

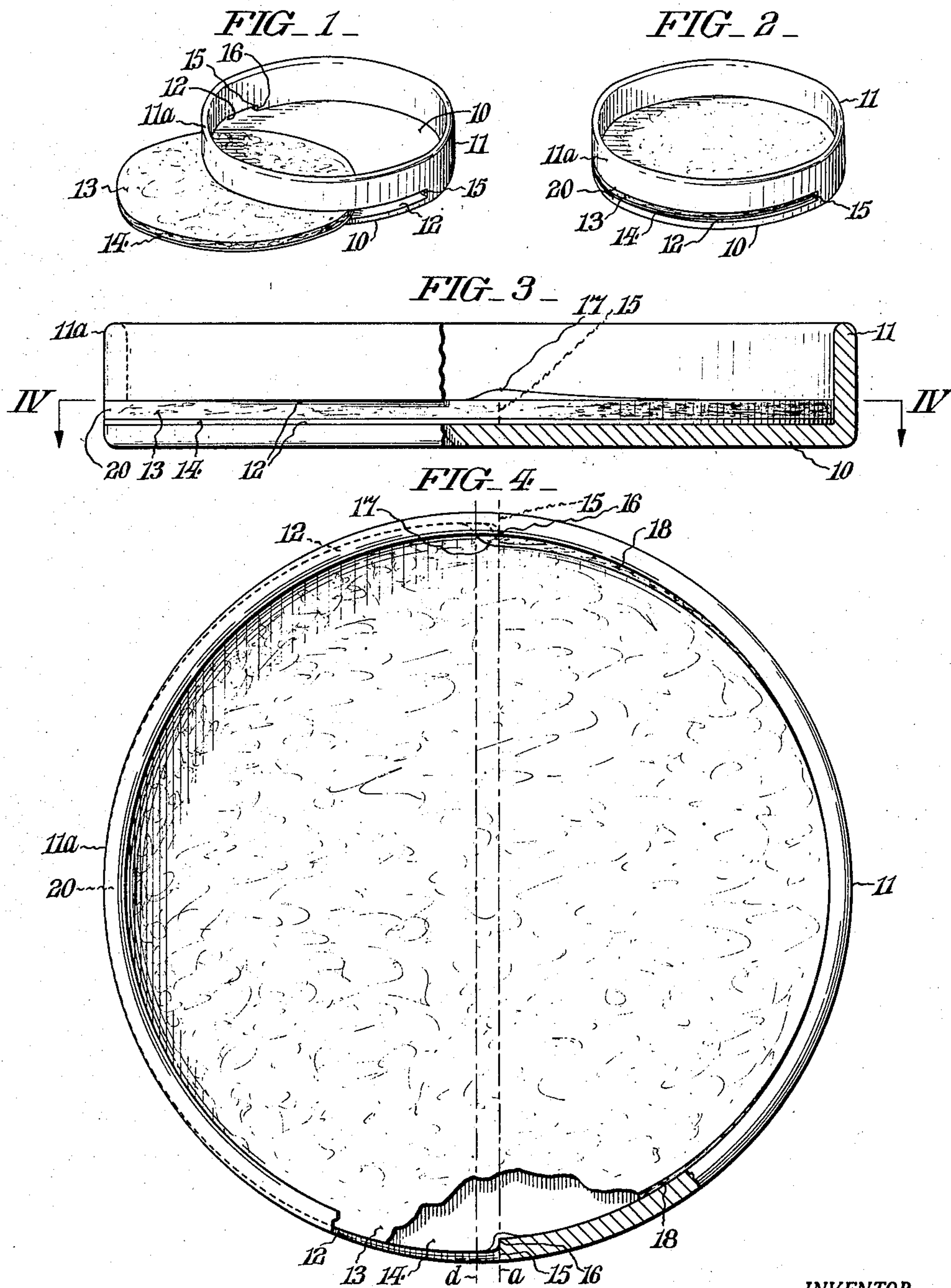
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COASTER

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COASTER

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3 Claims. (Cl. 65—53)

This invention relates to coasters for drinking glasses and the like.

It has been common practice to provide a sheet of absorbent material at the bottom of a coaster of this type. The sheet absorbs the moisture that condenses on the drinking glass carried in the coaster, which moisture eventually collects in the bottom of the coaster. However in some coasters of this type the sheet of absorbent material has not been firmly anchored in the coaster; when the sheet is wet it tends to adhere to the bottom of the drinking glass as the glass is lifted out of the coaster. In other coasters the sheet of absorbent material has been glued or cemented to the coaster bottom, but in this arrangement the sheet has been difficult to remove and replace.

It is accordingly an object of this invention to provide a coaster which overcomes the foregoing difficulties and disadvantages. Another object is to provide a coaster in combination with a sheet of moisture absorbent material wherein the moisture absorbent material may readily be inserted into and removed from the coaster, and wherein the sheet of moisture absorbent material is firmly and securely anchored in the coaster while in use. Other objects and advantages of the invention, including the simplicity and economy of the same, as well as its compactness and good appearance, will further become apparent hereinafter and in the drawings whereof:

Fig. 1 represents a view in perspective of a coaster embodying features of this invention, the absorbent sheet material being shown partially withdrawn from the coaster;

Fig. 2 represents a view in perspective similar to Fig. 1, the absorbent sheet material being completely inserted into the coaster;

Fig. 3 represents an enlarged side elevation of the coaster, with a portion cut away and shown in section in order more clearly to illustrate important details; and

Fig. 4 represents a plan view of the coaster with the lower portion thereof broken away and shown in section as indicated by the lines and arrows IV—IV which appear in Fig. 3.

Turning now to the specific embodiment of the invention selected for illustration in the drawings, it will be apparent that the coaster comprises a generally cylindrical receptacle having a flat, circular bottom 10 and a side wall 11 which extends completely around the outer edge of the bottom 10. The receptacle is open at the top. The side wall 11 is slotted near its bottom at 12, such slot extending through the wall 11 substantially parallel to the upper surface of the bottom 10. Slot 12 forms, of part of the wall 11, an upper strip portion 11a which extends around the coaster just above slot 12. A sheet 13 of moisture absorbent material (such as blotter paper, for example) is slidable through slot 12 into and out of the coaster. As shown, a water repellent backing sheet 14 is affixed to sheet 13. Back-

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ing sheet 14 preferably consists of non-absorbent paper or other bendable material. Sheets 13 and 14 have a total thickness substantially equal to the thickness of slot 12, and are preferably frictionally engaged within slot 12.

At the ends of slot 12 the wall 11 has two opposed slot end walls 15, 15. The slot 12 extends continuously around the coaster through a distance greater than one-half the circumference of wall 11. Thus, as indicated in Fig. 4, the slot end walls 15, 15 are not centered with respect to the coaster and lie along a line *a* which is spaced from the parallel diameter *d* of the coaster. Thus the inner corners 16, 16 of the slot end walls 15, 15 are spaced apart from one another at a distance less than the inside diameter of wall 11. This is an important and advantageous feature, as will further become apparent.

The piece of sheet material 13, before it is inserted into the coaster, is preferably of circular shape. It has a diameter greater than the inside diameter of wall 11 but less than the outside diameter of wall 11. Preferably its diameter is substantially equal to the outside diameter of wall 11 less the thickness of wall 11. Accordingly it will be apparent that, with the insertion of sheet 13 through the slot 12 its side edges engage the inner corners 16, 16 of slot edges 15, 15. This causes the edges of the absorbent material 13 to curl slightly, as indicated in slightly exaggerated form at 17. The foregoing remarks are also applicable to backing sheet 14, when used. Thus there are established, at two places at opposite sides of the coaster, frictional connections between the wall 11 and the moisture absorbent material 13 or backing sheet 14. These frictional connections serve to keep the sheet 13 from sliding outwardly through slot 12. Moreover, since the sheet 13 is oversize with respect to the inside diameter of wall 11, the edge portions 18, 18 of sheet 13 (Fig. 4) are compressed slightly against the corresponding portions of the bottom of wall 11 when the sheet 13 is forced completely into the coaster. Thus the edge portions 18, 18 are deformed slightly to establish frictional engagement with the wall 11.

Since the sheet material 13 is originally circular and has a diameter somewhat greater than the inside diameter of wall 11 the sheet material 13 has a tongue portion 20 (Figs. 3 and 4) which extends into the slotted space between the bottom 10 and the upper strip portion 11a of wall 11 which overlies the slot 12. The tongue 20 which projects into the slot serves to retain the moisture absorbent sheet 13 against movement upwardly away from the bottom 10. This eliminates any possibility that the moisture absorbent sheet 13 might adhere to a drinking glass as the glass is lifted out of the coaster, since the upper strip portion 11a anchors the sheet material 13 in the coaster.

Accordingly it will be appreciated that, in accordance with this invention, the sheet 13 can readily be inserted into and removed from the space at the bottom of the coaster. When the sheet 13 is inserted into the coaster it is automatically anchored against movement upwardly, and against movement to the sides as well. Yet the coaster just described is quite simple structurally and can readily be manufactured with minimum cost from metals, plastics and other rigid materials. Moreover a very inexpensive moisture absorbent disc 13 of blotter paper may be utilized to absorb the moisture. Such discs are ideally adapted to be marked with advertising material which advertising material can readily be changed by effecting the removal and replacement of the discs.

While I have shown and described in this application one specific form of my invention it will be appreciated

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that numerous changes and modifications may be made without departing from the scope of this invention. Moreover changes may be made as to the specific form and arrangement of parts of the apparatus, parts may be reversed, and equivalent elements may be substituted all without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. A coaster comprising a receptacle having a bottom and a cylindrical surrounding wall of uniform height fixed to and extending upwardly from said bottom, said wall having a slot extending through it immediately above the level of said bottom, said slot being substantially parallel to said bottom and spaced below the top of said wall, and a disc of absorbent sheet material slidable under said wall through said slot into and out of the space defined by said wall, said disc extending into said slot when fully inserted into said receptacle, whereby said disc is retained by the upper portion of said wall against movement upwardly from said bottom.

2. A coaster comprising a bottom member, a wall extending above said bottom member, said wall having near its lower end a slot which extends along the upper surface of said bottom member, said slot providing in said walls a pair of opposed slot edges arranged at opposite sides above said bottom member, and a piece of absorbent bendable paper slidable through said slot into the space defined by said wall, the size of the paper being slightly greater than the distance between said slot edges whereby the paper is bent and frictionally retained by said slot edges upon its insertion into the space defined by said wall.

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3. A coaster comprising a receptacle having a circular bottom and an enclosed upright cylindrical rim fixed to and extending upwardly from said bottom, the lower portion of said rim having a slot formed therein extending immediately above the upper surface of said bottom with a portion of the rim overlying said slot, said slot extending substantially parallel to said bottom and terminating about centrally of said rim, a disc of absorbent sheet material adapted to be disposed on said bottom within said rim, a portion of said absorbent sheet material disc extending into the space provided by said slot and serving to anchor the absorbent sheet material under that portion of the rim that overlies the slot, and the edge of said slot being shaped to engage said absorbent sheet serving to retain said sheet against sliding movement through said slot in the plane of said slot.

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