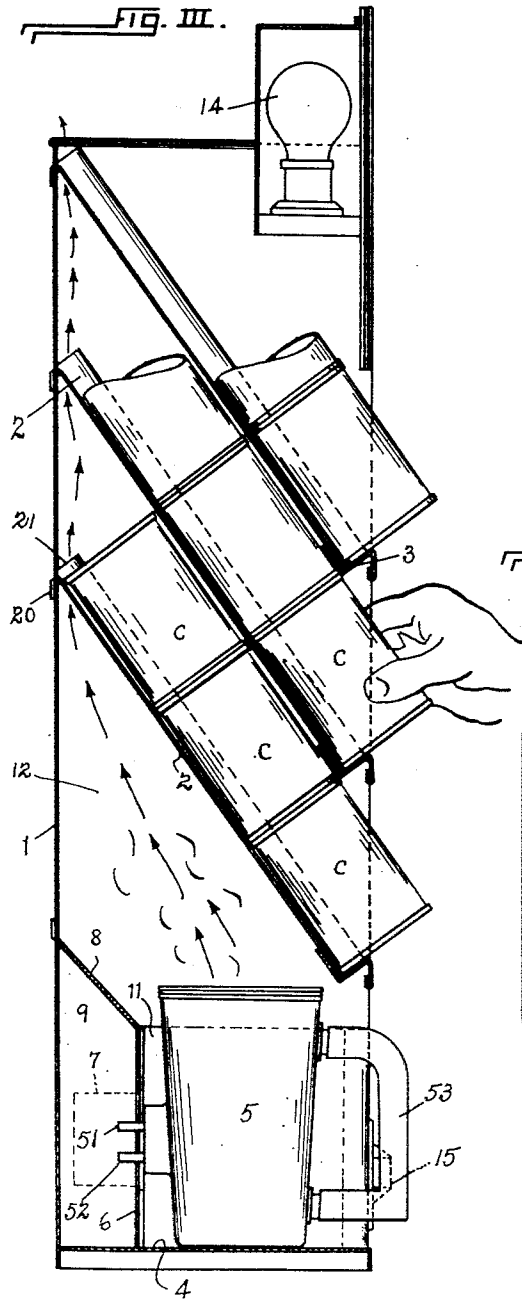
Aug. 25, 1942. W. G. ROEDER 2,293,764

SOUP KITCHEN

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FIG. III.



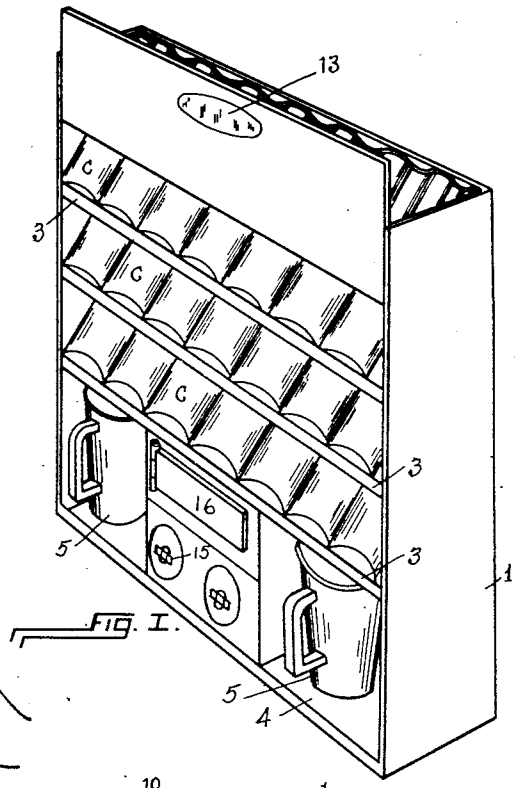




FIG. I.

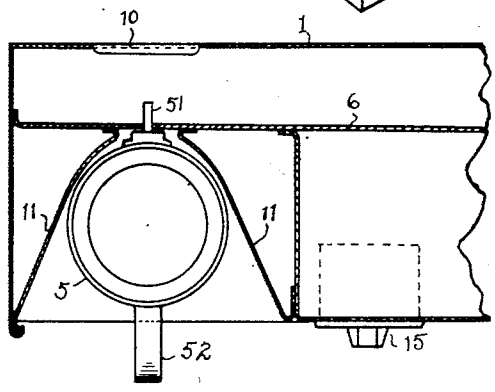



FIG. IV.

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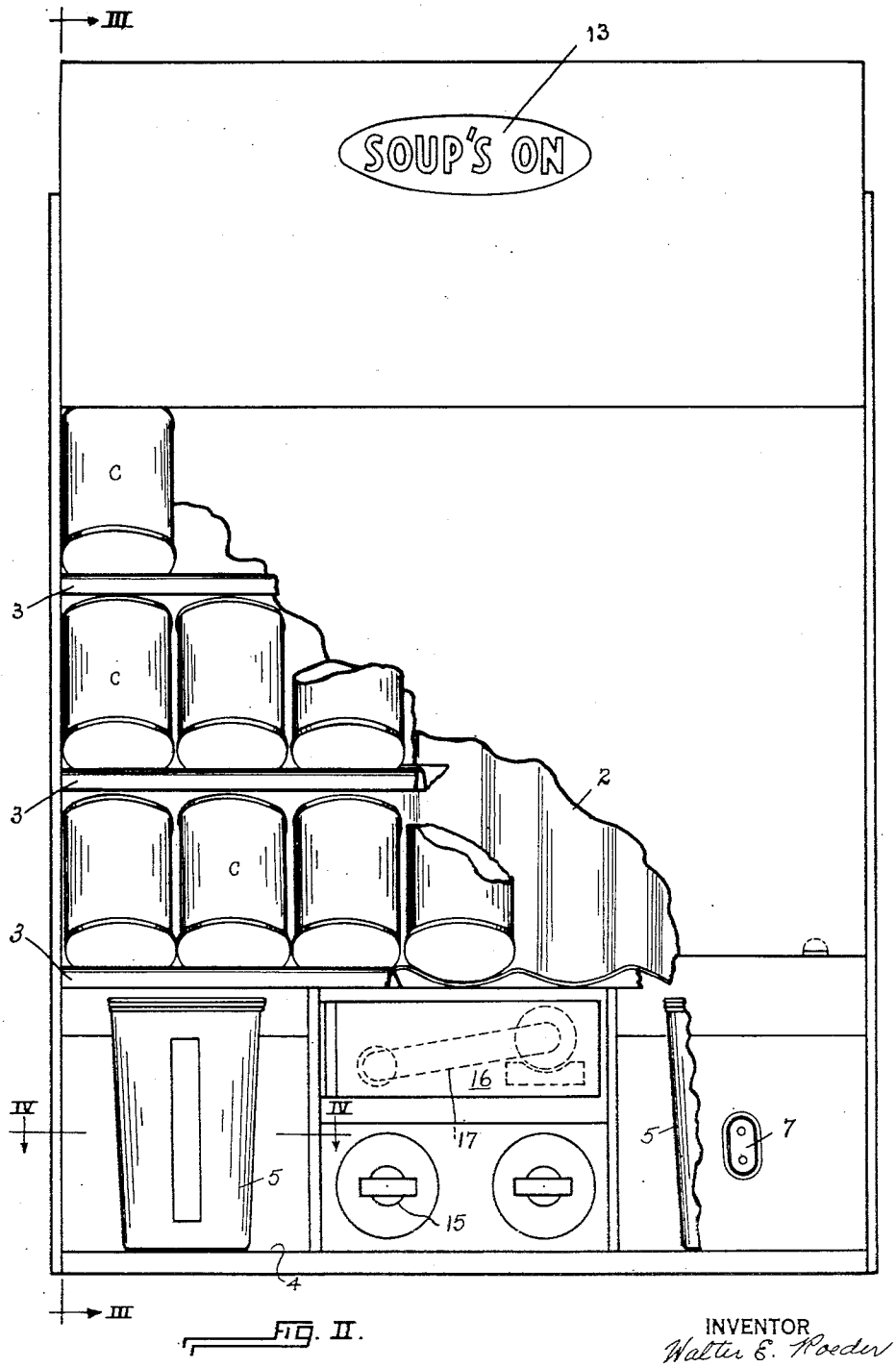



FIG. II.

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,293,764

## SOUP KITCHEN

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Application October 7, 1941, Serial No. 414,006

3 Claims. (Cl. 219—19)

This invention relates to the vending of food, and consists in a piece of equipment, adapted to be installed at lunch counters such as those abundantly established along automobile highways, in drug stores, and such like places, affording display of cans of food, and including means for heating for immediate consumption the contents of a can, typically of soup. The piece of equipment is of a class that has come to be known as an "electric soup kitchen"; it is designed to attract attention, to invite interest, and to induce the sale of the goods displayed.

In the accompanying drawings Fig. I is a view in perspective of the soup kitchen of the invention; Figs. II and III are views to larger scale—Fig. II a fragmentary view in front elevation, and Fig. III a view in transverse and vertical section of the piece of equipment. The plane of section of Fig. III is indicated by the broken line III—III, Fig. II. Fig. IV is a fragmentary view in horizontal section, on the plane indicated at IV—IV, Fig. II.

Soup kitchens now extensively in service include a rack for carrying a quantity of cans of soup in stepped and upwardly receding horizontal rows, and a shelf at the bottom of and in front of the rack, upon which shelf a hot cup may be set and when set may be brought into an electric circuit, with the effect that the contents of the cup are heated to the elevated temperature agreeable for consumption.

Instead of such a stepped and upwardly receding rack, I employ the obliquely inclined magazine rack whose arrangement is most clearly seen in Fig. III. Within a casing 1 with rectangular walls, a casing that is shallow in front-to-rear direction relatively to its height and width, is arranged a vertical succession of obliquely inclined shelves 2, having at their lower edges stop rails 3. The shelves are conveniently grooved or undulated for the reception and retention of lines of cans resting in end-to-end succession within them and against the stop rails 3; the grooves of the succeeding shelves may be, and here are shown to be, arranged in vertical alignment; and the spacing and inclination of the shelves are such that the bottom can of each line is accessible and removable without interference. When the lowest can of a line is removed, the succeeding cans descend and the lowermost of those remaining comes to position, resting upon stop rail 3, in the place of the can just removed. The front of the casing is open for the introduction of the cans to the shelves, for the free display in horizontal rows of the assembly of the lowermost cans of all of the lines of all of the shelves, and for the removal of the lowermost can of any of the lines.

With particular attention to the structure of the shelves 2 of the magazine rack, it will be seen in Fig. III that at their upper edges they are formed with tabs that in the assembly protrude through slots in the rear wall of the casing and are bent down, so as to form suspension hooks 20; while at their lower edges the shelves are welded to strips approximately Z-shaped in cross-section that form the stop rails 3.

The magazine rack is arranged within the upper portion of the casing 1.

The horizontal shelf 4 upon which the hot cup 5 rests when in service is arranged at, or forms the bottom of the casing 1; and the spacing is such that the cup is freely applicable and removable, beneath the lower edge of the magazine rack, to and from its operative position upon shelf 4.

The hot cup is of well-known kind and character. It is double-walled and equipped with an intramural heating coil whose projecting terminals 51 and 52 are rigidly carried by the outer wall. The handle 53 is provided, that the cup may be plugged into a contact block in an electric circuit, and conveniently used as a cooking utensil.

At the bottom of the casing, suitably spaced between the front and rear walls, is set a partition 6 that extends, from end to end, throughout the breadth of casing 1. In this partition is set the contact block 7 through which the heating coil of the applied hot cup is brought into the energizing electric circuit. The partition 6 is of sufficient height to carry the contact block 7. For further ends yet to be described it rises approximately to the height of the applied hot cup. At its upper edge it is made continuous with a partition 8 that rises obliquely, and in substantial correspondence with the obliquity of the magazine shelves above, and at its upper edge meets and is united to the rear wall of the casing. The partitions 6 and 8 form with the rear wall of the casing 1 an electrical outlet chamber 9 within which the leads of the electric circuit may be arranged. These leads are not shown, but it will be understood that they communicate with a suitable source of electric energy and terminate in the contact-pieces within the block 7. The outlet chamber is vented through louvres 10. Guide plates 11 may be provided, to aid in the expeditious plugging-in of the hot cup 5.

With particular attention to Fig. III, it will be

seen that the applied hot cup 5 rests to rearward of the lower rim of the lowermost shelf 2 of the magazine rack, and that the mouth of the cup is disposed at the lower end of a chimney passageway 12 that, defined by the magazine rack above and by the partition 8 beneath, rises obliquely to exit orifices 21 beneath the undulations of the shelves 2, and thence out at the open top of the casing. It is a defect of soup kitchens now in common use that the vapor that rises from the contents of the hot cup while the heating operation is in progress spreads over the exposed surfaces of the cans on the rack above, particularly over the surfaces of the immediately adjacent cans of the lowest row, and, moistening the paper labels of the cans, loosens them and causes disfigurement. In the kitchen here presented, the vapor that rises from the heated liquid passes upward beneath the lowermost shelf 2, through the chimney passage 12, and does not reach the paper-wrapped cans, to cause disfigurement.

The front wall of the casing is cut away sufficiently to allow the delivery through it of the cans at the lower ends of the shelves 2 and to allow also for the application and removal of the hot cup. The upper portion of the front wall, above the level of delivery of the cans from the magazine rack (in this instance extended upwardly beyond the side and rear walls) is shown to carry a translucent panel 13 that bears a legend (in this instance the legend, "Soup's on"); and to the rear of the wall and opposite this panel is placed an electric light 14. The light may be included in the circuit that energizes the coil in the hot cup, so that through the precise interval during which the heating of the soup (the usual commodity) is in progress, this legend, "Soup's on," is gleaming out.

The drawings show a specific embodiment of the invention. The magazine rack consists of three shelves each adapted to carry seven lines of three cans each, and two hot cups arranged below. It is manifest that proportions may be varied and the numbers altered. The kitchen that is equipped with two hot cups is, however, symmetrical, and on that account of pleasing appearance. The drawings show the kitchen to be of such breadth that the seats for the two cups, arranged immediately adjacent the end walls of the casing, are spaced apart; and between, in the front wall, are set switches 15 that control the energizing of the heating circuits. In this interval also and in the front wall a hinged door 16 may be set, and within the door and (if desired) carried by the door a can opener 17 (indicated in dotted lines) may be provided.

Ordinarily the kitchen will be designed to carry cans of the size of an individual portion of soup.

The kitchen of the invention is of minimum front-to-rear depth, with capacity to carry a large number of cans.

In service the customer, scanning the display of cans upon the magazine rack, selects the article desired and asks for it. The attendant removes the selected can from the rack (and immediately the place will be filled by another can). The attendant then, swinging open door 16, takes the can opener, opens the can, pours the contents into the hot cup, places the hot cup on the shelf 4, and plugs it into the contact block 7. At once the panel 13 is illuminated and the heating of the soup begins. The soup when heated is poured from the withdrawn hot cup into such cup or bowl as may be provided to receive it.

Time switches for the energizing circuits and tell-tale devices, all known to the art, may be provided, if desired.

I claim as my invention:

1. In apparatus for the display and the heating of liquid food, the combination, with a casing having arranged with it an obliquely inclined can-carrying shelf and a contact block through which an energizing current may be supplied to an in-plugged hot cup, of a hot cup adapted to be plugged into the said contact block, such shelf overhanging the cup when in place and forming the upper wall of a chimney passageway through which vapor rising from the heated cup passes upwardly and rearwardly segregated beneath the shelf from the cans that rest upon the shelf from above.

2. In apparatus for the display and the heating of liquid food, the combination with a casing having a vertically extending rear wall, of an obliquely inclined undulating shelf of sheet material arranged within the casing, and a front wall ported for the introduction and removal of cans, the undulations of the shelf being adapted to receive and retain a plurality of lines of cans introduced through such ported front wall and resting one upon another on the inclined shelf, a contact block arranged within the casing through which an energizing current may be supplied to an inplugged hot cup, and a hot cup adapted to be plugged into the said contact block, such shelf overhanging the cup when in place and forming the upper wall of a chimney passageway through which vapor rising from the heated cup passes off beneath and segregated by the shelf from the cans that rest upon the shelf from above, the undulations of the shelf at the upper and rear end thereof affording exit for the vapors that flow through such passageway.

3. In apparatus for the display and the heating of liquid food distributed in cans the combination, within a casing, of a magazine rack for cans consisting of a plurality of obliquely inclined shelves arranged in the upper part of the casing and adapted to carry lines of cans and to display in vertical succession horizontal rows of obliquely lying cans, each can severally being accessible and removable from its place, a contact block arranged in the lower part of the casing through which energizing current may be supplied to an in-plugged hot cup, and a hot cup adapted to be plugged into said contact block, the magazine rack overhanging the in-plugged cup, and affording by its lowermost shelf the limiting wall of an upwardly and rearwardly inclined passageway for vapors rising from the heated cup.

WALTER G. ROEDER.