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RECEPTACLE FOR SOILED CLOTHING

Filed March 15, 1956

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1

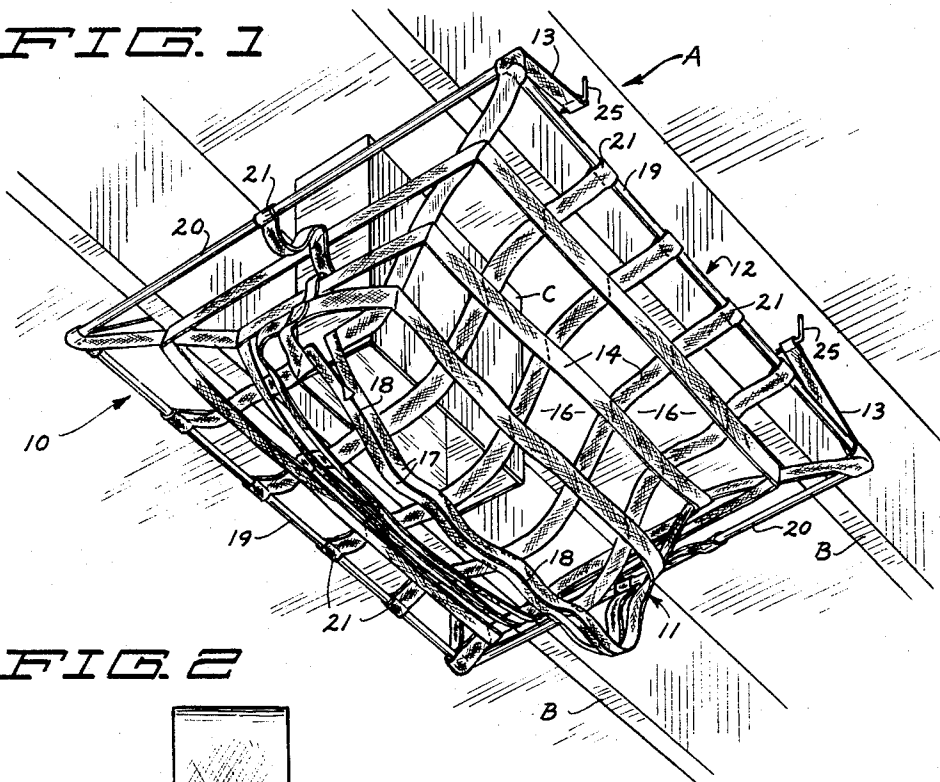


FIG. 2

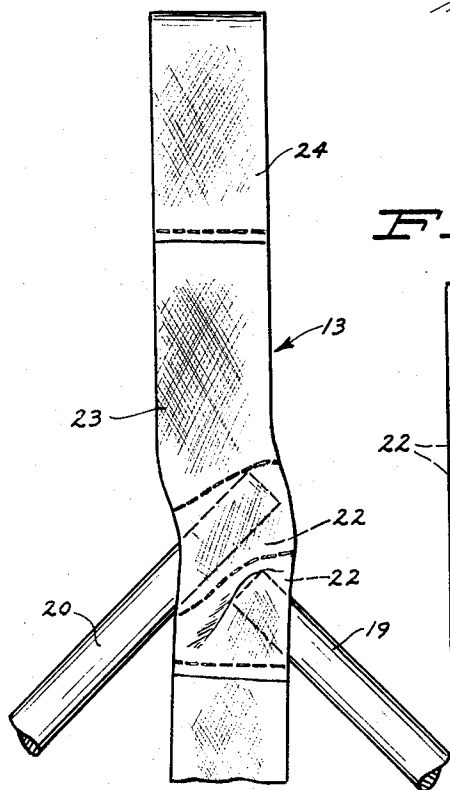
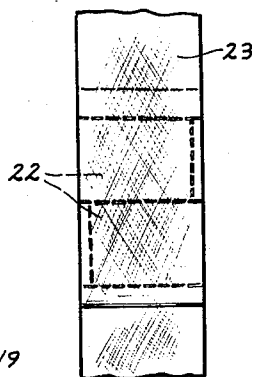


FIG. 3

FIG. 4



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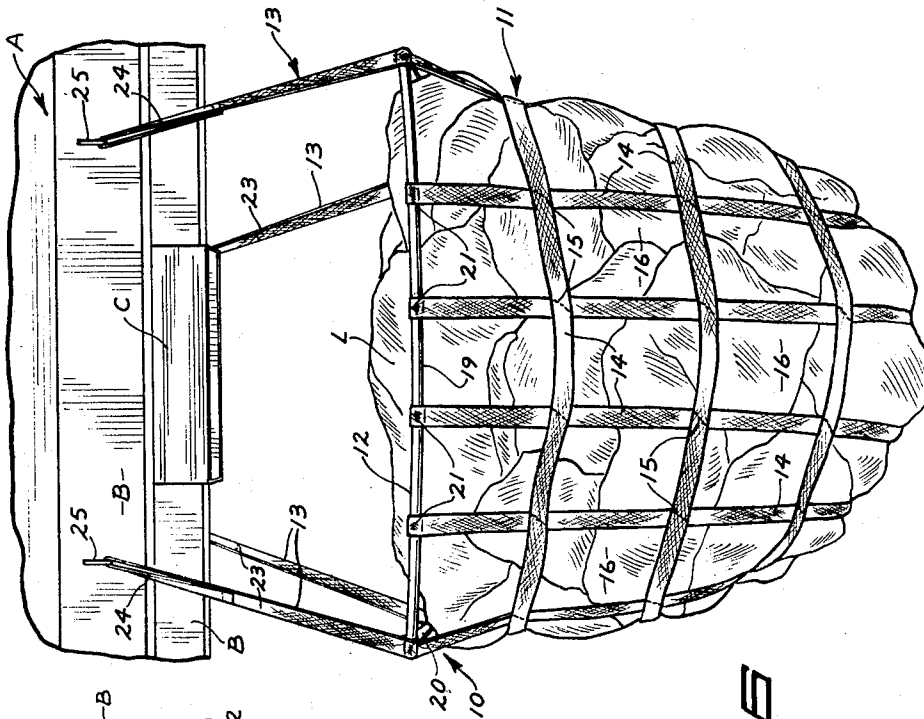
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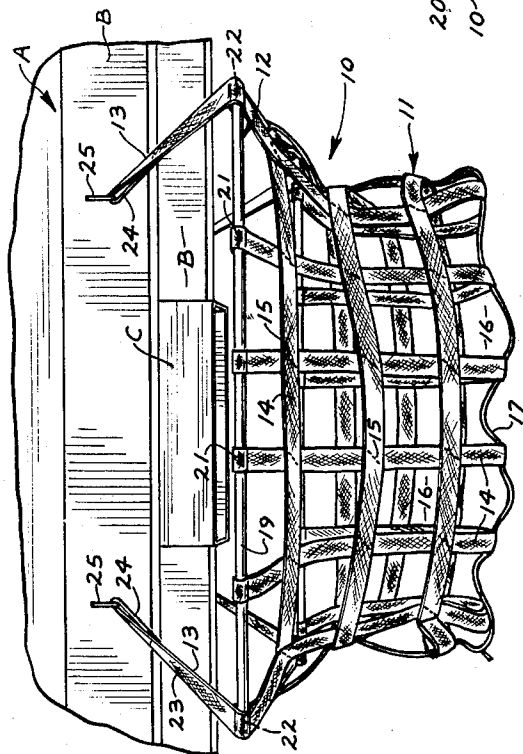
RECEPTACLE FOR SOILED CLOTHING

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2



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RECEPTACLE FOR SOILED CLOTHING

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4 Claims. (Cl. 150—48)

This invention relates generally to the art of receptacles for receiving and storing soiled clothing and the like, and more particularly concerns such receptacles as are designed to be supported beneath the discharge end of a clothes chute to receive soiled articles deposited therethrough for storage preparatory to laundering.

It is common in domestic building construction to incorporate a chute leading from the upper living areas of the house to the laundry area to facilitate movement of soiled clothing and other fabric articles to the latter area for laundering. A receptacle, sometimes referred to as a clothes "hamper," is generally provided at the lower end of the chute to gather and store the soiled clothing until the housewife is ready to perform the washing operation. Such hampers are normally attached to the ceiling and are generally formed of a box-like frame having walls of spaced wooden slats or wire mesh for adequate air circulation through the pile of clothing.

Hampers of the type described are objectionable for several reasons. They are cumbersome and occupy considerable space even when in empty condition. They are difficult to clean. Those using the wire sides and bottom are subject to rusting and such rigid type hampers are expensive to manufacture and difficult to mount.

Another type of hamper used for this purpose is the fabric type sack mounted to receive the soiled articles. These are objectionable as not allowing proper ventilation and requiring a complete emptying even though the housewife desires to launder only certain articles. Furthermore, the conventional sack type hamper is characterized by the aforementioned objection of occupying a great deal of space even when empty.

The primary object of the present invention is to provide a novel receptacle for soiled clothing which in its empty state will occupy only a limited area adjacent the lower end of the clothes chute but which will automatically expand in size to several times that of its empty condition as clothing is deposited therein.

Another object of the invention is to provide a clothes receptacle adapted to be suspended from a ceiling to be disposed below the discharge end of a clothes chute, the suspension means comprising a plurality of elements which are longitudinally elastic whereby the suspended elevation of the receptacle will be dependent upon the load carried therein.

Another object of the invention is to provide a new and improved clothes hamper which is of fabric material so as to be susceptible to laundering in a conventional domestic washing machine and yet which has a lattice type construction for free ventilation of articles deposited therein.

Still another object of the invention is to provide an improved clothes hamper to be disposed in receiving relation to the discharge end of a clothes chute, the hamper being so designed as to allow removal of a single item only from a pile of soiled articles deposited therein.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a clothes hamper for disposition at the discharge end of a

clothes chute, said hamper having means for readily discharging a pile of clothes accumulated therein, and also being so designed as to allow quick and convenient replacement of a portion of the discharged pile in the hamper.

A still additional object of the invention is to provide a new and improved clothes hamper which is rust-proof, which can be completely collapsed for packaging or storage, which can be manufactured and distributed at a relatively low cost, and which can be quickly and simply mounted in operating position.

With these objects in mind my hamper broadly comprises an open mouthed bag formed of a network of elastic strips and a plurality of elongated, resiliently extensible suspension elements spaced about the mouth of the bag, each element having one end connected to the bag and its other end adapted for connection to an elevated support.

The above mentioned and still additional objects of the invention will be brought to light during the course of the following specification, reference being made to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Fig. 1 is a perspective view from the bottom showing my improved hamper in empty condition and mounted on the ceiling structure of a room immediately below the discharge end of a clothes chute.

Fig. 2 is an enlarged plan view of one of the hamper suspension elements with the hamper or receptacle frame members engaged therewith.

Fig. 3 is a plan view of a section of the suspension element with the frame members removed.

Fig. 4 is a side view of the section shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 5 is a side elevation of the mounted hamper in empty condition.

Fig. 6 is a side elevation of the mounted hamper in loaded condition.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing, reference characters will be used to denote like parts or structural features in the different views. The letter A denotes generally the ceiling structure of the laundry area which is frequently unfinished so as to expose the joists B supporting the floor above. The chute C extends downwardly through the ceiling structure with its lower or discharge end generally extending somewhat below the ceiling surface or, in the structure shown, below the plane of the bottom edges of joists B.

My improved hamper is designated generally by the numeral 10 and comprises an open mouthed bag-like receptacle 11 having a rigid frame 12 extending around the mouth opening and suspension elements 13 spaced around the frame for suspending the receptacle from the ceiling A to open upwardly. The receptacle or bag 11 is made up of a network of strips 14 of material arranged in spaced criss-crossing relation. Strips 14 are formed of a flexible elastic webbing material of the type commonly used in men's suspenders and garters, which material is a fabric having fine strands of rubber woven therein for stretching of the strips. This material is frequently referred to simply as "elastic" and is stretchable under tension to a point where the fabric threads therein become taut. When tension is released the material will return to its normal contracted condition.

The strips 14 being arranged in criss-cross relationship are stitched to each other as at 15 at their intersections and are preferably disposed to extend horizontally and vertically when the device is mounted. The square spaces 16 between next adjacent strips are of such a size as to prohibit small articles of clothing normally processed through the domestic laundry operation from falling therethrough. The receptacle 11 is here shown as being of a substantially constant length and depth when viewed from the side (Fig. 5). The end walls of the bag pref-

erably taper downwardly somewhat as may be observed in Fig. 1. Such shape characteristics of the receptacle, however, are not considered to be imperative in the present invention.

Extending along the bottom of the bag and attached to the lower ends of the vertical strips 14 in the side walls I have provided a pair of opposing fabric tapes 17 associated by a slide fastener 18 adapted to be selectively operated to separate or connect the tapes to open or close the bottom of the bag.

The bag 11 opens upwardly and the open mouth thereof is defined by the frame 12. This frame is comprised of rigid side and end rods denoted at 19 and 20 respectively which are attached to the receptacle 11 in a manner now to be described. The rods 19 and 20 extend through loops 21 provided at the upper ends of the vertical or depth straps 14 of the receptacle. These straps 14 at each corner of the receptacle are attached to the suspension elements 13. Adjacent this connection each element 13 is provided with a pair of pockets 22 which open in opposite directions for receiving the ends of the rods 19 and 20, as shown in Fig. 2. The element with the rods removed is shown in Figs. 3 and 4.

In the preferred embodiment of my invention the suspension elements 13 are each formed of a strap 23 of elastic similar to that used in straps 14. The upper or distal end portion of each strap 23 is folded back upon itself and stitched to form an attachment loop 24. These loops are adapted to be placed over and around the L-hooks 25 which are anchored in the joists B so that the hamper may be suspended from the ceiling structure A.

It will be noted by observation of Figs. 1, 5 and 6 that the hooks 25 at each side of the hamper are spaced apart a distance considerably less than the length of the side rod 19, so that the suspension elements relatively diverge in their downward extension.

Operation of the device will now be explained. The hamper 10 is attached to the ceiling structure A in empty condition, as shown in Figs. 1 and 5, so that the lower end of chute C is substantially centered with respect to the continuous frame 12 formed by rods 19 and 20. It will be noted that the resiliently extensible suspension members 13 yieldably support the frame 12 against or in close proximity to the bottom plane of the ceiling structure A. Furthermore, inasmuch as there is no load imposed upon the straps 14 they will remain in their retracted state so that the entire hamper remains in the relatively compact condition in the area near the ceiling structure. With the hamper so contracted and raised it is in an out of the way position so that it is possible for a person of average height to walk under the chute without striking the hamper.

As clothes are deposited periodically through the chute C they will fall into the bag 11. With an increase in weight of the load received in the hamper the initial stretching will take place in the suspension elements 13. The single thickness of each strap 23 will be stretched to its elastic limit, after which the double thickness formed by loops 24 will yield so that the suspension elements will be distended downwardly to substantially twice their normal length, such as shown in Fig. 6. Throughout the loading period the top of the load will continually be spaced away from the bottom of the chute to prevent blocking thereof. As the load increases after stretching of the elements 13 to their limits the elasticity of straps 14 will allow the receptacle 11 itself to distend to the enlarged condition shown in Fig. 6, enabling the hamper to hold an extremely large load of soiled articles.

When it is desired to empty the hamper the slide fastener 18 is operated to open the bottom of the receptacle 11 and the load will fall upon the floor. The hamper will return to its raised or contracted condition shown in Fig. 5 and the fastener 18 is closed so that the hamper is ready to receive and store the next load.

It is customary for the housewife to frequently select only certain articles to be laundered together, leaving the remainder of the load to be laundered at some future date. When this is desired the articles to be laundered are taken from the load as deposited on the floor and the remaining articles may be redeposited in the hamper. This is accomplished by merely pulling one of the rods 19 downwardly substantially to the position shown in Fig. 6 exposing the interior of the hamper for reception of the articles from the side.

It will also be noted that the elasticity of the members 14 allows the removal of certain selected articles directly through the openings 16 eliminating the necessity of dumping the entire load L. While I have herein described the members 13 and 14 as being of elastic webbing it will be readily understood that other resiliently extensible materials or elements could be used to accomplish the desired result.

The device can, of course, be readily dismantled from the structure A by merely removing the loops 24 from the hooks 25. Rods 19 and 20 are withdrawn from loops 21 when it is desired to launder the hamper.

As hereinbefore mentioned a primary advantage in the hamper as disclosed lies in its ability to expand and contract dependent on the load carried thereby, so as to occupy substantially only the space necessary to store the load. It will also be readily understood that the inherent flexibility of the hamper allows its packaging and storing in a minimum of space. I have accordingly provided a clothes hamper for economically and effectively carrying out the aforementioned objectives.

It is understood that suitable modifications may be made in the structure as disclosed, provided such modifications come within the spirit and scope of the appended claims. Having now therefore fully illustrated and described my invention, what I claim to be new and desire to protect by Letters Patent is:

1. A clothes hamper for receiving and storing soiled garments deposited through a chute the lower end of which projects through the ceiling structure of a building confine, an open mouthed receptacle formed of a network of spaced intercrossing strips of flexible material, and a plurality of elongated suspension elements each having one end connected to the receptacle adjacent said opening and having its other end adapted for attachment to said ceiling structure, said strips and suspension elements being formed of elastic webbing.

2. A hamper for receiving and storing articles deposited downwardly through a clothes chute extending through a ceiling comprising an open mouthed receptacle, and means for suspending the receptacle in upwardly opening, hanging position below the lower end of the chute, said means comprising a plurality of suspension elements each having one end connected to the receptacle with its other end adapted for connection to the ceiling, each suspension element being formed of a strip of loosely woven fabric material having strands of rubber woven therein which allow the fabric to stretch until the threads thereof become taut for resilient and limited lowering of the receptacle from the ceiling under weight of the articles deposited therein.

3. A hamper for receiving and storing articles deposited downwardly through a clothes chute extending through a ceiling comprising an open mouthed receptacle, and means for suspending the receptacle in upwardly opening, hanging position below the lower end of the chute, said means comprising a plurality of suspension elements each having one end connected to the receptacle with its other end adapted for connection to the ceiling, each suspension element being formed of a strip of longitudinally elastic webbing for resilient lowering of the receptacle from the ceiling under weight of the articles deposited therein, and wherein a portion of each element is of single thickness and another portion is of double thickness whereby the

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latter portion will stretch only after the former portion has been stretched to its elastic limit.

4. A clothes hamper adapted to be supported below the lower end of a clothes chute extending through a ceiling structure of a building confine to receive and store soiled articles discharged downwardly through the chute which comprises an open mouthed bag formed of a network of spaced intercrossing strips of loosely woven flexible webbing having threads of rubber running longitudinally therethrough for resilient stretching of the strips to allow expansion of the bag as the articles are deposited therein, and a plurality of elongated suspension elements spaced around the mouth of the bag, each suspension element having one end attached to the bag adjacent the mouth thereof and its other end adapted for connection to the building ceiling structure, and said suspension elements each having an extensible nonelastic component and a resiliently elastic component allowing the element

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to be stretched under the load imposed on the bag to the limit of extension of the nonelastic component.

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