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H. D. BARTLETT

2,158,770

CONVERSION UNIT .

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Fig. 1.

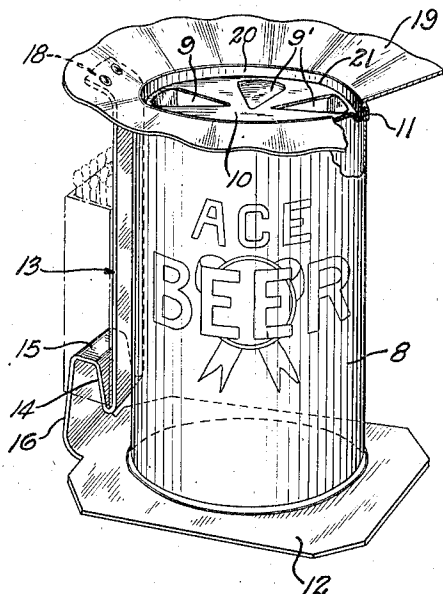


Fig. 3.

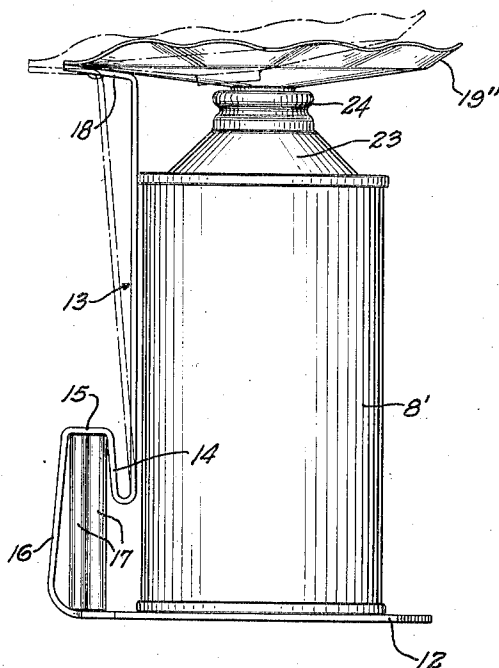
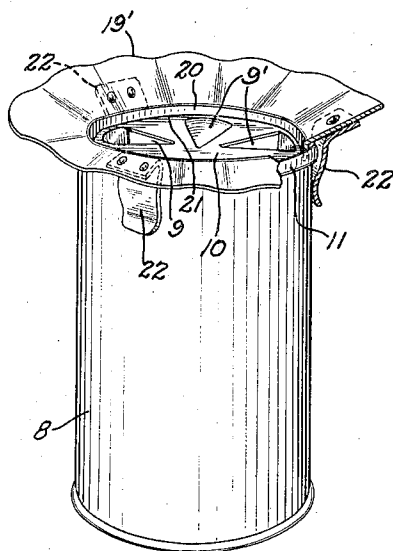


Fig. 2.

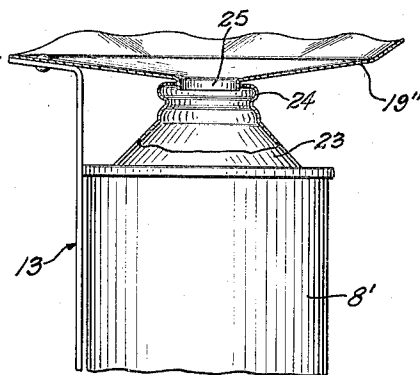


Fig. 4.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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CONVERSION UNIT

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5 Claims. (Cl. 131—51)

This invention relates to improvements in conversion units, and more particularly to a unit or accessory for converting discarded commodity containers into smokers' receptacles.

5 Numerous commodities are now sold in sealed metal containers or cans which are normally ruptured or opened for dispensing purposes and after the contents of a can has been poured out or used, the can is discarded. In the case of beer or like beverages, for instance, which are now
10 being vended extensively in cans, after the contents of a can has been poured, the can is discarded, and inn keepers and the like always have on hand a large quantity of used and discarded
15 cans of this character which have no apparent value and usefulness and which must eventually be disposed of with other rubbish.

With the above in mind, the present invention provides an accessory or unit attachable to or
20 connectable with a used commodity can or container to convert the same into a very handy and readily replaceable ash and smokers' receptacle.

In inns, taverns, restaurants and the like it is customary to provide on the various tables a number of ash trays and like receptacles for smokers. Due to the fact that these receptacles have a limited capacity, they require frequent attention and must be constantly emptied and cleaned. Also, where attractive and relatively
25 expensive receptacles are provided, there is great replacement expense as the same are often surreptitiously taken by patrons as souvenirs.

The present invention provides a means for overcoming the aforementioned objections and difficulties inasmuch as the improved unit or
35 accessory converts discarded beer cans or the like into cartridge-like or replaceable depositories for smokers' refuse, and such cans, when so utilized by means of the accessory unit, have relatively great capacity, eliminate the necessity of washing ash trays, can be removed, discarded and replaced when filled or dirty, and have no value or attraction to the souvenir hunter.

45 A further object of the invention is to provide a conversion unit of the character described which can be adapted to various styles and types of incombustible commodity containers including the two popular types of cans in which beer is now vended.

50 A further object of the invention is to provide a conversion unit of the character described which will form an excellent advertising medium because of the usage to which it is put and the fact that during usage it will effectively display a particular commodity container with its name
55

and advertising material thereon in the same manner in which it is sold.

Further objects of the invention are to provide a unit for converting a discarded commodity container into a refuse depository, which is of very simple construction, which is inexpensive, which is easily and quickly manipulated, which is neat and attractive in appearance, which has great utility, and which is well adapted for the purposes set forth.

10 With the above and other objects in view, the invention consists of the improved conversion unit, and its parts and combinations as set forth in the claims, and all equivalents thereof.

15 In the accompanying drawing in which the same reference characters indicate the same parts in all of the views:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view showing one type of can applied to a conversion unit therefor, portions being broken away and in section to show
20 details of construction;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view showing a modified form of conversion unit applied to the same type of can, parts being broken away and in section;

25 Fig. 3 is a side view of a modified form of conversion unit shown in use with another type of can; and

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary view of the upper portion of the combination shown in Fig. 3 with the neck portion of the container and the unit skirt
30 shown in section.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing, and especially that form of the invention depicted in Fig. 1, it will appear that the numeral 8 designates an emptied and used commodity can which is in condition so as to be normally discardable. The particular can illustrated in both Figs. 1 and 2 is a beer or beverage can of a well-known type wherein the can is opened for dispensing purposes by means of an opener or cutter which ruptures a wall portion of the upper end thereof to form a triangularly shaped dispensing opening 9. For the purposes of this invention, it may be convenient to additionally rupture said
40 wall of the can to provide several more spaced-apart openings 9'. As is common in cans of this character, an end wall 10 thereof is surrounded by a peripheral ridge or bead 11.

55 Cans of the type illustrated, after being emptied of their contents, are normally discarded, but the present invention contemplates the provision of an accessory or conversion unit whereby the can may be used as a discardable and replaceable refuse depository, and specifically the unit or

accessory coacting with the can to form an ash tray assemblage.

In the form of the invention shown in Fig. 1, the unit or accessory includes a flat base member 12 having a sheet metal resilient strip, indicated generally by the numeral 13, extending vertically upwardly from one side edge of the base. A portion of the metal strip, namely the lower end thereof is folded upwardly upon itself as at 14 and then outwardly laterally as at 15 and then downwardly as at 16, the portion 16 being offset laterally outwardly from the major upper portion of the strip. These folds and offsets in the strip cause its upper portion to have resiliency or springiness and in addition thereto, they provide supporting means for match containers. As shown in Fig. 1, a standard pocket match box depicted in broken lines may be mounted on the strip portion 16 so as to extend against the outer face of the major portion of the strip 13 and extend over portions of the strip sections 14 and 16. The arrangement also permits the holding of books of matches 17 in the manner shown in Fig. 3, wherein said folders of matches are confined between a side edge of the base 12 and the strip portion 15 between the strip portions 14 and 16.

The upper end of the resilient or yieldable strip 13 is flared outwardly as at 18 and is secured to a lower face portion of an annular skirt or tray 19. Said skirt or tray is of dished formation and terminates in an annular downturned neck or collar 20 adapted to surround a relatively large opening 21. Said neck or collar abuts against the can end 10 and also engages the inner surface of the annular ridge or bead 11 of the can. This engagement as between the neck 20 of the skirt and the ridge 11 of the can provides for a flush continuous construction which closes any crevices or joints as between the skirt and the end of the can and prevents leakage. The surfaces of the skirt 19 may be crimped or recessed to provide depressions for receiving and holding cigarettes or cigars and the like. In use, a discarded commodity can 8 is preferably provided at the end 10 with several additional openings 9' as previously described. Its opposite end is then disposed centrally on the upper face of the base 12, and the strip 13 and skirt 19 are then flexed or distorted outwardly so as to permit the top end of the can to position under the skirt 19. When it is correctly located, the neck 20 of the skirt reposes snugly against the inner face of the ridge 11 as previously described, and the resiliency of the accessory parts causes the skirt to forcibly bear against the end of the can, and the can is in effect removably clamped or held between the opposed skirt 19 and base 12. This assembly provides a very effective refuse depository or ash tray of substantial capacity. During smoking, cigarettes and the like may be temporarily rested or lodged on the skirt 19, and the discarded cigarettes, matches and ashes may be dropped through any of the openings 9 or 9' into the interior of the can. From time to time the container 8 may be removed by the reverse of the operation previously described, and it is then discarded and is replaced by a fresh and emptied used container of the same character. It is obvious, of course, that the supply of replacement cans 8 is not a problem because inns, taverns, restaurants and the like always have a large quantity of such used and previously emptied cans.

Fig. 2 illustrates a slight modification of the

invention wherein a conversion accessory in the form of a skirt 19' is applied to a discarded can 8 of the same character as that shown in Fig. 1. The construction of the skirt 19' is precisely similar to that shown in Fig. 1 except that the skirt 19' is held to the upper portion of the can 8 by means of a plurality of spaced-apart spring clips 22 secured to and depending from under portions of the skirt 19'. Said spring clips 22 yieldably engage upper wall portions of the container 8 in the manner shown, and it is obvious that the can may be readily detached from the skirt 19' for ready replacement.

Figs. 3 and 4 illustrate a conversion accessory adapted for use in connection with the well-known form of can 8', the can 8', however, being different in construction and form from the can 8 referred to in connection with the conversion accessories of Figs. 1 and 2. The can 8' has its upper end of frusto-conical formation as at 23 terminating in an open beaded and reduced neck 24 which is normally closed by a removable cap (not shown). When the can 8' is to be used with the conversion accessory, the can is of course emptied of its original contents and the cap is absent.

The conversion accessory is similar in all particulars to that shown and described in connection with the Figure 1 form of the invention, except that the skirt or tray 19'' has a larger face area and terminates in a reduced depending annular neck 25 corresponding to the inner diameter of the opening to the neck 24 of the container 8'. The can 8' is located on the base 12, and the strip 13 and skirt 19'' are flexed upwardly so as to permit passage of the upper end of the can under the skirt 19'', and then the parts 13 and 19'' are flexed to normal position so as to locate the skirt neck 25 within the container neck 24 as shown in Fig. 4. The assembly is then used in the manner of the assembly of Figs. 1 and 2, and it is obvious that whenever necessary the can 8' may be removed and discarded, and may be replaced by another emptied commodity container.

All forms of the conversion accessory are obviously of very simple construction utilizing a minimum number of parts, and the same may be stamped from sheet metal. Aside from the fact that they readily adapt normally discardable beverage cans and the like for temporary use as ash trays and refuse depositories, the assembly provides for a device having great utility, unusual appearance, and considerable advertising advantage. Due to the fact that the assembly utilizes as a component part thereof, a standard used commodity container, and the container naturally bears its label and other representative indicia, it is constantly before the user as an effective advertisement, and is a reminder of the product adapted to be vended in the container.

It should be understood that it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact details of construction and to the precise styles and forms of commodity containers herein shown and described, for various modifications within the scope of the claims may occur to persons skilled in the art.

What is claimed as the invention is:

1. A receptacle assembly for smoker's refuse, comprising a can having a closed lower end and a restricted opening in its upper end, one edge of the opening having a flange projecting into the can, said restricted opening and flange preclud-

ing ready removal of refuse from the can whereby the can is not susceptible of prolonged use for refuse, an apertured tray engaging the upper end of the can in registration with said opening, and resilient means carried by the tray and releasably engaging the can permitting removal and replacement of the can.

2. A receptacle assembly for smoker's refuse, comprising a can having a closed lower end and a restricted opening cut into the top wall of the can, a portion of the top wall adjacent an edge of said opening projecting substantially into the can and forming a baffle against ready removal of refuse from the can whereby periodic replacement of the can in the assembly is necessitated, a base on which the lower end of the can is mounted, an apertured tray engaging the upper end of the can in registration with said opening, and a resilient strap extending lengthwise of the can exteriorly thereof and resiliently connecting the base and the tray to releasably clamp the can therebetween.

3. The combination of a container having a restricted opening in its upper end and a clamp, said clamp including a base for the container, a resilient element connected to the base, and a funnel-shaped element rigidly secured to the resilient element and positioned in removable relation to the opening in the container, said resilient element having intermediate its base and funnel engaging portions a recessed portion adapted to maintain one or more match containers therein.

4. The combination of an open top container and a clamp, said clamp including a base for the container, a resilient element connected to the base, and a funnel-shaped element rigidly secured to the resilient element and positioned in removable relation to the opening in the container, said resilient element being formed with an outwardly projecting portion adapted to maintain one telescoping member thereover and a second telescoping member thereon, said telescoping members being the parts of a match box.

5. The combination of an open top container and a receptacle holder, said receptacle holder consisting of a funnel-shaped portion and a combined base and upright with the container being interposed between the funnel-shaped portion and the base, the upright being of resilient material and being constructed and arranged to retain on one side thereof match books and to retain on another side thereof a match box, said resilient element being adapted to maintain the bottom of the funnel-shaped member in registration with the open top of the container.

6. The combination of an open top container and a receptacle holder, said receptacle holder consisting of a funnel-shaped portion and a combined base and upright with the container being interposed between the funnel-shaped portion and the base, the upright being of resilient material and being constructed and arranged to retain on one side thereof match books and to retain on another side thereof a match box, said resilient element being adapted to maintain the bottom of the funnel-shaped member in registration with the open top of the container.

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