Patent Examination Board

Final Diploma

FD3 Amendment of Specifications

Wednesday 30 October 2024

10:00 to 13:20 GMT

Examination time: 3 hours 20 minutes plus 10 minutes upload time

The 3 hours 20 minutes is allocated as follows:

10 minutes – Downloading and printing the question paper;
3 hours – Answering the questions;
10 minutes – Two screen breaks of 5 minutes each.

At 13.20 you MUST immediately stop answering the questions. You then have **10 minutes** in which to upload your Answer document to the PEBX system.

You MUST upload your Answer document to the PEBX system by 13.30. After 13.30 you will not be able to upload it and your examination will be void.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. The whole assessment task is to be attempted.
2. The marks to be awarded are given at the end of the assessment task.
3. The total number of marks available for this paper is 100.
4. Start each part of your answer on a new sheet of paper.
5. You must use the Answer document for your answers.
6. Do not attempt to change the font style, font size, font colour, line spacing or any other pre-set formatting.
7. Start each part of your answer on a new page. Press the control key and the enter key simultaneously to begin a new page.
8. Do not state your name anywhere in the answers.
9. This question paper consists of **21 sheets**, including this sheet, and comprises:
   Assessment task (1 sheet)
   Client letter (1 sheet)
   Document A Examination Report (1 sheet)
   Document B Client application GB 2310101.0 (6 sheets)
   Document C Claims (4 sheets including 2 sheets of drawings)
   Document D Prior art reference D1 GB 2222000B (5 sheets including 2 sheets of drawings)
   A spare set of Claims (Document C) to use in your answer if you wish (2 sheets)

AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION

10. Save your Answer document and any hand-annotated claims to your hard drive. Then follow the instructions for uploading your document onto the PEBX system.

Assessment task

You have received the letter and documents listed on the Instructions to Candidates sheet regarding United Kingdom patent application number GB 2310101.0, which was filed at the UK Intellectual Property Office on 6 March 2023 with no claim to priority. All necessary documents for the application procedure have been received by the UK Intellectual Property Office (UK IPO).

The UK IPO issued a Search and Examination Report, of which the Examination Report is attached. The Report was duly sent to the client, the UK company Tintintin Ltd, the applicant. You have received brief comments in correspondence from your client, which is also attached.

Your task is to prepare:

1. **a letter to the UK Intellectual Property Office (UK IPO) in response to the Examination Report;**
2. **a set of amended claims, if considered necessary;**
3. **notes on which you would base advice to your client in which you:**
   - **i) explain the actions you have taken;**
   - **ii) provide full reasoning for your actions;**
   - **iii) outline future actions, if any, that your client could take to secure full protection of its commercial interests.**

Your advice should take into account that further information may be required.

Your notes should only relate to the invention(s) outlined in the client's correspondence to you.

Your notes should be directed to patent matters only.

Note the following:

a) You are NOT required to make any amendments to the description of the client's patent application.

b) You should accept the facts given to you and base your answer on those facts.

c) You should not make use of any other special knowledge that you may have of the subject matter concerned.

d) You should assume that the prior art referred to is complete.

e) You should identify clearly any amended claim set and/or divisional claim(s).

Allocation of Marks

Letter: 30 marks
Claims: 34 marks
Notes: 36 marks
Total: 100 marks

Client letter

Patricia A. Tourney, CPA, EPA

22 October 2024

Dear Pat,

Thanks for sending on the Patent Office's assessment. I have to say that I thought at first that the document the Examiner found was a knockout. It certainly looks quite close, but I think my bracket has some refinements. First, it can fit either stepladders or extensible ladders. I don't think the Van Gogh bracket can do this.

Also, I have the useful tool/brush tray feature; there doesn't seem to be enough room in the Van Gogh bracket for this. Meanwhile, the button feature, stopping the bail handle flapping about, is quite neat, even though the Examiner high-handedly dismisses it: I don't see that the button could be incorporated into the Van Gogh design because the step-like shape of the side arms would get in the way. However, these are only side issues.

I have also found a use for my bracket for holding lamps in shafts and other spaces where weight and portability are important. Can we cover this in the application?

Finally, I like the adapter shown in Van Gogh's patent, and I think I will produce one myself. I assume this is OK.

I see that we have plenty of time to get back to the Patent Office. However, I have an investor lined up with some funds and he is saying he wants the patent granted as soon as possible. What can we do to speed things up?

Yours sincerely,

Tony Khan

Tintintin Ltd

Intellectual

Property

Office

Your ref:		Examiner:	M Angelo
Application no:	2310101.0	Tel:	01633 819999
Applicant:	Tintintin Ltd	Date of report:	23 October 2023
Latest date for reply:	23 June 2025	Page:	1/1

Patents Act 1977

Combined Search and Examination report under Sections 17 and 18(3)

[*Extract of relevant part; the search report cites only one document, D1*]

Novelty

1. The invention as claimed in claim 1 is not new, being disclosed in D1 (GB 2222000). This shows: support arms extending from a cross member 14; upwardly open slots/ notches 22, 24; downwardly facing hook means 16; and stabiliser legs 10, 12, which abut against the lower rung 20.
2. Claim 2 is also not new: see parts 22, 24 in D1.
3. Claims 5 and 6 are also not new in view of D1: see page 15, lines 22, 23 and 12.

Inventive Step

4. Claims 3 and 4 do not appear to be inventive, being directed to minor constructional details.

Clarity

5. Claim 2 is not clear, since the paint can is not part of what is claimed, and therefore its dimensions are indeterminate.

Document B - Application

Client application

GB 2310101.0

SUPPORT BRACKET FOR PAINT CANS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed generally to a bracket for supporting a paint can on a ladder rung, step, or any other horizontally extended member.

A problem with painting any elevated surface wherein the painter stands on a ladder is how to support the paint can for the painter. Domestic step ladders are generally provided with a pivoting support tray at the upper end. Because only friction prevents the paint can from sliding off the tray, the paint can must be removed from the tray every time the ladder is moved. Even during work, any accidental jolting of the ladder can cause the paint can to fall off the tray, spilling paint over the work area. On extension ladders, the painter has to hold the paint can in one hand while painting with the other, or precariously rests the paint can on the ladder rungs. In either event, the painter's hands are busy painting and preventing the paint can from falling and may be unavailable for the most important task of holding onto the ladder to prevent the painter falling off.

The simplest solution is an S-shaped hook placed on a rung, from which the bail handle (wire handle) of the paint can can hang. However, in this case the can is behind the ladder as seen by the user, which is awkward. There exist specialized paint can support brackets fitted to the side rails, also known as stiles, of extension ladders. However, such brackets support the paint can to the side of the ladder, thereby adversely affecting the balance of the ladder, and most are usable only with custom designed ladders having special side rails. Such brackets are not universally suited for use on conventional ladders and none have been known to be commercially successful.

Accordingly, a primary object of the invention is to provide an improved paint can support bracket. Ideally, it should work with both step ladders and extension ladders.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The paint can support bracket of the present invention is defined in claim 1. The bracket fits over a rung or step and pivots down against the next-lower rung or step by the weight of the can. The pivotal support of the paint can prevents spillage of paint even when the ladder is

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moved and enables the paint can to remain vertical without regard to the angular position of the bracket. The bracket allows the can to be supported in front of the ladder.

It is possible to design the open bottom hook so that it can alternatively support the bracket on either the flat step of a step ladder or the generally circular rung of an extension ladder. In fact, the hook means can support the bracket on many kinds of horizontally extending member, such as the cross supports on the back half of a step ladder, or the top edge of a cherry picker bucket for elevating a worker supported therein.

With the paint can pivotally supported by the bail sockets, the bail handle, i.e. the semicircular wire handle of the paint tin, simply hangs from the socket against the side of the paint can and out of the way of a painter, who, therefore, has unobstructed access to the open top of the paint can. Further convenience is afforded by a tool support tray extending across the top of the bracket and one or more side openings in the support arms which may be tapered downwardly for receiving and gripping a rag in it for ready access.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the paint can hanger of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a view of a typical 5ℓ paint can;

FIG. 3 is a side elevational view of a step ladder having a pair of paint can hangers of the invention supported thereon with paint cans indicated in dotted lines; and

FIG. 4 is a side elevational view of an extension ladder having a pair of paint can hangers supported thereon in alternative positions with paint cans indicated in dotted lines.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The paint can hanger or bracket 10 of the present invention is illustrated in **FIG. 1** as including a pair of generally horizontally extending paint can support arms 12 which are spaced apart by a distance for receiving a conventional 5ℓ paint can closely fitting between them. Whereas smaller or larger brackets may be made to accommodate different size paint containers, the 5ℓ paint can, of diameter 18–19 cm, is most commonly used in Europe and is, therefore, of primary concern. For smaller cans, e.g. 2.5ℓ and 1ℓ, the bracket can be given a suitable width, though its vertical dimension should be about the same.

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As shown in **FIG. 2**, the paint can 14 has a pair of circular bail sockets 16 on opposite sides and a generally arcuate bail handle 18 whose end portions are pivotally received within the bail sockets 16.

Reverting to FIG. 1, a cross member in the form of a tool support shelf 22 is connected to and extends between the support arms 12 to form a rigid structure. The support shelf 22 is preferably integrally formed with an upright cross plate or back wall 24 which is connected to and extends between the rearward ends of the support arms 12. The tool support shelf 22 may be provided with a plurality of holes 26 of varying sizes, both for weight reduction and for supporting various tools, such as a hammer, paint scraper and screwdriver.

Extending below each support arm 12 is a downwardly extending stabilizer leg 80, giving the whole an approximate T-shape when viewed from the side. The two legs 80 are connected by a lower crosspiece 86 for rigidity.

To pivotally support a paint can, each support arm 12 has an upwardly opening slot or cutout 28 adjacent its free front end 30, i.e. the end away from the ladder when in use. The bottom portion of the slot 28 is preferably semicircular and of a diameter conforming to that of the outside diameter of a typical paint can bail socket, so that it can support the paint can for pivotal movement about an axis through the bail sockets 16. For instance, for a 5ℓ can the diameter would be about 2.5cm. The open tops of the slots 28 enable a can to be easily placed into and removed from the support arms.

The free ends 30 of the support arms 12 define a pair of curved horns 32 having interior surfaces 34 facing one another, and exterior surfaces 36. Each exterior surface 36 has a button or rounded protrusion 38 which frictionally engages the bail handle 18 of a paint can supported in the slots 28, so as to maintain the bail handle below the top of the can, out of the way of the painter. Upon lifting the bail handle to remove the paint can from the hanger 10, the bail handle can easily slide back over the buttons 38.

The opposite or rearward end of each support arm 12 has a downwardly open hook means 40 formed thereon for removable support of the support arms on the steps or rungs of a ladder. Each support arm, with its stabilizer leg 80, is in the form of a simple shaped sheet, as are the connecting parts 22, 24, 86, and the whole can be welded or glued together.

The two most common types of ladder are the step ladder 42 of **FIG. 3** and the extension ladder 44 of **FIG. 4**. The step ladder 42 includes a main ladder 46 having a pair of side

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rails 48 interconnected by a plurality of vertically spaced apart generally horizontally extending steps 50 of rectangular cross section. A pivotal stabilizer ladder 52, hinged at the top to the main ladder, includes smaller side rails 54 interconnected by vertically spaced apart horizontal rectangular leg supports 56 in the usual way.

The extension ladder 44 in FIG. 4 includes a base ladder 58 having a pair of opposite side rails 60 interconnected by vertically spaced apart rounded rungs 62 with each side rail having a ground-engaging foot pad 64 on its bottom end. A vertically adjustable upper ladder portion 66 likewise includes a pair of parallel spaced apart side rails 68 interconnected by vertically spaced apart rounded rungs 70. The brackets for slidably connecting the upper ladder portion 66 to the base ladder 58 are conventional and for clarity are not included in the illustration of FIG. 4.

Referring to FIG. 1, the downwardly open bottom hook means 40 on the opposite end of each support arm 12 is adapted for use on most types of step, rung, leg support or the like, referred to generally as a bar. To this end, it is formed in the shape of a stepped socket including a first, wide and shallow, socket portion 71 adapted to receive and engage a ladder step 50 (see FIG. 3); and a second, narrower and deeper, socket portion 72 adapted to receive and engage a ladder rung 62 (see FIG. 4), leg support 56 (see FIG. 3) or the like. In the embodiment illustrated, the hook means 40 includes a generally upright front wall 73 connected to a rearwardly extending top wall 74 which, in turn, is connected to a downwardly extending intermediate wall 76 of a shorter height than the front wall 73, forming the deeper socket portion 72. The lower end of the intermediate wall 76 is connected to a rearwardly extending step engagement wall 78, the rearward end of which is connected to the downwardly extending stabilizer leg 80. This wall, with the front wall 73 and the leg 80, forms the shallow socket portion 71. The socket portions should fit their respective rungs/steps reasonably accurately to ensure stability.

Since the paint can is supported outwardly from the downwardly open hook means, i.e. away from the ladder, the hanger 10 tends to pivot downwardly about the hook means 40 until the stabilizer leg 80 engages with the next lower rung or step of the ladder. To this end, the support legs would typically have a length of about 35–40cm.

Referring to FIG. 3, the hanger 10 shown on the left is supported on the step 50 on the main ladder 46, in contact with the step-engaging front wall 73 and the step engagement wall 78. This is a useful position for supporting a paint can for a painter standing on the ground next to the ladder. When the user is on the ladder, however, the hanger 10 may be moved over to

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the rear side (on the right in the drawing) and placed on the stabilizer ladder 52, where the downwardly open hook means 40 engages one of the rectangular leg supports 56. Note that the rectangular leg support fits within the narrower and deeper socket portion 72 for engagement against the top wall 74. In either position, the stabilizer leg 80 engages the next lower step 50 or rectangular leg support 56, as illustrated.

Likewise, on the extension ladder 44 illustrated in FIG. 4, the hanger 10 may be supported either on the front side or the back side of the extension ladder, as illustrated, and furthermore may be placed onto any desired rung of the ladder, except for the bottom rung, since then no lower rung is available for engagement by the stabilizer legs 80.

The angular relationship of the stabilizer legs 80 to the support arms 12 is not critical, but it is preferred that the portion of the stabilizer leg which engages a step ladder step be so positioned relative to the step engagement wall 78 that that wall is disposed substantially parallel to and in flush engagement with the step ladder step on which it is placed.

Note that the top edge of the cross plate 24 is considerably higher than the shelf 22, so that it serves either to prevent a paint brush from falling off the tool support shelf 22, or to elevate the handle of a brush supported on the shelf 22 to allow paint to run toward the bottom of the brush and into the paint can 14.

Further weight reduction can be achieved by providing cutouts or holes 90 in the support arm 12. It is preferred that the holes taper downwardly as at 92 to form a slot for receiving and gripping a rag therein for ready access by a painter.

In operation, the paint can hanger 10 is placed onto a step or rung of a ladder. The pivotal support of the can ensures that it will remain vertically disposed regardless of the angle of inclination of the hanger. Furthermore, the hanger engages the paint can at the bail sockets, which are perhaps the strongest portion of the paint can. This also enables the wire bail handle 18 to be lowered out of the way. Since the bail is not used for support of the paint can, the problem of the bail wires slipping or pulling out of the bail sockets, with resultant paint spills, is avoided.

The downwardly extending stabilizer legs 80 are readily accessible for vertically adjusting the paint can hanger without removal of the paint can from the hanger. Since the hanger is supported centrally of the ladder on the steps or rungs, it does not upset the balance of the ladder and creates no advantage or disadvantage for either a right- or a left-handed painter.

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Document B - Application

It can be seen in FIG. 4 that an extension ladder can be raised or lowered without removal of the hanger from whichever ladder portion it is engaged upon.

Modifications may be made to the version shown. For example, whereas the dual stabilizer legs are preferred, for stability, a single, possibly centrally situated, stabilizer leg could be substituted, to reduce weight and bulk. Likewise, whereas the preferred hanger is integrally moulded as a single unit of a relatively rigid plastic material, it could be otherwise assembled from parts of other materials, such as aluminium, wood or steel.

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Document C

CLAIMS

1. A bracket for adjustably supporting a paint can having a bail handle pivotally connected to bail sockets protruding from opposite sides of the can, on a ladder including a pair of spaced apart side rails and a plurality of rungs connected to and extending between the side rails in vertically spaced apart relation, the bracket comprising:

a pair of parallel support arms (12) horizontally extending in use and spaced to receive a paint can between their free ends (30),

a cross member (22) connected to and extending between the support arms,

each support arm having an upwardly open slot (28) adjacent the free end for pivotally receiving a bail socket of the paint can so that the paint can is supported on the arms and can swing about an axis passing through the bail sockets,

a downwardly open hook formation (40) at the rear of the support arms for support of the support arms on a rung of a ladder, and

a pair of stabilizer legs (80) each connected to and extending downwardly from the support arms respectively for abutment against the next lower rung of the ladder, in order to stabilize the support arms against downward rotation about the rung on which the hook means is supported.

2. A bracket according to claim 1, wherein the upwardly open slot (28) includes a generally semicircular bottom portion of a diameter such that the bottom portion is substantially filled by a generally circular paint can bail socket received therein.

3. A bracket according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the free ends (30) of the support arms define a pair of curved horns (32) having interior surfaces facing one another and opposite exterior faces, each exterior face having a protrusion thereon for engagement with the adjacent bail to restrict pivotal movement of the bail (18) of a paint can (14) supported on the arms.

4. A bracket according to any preceding claim, further comprising a cross member (86) connected to and extending between the stabilizer legs (80) at positions below the support arms.

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5. A bracket according to claim 1, wherein the open bottom hook formation is adapted for receiving either a ladder rung of generally circular cross section or a ladder step having a generally horizontally extending rectangular cross section.

6. A bracket according to claim 5, wherein the bracket is integrally formed as a unitary piece.

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Document C

Application drawings

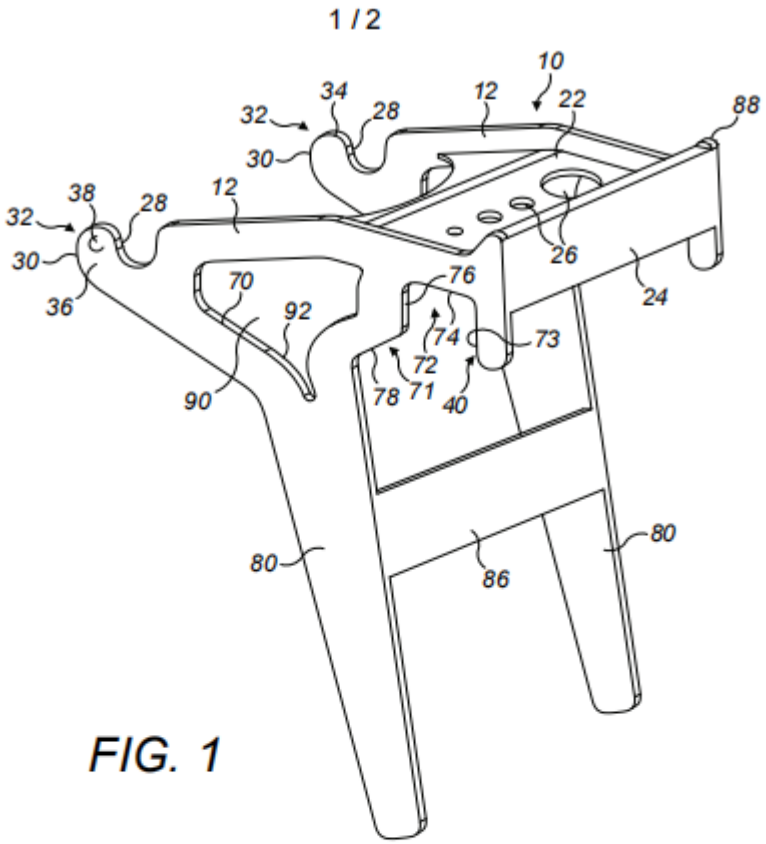

FIG. 1

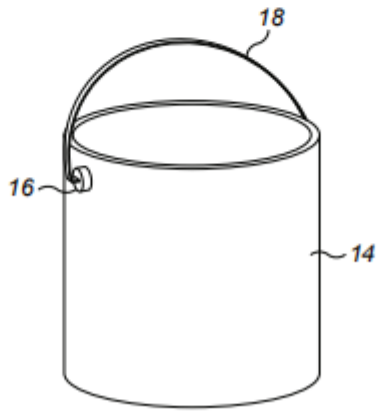

FIG. 2

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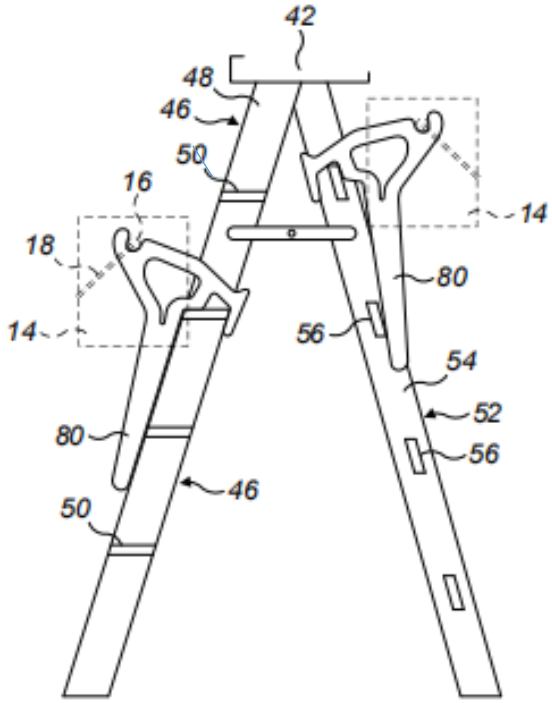
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FIG. 3

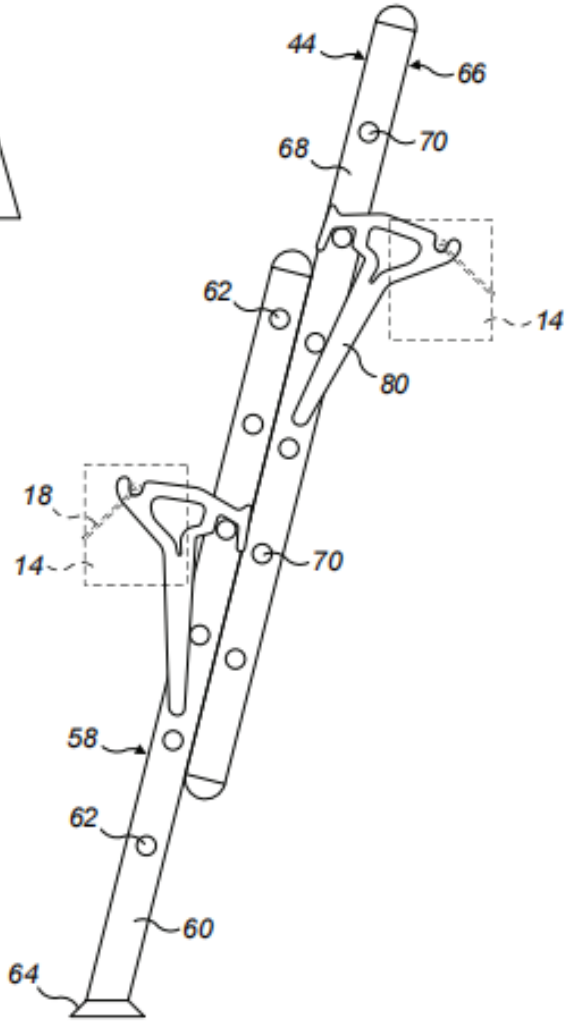
44
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FIG. 4

Document D

Prior art reference D1 – GB 2222000 B

Granted 22 September 1997

Van Gogh Ltd

SUPPORT DEVICE

BACKGROUND

This invention relates to a support device, in particular to a support device attachable to a ladder for supporting a paint container in a vertical position independently of the angular position of the ladder.

It has long been a problem for painters to position a paint bucket on a ladder so that the paint bucket is both stable and convenient for access.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The support device includes two elongate members which are rigidly held in a fixed predetermined spaced relationship to each other by a spacer between them. When the support device is attached to a ladder, the elongate members are respectively supported by and snugly abut an upper and a lower rung of the ladder. The paint bucket is suspended between the elongate members using the bail handle mounting brackets, and swings freely to maintain the bucket in a vertical position as the angular position of the ladder is changed. Supporting the paint bucket using the bail attachment brackets, which are near the top of a standard paint bucket, further reduces the probability that the paint bucket will be accidentally overturned. The design is such that during normal use it is not necessary to remove either the holder or the paint bucket when repositioning the ladder. The holder can be of plastic, sheet metal or wire. No tools are necessary to install the holder on the ladder.

Each support device is designed to support a container of a specific size. However, adapters can be provided, permitting the support device to be used to support other sizes of containers.

The fact that the paint bucket is self-adjusting to the vertical position as the ladder is moved up and down the side of the object being painted is extremely helpful to the painter. Additionally, the paint bucket is positioned in front of the ladder, that is, on the side of the rungs nearer the painter, to provide convenient and unobstructed access to the paint therein.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a better understanding, reference may be made to the following description and drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a drawing illustrating one embodiment of the support device of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a top view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in FIG. 1, with a paint bucket positioned thereon;

FIG. 3 is a view of an adapter for supporting a smaller container within the support device; and

FIG. 4 is a drawing illustrating the support device positioned on a ladder.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring now to **FIGS. 1 and 4**, a container support device of integral construction is depicted showing its relationship to a first, upper, rung 18 and a second, lower, rung 20 of a typical ladder, when installed thereon. The support device includes first and second downwardly extending elongate members 10 and 12. A spacer 14, with forwardly facing side arms 14a, extends between and rigidly supports the downwardly extending elongate members 10 and 12 in a fixed relationship to each other. Each downwardly extending elongate member 10, 12 includes a downwardly facing notch 16, illustrated with reference to the elongate member 10. The support device is attached to the ladder by positioning the container support device so that an upper rung 18 of the ladder fits snugly within the notches 16 in the elongate members 10 and 12. The lower ends of the downwardly extending elongate members abut the front side of the second, lower, rung 20 of the ladder. The notches 16 can be wider to fit wider rungs or steps.

Additionally, the support device includes upwardly extending notched portions 22 and 24. A generally curved opening 26 is formed by the side arms 14a extending from the front edge of the spacer 14 on either side. In use, the paint bucket is supported in the notched portions 22 and 24. It thus exerts a downward force on the support device, causing the downwardly extending elongate members 10 and 12 to tend to rotate about the upper rung 18 of the ladder until they contact the lower rung 20 of the ladder. By properly selecting the dimensions of the

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container support device, the angle of the ladder can be changed between vertical and substantially horizontal in either direction while the container remains vertical. That is, the ladder can be positioned at any usable angle while the paint bucket maintains its vertical position. In the preferred embodiment, the notches 22 and 24 are positioned on the forward ends of the side arms 14a, away from the upper rung 18 of the ladder. This positions the paint bucket at a convenient location for the user. The relative position of the downwardly extending notches 16 to the upwardly facing notches 22 and 24 determines the angle through which the ladder can be changed while the lower ends of the elongate members 10 and 12 remain in contact with the lower rung 20 of the ladder.

FIG. 2 is a top view of the spacer 14 which is attached to and extends between the elongate members 10 and 12. In a variant, the spacer could be deeper horizontally and have a lip, so as to be useful as a shelf. This figure also illustrates in top view a typical container 30 as supported by the container support device comprising the invention. Paint containers typically include bail or handle attachment bosses or protrusions 32 and 34. The dimensions of the container support device are selected such that the container 30 fits within the curved opening 26 at the front edge of the spacer 14 with the handle attachment protrusions 32 and 34 resting in the notched portions 22 and 24. Thus, as the angle of the container support device changes as a result of positional changes in the ladder to which it is attached, the container rotates in the notches 22 and 24 to stay vertical.

FIG. 3 illustrates an adapter designed to permit the container support device to be utilized to support containers having a lesser diameter than a 5ℓ bucket, wherein the handle attachment brackets 32 and 34 are more closely spaced than the container support notches 22 and 24. More specifically, the adapter device illustrated in FIG. 3 includes a ring member 36 having attached thereto first and second outwardly extending portions 38 and 40 which are positioned in the container support notches 24 and 22 of the container support device. Extending downwardly from the ring member 36 and attached thereto is a generally U-shaped member 42 which provides support for a container positioned within the ring member 36. By properly selecting the dimensions of the circular member 36, containers having a diameter less than the distance between the container support notches 22 and 24 can be supported.

[claims omitted]

Cont…

Document D

D1 drawings

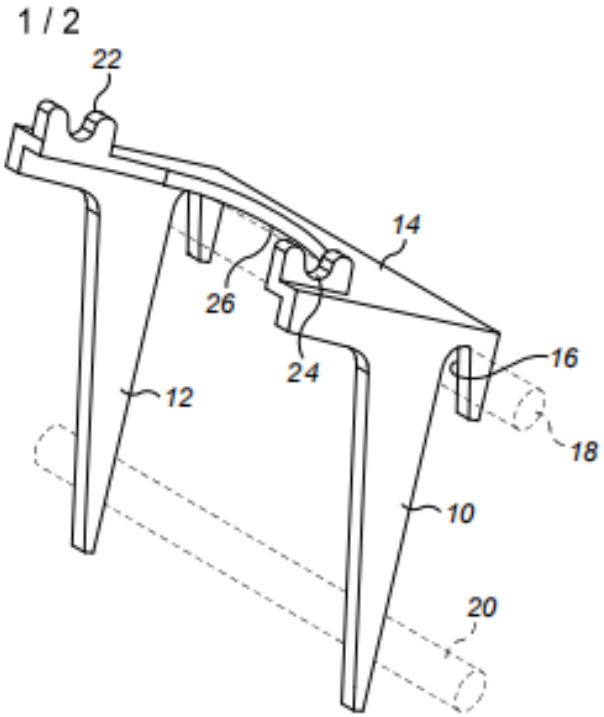

FIG. 1

FIG. 2

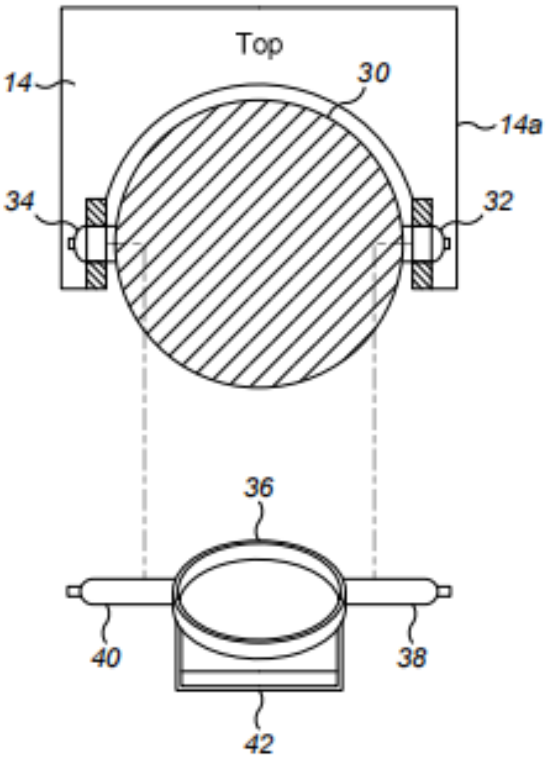

FIG. 3

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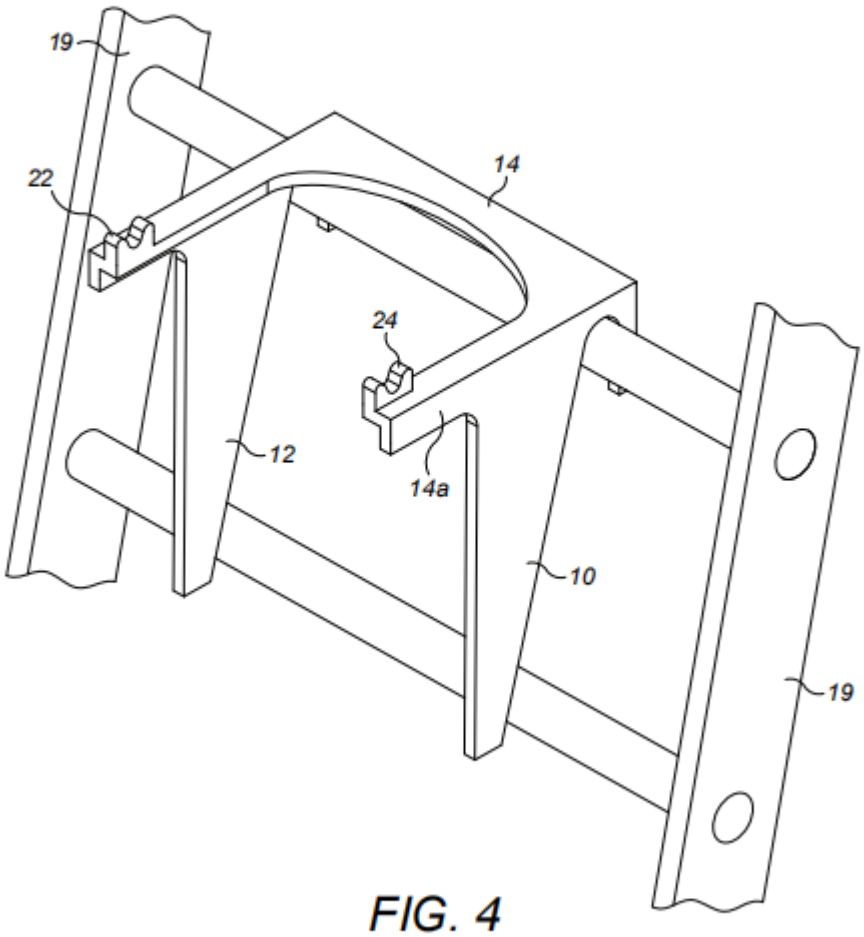

FIG. 4

Spare set of Claims

CLAIMS

1. A bracket for adjustably supporting a paint can having a bail handle pivotally connected to bail sockets protruding from opposite sides of the can, on a ladder including a pair of spaced apart side rails and a plurality of rungs connected to and extending between the side rails in vertically spaced apart relation, the bracket comprising:

   a pair of parallel support arms (12) horizontally extending in use and spaced to receive a paint can between their free ends (30),

   a cross member (22) connected to and extending between the support arms,

   each support arm having an upwardly open slot (28) adjacent the free end for pivotally receiving a bail socket of the paint can so that the paint can is supported on the arms and can swing about an axis passing through the bail sockets,

   a downwardly open hook formation (40) at the rear of the support arms for support of the support arms on a rung of a ladder, and

   a pair of stabilizer legs (80) each connected to and extending downwardly from the support arms respectively for abutment against the next lower rung of the ladder, in order to stabilize the support arms against downward rotation about the rung on which the hook means is supported.

2. A bracket according to claim 1, wherein the upwardly open slot (28) includes a generally semicircular bottom portion of a diameter such that the bottom portion is substantially filled by a generally circular paint can bail socket received therein.

3. A bracket according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the free ends (30) of the support arms define a pair of curved horns (32) having interior surfaces facing one another and opposite exterior faces, each exterior face having a protrusion thereon for engagement with the adjacent bail to restrict pivotal movement of the bail (18) of a paint can (14) supported on the arms.

4. A bracket according to any preceding claim, further comprising a cross member (86) connected to and extending between the stabilizer legs (80) at positions below the support arms.

Cont…

5. A bracket according to claim 1, wherein the open bottom hook formation is adapted for receiving either a ladder rung of generally circular cross section or a ladder step having a generally horizontally extending rectangular cross section.

6. A bracket according to claim 5, wherein the bracket is integrally formed as a unitary piece.