

# Just For Openers January-December 2025 1

## Edmund B. White's Quest

For The Best Up-N-Off By Don Thornton

It took Edmund B. White two U.S. patents, two U.S. trademarks and one Canadian patent stretching over a decade to perfect his "UP-N-OFF" kitchen tool, and the icing on the cake was, of course, a hook-style bottle opener. The Massachusetts inventor was awarded Design Patent No. 126,898 on April 19, 1941 for a "jar cap lifter" which became the first UP-N-OFF.

April 29, 1941. E. B. White Des. 126,898

JAR CAP LIFTER  
Filed Jan. 9, 1941

Fig. 1.

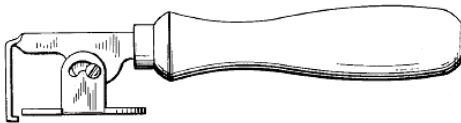


Fig. 2.

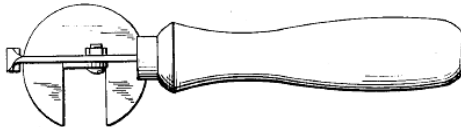


Fig. 3.



Inventor  
EDMUND B. WHITE

By *Charles A. Keenan*

Attorney

The first of three versions of the UP-N-OFF hit the market in late 1941. The 6 1/2-inch device with wood handle is marked on the circular pry base: UP-N-OFF PAT. 4-29-41 WOLLASTON, MASS. MADE IN U.S.A.



### Pressed-On Jar Caps Removed Without Bending Them

Covers applied to jars and jelly glasses by pressure, usually entailing considerable struggle with a knife or other kitchen cutlery in opening them, can be removed easily with a lever top-lifter that does not bend the caps out of shape. With a hook at one end to engage the lip of the lid, it operates on a movable fulcrum which may be placed near the edge for thin caps, and toward the center of the heavy ones.



The July 1942 edition of *Popular Mechanics* gave the opener a plug saying in part that it "does not bend the caps out of shape." It also listed the contact as "Edmund B. White, 5 Aston St., Worcester, Mass." A newspaper advertisement in 1945 listed the retail price at 24 cents.





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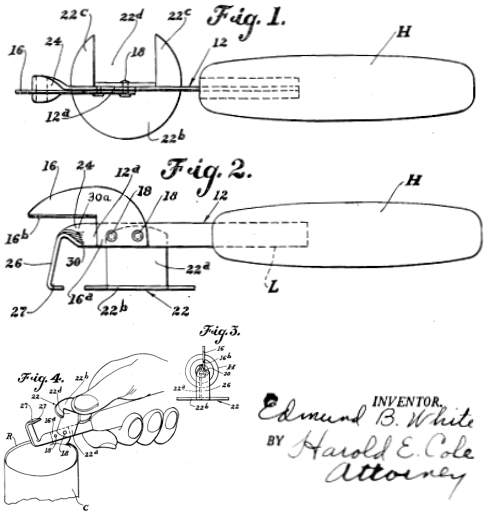
White obviously was proud of the UP-N-OFF name, trademarking it in 1945. Also in 1945 White, then a resident of Quincy, applied for a patent for a "device to open containers" and it was granted February 17, 1948 Patent No. 2,436,133. And the UP-N-OFF added a pierce and cut can opener.

422,520. (CLASS 23, CUTLERY, MACHINERY, AND TOOLS, AND PARTS THEREOF.) EDMUND B. WHITE, QUINCY, MASS. Filed Aug. 3, 1945. Serial No. 486,704.

# UP-N-OFF

FOR JAR AND BOTTLE CAP REMOVERS.  
Claims use since Dec. 15, 1941.

Feb. 17, 1948. E. B. White 2,436,133  
DEVICE TO OPEN CONTAINERS  
Filed Dec. 28, 1945



"The principle object of my invention is to provide a new device to open cans that has a combined thumb rest and pressure member that aids in cutting away part of an enclosed container to open it," the patent papers said. "Still another object is to provide a (jar) cover lifter ... adapted to be in coordination with said pressure member when the latter serves as a base and fulcrum as it rests on the container during the lifting operation."



The new version remains 6 1/2-inches in length and is exactly like the first version but with a curved can opener blade added on top. It is marked on the metal arm: UP-N-OFF WOLLASTON, MASS. Like the original, it is also marked on the circular base: UP-N-OFF PAT. 4-29-41 WOLLASTON, MASS. MADE IN U.S.A. (It should be noted that Wollaston is not a city, but rather a neighborhood of the city of Quincy).





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In 1950, White offered a third version of his opener, this one with a cut out hook to open bottles. This model is 7-inches long and with the same design as the original two, but adding a Canadian patent. It is marked: U.S. PAT. 2435133 CANADA PAT. 462458 TRADE MARK REG. IN U.S. & CANADA CAP-SAVA MFG. CO. QUINCY 70 MASS MADE IN U.S.A.



White trademarked the new name in 1950, saying it had been in use since December 15, 1949. The Canadian patent was for a "device to open containers" and was issued to Edmund B White on January 17, 1950. The Canadian Patents Database said the patent abstract, including drawing, was not available.

Serial No. 603,509. Edmund B. White, doing business as Up-N-Off Mfg. Co., Quincy, Mass. Filed Sept. 13, 1950.

# CAP-S-A-V-A

The word "Cap" is disclaimed.  
For Hand Opener for Removing Caps from Jars, Bottles,  
and Cans.  
Claims use since Dec. 15, 1949.

