March 26, 1940. W. F. INNES 2,195,369

DISPENSING PACKAGE

Filed Aug. 12, 1938

Fig. 1.

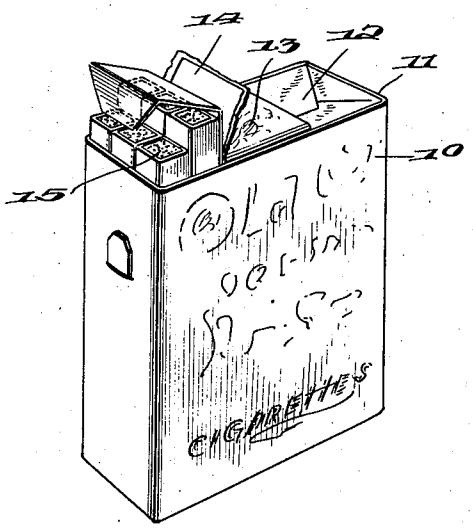


Fig. 4.

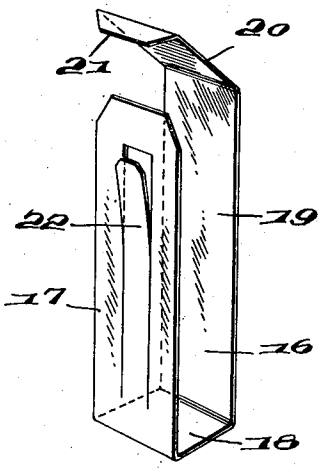


Fig. 2.

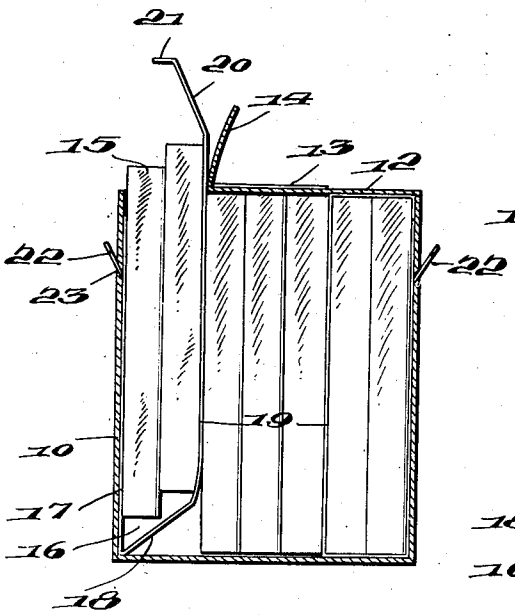
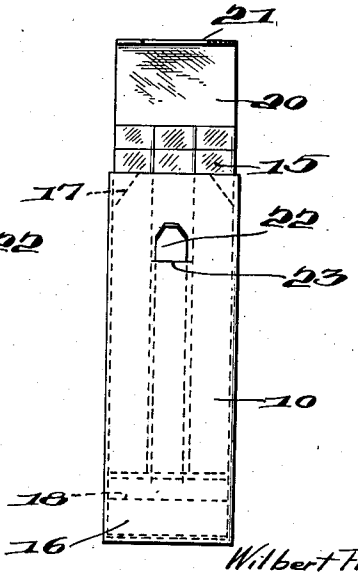


Fig. 3.



Inventor

Wilbert Francis Innes

By Riordon & Riordon

Attorney

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DISPENSING PACKAGE

Wilbert Francis Innes, Des Moines, Iowa

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9 Claims. (Cl. 206—41.2)

This invention relates to improvements in packages, containers, and fillers therefor, wherein the contents are to be packed in uniform regularity, and more particularly to a method and means for opening such package or container, and for dispensing the contents therefrom.

The invention is described herein, for illustrative purposes, as applied to cigarette packages, of the type wherein the cigarettes are enclosed in a foil paper wrapper, folded over at the ends, and sealed by a revenue stamp, this being a conventional type of cigarette package.

Most smokers, in opening a package of cigarettes, tear the package at one corner, leaving the remainder sealed to protect unused contents of the package, and hence are familiar with the difficulties of opening the package without completely mutilating the folded over ends, and the contents, and also acquainted with the difficulty of extracting the first cigarettes from the package without tearing the ends.

One of the principal objects of the invention, then is to provide a means to facilitate opening of a package of this nature at the corner only, and another important object is to provide means whereby the first portion of the contents, e. g. the first cigarettes, may be partially ejected without mutilation, the usual pounding of the package and possible bending, or tearing of the ends of the cigarettes.

Another object contemplates a double action dispensing principle in which cigarettes may be ejected from any desired portion of the package, and the remaining cigarettes kept separated and properly packed in the container, thereby further minimizing the possibility of breaking or bending, either during removal of a cigarette or while being carried in the smoker's pocket.

A still further object is to provide a dispensing medium which will function as a covering for that part of the package which has been torn open, thereby protecting the freshness of the cigarettes, and preventing fine tobacco from leaking out.

Many efforts have been made heretofore to provide dispensing devices for cigarette packages, but for one reason or another, such as complexity of structure, difficulty of assembling the package, or difficulty in satisfactorily ejecting a cigarette, they have not been found practical. It is accordingly another object of this invention to provide a simple, non-complicated, mechanical working unit which eliminates the necessity of tearing the end of the package to open the same, and at the same time avoids tearing or mutilation of the cigarette.

To the attainment of the foregoing, and other objects which will appear as the description proceeds, reference may be made to the drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a cigarette package showing the invention in operative position.

Fig. 2 is a vertical section through the package, showing the contents and the application of the invention thereto,

Fig. 3 is an end elevation of the package, and

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of a dispensing unit.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing, wherein like reference numerals designate like parts, there will be found a cigarette package 10 of conventional construction wherein a paper cup or wrapper 11 encases the usual foil wrapper having folded over ends 12, sealed by a revenue stamp 13. In the ordinary use of these packages, a corner portion 14 of the ends 12 will be torn off, thereby exposing the ends of the cigarettes 15, and when it is desired to remove a cigarette, it is necessary to tip the package upside down and dig at the cigarette, usually with the result that the end of the cigarette is mutilated before it can be removed.

This invention contemplates the insertion of a dispensing unit, generally designated at 16, formed from a strip of Cellophane, Celluloid, or any desired material of proper resilience, folded to an oblong box-shape, having one upstanding side portion 17, a bottom wall 18, another longer side portion 19 opposed thereto, and a covering or cap portion 20 formed with a tab or flap 21.

An auxiliary tab strip 22 is struck out of the side 17, or may be formed by attaching a separate strip to the outer face of the wall of side 17.

The width of the strip 16 will be such as to fit closely between the front and back walls of the cigarette package, and the spacing between the side portions 17 and 19, preferably will be sufficient to accommodate two rows or tiers of cigarettes 15.

In the use of the device, the unit 16 will be inserted in the package, with the side 19 nearest the center of the package, the side 17 adjacent an end wall of the package, the tab 22 projecting slightly from the package through a slit 23, provided for the purpose. The cap portion 20 will be folded across the top of the cigarettes, beneath the ends 12, and the flange or tab 21 will be tucked down inside.

From the foregoing description, the use and operation of the device will be readily apparent.

When it is desired to open the package, this may be accomplished by lifting the cover portion 20, which is of sufficient firmness to be grasped, thereby tearing the foil about the corner of the package, and if found desirable, the foil may be perforated to facilitate this action. Also, the tab 23, which projects from the side of the package, may be lifted, thereby raising the unit 16 sufficiently to open the corner of the package 10.

The cover portion 20 may be raised to tear the foil by grasping the edges thereof, which can be felt immediately beneath the foil along the corners of the package, but preferably the flap 21 will be tucked around the cigarettes immediately above the section or side 17 of the strip, as illustrated in Fig. 2. Thus, when the tab 22 is lifted, it will force the section 17 up against the flap 21, raising the cover portion 20 with resultant rupturing of the foil and opening of the corner of the package.

It will be observed that the upper end of the section or side 17 of the strip is tapered off, and if for any reason such end fails to abut the flap 21, or even in the absence of a flap, such as 21, lifting the side 17 by means of the tab 22 would have the effect of cutting the foil along the corner edge of the package, as the section 17 is forced upwardly.

When it is desired to remove a cigarette, an upward pull on the cap portion 20 will lift the second tier of cigarettes from the end of the package, or a pull on the tab 23 will lift the first tier of cigarettes. Thereafter, the unused cigarettes which project can be pushed back into the package, the cap portion 20 folded thereover, and the tab or flange 21 tucked back into the package, thereby effectively closing up the package.

Thus a double action principle is provided in the pull from the top cap portion 20 and also the auxiliary tab strip 22 on the ends. One creates a positive pull and the other a push and a pull. This principle adds 50% more efficiency without added expense in manufacture, and may be utilized with a standard form of package universally adopted by manufacturers.

The top or cap portion 20 may be used independently as a covering, or when a foil wrapper is provided, as a medium for opening the foil when pressure is applied to the cap opener through the tab 21.

When the cigarettes forming the tiers within the unit 16 have been used, then the unit 16 may be removed and the cigarettes remaining in the package removed in a conventional manner.

While not essential to the use of this invention, it may be found desirable to duplicate the unit 16 at the opposite end of the package, as indicated in Fig. 2.

Since the law requires that the revenue stamp be placed on the package in such a position as to be mutilated when the package is opened, it is contemplated that the length of the cap portion 20 will be sufficient to extend partially under the revenue stamp, thereby tearing same when the package is opened, or when the first cigarette is removed.

By the use of the simple unit herein described, the user is afforded speed in opening the package, accessibility to the cigarettes, and protection to the cigarettes, both in removal and in protecting those left in the package.

While the invention has been described herein as particularly applied to a cigarette package, it is to be understood that such description is intended primarily as illustrative and not as limiting. The invention is applicable to other types of packages and containers, wherein the contents are to be packed in uniform regularity, and especially where the contents may be flimsy in nature.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States is:

1. The combination with a cigarette container, of a flexible strip independent of the material of said container, adapted to be passed around a plurality of cigarettes in the container with an end section of the strip lying between said cigarettes and the adjacent container wall, said section having a tab portion attached thereto and projecting through the container when in its wrapped and sealed condition, said section having sufficient firmness that a pull on the protruding end of said tab will force the edge of said strip outwardly through the wrapped container to open same and project a cigarette through the open part of the container.

2. The combination with a cigarette container, of a flexible strip independent of the material of said container, adapted to be passed around a plurality of cigarettes in the container with an end section of the strip lying between said cigarettes and the adjacent container wall, said section having a tab portion attached thereto and projecting through the container when in its wrapped and sealed condition, said section having sufficient firmness that a pull on the protruding end of said tab will force the edge of said strip outwardly through the wrapped container to open same and project a cigarette through the open part of the container, said strip having a cover portion effective to close the container after it has once been opened.

3. The combination with a cigarette container, of a flexible strip independent of the material of said container, adapted to be passed around a plurality of cigarettes in the container with an end section of the strip lying between said cigarettes and the adjacent container wall, said section having a tab portion attached thereto and projecting through the container when in its wrapped and sealed condition, said strip having a cover portion positioned to close the container, once it has been opened, and said cover portion having an end positioned, when the package is closed, in the plane of said end section of the strip, said end section and said cover portion each being of sufficient firmness that a pull on the protruding end of said tab will force the edge of said strip and the cover portion outwardly through the wrapped container to open same and project a cigarette through the open part of the container.

4. The combination with a cigarette container, of a flexible strip independent of the material of said container, adapted to be passed around a plurality of cigarettes in the container with an end section of the strip lying between said cigarettes and the adjacent container wall, said section having a tab portion attached thereto and projecting through the container when in its wrapped and sealed condition, said section having sufficient firmness that a pull on the protruding end of said tab will force the edge of said strip outwardly through the wrapped container to open same and project a cigarette through the open part of the container, the wrapper of said container being perforated in the region engageable

by said section to facilitate opening of the container.

5. The combination with a cigarette container, of a flexible strip independent of the material of said container, adapted to be passed around a plurality of cigarettes in the container with an end section of the strip lying between said cigarettes and the adjacent container wall, said section having a tab portion attached thereto and projecting through the container when in its wrapped and sealed condition, said strip having a cover portion positioned to close the container, once it has been opened, and said cover portion having an end positioned, when the package is closed, in the plane of said end section of the strip, said end section and said cover portion each being of sufficient firmness that a pull on the protruding end of said tab will force the edge of said strip and the cover portion outwardly through the wrapped container to open same and project a cigarette through the open part of the container, the wrapper of said container being perforated in the region engageable by said cover portion to facilitate opening of the container.

6. The combination with a cigarette container, of a flexible strip independent of the material of said container, adapted to be passed around a plurality of cigarettes in the container with an end section of the strip lying between said cigarettes and the adjacent container wall, said section having a tab portion attached thereto and projecting through the container when in its wrapped and sealed condition, said section having a sharpened or tapered end and sufficient firmness that a pull on the protruding end of said tab will force the tapered end of said section outwardly to open the container.

7. A combined opener, dispenser and closure unit for the contents of packages and containers, wherein the contents are packed in substantially uniform regularity, comprising a flexible strip member effective to encase a portion of the contents, and a closure member initially positioned beneath a wrapped and sealed portion of the package, said closure member being effective to close the package after said wrapped portion has been ruptured and opened by movement of the closure member, and means positioned to abut said closure member within the package to project said closure member from the package, thereby rupturing the closed and wrapped portion and ejecting a portion of the contents, and to restore the unit to its original position within the package and close the ruptured portion, said means comprising an end section of the strip member and an actuating tab secured to said end section.

8. An ejector unit for dispensing cigarettes from a package, comprising a base, side walls extending therefrom, a cover portion, and tab means secured to one of said side walls and projecting through the package when in its wrapped and sealed condition for forcing said unit through the wrapping of the package, and for raising and lowering said unit, and cigarettes encased therewithin, with respect to the package.

9. The combination with a container having a sealed wrapper thereabout, of a flexible strip independent of the material of said container adapted to be passed around a portion of the contents of the container, with an end section of the strip lying between said contents and the adjacent container wall, said strip including means forming part thereof positioned within the wrapper of the container and of sufficient firmness that a movement of the strip outwardly will rupture the wrapper and project said portion of the contents through the ruptured part of the container, and means to move the strip outwardly.

WILBERT FRANCIS INNES.