April 26, 1960 M. REES 2,934,385

UTILITY BOAT TRAY

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Fig.1

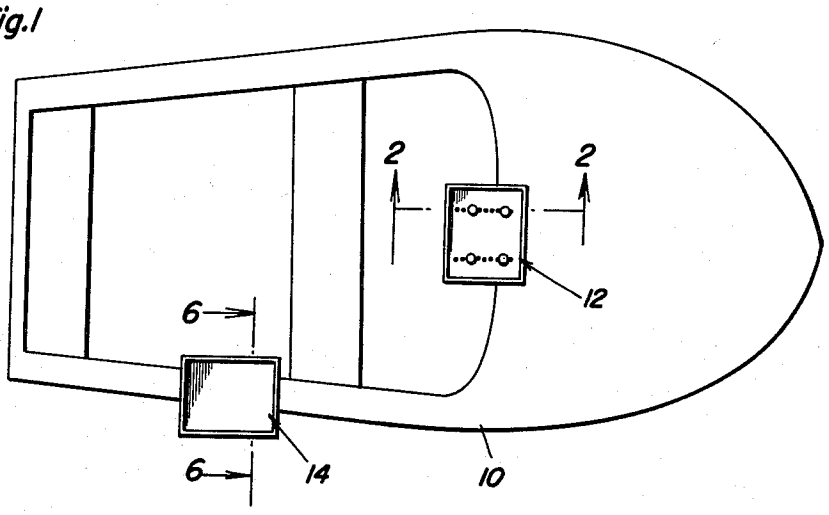


Fig.2

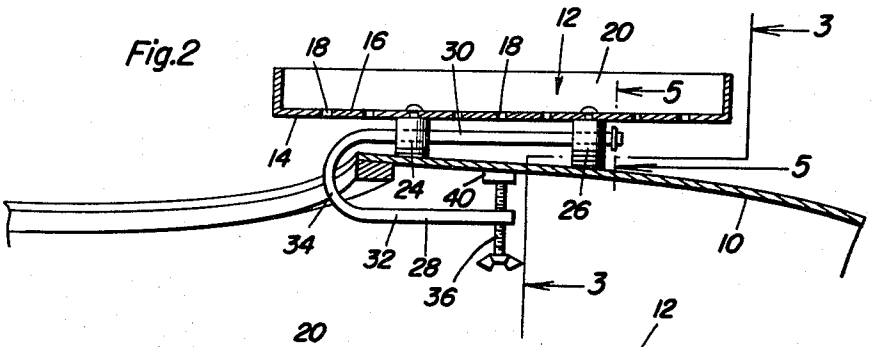


Fig.3

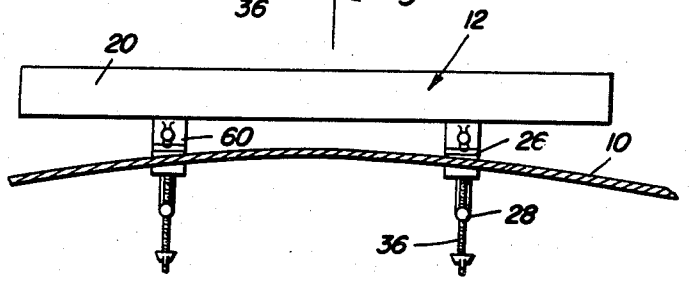


Fig.4

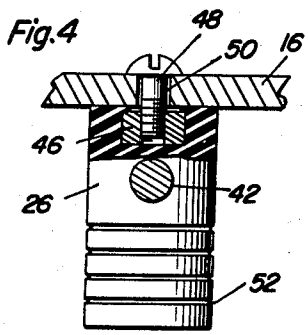
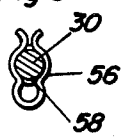


Fig.5



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Fig.6

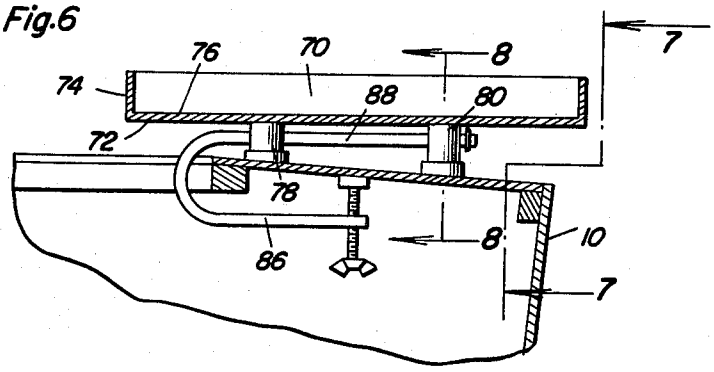


Fig.7

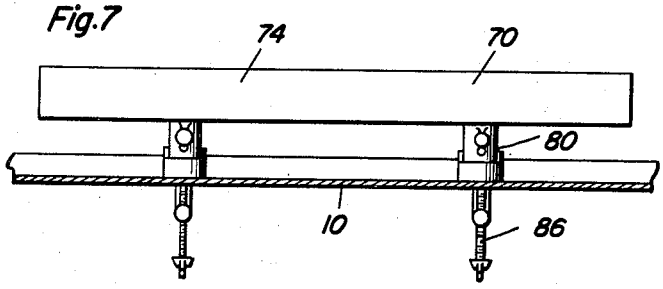


Fig.9

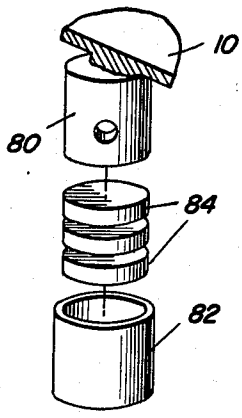
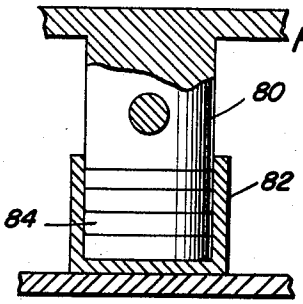


Fig.8



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UTILITY BOAT TRAY

Mahone Rees, Live Oak, Fla.

Application October 1, 1958, Serial No. 764,591

2 Claims. (Cl. 311—17)

This invention relates to attachments for boats and more particularly to a utility tray for small boats to protect the boat finish and provide a holder for knives, small tools, cut bait and other fishermen's equipment, gear, bait and the like.

An object of the invention is to provide a handy adjustable utility boat tray which is adapted to be removably secured to any convenient part of the boat, especially along the gunwales thereof so that small parts, pieces, bait, a knife, etc. are easily accessible to the fisherman and in one convenient location.

One of the features of the invention is found in its structure providing for adjustment so that the tray may be maintained horizontal regardless of the manufacturer's make or type of boat to which it is applied. The slope of the gunwales, paneling, etc. of different boats varies in accordance with the manufacturer's desire. Therefore, the utility tray has unique means by which to support the tray so that it is horizontal regardless of the type or make of boat on which it is used.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

Figure 1 is a top view of a boat showing diagrammatically two of any number of possible locations of the tray on a boat.

Figure 2 is a sectional view taken on the line 2—2 of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 2.

Figure 4 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view showing one modification of leg adjustment.

Figure 5 is a sectional view taken on the line 5—5 of Figure 2.

Figure 6 is a sectional view taken on the line 6—6 of Figure 1.

Figure 7 is a sectional view taken on the line 7—7 of Figure 6.

Figure 8 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view showing another modification of the adjustment of the tray, and taken on the line 8—8 of Figure 6.

Figure 9 is an exploded fragmentary perspective view of one of the leg adjustment structures.

In the accompanying drawings there is a boat 10 which diagrammatically represents any type of small boat. There are two trays 12 and 14 on the boat 10 showing that one or more trays may be used in the same boat and further showing that the trays may be applied in any place suitable for the purpose, this being left within the prerogative of the fiisherman.

Figures 2–5 illustrate the construction of tray 12. The tray is composed of a pan 14 having a flat bottom 16 with a number of drain openings 18 therein. There

are four upstanding sides 20 attached to the bottom of the tray. Although the tray is shown as rectangular, this shape may be varied.

The means for attaching the tray to the boat allow for different inclinations of boat surface making it possible to keep the tray level at all times and assure that the bottom 16 of the pan is not at an objectionable slope. These means each consists of a pair of legs, for instance legs 24 and 26 to which C-clamp 28 is secured. The C-clamp has an upper side 30 and a lower side 32 connected by a generally U-shaped portion 34. Setscrew 36 is threaded in side 28 and has a pad 40 adapted to contact the undersurface of a part of the boat. Side 30 extends through aligned openings, for instance openings 42, in each of the legs 24 and 26.

Legs 24 and 26 may be made of rubber, plastic or any other suitable flexible substance. Typical leg 26 (Figure 4) is cylindrical, although the cross-sectional shape may vary, and has a nut 46 embedded in the top part thereof. Bolt 48 is extended through an opening 50 in the bottom 16 of the tray and is threaded into nut 46. The lower part of the leg 26 has a plurality of circumferential grooves 52 forming weakened circumferential areas at which leg 26 may be trimmed or otherwise shortened. Accordingly, leg 26 may be left longer than leg 24 and leg 24 trimmed so that its length with respect to leg 26 is correct for the slope of the part of the boat to which tray 12 is attached in order to have the bottom of the tray level.

Although the C-clamp may be attached to some other part of the tray, it is preferred that the C-clamp extend through openings 42 in both legs and be held in place by frictional contact between the outer surface of the side 30 of the C-clamp and the openings 42. A spring clip 56 fitted in a circumferential groove 58 near the outer end of side 30, is a safety device preventing separation of the C-clamp from both of the legs. Although only one pair of legs, consisting of legs 24 and 26, are specifically described, the legs 60 on the opposite side of the tray, are identical in function and construction.

Figures 6–9 show a modification of the tray. This embodiment has tray 70 attached to another part of the boat 10 for the reasons pointed out previously. Furthermore, the tray 70 is made of a pan 72 which has sides 74 and a bottom 76. But the bottom 76 has no apertures showing that it is within the purview of the invention to have the bottom imperforate or perforated in either form. Moreover, special holders to hold appliances, bait and the like may be built in the tray, this being a further option.

The principal difference between the embodiments of Figure 2 and Figure 6 is found in the leg construction. There are two pairs of legs, one pair being shown in detail and consisting of legs 78 and 80. These are molded to the bottom 76 of the tray. The entire tray may be made of plastic with the legs 78 and 80 integral therewith. Further, the legs 78 and 80 may be adhered in any other way. It is preferred that these legs seat in sockets 82 that contact the top surface of a portion of boat 10. The sockets open upwardly and are preferably made of rubber or some other non-abrasive substance. The sockets are adhered to an integral part of typical leg 80 (Figures 8 and 9) and leave room to accept a group of circular shims 84. The vertical height i.e. length, of legs 76 and 80 is arrived at by using a larger or smaller number of shims 84.

As shown in Figure 6 there is a C-clamp 86 which is identical in construction and function to C-clamp 28. Therefore it has its upper side 88 passed through aligned openings in the integral or solid portions of legs 78 and 80. The C-clamp is adapted to grip against the

undersurface of a portion of the boat. Since two C-clamps are used, tray 70 is very securely and firmly held in place.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A utility tray for a fisherman's small boat, said tray comprising a pan which has a bottom, sides connected to the edges of said bottom, a plurality of legs attached at their upper ends to said pan bottom, said legs adapted to be severed to provide legs which are of a length to contact a sloping part of the boat while retaining the pan bottom approximately level, a C-shaped clamp by which to fasten a pair of said legs to the boat and thereby retain said pan in a fixed position with respect to the boat, said clamp having a lower member

adapted to fit beneath said boat part, said pair of legs having aligned transverse openings below the connection of said legs with said pan bottom and through which said upper part of said clamp extends to thereby attach said clamp to said pair of legs and also function as a brace to stabilize the legs of said pair of legs.

2. The utility tray of claim 1 wherein said legs are constructed of an elastomeric substance, said clamp having a clamp screw to engage the lower surface of said boat part and compress said elastomeric legs firmly against the upper surface of said boat part as said clamp screw is tightened.

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