

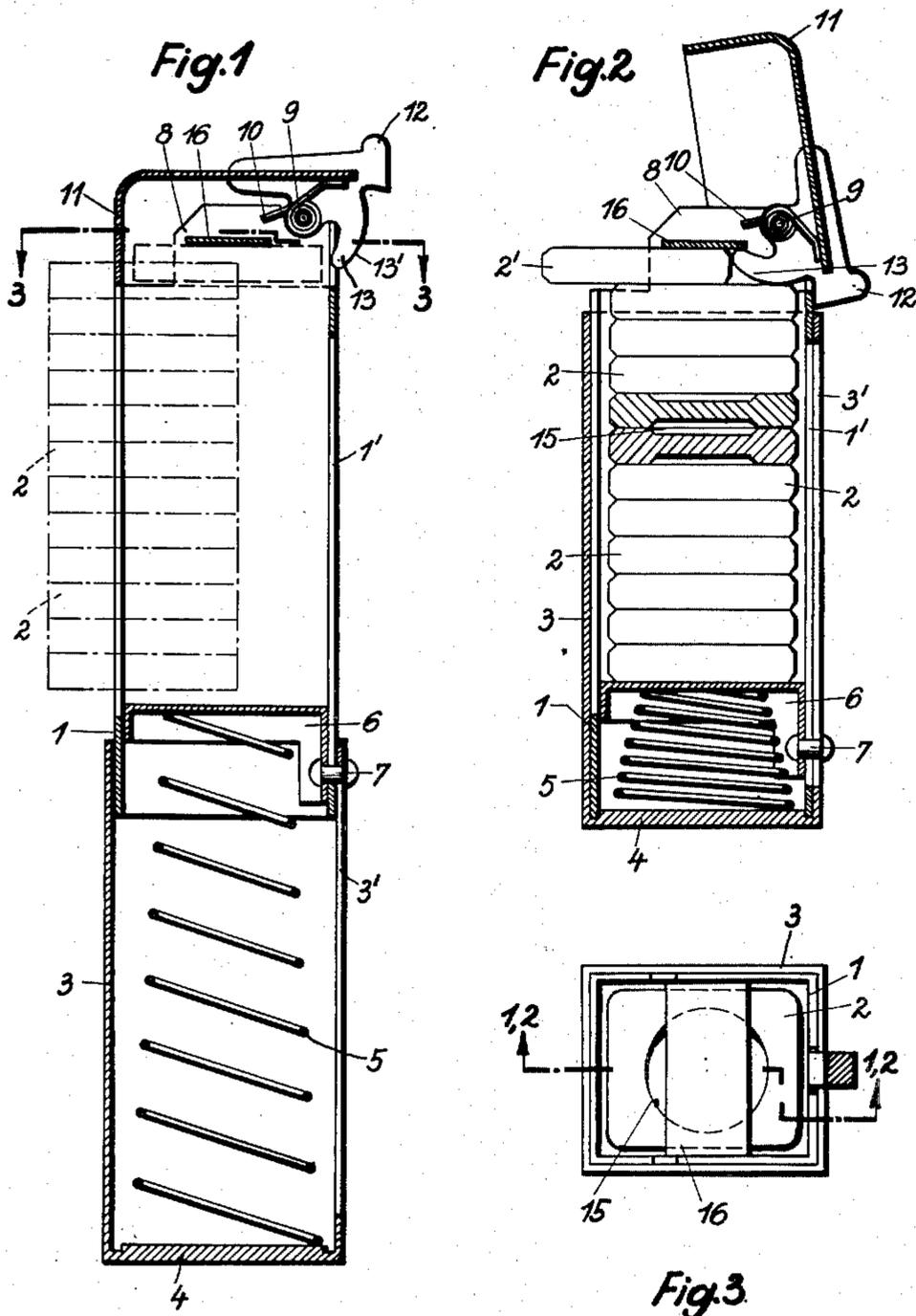
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POCKET ARTICLE DISPENSING CONTAINER

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POCKET ARTICLE DISPENSING CONTAINER

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The invention relates to pocket containers having a hinged lid and adapted for the delivery of articles, such for example as pastilles, tablets, sweetmeats and cigarettes, which containers can be opened or closed with one hand, and present the merchandise to the user in a hygienic and unspoil condition. The possibility of operation by one hand only is important not only for persons having only one hand but also persons who often have only one hand free (for example motor-vehicle drivers), or whose occupation causes their hands to become smeared with dirt.

Known pocket containers for the delivery of tablets singly and which are provided with hinged lids can be opened by one hand, but it is necessary to grasp the uppermost articles with the fingers. This is only made possible by opening the container to render the top article accessible and inserting a knife or similar implement laterally beneath it in order to raise it slightly. These operations can obviously be effected only by using both hands. By contrast the container according to the present invention is so constructed that the opening operation can be effected with one hand and not only frees the tablets but also displaces each of them laterally sufficiently far over the edge to enable it to be gripped between the lips and so placed in the mouth in a hygienic and unspoil condition.

This lateral displacement is achieved by providing a thrust member attached to the lid which, on opening the lid, presses laterally against the uppermost article in the container thus displacing it from its central position and over the container edge. The thrust member may be formed in the shape of a finger, in which case its lower edge is so curved that, on opening the lid, the article following the one being delivered is prevented from moving upward and so rendering closing the lid difficult.

The diagrammatic drawings illustrate by way of example several embodiments of pocket containers according to the invention.

Fig. 1 is a cross-section on line 1—1 in Fig. 3 of a container with the lid closed and in which the component parts are shown extended for refilling.

Fig. 2 is a section on line 2—2 of Fig. 3 of the same container, in use, delivering an article.

Fig. 3 is a section on line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

The embodiment shown in Figs. 1 to 3 has an oblong container 1 with an opening in front. The container 1 is made of synthetic resin, metal or the like, and is adapted to contain the loose articles 2, which in this case consist of oblong pas-

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tilles (sweetmeats or pharmaceutical tablets). Surrounding the inner container 1 is an outer movable casing 3 on the base 4 of which is fixed a spring 5 acting against the movable base 6 of the container 1. Secured to the base 6 is a stud 7 arranged to slide in the slots 1' and 3' provided in the surrounding component parts 1, 3 of the container. By this means the parts 1, 3 can be arranged at will either in the position for filling (Fig. 1) or in the position for use (Fig. 2) without completely dismantling the container. Free movement of the base 6 is kept within the required limits, however, by virtue of the stud 7 being rigid with the base 6 and slidable only in the slots 1' and 3'.

In the upper extension of the wall of the container 1 is mounted a pin 9 about which the lid 11 is rotatable against the action of a spring 10, one end of which is fixed to the extension 8.

The lid carries a fixed thumb piece 12 including a thrust member 13, the lower edge 13' (Fig. 1) of which is curved. Holding the container, with one hand, the lid can be opened by depressing the thumb piece 12 with the thumb, whereupon the thrust member 13 laterally displaces the uppermost article 2' into the position shown in Fig. 2. Owing to the curved form of the lower edge 13' of the member 13 the articles thrust upwards by the action of the spring 5 are prevented from following the article 2' being delivered. As soon as the pressure on the thumb piece 12 is sufficiently relaxed, the lid 11 is automatically returned to the closed position by the spring 10. The thrust member 13 is thus removed out of the way of the new top article and thus allows the latter to take up a position ready for next opening operation (Fig. 1).

The lid may also be arranged in known manner so as to be permanently spring-loaded in the direction tending to open it, the lid moving smartly to the open position on release of a locking device and thus ejecting or pushing out an article 2. The articles are formed with recesses 15 in order to facilitate lateral displacement with respect to one another.

When it is desired to fill the container, the parts 1, 3 are moved into the position shown in Fig. 1, whereupon the new stack of tablets 2 (shown by dotted lines in Fig. 1) is inserted through the front of the open container 1. By collapsing the parts 1, 3 the base 6 is displaced downwards and the spring compressed (Fig. 2), whereupon the container is ready for use. The uppermost article presses against the bridge

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piece 16 carried by the extensions 8 of the container 1.

When dealing with articles having a sticky surface, it is advisable to separate the individual articles by interposing spacers of different material, for example separation could be effected by means of wafers or by covering the articles with a non-adhesive wrapper.

Having now particularly described and ascertained the nature of my said invention, and in what manner the same is to be performed, I declare that what I claim is:

1. A container adapted to receive a stack of tablets or the like and individually to dispense same, comprising an elongated casing having a side opening near one end thereof accommodating a single item to be dispensed, spring means tending to longitudinally displace a stack of such items toward said one end, pivot means extending transversely of said casing adjacent said one end and at the side thereof remote from said opening, a cover swingable about said pivot means and provided with a portion closing said opening in a normal position of said cover, and a pusher member on said cover swingable simultaneously with the latter about the axis defined by said transverse pivot means and comprising a cam-shaped portion with a curved outer edge centered substantially on said pivot means, said casing being apertured to admit said pusher member, said curved outer edge of the cam-shaped portion being of such configuration as to slide along the surface of the second-highest item of the stack while an end of said pusher member, upon movement of said cover to an operated position, partially ejects the highest item of the stack through said opening.

2. A container adapted to receive a stack of tablets or the like and individually to dispense same, comprising an outer receptacle, an inner casing slidably held in said receptacle, said casing being provided with a movable bottom adapted to support a stack of dispensable items and with a loading aperture at one side, said casing being displaceable with respect to said receptacle between a partly withdrawn position, in which said loading aperture is sufficiently uncovered to permit sideways insertion of a stack into said casing, and a retracted position in which said loading aperture is obstructed by said receptacle except for so much of said aperture as will accommodate the uppermost of the items of the

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stack, spring means in said receptacle bearing upon said movable bottom when said casing is in said retracted position, thereby urging said stack against the top of said casing, retaining means on said receptacle restraining upward movement of said bottom upon displacement of said casing into said partly withdrawn position, thereby preventing said bottom from interfering with the insertion of a stack into the casing, and ejector means operable in said retracted position of said casing to push said uppermost item through said aperture.

3. A container according to claim 2, wherein said ejector means comprise transversely extending pivot means on said casing adjacent the top thereof and at the side of the casing remote from said aperture, a cover available about said pivot means and provided with a portion for closing the unobstructed portion of said aperture in the retracted position, of said casing and with said cover placed in a normal position, and a pusher member on said cover swingable simultaneously with the latter about the axis defined by said transverse pivot means and comprising a cam-shaped portion with a curved outer edge centered substantially on said pivot means, said casing being apertured to admit said curved outer edge of the pusher member, said cam-shaped portion being of such configuration as to slide along the surface of the second-highest item of the stack while an end of said pusher member, upon movement of said cover into an operated position, partially ejects said uppermost item.

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