Nov. 8, 1949 F. KUHLMAN 2,487,145

WASHABLE HANDBAG WITH REMOVABLE HANDLES AND STIFFENER

Filed July 25, 1947

Fig. 1

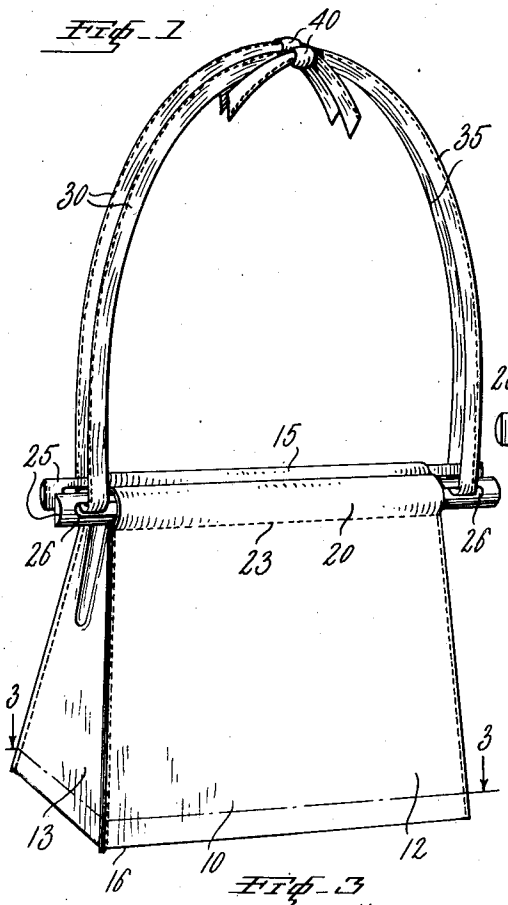


Fig. 2

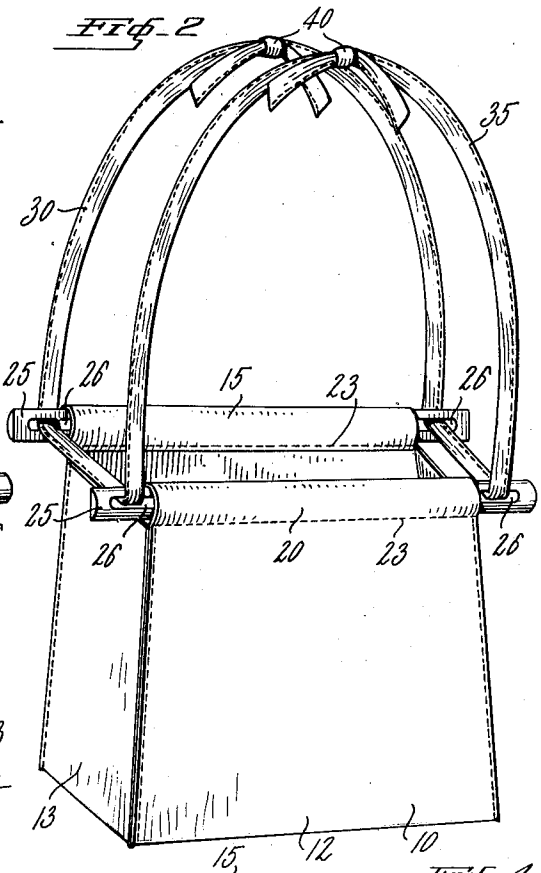


Fig. 3

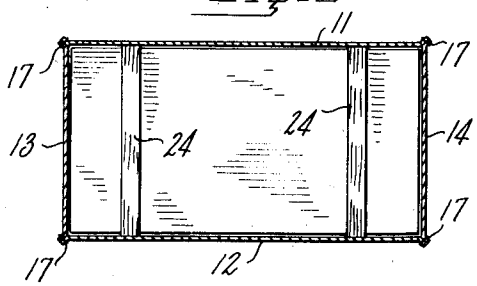
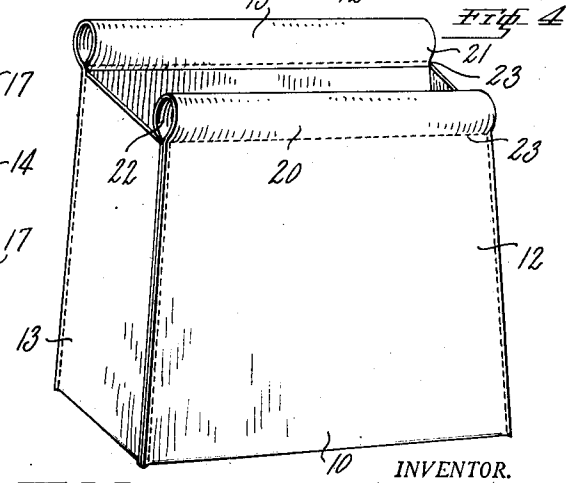


Fig. 4



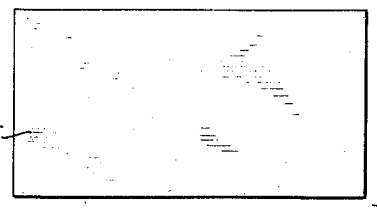
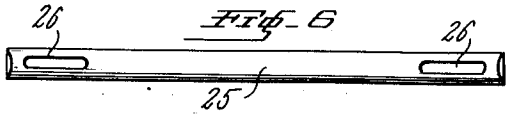


Fig. 5

Fig. 6



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WASHABLE HANDBAG WITH REMOVABLE HANDLES AND STIFFENER

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3 Claims. (Cl. 150—28)

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This invention relates to a handbag construction, and more particularly to a handbag of washable fabric having a removable handle structure and a removable bottom stiffener or brace.

In prior art handbag constructions, it has not been possible to give the leather or fabric of the handbag more than a cursory cleaning when soiled, without destroying the bag. This has been due to the integrated construction of the bag with its handle and latch arrangements preventing the use of washable fabric for the bag. When handbags become soiled, they are generally discarded. Consequently, prior art handbags have had a relatively short life.

It is among the objects of the present invention to provide a washable handbag construction.

Another object is to provide a handbag having its carrying or container portion made of a washable fabric, and which container portion may be turned inside out for thorough cleaning.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a handbag construction including a flexible fabric container and a handle structure removably cooperative therewith, whereby the handle structure may be readily removed so that the fabric container may be washed.

A further object of the invention is to provide a handbag having a container of flexible, washable fabric and a removable stiffener insertable in the container for ready removal therefrom to permit the container fabric to be thoroughly cleaned by washing or the like.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a novel handbag of the type having a handle structure which automatically closes the bag when the latter is placed in the carrying position, thus dispensing with the necessity for a latch.

These, and other objects, advantages and novel features of the invention will be apparent from the following description and the accompanying drawing.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a perspective elevation view of a handbag, according to the invention, in the closed position.

Fig. 2 is a perspective elevation view of the handbag in the open position.

Fig. 3 is a transverse sectional view on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a perspective elevation view of the container portion of the handbag, with the handle structure removed therefrom preparatory to washing of the container.

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Fig. 5 is a plan view of a removable bottom stiffener for the handbag.

Fig. 6 is a side elevation view of a handle element of the handbag.

The handbag of the present invention comprises a fabric container which is generally quadrilateral in shape with an open top. The bottom of the bag is preferably rectangular, and the sides of the container may be either rectangular or trapezoidal. The upper edges of a pair of opposite sides of the container are turned over and stitched to form looped apertures or hems extending longitudinally of such sides at least adjacent each end of the upper edges, and one or more flexible strap members are secured to extend across the inside of the bottom of the container.

The container itself is made of a washable fabric, which is preferably flexible. The fabric is preferably one which may be washed by the usual home laundering processes without any damage thereto. Alternatively, the material may be one which may be readily cleaned by other processes, such as dry cleaning, steam cleaning and the like.

A removable handle assembly and stiffener are secured to the container to complete the handbag. This handle assembly includes a pair of elongated members, or rods, which are insertable through the hems at the upper edges of the aforementioned opposite sides, and extend therebeyond a short distance. Each end of each rod is formed with a suitably shaped aperture, and a ribbon-like member or tape is inserted transversely of the bag through aligned rod apertures in series at each end of the rods. If desired, two such ribbon-like members or tapes may be used and the ends thereof are suitably secured together after insertion through the rod apertures.

Accordingly, when the ribbons or tape members, which form the handle means of the bag, are held so that the container depends therefrom, the rods will slide together along the handle ribbon or tape, due to the weight of the container or of its contents, to automatically close the bag. To give a shaped appearance to the bag, a rectangular stiffener of cardboard, plywood, plastic, or any other suitable rigid or semi-rigid material is disposed on the inside of the bottom of the bag, being removably held in position by the straps extending transversely of the bottom.

When the container portion of the bag needs cleaning, the handle elements are untied and withdrawn from the apertures in the rods. The

rods may then be withdrawn from the hems. The bag is then turned inside out, and the bottom stiffener is readily withdrawn from beneath the bottom straps. The container itself may then be washed or cleaned in any desired manner after which the handle and stiffener elements are reassembled therewith. These latter elements may likewise be washed or cleaned separately.

Referring more particularly to the drawing, the handbag is illustrated as including a container 10 of suitable flexible, washable or cleanable material, such as cloth, artificial leather, flexible plastic or the like. Container 10 includes relatively long opposite sides 11 and 12, short sides 13 and 14 and a bottom 16, and has an open top. The ends of each pair of adjacent sides are suitably secured together in any desired manner as by stitching 17, for example, to form a stable quadrilateral enclosure.

The upper ends of longer sides 11 and 12 extend beyond the ends of shorter sides 13 and 14, and are turned inwardly as indicated at 21 and 22. Turned in ends 21 and 22 are stitched to the main portions of sides 11 and 12, as indicated at 23, to form looped apertures or hems 15 and 20. Extending across bottom 16 are a pair of spaced straps or webs 24, 24 which normally lie flat against bottom 16 and are stitched or otherwise secured, at their ends, to sides 11, 12 near bottom 16.

The handle structure for the bag includes a pair of rod-like elongated members or elements 25, 25 longer than hems 15, 20 and having a shape and size such that they may be loosely inserted therein. The ends of rods 25 thus project beyond the hems, and have apertures 26 in each projecting end which apertures are substantially elliptical in shape. The handle structure also includes, in the embodiments shown, two tape or ribbon-like fabric members 30, 35. Member 30 is drawn through the left-hand apertures 26, and member 35 is similarly drawn to the right-hand apertures 26. Each end of member 30 is then secured to an end of member 35 by a releasable knot or other suitable fastening means 40, thus forming carrying loops.

To give a shape to the bag, a bottom stiffener 45, substantially rectangular in shape, is laid along bottom 16 extending beneath transverse webs 24. Member 45 is made of any suitable rigid or semi-rigid material having sufficient stiffness to maintain the bottom of the bag in a substantially rectangular shape. Thus, member 45 may be wood, metal, rigid plastic, or suitable material of any other desired composition. Preferably, member 45 is inserted beneath webs 24 with the container 10 in the inside out position.

When the bag is placed with handles or loops 30, 35 over the arms of the user, the weight of container 10 and/or its contents tend to pull the container downwardly. This causes rods 25 to ride along strap elements 30 and 35 forcing container 10 to close and remain closed as indicated in Fig. 1. The container may be readily opened by pulling rods 25 apart. While straps 30 and 35 have been shown as two separate straps, it will be readily appreciated that a single member could be used and threaded through all of the apertures 26 and its ends tied with a suitable knot.

When the bag becomes soiled, knots 40 are disengaged and straps 30 and 35 are withdrawn from the apertures 26 of rods 25. The latter are then withdrawn from hems 15, 20. Thus, the handle structure is completely disengaged from container 10. The bottom of the container may

then be pushed upwardly through its top opening and stiffener 45 may be withdrawn readily from beneath webs 24. The fabric container 10 may then be washed or cleaned in any desired manner, as by the usual laundering, dry cleaning or the like processes. At the same time, the straps 30, 35, the rods 25 and the stiffener 45 may likewise be cleaned in any desired manner.

After such cleaning, stiffener 45 is again inserted beneath webs 24 with the container 10 in the inside out position. The bottom is then pushed downwardly so that the container assumes the position shown in Fig. 4. Rods 25 are then inserted through hems 15, 20 and straps 30, 35 inserted through apertures 26 and their ends tied by knots 40 to complete the reassembling of the bag.

The described invention thus provides a novel, removable element handbag, in which all the constituent elements may be readily disengaged from each other for cleaning. The fabric of container 10 is preferably such as may be readily washed or cleaned after the handle structure and the bottom stiffener have been removed therefrom.

While a specific embodiment of the invention has been shown and described in detail to illustrate the application of the principles thereof, it will be understood that the invention may be otherwise embodied without departing from such principles.

What is claimed is:

1. A handbag comprising, in combination, a flexible container of cleanable material having a bottom, and a pair of side walls each formed with a hem along its top edge; a pair of relatively rigid elongated handle elements slidably receivable in and removable from said hems and each projecting therebeyond at each end; each element having a transverse aperture in each projecting end; and flexible handle means extending through both apertures in the elements in series at one end of the bag and through both apertures in the elements in series at the other end of the bag and preventing disengagement of said elements from said hems; said handle means being withdrawable from the apertures of said elements to provide for withdrawal of said elements to disengage said container for cleaning.

2. A handbag comprising, in combination, a flexible container of cleanable material having a bottom, and a pair of side walls, the upper edges of said walls being turned over and stitched at least adjacent either end to provide looped apertures adjacent each end; a pair of relatively rigid elongated handle elements slidably receivable in and removable from said looped apertures and each projecting beyond its associated side wall at each end, each element having a transverse aperture in each projecting end; and flexible handle means extending through both apertures in the elements in series at one end of the bag and through both apertures in the elements in series at the other end of the bag and preventing disengagement of said elements from said looped apertures; said handle means being withdrawable from the apertures of said elements to provide for withdrawal of said elements from such looped apertures to disengage said container for cleaning.

3. In a handbag including a quadrangular container of flexible cleanable material having a quadrilateral bottom, four side walls secured to said bottom, and a stiffener of relatively rigid material disengageably secured with said bottom

for removal therefrom to provide for cleaning of the container; the upper edges of a pair of opposite side walls being turned over and stitched at least adjacent either end to provide looped apertures adjacent each end; a pair of relatively rigid elongated handle elements slidably receivable in and removable from said looped apertures and each projecting beyond its associated side wall at each end, each element having a transverse aperture in each projecting end; and flexible handle means extending through both apertures in the elements in series at one end of the bag and through both apertures in the elements in series at the other end of the bag and preventing disengagement of said elements from said looped apertures; said handle means being withdrawable from the apertures of said elements to provide for withdrawal of said elements from such looped apertures to disengage said container for cleaning.

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