being of a diameter a fraction less than the diameter of the coin to be registered therewith, said coin slot, with the coin deposited therein, being movable into alignment with said opening, and cooperating image reflecting mirrors mounted in the base and cooperable with said opening, whereby to permit the user to obtain a direct view of the top side of the coin and a reflected view of the bottom at the same time.

2. The structure defined in claim 1, and wherein said base comprises a hollow box-like cabinet, there being two mirrors, said mirrors being aligned with each other and having their cooperating reflecting surfaces disposed in divergent relationship.

3. The structure defined in claim 2, and wherein said top comprises a flat plate removably mounted atop said base, said lever and tube being mounted on said plate and the plate, tube, and lever constituting an assembly, and said plate having limit stops to the right and left, respectively, of the tube to check the swinging movement of the lever in either or both directions, the stop at the right functioning to align the coin slot with the bottom of the tube.

4. The structure defined in claim 2, and wherein said top comprises a flat plate removably mounted atop said base, said lever and tube being mounted on said plate and the plate, tube, and lever constituting an assembly, and said plate having limit stops to the right and left, respectively, of the tube to check the swinging movement of the lever in either or both directions, the stop at the right functioning to align the coin slot with the bottom of the tube, and said base having a coin return chute adjacent to the stop at the left, whereby when the lever is in the left hand position the inspected coin is automatically dropped into the chute.

5. A portable coin viewer comprising a hollow cabinet constituting a base and having a bottom wall, side walls rising therefrom, an inclined back wall, and an open front; a first mirror facing upwardly and mounted above the bottom, a second companion mirror mounted on the interior of the back wall and facing and cooperating with the first mirror; a horizontal plate mounted on the side walls, the rearward edge of said plate being spaced forwardly from the back wall and providing an open space exposing said second mirror, said plate having an opening therein directly above the second mirror, said opening marking the coin viewing spot on said plate and being of a diameter less than the coin which is registered therewith to prevent the coin from passing therethrough while allowing the "down" face of the coin to be reflected from the first mirror to the second mirror and its image reflected from the second mirror for viewing, a hopper-like

coin stacking and depositing tube mounted vertically on the plate and having an open bottom spaced a predetermined distance above the plate, and a handle-equipped lever pivotally mounted atop the plate and having a portion with a coin depositing slot swingable in an arcuate path in the space between the plate and open bottom of said tube.

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