

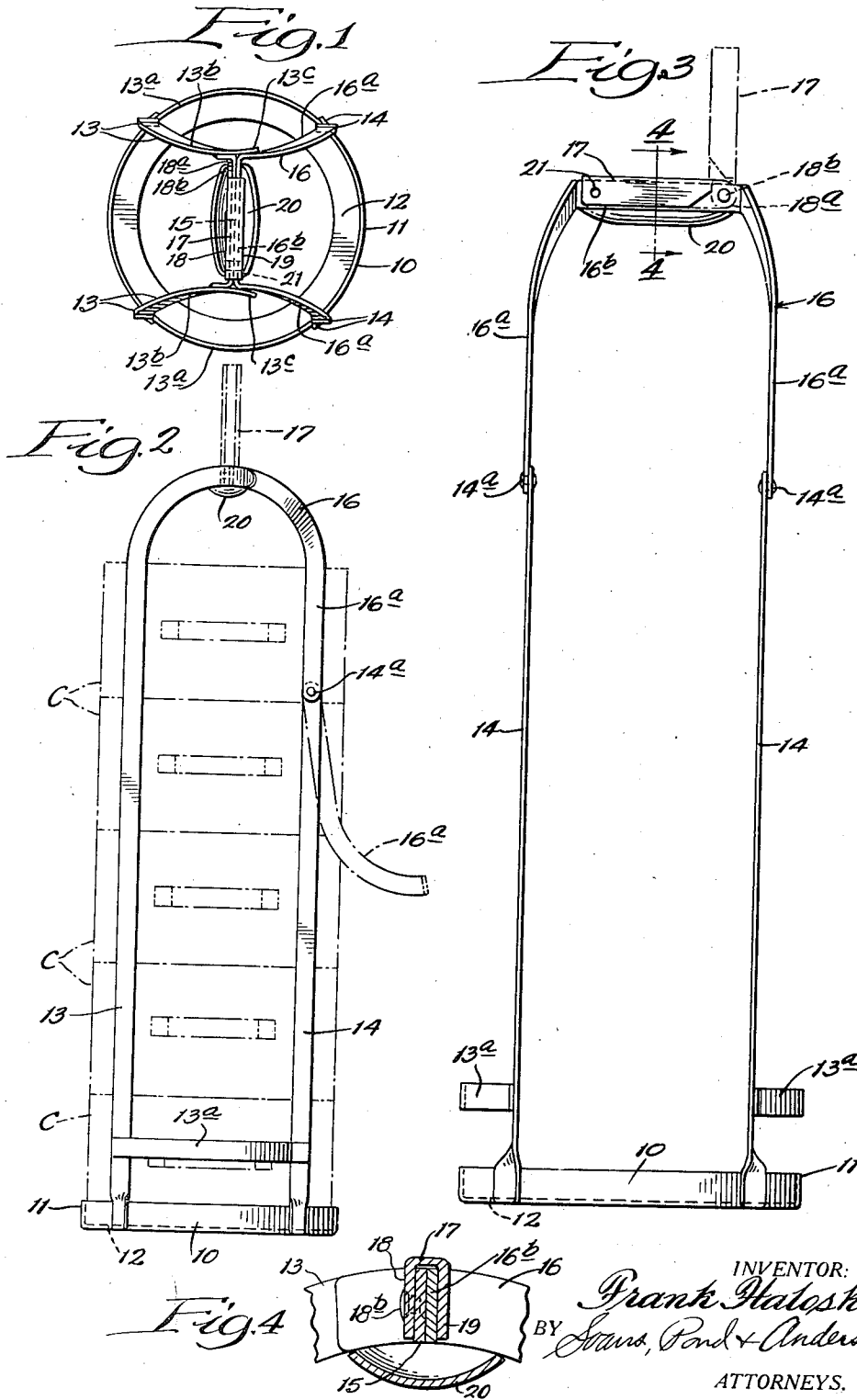
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CARRYING RACK

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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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## CARRYING RACK

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5 Claims. (Cl. 224—45)

This invention relates to carriers or carrying racks for food containers or the like.

The main objects of the invention are to provide a carrier or carrying rack of simple, lightweight and yet sturdy construction, for transporting food or like containers in stacked relation; to provide such a carrier with improved means for retaining containers in stacked relation, and having quickly releasable means for permitting ready insertion and removal of the containers with a minimum of danger of toppling the same;

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be manifest from the following description and the accompanying drawing (one sheet) wherein there is illustrated a carrying rack embodying a selected form of the invention.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a top plan view;

Figure 2 is a front elevation wherein there is shown in broken lines, a stack of food or like containers in place in the rack;

Figure 3 is a side elevation, on an enlarged scale, as viewed from the right of Figure 2, and

Figure 4 is an enlarged fragmentary cross-section on the line 4—4 of Figure 3.

Referring to the drawing, the numeral 10 designates an annular base having a vertical side flange 11 and an integral inwardly extending bottom flange 12. The rack herein illustrated is designed for supporting a plurality of substantially cylindrical food containers or like receptacles C, C, (illustrated in broken lines in Figure 2), wherefore said base is of annular form as aforesaid.

For retaining the containers C in stacked relation, there are provided four uprights 13, 13 and 14, 14, secured to flange 11 as by welding. The uprights may be of flat bar stock for economy and lightness of construction. For reinforcing, or stiffening purposes, outwardly curved bars 13a are provided between and rigidly secured to each pair of uprights 13 and 14 respectively. These reinforcing members 13a are preferably located adjacent the bottom of the carrier.

The two uprights 13, 13 extend straight upwardly a distance approximately corresponding to the height of the stack of containers and then inwardly over the area of the base and the stacked containers C, C. The upper ends of the uprights 13, 13 are connected by a straight bar member 15 welded at its ends to the uprights, this member 15 being arranged to overlie the central portion of the carrier.

The two uprights 14, 14 may be somewhat

shorter than the height of the stacked containers, in this instance terminating at a point which permits free passage of containers to and from the carrier.

The uprights 14, 14 are extended or continued upwardly by means of the side arms or legs 16a, 16a of an inverted U-shaped member 16, the free ends of which are pivoted as shown at 14a, 14a to the upper ends of uprights 14, 14. The inverted U-shaped member is formed with a straight cross-piece 16b for co-operative handle-forming engagement with connecting member 15 of the uprights 13, 13, as best shown in Figures 1 and 4.

For guiding the cross-piece 16b into registered relationship with the connecting member 15, the inwardly offset portions 13b, 13b of the uprights 13, 13, have end portions 13c, 13c extended beyond the connecting member 15. As clearly shown in Figure 1, the end extensions, or ears 13c constitute guides for directing the cross member 16b into registered relationship with the connecting member 15.

As shown in the drawing, the pair of uprights 13, 13 and the pair of uprights 14, 14 are made preferably of strap metal. The straps of each pair are disposed with their faces or widths in parallel relation to each other, that is to say, the faces of the straps 13 are in parallel relation, and the faces or widths of the straps 14 are in parallel relation, to each other. The lower ends of each of the uprights are twisted sufficiently to lie flatwise against the side flange of the base to facilitate rigid attachment of said uprights to the base. Because of the specified relationship of the straps, the inwardly offset handle-forming portions thereof are disposed in such a position as to be capable of effectively resisting bending when the rack is loaded. Also, the uprights are disposed with their widths in more or less transverse relation to the stack of containers, so that bending of the uprights by outward thrust of the containers is more effectively resisted than if the straps were disposed with their widths parallel to the surfaces of the stacked containers.

A downwardly facing channel-shaped bar 17 normally embraces the interengaging members 15 and 16b to hold the same together, thereby also maintaining the uprights in container-holding position, and the pivoted, inverted U-shaped or closing member 16 in closed position. The channel-shaped bar is provided with a lug or extension 18a on one flange 18 thereof, through which it is pivoted as shown at 18b, to the normally fixed connecting member 15.

A concavo-convex plate 20 is secured, as by

welding, to the underside of connecting member 15 with the convex side down, to provide a comfortable hand or finger grip for lifting the carrier.

In the use of the improved carrier, food containers C, C, or the like may be inserted or removed through the opening provided when the closure member 16 is swung to the dotted line position thereof shown in Figure 2. The shorter or front uprights 14, 14 are preferably of such height that they are effective, when the closure member 16 is open, to prevent accidental displacement of even the uppermost container from the stack thereof in the rack.

If it is desired to lock the carrier in closed position, it may be conveniently done by providing registering holes, as shown at 21, in the handle-forming elements 15, 16b and 17 for the reception of a suitable padlock or the like.

The described carrier provides a convenient and comfortable, and safe means which facilitates the carrying about of a stack of food or other containers which may be too hot or too cold to handle directly, and which, because of their number, could not be efficiently handled, regardless of temperature conditions, without some form of carrying rack. The described structure provides a carrying handle located substantially in vertical alignment with the center of gravity of the stack of containers (whether one or more) in the rack, so that when the rack is suspended from its handle, as when being carried about, the containers therein will normally and automatically assume a substantially horizontal position so that any tendency to tilt the containers and spill material therefrom is substantially eliminated or avoided.

Changes in the invention may be made without departing from the spirit thereof or the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A carrier for a stack of food containers or the like, comprising a base, a pair of uprights secured to said base, a connecting member extending between the upper ends of said uprights, a second pair of uprights secured to said base, said second pair of uprights being shorter than said first mentioned pair of uprights, all of said uprights being spaced around said base so as to be adapted to retain a stack of containers on said base, a closure member embodying leg portions adapted to constitute extensions of said shorter uprights and a cross member connecting the upper ends of said legs, said cross member being adapted to co-operate with said connecting member to form a carrying handle, and the lower ends of said legs being pivotally connected to the upper ends of said shorter uprights, so as to provide for pivotal movement of said closure member from closed position to an open position in which it extends angularly from said shorter uprights.

2. A carrier for a stack of food containers or the like, comprising a base, four relatively spaced uprights extending upwardly from said base, one pair of said uprights having upper end portions offset inwardly over the area of said base, a member extending between and rigidly interconnecting said offset upper end portions adjacent their upper ends, the other pair of said uprights being shorter and terminating in such relationship to said inwardly offset portions of said first mentioned pair of uprights and said connecting member as to provide an opening adjacent the upper end of the rack for the insertion and removal of containers laterally into and from the rack, a

closure member for said opening comprising leg portions pivotally connected at their lower ends to the upper ends of said shorter uprights and adapted to extend upwardly in continuation thereof, upper end portions of said legs being offset inwardly in complementary relationship to said first mentioned inwardly offset portions, and a cross member connecting the offset upper ends of said leg portions, said cross member being adapted to cooperate with said connecting member to form a handle for carrying said rack and its contents.

3. A carrier for a stack of food containers or the like, comprising a base, four relatively spaced uprights extending upwardly from said base, one pair of said uprights having upper end portions offset inwardly over the area of said base, a member extending between and rigidly interconnecting said offset upper end portions adjacent their upper ends, the other pair of said uprights being shorter and terminating in such relationship to said inwardly offset portions of said first mentioned pair of uprights and said connecting member as to provide an opening adjacent the upper end of the rack for the insertion and removal of containers laterally into and from the rack, a closure member for said opening comprising leg portions pivotally connected at their lower ends to the upper ends of said shorter uprights and adapted to extend upwardly in continuation thereof, upper end portions of said legs being offset inwardly in complementary relationship to said first mentioned inwardly offset portions, and a cross member connecting the offset upper ends of said leg portions, said cross member being adapted to cooperate with said connecting member to form a handle for carrying said rack and its contents, said closure member being movable about its pivotal leg ends from an open position to a closed position wherein said cross member is disposed in side by side relation to said connecting member so as to cooperate therewith to form a handle for carrying said rack and its contents, and a locking member embodying a portion adapted to embrace and hold together said connecting member and said cross member, said locking member being pivotally secured to one thereof so as to be movable in the plane thereof to and from locking position.

4. A carrier for a stack of food containers or the like, comprising a base, four relatively spaced uprights extending upwardly from said base, one pair of said uprights having upper end portions offset inwardly over the area of said base, a member extending between and rigidly interconnecting said offset upper end portions adjacent their upper ends, the other pair of said uprights being shorter and terminating in such relationship to said inwardly offset portions of said first mentioned pair of uprights and said connecting member as to provide an opening adjacent the upper end of the rack for the insertion and removal of containers laterally into and from the rack, a closure member for said opening comprising leg portions pivotally connected at their lower ends to the upper ends of said shorter uprights and adapted to extend upwardly in continuation thereof, upper end portions of said legs being offset inwardly in complementary relationship to said first mentioned inwardly offset portions, and a cross member connecting the offset upper ends of said leg portions, said cross member being adapted to cooperate with said connecting member to form a handle for carrying said rack and its contents,

said closure member being movable about its pivotal leg ends from an open position to a closed position wherein said cross member is disposed in side by side relation to said connecting member so as to cooperate therewith to form a handle for carrying said rack and its contents, said first mentioned inwardly offset portions having ears extending beyond said connecting member for guiding said cross member into registering relationship with said connecting member.

5. A carrier for a stack of food containers or the like, comprising a base, four relatively spaced uprights extending upwardly from said base, one pair of said uprights having upper end portions offset inwardly and towards each other over the area of said base, a member extending between and rigidly interconnecting said offset upper end portions adjacent their upper ends, the other pair of said uprights being shorter

and terminating in such relationship to said inwardly offset portions of said first mentioned pair of uprights and said connecting member as to provide an opening adjacent the upper end of the rack for the insertion and removal of containers laterally into and from the rack, a closure member for said opening comprising leg portions pivotally connected at their lower ends to the upper ends of said shorter uprights and adapted to extend upwardly in continuation thereof, upper end portions of said legs being offset inwardly and towards each other in complementary relationship to said first mentioned inwardly offset portions, and a cross member connecting the offset upper ends of said leg portions, said cross member being adapted to cooperate with said connecting member to form a handle for carrying said rack and its contents.

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