Jan. 31, 1967 R. O. McCLAIN 3,301,429

SAUCER PAD, COVER OR THE LIKE

Filed Oct. 29, 1963

FIG.1

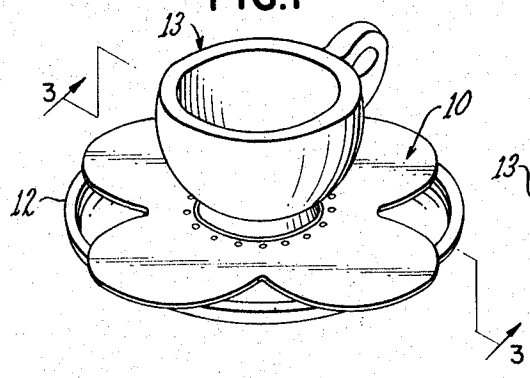


FIG.2

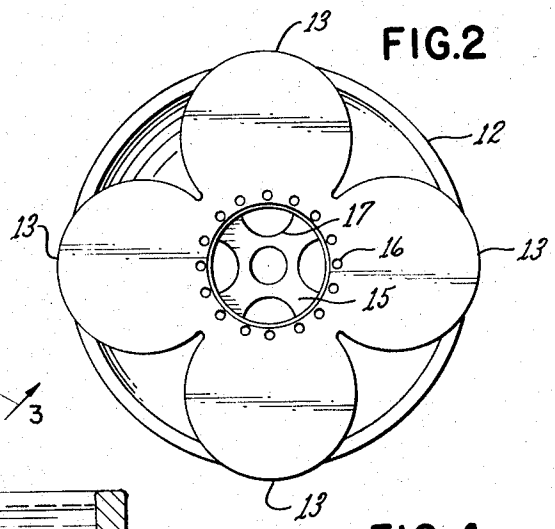


FIG.4



FIG.3

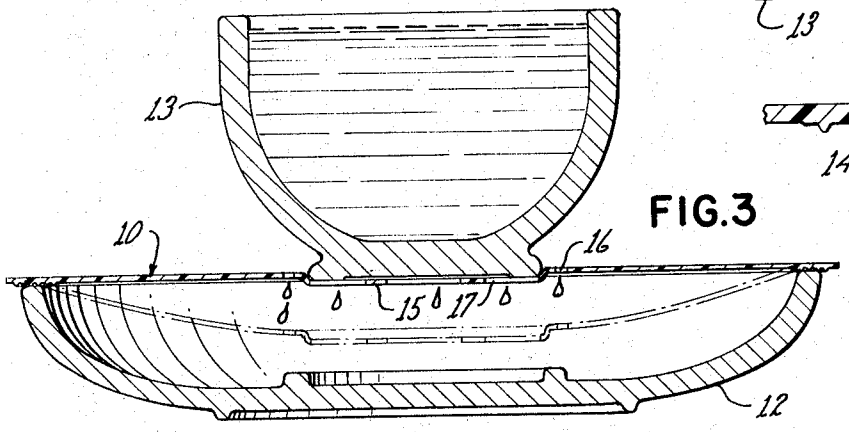


FIG.5

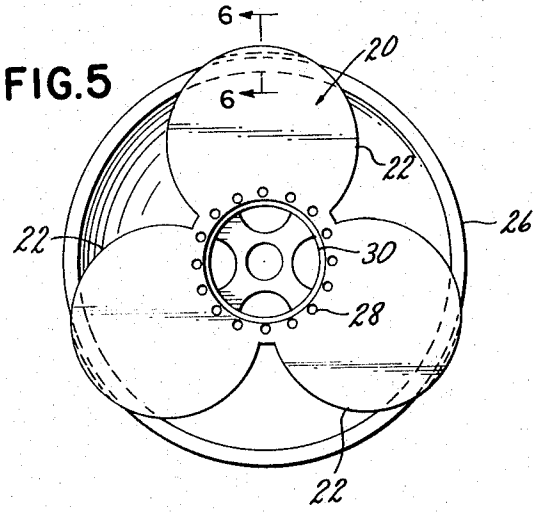
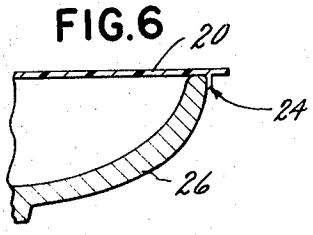


FIG.6



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SAUCER PAD, COVER OR THE LIKE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 220—23.83)

This invention relates generally to saucer pads or covers and more particularly to a device which is to be applied to a saucer to support a cup above the surface of the saucer in a manner to prevent the cup from contacting liquid which may have spilled into the saucer.

Heretofore, saucer pads have been provided which were adapted to be inserted directly into the saucer and lie in contact with the surface of the saucer. These pads were often made of an absorbent material which was adapted to absorb liquid which may have spilled into the saucer. The absorbent pad was not satisfactory since the amount of spillage that it could absorb was limited. Any excess spillage caused a condition to exist wherein droplets of fluid would accumulate on the bottom of the cup and could readily drip on the clothing of the consumer during use.

Other complicated devices have been devised to replace the absorbent pad but all such devices have depended upon the bottom of the saucer for their support.

There has long existed a need for a simple, inexpensive device, for preventing a cup from contacting spillage in a saucer, which could be reused or disposed of at will.

A device of this type must have a very pleasing appearance since it is used in connection with dining and therefore cannot be unappetizing in appearance which is generally the case when a device becomes too mechanical and grotesque.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an inexpensive, reusable or disposable saucer pad or cover which is adapted to support a cup a spaced distance above the surface of the saucer so as to keep the cup out of contact with any fluid spillage which may have collected in the saucer.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a cup supporting saucer cover which is adapted to engage the outer edges of the saucer and form a bridge like structure extending across the saucer and support thereon a cup in a manner wherein the bottom of the cup will not come into contact with any spillage that may have collected in the saucer.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a cup supporting saucer cover which is made of light weight disposable or reusable material which is appetizing in appearance and sanitary in use.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a cup supporting saucer cover which is easy to store and use and one which will eliminate totally any danger of spilled liquid which has accumulated in the bottom of the saucer and from being transferred by the cup to the clothing of the consumer during use.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a supporting member adapted to overlie a saucer which is decorative and appetizing in appearance and is characterized by its structural simplicity, and low manufacturing cost.

Other features of this invention reside in the arrangement and design of the parts for carrying out their appropriate functions.

Further objects of the present invention and certain practical advantages will be referred to in or will be evident from the following description of several embodiments of the invention as illustrated in the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view showing the present device as applied to a saucer with a cup supported thereon.

FIGURE 2 is a top plan view of one embodiment of the present device in position upon a saucer.

FIGURE 3 is a cross sectional view taken along the plane of line 3—3 of FIGURE 1 showing the device as applied to a saucer with a cup supported thereon.

FIGURE 4 is an enlarged fragmentary cross sectional view of the outer end portion of one segment of the present device as seen in FIGURE 3.

FIGURE 5 is a top plan view of another embodiment of the present device, and

FIGURE 6 is an enlarged fragmentary cross sectional view of the embodiment shown in FIGURE 5 and taken along the plane of line 6—6 of FIGURE 5.

Before describing in detail the herein disclosed embodiments of the invention, it is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the structural details or the particular arrangement of parts herein shown, as devices embodying the present invention may take other forms.

It is also to be understood that the phraseology and terminology herein used are for purposes of description and not of limitation, as the scope of the present invention is denoted by the appended claims.

Referring now to the accompanying drawing in which like numerals designate like parts throughout the several views, the present device is preferably constructed as a single unit. In FIGURES 1–4 the device is seen to consist of a one piece sheet like member **10** which is adapted to be placed on a saucer **12** and supported on the outer edges thereof. The device is to be constructed of a material having sufficient rigidity to form a bridge across the saucer and support a full cup **13** thereon, as seen in FIGURE 3, wherein, the cup is suspended a spaced distance above the bottom of the saucer. This spacing should be of such distance that the saucer may contain substantial spillage without having the bottom of the cup contact the spillage.

Since the device is used in connection with the partaking of food, it must be pleasing in appearance. As seen in FIGURES 1 and 2, the member is constructed generally in the form of a three or four leaf clover, with the three or four leaves **13** projecting radially outwardly from the center and having sufficient length so as to span the entire width of the saucer and engage the outer edges of the saucer. The lower surface of each of the projecting leaves of the device **10** is provided with ridges and grooves **14**, see FIGURE 4, adjacent the outer edges thereof. Such ridges and grooves **14** are adapted to engage the outer edges of the saucer and prevent the saucer cover **10** from sliding during use. The center of the cover is provided with a circular recessed area **15** which is adapted to receive the bottom of the cup **10** and prevent it from sliding during use. A plurality of holes **16** are disposed around the outer edge of the recessed area **15**. A second group of holes **17** are disposed in a circular pattern within the depressed area **15**, the holes **16** and **17** being sufficiently large to prevent capillary action therein which would tend to retain liquid in the holes.

Further, the holes **16** could be eliminated and the device would function equally well by utilizing only the holes **17** in the depressed area **15**.

Thus, any spillage which may occur upon the cover **10** in the area of the leaves **13** will tend to drain through the holes **16** into the saucer before reaching the recessed area **15** which receives the bottom of the cup **13**. However, should the spillage be excessive and enter the recessed area **15** it will drain into the saucer via holes **17**, thereby maintaining the surface of the cover **10** relatively free of liquid at all times. As seen in FIGURE 3, the bottom of the cup, as supported upon the member **10**, is suspended a spaced distance above the bottom of the saucer. It is

desirable that the distance between the bottom of the saucer and the cup be such that the saucer may accommodate at least a (¼") one quarter inch depth of liquid without having the bottom of the cup engaging the liquid. It has been found that in ordinary use this will accommodate average spillage and maintain the cup in a dry condition.

It will be noted that the cover **10** may be constructed of a flat material so that its entire body lies substantially in the same plane, or it may be slightly curved downwardly and inwardly in the shape of the saucer by providing a bend in each of the leaves and by curving the central area of the cover inwardly into the confines of the saucer as illustrated by dotted lines in FIGURE 3. Since saucers vary in depth and some are extremely shallow it may be found that a cover whose body lies in substantially the same plane, as seen in full lines in FIGURE 3, is most desirable.

In FIGURES 5 and 6 there is shown another embodiment of the present invention, wherein a saucer cover **20** is provided with three leaves **22** in the form of a three leaf clover. The three leaves project radially outwardly from the center of the device. It will be noted in FIGURE 6, the underside of each of the leaves adjacent the outer edge thereof is provided with a depending lip **24** which is adapted to engage the outer surface of the upper edge of the saucer **26** and prevent the cover from sliding off of the saucer. A plurality of holes **28** are disposed in a circle around a central recessed area which is adapted to receive a cup. Also holes **30** are formed through the central recessed area, the holes **28** and **30** being utilized for the purposes previously described.

Other forms of the device are contemplated by the present invention; for example, the device may be made in a complete solid circular fashion employing either the ridge and groove construction of FIGURE 4 or the depending lip construction of FIGURE 6 or any other suitable means retaining it upon the saucer.

It will be understood that the present device can be constructed of any suitable material. For example, if it is desired to make the device of a disposable material, materials such as processed paper, cardboard, or other similar inexpensive materials may be used. On the other hand, if it is desired to make a more durable and reusable device it may be constructed of material such as plastics, wood, metal, silver, aluminum or any other suitable material which has lasting properties.

As constructed it will be readily apparent that the device can be manufactured realtively inexpensively and by rapid mass production means. Furthermore, as constructed the device is adapted to reduce shipping costs and effect economies in storage requirements.

Further, it will be readily seen that the device is extremely simple to use and the operator need only place the device upon the saucer in the manner illustrated in the drawings and thereafter place the cup upon the device for use.

An additional novel feature of the invention resides in its advertising potential whereby suitable advertising indicia may be placed upon the upper surface of the device. Of course, it must be kept in mind that any such advertising should be neat in appearance and create a pleasant total effect.

In view of the foregoing description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, it is believed that a clear understanding of the construction, operation and advantages of the present device will be quite apparent to those skilled in the art.

While the form of the invention now preferred has been disclosed as required by the statutes, other forms may be used, all coming within the scope of the claims which follow.

What is claimed is:

In combination, a saucer or the like having a rim structure surrounding the same and raised above the bottom wall thereof, a separate cover member disposed across said saucer and resting on said rim structure thereof, said cover member having drainage openings provided therein and having a depressed central area to nestingly receive a cup or the like, and a cup of liquid disposed in said depressed area and resting on said cover member with said cover member being elevated above said bottom wall of said saucer whereby any spillage from said cup onto said cover member will drain through said openings into the space between said cover member and said saucer to tend to keep the bottom of said cup dry, means integrally depending from said cover member to grip said rim structure to prevent slippage between said saucer and cover member and said drainage openings being disposed in said cover member to be located beneath said cup.

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