

PATENT SPECIFICATION

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- (21) Application No. 53404/73 (22) Filed 16 Nov. 1973
 (31) Convention Application No. 323 662 (32) Filed 15 Jan. 1973 in
 (33) United States of America (US)
 (44) Complete Specification published 3 Sept. 1975
 (51) INT. CL.² A47G 23/02
 (52) Index at acceptance
 A4A C2A2
 A4H 22D 6C



(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO A CONDIMENT RECEPTACLE HOLDER

(71) We, DART INDUSTRIES INC., a company organised and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware United States of America, of 8480 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90048, United States of America, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to a condiment receptacle holder and more particularly to a salt cellar and pepper pot holder suitable for use with such that are intended as table service implements. More specifically the holder is intended for use with doubly divergent condiment receptacles as are illustrated in United States Patent 3,476,297.

The unique shaping of the particular receptacles referred to makes desirable use of a construction that (1) will firmly hold the receptacles so that during movement of the holder from place to place, one is assured of the positive retention of the receptacles, yet will easily release the receptacles when required, and (2) will provide for the stable retention of a unit comprising a holder together with condiment receptacles when they are at rest on a suitable supporting surface.

Although a variety of receptacle holders are known in the prior art these vary considerably in structure from that herein described in more detail below. These prior art holders, for example, have either provided a base support for a retained condiment receptacle, the base also being interposed between the lower surface of the receptacle and a supporting surface for the combined unit and/or provided supports adapted to support such receptacles above the base element of the holder. In either or both instances the unit (holder and re-

ceptacles) may tend to be unstable when in a position of repose on a suitable support surface. Further, during movement of the unit, there may be instances where the receptacles are not firmly retained both near their base and adjacent their upper end, thus creating an unstable situation. In either instance, upset is likely and, of course, any such upset is disruptive and annoying to all those associated with, or bearing witness to, the unfortunate accident.

Accordingly, this invention seeks to provide a holder that is adaptable to retain condiment receptacles with stability at all times.

According to this invention there is provided a condiment receptacle holder adapted to releasably retain a plurality of condiment receptacles in a substantially upright position, said holder comprising an upstanding main center support section having a handle protruding therefrom; at least two pairs of outwardly extending fingers positioned to extend from said support section, the two fingers of each pair being spaced laterally of but adjacent to one another; and at least two pairs of outwardly extending feet positioned at the lowermost extent of said support section and in substantial vertical alignment with the respective finger pairs thereabove, said respective fingers and feet in combination being adapted to support and/or position said condiment receptacles.

In one embodiment of the invention comprising a holder in combination with one or more receptacles, the receptacles as well as the holder feet are adapted to contact the supporting surface. This, of course, means that the holder is not providing the sole support for the receptacles at this time. Rather, each member of the unit needs only to support itself thus reducing any chance of a cantilevering force effect on the holder. Likewise, due to the

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particular finger and foot construction, when the holder is elevated for movement these fingers and feet engage upper and lower portions of the receptacles and draw

5 the receptacles into close contact therewith, thus securely retaining the receptacles with a high degree of stability.

In order that the invention may be more readily understood and so that further features thereof may be appreciated the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:—

10 FIGURE 1 is a top-front perspective view of a condiment receptacle holder in accordance with this invention showing the overall construction thereof;

FIGURE 2 is a side view of the holder of Figure 1 illustrating the relative spacing of the receptacle holding elements;

20 FIGURE 3 is a front elevational view of the holder of Figures 1 and 2;

FIGURE 4 is a top plan view of the holder of Figures 1 to 3 again illustrating the relative spacing of the holding elements;

FIGURE 5 is a partial cross-sectional view taken along line 5-5 of Figure 2;

30 FIGURE 6 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 6-6 of Figure 2;

FIGURE 7 is a partial cross-sectional view taken along line 7-7 of Figure 2;

FIGURE 8 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 8-8 of Figure 3;

35 FIGURE 9 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 9-9 of Figure 3;

Figure 10 is a front elevational view of the condiment receptacle holder of Figures 1 to 9 and a condiment receptacle therein, both shown resting on a supporting surface; and

40 FIGURE 11 is a similar view to that of Figure 10 except that the holder and receptacle are shown to be supported above the supporting surface.

Referring now to the various figures, and more particularly to Figure 1, it can be seen that a holder 10 for condiment receptacles 20 comprises an upstanding main center support section 12, a vertically protruding handle 14 extending from the upper end 15 thereof and two pairs each of fingers 16 and feet 18.

The handle 14, as is readily apparent from Figures 10 and 11 extends substantially above the uppermost portion of receptacle 20 thus allowing its easy entry between the fingers. Likewise, a bifurcated terminal end 22 of the handle is curved in opposite directions to provide a readily graspable means.

The main holding features of the holder 10 are, however, the respective finger and feet pairs 16 and 18.

65 In view of the fact that this holder is

primarily intended for use with salt and pepper receptacles, two pairs of fingers and feet are provided. It should be apparent that more might be desirable and such is contemplated by the invention.

Each finger pair includes two outwardly extending fingers 16 extending from the support section 12 and in this instance located at the upper extremity thereof. Such fingers 16, are, further, positioned adjacent each other but are spaced apart by a distance approximately equivalent to the minimum diameter of an upper divergent section 26 of a condiment receptacle intended to be located in the holder. The fingers 16 are provided with upwardly curved ends 28 that are adapted to firmly engage the condiment receptacle thereby stably retaining the receptacle in the holder when the unit (holder 10 and receptacles 20) is removed from a support surface.

Further, because of the abovementioned curved end portions 28 on fingers 16, the retained receptacles are supported thereby so that even if the holder is tilted laterally the receptacles will be retained in a substantially secure manner.

Feet 18 are likewise respectively positioned below each of the fingers 16 in substantial alignment therewith at the lowermost extent of support section 12. These are adapted to securely rest on any suitable supporting surface, thus effectively and stably supporting the holder. The feet 18 are also spaced apart a distance to accommodate the maximum diameter of a lower divergent section of a receptacle 29. Thus upon elevation of the holder feet 18 will function to provide lateral support to the base 30 of the receptacle.

In order that the unit (holder and receptacles) may have a maximum stability in the "at rest" position on any suitable surface, the base 30 of each receptacle will be positioned to be firmly and wholly in contact with the support surface 32. It is to be understood that the vertical distance between fingers 16 and feet 18 is critical to creation of this contact. Such distance is, of course, dependent on the size of the receptacle and is readily determinable therefrom. Between about 0.03125" and 0.1875" vertical movement from rest is, however, desirable prior to the firm engagement of the finger curved finger portions 28 and the receptacle 20.

It should be understood that the feature enabling engagement of not only the holder feet but also each receptacle itself, with the support surface, creates maximum stability. Furthermore, because of the release of fingers 16 from the receptacle body during the times the unit is at rest, such are easily removable from and replaceable in holder

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WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A condiment receptacle holder adapted to releasably retain a plurality of condiment receptacles in a substantially upright position, said holder comprising an upstanding main center support section having a handle protruding therefrom; at least two pairs of outwardly extending fingers positioned to extend from said support section, the two fingers of each pair being spaced laterally of but adjacent to one another; and at least two pairs of outwardly extending feet positioned at the lowermost extent of said support section and in substantial vertical alignment with the respective finger pairs thereabove, said respective fingers and feet in combination being adapted to support and/or position said condiment receptacles.
2. A condiment receptacle holder according to claim 1 wherein the terminal ends of each pair of said fingers are upwardly curved so as to be engageable with a diverging portion of a condiment receptacle adjacent the uppermost portion thereof.
3. A condiment receptacle holder according to claim 1 or claim 2 in combination with condiment receptacles retained thereby wherein said respective fingers and feet are vertically spaced such that said condiment receptacles retained thereby

will themselves contact any suitable supporting surface upon which the holder feet are placed in a position of rest, thus effectively resting the receptacle bottoms on the same supporting surface.

4. A condiment receptacle holder according to any one of the preceding claims, in combination with condiment receptacles retained thereby wherein said handle protrudes upwardly from the main center support section to a point substantially above the uppermost extent of said condiment receptacles retained thereby.

5. A condiment receptacle holder according to claim 1 or claim 2 in combination with one or more condiment receptacles.

6. A condiment receptacle holder substantially as herein described with reference to, and as illustrated in, the accompanying drawings.

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