Sept. 11, 1934. R. LURBA 1,973,438

DEMOUNTABLE TOP

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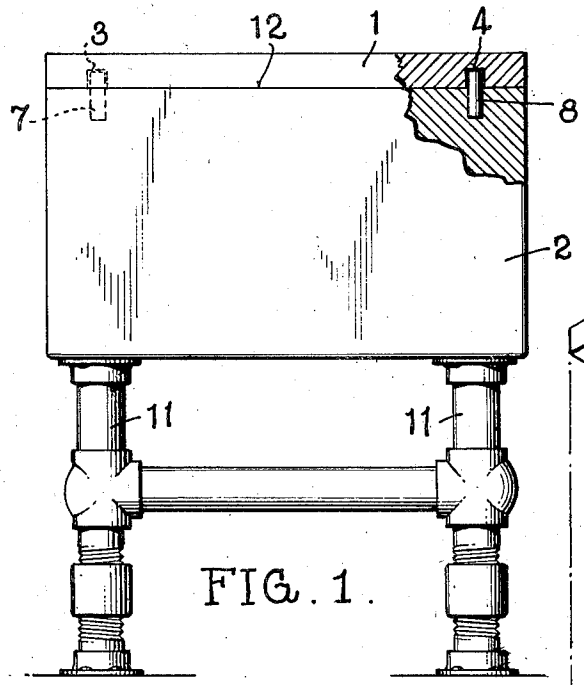


FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

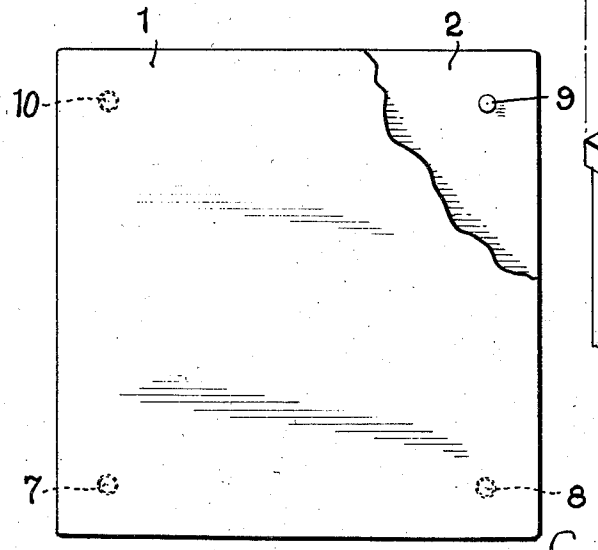
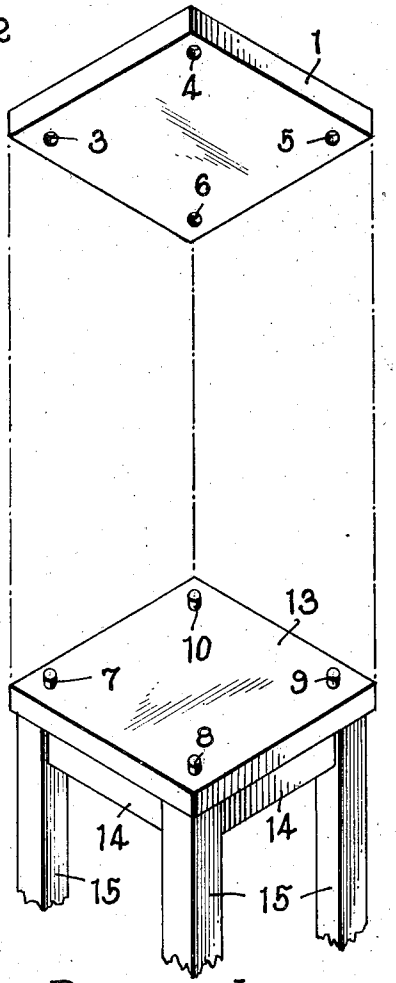


FIG. 3.



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DEMOUNTABLE TOP

Raymond Lurba, Washington, D. C.

Application October 11. 1932, Serial No. 637,312

1 Claim. (Cl. 146—215)

My invention relates to demountable tops, particularly intended for use on tables and the like which are subjected to unusual wear when in use. Examples of tables of this kind are the tables used in stores, factories butcher shops, restaurants and the like for treating various products. More particularly the invention relates to demountable tops for use with food products, such as bakery goods, candies, meats and the like which are to be cut, chopped or otherwise treated upon the table top.

Table tops when subjected to service of this kind soon become uneven or wear away, with the result that the top must be refinished or even replaced entirely, depending upon the extent of wear and injury it has suffered. This is particularly true of table tops whereon materials are chopped or cut by means of knives, because the knives, etc., rapidly cut away the wood of which the table top is made.

The invention relates also to table tops and the like which are made demountable in order to make it possible to quickly exchange one top for another, so that each top may be employed for a particular purpose or group of purposes and may not contaminate the products of other natures incompatible therewith. Examples of this are found in restaurants where various food products must be handled, some of which it would be highly undesirable to mix with others because they would impart foreign and unwanted flavors thereto. For instance, many people would object to having the taste or odors of fish or onions or other highly flavored foods imparted to foods of other nature devoid of such flavors or odors. In this event my invention makes it possible to rapidly remove one top from the table or the like and substitute another reserved for the purpose in question, which is a matter of great importance, particularly where floor space is limited, because a single table will suffice for handling all the various foods and the demountable tops can be stored in small spaces when not in use.

A further advantage of the demountable table tops, in accordance with the present invention, is that they may readily be removed to a convenient place for washing and otherwise treating them without at the same time removing the entire table. This is of great importance for the reason that these tables are often very bulky and consequently heavy and furthermore it is possible to continue using the same table with a different top thereon while one top is being cleaned.

For a clearer understanding of my invention reference should be had to the present specification in connection with the accompanying drawing illustrative of one embodiment thereof.

In said drawing:

Fig. 1 illustrates the invention as applied to a meat block, the figure being an elevation, partly broken away to show a detail of the construction.

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the device shown in Fig. 1, also partly broken away.

Fig. 3 shows a demountable table top as applied to a table of different nature, said figure being an exploded view showing how the parts would fit together when assembled.

Referring now specifically to Fig. 1 I have illustrated the invention as applied to a heavy table of the type ordinarily known as a meat chopping block, which is commonly used by butchers, restaurants and the like. These blocks are ordinarily made of a single unitary block of wood which is extremely heavy and bulky, in order to provide sufficient inertia or "solidity" to afford a stable support for meat and the like, when being chopped thereon. When meat blocks are thus made of but a single unitary block of wood, (by which I do not mean, of course, that the block is only a single piece of wood, because in fact it is usually assembled of a plurality of pieces standing vertically and glued together to form a single block with the end grain exposed at the top) these blocks, although perfectly plane and level on top when new, will soon become rough, uneven and out of level, due to the fact that when chopping is done thereon most of the wear will be concentrated at certain parts of the surface. With the unitary blocks formerly used it then became necessary to have a portion sawed off from the top of the block to restore its level and plane condition. This required that the meat block be out of service for some time during the sawing operation, which is an expensive operation and often is not entirely satisfactory because the sawing, when not performed with the utmost skill, will still leave the meat block with an uneven surface. Furthermore, every time the surface is thus reconditioned by sawing it is obvious that much of the material of the block is lost, so that eventually the block will become unfit for further service, because it has become too light in weight and of insufficient height to be conveniently employed.

In accordance with my invention I provide a demountable top designated by reference char-

acter 1 upon a meat block or the like 2, said demountable top having four apertures 3, 4, 5 and 6 therein to cooperate with four dowel pins 7, 8, 9 and 10 respectively. The meat block 2 may be provided with a suitable supporting structure 11, here shown as made of ordinary pipe fittings and the like. Preferably the demountable top 1 and the block 2, when the invention is applied to the meat block, will meet at a plane surface, shown at 12 in Fig. 1, so as to produce sufficient support and solidity. Preferably also the said demountable top 1 may be made with end grain of the wood exposed at the top thereof. At this point it may be well to call attention to the fact that the meat block 2 which is ordinarily made, as stated, of a massive piece of wood may, in case the present invention is applied thereto, be equally well made of some other material having sufficient mass and strength, for example, it may be made of metal or concrete or other plastic composition, thus facilitating and cheapening the construction of this portion 2 of the block very materially, while in no way detracting from the usefulness and quality of the whole, due to the fact that the upper exposed surface of the demountable top is an end-grain wooden surface, just as though the entire block were made of such wood.

Referring now to Fig. 3 I show how the demountable top 1 may be removed from the meat block and inserted upon a table or the like of different nature, here shown as a substantially built table of more or less conventional construction, namely, having a top 13, side rails 14 and legs 15. This table top 13 will have the same dowel pins 7, 8, 9 and 10 therein as were shown in the meat block of Figs. 1 and 2, said pins being properly spaced to fit in the apertures 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the demountable top 1. By arranging the locations of these dowel pins above or approximately above the center points of the table legs it will be evident that a very firm support is provided for the demountable top 1 so that any necessary operations can be performed upon said top when it is applied to the table.

While I have illustrated two different forms of tables, namely, the meat block and the conventional table form, it should be understood that such illustrations are merely suggestive and that my invention is not to be restricted to these two definite types of tables, but is applicable to any other suitable supports. The only requisite is that the dowel pins 7, 8, 9 and 10 should be present in the support for the demountable top and it is clear that such dowel pins may be provided readily in any support or work bench, thereby making it possible to apply the same demountable top 1 to a plurality of different supports and also making it possible to provide a plurality of different tops 1, all of which are interchangeable with one another and which may be used for various distinct purposes.

It has heretofore been proposed to secure a demountable top to a meat block by means of complicated structures comprising iron rods, bolts and nuts. A serious objection to this way of securing a demountable top to a meat block resides in the fact that the demountable top is very much weakened at the points where the bolts are located therein and this objection is particularly serious because of the relatively slight thickness of the top. A further objection to this construction resides in the fact that much time is lost in securing the top in place or in removing it, thus making it impossible to secure one of the important advantages of the present invention, namely, rapid interchangeability of the table top. A further objection to the placing of metallic bolts and rods in the wooden top is that it decreases the available extent of wood over the said rods so that after even a relatively short time the wood may have been worn down sufficiently for the butcher's cleaver or the like to strike the said bolts and rods and thereby become dulled and possibly even to split the wood at the weakened parts.

My invention obviates all these objections because nothing but wood is used in the construction of the demountable top, and yet the top may be made to fit as snugly and tightly as may be desired in any particular case by making a correspondingly tight fit of the dowel pins in the apertures. The same top may in fact be made to fit tightly on one table and more loosely on another, should it be desired to do so.

While I have illustrated and described a construction employing four dowel pins supported in the stationary or non-removable portion of the table and a corresponding number of apertures in the demountable top, it will, of course, be evident this may be reversed, that is, the dowel pins may equally well form a part of the demountable top and the apertures in that case may be provided in the lower part of the table. It is also evident that while four dowel pins and apertures afford a generally satisfactory arrangement, it is by no means necessary to have exactly four, and more or less may be employed as may be thought desirable in any particular instance. Where it is desired to position the demountable top in a definite manner it is also obvious that some of the dowel pins may form a permanent part of the top and others a permanent part of the bottom, so that the demountable top will fit in only a certain way or ways upon the sub-structure.

It will also be obvious that my invention is not in any way restricted to the particular embodiment illustrated, but that modifications may be made in both the material, structure and shapes of the various elements thereof without departing from the invention. Reference should, therefore, be had to the accompanying claim wherein the invention is defined.

Having thus described an embodiment of my invention and explained some of the advantages thereof, I claim:

A chopping block installation comprising a plurality of supports, one of said supports being relatively heavy and each support having a plurality of dowel pins projecting from its upper surface, those of the relatively heavy support being made of wood, and a flat relatively thin and light slab of wood having apertures therein spaced properly to fit interchangeably on the dowel pins of the various supports, said slab having the grain of wood extending substantially at right angles to its upper surface, said relatively heavy support having an upper surface shaped to make intimate contact throughout its entire extent with the lower surface of the said wooden slab, which has a correspondingly shaped surface, each of said dowel pins extending in a direction normal to said surfaces of contact and said dowel pins constituting the sole means for securing the slab interchangeably to any of the said supports.

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