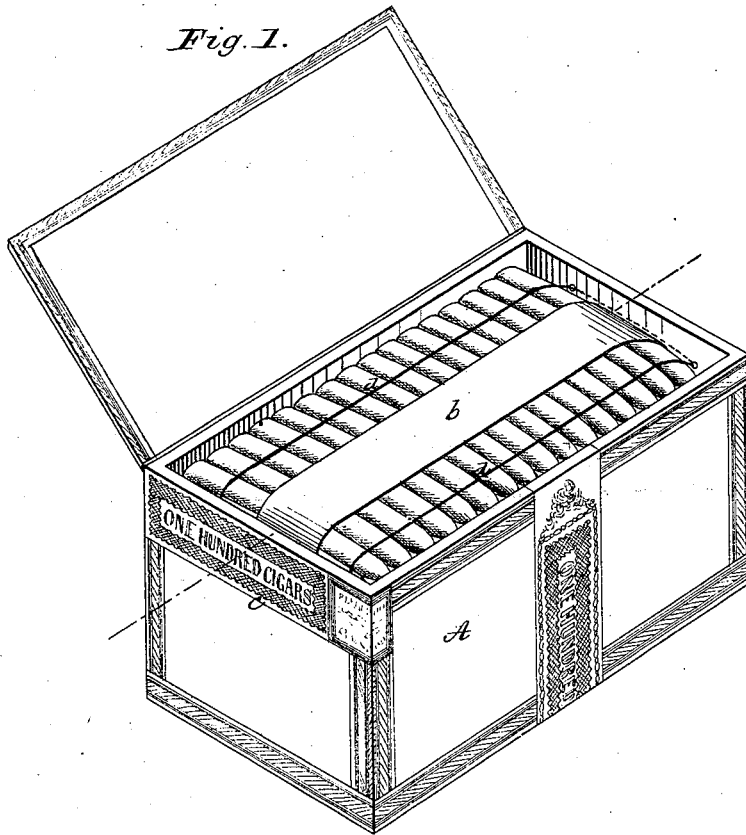


O. T. EARLE.  
Revenue-Guard for Cigar-Boxes.

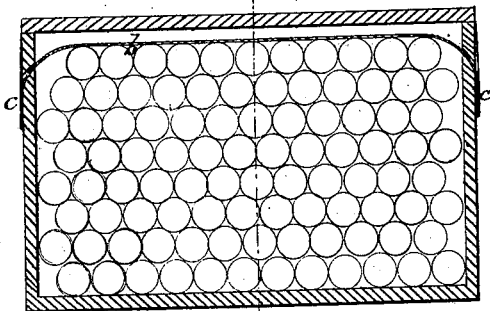
No. 167,752.

Patented Sept. 14, 1875.

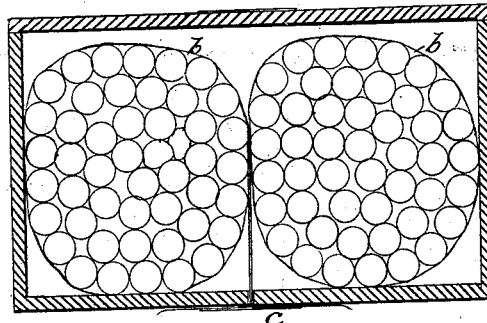
*Fig. 1.*



*Fig. 2.*



*Fig. 3.*



Witnesses:

*A. W. Byington*  
*E. Rice*

Inventor:

*Oscar T. Earle*

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Fig. 4.

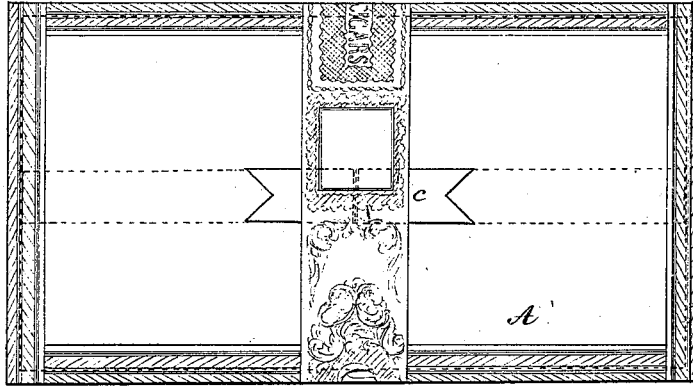


Fig. 5.

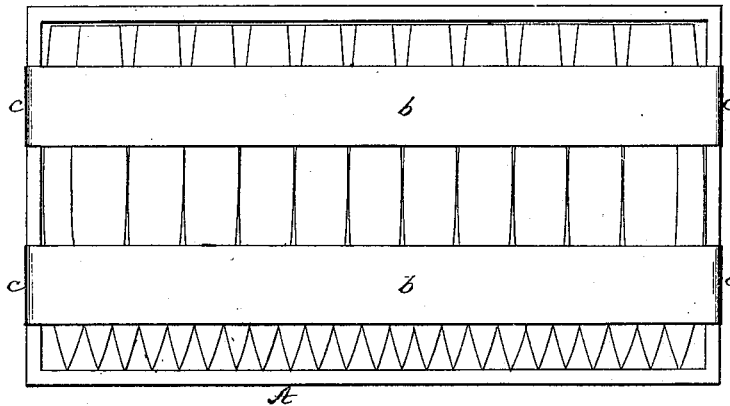
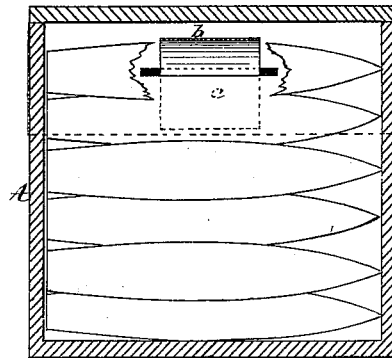


Fig. 6.



Witnesses:

*A. W. Spingarn*  
*E. E. Mice*

Inventor:  
*Oscar T. Earle*

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

OSCAR T. EARLE, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

## IMPROVEMENT IN REVENUE-GUARDS FOR CIGAR-BOXES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 167,752, dated September 14, 1875; application filed February 20, 1875.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, OSCAR T. EARLE, of the city of New York, in the county of New York and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Stamping Cigars to Prevent Frauds on the Revenue; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it pertains to make and use it, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, which form part of this specification, in which—

Figures 1 and 4 show a box of cigars with the revenue-stamps and the protecting devices affixed, and Figs. 2, 3, and 6 sections and detached views of the same. Fig. 5 is a plan view, showing the ribbon passed over the top edges of the box, as when applied to imported cigars.

The present mode of putting up cigars and affixing revenue-stamps leads to great loss to the revenue, from the facility which it affords irresponsible and dishonest dealers of refilling the boxes after being wholly or partially emptied of their contents. Several devices have been invented having in view the prevention of such frauds, but as they have been either inefficient or injurious to the legitimate business of cigar manufacturers they have failed of adoption. The object of my invention is to put up cigars and affix revenue-stamps in such a manner that the cigar shall not be injured; that the usual handling and inspection may not be interfered with; and that it shall be impossible to reuse the box or refill it after any of the cigars have been taken out. My invention consists in passing over or around the cigars in the box a ribbon or strap of cloth, netting, wire, or other flexible fabric or material, the ends of which are passed through the box, and fixed under the revenue-stamp, so that its removal will break the stamp, and so that the cigars cannot be removed without cutting, breaking, or tearing out the ribbon, tape, wire, or other device which holds the cigars in the box. This arrangement permits the cigars to be inspected and exhibited by simply opening the lid of the box without breaking the seal of the stamp; but as soon as any of the cigars are removed this seal is

broken, and cannot be restored except by a new stamp and seal.

My invention is applicable to cigar-boxes as ordinarily used either for imported or domestic manufacture. In the case of imported cigars the protecting device is to be attached before leaving the charge of the customs officers; but ordinarily it will be better to attach my devices at the time the cigars are placed in the box, and as it in no way interferes with the usual styles of putting up cigars it will not be any inconvenience to legitimate business. Thus the best cigars are commonly put up in bundles, and in this case the binding ribbon or tape which secures the bundles is made the protecting device. When the whole box is filled with cigars the protecting device is placed across the top and secured at the ends of the box.

The following description will enable others to make and use my invention:

In the drawing, *A* is the cigar-box, *b* the protecting device, and *c c* the points at which the ends are secured to the stamp, so as to cause the breaking of the stamp by the removal of the protecting device. In Fig. 1 and in Fig. 2, which is a longitudinal vertical section of Fig. 1, the strip *b* passes over the top of the cigars, and the ends passed through a slot in each end of the box, and secured under the stamp, as shown at *c*. It is obvious the stamp may be pasted upon or fixed directly to the flexible strip, instead of the several ways shown, unless the transparent properties of the mica—when that is employed—are desired to be utilized. Fig. 3 shows the ribbon or tape *b* passing around the bundles and down through a slot in the bottom, where they are secured under the stamp, as shown in Fig. 4. Only two bundles are shown, but any desired number may be placed in the box. Fig. 5 shows two straps passing over the cigars. The bundles may also be bound with two or more bands, and the ends in both these modifications secured, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3. Fig. 6 shows the method of securing the ends of the strips by passing them through a slot in the end of the box and turning down the end, so as to be covered by the stamp or by a stamp and seal. The line *d d* in Fig. 1 shows a modification, consisting of a wire or

thread, or a series of wires or threads, passing twice through each end of the box, and closing the top of the box, so as to prevent the removal of cigars without first breaking the stamp or seal. The strip *b* I prefer to make, when applied to bundle cigars, of the ordinary ribbon or tape commonly used for that purpose. A strip of mica is very suitable when applied in the form shown in Figs. 1 and 5. Instead of these a netting of thread, silk, wire, or any other fibrous material may be substituted without departing from the nature of my invention.

I am aware that slats of wood or other rigid material have been fixed across the top of a cigar-box, the revenue-stamp being secured thereto and passing over the ends thereof, the whole permitting the box to be opened and cigars inspected without canceling the stamp. I am also aware that ribbons passing over the cigars, in combination with the revenue-stamp passing around the box when closed, have been used, but this prevents the inspection of the cigars without first canceling the stamp.

My method interferes but little with the ordinary modes of putting up cigars, and at the same time admits of inspection of the

cigars without breaking the stamp or permitting the removal of the cigars till they are to be taken out for consumption; and then the stamp is so destroyed that the box can never again be put off as a new one without having a new stamp.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as my improvement is—

The combination, in revenue-guards for cigar-boxes, of a revenue-stamp of the ordinary construction with a ribbon, tape, cord, wire bandage, or other flexible strip attached thereto, and placed under the lid, and arranged over or around the cigars in the box, the ends of such strip, tape, cord, or bandage being passed out through a slot or slots in the box-body or over the edge of the same, and secured directly to the stamp or immediately underneath and in contact with the same, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of December, 1873.

OSCAR T. EARLE.

Witnesses:

WM. G. HENDERSON,  
THOMAS C. CONNOLLY.