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RING HOLDER AND METHOD OF FORMING SAME

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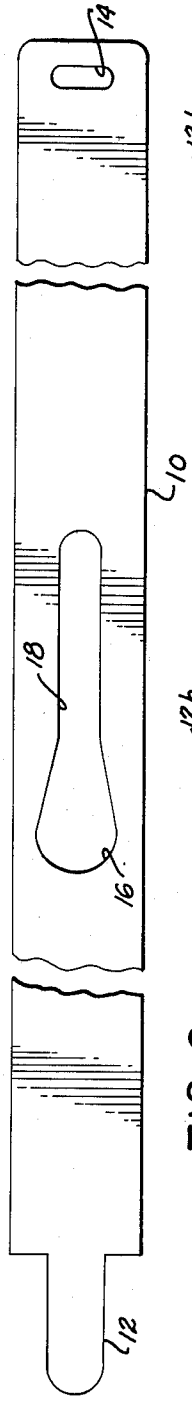


FIG. 2

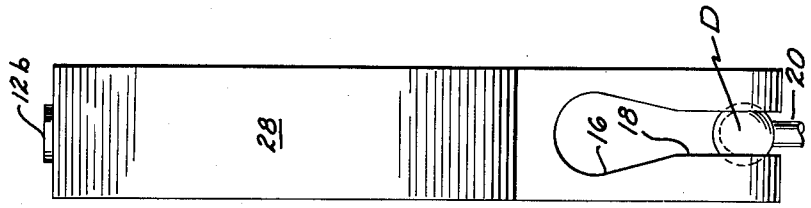


FIG. 4

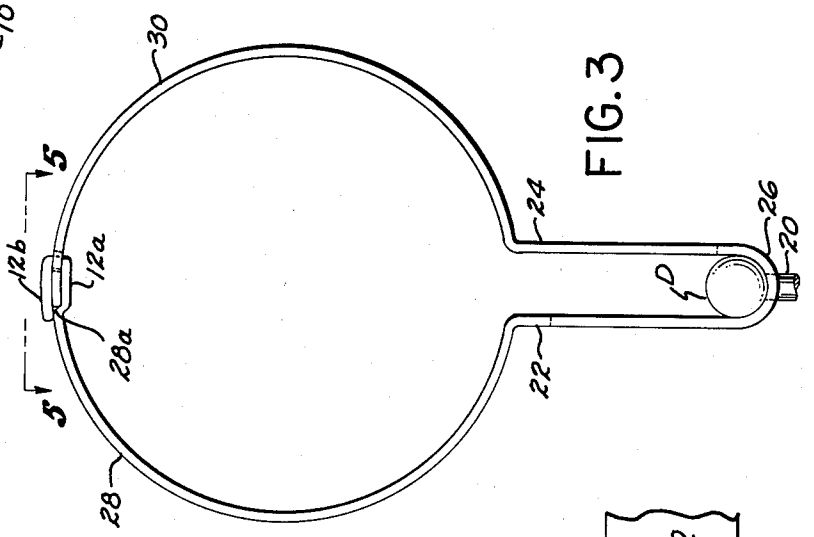


FIG. 3

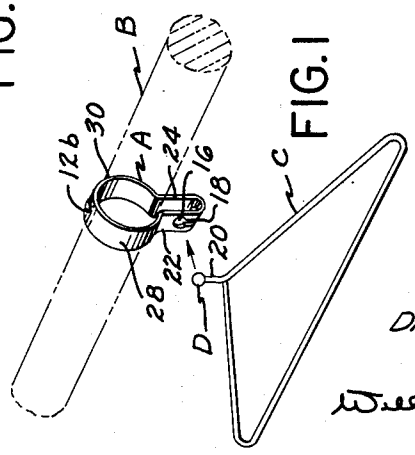


FIG. 1

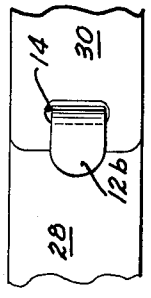


FIG. 5

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RING HOLDER AND METHOD OF FORMING SAME

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The present invention relates generally to coat hanger accessories, and more particularly to a ring holder that may be mounted on a horizontal rod to removably support a coat hanger having a bead or ball at the upper extremity thereof.

It is commonplace in the structure of clothes closets to provide a horizontal rod that may be removably engaged by clothes hanger hooks. Also, such rods may be used to slidably support ring holders that are so constructed as to be removably engaged by the enlarged upper extremities of clothes hangers. However, one operational disadvantages of holders of this type is that they engage the enlarged portions of the hangers through initial movement of the hangers parallel to the supporting rod, which in a crowded closet is, in many instances, difficult to accomplish.

A major object of the present invention is to provide an improved ring holder of simple structure, which is inexpensive to produce, durable, and one that will provide satisfactory service over a prolonged period of time.

Another object of the invention is to supply a ring holder with which the movement of the hanger relative thereto for engagement purposes is in a direction normal to the supporting rod, rather than parallel thereto.

A further object of the invention is to furnish an inexpensive and convenient method of forming a ring holder having the operational advantages above described by the use of simple and readily available mechanical equipment.

Yet still a further object of the invention is to provide a ring holder which eliminates certain of the operational disadvantages of previously available devices used for this purpose.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following description of a preferred form thereof, and from the drawing illustrating the same, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the ring holder mounted on a horizontal rod and so positioned as to be engageable by the enlarged upper portion of a clothes hanger;

FIGURE 2 is a top plan view of a flat stamped strip prior to the same being formed into the ring holder shown in FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is an enlarged end elevational view of the ring holder shown in FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 4 is a side elevational view of the ring holder shown in FIGURE 1; and

FIGURE 5 is an enlarged top plan view of the interlocking portions of the holder, taken on the line 5—5 of FIGURE 3.

With continued reference to the drawing for the general arrangement of the invention, it will be seen in FIGURE 1 that the ring holder A is mounted on a horizontal rod B, ready to engage and support a clothes hanger C having a ball or enlarged portion D on the upper extremity thereof. The holder A is fabricated from an elongate strip **10** of a formable metallic material such as steel, aluminum, or the like, from one end of which a tongue **12** projects. A transverse slot **14** is formed in the second end of strip **10**, as may best be seen in FIGURE 2.

A tear-shaped opening **16** is formed in the strip **10** intermediate the ends thereof (FIGURE 2), with the

transverse cross section of this opening being sufficient to permit the ball D to be inserted therethrough. Opening **16** communicates with an elongate slot **18** that extends longitudinally along the strip **10**. The width of the slot **18** is slightly greater than the diameter of an upwardly extending portion **20** of hanger C on which portion the ball D is mounted.

The strip **10** is subjected to a forming operation to transform the central portion thereof into first and second parallel legs **22** and **24**, as may best be seen in FIGURE 3, that are connected on their lower ends by an arcuate web **26**. The upper ends of legs **22** and **24** develop into two substantially semi-circular portions **28** and **30** respectively.

The tongue **12** is extended through the opening **14**, and bent upon itself to assume the configuration of a U-shaped hook, as illustrated in FIGURE 3. In bending the tongue **12**, one leg **12*a*** of the U is deformed downwardly slightly below the first portion **28** to define a transverse body shoulder **28*a*** at the junction of the tongue and first portion. The free end of portion **30** is in abutting contact with body shoulder **28*a***. After the tongue **12** has been bent to define the U-shaped hook which engages the slot **14**, the upper leg **12*b*** of the tongue overlies the adjacent end extremities of portions **28** and **30**. Due to the fact that the free end of second portion **30** abuts against the shoulder **28*a***, and the positioning of upper leg **12*b***, the possibility of inadvertent separation of the second portion from the first portion is eliminated.

After the strip **10** has been bent to define the ring holder A (FIGURE 3), it is mounted on the rod B whereby the ball D may be inserted into the opening **16**. Due to the weight of the hanger C, the ball D thereafter moves downwardly inside the two legs **22** and **24** to rest on the upper surface of the web **26**. When the ball D is so supported, the hanger portion **13** extends downwardly through the slot **18**. As can best be seen in FIGURE 3, the slot **18** continues downwardly through the first leg **22** across the web **26** and into the lower portion of the second leg **24**.

In forming the ring holder A, a metal strip **10** as shown in FIGURE 2 is provided, which is capable of being permanently deformed, preferably by stamping, by the application of a substantial force. Strip **10** is then subjected to a sequence of forming steps in which the central portion thereof is transformed to define first and second legs **22** and **24**, web **26**, and the two semi-circular portions **28** and **40**. The tongue **12** may thereafter be bent to engage opening **14** and formed into the U-shaped configuration illustrated in FIGURE 3.

The legs **12*a*** and **12*b*** are so disposed that the free end of the semi-circular portion **30** is in abutting contact with the shoulder **28*a***, and this in combination with the overlapping position of the leg **12*b***, assures that there will be no movement of the semi-circular portions **28** and **30** relative to one another. Such relative movement, should it occur, could cause the holder A to bind on rod B or become dislodged therefrom.

The use and operation of the invention has been described herein in detail and need not be repeated.

Although the present invention is fully capable of achieving the objects and providing the advantages hereinbefore mentioned, it is to be understood that it is merely illustrative of the presently preferred embodiment thereof and I do not mean to be limited to the details of construction herein shown and described, other than as defined in the appended claim.

I claim:

A holder capable of removably supporting a clothes hanger that includes a ball at the upper extremity thereof and an elongate portion of less thickness than said ball immediately therebelow, which holder comprises:

(a) a rigid strip of material that defines first and second laterally spaced parallel legs which are connected on their lower ends by an arcuate web, with the upper ends of said legs developing into first and second semi-circular portions having internal diameters that are slightly greater than the diameter of a horizontal rod on which said holder is to be supported, which first leg has an opening formed therein of greater transverse cross section than that of said ball, and a slot of greater width than said elongate portion that extends downwardly in said first leg from said opening to continue at least partially across said web; and

(b) means on the ends of said strip for holding said semi-circular portions in an encircling position on said rod, which means includes a transverse slot formed in an end section of one of said semi-circular portions and a tongue projecting from the other of said semi-circular portions, which tongue and the semi-circular portion from which it projects defines a transverse body shoulder, and said tongue is capable of being formed into a U-shape to engage said slot in said end section to lock said semi-circular portions together, with the free end extremity of one of said semi-circular portions being in abutting contact with said shoulder to prevent movement of said semi-circular portions relative to one another.

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