

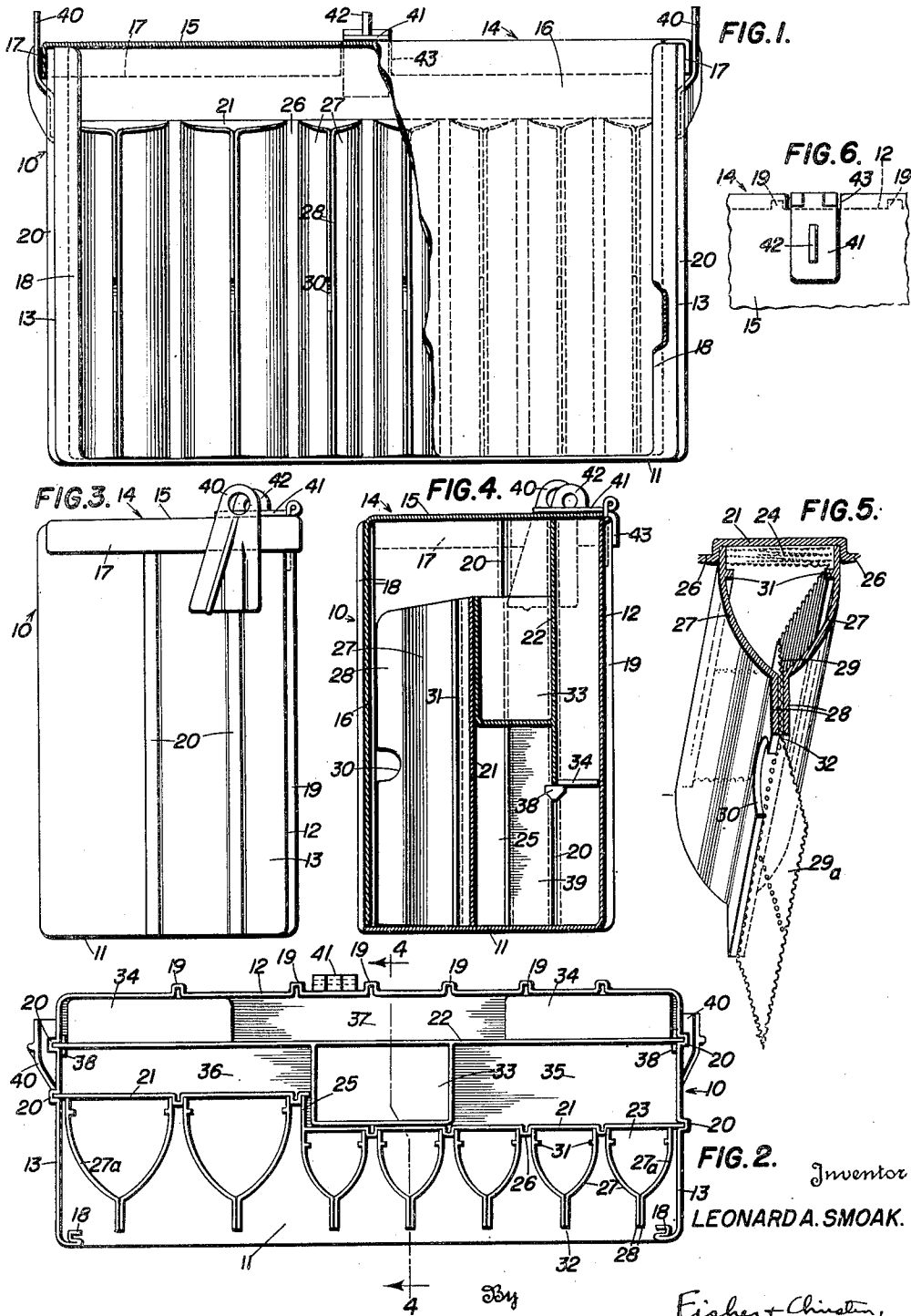
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DISPENSING CONTAINER FOR SHEET MATERIAL

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DISPENSING CONTAINER FOR SHEET MATERIAL

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This invention relates to improvements in dispensing containers, a particular purpose thereof being to provide a postal kit which includes a compartmentation for the storage of postage stamps interfolded in accordion formation, the dispensing guide flanges which comprise the principal elements of the compartmentation being resilient in nature, thereby to exercise a grip on succeeding vertical rows of stamps to prevent undue unfolding yet yielding to manual pulling when it is desired to tear off a row or rows of the stamps or other sheet material.

One of the important uses of the present container in the form of a postal kit is by mail carriers serving rural communities. Such communities do not always have the advantage of a conveniently located post office where postage stamps can be purchased. Reliance is then placed on the mail carrier as the source of supply for postage stamps, post cards and envelopes. Since mail carriers often encounter inclement weather in their daily travels, the handling of such commodities as mentioned makes them highly vulnerable to the collection of moisture and dirt, especially so with respect to the gummed surfaces thereof which should be kept dry and clean. Another important use is for the dispensing, safe-keeping and storage of postal sheet material by stamp clerks and postmasters in small post offices and by clerks in various stores and offices.

At this point it should be explained that while the foregoing uses of the postal kit are its chief uses, the principles of its several features are such as will enable extending the use of the invention to other fields. For example, gummed sheet material in accordion-folded form, or in rolled form, and printed otherwise than to comprise postage stamps, can be stored in and dispensed from the resiliently walled compartments. By the same token, articles other than post cards and envelopes may be contained by other storage spaces provided in the kit for this purpose. The broad aspects of the invention are therefore to be kept in mind, particularly when considering commonly encountered faults in dispensing containers of generally kindred types.

Therefore, reverting to a preferred embodiment of the use of the present invention and now setting out its salient features, it will be understood that one of the objects thereof is to provide a postal kit having one or more compartments especially constructed to contain postage stamps in interfolded or accordion-fold formation, the side members of each compartment being made of resilient material so that the terminal guide flanges at which an end of the stamp sheet emerges will press thereon with a grip that will yield under a manual pull on the emergent portion.

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Another object of the invention is to supplement the stamp compartment with confronting retarding ribs which cooperate with the dispensing flanges in that they retard the major portion of the folded sheet while the emergent end is pulled out between the dispensing flanges.

Another object of the invention is to provide a container of the present type having means for exercising a grip on the emergent portion of the sheet.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a compartment for the sheet material which is constructed of resilient material in order to grip the sheet in the manner herein intended.

A further object of the invention is to provide an initial or partial compartment within the confines of the main dispensing compartment for retaining the major portion of the sheet material in folded or other stored position.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a postal kit having a system of compartmentation which especially adapts the kit to safely and cleanly carrying postage stamps, cards and envelopes and storing them.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention appear in the following specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a front elevation of the postal kit, portions of the cover and one of its guide flanges being broken away;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the postal kit, the cover being omitted;

Fig. 3 is an elevation of one end of the postal kit;

Fig. 4 is a vertical section taken on the line 4—4 of Fig. 2, showing the cover in place;

Fig. 5 is a fractional perspective view of one of the stamps compartments, illustrating a particularly important feature of the invention, and

Fig. 6 is a detail plan view presently described.

In carrying out the invention, the postal kit, generally designated 10, is made in the form of a rectangular box preferably of a thermo-setting plastic but permissibly of any substitute of sufficient durability to withstand the hard use to which it will be put. The box has a bottom 11, back 12 and opposite sides 13. The top and front are open thereby to provide full and easy access to the compartmented interior in which the stamps, cards and envelopes are stored.

The space afforded by the open top and front may be closed by a cover 14 which comprises the top and front portions 15 and 16. The top has a depending flange 17 which overlaps the back 12 and sides 13 to compose a fairly complete closure around the top margin. The front portion 16 is in the form of an oversize flange, more in the nature of a flap which goes completely to the bottom 11. The cover 14 is emplaced and re-

moved in its entirety. When it is emplaced, the flange 17 fits over the back and sides while the front portion is slid in crimped guideways 18 (Fig. 2) into which the front-vertical edges of the sides 13 are formed.

Channels 19 and 20 are formed in the back and sides, all of which add considerable stiffness to the structure. The side channels 20 provide guides for the plates 21 and 22 of a compartmentation, the immediately following description being confined to one of the members thereof. The plate 21 is slid into and desirably fixed in a pair of the guides located nearest the open front. It is the foundation of a plurality of stamp compartments 23, all of which are identical except for a difference in size. Most of the compartments are of a size to hold the usual small postage stamps in accordion-fold formation as at 24 (Fig. 5). Several compartments of larger dimension are provided to hold stamps of the commemorative size. Said difference occasions an offset 25 in the plate 21.

Vertical parallel ribs 26 on front of the plate 21, formed by channelling the back of said plate, provide mounts to which the inner upright edges of the horizontally arched or bowed resilient sides 27 are either cemented or press-fitted to make an enduring bond. The remote sides 27a, lacking mounting ribs, are cemented directly to the backing plate. The dispensing flanges 28, in which the sides 27 and 27a terminate at the front, lie flat against each other, or nearly so, being restrained in that relationship by the inward tension of companion sides of each compartment 23. The nether edges of said sides 27 are unattached to the bottom 11 so as not to limit flexure.

Consequently the dispensing flanges exercise a grip on the emergent vertical row stamps 29 (Fig. 5), yielding only to the manual pull applied thereto at a thumb-notch 30 in at least one of the dispensing flanges. Retarding ribs 31 on the inner surfaces of the sides 27, 27a are spaced forwardly at equal distances from the inner upright edges to confront each other as shown (Fig. 2). The previously mentioned accordion fold 24 is emplaced behind the confronting ribs which act to retard the major portion of the interfolded sheet. The stamps are prevented from unfolding too much when the emergent row 29 is pulled out as at 29a and torn off across the edge 32, in which respect said ribs 31 cooperate with the dispensing flanges 28.

Referring now to the other member of the compartmentation, namely, the plate 22, it is observed in Fig. 2 that the offset 25 is occupied in part by a small receptacle 33 which extends forwardly from the plate 22. The latter has one or more shelves 34 which extend to the back. The distribution and dimensions of the receptacle and shelves are such as to define spaces which can be used for the storage of postcards, small and large envelopes in that order. The large envelopes rest on the shelves. Stamp books are kept in the receptacle 33. In addition to that purpose the lateral walls of the receptacle provide a fingerhold by means of which the plate can be lifted in its guides 20.

In the embodiment shown, the plate 22 does not extend all the way down (Fig. 4), being supported in the suspended position by rests 38 which are cemented to the sides 13 across the proper guides 20 at the requisite upward distance. The space 39 (Fig. 4), resulting from these arrange-

ments provides an additional or semi-secret compartment for the storage of extra sheets of stamps of various denominations.

Handles, or a carrying strap (neither shown) will be connected with upstanding lugs 40 which are cemented or otherwise affixed to the sides. Each is desirably strengthened by a rib. Means for locking down the cover 14, comprising a hasp 41 which is hingedly affixed to the back 12 as shown, is provided. The hasp is swung over a keeper 42 (Fig. 6) which has a hole for the shackle of a lock. The cover flange 17 is cut out at the back as at 43 to make room for the hasp when the cover is set down into place. The short radius of the hasp restricts the raising movement of the cover so that the latter is locked down for all practical purposes when the lock (not shown) is in place.

From the foregoing description it will be understood that the compartments 23 are primarily constructed for the storage of sheets of stamps, or portions thereof, folded vertically in accordion formation. As each vertical row is pulled out and torn off, the emergent edge is yieldingly gripped by the dispensing flanges, while the major portion of the accordion fold is held back by the retarding ribs. The remaining compartmentations 35, 36, 37 and 39 are an important auxiliary to the compartments 23 in that they maintain, in a sense, a necessary source of supply. By an extension of the present invention, the latter compartmentation is active while the former is static.

Moreover, by removing the plate 22, a new series of compartments may be formed by inserting one or more plates (not shown) parallel to the sides 13 between the cooperating, opposing channels 19 so that the plates are vertically slidable in the channel grooves. These compartments have found particular use as storage space for stamps.

True to its primary nature of a kit, the container includes the bottom 11. But it is conceivable that the stamp compartments 23 may function as the dispensing medium of interfolded commodities without employing a bottom. This arrangement can be visualized without illustration. Thus, in the case of a sheet of stamps, the major fold formation 24 will stay in place by the expansive reaction of the folds. The dispensing flanges aid in holding the stamps in place in the compartments down to the last row.

While the invention has been described in a preferred embodiment, it will be understood that various modifications and departures thereof are included and I intend that such modifications shall be included within the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A dispensing container for sheet material, comprising a box including a bottom, opposite sides and a back, and an open front and top, said sides having guideways at their front portion, active and static compartmentation in the box comprising a plate mounted on the sides and extending to the bottom to define at least one static stowage space adjacent to the back, at least one pair of resilient sides affixed at like edges on the front of the plate in spaced relation and extending toward the open front to provide an active compartment into which a sheet in folded form is transferable from said stowage space, said sides having terminal dispensing flanges between which a free edge of the folded sheet is emergent, and a cover providing a common closure for all of the compartmentation, including

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a front portion slidable in said guideways and a top portion flanged on three sides.

2. A dispensing container for sheet material, comprising a box including a bottom, back and opposite sides and open at the front and top, at least two compartments of varied size in the box, each being composed of resilient sides extending toward each other and having terminal dispensing flanges, a first plate affixed to the sides having an offset to accommodate the varied sized compartments said flanges extending to the bottom, like edges of the sides being affixed to the respective portions of the plate, and a shelved second plate mounted on the sides defining a compartmentation between the first plate and back, and a receptacle affixed to the second plate, extending into said offset and providing a fingerhold for the withdrawal of the second plate for access to the space below said compartmentation.

3. A postal kit comprising a box container including a bottom, opposite sides and a back, and an open front and top, said sides having guideways at their front portion, at least one plate vertically fitted in the box mounted on said sides and extending to the bottom, and a stamp compartment of which the plate is a part, said compartment including a pair of arched resilient sides vertically positioned and affixed at like edges to the plate in spaced relation, their nether edges extending to the bottom but being unattached thereto whereby to avoid interference with flexure, said sides extending toward each other and having terminal dispensing flanges held in substantial contact by the resilience of the sides to yieldingly grip a row of stamps, and a cover providing a closure, including a front portion slid-

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able in said guideways and a top portion flanged on three sides.

4. In a dispensing container for sheet material, a plate having parallel mounting ribs, a pair of oppositely positioned compartment sides affixed at like edges to the plate along the ribs for determining the spaced relation of the sides, said sides being resilient and arched from the ribs toward each other and having terminal dispensing flanges held in substantial flat contact by the resilience of the sides, and oppositely positioned inwardly extending retarding ribs on the inner surfaces of each of the sides running parallel to and spaced apart from the plate whereby to provide an initial compartment within the confines of the sides.

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