Feb. 6, 1951

W. H. HASKELL

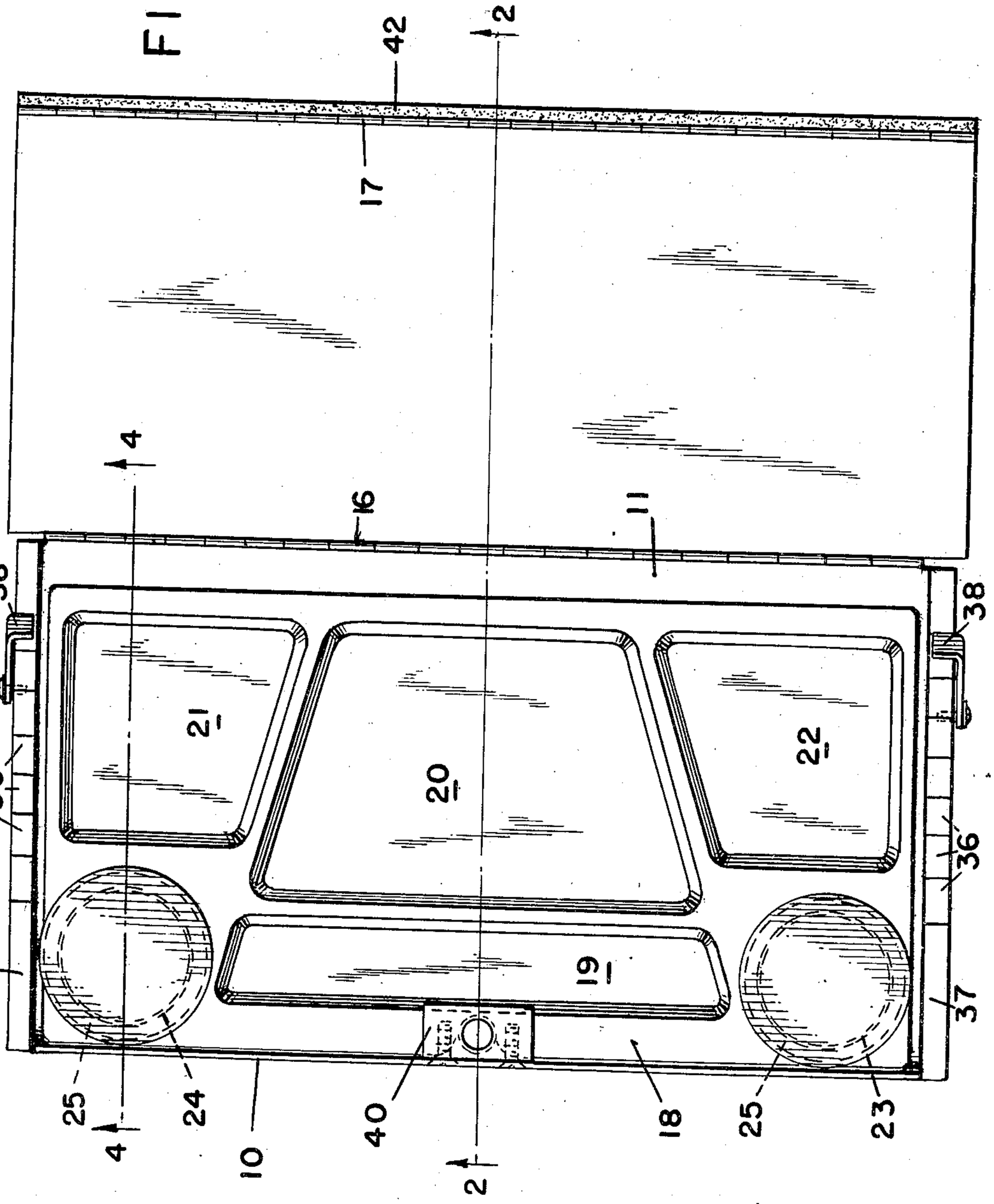
LUNCHEON TRAY

2,540,392

Filed Aug. 11, 1948

4 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1



Inventor:
WILLIAM H. HASKELL,

By Stone, Boyden & Treat
Attorneys.

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W. H. HASKELL

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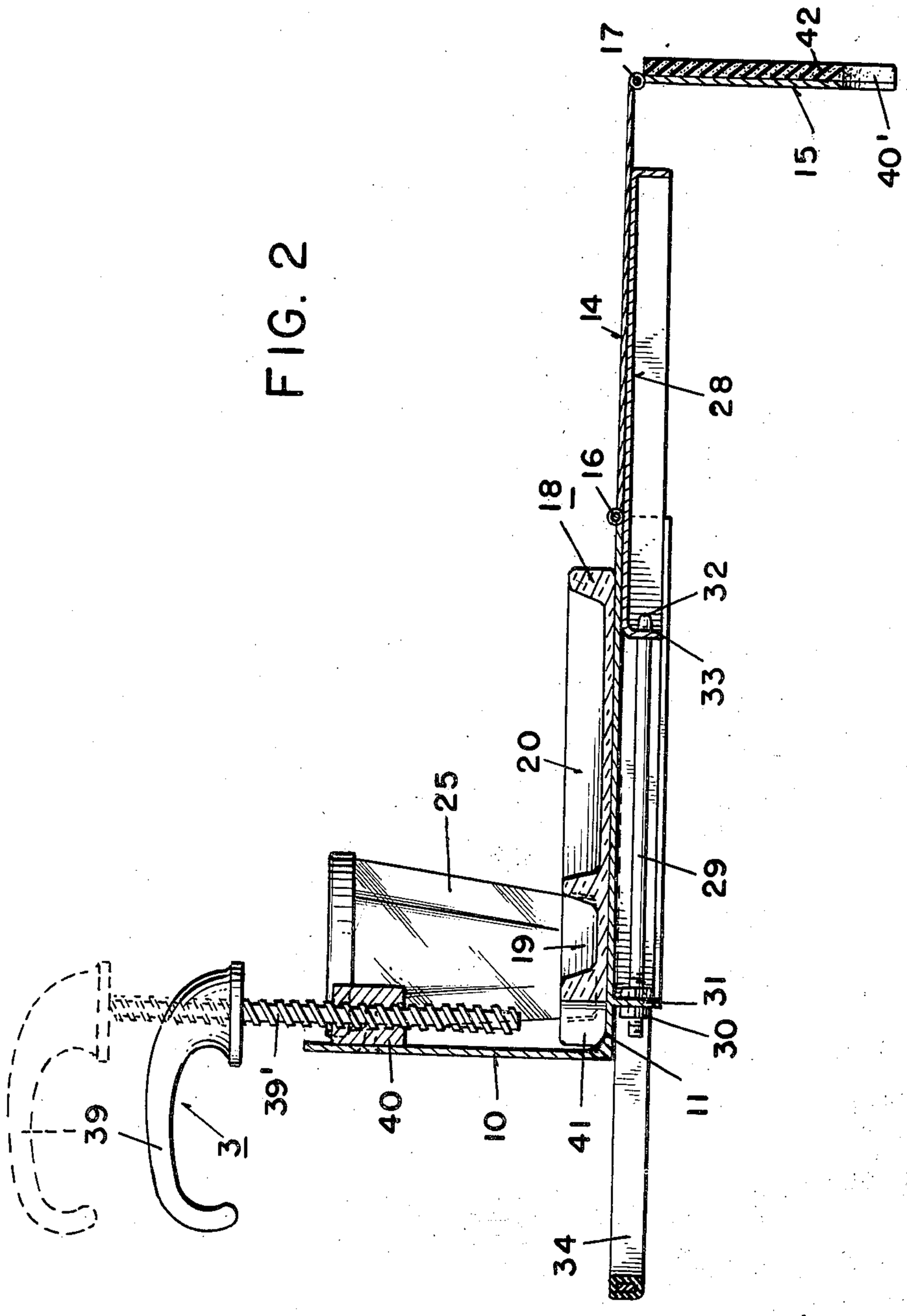
4 Sheets-Sheet 2

FIG. 2



Inventor:
WILLIAM H. HASKELL,

By Stone, Boyden & Isaacs,
Attorneys.

Feb. 6, 1951

W. H. HASKELL

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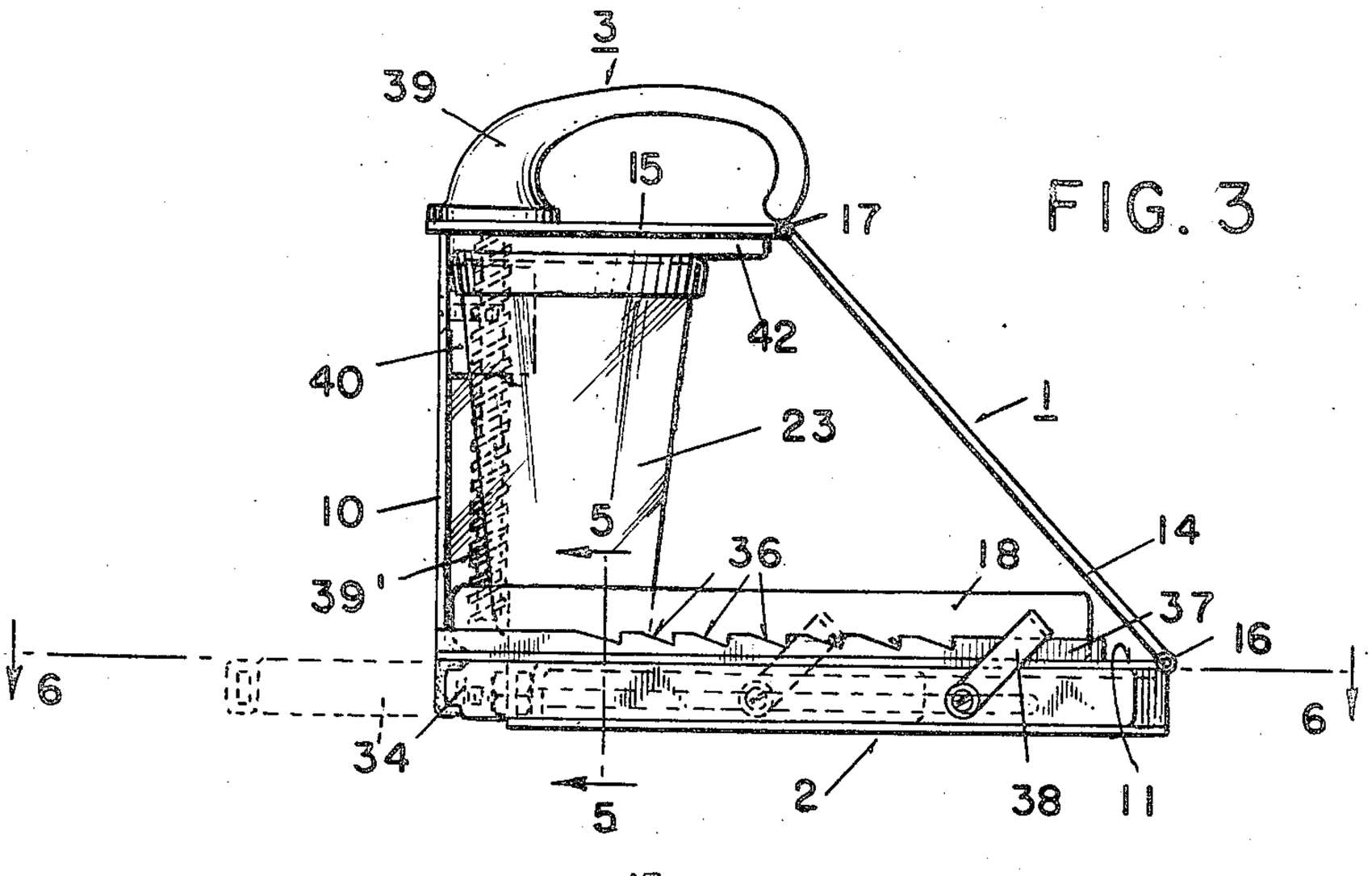

FIG. 3

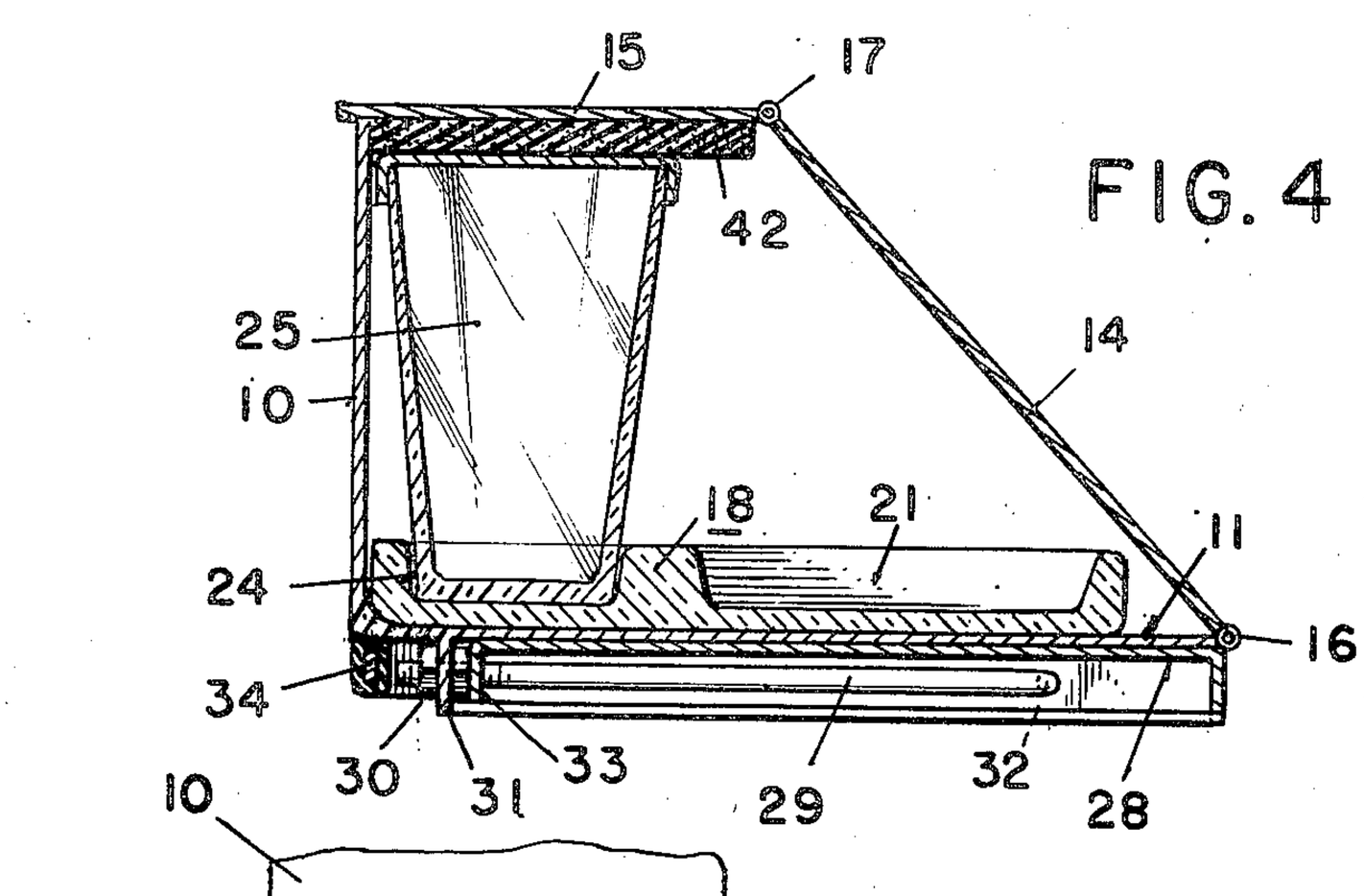

FIG. 4

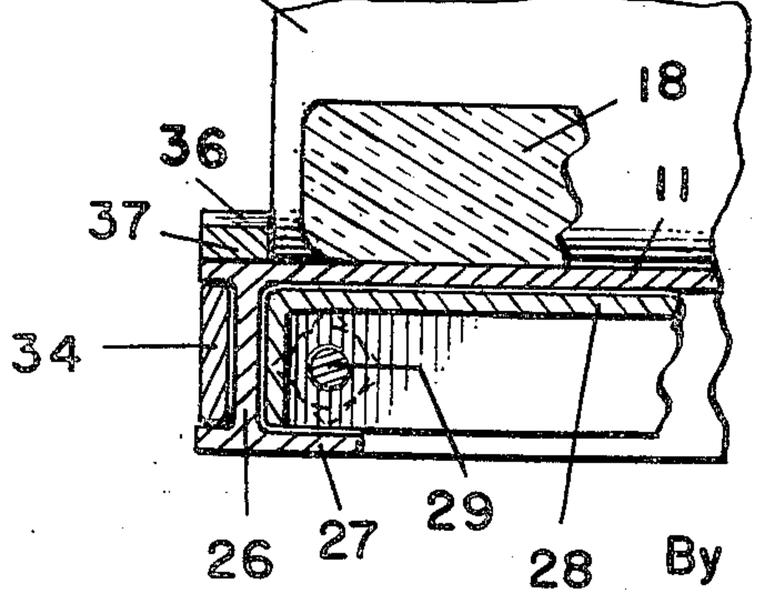

FIG. 5

Inventor:
WILLIAM H. HASKELL,

By Stone, Boyden & Haak.
Attorneys.

Feb. 6, 1951

W. H. HASKELL

LUNCHEON TRAY

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Filed Aug. 11, 1948

4 Sheets-Sheet 4

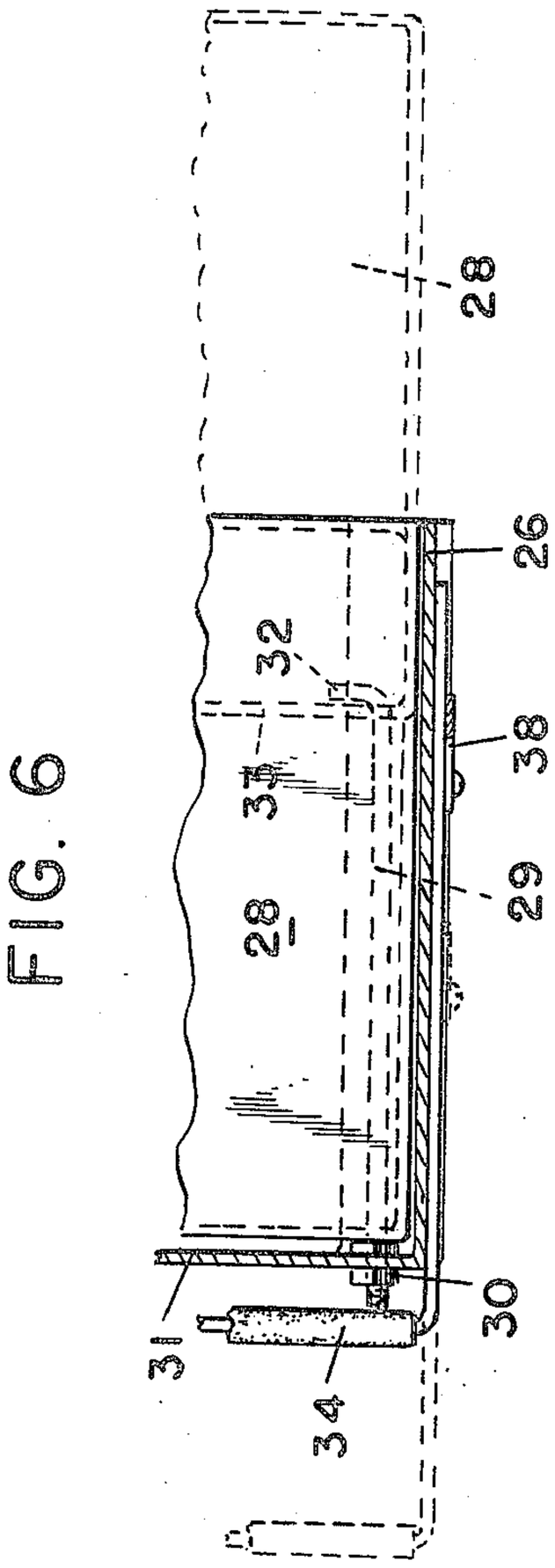

FIG. 6

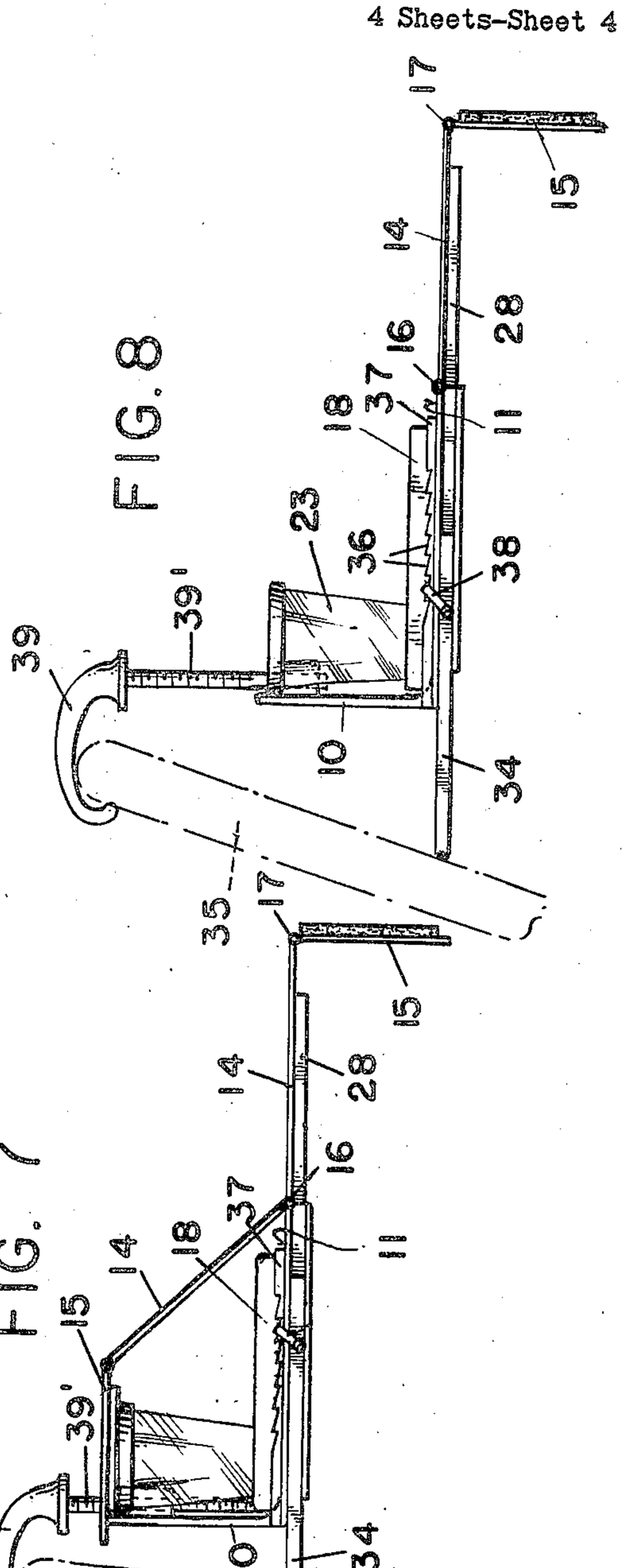

FIG. 8

FIG. 7

Inventor:
WILLIAM H. HASKELL,

By Stone, Boyden & Isaacs
Attorneys.

Patented Feb. 6, 1951

2,540,392

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,540,392

LUNCHEON TRAY

William H. Haskell, New London, Conn.

Application August 11, 1948, Serial No. 43,609

5 Claims. (Cl. 224—48)

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This invention relates to new and useful improvements in trays and adjustable mountings therefor and pertains particularly to a portable serving container and tray which may be readily adjusted and secured to the back of the seats of either railroad cars, automobile front seats, ordinary chairs, etc., whereby when the device of this invention is so secured, a refreshment tray or similar article is conveniently provided.

Another feature of the invention is a tray and support therefor which may be easily and quickly removed from its place of use, closed up and carried away as a compact unit.

A further feature of the invention is a removable box and tray which, when not in use, may be closed into the general shape of a container or box having cooperating parts such that articles carried in said container will be tightly locked in place.

Other features, objects and advantages of this invention will be apparent during the course of the following detailed description.

In the drawings, wherein similar reference characters designate corresponding parts throughout the several views,

Figure 1 is a top plan view of the container in open position;

Figure 2 is a sectional view taken along the line 2—2 of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a side elevational view of the container in closed position and ready to be carried;

Figure 4 is a sectional view taken along the line 4—4 of Figure 1 but with the container in closed position;

Figure 5 is a partial sectional view taken along the line 5—5 of Figure 3;

Figure 6 is a partial sectional view taken along the line 6—6 of Figure 3; and

Figures 7 and 8 are two illustrations of the manner in which the container of this invention may be adjustably mounted on and secured to seats having different inclinations.

Having more particular reference to Figure 3 of the drawings, the improved container and tray comprises essentially a box or container element 1, and adjustable base indicated generally at 2 and a handle 3 whereby the box or container may be carried and also adjusted and mounted in place as will be explained hereinafter.

The container element 1 has two rigid walls including a rear wall 10, a bottom 11, a front sloping panel 14, and a cover or closure 15. The bottom 11 of the container element 1 is hinged at 16 to the sloping side 14 and the latter is hinged at 17 to the top side or closure 15. The purpose

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of hinge connections 16 and 17 is to permit the folding of the parts as shown in Figures 3 and 4 and the unfolding thereof as illustrated in Figures 1, 2, 7 and 8. As shown in the several figures, the opposite ends are open.

A shallow removable tray or receptacle 18 of glass, porcelain, plastic or the like is fitted on the bottom 11 and is provided with suitable sunken or depressed portions 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 which are adapted to receive various implements used in the partaking of meals and refreshments, such as plates, cups, knives, forks, glasses, condiment containers, etc. Figures 2, 3 and 4 show a receptacle such as a drinking glass 25 in place in its depression 24 in the removable tray 18.

The base 2 of the improved container, one side of which is illustrated in section in Figure 5, has at each end a depending vertical wall 26 terminating in a flange 27, the function of which is to guide the sliding movements of a shelf 28 beneath the bottom 11 of the container 1. Thus, when the shelf 28 is pulled from its innermost or retracted position in Figure 4, to the extended position shown in Figure 2, it acts as a support for the unfolded side 14 of the container and this side 14 may then be used as a table by the user of the device. In order to limit the outward travel of the shelf 28 and for the additional purpose of steadying the extended shelf, a U-shaped guide rod 29, suitably secured at 30 to a vertical ledge 31 depending from and beneath bottom 11 of the tray, provides a stop at 32 formed by the bail of the guide rod 29 for the flange 33 of shelf 28. With reference to Figure 5, it will be seen that flange 27 extends on opposite sides of the vertical wall 26 and that it further provides guiding surfaces for a U-shaped sliding member 34 adapted to move outwardly from under bottom 11 of the container in a direction opposite to that of the shelf 28. The function of the sliding member 34 is to serve as an adjustable abutment for the tray against the back 35 of a seat on which the device is adapted to be mounted.

Figures 7 and 8 of the drawings show how slide member 34 may be moved to positions wherein it may engage seat backs having different inclinations. In order to maintain the sliding member 34 in its proper positions of adjustment, rack teeth 36 are provided on a flat ledge or horizontal extension 37 of bottom 11 as illustrated in Figure 5. Pawl elements 38, pivotally carried by and movable with the slide member 34, are adapted to cooperate with rack teeth 36 and thus keep the slide 34 in selected positions against the seat back

35. When it is desired to push slide 34 in the innermost position under the bottom 11 shown in Figure 4, it is merely necessary to swing the pawls 38 upwardly so as to free them from the rack teeth 36 and to push the slide 34 inwardly beneath the bottom 11 of the tray.

The handle 3 comprises the crook 39 having a threaded stem 39' rigidly secured thereto and depending therefrom. The stem 39' is adapted to be threaded through a lug 40 within the container 1 and secured to the back portion 10 thereof. The handle 3, through its threaded connection with the container, may be adjusted for height and its crook 39 fitted over or hooked onto the top of the seat back 35 as illustrated in the drawings.

When the device of the invention is not in use, the parts are folded as shown in Figure 3 and the handle is turned down within the container to a point where it will maintain the cover 15 in secure closed position. A suitable opening 40' is provided at the free edge of the cover 15 so as to permit the stem 39' of the handle 3 to extend therethrough when the device is closed. Similarly, an opening 41 is also provided through receptacle 18 to permit passage of the handle stem 39' when screwed down to its limit. When the device is closed as shown in Figure 3, the entire assembly may be carried by the handle crook 39. A rubber mat or pad 42, preferably of sponge rubber and of substantial thickness, is secured to the under side of the closure 15 so that when the device is closed it will resiliently press on the uppermost end of the glass or tumbler 25 carried within the container and maintain it in its proper position. This rubber mat will also assist in maintaining the handle in its closed position.

When the device is to be placed in use, the handle 3 is released by unscrewing it and is adjusted to the back 25 of the seat. The front panel 14 and the cover 15 are unfolded, the shelf 28 is pulled out to proper position; and the slide member 34 is pulled in the opposite direction until it engages the seat back 35. It is then locked in place by means of the ratchets and pivoting pawls 36, 38.

Various changes in the shape, size and arrangement of parts may be made to the form of invention herein shown and described without departing from the spirit of the invention or the scope of the claims.

I claim:

1. As an article of manufacture, a portable serving container comprising a rear wall, a base, and a closure including a front wall and a top, a handle for said container, a tray carried by said base, said tray having depressions adapted to retain a receptacle, and resilient means carried by said top and adapted to rest upon and close the open end of the receptacle, said handle being adjustable to exert pressure upon said top and said resilient means to maintain the receptacle in fixed position.

2. An article of manufacture as set forth in claim 1 wherein said resilient means consists of a rubber pad.

3. As an article of manufacture, a portable serving container comprising a rear wall, a base, and a closure including a front wall and a top, a handle for said container, a tray carried by said base for supporting a receptacle, and resilient means carried by said top and adapted to rest upon and close the open end of the receptacle, said handle having a downwardly extending screw threaded stem adapted to be elevated or lowered with respect to said rear wall, said handle having a portion adapted to engage said top when the latter is in the closed position, whereby said handle is adjustable to exert pressure upon said top and said resilient means to maintain the receptacle in fixed position.

4. As an article of manufacture, a portable serving container comprising a rear wall, a base, a closure including a front wall and a top, a handle for said container, a tray carried by said base for supporting a receptacle, and resilient means carried by said top and adapted to rest upon the upper end of the receptacle, said handle being adjustable to exert pressure upon said top and said resilient means to press the latter upon the end of the receptacle and hold the same in fixed position.

5. As an article of manufacture, a portable serving container comprising a base adapted to support a beverage receptacle, a rear wall, and a closure including a front wall and a top, a handle for said container, and resilient means carried by said top and adapted to rest upon the upper end of the receptacle, said handle being adjustable to exert pressure upon said top and said resilient means to press the latter upon the upper end of the receptacle to hold the same in fixed position.

WILLIAM H. HASKELL.

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