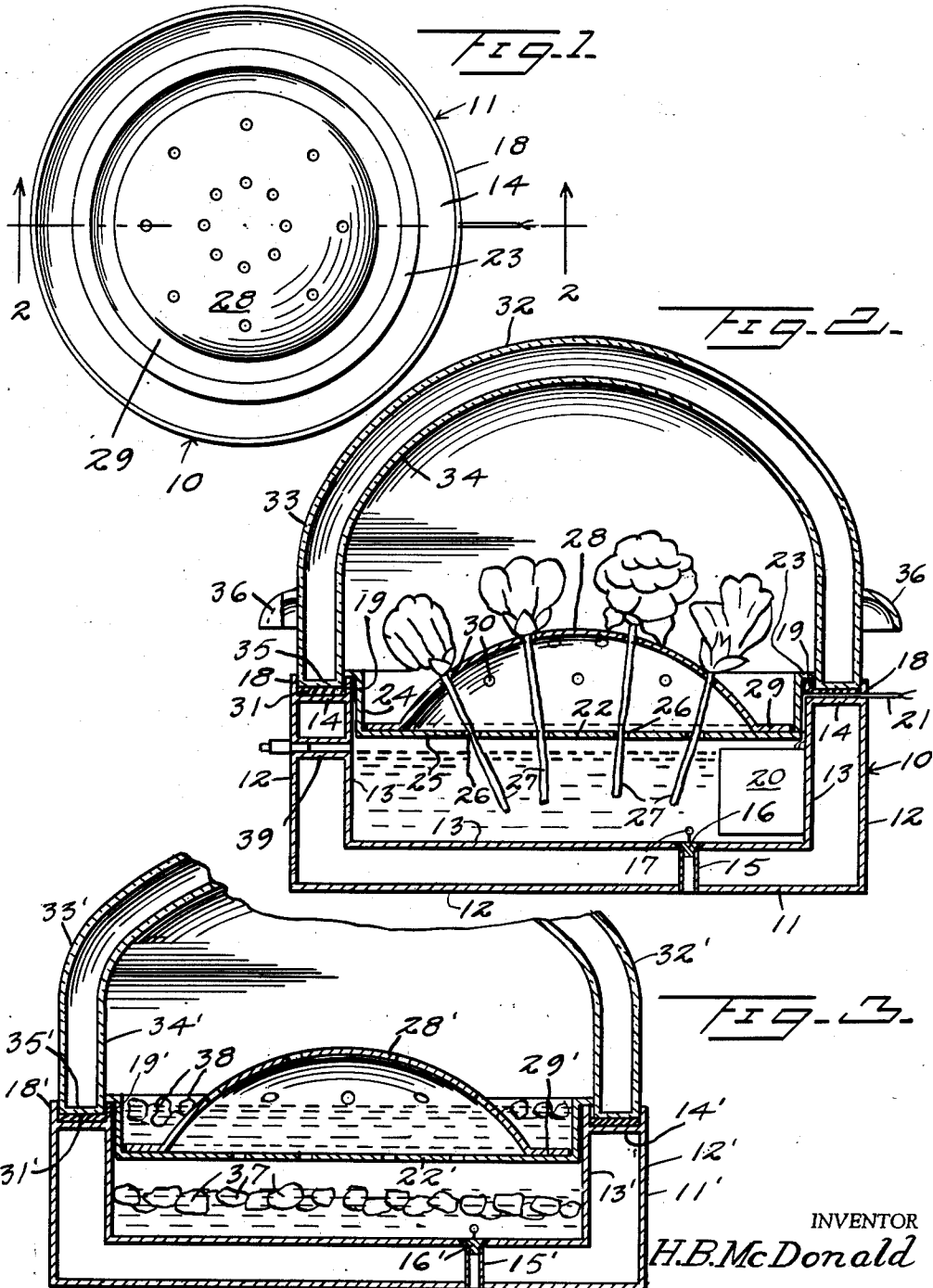


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H. B. McDONALD
REFRIGERATED CONTAINER

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REFRIGERATED CONTAINER

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5 Claims. (Cl. 62—86)

The present invention relates to refrigerated containers and more particularly to an insulated vessel adapted to serve as a preserving container for flowers or for cooling drinks and food.

The primary object of this invention is to provide a portable refrigerated container for flowers, which will maintain the flowers at a temperature best adapted to preserve them while simultaneously supporting the flowers with their stems immersed in water.

Another object of the invention is to provide a structure of the class described which can be used for maintaining foods in refrigerated condition.

A further object of the invention is to provide a refrigerated container which is adapted to support and maintain bottled beverages in a refrigerated condition.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a device of the class described, in which a mechanical refrigerating apparatus is combined therewith to maintain the contents in refrigerated condition.

Another object of the invention is to provide a device of the class described, in which ice can be used to maintain the container at a temperature less than normal.

Other objects and advantages will become apparent in the following specification when considered in the light of the attached drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a top plan view of the invention with the dome removed;

Figure 2 is a vertical cross section of the invention with the dome in place, taken along the line 2—2 of Figure 1, looking in the direction of the arrows, and

Figure 3 is a vertical cross section of a slightly modified form of the invention in which the lower member is formed shorter.

Referring now to the drawings in detail wherein like reference numerals indicate like parts throughout the several figures, the reference numeral 10 indicates generally the invention which consists of a base container 11 having an outer wall 12 and an inner wall 13. The walls 12 and 13 are spaced apart by means of an upper wall 14 which extends circumferentially between the walls 12 and 13. The walls 12, 13 and 14 form a sealed compartment which is evacuated to provide a dead-air insulating space. A drain tube 15 extends between the outer wall 12 and inner wall 13 of the container 11 and is closed at its inner end by a stopper 16 which is provided with a handle 17 for ease of removal. The outer wall 12 and the inner wall 13 extend above the top wall 14, forming an outer peripheral flange 18 and an inner peripheral flange 19, the purpose of which will be later explained.

A refrigerating unit 20 is positioned within the lower container 11 and is adapted to cool fluid contained in the container 11 by any common means. The refrigerator unit 20 is of an electric character and receives its electricity through an extension cord 21. The refrigerator unit 20 may have coils (not shown) extending through the water contained in the container 11, or the water can be circulated through the refrigerating unit 20 by any conventional means.

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A tray 22 is positioned within the lower container 11 and is provided with an outwardly projecting peripheral flange 23 which engages over the inner flange 19 on the bottom container 11. The tray 22 is provided with an upright side wall 24 which extends downwardly from the flange 23 and supports the bottom wall 25. The bottom wall 25 is provided with a series of openings or perforations 26 to receive flower stems 27 extending downwardly therethrough. A crowned disc 28 is provided with a flattened outer peripheral rim 29 which engages the bottom wall 25 of the tray 22 and supports the crowned portion of the disc 28 in spaced-apart relation to the tray 22. The disc 28 is perforated as at 30 to permit the flower stems 27 to pass therethrough. A gasket 31 is positioned on the upper wall 14 of the lower container 11 and extends between the outer flange 18 and the inner flange 19.

A dome 32, comprising an outer wall 33 and an inner wall 34 which are secured in spaced-apart relation by means of a bottom wall 35, is formed of transparent material and is adapted to be positioned on the lower container 11 with the bottom wall 35 in contact with the gasket 31. The dome 32 is provided with handles 36 to permit the removal of the dome 32 by means of the hands.

Referring now to Figure 3 wherein a modified form of the invention is disclosed, a base container 11' is formed with the sides thereof shorter than the sides of the container 11 in the preferred form of the invention. The base container 11' consists of outer and inner walls 12' and 13' which are secured in spaced-apart position by means of an upper wall 14'. A drain tube 15' is closed by a stopper 16' and the upper ends of the walls 12' and 13' extend above the top wall 14' to form flanges 18' and 19'. A tray 22', identical with the tray 22, is supported on the flange 19' and a crowned disc 28', identical to the crowned disc 28, is positioned in the tray 22'. A gasket 31' is seated on the top wall 14' and a dome 32', formed of inner and outer transparent walls 33' and 34' which are secured in spaced-apart relation by a bottom wall 35', is seated on the gasket 31' to seal the container 11'. The dome 32' is somewhat shorter in overall height than the dome 32 in the preferred form of the invention.

In the modified form of the invention ice, illustrated at 37, may be placed in the bottom portion of the container 11 or ice, illustrated at 38, may be placed in the tray 22' above the outer flange 29' on the crowned disc 28'.

In the use and operation of the invention, it is primarily intended that the device serve as a preserving container for flowers which can be positioned with their stems extending through the crowned disc 28 and through the tray 22 into the water contained in the container 11. The interior of the container 11 and the dome 32 will be cooled by the coils of the refrigerator unit 20 in contact with the water in the container 11. The flowers will be cooled both by the cold water in which their stems are immersed and by the air which is cool inside the dome 32. When it is desirable to cool foods, the crowned disc 28 is removed and the food is placed on the tray 22. Ice cubes and chipped ice may then be positioned on the tray 22 surrounding the food and the water, resulting from the melting of the ice, will trickle downwardly into the lower container 11. When it is desired to cool bottled drinks and the like, the tray 22, as well as the crowned disc 28, will be removed and the drinks placed directly in the water contained in the container 11. Upon sufficient cooling with the dome 32 in place, the material, i. e., drinks or food, may be removed from the tray 22 or the container 11 to permit them to be used in a normal manner. It should be understood that the dome 32 will be used during the cooling step.

The modification illustrated in Figure 3 will be used in the same manner as the preferred form illustrated in

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Figures 1 and 2, with the exception that ice 37 or ice 38 will be used to cool the flowers, food and drink in lieu of a mechanical refrigerating unit such as disclosed in the preferred form.

It should be understood that the shape of the lower container 11 and dome 32 can be varied to form a rectangular body having arcuate corners, oblong bodies, elliptical bodies, and any other shape that is deemed desirable.

The lower container 11 is illustrated in Figure 2 as being provided with a valved fitting 39 to which a vacuum pump (not shown) may be attached to evacuate the air between the lower container 11 and the dome 32. The evacuation of the air from between the lower container 11 and the dome 32 provides a more effective seal therebetween and assists in the protection of the contents.

It should be further understood that the double walled lower container 11 can be formed as a single wall provided with a groove at its upper edge to receive the dome if such should be desired.

Having thus described the preferred forms of the invention, it should be understood that numerous structural modifications and adaptations may be resorted to without departing from the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A portable container comprising: a double wall lower

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member, a double wall upper member, a gasket sealing said upper member to said lower member, a perforate tray supported in said lower member and a crowned disc supported on said tray and being provided with perforations to permit flower stems to extend therethrough and through the perforations of said tray.

2. A device as claimed in claim 1, in which said lower container is provided with a mechanical refrigerating unit.

3. A device as claimed in claim 1, in which a drain tube extends through the walls of the lower container with the drain tube closed by a stopper.

4. A device as claimed in claim 1, in which flanges formed on said lower container extend above said gasket and form retaining walls to maintain the upper member on said lower member.

5. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said tray and said lower member each form a support for cooling ice positioned therein.

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