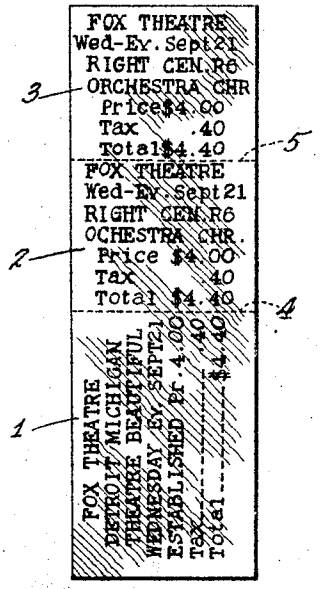
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COUPON TICKET

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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COUPON TICKET.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HARRY C. FOX, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York city, county and State of New York, have invented a certain new and useful Coupon Ticket, of which the following is a specification.

This invention is a coupon ticket for use in theatres, concert halls and the like wherein reserve seats are sold. It is the common practice in places of this character to employ tickets comprising a stub having a coupon attached to one end thereof and both the stub and coupon contain the name of the amusement place, the date, and the seat number. The entire ticket is sold to the patron, and, when presented at the door for admission, a doorman tears off the stub, deposits it in a box, and returns the coupon to the patron, who thereafter retains it. The doorman's box is subsequently turned over to the treasurer or accounting department and checked with the cash receipts from the box office. At the same time, the report, required by law, is prepared and the federal tax return placed thereon.

The foregoing procedure is universally employed wherever reserve seats are sold, but it has long been recognized that this system is faulty in that unscrupulous employees, acting in collusion, can very easily and do in fact manipulate the handling of the coupons and cash receipts from the box office in such manner as to annually mulct theatre owners, producers and the government out of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

It is the practice of theatrical managers to constantly employ a corps of detectives and to audit the ticket sales with great care, yet even with these precautions, it is practically impossible to preclude manipulation of tickets under the present system. Heretofore there has been no satisfactory method whereby accurate accounting can be secured at all times and the primary object of this invention is to provide means to enable accurate accounting at all times and permit of an absolute check up of the receipts and number of patrons and thus preventing collusion between employees and consequent defrauding of the management.

The ticket of this invention embodies three distinct portions or sections, namely, a stub and two coupons arranged in succession; that is to say, a stub with a coupon attached to one end thereof and a second coupon attached to the end of the first. The coupons and stubs are of the same width and are connected to one another at lines of scoring to render the parts readily detachable.

The patron receives from the box office, when paying for his seat, the entire ticket, and upon entering the theatre hands the whole ticket to the doorman. The doorman tears off the stub and drops it in the box and returns the two coupons still attached to one another to the patron, who, in turn, hands the assembled coupons to an usher. The usher separates the coupons, retains one and returns the other to the patron who thereafter retains it. The coupon taken by the usher is placed by him in a little box provided for this purpose and for which the usher is responsible and which is inaccessible to anyone except the usher. At a subsequent time, the ushers' boxes are mailed by the usher, or sent to the owner, who may reside in another city, as is the case when an owner controls a chain of theatres. This additional coupon enables him to have a complete and distinct record of all tickets sold, which the house staff and house treasurer, have no access to.

The usual procedure is to take the doorman's boxes to the box office where the tickets are counted by the treasurer and company manager, which enables them to make any false statement agreed upon, as the owner accepts the statement signed by the company manager, and house treasurer, and has no other record. But the ticket with two coupons on one end gives the owner an additional record, and when compared with the unsold tickets, which the treasurer is not obliged to send in, (and which were usually destroyed) makes a complete and accurate check up.

It also enables the owner to know just how the people are seated, which is very desirable, when the attendance is small, the object being to scatter the people around and make the audience seem larger.

This ticket also prevents the house or company managers from passing people by the door without tickets, and seating them in unsold seats; a practice which is carried on in many theatres today but, as the usher is responsible for each seat occupied, this would be impossible.

This method of check up obviously precludes a duplicate set of tickets being used.

When it is borne in mind that in practically all theatres, there are at least several ushers, none of whom have any definite assurance of what patrons they will seat, that collusion in the manipulation of tickets is absolutely impossible and that an accurate check up can be made.

An important feature of the invention resides in the structural peculiarities of the ticket, namely, the fact that both the patron's and usher's coupons are attached to the same end of the stub in succession, are of the same width as the stub and are not valid unless attached to one another. This arrangement makes the construction practical and unless this arrangement were employed, it would not be practical for reserve seat houses.

It has heretofore been suggested in moving picture houses to employ strip tickets wherein a plurality of coupons were attached to a stub portion at one side thereof, so that when the tickets were fed from the reel the tearing off of the stub from the strip would simultaneously remove the coupons, but while this arrangement could be used in a motion picture house, where there were no reserve seats, it is entirely impractical for reserve seat houses. Moreover, the formation of coupons at the side of the stub makes it difficult to remove the coupons without tearing them, delays the collecting of the stubs, and what is equally important, such a ticket would not fit the ticket racks of the box offices of any of the theatres and to use such a ticket it would be necessary to provide new ticket racks wherever such a ticket was to be used.

The present invention, in contradistinction, obviates all these disadvantages and can be used in the present racks.

Features of the invention, other than those adverted to, will be apparent from the hereinafter detailed description and claims, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

The accompanying drawing illustrates one practical embodiment of the invention, but the construction therein shown is for the purpose of illustration, only, and does not define the limits of the invention.

The ticket shown in the drawings embodies three distinct portions or sections designated 1, 2 and 3. The section 1 is a stub and the sections 2 and 3 are the coupons. The part 2 is positioned at one end of the stub 1, and the coupon 3 is positioned at the corresponding end of the coupon 2.

Each of these sections have printed thereon substantially the same subject matter, that is to say, each contains the name of the theatre, the date for which the ticket is issued, the seat number and the price. The stub may contain additional data, such as the address of the theatre and a slogan or any other information, which it may be desired to print thereon. The stub 1 may, for the purpose of description, be referred to as the doorman's stub, the section 2 may be referred to as the usher's coupon, and the section 3 as the patron's coupon. Between the sections 1 and 2 is a line of scoring 4, and between the sections 2 and 3 is a line of scoring 5.

The patron receives, upon paying his admission fee, the entire ticket, and presents the ticket in its entirety to the doorman, who tears off the stub 1 along the line of scoring 4, drops it in the doorman's box, and returns the assembled coupons 2 and 3 to the patron. Entering the theatre, the patron passes the assembled coupons to an usher, who separates them, drops the usher's coupons 2 into a small box provided for the purpose, and returns the coupon 3 to the patron. In due course of business, the doorman's boxes are sent to the accounting department where they are opened and the stubs therein contained are carefully counted and checked up with the unsold tickets and cash receipts of the box office. The usher's coupons are sent, with the unsold tickets, to the owner for his check upon the employees of the theatre.

The use of the ticket of this invention permits of an absolute accurate accounting, eliminates the opportunity of employees to defraud the theatre management and government and does not in any way delay the entrance and seating of the patrons. The ticket clearly differs from all prior theatre tickets inasmuch as the coupons are both on one and the same end.

In employing the ticket of this invention, it is apparent that a doorman must return the coupons to the patron in order that the patron have a coupon to turn over to one of the ushers and consequently the doorman cannot return the stubs to the box office to be used over again as is now frequently done. It also prevents collusion between travelling managers and house treasurers, preventing them from making false box office statements without being detected. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are lost yearly by this method which is impossible when the ticket of the present invention is used.

Theatrical managers and owners have particularly been defrauded by collusion of employees as heretofore stated, and, moreover, the defrauding of such persons simultaneously brings about defrauding of the government on the amusement tax. Producers and owners have for years sought to find some effective method or means for eliminating this "leakage". Numerous mechanical devices have been suggested, such as turnstiles and the like, but fire underwriters will not permit the use of such devices so that at the present time, the manage-

ments are continuing to use the old defective system, knowing it to be thoroughly ineffective and attempting to eliminate fraud as much as possible by the employment of spies, detectives and other human agencies.

The present invention entirely overcomes the possibility of fraud and places the sale, collection and accounting of tickets on an absolutely firm financial status.

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

A reserve seat theatre ticket for a single specified performance, comprising a strip of material divided by two transverse lines of scoring into three distinct separable sections, positioned end to end, one end section being longer than the others and constituting the doorman's stub, and the other two sections being positioned beyond one and the same end of the stub and constituting patrons' and ushers' coupons, and all of which sections are of the same width and contain the same date and seat number.

In testimony whereof I have signed the foregoing specification.

HARRY C. FOX.