

Feb. 19, 1929.

1,702,987

G. C. WILSON

TRAY

Filed April 17, 1928

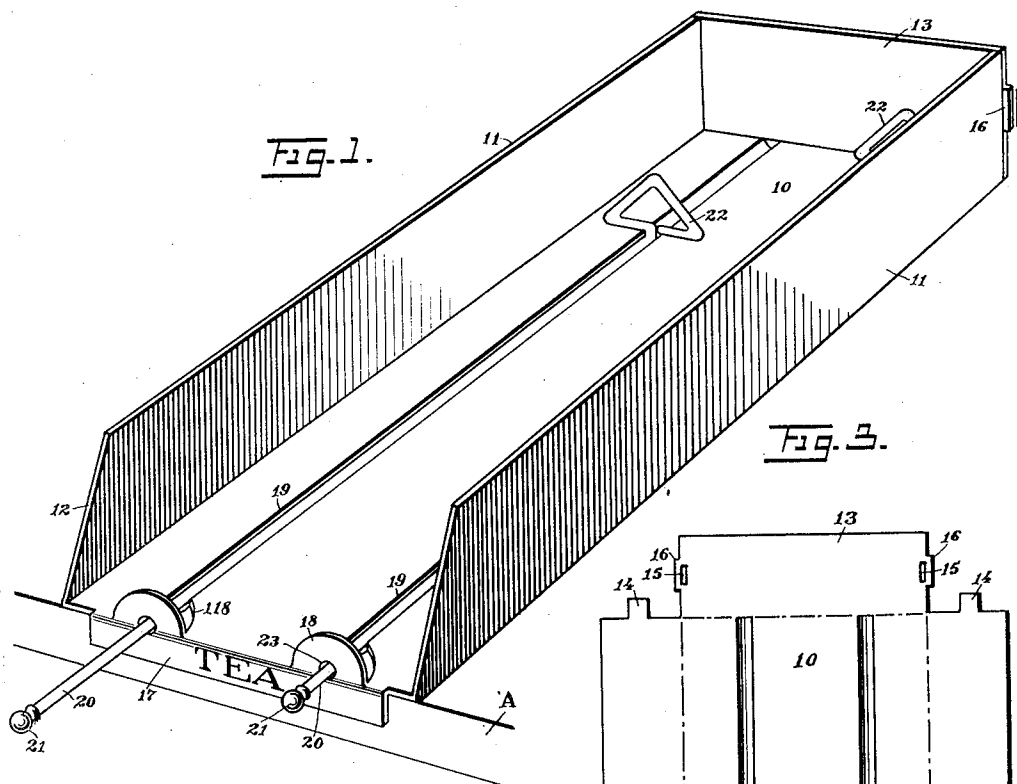


Fig. 3.

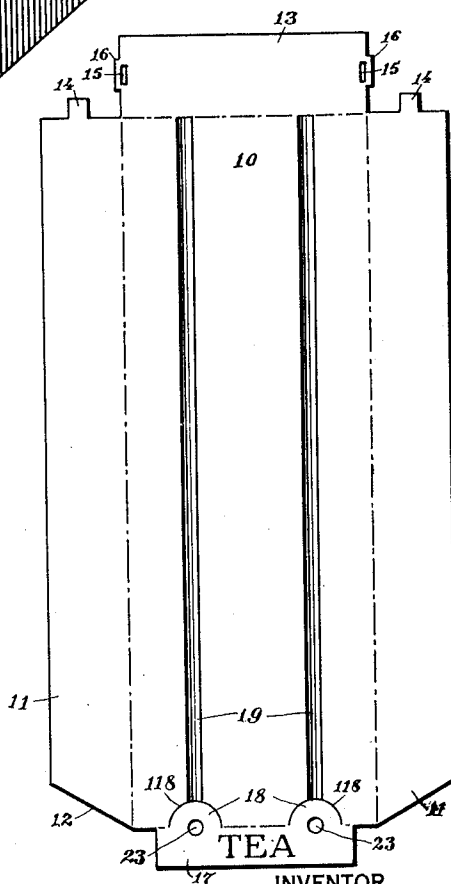
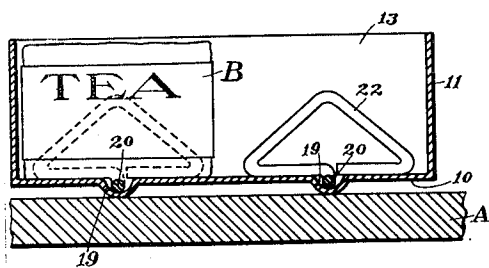


Fig. 2.



WITNESSES

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GORDON C. WILSON, OF GLENDO, WYOMING.

TRAY.

Application filed April 17, 1928. Serial No. 270,713.

My invention relates to a merchandise tray, and more particularly to a tray designed to constitute a container unit to be emplaced on shelves in stores for holding separate articles of merchandise in each unit, such merchandise, for example, as spices, drugs, tobaccos, and all other items of merchandise sold in packages, tins or bottles.

The general object of my invention is to provide a tray whereby merchandise may be dressed always to the front of the shelf with convenience and with the minimum of labor, a further object being to promote convenience in re-stocking the shelves by providing a unit which can be removed from the shelves, refilled, and then returned to its place.

The nature of my invention and its distinguishing features and advantages will clearly appear as the description proceeds.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification, it being understood that the drawings are merely illustrative of one example of the invention.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a tray embodying my invention;

Figure 2 is a transverse vertical section looking toward the rear of the tray and indicating a package of merchandise therein;

Figure 3 is a plan view of the blank employed in forming the tray body in the preferred form of my invention.

In carrying out my invention in accordance with the illustrated example, a tray is formed which advantageously in practice is stamped from a sheet metal blank shown in Figure 3. Said tray includes a bottom 10 and sides 11. The front edges 12 of the sides 11 are cut off to slope rearwardly at an angle of 30% or thereabout to decrease the visibility of the tray at the front of the shelf indicated conventionally at A. The back or rear end 13 of the tray is bent up from the blank of Figure 3 perpendicularly and on each side 11 at the rear end is a tongue 14 which is passed through a slot 15 at the adjacent end of the back 13, the material of the back having a flange 16 formed thereon for strength adjacent to the slot 15.

In the bottom 10 of the tray at the front end is a depending flange 17 bent downwardly from the material forming the bottom. Said flange 17 forms a stop adapted to contact with the front edge of the shelf A to limit the rearward movement of the tray and position the tray or a plurality of trays in

line with the front of the shelf. Rising from the bottom 10 is an ear 18. The ear 18 is duplicated in the illustrated example as the tray is indicated to constitute a unit to accommodate two rows of packages or the like of merchandise.

In the bottom 10 is a longitudinal groove or grooves 19 formed by depressing the material of the bottom. In each groove 19 of the unit is a slidable pull rod 20 of a size in cross section to lie below the top surface of the bottom 10 so as not to contact with the merchandise placed in the tray. Each pull rod 20 has a knob 21 or other handle or handhold. The rear end of each rod 20 is formed with a suitable pusher element or follower 22 to force the goods forwardly in response to a forward pull on the rod 20.

Advantageously in practice the merchandise moving member 22 is formed integral with the rod 20 and is given a triangular shape or other formation to be disposed transversely of the tray at both sides of the groove 19. Each pull rod 20 passes through and is guided by one of the ears 18 which is formed with a hole 23 therein for the purpose.

The letter B indicates a package of merchandise here marked "Tea". The tray in the illustrated form of the unit has a capacity to receive two longitudinal rows of packages of merchandise. The merchandise is placed in the tray with the push member or follower 22 adjacent to the rear end 13. It will be readily understood that a pull on the rod 20 will cause the member 22 to press against the rearmost package so that after a package has been removed from the front of the tray, the rod 20 and its pushing member 22 may be employed to move the row of packages forwardly to bring the front package again to the front of the tray for the proper dressing of the shelves. The movement of the front package under the pulling action of the rod 20 is arrested by the ear 18. Said ear is produced by cutting or striking out the material of the bottom 10 on an arcuate line, as indicated at 118 in Figures 1 and 3, and then bent upwardly.

The units can be in groups or singly, and can be readily slid back on the shelves the height of which is very little greater than the height of the packages they contain. The use of the units eliminates the necessity of reaching back into small cramped spaces in order to dress up the remaining portions of unsold stock. In the usual system employed

in arranging merchandise on shelves, the shelves are made wider than is actually necessary whereby the merchandise may be stacked, and thus small cramped spaces are avoided instead of being availed of as in my unit. Again, my unit permits of the trays being stacked one above another on the shelves.

I would state furthermore that while the illustrated example constitutes a practical embodiment of my invention, I do not limit myself strictly to the exact details herein illustrated, since, manifestly, the same can be considerably varied without departure from the spirit of the invention as defined in the appended claim.

I claim:

A tray of the class described, including integral sheet metal bottom, side and rear walls,

said bottom having a longitudinal pressed out groove the length thereof, a depending flange integral with the bottom at the front thereof adapted to contact with the front of a shelf to position the tray thereon, an ear struck up from said bottom at the front and projecting upwardly in a plane adjacent to that of the depending flange, said ear having a hole therethrough in alinement with said bottom groove, a pull rod in said groove and extending through said ear, said rod provided at its rear end with a transverse follower extending laterally on opposite sides of said groove, whereby packages in the tray may be dressed to the front thereof.

Signed at Glendo in the county of Platte and State of Wyoming this 31st day of March, A. D. 1928.

GORDON C. WILSON.