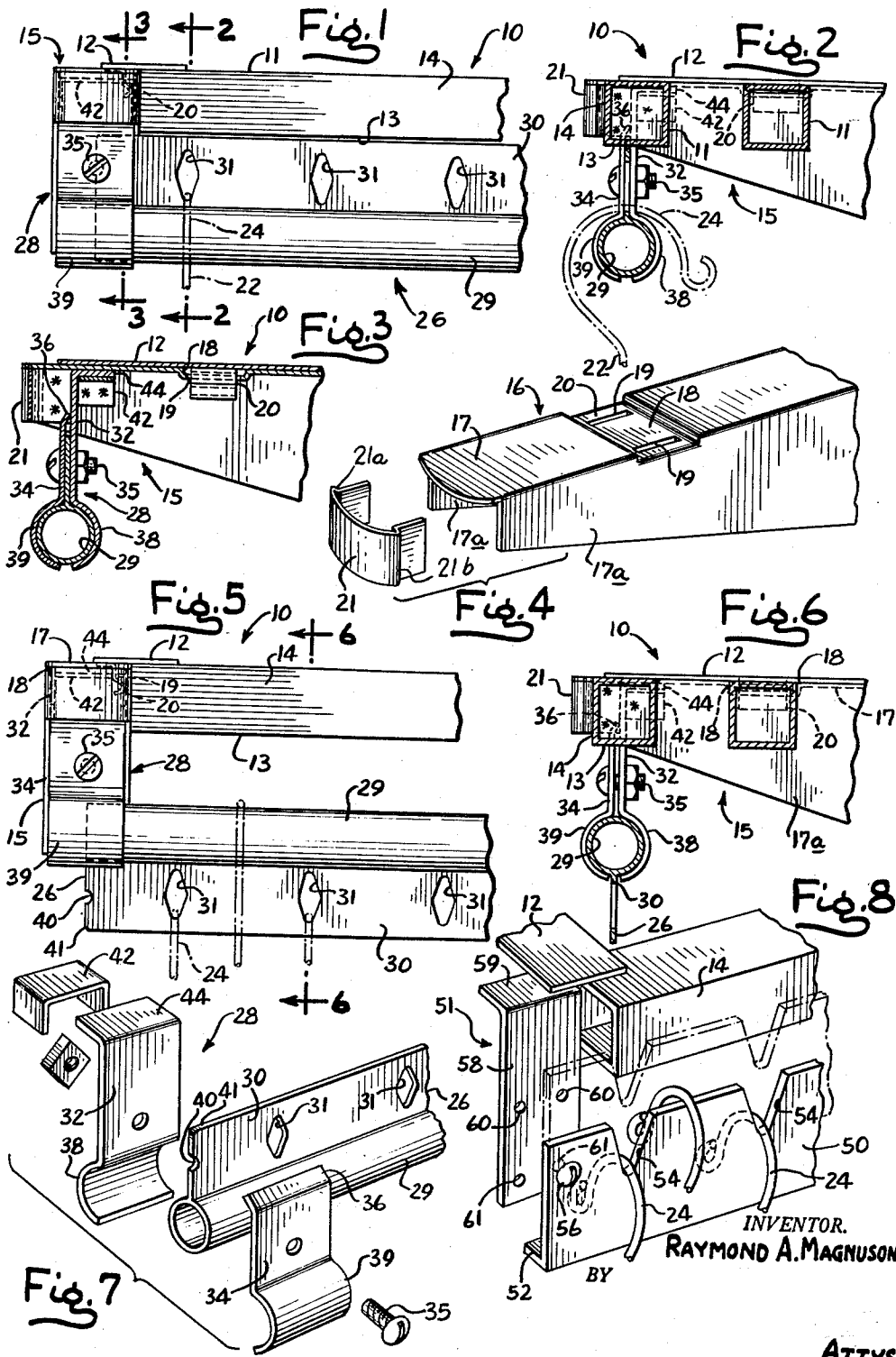


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HANGER RAIL CONSTRUCTION

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HANGER RAIL CONSTRUCTION

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The present invention relates generally to devices for supporting garments such, for example, as hat and coat racks upon which garments are hung by the use of hangers of the familiar triangular form. More particularly this invention relates to an improved construction for receiving and supporting garment hanger hooks.

Attending the practice of hanging garments by the use of conventional coat hangers is the tendency of hanger rails to become overcrowded. The ordinary hanger rail, consisting of a continuous rod or the like, does not provide for predetermined location of a plurality of hanger hooks. As a result, garments supported thereon are frequently crushed, wrinkled and sometimes are even torn as more garments are squeezed in than the rail was designed to accommodate. Indeed, an overloaded hanger rail sags and not only does not appear neat, but even becomes permanently deformed and thus loses its utility as a garment hanger hook support. So, too, when it is desired to remove the garments, because predetermined positions for the hanger hooks have not been provided, it is difficult to locate individual garments. Additionally, in the process of finding and removing individual garments, adjacent apparel are often pulled from their hangers and drop to the floor.

Some prior garment supports have been provided with individual stations for garment hangers. Such devices, however, have taken the form of permanent fixtures. Thus the utility of this type of support is limited to the reception of only that number of garment hangers corresponding to the number of stations provided.

It is a primary object of the present invention to provide a hanger rail construction for receiving and supporting garment hanger hooks which not only affords predetermined support stations for garment hanger hooks, but alternatively permits reception of the hanger hooks at will if the occasion of its use should so require. It is a related object to provide such a hanger rail construction which when arranged to establish predetermined stations for garment hanger hooks positively precludes overcrowding.

Another object of the invention is to provide a hanger rail of the foregoing character which can cooperate with any support such as a shelf which affords a longitudinal surface.

Yet a further object lies in the provision of an improved hanger rail which is sag-proof, of neat appearance and is simple to install yet which permits of economical manufacture.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description and upon reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a fragmentary front elevation of a hanger rail and shelf construction embodying the features of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary sectional view taken substantially along the line 2-2 in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary section taken substantially along line 3-3 in FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of an exemplary shelf arm such as indicated in other views and to which the hanger rail support is affixed;

FIG. 5 is an elevational view similar to FIG. 1 but

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showing the hanger rail supported in an alternative position in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 6 is a section taken substantially along line 6-6 in FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is an exploded perspective view of the improved hanger rail construction shown in preceding figures;

FIG. 8 is a fragmentary perspective view illustrating a modified form of the present invention.

While the invention is illustrated and described in connection with certain preferred embodiments, it is to be understood that it is not intended that the invention be limited to such embodiments. On the contrary, it is intended to cover all modifications and alternative constructions falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, there shown is a shelf 10 of the type that is frequently used in schools, offices, restaurants and the like, for hanging clothes, especially outer garments, and also for temporarily storing books, hats, packages and similar articles. For this latter purpose the shelf 10 has a horizontal supporting surface defined by longitudinal bars 11 of which two are shown. The bars 11 are spaced apart transversely of the shelf 10 and are fixed at their ends to transverse straps 12 of which one is shown. The shelf 10 presents a plurality of longitudinal surfaces with respect to which structures for hanging garments can be oriented, for example, a longitudinal horizontal surface 13 underneath and a longitudinal vertical surface 14 at the front.

For supporting the shelf 10 at its outer ends, support arm assemblies 15 are provided (one such assembly is shown). The assembly 15 includes an arm 16, which is best seen in FIG. 4 of the drawings. The arm 16 is of inverted U-shaped cross-section having a web 17 and depending legs 17a. The arm 16 is constructed with a channeled indentation 18 and apertures 19 for receiving a retaining clip 20 which is affixed to the underside of the strap 12 of the shelf 10. Through only one retaining clip is shown, two or more can be provided as described according to the width of the shelf, and each is accommodated in the same manner by the arm 16. The front sharp edges of each of the legs 17a are covered, so as to protect users against cuts or scratches and provide a neat appearance. To this end a nose piece 21 is fastened to the inner surfaces of the legs 17a and has a pair of shoulders 21a, 21b abutting the juxtaposed leg edges. The end strap 12 of the shelf 10 covers slightly less than one-half the width of the arm 16 leaving the remainder of the arm web 17 for a reception of a contiguous shelf.

Shelf structures of this general type are utilized to support conventional garment hangers upper portions of which are indicated at 22. These garment hangers include a generally triangular body portion for reception of garments. The hangers terminate at the top in a hook 24.

In carrying out the present invention the novel hanger rail construction includes in the first of the illustrative embodiments, a hanger rail 26 and means 28 for mounting the hanger rail in alternative positions with respect to one of the longitudinal surfaces of the shelf 10. The construction and arrangement is such that in one of the alternative positions of the rail the hooks 24 of garment hangers 22 are received only in predetermined, spaced stations. In the other position garment hanger hooks can be gaffed at will upon the rail.

In the first illustrated embodiment, that of FIGS. 1-7, inclusive, the hanger rail 26 has a tubular body section 29 with a laterally projecting fin 30. For receiving the hanger hooks 24, the fin 30 is provided with apertures 31 of a generally keyhole configuration to define individual, spaced stations at predetermined distances apart. In this form of the invention the means 28 for mounting the

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hanger rail 26 is preferably constructed so as to grip the hanger rail 26 between a fixed leg 32 and a movable leg 34, the latter being held to the leg 32 by a fastener, such as a bolt 35. Ordinarily two such support assemblies are provided, one at each end of the rail 26, though only one assembly is shown. Preferably this fixed leg 32 is secured as by welding to the support arm web 17. To provide additional rigidity in fastening the leg 32 to the support arm 16, a C-shaped strap piece 42 (as shown in FIG. 7) is pressed snugly against the transverse portion 44 of the leg 32 and secured to each of the support arm depending legs 17a.

The mounting means 28 provides for the alternative disposition of the rail 26 with respect to one of the longitudinal surfaces of the shelf 10. In one of these alternative positions, the hanger rail fin 30 is disposed in closely spaced relation to the shelf horizontal longitudinal surface 13 allowing hanger hooks 24 to be gaffed only in respective ones of the apertures 31. In the second of these positions, the fin 30 is directed downwardly away from surface 13 and thus allows garment hanger hooks 24 to be received upon the rail at will. With the hanger rail mounted in the second position, it is also possible to maintain stations along a portion of the hanger rail while gaffing the hooks 24 over the rail at will along the remainder of the rail. Such practice may be desirable in garment display racks.

To receive the fin 30 between the fixed leg 32 and the clamping leg 34 with the fin directed upwardly, a space is provided between the legs by a flange 36 formed on the upper end of clamp 34 and directed inwardly for engagement with the leg 32. To accommodate the fin 30 when it is directed downward, a space is provided by constructing semi-cylindrical end portions 38, 39 on the fixed leg and clamping leg, respectively, so that each goes only partially about the hanger rail body portion 29. The hanger rail is positively gripped by these end portions 38, 39 when the stove bolt 35 is tightened.

So that the end of a contiguous length of hanger rail can be supported by a single mounting assembly 28, the preferred embodiment of the support assembly 28 utilizes only approximately a half of the width of the leg 32 and clamp 34 in gripping the hanger rail 26 (FIGS. 1 and 5). To facilitate assembly and to accommodate the fastener 35 the end of the fin 30 is provided with a semi-circular aperture 40. A corner 41 of the hanger rail 26 is rounded so as to present, for safety reasons, a smooth surface to any person brushing against the fin 30 when the latter is directed downwardly.

An alternative hanger rail construction embodying the features of the present invention is shown in FIG. 8. As there shown, a hanger rail 50 is removably mounted for alternative positioning with respect to the longitudinal vertical surface 14 of the shelf 10. Support or mounting assemblies 51 are provided at the hanger rail ends, one assembly being shown in FIG. 8. The hanger rail 50 in this form is constructed on flat stock with an in-turned flange 52 integral with its lower edge. The rail 50 is provided with spaced apertures 54 which are in the form of generally V-shaped notches for receiving hanger hooks 24. Openings 55 are provided, one at each end, for receiving a holding bolt 56. The support assembly 51 includes a depending leg 58 of strap material having a transverse portion 59. The leg 58 is fastened to the support arm web 17 and held rigid in the same manner as the leg 32 of the first described embodiment. For mounting the hanger rail 50, the leg 58 is provided with upper and lower apertures 60, 61, respectively. The upper aperture 60 receives the stove bolt 56 to mount the hanger rail 50 in the first of its alternative positions permitting hanger hooks 24 to be gaffed only in apertures 54. The lower aperture 61 receives the same bolt 56 to mount the hanger rail 50 in its alternative position so as to allow reception of hanger hooks 24 at will on the rail.

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It will be apparent from the foregoing, that the present invention provides a versatile hanger rail construction allowing alternative positioning of the hanger rail either to permit reception of hanger hooks only in stations that are disposed at predetermined distances apart, or allow gaffing of hanger hooks at will upon the hanger rail. The hanger rail constructed in accordance with the present invention is particularly adapted to support heavy loads of garments without sagging.

I claim as my invention:

1. The combination for use with a longitudinal surface, comprising a hanger rail having longitudinally spaced apertures for the reception of garment hanger hooks, means for mounting said hanger rail in alternative positions with respect to said longitudinal surface, said hanger rail in one of said positions having a surface disposed in closely spaced relation to said longitudinal surface for precluding reception of garment hanger hooks other than in said hanger rail apertures, said hanger rail in the other of its alternative positions having its surface disposed in spaced relation to the longitudinal surface for the reception of garment hanger hooks at will over said rail and in said apertures.

2. The combination comprising a hanger rail having longitudinally spaced apertures for the reception of garment hanger hooks, means providing a longitudinal surface, means for mounting said hanger rail in alternative positions, in one of said positions said hanger rail having an upper longitudinal surface disposed in closely spaced relation to said longitudinal surface for precluding reception of garment hanger hooks other than in said hanger rail apertures, said hanger rail in the other of its alternative positions having its upper longitudinal surface disposed in spaced relation to the longitudinal surface for permitting the reception of garment hanger hooks at will over said rail and in said apertures.

3. For use with a support having a longitudinal surface, the combination comprising a hanger rail having longitudinally spaced apertures for the reception of garment hooks, means for mounting said hanger rail on the support in alternative positions, said hanger rail in one of said positions having a surface disposed in juxtaposed relation to the longitudinal surface of the support for precluding reception of garment hanger hooks other than in said hanger rail apertures, said hanger rail in the other of its alternative positions having its surface disposed in spaced relation to the longitudinal surface of the support for the reception of garment hanger hooks at will over said rail.

4. For use with a support having a longitudinal surface, the combination comprising a hanger rail having a laterally projecting fin rigid therewith, said fin having longitudinally spaced apertures for the reception therein of garment hanger hooks, a bracket having a mounting leg for attachment at one end to the support and having the other end depending below said longitudinal surface, said bracket also having a clamping leg carried by said mounting leg and cooperating therewith to receive therebetween said rail and fin in alternative positions, said fin corresponding in lateral dimension to that of the depending portion of said mounting leg, said fin in one of said positions projecting toward the longitudinal surface of said support with the free edges of said fin terminating immediately adjacent the longitudinal surface so as to preclude reception of a garment hanger hook over said fin, said fin projecting away from said longitudinal surface in the other of said positions so as to permit reception of garment hanger hooks at will over said rail and in said apertures.

5. A hanger rail for supporting garment hangers comprising a longitudinally-elongated tubular body and a member rigid with said body and projecting laterally therefrom, said member having apertures therein longitudinally spaced at predetermined distances apart for receiving the hooks of the garment hangers therein whereby to

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maintain the same in similarly spaced relation to each other.

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