Aug. 23, 1932. H. H. McKEE ET AL 1,872,779

DISPLAY DEVICE FOR REFRIGERATOR INSTALLATIONS

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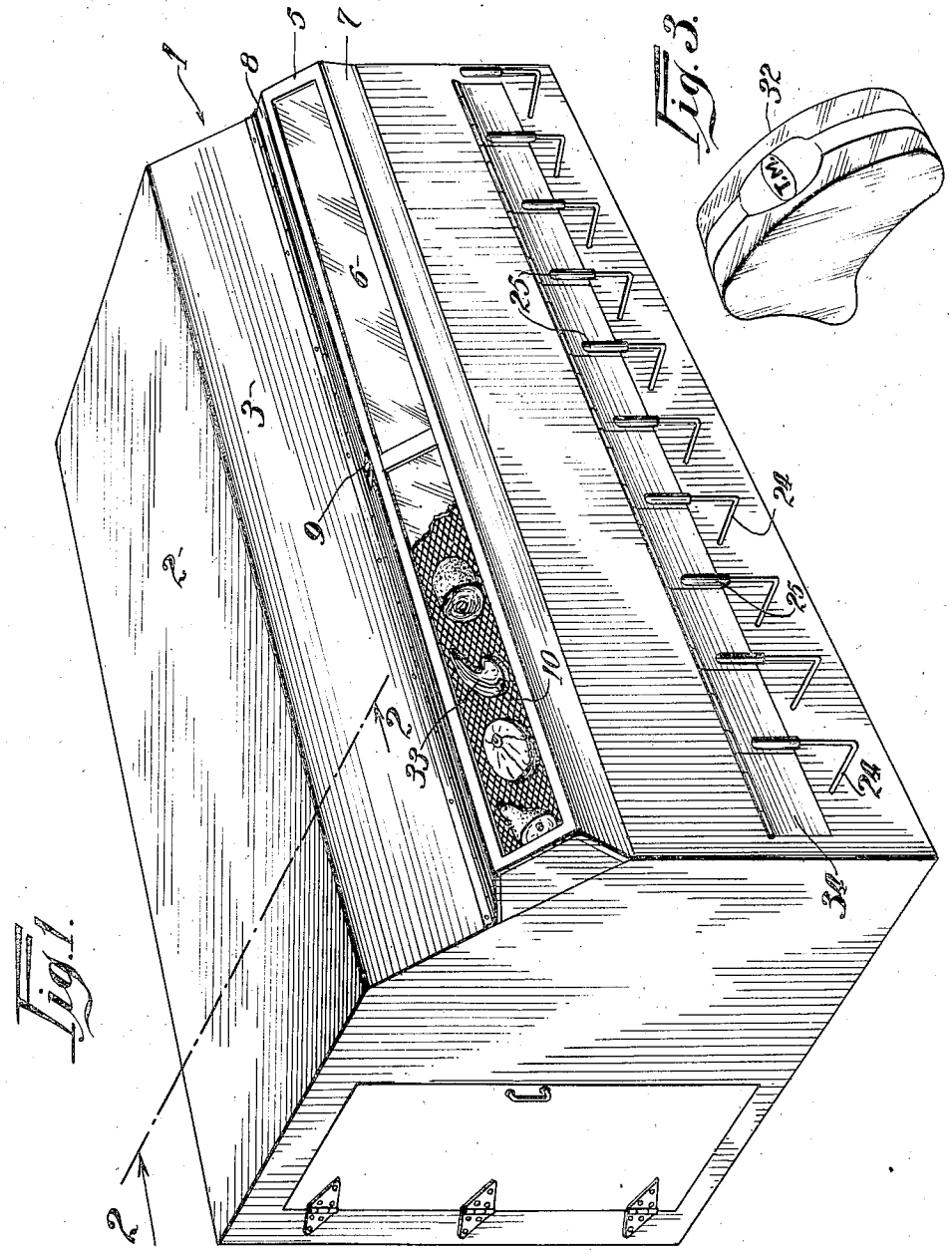


Fig. 1.

Fig. 3.

Witnesses:
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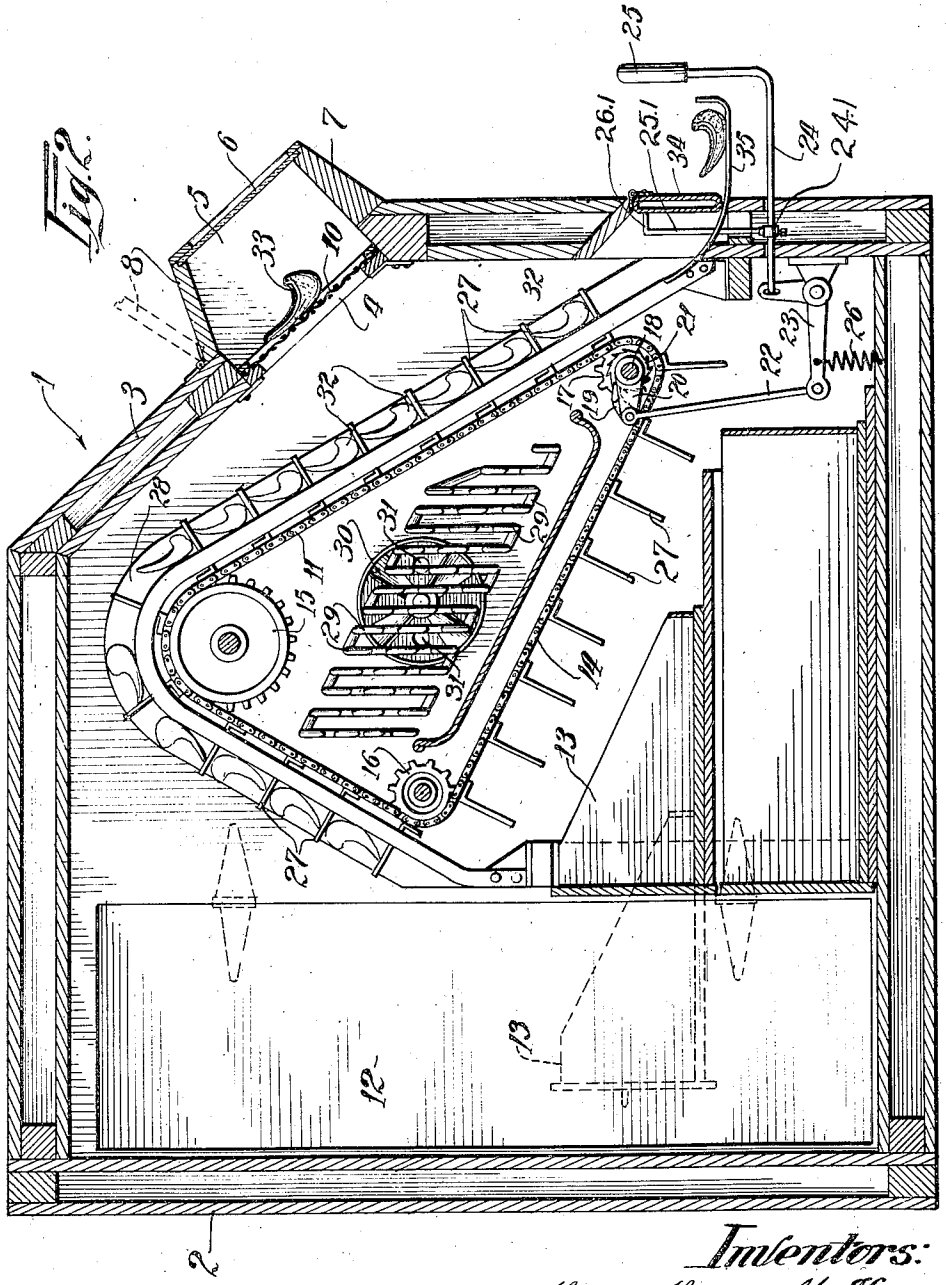
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Fig. 2.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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DISPLAY DEVICE FOR REFRIGERATOR INSTALLATIONS

Application filed September 9, 1929. Serial No. 391,474.

This invention relates to the retail merchandising, and particularly displaying, of standardized package goods, such as meats and various other goods which require refrigeration.

The main objects of this invention are to provide a device for vending a plurality of kinds of meat from a common refrigerated chamber; to provide a permanent display for exhibiting samples of the various kinds of meat in related proximity to goods which are offered for sale, and to the operating means by manipulation of which such goods are obtainable by the purchaser; to provide for refrigeration of the display samples; to provide a sample display compartment which is conveniently accessible from the exterior of a device of this kind and which is adapted to minimize the exchange of heat between the interior and exterior of the device.

An illustrative embodiment of this invention is shown in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a refrigerated automatic vending store fixture or cabinet.

Fig. 2 is a vertical section taken on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a wrapped meat package.

In the construction shown in the drawings, the vending device or machine 1 is of the same general type as that shown in our copending application, Serial 387,364, filed August 29, 1929, and is adapted for installation in any retail store where it may be placed in any convenient position, as for example with its back adjacent to the wall of the building; the front being accessible to customers as they walk along an aisle or passageway in front of the device. This may extend for any desired distance, according to the capacity and needs of the store. The height of the device is preferably sufficient to give ample head room inside.

The device comprises a tightly closed cabinet 2 having an inclined front wall 3 in which is provided a longitudinal opening 4. Mounted on the front wall 3, in registration with the opening 4, is a display case 5. This comprises a transparent top 6, located in a plane substantially parallel to the inclined wall 3, a front wall 7 substantially perpendicular to the inclined wall 3, and a hinged door 8. The hinged door is on the rear side of the display case and is provided with a lock 9 by means of which it may be secured against unauthorized tampering with the contents of the case 5. A partition 10, preferably comprising perforated or screen material, extends between the interior of the housing 2 and the interior of the display case 5.

In the cabinet 2 is a set of mutually independent dispensing conveyor mechanisms 11, a passageway 12 behind the mechanism to admit an attendant, and supply drawers 13 beneath the conveyors to receive sufficient quantities of goods from time to time, to enable frequent recharging of the conveyors 11 as their contents are currently removed by customers.

Each mechanism 11 comprises an endless chain 14 disposed triangularly in a vertical plane, a large wheel 15 to support the uppermost corner of the chain, a smaller wheel 16 to support the rearward corner of the chain, and a similar sized wheel 17 of the sprocket type provided with a ratchet 18 to be actuated by the pawl 19, for driving the conveyor chains 14 step by step under manual operation by the customer. The pawl is carried by a link 20 pivoted to the shaft 21 with the wheel 17. The link 20 is pivoted to a link 22 which in turn is pivoted to one arm of a bell crank lever 23. The other arm of the lever is operatively connected to a pull rod 24 having a handle 25 to be grasped by the customer. The spring 26 normally holds the rod 24 retract-

ed. Each chain 14 has a series of pairs of outstanding arms 27 to assure positive movement of the goods. Guide walls 28 separate the conveyors 11.

Rigidly mounted on each rod 24 within the cabinet 2, is a collar 24.1 having an upright rod 25.1 which comprises a forwardly extending arm 26.1. The end of the arm 26.1 registers with the delivery outlet and is extended into said outlet when the rod 24 is pulled outwardly, and serves to open the door 34.

In order to keep the device as a whole properly chilled, a refrigerating system of any desired kind is provided. The kind shown comprises a set of cooling coils 29 disposed within the space which is surrounded by the conveyors 11. A fan 30 is provided in the interior of the housing 2 to circulate the air in the device and to drive it past the coil 29. Passageways 31 admit air from the outside to assure gradual renewal and replacement of the air of the cabinet.

In the practice of this invention, the packer delivers his supplies to the storage drawers or magazines 13. Then the local clerk observes the conveyors from time to time, and as the packages are removed, he replenishes the conveyors from the drawers 13. The packages 32 shown in Figs. 2 and 3 represent wrapped packages of sliced pork chops.

Samples 33, preferably unwrapped, of each kind of meat carried by the respective conveyors 11 are exhibited in the display case 5 in related proximity to the respective conveyors and to the handles 25 by which they are operated. These samples illustrate to a customer the kind, size and quality of the corresponding goods which are offered for sale. The refrigerated air of the interior of the housing 2 circulates into the interior of the casing 5 and kepes the samples at a proper temperature. Old samples may be replaced by fresh ones when the door 8 is in the dotted line open position shown in Fig. 2.

The customer passes along the front of the device and whenever he desires to purchase goods of the kind indicated by a certain sample, he pulls the corresponding handle 25. This advances the conveyor and causes it to discharge a package downwardly by gravity. When a rod 24 is moved in this manner, the end of the arm 26.1 opens the corresponding trap door 34, allowing the package to pass through the outlet and onto the platform or shelf 35. The spring 26 restores the operating mechanism ready for the next customer to use.

Although but one specific embodiment of this invention is herein shown and described, it is to be understood that numerous details of the construction and method set forth may be altered or omitted without departing from the spirit of this invention as defined by the following claims.

We claim:

A device of the character described, comprising a housing including an inclined front wall having an opening therein, a display case mounted on said inclined wall over said opening and including a transparent top wall and a hinged door at the rear of the case, and a perforated partition between the housing and the case and secured over said opening for the support of articles thereon and whereby communication is established between the housing and the display case.

Signed at Chicago this 4th day of September, 1929.

HARRY H. McKEE.
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