

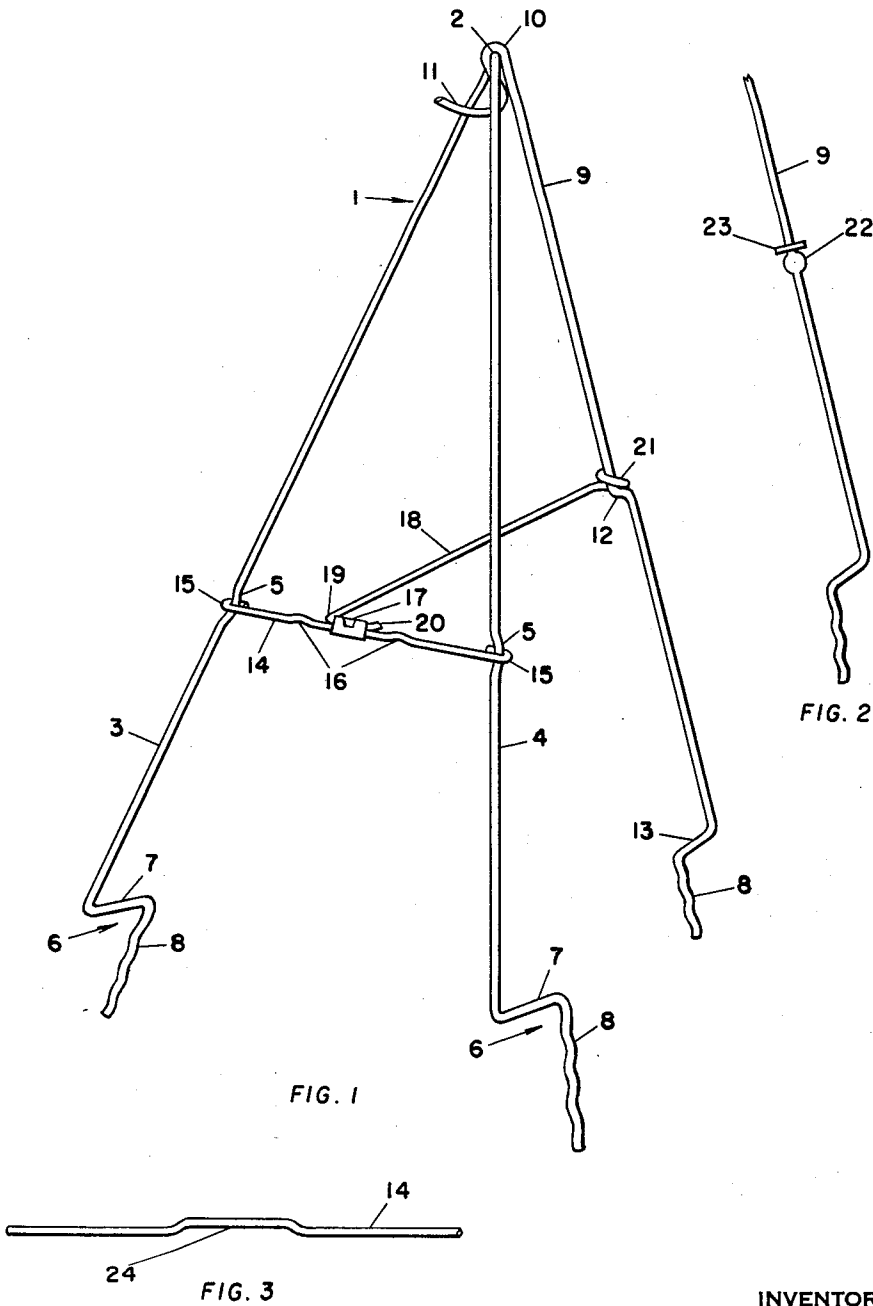
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FLORAL EASEL

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FLORAL EASEL

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This invention relates to an easel and more particularly to a collapsible floral easel.

One object of this invention is to provide a folding easel which is inexpensive to manufacture and simple to use, while at the same time avoiding the binding and sticking together of parts intended to be relatively movable which occurs in easels heretofore known or used.

Another object is to provide an easel having legs the ends of which can be readily driven into the ground to avoid overturning, as by the force of wind.

A further object is to provide such an easel the leg ends of which are of irregular surface to grip the ground firmly.

Still another object is to provide an easel which avoids the expense and breakage of spot-welded connections which occurs in easels heretofore known or used while firmly securing frame members together against relative movement.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of an easel made in accordance with this invention;

FIG. 2 is a partial side elevation of one member showing a modification; and

FIG. 3 is a partial plan view of another member showing a modification.

In the drawings, a first frame member, generally designated by the numeral 1, is preferably constructed of wire of a gauge sufficiently strong to support the weight of the article to be held, the other parts of the easel being preferably made of wire of a similar gauge. The member 1 is bent adjacent to its center to form an apex 2 at which front legs 3 and 4 are integrated or jointed, the legs forming an acute angle. Each of the legs has a bend or bow 5 approximately halfway of its length and, near its lower end, an offset 6 including a shoulder 7 of appreciable lateral extent or width and a lower end 8. The lower ends 8 preferably have an irregular or uneven surface, as by being made slightly sinuous or serpentine, or with serrations or small notches in them, in order that they may engage the ground firmly when they have been driven into it.

To the apex 2 at the upper ends of the legs 3 and 4 there is pivotally attached a second frame member 9. Such pivotal connection may be made by forming a bend 10 around the apex 2 near the upper end of the frame member 9 so as to engage the apex securely, but loosely enough to permit relative movement between frame member 9 and legs 3 and 4. The upper end of the frame member 9, beyond the bend 10, may conveniently be formed into an upstanding hook 11 for the purpose of engaging and supporting an article, such as a floral wreath. Approximately halfway of its length, the second frame member 9 may be provided with a stop means, as by being formed into an offset 12. Near its lower end, the member 9 is formed to have another offset 13. As in the case of the front legs 3 and 4, the second frame member 9 has at its lower end 8 an irregular or uneven surface, as by being made slightly sinuous or serpentine, as clearly illustrated in FIG. 2.

A third frame member 14 is fixedly connected between the front legs 3 and 4 by having its ends 15 bent around the bends 5 in those legs. This manner of construction,

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while being inexpensive, avoids the breakage which occurs in spot welded connections in some easels heretofore known or used, but at the same time provides a firm connection which prevents slippage of the frame member 14 relative to the front legs 3 and 4. The frame member 14 may have spaced bends 16 therein for preventing or limiting the lateral movement relative thereto of a bent clip or sleeve 17 which encircles or embraces the frame member 14 between the spaced bends 16.

A fourth frame member 18 is a substantially linear single wire and extends from front to back of the easel. At its front end, the frame member 18 may have a transversely extending portion 19 which is encircled or embraced by the clip or sleeve 17 rather firmly, but loosely enough to permit pivoting of the frame member 18 relative to the frame member 14. The extremity 20 of the lateral portion 19 is bent so as to prevent the transverse portion 19 from sliding out of the clip or sleeve 17.

At its other end, the frame member 18 may be formed into a loop 21 encircling rather loosely the upper portion of the second frame member 9. Since the loop 21 is located above the offset 12 and the loop has an inner dimension smaller than the lateral extent of the offset 12, the loop 21 cannot slip below the offset, so that it can be instantly set in the correct position with no difficulty.

A modification illustrated in FIG. 2 consists of flattening the rear upright member 9 at a point 22 about halfway of its length, in place of having the offset 12. A washer 23 is positioned on the member 9 above the flattened portion 22 and is held up hereby. The washer is of larger diameter than the loop 21 and thus acts as a stop means, as the loop cannot pass below the washer.

Another modification, illustrated in FIG. 3, consists of replacing the bends 16 in the third frame member 14 with a centrally positioned offset 24 to be engaged by the clip or sleeve 17.

A further modification is that the lower offsets 7 and 13 need not be turned inwardly, as illustrated, but may be bent in any direction around the axes of the legs 3 and 4 and of the rear upright member 9.

Many advantages are obtained in the manufacture and use of an easel made in accordance with this invention over easels heretofore known or used. Since no expensive spot-welded joints are used, this easel is inexpensive to manufacture, rugged and durable, not being subject to breakage. In addition, due to the use of bends at the central portions of its front legs, to which the transverse member is fixed, the transverse member cannot slip relative to the front legs. Since the rearwardly extending member is substantially linear and has no open loops where it is pivoted to the transverse brace between the front legs, it cannot become bound or stuck to the bent ends of the transverse front member. Such open loops in easels heretofore known or used frequently bind and sometimes come loose; this occurs often when the rear leg is moved sideways.

The stop means provided in the central portion of my rear upright member prevents the rearwardly extending pivotal member from sliding downwardly below the stop means and thereby binding the easel against being folded. At the same time, the rearwardly extending pivotal member can be moved freely relative to the rear upright member above the stop means.

The offsets at the lower ends of the front legs and of the rear upright member have shoulders of appreciable width, so that the ends of these members can be readily pushed into the ground by stepping upon them. If the ground should be frozen or unusually hard, the ends can be driven into the ground by a hammer or other suitable tool. It is not necessary to make preformed holes in

the ground, as it is with presently used easels, so that the easel has a much more secure grip in the firm ground than do easels with conventional straight legs. This secure grip affords considerably more resistance against the force of wind tending to blow the easel over. Also, the bending over required of a person when forcing conventional straight legs into the ground is eliminated.

Since the lower ends of the front legs and of the rear upright member have irregular or uneven surfaces, they will grip the ground more firmly than is true of the straight wire ends on easels heretofore known or used. Thus, additional resistance is provided to the force of wind tending to blow the easel over.

Due to its tripod construction, my easel is self-supporting on a table or other surface. This makes it convenient for a florist to arrange a floral design on the easel and the easel can be used inside a residence, a church or a funeral home for display of a floral piece.

Because of the foregoing features of construction, there is no binding of the parts and there is at all times free movement of the connection between the transverse front frame member and the rearwardly extending pivoted member, as well as between the rearwardly extending pivoted member and the rear upright member. An easel made in accordance with this invention can be manipulated by one hand in folding and unfolding it, as well as in securing it in the ground, thereby speeding up its use and allowing use of the other hand to hold a floral wreath, for example. Also, my easel always presents a neat and pleasing appearance, in contrast with the very cheap and unsightly appearance of easels heretofore known or used.

It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes may be made in the invention, without departing from the spirit and scope thereof, and therefore the invention is not limited by that which is shown in the drawings and described in the specification, but only as indicated in the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A collapsible easel comprising
 - a first frame member formed as
 - two front legs integrated at their upper ends to form an apex, each of the front legs having a bend therein adjacent to its center and an offset adjacent to its lower end,
 - a second frame member pivotally connected to the

first frame member at its apex, the second frame member having

- a stop means adjacent to its center and an offset adjacent to its lower end,
- a third frame member fixedly connected between the bends in the front legs,
- a substantially linear fourth frame member pivotally connected at one end to the third frame member and slidably connected at its other end to the second frame member above the stop means and a sleeve embracing the third frame member and the one end of the fourth frame member to provide the pivotal connection between the third and fourth frame members.
2. The invention according to claim 1 in which the lower ends of the front legs and of the second frame member have wavy surfaces.
3. A collapsible easel comprising
 - a first frame member formed as
 - two front legs integrated at their upper ends to form an apex,
 - a second frame member pivotally connected to the first frame member at its apex, the second frame member having
 - a stop means adjacent to its center,
 - a third frame member fixedly connected between the front legs,
 - a substantially linear fourth frame member pivotally connected at one end to the third frame member and slidably connected at its other end to the second frame member above the stop means and
 - a sleeve embracing the third frame member and the one end of the fourth frame member to provide the pivotal connection between the third and fourth frame members.

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