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(71) Applicant: **BOWATER-SCOTT CORPORATION LIMITED**
Bowater House Knightsbridge
London SW1X 7LR(GB)

(72) Inventor: **Huntley, Ian Michael**
30, Whitfield Road
Bexleyheath Kent DA7 5LU(GB)

(74) Representative: **Richards, David John et al,**
Page, White & Farrer 5, Plough Place New Fetter Lane
London EC4A 1HY(GB)

(54) **A dispenser for sheet material.**

(57) A dispenser for sheet material comprises a stack of sheet material (10), such as facial tissues, a carton (20) having an aperture (45) in its top wall (35), and support means (40) for the stack (10). The support means (40) comprises a central member (55) projecting vertically upwards from the base wall (25) over which the stack (10) is folded, two support members (60a and 60b) extending from the base wall (25) to the side walls (30 and 32) at an angle (A) to the central member (55), which support the end edges of the sheets (10), and two members (65a and 65b), extending from the central member (55) horizontally across the base wall (25) to the side walls (30) and (32), locating the support means (40) in position.

The support means (40) is suitably formed integrally from a cardboard insert (80).

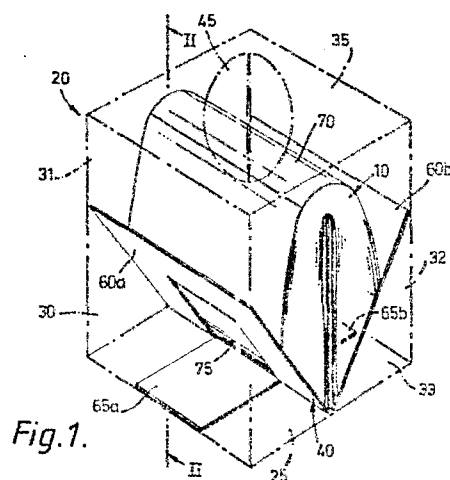


Fig.1.

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A DISPENSER FOR SHEET MATERIAL

This invention relates to dispensers for sheet material, and in particular dispensers for facial tissues.

- 5 Cartons of the kind for dispensing sheet material which is folded on itself into an inverted U-shaped stack are known. The advantages of this kind of carton compared to those which store the sheet material flat, is that they are more compact and require less packaging material and storage space. However, a drawback with
10 cartons of this kind is that the stack of sheet material tends to shift during transportation and use such that the sheets are not properly orientated with the dispensing aperture, giving a potential dispensing problem.
- 15 British Patent No. 1,186,787 shows a carton in which the stack of tissues is folded on itself. In this arrangement, the end edges of the tissues are flared outwardly so that they bear against the side walls of the carton so as to support the stack and prevent it from shifting.
- 20 To help overcome the problem of shifting, it has been proposed to provide an insert within the carton which supports the tissues. However, it is still possible for the insert itself to shift or for the sheets to become displaced from their correct position over the
25 insert. British Patent No. 1,443,111 shows a carton having an inverted Y-shaped insert over which the stack of sheets is folded. The insert causes the sheets to flare out so that the edges of the tissues bear against the side walls of the carton.
- 30 United States Patent No. 3243079 shows a carton having a W-shaped insert wherein the lateral uprights of the W lie against the side walls of the carton, and wherein the sheets are folded over the central inverted V of the insert and are thus flared out so that the
35 edges of the tissues bear against the lateral uprights

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of the insert.

An object of the present invention is to provide a carton having an insert which improves the dispensing properties of the carton and which substantially reduces the shifting of the tissues in the carton during handling and transportation and which is itself prevented from being displaced.

According to the present invention there is provided a dispenser for sheet material comprising a stack of sheet material, a carton having a base wall, side walls and a top wall, an aperture in the top wall through which the sheet material is dispensed, and support means within the carton for the stack of sheet material, characterised in that said support means comprises a central member projecting substantially vertically upwardly from the base wall, over which the stack of sheet material is folded in the form of a symmetrical inverted U such that the top sheet of the stack is presented to the aperture in the carton; means for supporting the end edges of the folded sheet material; and locating means locating the support means in position in the carton.

In this way the sheet material is supported in position over the central member which is itself prevented from any substantial shifting within the carton, so that the sheet material is always presented to the aperture for extraction.

Preferably the means for supporting the end edges of the folded sheet material comprises two wall members which project outwardly and upwardly from either side of the central member, at an angle to the central member, to opposite side walls of the carton, the said angle being advantageously dependent upon the bulk of the sheet material, the number of sheets, the number of plies in each sheet, and the folding configuration. Suitably these wall members extend upwardly from the base wall.

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The whole end edge of each end of the stack is supported in this way since the angle of the two wall members can be varied to match the angle of the end edge of the stack according to the bulk of the sheet material used.

Preferably the said locating means comprises two members which project substantially horizontally from either side of the central member, along the base wall, to one of the said opposite side walls respectively.

10 In this way the central member and the two members for supporting the end edges of the stack are kept in position within the carton without the necessity for additional fixing. Other locating means may be provided, for example the wall members may be provided with tabs 15 which are glued inside the carton.

Advantageously a plastic film member may be provided, extending across the aperture in the top wall, the said membrane having either an elongate overlapping opening or a slit depending on the nature of 20 the substrate or the fold configuration used to permit extraction of the sheet material from the carton.

The plastic membrane helps to prevent the sheet material becoming soiled and may also assist in the dispensing action.

25 Advantageously the support means is a removable insert which is formed integrally from a cardboard blank.

The insert used can thereby be changed according to the bulk and length of the sheet material used and 30 the dimensions of the carton.

Suitably the sheet material may be either interleaved, tab-tied or longitudinally folded.

The invention will now be described by way of example and with reference to the accompanying drawings 35 in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the dispenser

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according to the present invention;

Figure 2 is a cross-sectional side view of the dispenser along the line II-II of Figure 1,

Figure 3 is a view of the dispenser from above
5 showing the plastic film membrane;

Figure 4 shows the blank for the cardboard insert,

As shown in Figures 1 and 2, a dispenser for tissues 10 comprises a carton 20 having a base wall 25, side walls 30, 31, 32, 33, a top wall 35 and a cardboard
10 insert 40.

The top wall 35 is provided with an aperture 45 through which the tissues 10 can be extracted. A plastic film membrane 47 extends across the aperture 45 as shown in Figures 1, 2 and 3. This membrane 47 has an elongate
15 opening 50 which is originally sealed for example by perforations so that it can be opened by a user by tearing.

As will be described with reference to Figure 4, the insert 40 is cut and folded from a single piece of cardboard, and comprises a folded spine forming a central
20 member 55 projecting vertically upwards centrally from the base wall 25, and two support members 60a, 60b projecting upwards from the central member 55 at an angle A thereto. The upper edges of the support members 60a, 60b rest against the side walls 30 and 32 of the
25 carton, and the insert also includes base members 65a, 65b extending from the central member 55 horizontally along the base wall 25 respectively to the side walls 30 and 32. The configuration of the insert, with the outer edges of base members 65a, 65b and support members
30 60a, 60b engaging the side walls of the carton, ensures a relatively rigid assembly which does not require the presence of tissues for support and which will not collapse during transit or use.

Although the spine 55 is shown as being vertical,
35 it may be substantially vertical and comprise an inverted V-shape, the central member 55 and the support members

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60a and 60b thus combining to form an inverted W-configuration.

The tissues 10 are folded over the central member 55 in the form of a symmetrical inverted U, so that
5 the uppermost tissue 70 is presented to the aperture 45. The end edges 75 of the tissues 10 are supported by the support members 60a, 60b. The height of the central member 55 should be not more than half the length of tissues 10, and preferably be slightly less than half
10 the length of the tissues 10. The angle A is dependent on the bulk of the tissue 10 used, the sheet count, the ply makeup and the fold configuration. A suitable angle would lie between 45° and 65°.

The tissues 10 of the stack are either interleaved,
15 tab-tied or longitudinally folded as is in itself known. In this way as the top tissue 70 is extracted the next tissue is pulled partially through the aperture 45 so that it can be grasped by a subsequent user.

In order that the first tissue of a new box
20 can be easily grasped, the top sheet of a complete stack is preferably folded over.

Figure 4 shows the blank 80 of the cardboard insert 40 before it is assembled.

To assemble the insert 40, the blank 80 is cut
25 along lines A', A'', B', B'', and C', C''. It is then folded along line D and, in the opposite direction, along lines E between X'-Y' and X''-Y'', and to a lesser extent along lines E between Y'-Y' and Y''-Y''.

The length of the cuts A', C', A'' and C'' are
30 half the width of walls 31 or 33, although this may vary to take into account the board thickness and the clearance required during assembly.

The stack of tissues 10 can then be folded over the central member 55 and the assembly placed inside
35 the carton 20, where it is retained in position by abutment between edges B', B'' of panels 65a, 65b and side walls 30, 32.

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CLAIMS:

1. A dispenser for sheet material comprising a stack (10) of sheet material, a carton (20) having a base wall (25), side walls (30, 31, 32, 33) and a top wall (35), an aperture (45), in said top wall through which the sheet material is dispensed, and support means (40) disposed within the carton for the stack of sheet material, characterised in that said support means comprises a central member (55) projecting substantially vertically upwardly from the said base wall over which the stack of sheet material is folded in the form of a symmetrical inverted U such that the top sheet of the stack is presented to the aperture in the carton, means (60a, 60b) for supporting the end edges of the folded sheet material, and locating means (65a, 65b) locating the support means in position in the carton.
2. A dispenser according to Claim 1, wherein the means for supporting the end edges of the folded sheet material comprises two wall members (60a, 60b) extending outwardly and upwardly from either side of the central member (55), at an angle (A) thereto.
3. A dispenser according to Claim 2, wherein said wall members (60a, 60b) extend from the base wall (25) of the carton to opposite side walls (30, 32) thereof, and the angle (A) between the base wall and the wall members lies between 45° and 65° .
4. A dispenser according to any of Claims 1 to 3, wherein said locating means comprises two members (65a, 65b) which project substantially horizontally from either side of the central member (55), along the base wall (25), to one of the said opposite side walls (30, 32) respectively.
5. A dispenser according to any of the preceding claims wherein a plastic film membrane (47) is provided,

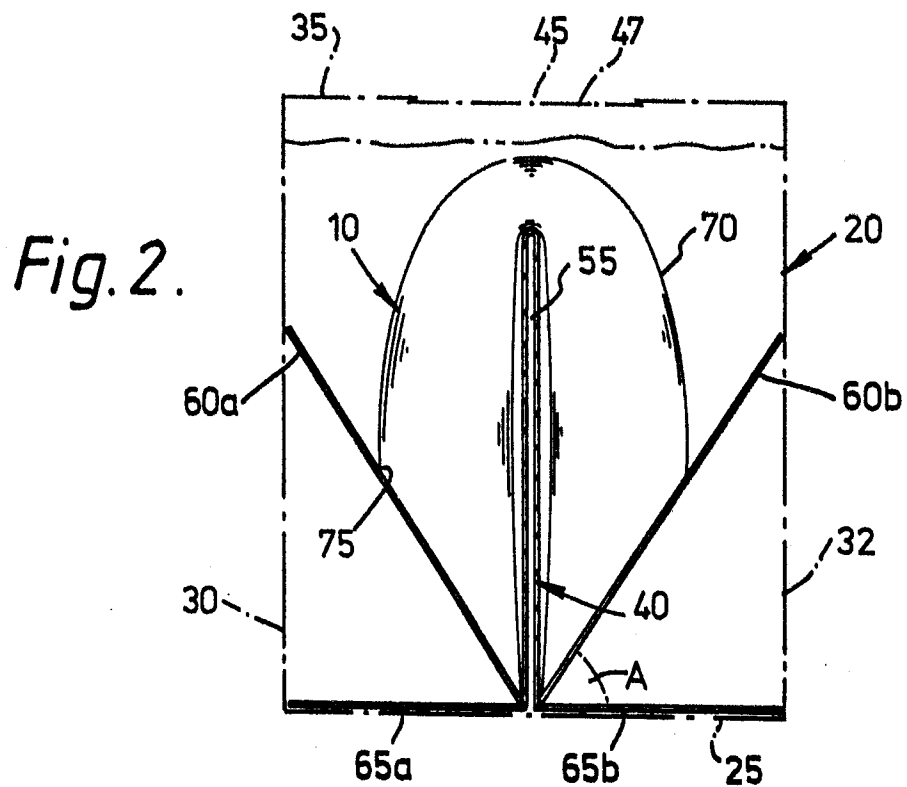
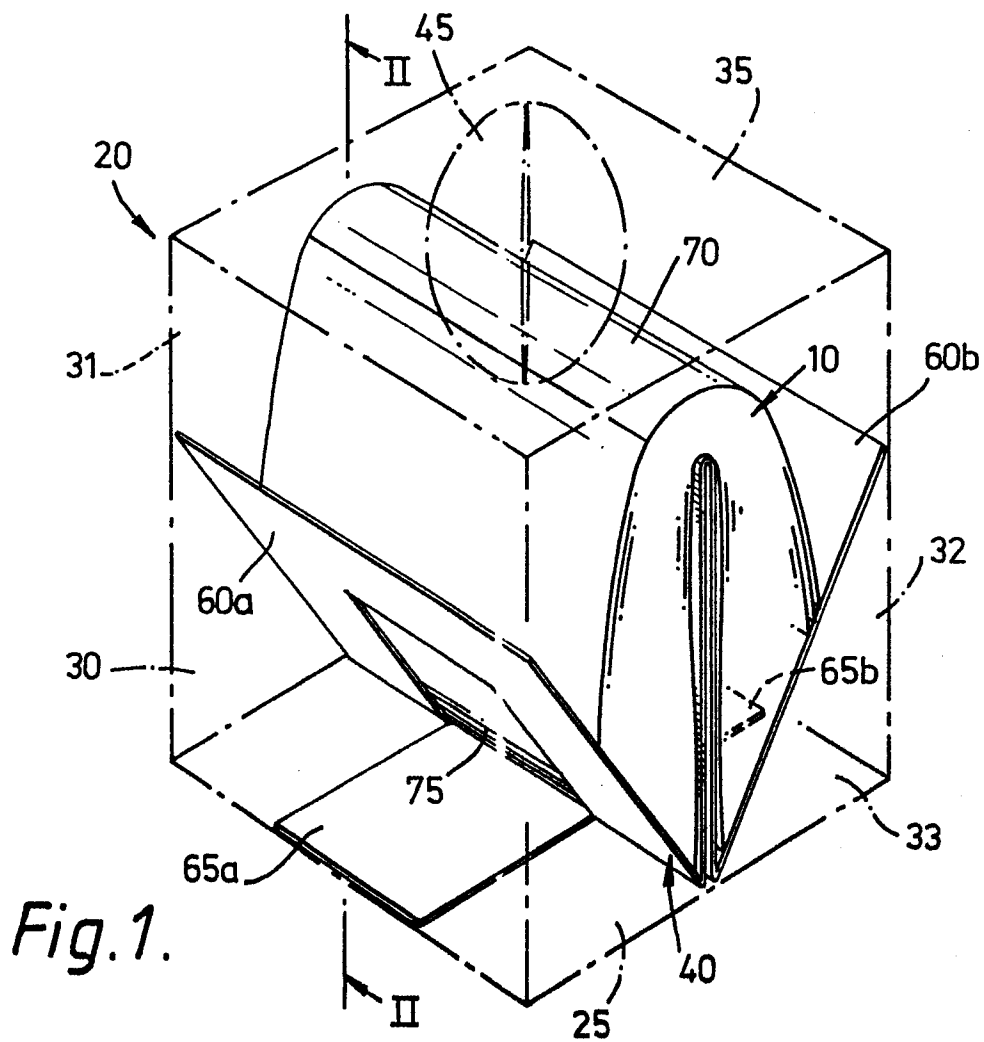
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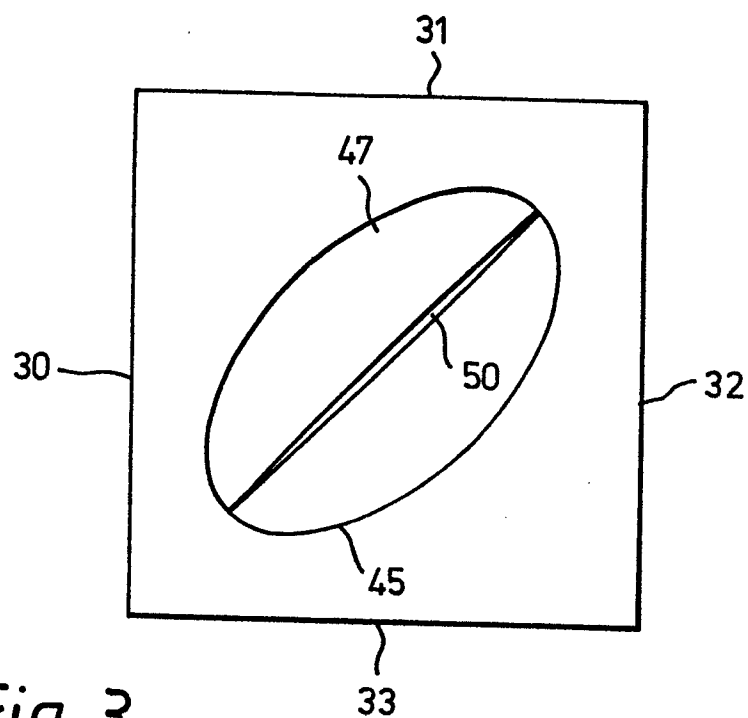
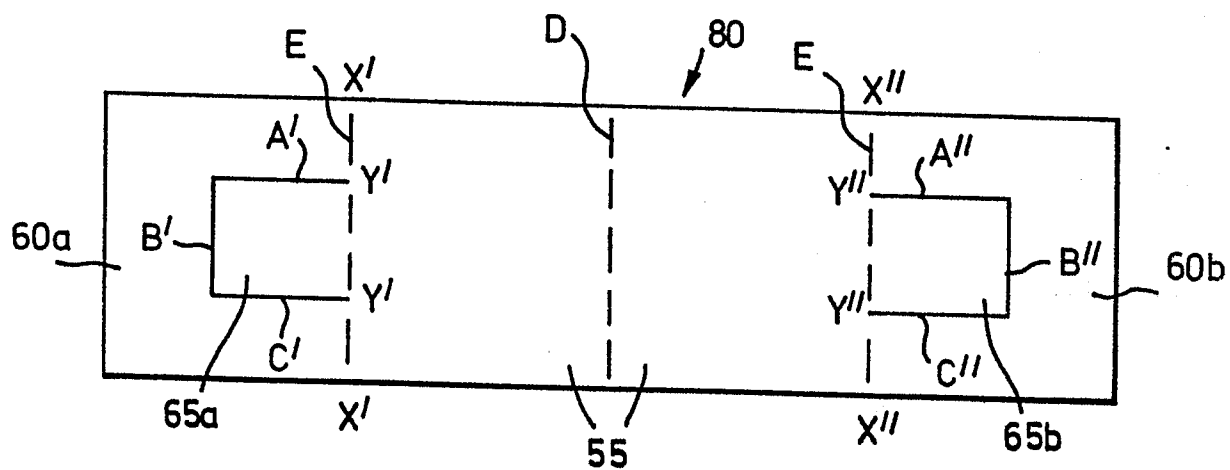
extending across the aperture (45) in the top wall, the said membrane having an elongate opening (50) to permit extraction of the sheet material from the carton.

6. A dispenser according to any of the preceding
5 claims wherein the support means comprises a removable insert (40).

7. A dispenser according to Claim 5, wherein the insert (40) is formed integrally from a cardboard blank.

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*Fig. 3.**Fig. 4.*