

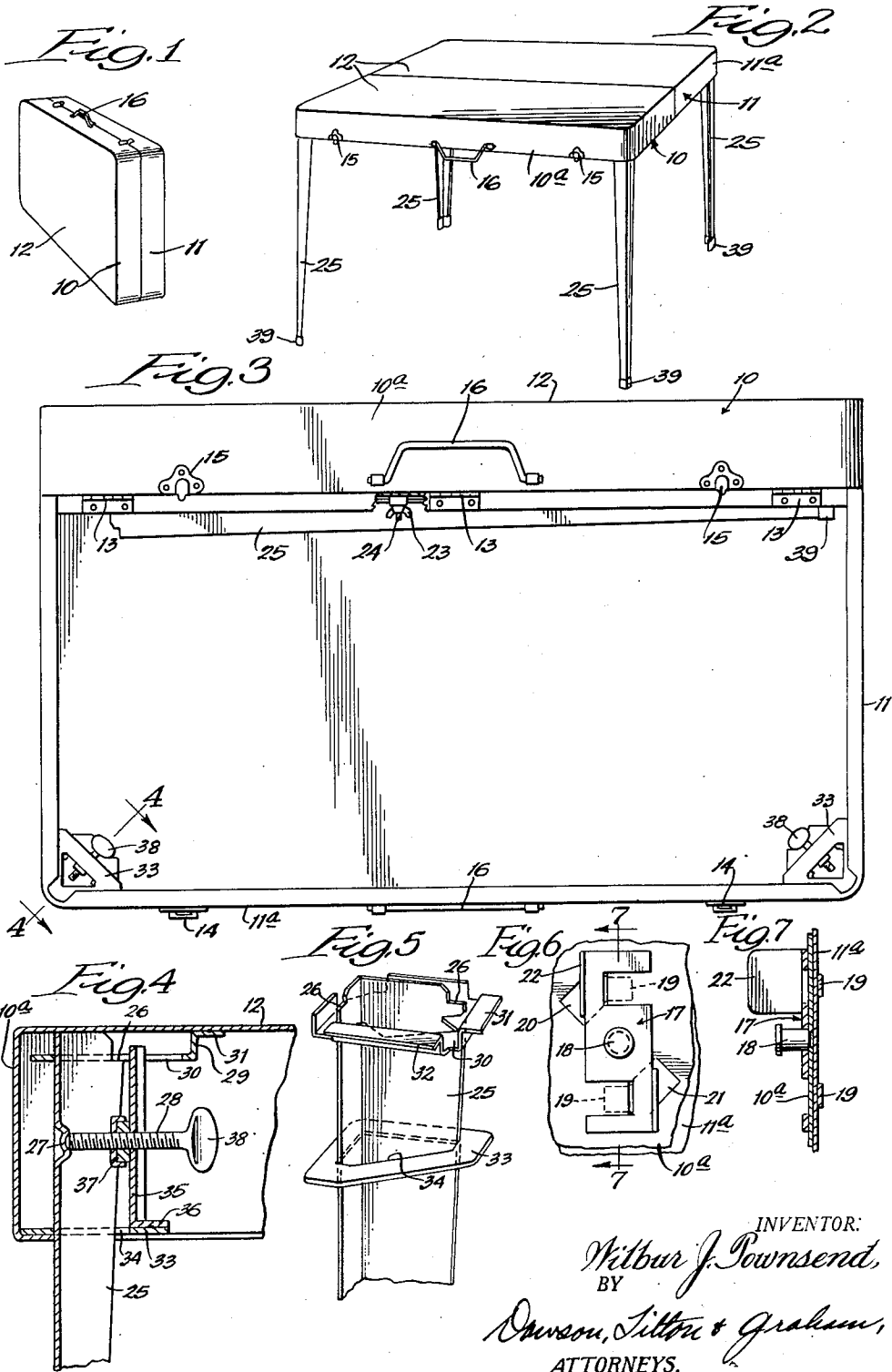
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TABLE CASE

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TABLE CASE

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This invention relates to a table case in which the case may be employed for carrying articles and, when desired, the case may be folded into table-forming position. The invention is particularly useful as a picnic table, and when in case position, may be employed for carrying foldable stools, cutlery, and other articles.

The main difficulty with folding table structures heretofore employed is the lack of rigidity in the structure when moved to table-forming position, and further the labor and time involved in setting up the table. A problem has also been involved in the folding and storing of the legs when the structure is converted into a case.

An object of the present invention is to provide a table structure in which the legs may be stored in nested relation to occupy a minimum of space within the case, while, when the structure is formed into a table, permitting the legs to be locked into the corners of the table in an extremely sturdy arrangement. A further object is to provide in such a structure means for locking the adjacent hinged sides of the case into horizontal alignment for forming a rigid table. A still further object is to provide a table and case structure in which the legs may be readily removed and folded in nested relation when they are to be carried within a case while at the same time permitting them to be rigidly grasped within the corners of the table when the case is converted to a table. Other specific objects and advantages will appear as the specification proceeds.

The invention is shown, in an illustrative embodiment, by the accompanying drawing, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a table case embodying my invention, the structure being shown in case position; Fig. 2, a perspective view of the structure in table position; Fig. 3, a top plan view of the case with one portion of the case in horizontal position and the other portion in vertical position; Fig. 4, an enlarged broken sectional view, the section being taken as indicated at line 4—4 of Fig. 3; Fig. 5, a broken perspective view of the retaining means employed for securing the leg to the table; Fig. 6, a front view in elevation of the latch means employed for securing the two adjacent hinged sides of the table together through the rotation of the latching member; and Fig. 7, a broken sectional view, the section being taken as indicated at line 7—7 of Fig. 6.

In the illustration given, 10 designates one side of the case and 11 designates the other side of the case. Each side of the case is provided with a flat top portion 12 which, when brought together, as shown in Fig. 2, form a horizontal table. The case 10 is provided with depending side walls 10a, and the case portion 11 is provided with depending side walls 11a. The adjacent side walls 11a of the two structures are connected by hinges 13. The case portions at their front sides may be provided with complementary catches 14 and 15, as shown more clearly in Fig. 3, conventional catches being employed, if desired. The case may be provided with a handle 16.

In order to latch the table portions 10 and 11 in the table position shown in Fig. 2, I prefer to employ a

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device such as the rotary latch bar shown in Figs. 6 and 7 of the drawing. The latch bar 17 is pivotally secured by pivot pin 18 upon the case wall 10a, as shown more clearly in Fig. 7. The latch bar 17 is secured upon the pin 18 and is provided with a pair of spring latching teeth 19 which are adapted, upon rotation of the latch bar 17, to pass through aligned openings 20 and 21 through the walls 10a and 11a so as to latch the two walls together. The latch bar 17 is preferably provided with a thumb flange 22 to facilitate rotation of the latch bar. The teeth 19 are preferably spring-like in character and are bent slightly in a direction to cause them to enter the recesses 20 and 21 as the latch bar 17 is rotated clockwise to bring the teeth into securing position, as illustrated in Fig. 6. Rotation of the latch bar 17 in a counterclockwise direction causes the teeth 19 to pass through the slots 20 and 21 and to lie against the inner side wall 10a only.

In the construction shown, I prefer to employ steel, plastic, or other suitable material for the forming of the case, and with such thin-walled structure, the rotary latch bar 17 is particularly effective. The wide flange of the latch bar 17 cooperating with the teeth 19 provide an extremely sturdy latch which grips the side walls 10a and 11a of the case to unite them firmly when the structure is in table-forming position. It is not necessary for the user to unscrew any parts or apply any specific devices for uniting the table sections; instead, it is merely necessary to rotate the latch bar device 17 for the locking or unlocking of the casing parts. I prefer to employ a pair of latch bars 17 for securing the inner adjacent walls of the case, but it will be understood that any desired number may be used.

I prefer to equip the central portion of the case 10 on the interior thereof with a wing nut 23 engageable with a threaded stud 24 for the purpose of securing within the case of the four table legs 25 when they are laid therein in nested position. If desired, a clamp may be employed with the nut 23 for engaging the nested legs 25 and securing them in position.

Each of the legs 25 is preferably formed of an angle piece having the two flanges thereof forming substantially a V in cross section. I prefer to have the angles tapering slightly, as indicated more clearly in Figs. 4 and 5. Also, I prefer to provide the legs at their inner ends with notches 26, as shown more clearly in Fig. 5. Near the upper end of each leg 25 I provide an indentation 27 to cooperate with the locking screw 28, as will be later described.

In the top portion of the table near each corner, I provide a platform or bracket 29 having a recess therein for receiving the upper portion of the leg 25. The notch portion 26 of the leg bears against a portion of the platform 29 as indicated at 30 in Fig. 4. The platform 29 is provided with flanges 31 and 32, which are preferably secured by spotwelding to the table top section 12 thereabove.

Spaced along the side wall 10a or 11a below the panel 12, is a triangular support 33, as shown more clearly in Fig. 5, the opening 34 in the piece 33 being such as to engage the flanges of the leg 25 and to brace the same. A standard 35 extends through the platform 29 and thence upwardly and is provided with a right angle flange 36, which may be spotwelded to the triangular piece 33.

Secured to the standard 36 is a nut 37 receiving the screw 28, which is provided with a wing handle 38.

In the operation of the table case, the legs 25 may be brought with their V portions in nested relation and secured by the wing nut 23 along one side of the case. Stools or other articles may be folded within the case and carried to the desired destination. The case may then be opened and the articles removed, the nested legs 25 being released also. The table top portions 10 and 11 may be placed upon the ground in open position and latched

in this position by rotating the latch bars to the positions shown in Figs. 6 and 7. The legs may be separately placed in position by inserting the ends thereof into the table corners, as illustrated in Fig. 4. The upper notched end of each leg fits within the recess of the platform 29, and the screw 28 is then advanced to bring the point thereof into engagement with the indentation 27 of the leg 25. By this means, each leg is securely and rigidly anchored within the table corner. The indentation 27 prevents outer movement of the leg and each leg is confined between the angles of the parts 34 and 29. When the table is secured as described in the position shown in Fig. 2, it is found that an extremely rigid structure is provided. At the same time, the table may be lifted or handled as a single rigid unit. When it is desired to form a case again, the screws 28 are loosened and the legs 25 removed, placed in nested position, and secured within the narrow area, as illustrated in Fig. 3, with the wing nut anchoring the nested legs against one side of the case. The folding stools may then be collapsed and placed within the case, together with cutlery or other material to be carried, and the case locked in the position illustrated in Fig. 1.

While I prefer to employ legs having angular sides, it will be understood that legs of other shapes may be effectively employed; further, instead of the wing screw and nut structure, fastening means such as toggle clamps and other similar devices may be employed.

If desired, rubber tips 39 may be provided for the ends of the legs 25. The rubber tips are preferably triangular in cross section and form sleeves receiving the outer ends of the metal legs 25 for frictional engagement therewith.

While, in the foregoing specification, I have shown a specific structure in considerable detail for the purpose of illustrating the invention, it will be understood that such details of structure may be varied widely by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of my invention.

I claim:

1. A table case, comprising hinged inner table portions foldable selectively into case and table positions, means for latching the hinged portions in table-forming position, corner platforms in the corners of the table portions and having recesses therein, a bridge extending across each corner portion outwardly of said platforms, and at each corner, a leg having sides engaging the recess of said platform for securing said leg within the corner of the table portions, said corner platforms and each of said bridges being carried by said table portions.

2. A table case of the character set forth, comprising hinged table portions foldable into case position, rotatable means carried by said table portions for latching the hinged portions into table-forming position, platforms secured in the corners of the table and having leg-receiving recesses, a bridge extending across each corner portion of the table portions outwardly of the platform therein, a leg for each corner and having sides extending under said bridge within the corner of the table portions and within the recess of said platform, and clamping means carried by said bridge for anchoring said leg within the corner of said table portions, each bridge being carried by a table portion.

3. A table case of the character set forth, comprising hinged table portions foldable into case position, rotatable means carried by said table portions for latching the hinged

portions into table-forming position, platforms secured in the corners of the table portions and having leg-receiving recesses, a bridge extending across each corner of and carried by the table portions outwardly of the platform therein, a nut carried by said bridge, a screw in each nut, and a leg for each corner and having angular sides extending under said bridge within the corner of the table portions and within the recess of said platform and secured in position by said screw, said legs being provided with indentations engaged by the inner points of said screws.

4. A table case, comprising two case portions equipped with side walls, the adjacent side walls thereof being hinged together, clamping means operatively carried by said case portions for securing the adjacent side walls in abutting relation when said case portions are in planar, table forming position, four legs V-shaped in cross section adapted to be received in nested relation within the case portions, means for clamping said legs along one side of said case portions, and means within the corners of the table case, when the case portions are opened into table position, for releasably securing the legs within the corners of the table case.

5. The structure of claim 6, in which said legs have indented portions adjacent the upper ends thereof, and in which said case portions are equipped with nuts adjacent the corners thereof aligned respectively with said indented portions for receiving bolts threadable therethrough into engagement with the indented portions.

6. A table case of the character set forth, comprising a pair of case sections equipped with side walls, said sections being hinged along one side, clamping means carried by said case sections for securing the hinged sides together in table-forming position, removable legs of angular cross section, a bridge extending across each corner of the table case, carried by the case sections and equipped with a nut, a wing screw engaging said nut, and a platform in each corner of the table case adjacent the top panel thereof and provided with a recess, each of the legs being provided with a notch at its upper end and having a portion resting upon the outer face of the platform and a portion extending through the recess thereof.

7. A table case, comprising hinged inner table portions foldable selectively into case and table positions, means for latching the hinged portions into table-forming position, corner platforms in the corners of the table portions and having recesses therein, a bridge extending across each corner portion outwardly of said platform and secured thereto, a nut carried by each bridge, a screw in said nut, and a leg having angular sides engaging the recess of said platform and secured by the screw of said bridge.

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