June 24, 1958 J. J. STODDARD 2,840,292

CUP SUPPORT

Filed May 31, 1955

Fig. 1.

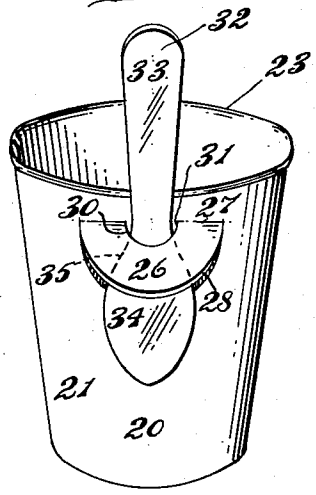


Fig. 2.

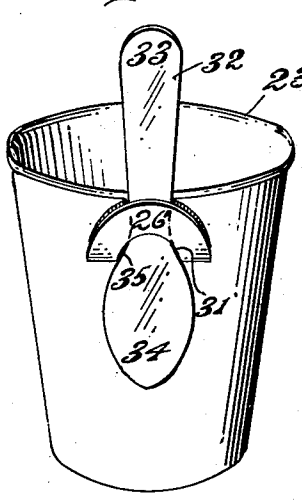


Fig. 3.

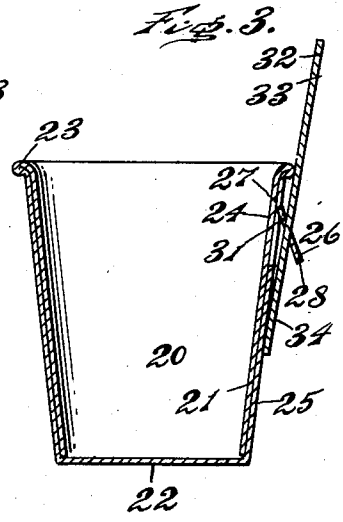
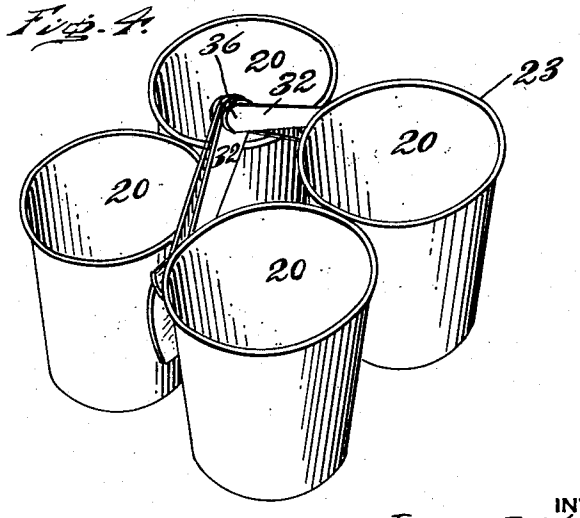


Fig. 4.



INVENTOR

James J. Stoddard

BY

ATTORNEYS.

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CUP SUPPORT

James J. Stoddard, Glenolden, Pa.

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4 Claims. (Cl. 229—1.5)

The present invention relates to the supporting and carrying of cups, especially paper and cardboard cups incident to normal outdoor use.

The purpose of the invention is to permit carrying a group of cups with greater convenience and without the necessity of using a tray.

A further purpose is to support the cup in such a manner that the contents will be less likely to spill.

A further purpose is to carry a group of cups in such a way that in case the contents do spill, such contents will be less likely to fall on the arm or hand of the person carrying the cups.

A further purpose is to permit carrying cups containing contents of high or low temperature without discomfort to the person carrying the cup.

Further purposes appear in the specification and in the claims.

In the drawings I have chosen to illustrate a few only of the numerous embodiments in which my invention may appear, selecting the form shown from the standpoints of convenience in illustration, satisfactory operation and clear demonstration of the principles involved.

Figure 1 is a perspective of a copy and spoon combination in position for carrying.

Figure 2 is a view corresponding to Figure 1, showing a variation.

Figure 3 is a central vertical section of the cup and spoon combination of Figure 1.

Figure 4 is a perspective of a group of cups in position for carrying.

Describing in illustration but not in limitation and referring to the drawings.

In serving of food, especially outdoors, as for example at drive-in refreshment stands, drive-in theatres, picnics, clambakes, barbecues, rodeos, expositions, pageants, football and baseball games, and also in the mass serving of food indoors at places of entertainment and the like, it is difficult to carry cups in comfort and without spilling the contents.

The problem is complicated by the fact that coffee, tea, and hot chocolate are often uncomfortably hot to the touch when carried in paper cups, whereas ice cream, milk, and soft drinks are sometimes unpleasantly cold. The problem is further complicated by the fact that the person carrying the cups often is tempted to assemble a larger group of cups than can be conveniently handled. A further complication is that it is often necessary to walk up or down steps at a stadium or the like or to climb around members of an audience.

As a consequence, the person carrying cups under these circumstances is likely to suffer discomfort by spilling the contents on his hand or arm, including his clothing, and also will react unpleasantly to contact with very hot or very cold surfaces.

The present invention is designed to provide a very simple and convenient procedure for carrying one or a group of cups, rendering the user completely independent of the

high or low temperature of the content, and reducing the likelihood that if any spilling occurs the spilled content will fall on the hand or arm of the user.

By the invention it is possible to group together and hold with one hand at least four cups, and the other hand can be left free, or a similar group of cups can be carried in the other hand.

A tab is positioned near the top of the outside of each cup, and unlike the usual paper handle which is extended vertically, the tab extends horizontaly and provides a vertically disposed spoon receiving opening. The opening is of a size which will pass the handle but will not pass the bowl of the spoon. It was also be small enough so that the handle must be forced through by the hand. The spoon will be less likely to drop out of the opening when it is released.

The tab is placed relatively high on the cup so that the center of gravity of the cup and contents is below the tab, and the cup tends to remain upright as it is carried, even though the spoon may tilt.

The spoon may be the usual wood or cardboard spoon and it may where desired be a spoon obtained as a cutout or insert on the side of the cup as well known. The spoon can be used in eating the content, such as ice cream. Of course, if desired, the spoon may be employed entirely as a handle.

Considering the drawings in detal, I illustrate a cardboard or paper cup **20** having a conical cylindrical side wall **21**, a bottom **22**, and a lip or rim **23**. The type of cup shown is of the permanently open character, although it will be evident that it is immaterial from the standpoint of the present invention whether the cup is of the folding or permanently open type.

In the form illustrated the cup has an inner wall **24** and an outer wall **25** at the side. The outer wall **25** is stamped or cut to form a tab **26** which is located at the outside near the top and in inactive position remains flush with the wall. The user can, however, bend the tap outwardly at hinges **27**, the tab separating from the wall along an outer arc **28** and also along an inner arc **30** to form a vertically disposed opening **31**. Thus when it is bent outwardly the tab is generally in horizontal position or slightly inclined to the horizontal.

Through the opening **31** a spoon **32** is inserted, handle foremost, by pushing the handle **33** through the opening **31**, the bowl **34** of the spoon being too large to pass through the opening and therefore socketing in the opening along curved edges **35** of the bowl. The width of the handle portion of the spoon at the widest part is desirably made sufficiently wide so that the handle portion has to be forced through the opening **31** and thus the spring of the cardboard or paper will tend to hold the spoon from dropping out when the user lets go the handle. At the same time the spoon can be pulled out of the tab readily by pulling downward at any time.

The tab **26** can be stamped out of the material and bent upward as shown in Figures 1 and 3 or a tab **26'** may be used as shown in Figure 2 which is stamped out of the outer wall of the material and bent downward. Of course it will be evident that the question of whether the tab is stamped out of the wall of the cup or pasted on the wall of the cup is immaterial from the standpoint of the present invention.

When carrying a group of cups the handles are conveniently deflected together at **36** as shown in Figure 4 so that the user can simply grasp a group of handles at that point and carry several cups as shown.

It will of course be evident that while the invention is illustrated in connection with a wooden or cardboard spoon, it can also be applied using metal or other suitable spoons with much of the same advantage.

In operation the cup is supplied with the tab weakened or stamped out but still flush with the wall and the user pulls the tab up and out in Figure 1 or down and out in Figure 2. He then pushes the spoon from below through the opening **31** and grasps the handle **33** above the cup and proceeds to lift the cup and carry the cup dangling below the handle and held on the bowl. Since the bowl forms a curved engagement it is capable of acting like a pivot and the handle can be deflected at an angle as shown in Figure 4, while the cups will remain vertical notwithstanding the deflection of the handle because the center of gravity of cup and contents is below the pivotal engagement between the spoon and the tab.

In view of my invention and disclosure variations and modifications to meet individual whim or particular need will doubtless become evident to others skilled in the art, to obtain all or part of the benefits of my invention without copying the structure and method shown, and I therefore, claim all such insofar as they fall within the reasonable spirit and scope of my claims.

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

1. A cup having a side wall and a bottom, and having near the top of the side wall and permanently secured thereto a tab which extends out from the side wall and is hingedly connected thereto on a horizontal axis, there being an opening in the tab which is disposed vertically, in combination with a spoon engaging in the opening of the tab and surrounded at the upper part of the bowl of the spoon by the walls of the opening, having a handle portion extending above the cup for holding by the hand and having a bowl portion which is too large to pass through the opening and which is retained below the tab.

2. A cup according to claim 1, in which the handle of the spoon is gripped by the opening and prevents the spoon from dropping out.

3. A cup having a side wall and a bottom and having extending outwardly from the side wall near the top a hanger tab permanently secured thereto, hingedly connected to the side wall of the cup on a horizontal axis, there being a vertically disposed opening in the hanger tab of a size smaller than the transverse dimension of the bowl of a normal spoon, the opening being adapted to receive and pass the handle of such spoon and the walls of the opening being adapted to surround the spoon and engage and hold the bowl of the spoon.

4. The method of forming a cup having a side wall and having a tab provided with an opening hingedly connected to the side wall on a horizontal axis, which comprises diverting the tab outwardly from the side wall so as to dispose the opening in the tab vertically, extending a spoon up through the opening in the tab with the bowl of the spoon received and retained below the tab and the handle extending upwardly beyond the tab, while the walls of the opening surround the spoon at the upper portion of the bowl and engage the same, and grasping the handle of the spoon above the cup to hold the cup.

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