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HOLDER FOR CHRISTMAS TREE OR THE LIKE

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Fig. 3.

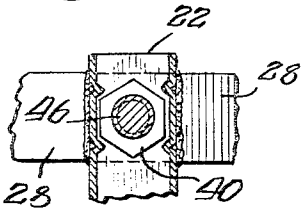


Fig. 1.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 2.

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HOLDER FOR CHRISTMAS TREE OR THE LIKE

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A holder for supporting a generally upright body, such as a Christmas tree, flag pole, or the like, the holder including a support, such as a tripod with one relatively short leg and two relatively long legs, supporting a standard operatively associated with a pair of vertically spaced and axially aligned C-clamps into which the body may be inserted laterally without obstruction by the support.

This invention relates to a holder for supporting a generally upright body, such as a Christmas tree, flag pole, or the like, but particularly a Christmas tree.

In the presently preferred embodiment of this invention there are provided one relatively short leg and two relatively long legs generally evenly divergent from the relatively short leg and joined thereto by a bracket to form a tripod, a standard mounted to and extending from the bracket, and a pair of vertically spaced and axially aligned C-clamps mounted to the standard on the side of the standard opposed to the relatively short leg. Preferably the ground or floor contacting extremities of the legs are spaced about 120 angular degrees apart, about the intersection of the aligned axes with the area spanned or occupied by the legs.

One feature of this invention is that the C-clamps have their open side portions aligned whereupon the generally upright body may be inserted laterally without obstruction by the tripod; this allows the generally upright body to be gripped with its free portion resting on the ground or floor during lateral insertion of the body into the C-clamps.

Another feature of this invention is that each leg includes a generally straight portion disposed to be generally parallel with the ground or floor and a base portion extending from the generally straight portion to the ground or floor to elevate the generally straight portion, thereby forming an arched tripod such that the holder is adapted to straddle a pan of water or the like by which a Christmas tree held by the holder may be watered.

Another feature of this invention is that each C-clamp includes a C-shaped member mounted at its midportion to the standard, an inwardly directed stud threadably engaging the standard and passing through the C-shaped member, and two inwardly directed studs threadably engaging the C-shaped member adjacent to its ends. Each stud is in the form of an L-bolt.

Another feature of this invention is that the mounting of the C-clamps on the side of the standard opposed to the relatively short leg allows the generally upright body to be held without support from beneath upon a tripod which for the ground or floor space spanned or occupied is comparatively stable to tipping moments. As well, the vertical position of the held body may be adjusted with respect to the ground or floor; in this manner, the vertical position of a Christmas tree may be adjusted so that the Christmas tree is immersed properly in a pan of water straddled by the holder.

Another feature of this invention is that the central axes of the C-clamps are aligned so as to intersect the ground or floor at a location generally central of the ground or floor area spanned or occupied by the tripod.

Another feature of this invention is that the provision of two C-clamps each having three studs allows for adjustment of the position of the held body with respect to the vertical position, and for accommodation of somewhat irregularly shaped held bodies.

And another feature of this invention is that the provision of a bracket mounted to the standard to which bracket the legs are removably mounted allows for partial disassembly of the holder to facilitate storage and shipment thereof.

These and other features, objects, and advantages of this invention will be apparent from the following description. To acquaint those skilled in the art with the manner of utilizing and practicing this invention, there shall be described, in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, a presently preferred embodiment thereof.

FIGURE 1 is a top plan view of a preferred embodiment of this invention. A pan straddled by the illustrated holder and the outline of the trunk of a tree held by the holder are shown in phantom lines.

FIGURE 2 is an elevation view of the holder of FIGURE 1, showing the same pan and a fragmentary portion of the same tree trunk in phantom lines.

FIGURE 3 is a fragmentary view taken along section plane 3—3 of FIGURE 2 looking in the indicated direction.

FIGURE 4 is a view taken along section plane 4—4 of FIGURE 1 looking in the indicated direction.

In FIGURES 1 and 2, holder **10** comprises a tripod indicated generally at **12**, including a relatively short leg **14** and two relatively long legs **16** and **18** assembled to a bracket **20**, as will be hereinafter described in detail. It is sufficient at this point to note that bracket **20** is generally Y-shaped in plan view (FIGURE 1).

An elongated standard **22**, in the form of a closed channel or tubular member of square cross section is welded or otherwise mounted to the midportion of bracket **20**, as shown. It should be understood that the respective parallel sides of standard **22** are oriented with respect to bracket **20** in the manner shown in FIGURE 1.

A first C-clamp, indicated generally at **24**, is mounted on one side of a pair of parallel sides to standard **22** toward the end of the standard which is welded or otherwise mounted to the midportion of bracket **20**, and a second C-clamp, indicated generally at **26**, is mounted similarly to standard **22** toward the opposite (upper) end thereof, as seen in FIGURE 2. C-clamps **24** and **26** are disposed in horizontal planes parallel to each other and have their openings **23** and **25**, respectively, aligned one above the other and facing in a direction away from the shorter leg **14** and approximately midway between the longer legs **16** and **18**. C-clamps **24** and **26** are similar. For this reason, only C-clamp **26** will be described in detail, and it should be understood that the structure and manner of mounting C-clamp **24** is comparable to the structure and manner of mounting C-clamp **26**.

C-clamp **26** includes a tubular member **28** of square cross section arcuately curved to an open C-shape enclosing approximately 220 angular degrees, as seen in FIGURE 1. Apertures, for passing studs to be hereinafter described, are provided through C-shaped tubular member **28** at **30** and **32** adjacent the extremities thereof, and at **33** and **34** at the arcuate midpoint thereof. As indicated at **36**, C-shaped tubular member **28** is welded by a flat side, or is otherwise mounted, at about its arcuate midportion to a flat side of standard **22**, preserving the aperture at **34**. Apertures communicating with the aperture at **34** are provided at **38** and **39** through standard **22**.

As disclosed more clearly in FIGURE 3, a stud-re-

ceiving nut 40 is staked within standard 22 with its threaded bore communicating with the apertures at 38 and 39 through standard 22. Also, as disclosed more clearly in FIGURE 4, a stud-receiving nut 42 is staked within C-shaped tubular member 28 at one extremity thereof with its threaded bore communicating with the apertures at 30 and 32 through C-shaped tubular member 28. And a stud-receiving nut 44 is staked in like manner within C-shaped tubular member 28 at its other extremity with its threaded bore communicating with the apertures at 30 and 32 through C-shaped tubular member 28.

An inwardly directed threaded stud 46 is threaded through stud-receiving nut 40. Stud 46 is sufficiently long to pass through standard 22 and C-shaped tubular member 28. An outer extension 48 of stud 46 is bent over to form of stud 46 an L-bolt. Also, an inwardly directed threaded stud 50 is threaded through stud-receiving nut 42. Stud 50 is sufficiently long to pass through C-shaped tubular member 28. An outer extension 52 of stud 50 is bent over to form of stud 50 an L-bolt. And a similar stud 54 (having bent-over extension 56) is threaded through stud-receiving nut 44. The three studs are disposed angularly over an arc of almost 220 angular degrees.

The provision of three inwardly directed threaded studs on C-clamp 24 and on C-clamp 26 allows for adjustment of the position of a held object with respect to the vertical and for accommodation of irregularly shaped held objects.

Bracket 20, to which standard 22 is welded or otherwise mounted, is formed with three open rectangular channel extensions 58, 60, and 62, each arranged with its open side facing downwardly.

Each of the legs 14, 16, and 18 is in the form of a tubular member of square cross section. Leg 14 is provided with a generally straight portion 64 having an inner end 66 mounted by means of machine screw and nut set 68 within channel extension 58 of bracket 20. This portion 64 is relatively short with respect to comparable portions of legs 16 and 18. Integral with the outer end (as at 70) of the straight portion 64 is a base portion 72 which curves as shown in FIGURE 2 to elevate portion 64 with respect to the floor. A conventional non-skidding, non-marring tip (not shown) may be provided at the floor-contacting extremity 74 of leg 14.

Leg 16 is provided with a generally straight portion 76 having an inner end similarly mounted within channel extension 60 of bracket 20. The portion 76 is relatively long with respect to the comparable portion 64 of leg 14. Leg 16 is similarly provided with a base portion 78, which is similar to the base portion 72 of leg 14. Leg 18 is similar to leg 16 and is similarly mounted within channel extension 62 of bracket 20. Each of these legs 16 and 18 may be provided with a conventional non-skidding, non-marring tip (not shown).

The lengths and interangles of the generally straight portions of legs 14, 16, and 18 are arranged so as to generally balance and center the load-center axes of C-clamps 24 and 26 with respect to the ground or floor contacting extremities of the legs 14, 16 and 18. Preferably, these extremities are spaced about 120 angular degrees apart, about the intersection of the aligned axes and the ground or floor area spanned or occupied by the tripod, whereby the holder is comparatively stable to tipping moments.

The manner in which the legs 14, 16 and 18 are mounted to the bracket 20 allows for partial disassembly of the holder to facilitate storage and shipment thereof.

The illustrated embodiment is shown holding a tree 80 having its trunk 82 positioned within C-clamps 24 and 26, with the respective sets of threaded studs inwardly threaded to engage and grip the tree trunk 82, as will be understood. The tripod 12 is shown straddling a pan 84 adapted to hold water for the tree 80. As shown, the lower extremity of the tree trunk 82 is elevated with respect to the floor and the bottom 86 of pan 84, as indicated generally at 88, to accommodate the pan 84 and to allow water to pass beneath the tree trunk 82 for proper immersion thereof. While the lower end of the tree 80 is shown elevated above the bottom of the pan 84, it will be understood that the lower end could be at any level from the floor level up to the level of the lower C-clamp 24. The tree 80 and the holder 10 can be removed without disturbance to the pan 84 and the water therein.

It should be noted that in the illustrated embodiment, C-clamp 26 is situated above a couple of low-lying branches 90. From this it should be evident that in Christmas tree applications the need to strip the trunk of low-lying branches is substantially eliminated.

While this invention is singularly adapted to Christmas tree applications, it contemplates applications for supporting flag poles, theatrical displays, or other generally upright objects which are of a columnar shape at the end to be mounted. It is thought that in some instances it may be found useful to provide such a holder mounted to a wall or other base. And while this invention has been described in a presently preferred form, it is not intended to be limited to that form, except insofar as the following claims are so limited, since modifications coming within the scope of this invention will be suggested by this disclosure to those skilled in the art.

What is claimed is:

1. A holder for a generally upright columnar body comprising support means adapted to have at least three points of spaced apart contact with a supporting surface such as a floor and adapted at its center portion to operatively support a vertical standard, a pair of C-clamps operatively associated with the standard and disposed in spaced apart horizontal planes with their open sides vertically aligned and facing away from the standard, said support being constructed so as to provide an unobstructed space between the supporting surface and said C-clamps and extending unobstructedly, laterally away from said support means, and means associated with the C-clamps for removably securing the upright columnar body within said clamps and generally perpendicular to the supporting surface.

2. The holder of claim 1 wherein the support comprises three legs with their radially outer ends adapted to engage the supporting surface at points angularly and radially disposed from each other generally equal distances from a point on the supporting surface below the center of the C-clamps, and wherein said unobstructed space beneath said C-clamps lies between a pair of adjacent legs.

3. A holder comprising a support including one relatively short leg and two relatively long legs generally evenly divergent from the relatively short leg, a standard mounted to and extending vertically from the support, and a pair of spaced C-clamps mounted to the side of the standard opposed to the relatively short leg, each C-clamp including a C-shaped member supporting three inwardly directed threaded studs, with one stud being threadedly supported adjacent to each of the ends of the C-shaped member, and with a third stud threadedly supported adjacent the connection of the C-shaped member with the standard, said standard comprising a tubular member and a pair of nuts staked relative to said tubular member with one nut being associated with each C-clamp for threadedly supporting said third stud.

4. A holder comprising a support including one relatively short leg and two relatively long legs generally evenly divergent from the relatively short leg, a standard mounted to and extending vertically from the support, and a pair of spaced C-clamps mounted to the side of the standard opposed to the relatively short leg, each C-clamp including a C-shaped member supporting three inwardly directed threaded studs, with one stud being

threadedly supported adjacent to each of the ends of the C-shaped member, and with a third stud threadedly supported adjacent the connection of the C-shaped member with the standard, each C-shaped member comprising a tubular member and having a nut staked to the tubular member adjacent each end of the C-shaped member for threadably supporting one of said threaded studs.

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