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COLLAPSIBLE LAUNDRY HAMPER

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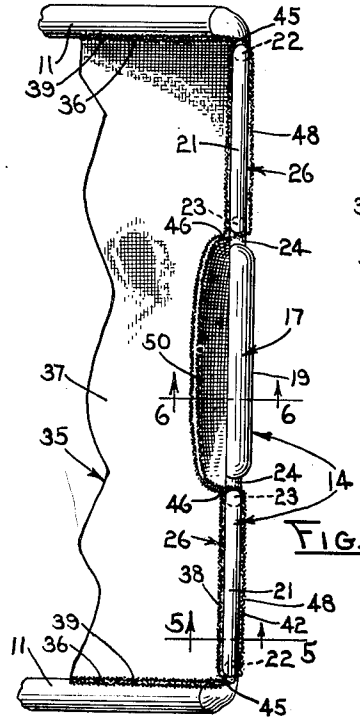


FIG. 2.

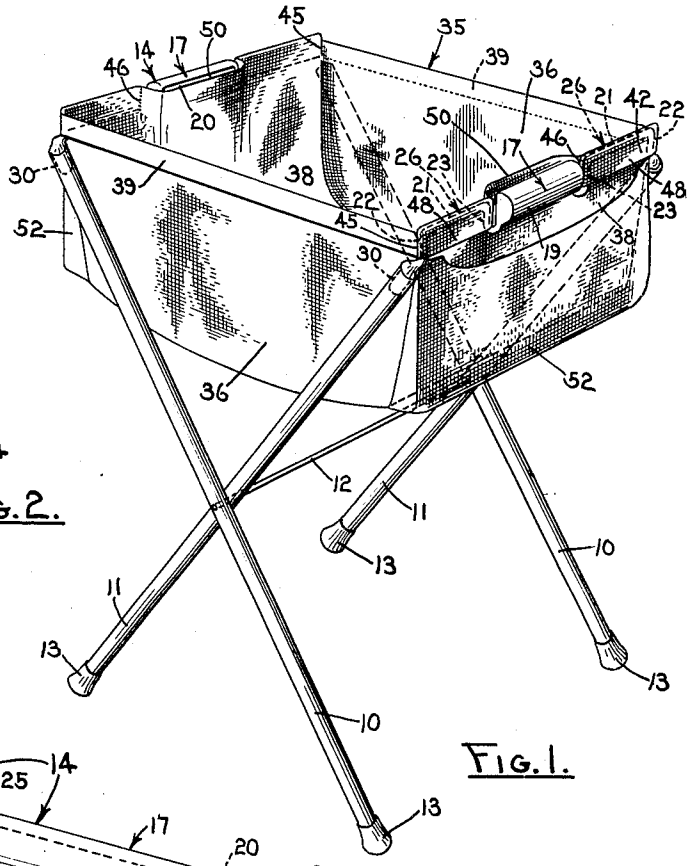


FIG. 1.

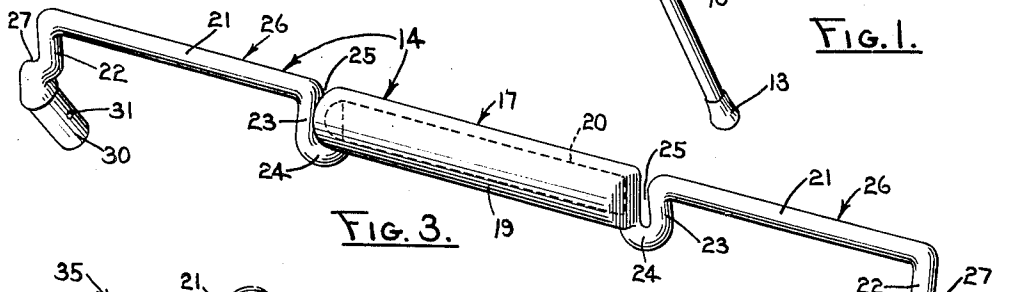


FIG. 3.

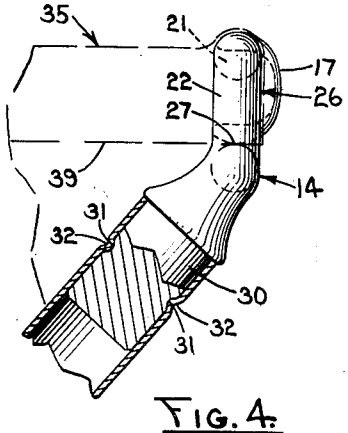


FIG. 4.

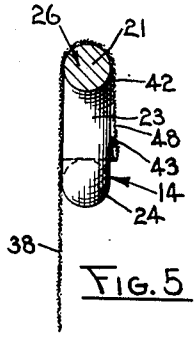


FIG. 5.

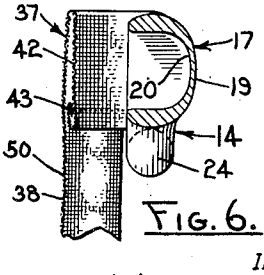


FIG. 6.

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COLLAPSIBLE LAUNDRY HAMPER

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3 Claims. (Cl. 150—49)

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This invention relates to laundry hampers and more particularly to an improved combined flexible laundry basket and collapsible supporting structure therefor.

Many conventional laundry hampers employ collapsible supporting structures and flexible, collapsible baskets supported at heights intended for filling and emptying convenience. Such hampers, however, are subject to certain disadvantages which the present invention seeks to overcome.

The fastening devices employed in many such hampers are metallic or of other hard material, are subject to rust or other deterioration, make laundering of the baskets difficult, unnecessarily increase the initial cost of the hampers, and are subject to maladjustment and frequently fail to provide dependable basket support. Such fastening devices are characterized by the well known snap fasteners which become detached when slightly excessive weight is placed in the basket or after use, even in response to normal weight. Thus, heavy weight clothes positioned in such baskets exert their weight on the snaps which are frequently accidentally disconnected, permitting the basket to collapse and disgorge its contents.

A further disadvantage of conventional collapsible laundry hampers, is that no convenient means are provided for grasping the hampers for transporting purposes. It is the conventional practice to grasp the supporting structure where it is overlaid by the fabric basket. Such grasping is insufficient to support heavy weights in the hamper, subjects the user's finger nails to uncomfortable pressure and damage inasmuch as the grasping of the supporting structure is achieved through the basket mounted thereon, and the material of the basket is rapidly worn at the grasped positions necessitating frequent replacement of the basket, in conventional forms a difficult procedure, or replacement of the entire hamper.

In view of these and other difficulties and disadvantages of previous constructions of laundry hampers, it is an object of the present invention to provide an improved laundry hamper employing a collapsible support and foldable basket borne thereby.

Another object is to provide a laundry hamper in which a basket portion is borne on a supporting structure by means of a four-point attachment at each horizontal corner of the basket to the support.

Another object of the present invention is to provide handles for a laundry hamper of the type

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described providing convenient grips for carrying and handling the hamper.

Another object is to provide an improved metal supporting structure in a device of the character described.

A further object is to obviate bends in tubular formed supporting structures for laundry hampers thus reducing construction time and expense, assuring increased uniformity, and achieving a more compact hamper of a given capacity.

Still further objects of the present invention are to provide a laundry hamper which is economical to manufacture, quickly and easily assembled and disassembled, easy and convenient to use, durable, and expeditiously repaired by replacement of parts.

Other objects of the present invention will appear from the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a clothes or laundry hamper showing the principles and construction of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary plan view of one end of the laundry hamper, with the fabric basket thereof shown in horizontal section to reveal basket mounting structure.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a combined handle and basket supporting projections embodied in a casting attached to, and borne by supporting legs of the clothes basket.

Fig. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary side elevational view of an upper outer corner of the clothes basket construction with a leg thereof being shown in vertical section and the fabric basket being shown in dash lines supported thereon.

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view taken transversely through a projection of the supporting casting with fabric basket supporting pockets located thereover, taken along line 5—5 in Fig. 2.

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view taken transversely through the handle portion of the supporting casting at one end of the laundry basket with the end of the basket being supported thereon and being shown spaced therefrom, taken along line 6—6 in Fig. 2.

Referring in greater detail to the construction as shown in the drawings, attention is first directed to a supporting structure for the clothes hamper of the present invention.

The numerals 10 and 11 refer to corresponding individual legs, respectively, of two pairs of crossed legs. The legs are conveniently formed of tubular material, such as aluminum tubing,

to achieve a light, but strong, structure. Corresponding legs of the pairs of crossed legs are preferably of the same length, and as shown in the drawing, all four legs may be of the same length. The individual legs of the pairs of crossed legs are pivotally interconnected by a rod 12 at coaxial positions intermediate the ends of the legs. The rod 12 not only pivotally interconnects the individual legs but further serves to maintain the pairs of legs in substantially parallel planes in which they may be folded and unfolded at will.

For purposes of convenience, an anti-friction foot 13 is fitted over the lower end of each of the legs 10 and 11. To add rigidity to the supporting structure, to provide convenient hand grips for transporting and handling the laundry hamper, and to provide a suitable means for mounting the clothes basket subsequently more fully described on the supporting structure, cross members 14 are mounted in inter-connecting relation between the upper ends of the legs 10 and 11, respectively. As described, the upper ends of the legs 10 and 11, when the individual legs of the pairs of legs are equally angularly related, terminate in a common plane substantially parallel to a plane common to the feet 13. The cross members aid in maintaining the individual legs of the pairs in corresponding angular relation whether opened to operating position or folded for storage. The cross members may be fabricated, stamped, die cast, or otherwise formed. The die casting of the cross members of aluminum has been found convenient, inexpensive and excellently suited to the purpose.

Considerable significance is attached to the configuration of the cross members 14 which achieves advantages peculiar to the device of the present invention. A handle portion 17 is formed approximately in the middle of each of the cross members 14. As shown in Fig. 3 and more particularly in Fig. 6, said handle portions have a substantially semi-cylindrical exterior portion 19 which is disposed outwardly from the opposite cross-member. A substantially semi-cylindrical recess 20 is formed coaxially of the exterior portion 19 and disposed toward the opposite cross member for gripping convenience and to save material.

Support bars 21 are horizontally extended to opposite sides of each of the handle portions 17 in substantial alignment therewith. Downwardly extended from the outer ends of the support bars are posts 22 and downwardly extended from the inner end of the support bars are posts 23. Each of the posts 23 is formed integrally with its adjacent handle portion by means of an interconnecting downwardly looped portion 24 defining an upwardly disposed pocket 25, the significance of which will subsequently become apparent. The posts 22 and 23 are preferably slightly downwardly convergent. The support bars 21 and the posts define upwardly disposed projections adjacent each end of each cross member. Downwardly extended from the lower end portion of each of the posts 22 is an enlarged shoulder formation 27 from which downwardly extends a stud 30 having a dimple 31 formed in the side thereof. The shoulders and studs are outwardly offset from their respective posts 22 sufficiently to position the inner peripheries of the studs outwardly of the outer peripheries of said posts. The studs are preferably cylindrical and of a diameter for convenient reception thereof into the upper end portions of the legs 10 and 11. The posts and the studs borne thereby are angularly related so that when the legs are in open position, as shown in Fig. 1, the posts 22 and 23 lie in substantially erect planes. The cross members interconnect corresponding legs of the pairs of legs by the insertion of the studs 30 into said cross members' respective legs. The cross members are locked in position by dimpling or punching the material of the legs into the dimples 31. So associated the cross members are dependably maintained in position mounted on their respective legs in an economical manner and the legs 10 and 11, the rod 12 and the cross members constitute a lightweight, and collapsible supporting structure.

A basket indicated generally at 35 is adapted to be borne by the supporting members 14 and is made of fabric, sheet plastic, rubberized fabric or any other available pliable sheet material. The basket is constructed in the form of an open rectangular receptacle with substantially rectangular sides 36, ends 37, and bottom 38 and a substantially rectangular open top. The upper edge of each of the sides 36 of the basket is preferably hemmed as at 39. The upper edge of each of the end portions 38 of the basket is folded downwardly and outwardly against itself in a narrow strip 42 with the return fold thereof located a short distance above the upper edge of the hems 39 formed along the sides 36 of the basket. The lower edge of the strip 42 along the ends of the basket is hemmed at 43 to treble the strength characteristics of this vital portion of the basket which bears the principal strain imposed on the basket when bearing a load. The strips 42 are stitched vertically at 45 to the vertical corners of the basket, and are also stitched vertically to the ends of the basket, as at 46, a horizontal distance from each of the corners of the basket whereby inverted pockets 48 are formed between the stitchings 45 and the stitchings 46. These pockets 48 each are adapted to be located over one of the upwardly extending projections 26 of the cross members 14 with the basket 35 supported thereby. The length of each of the pockets 48 is approximately the distance between the outer sides of the posts 22 and 23 of the projections 26 whereby each pocket 48 must be stretched slightly longitudinally as it is located slidably over its respective projection.

The spacing of the pockets 48 on their respective ends of the basket 35 is greater than the spacing of the projections 26 on the cross members 14. Thus, when the pockets are fitted downwardly over their corresponding projections 26 of the cross members, the fabric of the basket is looped loosely inwardly past the handles 17 of the cross members, as shown at 50, for grasping convenience and to obviate unnecessary wear of the basket.

A clothespin pocket 52 is formed at each opposite end of the fabric basket 35 with the sides and bottom thereof sewed to the bottom and sides of the respective end 38 of the basket to which it is attached.

Although I have herein shown and described my invention in what I have conceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiment, it is recognized that departures may be made therefrom within the scope of my invention, which is not to be limited to the details disclosed herein, but is to be accorded the full scope of the claims so as to embrace any equivalent device.

Having described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A laundry hamper comprising a supporting structure having a pair of horizontally located, relatively parallel end members, the end members being of equal length and movable horizontally toward and away from each other, an upwardly extending looped projection formed adjacent to each end of each of the end members with a handle located between the spaced looped projections on each of the end members, a basket of fabric material having a closed bottom and a rectangular opening in the upper side thereof, and an inverted pocket formed along the end of the fabric basket adjacent to each corner thereof with each pocket having a length approximately equal to the horizontal length of the projections and each pocket being adapted to be received downwardly over the correspondingly located looped projection whereby the basket is supported thereon extending between the spaced end members.

2. A laundry hamper comprising a supporting structure having a pair of horizontally disposed, parallel, transversely extending end members movable horizontally toward and away from each other, each of the end members being of substantially equal length with an upwardly extending looped projection formed adjacent to each end of each of the end members, a handle portion extending integrally and horizontally spaced between the looped projections, a fabric basket having a closed bottom and a horizontally rectangular opening in the upper side thereof, and an inverted pocket at each end adjacent to each corner of the basket, each pocket having a length substantially equal to the length of the looped projections and being adapted individually to be received over respective looped projections of the end members, the pockets at each end of the basket being interconnected by the fabric of the basket of a length greater than the spacing of said pockets' respective looped projections, whereby the basket is supported on the looped projections with the fabric between the pockets extended loosely past the handle portions of the end members.

3. A laundry hamper comprising two pairs of substantially straight hollow tubular legs, the legs of each pair being pivotally connected intermediate their end portions and the pivotal connections of the pairs being coaxially related; substantially parallel cross members having studs extended from opposite ends thereof in substantially right angular relation to said cross members, the studs individual to each cross member being fitted within corresponding ends of corresponding legs of the pairs of legs; a looped projection upwardly extended from each of the cross members adjacent to each end of each cross member; a handle provided in each cross member intermediate the cross member projections; a fabric basket having a closed bottom, upwardly extended end walls, upwardly extended side walls interconnecting the end walls, and inverted pockets mounted on the ends of the basket adjacent to each corner thereof with each pocket having a length approximately equal to the horizontal length of the projections and being adapted to be received downwardly over the projections, the pockets being spaced on their end walls a greater distance than the spacing of said pockets' corresponding looped projections whereby the basket is adapted to be supported on the projections by the reception of the pockets thereover with the end walls of the basket extended loosely past the handle portions of the end members in spaced relation thereto.

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