No. 668,727.

H. H. CHAPMAN.

Patented Feb. 26, 1901.

MERCHANT'S SHORT ACCOUNT CASE.

(No Model.)

(Application filed Apr. 14, 1900.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

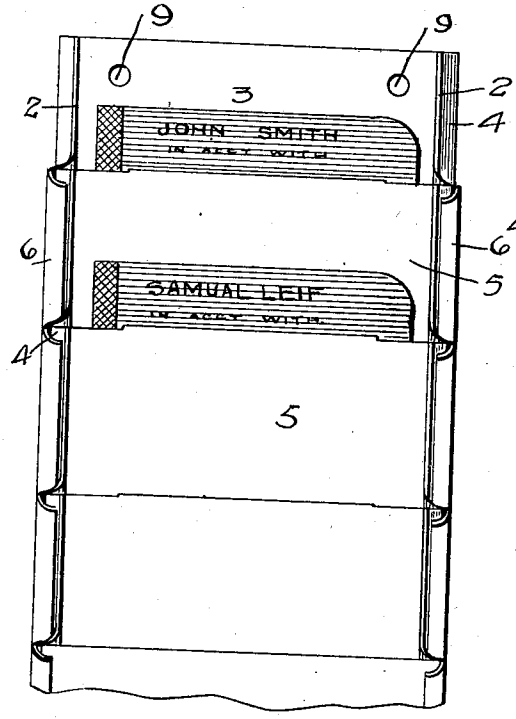

FIG. 1

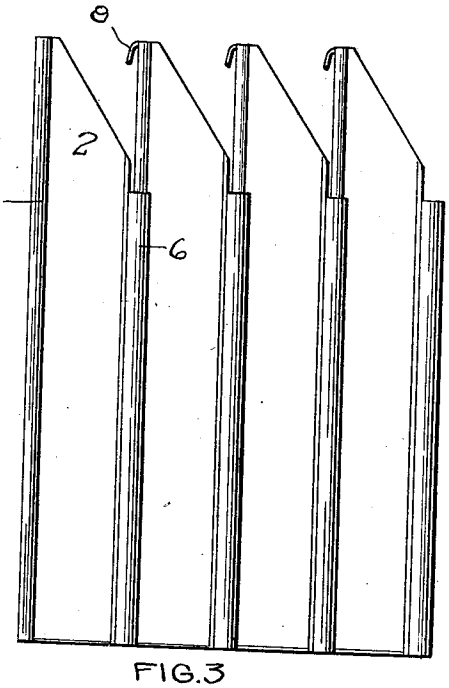

FIG. 3

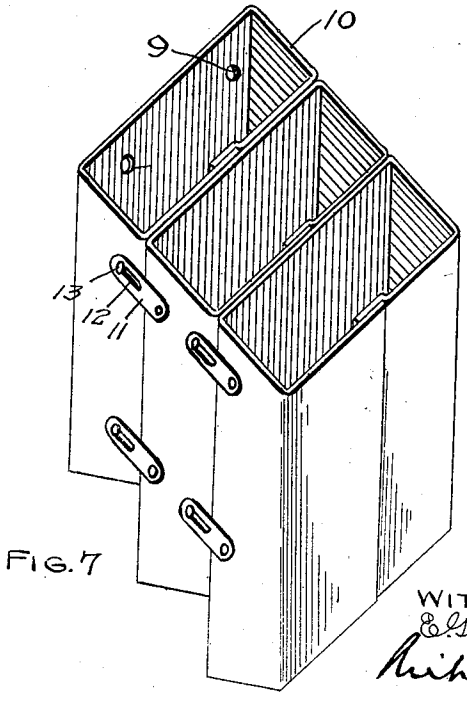

FIG. 7

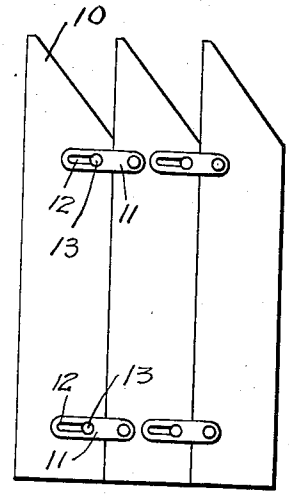

FIG. 8

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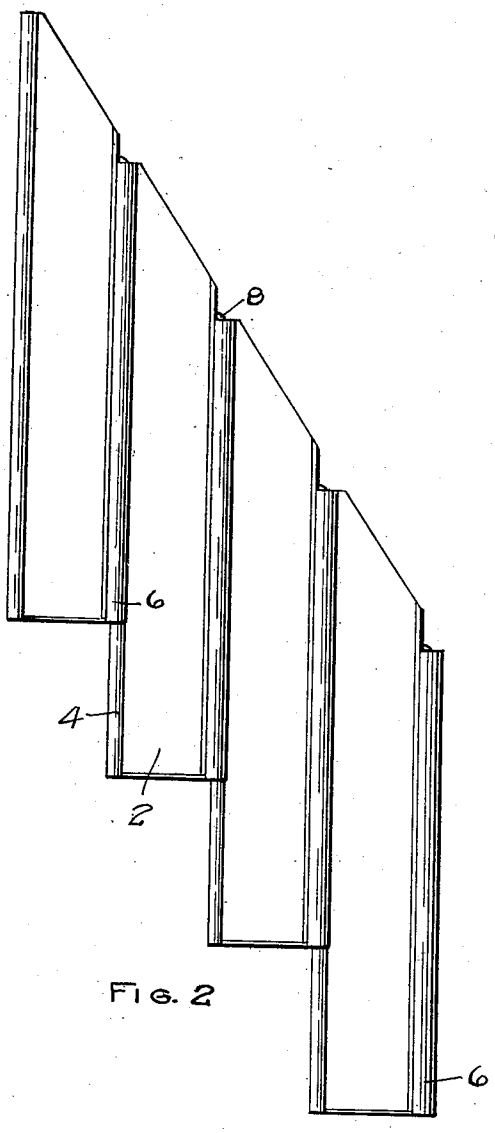

FIG. 2

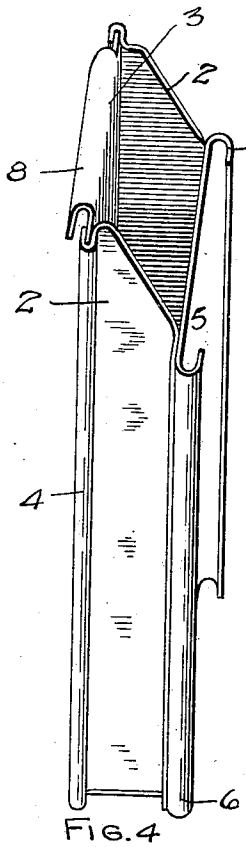

FIG. 4

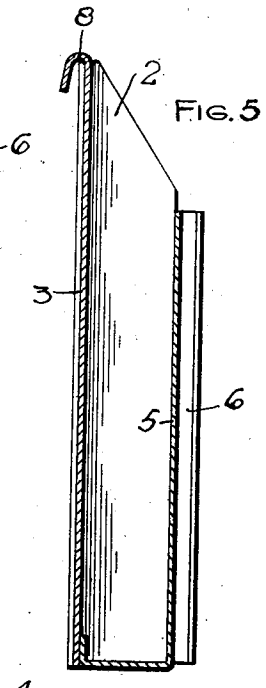

FIG. 5

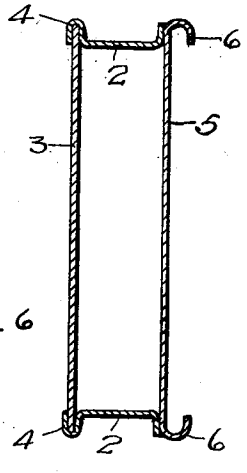

FIG. 6

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HARRY H. CHAPMAN, OF MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO JAMES H. TENVOORDE, OF SAME PLACE.

MERCHANT'S SHORT-ACCOUNT CASE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 668,727, dated February 26, 1901.

Application filed April 14, 1900. Serial No. 12,826. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HARRY H. CHAPMAN, of Minneapolis, Hennepin county, Minnesota, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Merchants' Short-Account Cases, of which the following is a specification.

The invention relates to devices designed for the use of grocers and other merchants who do not keep ledger accounts with their customers, but employ a system of short-account books, appropriating a book to each customer having credit at the store, entering in such book the various items purchased, showing the cost of each item and the total, and giving the original slip to the customer with the goods purchased, while a duplicate is kept in the book for record. A merchant doing a large credit business and having a number of these short-account books in use finds that considerable time is lost in selecting a customer's book from the series when needed and also finds that the books have to be handled many times in packing them away in a vault or safe at night and removing them when the store is opened for business in the morning.

The primary object of my invention, therefore, is to provide a case or receptacle adapted to contain a series of books, one for each customer, carrying a short account, the case being so constructed that each book and the customer's name thereon is exposed and its position in the case easily located at a glance.

A further object is to provide a case or receptacle which can be easily and quickly folded or shut up into a small compass to permit it to be placed in a pigeonhole of the safe or vault.

A further object is to provide a case or receptacle that can be easily increased or decreased in size and readily adapted, therefore, for grocers or other merchants carrying on a large or small credit system.

The invention consists generally in various constructions and combinations, all as hereinafter described, and particularly pointed out in the claims.

In the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification, Figure 1 is a front elevation of the receptacle or case embodying my invention, showing the books therein. Fig. 2 is a side elevation of the same. Fig. 3 is a similar view showing the case shut up or folded. Fig. 4 is a perspective of one of the pockets or sections of the case. Fig. 5 is a vertical section of the same. Fig. 6 is a horizontal section. Fig. 7 is a perspective of a modified form of case when extended. Fig. 8 is a side elevation of the same when closed.

In the drawings the case or receptacle is shown as comprising a series of removable sections or pockets that are adapted to be connected or strung together, the number of pockets or sections used depending upon the size of the case required. These sections or pockets are, preferably, of substantially the form shown herein and of any suitable material, preferably tin, and each section comprises side plates 2, having their rear edges folded over and secured to the edges of a back plate 3, forming vertical guide rails or flanges 4 on the back of each pocket. The forward edges of the side plates 2 are bent outwardly and secured to the front plate 5, whose vertical edges are inwardly turned to form guideways 6, wherein the guide-rails of the succeeding pocket are slidable. The bottom of the pocket is formed by the backwardly-turned lower end of the front plate 5, the rear edge of which is turned up and suitably secured to the back plate. The upper end of the back plate is turned back to form a hook or lip portion 8, that is adapted to engage the top of the front plate of the preceding pocket when they are strung together.

The upper ends of the side plates 2 are beveled or cut away, as shown, and as the upper ends of the front and back plates of each pocket are in line or flush with the upper edges of the side plates of the respective pockets it follows that the top of the front plate will be lower than the top of the back plate, and when the pockets are strung together each pocket or section from back to front will be lower than the preceding pocket and a portion of each of the books arranged in the case will be visible and the names thereon exposed to view, so that the merchant can at a glance locate the desired account-book, and thus save a great deal of time that is frequently lost in looking for a particular

book. The back plate of the rear section of the series is preferably provided with holes 9 to permit the device to be hung on the wall at any convenient point in the store.

It will be noted that each pocket while supported by the preceding one is not fixed thereon, but is adapted to slide vertically in the guideways of the preceding pocket and permit the case to be contracted or collapsed to the rectangular form shown in Fig. 3, wherein the tops and bottoms of the pockets are in line, respectively, with each other and the case is in compact form suitable for insertion into the pigeonholes of a safe or vault. The pockets or sections are interchangeable and being readily separable permit the size of the case to be altered by simply adding to or taking away from the number of pockets employed. The device is thus adapted for merchants having a large or small number of short accounts.

In Figs. 7 and 8 I have shown a slight modification in the construction of the section or pocket heretofore described, which consists in providing a pocket 10, formed, preferably, out of a single piece of sheet metal bent into the desired form, each pocket being beveled at the top and all of them substantially the same length and each pocket being connected with the next succeeding and preceding one of the series by links 11, that are pivotally connected at one end to one of the pocket and are provided with longitudinal slots 12 to receive pins 13, attached to the other pockets and whereon said links are slidable when the case is closed or folded.

The device when in use is hung upon the wall or other suitable support and will immediately assume the position shown in Figs. 1 and 2, each pocket from the rear or first pocket of the series being lower than the preceding pocket, so that when an account-book is placed therein its upper portion, where the name of the customer is usually written, is exposed and the clerk or merchant can locate at a glance the particular book of any customer. At the close of the day's business the device is detached from its support and callapsed or folded to the position shown in Fig. 3, wherein it appears in a compact form adapted to be slipped into a pigeonhole or other receptacle in a safe or vault. The collapsible feature of this device I regard as a very important one, as many merchants, particularly grocers, keep no other accounts with their customers than what appear in these so-called "short-account books," and it is essential, therefore, that the books be kept in a case that can be compactly collapsed or folded when not in use to permit them to be placed in vaults or other fireproof receptacles.

The details of construction herein described may be modified by any one skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of my invention.

Having thus described my invention, I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent—

1. A short-account-sales-book case, comprising a series of pockets or sections, a connection provided between each pocket of the series, means for supporting or suspending the forward pockets from the rear pocket in such manner that each pocket when the device is suspended drops below the plane of the preceding pocket, said pockets being readily separable to permit the size of the case to be increased or decreased at will, substantially as described.

2. A short-account-sales-book case, comprising a series of pockets or receptacles, a guideway provided on the front of each pocket, a guiding rail or flange provided on the rear of each pocket and adapted to slide in the guideway of the preceding pocket, the upper edge of the front plate of each pocket being lower than the corresponding edge of the back plate, and a lip or flange provided on the back plate of each pocket to engage the upper edge of the front plate of the preceding pocket, substantially as described.

3. A short-account-sales-book case, comprising a series of separable sliding pockets or receptacles of substantially the same size and shape, each pocket having guideways to receive guide rails or flanges provided on the next succeeding pocket, and a lip or hook provided on each pocket to engage the wall of the adjoining pocket, substantially as described.

4. A case or receptacle, comprising a series of separable pockets, each having guideways 6 on its front plate, the guide rails or flanges provided at the rear of each pocket and adapted to slide in said guideways to permit said pockets to be connected together, and a hook or lip portion 8 provided at the top of the back plate of each pocket and adapted to engage the top of the front plate of the preceding pocket, whereby when the rear of the first pocket of the series is supported the remaining pockets will be supported also, substantially as described.

5. In a short-account-sales-book case, a series of pockets, each pocket comprising a back plate 3 having a hook or lip portion at its upper end, the side plates 2 having their rear edges folded over the edges of said back plate forming guide rails or flanges, the front plate 5 secured to the forward edges of said side plates and having its edges inwardly turned forming guideways to receive the guide-rails of the next succeeding pocket, and the top of the front plate of each pocket being lower than its back plate and adapted to engage the hook or lip of the next succeeding pocket, substantially as described.

6. A short-account-sales-book case, comprising a series of pockets, supported or suspended from the rear pocket of the series, a slidable separable connection provided between each pocket of the series and the next

preceding one, said connection permitting the addition or removal of one or more pockets to increase or decrease the size of the case and supporting means whereby each pocket when in use is adapted to drop below the plane of the preceding pocket, substantially as described.

7. A short-account-sales-book case, comprising a series of separable pockets arranged one in front of the other, the rear pocket being adapted to be suspended, a sliding connection provided between each pocket of the series and the preceding one, and a hook device provided on each pocket and adapted to engage the front wall of the preceding pocket to limit the downward movement of each pocket but permitting it to drop below the plane of the preceding pocket and to be separated therefrom when lifted, substantially as described.

8. A short-account-sales-book case, comprising a series of separable pockets arranged one before the other, the rear pocket being adapted to be suspended, a hook device provided on each pocket and adapted to engage the front wall of the preceding pocket and limit the downward movement of each pocket of the series, said hook devices permitting each pocket to drop below the plane of its preceding pocket and to be separated therefrom when lifted, substantially as described.

9. A short-account-sales-book case comprising a series of separable pockets or receptacles, suitable connections provided between said pockets, to allow each pocket to drop below the plane of the preceding pocket, stop devices provided on said pockets, said connections and said stop devices permitting the addition or removal of one or more pockets to increase or decrease the size of the case, substantially as described.

10. A short-account-sales-book case, comprising a series of pockets, at least one of which is provided with connections between it and a pocket placed in front of it and another pocket placed to the rear of it in such manner that each pocket when the device is suspended drops below the plane of the preceding pocket without one pocket moving outwardly from the face of the other pocket, and means for suspending one pocket from the other, substantially as described.

11. In a short-account-sales-book case, a pocket having at its rear wall projecting guide rails or flanges and at its front wall guideways, whereby a number of pockets may be connected together by the projecting rails or flanges at the rear wall of one pocket engaging the guideways at the front wall of another pocket, and means for suspending one pocket from the adjoining pocket, substantially as described.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of April, 1900.

HARRY H. CHAPMAN.

In presence of—

RICHARD PAUL,

M. C. NOONAN.