June 2, 1970 C. L. WEBSTER 3,515,321

AMMUNITION CARRYING CASE

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Fig. 1.

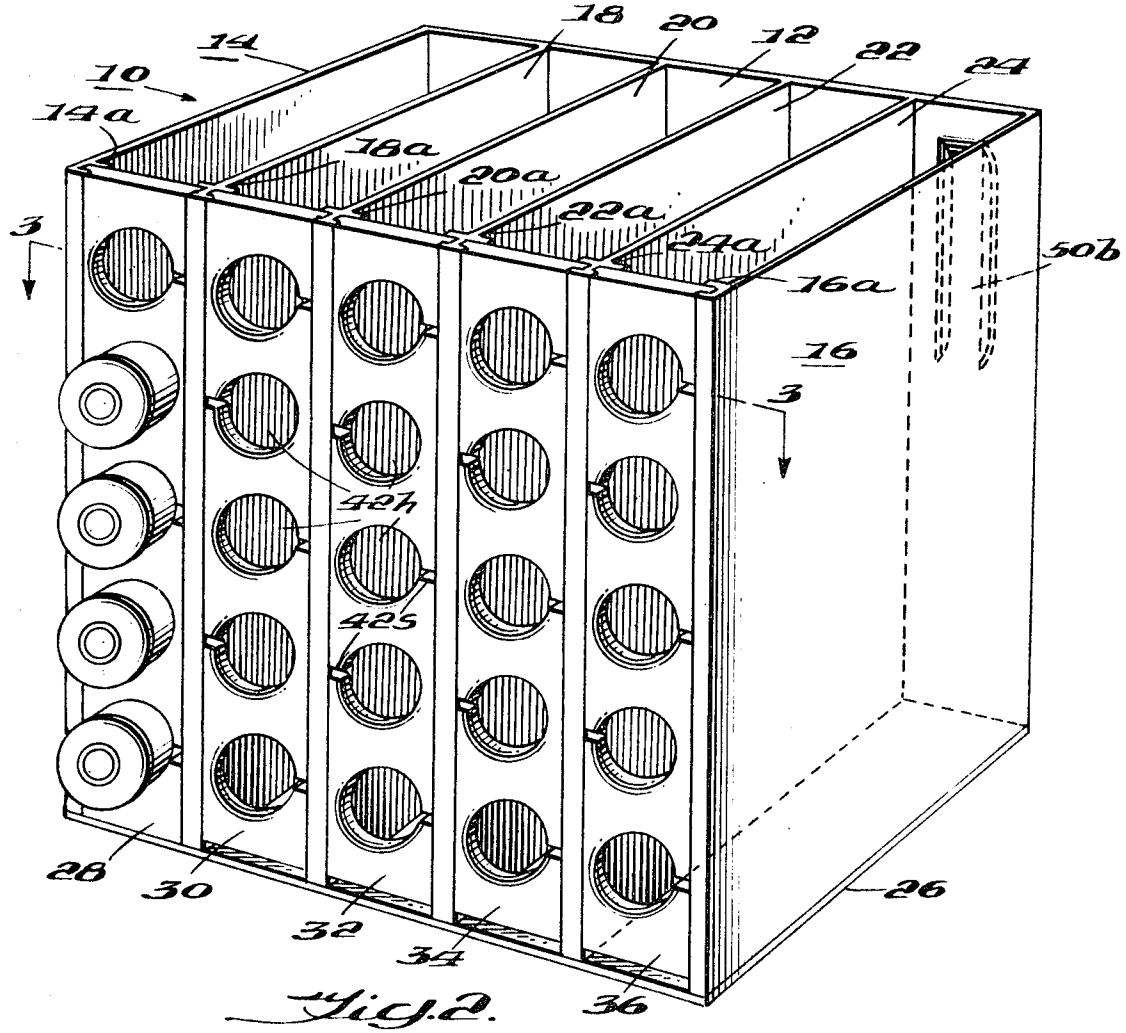
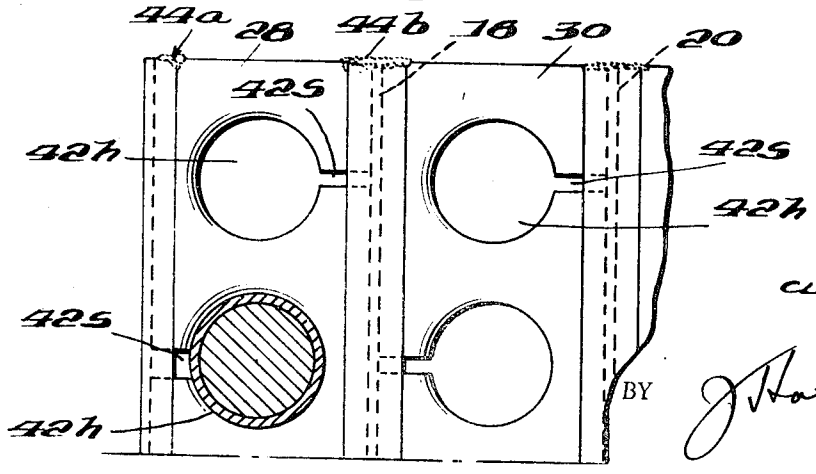


Fig. 2.



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Fig. 3.

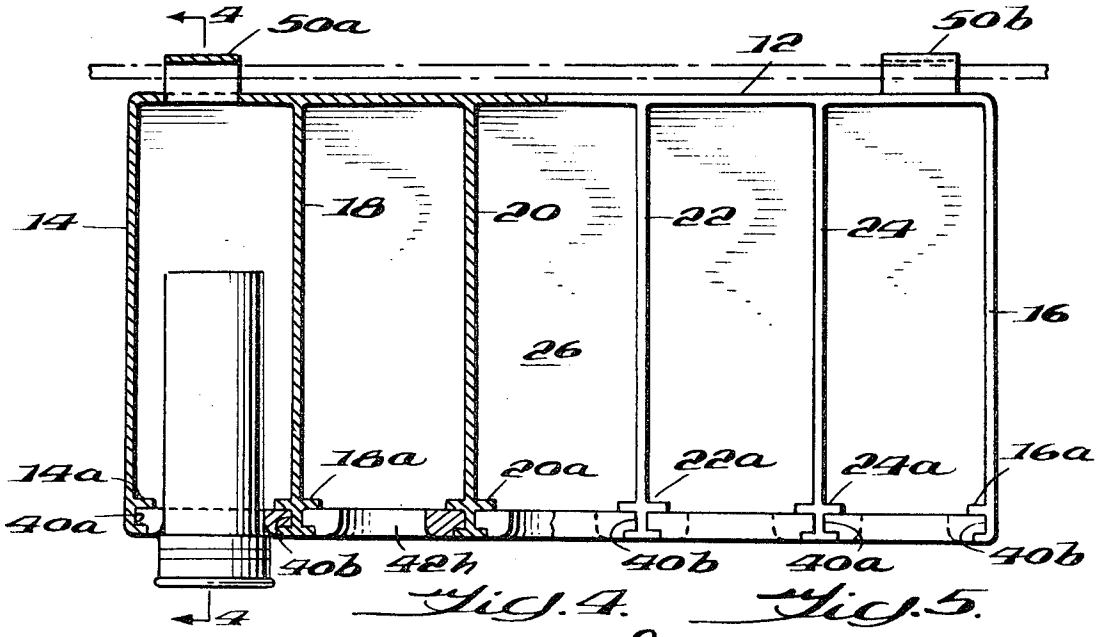


Fig. 4.

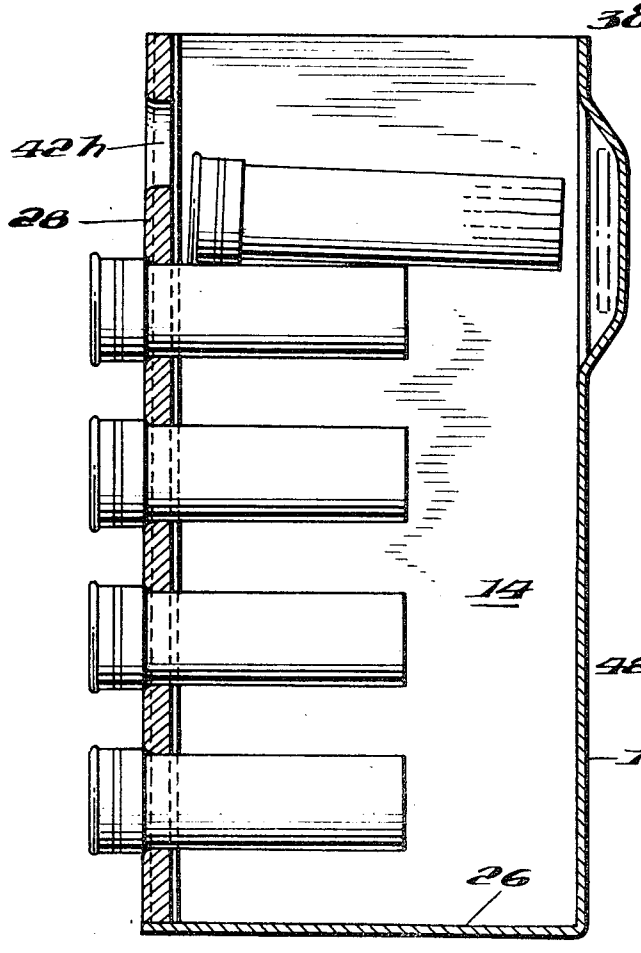
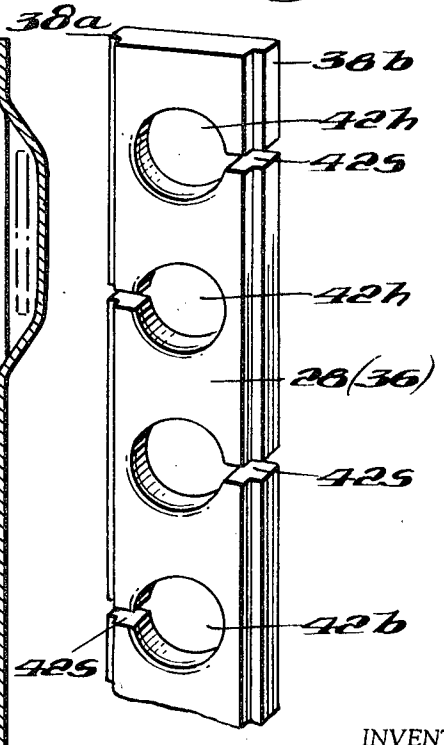


Fig. 5.



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AMMUNITION CARRYING CASE

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U.S. Cl. 224—21 9 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A live and spent ammunition carrying case designed particularly for use in trap and skeet shooting but suitable also for use by hunters and others engaging in sport shooting. The case provides a plurality of open top compartments, the front walls of each consisting of a so-called tension strip having pre-sized ammunition receiving holes of a diameter slightly less than that of the ammunition to be held, the holes being enlargeable in diameter upon insertion of a piece of ammunition, i.e. a shotgun shell therein, through the provision of slits in the strips extending alternately from opposite sides of the holes to and through the side edges of the strip. Such arrangement of holes and slits results in the strips growing in length when the holes therein are successively filled with shells. To insure that the strips elongate only in downward direction, they are secured only at their upper ends and their length is shorter than the height of the case as measured from its bottom wall by an amount substantially equal to the amount that the strip elongates when its holes receive their complement of shells; and to insure return of the strips to normal length for subsequent reloading of the case, the strips are fashioned from a memory plastic. The number of compartments in the case and the number of holes in each of the tension strips are preferably related to the number of firing positions and the number of shots which are fired at each firing position, respectively, according to the rules of trap and skeet shooting.

This invention relates generally to ammunition cases and more particularly to an improved live and spent ammunition carrying case designed for use by trap and skeet shooters in particular but suitable also for use by hunters and others engaging in sport shooting.

As is well known, a "round" as the term is used in both trap and skeet shooting can be generally described as comprising a total of twenty-five shots which are fired at thrown targets in groups of specified number of shots by each person of a five-man squad from different shooting positions or stations. Accordingly, it is of particular advantage to a trap shooter in particular not only to have his ammunition readily available to him as he takes his specified number of shots at each station, but also that he know without question the number of shots he has taken at each station and when to move from one station to the next station. With the above in mind, a major object of the present invention is that of providing an ammunition carrying case for use in trap and/or skeet shooting, which is so constructed and arranged as to be capable of carrying the exact amount of ammunition required for a complete round of trap and skeet, of presenting the same to the shooter in manner highly convenient to him and which provides finger-tip accessibility, of giving him an accurate indication, both visual and tactual, of the number of shots he has taken at the particular station from which he is shooting, and more importantly to the trap shooter, when he has taken his prescribed five shots at any one station as induces an awareness that for safety he should not re-load his gun until arriving at the next shooting station.

In line with the growing trend among shooters, particularly in trap and skeet shooting, of retrieving spent ammunition, i.e. empty shotgun cartirdge shells, for re-loading purposes, it is a further important object of the invention to provide an ammunition carrying case characterized as in the foregoing which is also ideally suited to the orderly storage in clean condition and transport of spent ammunition, i.e. empty cartridge shells, retrieved during the course of shooting a round of trap or skeet, for subsequent re-loading and firing thereof.

Among other important objects of the invention may be noted the provision of an ammunition carrying case incorporating simple yet practical and effective means for holding the live or loaded ammunition apart from one another and in an orderly array suited both to the shooters' convenience and the prevailing shooting rules requirements, while permitting ready withdrawal of the ammunition as needed for initial shotgun loading and subsequent reloading; and the provision of a live and spent ammunition carrying case as aforesaid of relatively inexpensive yet sturdy construction and which is thoroughly practical and dependable in use.

The above and other objects and features of advantage of a live and spent ammunition carrying case according to the invention will appear or be obvious from the following detailed description and accompanying illustrative drawings thereof, in which latter:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view thereof looking onto its front and right sides, the view further generally indicating the manner in which live ammunition is held in orderly arry, i.e. in both vertical and horizontal rows:

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary front elevation of the ammunition case shown in FIG. 1, intending to illustrate the feature of the so-called tension strips being secured only at their upper ends as permits them to elongate in downward direction only and the frictional grip which said strips exert on the ammunition inserted in the receiving holes provided in said strip;

FIG. 3 and FIG. 4 are horizontal and vertical sections, taken along planes designated by lines **3—3** and **4—4**, respectively, of FIG. 1 and FIG. 3; and

FIG. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view of one of the aforesaid so-called tension strips, which is intended to illustrate its detailed construction.

Referring to the drawings, an ammunition carrying case according to the invention comprises a case body generally indicated by the reference numeral **10** and consisting of a vertical back wall **12**, vertical end walls **14, 16**, and equidistantly spaced-apart vertical partition walls (four such walls designated **18, 20, 22, 24** being shown) which extend integrally and forwardly from said back wall and subdivide the space between said end or side walls **14, 16** into open top, equal-width compartments in number greater by one than the number of said partition walls; a separate bottom wall **26** affixed to the lower edges of the side and back walls and said partition walls; and a multi-strip or panel front wall made up of a plurality of individual, vertically disposed strips (hereinafter termed "tension strips" for reasons to be explained). As one such strip is provided for each of the aforesaid five compartments, five tension strips designated **28, 30, 32, 34** and **36** are shown.

Illustratively, the tension strips **28–36** are held in front-wall forming relationship by virtue of their vertical side edges being formed with half-width tongues **38***a*, **38***b* (FIG. 5) which fit into appropriately sized facing grooves **40***a*, **40***b* (FIG. 3) provided in thickened front-edge formations **14***a*, **16***a*, **18***a*, **20***a*, **22***a* and **24***a* with which the aforesaid vertical end and partition walls of the case body **10** are formed and which extend vertically along the front edges of said walls.

Since the tension strips **28–36** are of identical construction and are moreover each secured in identical manner, only one tension strip and its manner of securement will be described in detail. More particularly, each tension strip is provided with a vertical series of spaced-apart ammunition, i.e. cartridge shell, receiving holes **42***h* (FIG. 5) which are pre-sized to a diameter slightly smaller than that of the cartridge shells of the particular gauge for which the case-holder is designed. Moreover, it is a feature of the invention that the aforesaid holes **42***h*, rather than having full-circular edges, each has a gapped edge, i.e. an edge which is interrupted by a slit **42***s* which extends along a projected horizontal diameter of the hole to and through the edge of the strip. As is also seen in FIG. 5, the slits **42***s* extend from the holes **42***h* alternately to the opposite side edges of the tension strips, that is to say, the slits **42***s* of next adjacent holes extend alternately from opposite sides of the holes thereof to opposite side edges of the strips. This relationship of holes **42***h* and slots **42***s* provides that when cartridge shells are progressively inserted into the holes of a tension strip, the holes not only enlarge to the diameter of said shells, due to the fact that the slits are free to widen when their associated holes are filled with the shells, but also the strips are tensioned and actually grow in length, i.e. elongate. According to the invention, the tension strips are permitted to lengthen in downward direction only responsive to shell insertion in their holes **42***h* as aforesaid and to effect the strips returning to their normal length, they are fashioned from a plastic having memory properties. More particularly, the tension strips **28–36**, inclusive, are secured only at points located at their upper ends (designated **44***a*, **44***b* in FIG. 2) to the aforesaid front-edge formations **14***a*, **16***a*–**24***a* in whose grooves said tension strips fit, and their length is such that they terminate short of the case bottom wall **26** by an amount calculated to accommodate for the amount of strip-length extension upon all holes thereof receiving a cartridge shell. Such an arrangement provides that upon shell insertion the shells are firmly held yet are readily withdrawable, and further that upon withdrawal of the shells from a strip by the shooter, said strip will automatically return to its normal length and the holes therein will contract to their initial unstressed diameter, as permits subsequent re-loadings of the case.

Another important feature of the invention resides in the incorporation into an ammunition case designed primarily for the convenient storage and carrying about, ready-for-use, of live ammunition, the provision necessary to the case being also useful as one for spent ammunition. More particularly, the compartments defined by the rear wall **12**, end and partition walls **14–24** inclusive, and bottom wall **26** are provided with the width, height and depth necessary for the ready reception of the spent shells resulting from the firings thereof of the previously live ammunition carried by the aforesaid tension strips. While the width and height dimensions of the compartments are not unduly critical to such additional use, because said compartments for the live ammunition case will have width and height such as to accommodate the empty shells also, such is not true of the depth, i.e. the front-to-rear, dimension of the compartments. In explanation, whereas a live cartridge shell is pushed through any one of the holes **42***h* of the tension strips only until the brass shoulder conventionally provided on its firing-cap end engages the edge of said hole, with the result that the live shell projects into its compartment by an amount which is appreciably less than the full length of the shell, the depth of a compartment suitable to the accommodation of the spent shell must be greater than by at least one-half inch than the full length of the live shell, such due to the fact that a shotgun cartridge shell lengthens in firing by approximately one-half inch. According to the invention, therefore, the depth of the case compartments is made greater than required for a comparable case designed solely for live ammunition by an amount enabling spent ammunition, i.e. an empty shotgun shell, dropped into a case compartment after each firing, to be readily received therein, as such is indicated in FIG. 4.

While an ammunition case as described and illustrated may be fashioned from metal, it is preferably made throughout from a plastic material such as a suitable vinyl. More particularly, the case body **10** without the bottom **26** may be formed as a rigid vinyl extrusion, or with said bottom it may be formed by injection molding. If the case body is made as an extrusion as aforesaid, the separate bottom **26** may also if desired be formed as an extrusion. As previously stated, the tension strips **28–36** are preferably fashioned from a memory plastic, that is, one having the property of returning, after being stretched, deformed or otherwise stressed, to its original normal unstressed shape and state. Preferably, the tension strips are formed by injection-molding same to final form, i.e. with their holes **42***h* (having chamfered front edges as in FIG. 5) and slits **42***a*, or with only the holes **42***b* in which event the slits **42***s* will be subsequently provided. It is of course also possible to extrude the tension strips as plain strips and subsequently punch the holes and slits therein. When the bottom **26** is made separate from the extruded case body, it is secured to the latter by any of the suitable plastic-to-plastic adhesives known in the art, and such is true also of the adhesive employed to secure the tension strips at their upper ends only, as previously explained.

As best seen in FIG. 3, the case is shown to be provided in its back wall **12** with horizontally spaced-apart loops **50***a*, **50***b* enabling the case to be belt-held to the shooter. Such loops may also be formed and positioned to accommodate an "over-the-shoulder" carrying strap for shooters preferring this type of case-to-body securement.

It is understood that while a case designed to hold one full box of twenty-five live shotgun shells for shooting a round of either trap or skeet, and with the twenty-five shells being arranged in vertical and horizontal rows of five such as particularly adapts the case for trap shooting, has been illustrated and described, the present invention is not so limited since the principle of an ammunition case as herein contemplated and provided is adapted to the carrying not only of ammunition in different row arrangement than that illustrated and described, but also to the carrying of other types of ammunition used by hunters and persons engaged in sport shooting and indeed is also adapted to the carrying of cylindrical articles generally which are required to be carried about in a case and at the same time readily withdrawable therefrom.

To summarize the advantages of a case according to the invention used as an ammunition case:

(a) It provides a conveniently placed and held supply of live ammunition to a user thereof;

(b) In trap shooting in particular, it automatically gives to the shooter indication of the number of shots which he has fired at any one shooting station and, more importantly, that the allowed number of shots to be fired at said station have in fact been fired and thus when to move from one station to another;

(c) It provides a plurality of so-called saver compartments for deposition of spent ammunition immediately after it has been fired, thus to maintain same clean for safe re-loading;

(d) It conserves space in providing a single unit serving both for live and spent ammunition to be re-loaded; and

(e) It provides a rugged, practical and thoroughly dependable ammunition case which may be inexpensively manufactured.

As many changes could be made in carrying out the above constructions without departing from the scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in

the above description or shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

I claim:

1. In a carrying case for generally cylindrical articles, means providing an enclosure for a plurality of said articles disposed in a single vertical row, said means including spaced-apart side walls, a rear wall and a front wall, said rear and spaced-apart side walls being immovably joined along their respective meeting edges and throughout the full length of said edges, said front wall having a plurality of holes for the reception of said articles, said holes being disposed on centers which are spaced apart a distance substantially greater than the diameter of said articles and being slightly undersize with respect to the diameter of said articles, said front wall being secured to said spaced-apart side walls only at fixed points at its upper ends, and means responsive solely to article insertion in said holes for effecting downward elongation of said front wall and corresponding enlargement of said holes to a diameter enabling at least partial insertion of the articles therein.

2. A carrying case for generally cylindrical articles according to claim 1, wherein said front wall is fashioned from a memory plastic whereby, following its elongation and withdrawal of the articles from said holes, said front wall returns to normal length and said holes contract to their initial diameter.

3. A carrying case for generally cylindrical articles according to claim 1, wherein said spaced-apart side walls are provided with front-edge formations which define facing grooves for the reception of the vertical side edges of said front wall.

4. A carrying case for generally cylindrical articles according to claim 1, wherein said front wall is made of a memory plastic, and wherein said means includes slits each extending between a side edge of a hole and the adjacent side edge of said strip, said slits extending alternately from opposite sides of the holes to and through the opposite side edges of the strip.

5. In an ammunition carrying case, an open-top case body defined by a bottom wall, end walls and a rear wall, partition walls extending forwardly from said rear wall and subdividing the space between said end walls into a plurality of ammunition encasing compartments, elongated strips each providing a compartment front-closure and together providing a case front wall, said strips being secured only at their upper ends and terminating at their bottom ends short of said bottom wall whereby they may elongate, said strips being each provided with a plurality of cartridge receiving holes disposed in row formation, said holes being slightly undersize with respect to the diameter of said cartridges, and means responsive solely to insertion of said cartridges in the holes of a strip to effect downward elongation of said strip and corresponding enlargement of said holes to a diameter enabling at least partial insertion of the cartridges therein.

6. An ammunition carrying case according to claim 5, wherein said strips are fashioned from a memory plastic whereby upon withdrawal of the cartridges from the holes of a strip, the latter will return to its normal unstressed length and said holes contract to their initial diameter.

7. An ammunition carrying case according to claim 5, wherein said means includes slits each extending from a side of a hole in a strip to the adjacent side edge thereof and said slits extend alternately from opposite sides of said holes to opposite side edges of said strip.

8. An ammunition case according to claim 5, wherein the holes of the strip are arranged in horizontal and vertical rows of the same number.

9. An ammunition carrying case according to claim 5, wherein the case normally carries live ammunition and its front-to-rear dimension is such as to provide the compartments with the depth requisite to said compartments being able also to receive spent ammunition shells dropped thereinto through the open top of the case.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

42—87; 211—89; 224—5