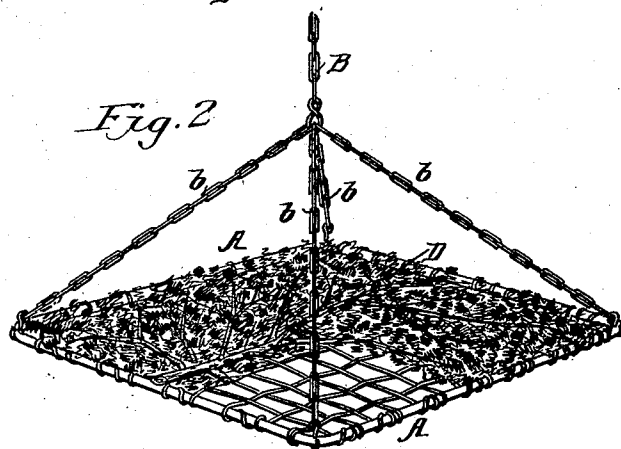
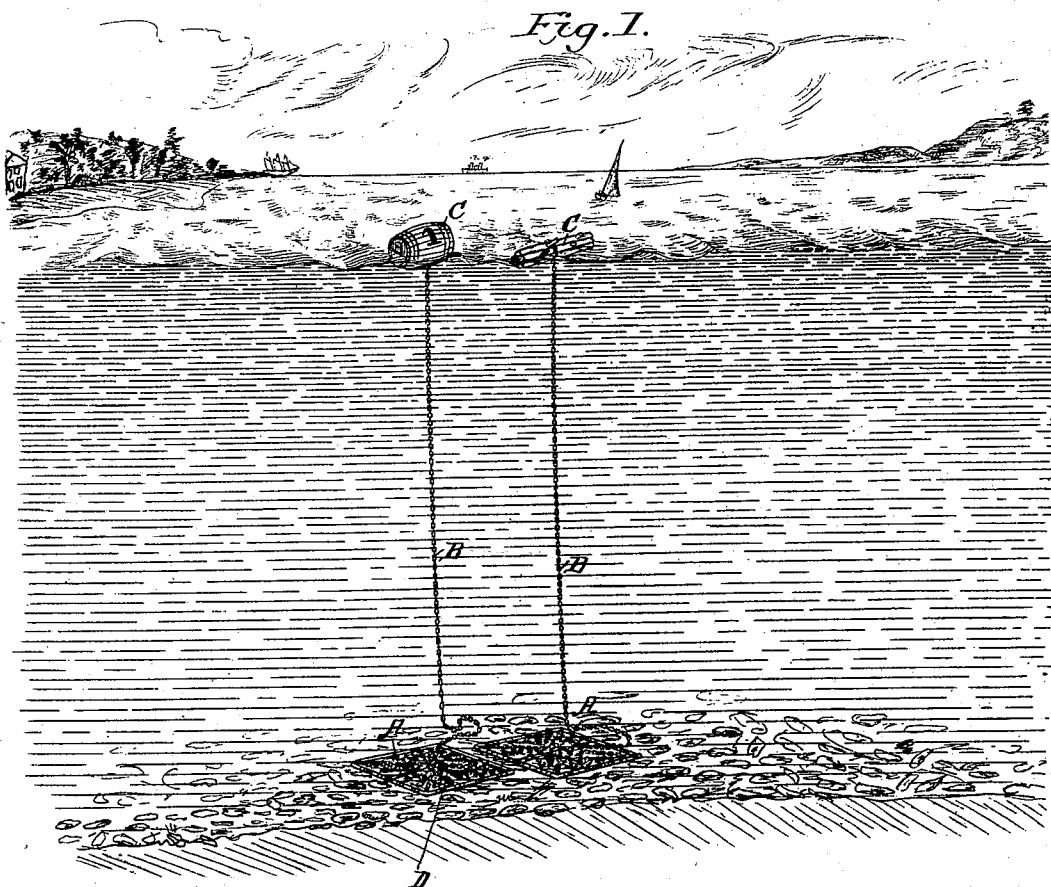


(No Model.)

A. M. WILLIS.
ARTIFICIAL OYSTER BED.

No. 456,390.

Patented July 21, 1891.



WITNESSES:

Fred G. Dieterich
P. B. Furpin.

INVENTOR:

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BY

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ACHILLE M. WILLIS, OF REDIVIVA, VIRGINIA.

ARTIFICIAL OYSTER-BED.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 456,390, dated July 21, 1891.

Application filed October 24, 1890. Serial No. 369,250. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ACHILLE M. WILLIS, of Rediviva, in the county of Rappahannock and State of Virginia, have invented an Artificial Oyster-Bed, of which the following is a specification.

My invention is an artificial bed for oysters and the like, as hereinafter referred to; and it consists in certain features of construction and novel combinations of parts, as will be hereinafter described, and pointed out in the claims.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view illustrating the invention as in use, and Fig. 2 is a detail perspective view of the device.

My artificial bed comprises the bed proper or platform A, the chain or connection B, connected therewith and leading upward therefrom, and a support C for the upper end of said chain or connection, whereby the same is retained in convenient position for easy access when desired to lift the bed proper. This bed proper or platform is shown as made of an outer metal frame and a net-work of wires extending across said frame. This form of bed proper is preferred because of its durability and the fact that it will sink itself; but manifestly the bed proper may be of any suitable construction or material adapted to support the oysters.

The chain or connection B is shown as a linked chain, having branches *b* connecting with the opposite corners of the frame, so that the chain B can lift the frame A up squarely.

The support C is preferably a float, as shown; but in cases where the apparatus is employed near the shore a windlass or the like may be used to support the upper end of the chain, and also serve as a means of drawing upon the chain to lift the bed proper.

The bed proper supports what may be termed a "spawn-supporting mat" D, which is shown as a pine brush secured upon and spread out on the bed proper; but I do not desire to be limited to a brush, as shavings or any other suitable material to which the

spawn will adhere may be used instead; nor do I mean by the term "mat" to mean that it entirely covers the frame.

Oyster-spawn is a substance which adheres to substances like pine brush, shavings, old shoes, &c., and therefore I find it desirable to provide the bed proper with some substance to which the spawn will adhere.

It is sometimes thought that on sandy bottom oysters do not do well, and it becomes desirable to provide a loam or muddy bottom. By the use of my bed loam or mud can be supported thereon to receive the oysters, so that oysters can be raised at any place where the water is suitable.

In use the seed-oysters are placed on the bed proper and the same is lowered to the bottom, and the connection is left sufficiently slack for the tides, &c., and also so slack that if it should be struck by a passing boat the chain will give and the bed be left undisturbed. The float is then attached to the top of the connection.

Not only oysters or edible mollusks, but other mollusks, may be cultivated, and, when desired, pearl oysters may be brought from Ceylon, Panama, or elsewhere and cultivated in any desired suitable location.

In practice the beds proper may be arranged in sets to cover the bottom and the floats may be numbered or otherwise designated, so that the owner may keep account of the condition of the several bed-frames, so that he can at any time go and draw up the particular frame desired.

In lifting the frames windlass on boats may be employed, and when the bed has been raised to the surface the oysters may be culled therefrom and the rest left undisturbed on the bed-frame, which may then be lowered again to the bottom.

It will be seen my improvement may be used in depths too great for tonging or dredging, and in fact may be used at any depth where the pressure is not too great for the oyster.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new is—

1. The herein-described artificial oyster-

bed, comprising the bed proper and a spawn-supporting mat supported by said bed proper, substantially as set forth.

5 2. The improved artificial oyster-bed consisting of the bed proper formed of a frame and a net-work held in the frame, the spawn-supporting mat secured to the bed proper, the chain or connection secured to the bed proper

and extended upward therefrom, and the float for supporting the upper end of the chain, 10 substantially as set forth.

ACHILLE M. WILLIS.

Witnesses:

P. B. TURPIN,
SOLON C. KEMON.