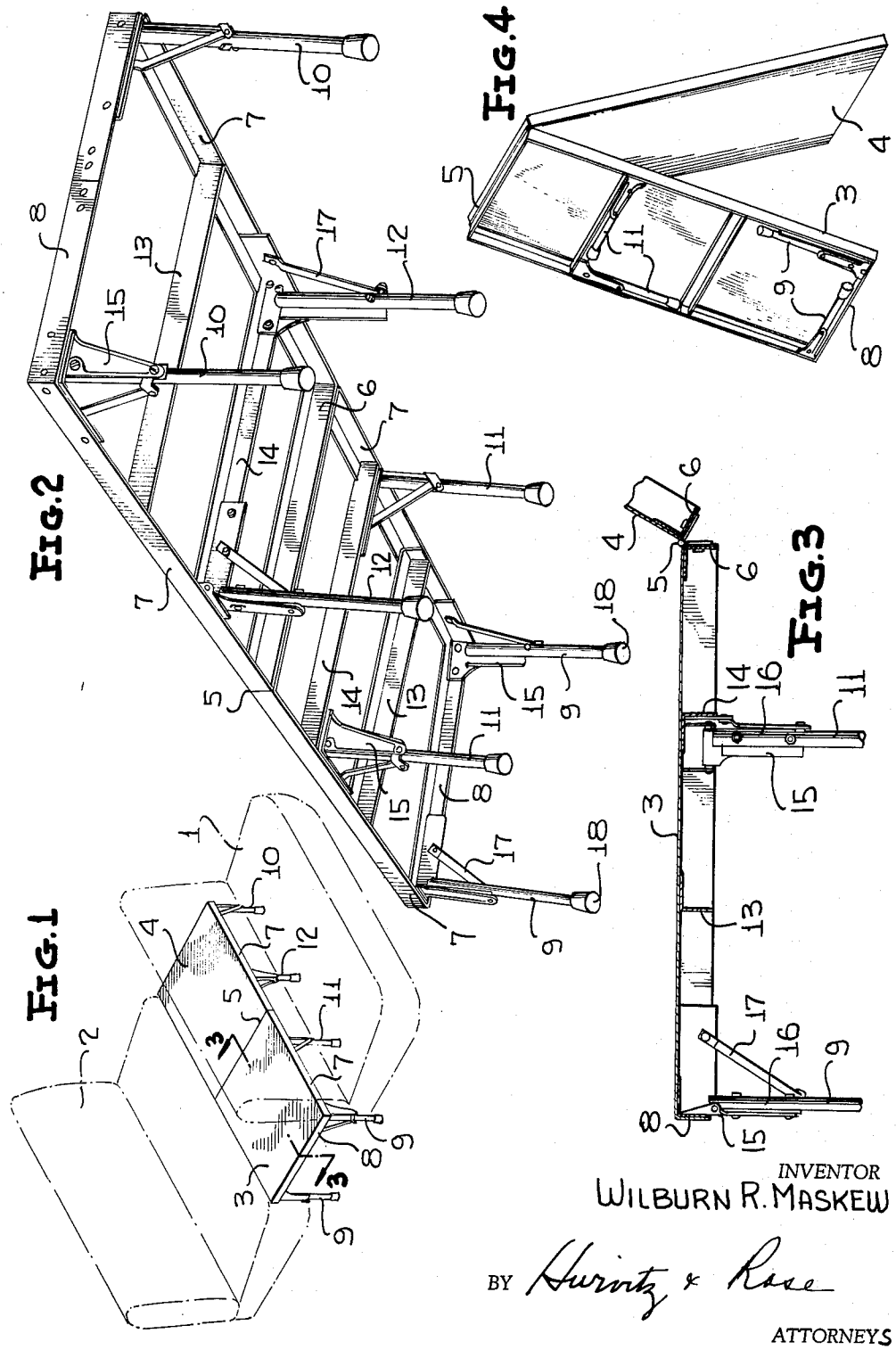
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This invention relates to folding portable tables and more particularly to an eight legged folding table having a flexible midsection.

Because picnic tables at campsites are often occupied when their use is desired and because sleeping accommodations in places such as national parks are often full when needed there is a need for a portable and compact device which can be used as a picnic table or as an apparatus for converting an automobile into a sleeping quarter. The present invention fulfills this need by providing a portable table which can be used as a picnic table or as a platform situated between the front and rear seats of an automobile.

As a rule, the ground where it is wished to set a picnic table will not be level and the floorboard of an automobile will slope away from the driveshaft tunnel. Thus by providing a table with eight legs and a flexible and foldable midsection applicant has developed a table which will conform to an irregular surface and be reducible to one half size by folding at the midsection making automobile trunk storage possible when traveling.

The principal object of the invention is to provide a table having folding legs and a foldable top which may be stored in a confined space.

An additional object of the present invention is to provide a folding top table which has great support strength in the midsection.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a folding table which may be used as an ordinary table or as a platform which may be placed between the front and rear seats of an automobile to provide sleeping space therein.

In general the foregoing and other objects of the invention are accomplished by providing a table the top of which is in at least two sections and pivotally connected by means of hinge. More than two folding legs are provided for each of the two table top sections.

Other objects and many of the attendant advantages of this invention will be readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a top view perspective of the invention used as a platform between the front and rear seats of an automobile;

FIGURE 2 is a bottom view perspective showing the invention in the unfolded ready for use state;

FIGURE 3 is a cross-sectional view of the invention along line 3—3 of FIGURE 1 in a partially unfolded state; and

FIGURE 4 is a side perspective view of the invention in almost a completely folded state.

FIGURE 1 shows the invention situated between a front seat 1 and a rear seat 2 of an automobile. The table includes a first table top 3 and a second table top 4 joined by a hinge 5 fixedly attached to inside end flanges 6. Aiding in the support of the table top are side flanges 7 and outside end flanges 8. A first pair of outside legs, 9, a second pair of outside legs 10, a first pair of inside legs 11 and a second pair of inside legs 12 are attached to the flanges by hinges which enable the legs to fold under the table, although the inside legs 11 and 12 could be set at the inner edge of both table tops 3 and 4 so that they would be in close relationship, they are herein set

apart away from the inner edges of the table tops to allow the drive shaft tunnel to pass between them. As a practical matter, there need be no more than one inner leg attached to either table top for the table to have utility. One leg will support the hinged portion of the table to keep it from buckling.

FIGURE 2 is a more detailed bottom perspective view of the table of the invention. The first table top 3 is pivotally joined by means of hinge 5 to the second table top 4. Surrounding the individual table tops 3 and 4 are the inner end flanges 6 to which the hinge 5 is attached, the outer end flanges 8 and the side flanges 7. Since the table tops may be made of sheet metal, the flanges may be turned down extensions of the table tops. Outer supports 13 and inner supports 14 run across and beneath the table tops 3 and 4 connecting fixedly with the side flanges 7 to give support and strength to the table tops. The outside legs 9 and 10 are firmly attached by welding, bolts or other suitable means at each junction of the outside end flanges 8 and the side flanges 7. The inside legs 11 and 12 are likewise firmly attached at junctions of the inner supports 14 and the side flanges 7. The inner legs 11 and 12 are attached at the junctions of the inside end flanges 14 and the side flanges 7 rather than at the junctions of the inside end flanges 6 and the side flanges 7 to provide room for the drive shaft tunnel of an automobile, when the device is used as a sleeping platform in an automobile. For other uses, however, the arrangement of the inside legs 11 and 12 could take many forms and the number of inside legs 11 and 12 need not be four. To allow the legs of the table to be folded each leg is provided with a leg hinge 15. Leg hinges 15 are secured to bracing elements including outside end flanges 8, inside end flanges 6, side flanges 7 and inner supports 14 on one side of the hinge pivot, and to leg shafts 16 on the other side of the hinge joint. Brace elements 17 hold the legs in a fixed position when the legs are extended. The brace elements 17 may work in a slotted guideway having a notch at one end of well known structure or be bolted or otherwise secured to keep the legs in a desired position. Each leg shaft 16 is capped on its bottom side by a resilient foot 18. The preferable arrangement of the leg hinges 15 is in continuous ninety degree displacement in a single direction from the plane of the previous hinge on each individual table section. This allows the table legs to be folded so that each leg will lay along a different side of the table section.

FIGURE 3 shows the table in section along the line 3—3 of FIGURE 1. The hinge 5 joining the first table top 3 to the second table top 4 is connected to the inner end flanges 6. Outside leg 9 is connected to the outside end flange 8 by the leg hinge 15 and held rigid with respect to the side flange 7 by a brace element 17. Inside leg 11 is connected to the side flange 7 and held rigid with respect to the inner support 14 by a brace element 17. Outer support 13 gives strength to the table top. In the figure the table sections are shown at an angle as if the table were being erected or dismantled.

FIGURE 4 is a side perspective view of the table in almost dismantled form ready for storage, the legs 9 and 11 are folded so that one leg only lays along each side of a table section. The hinge is normally set between the two table sections so that the hinge pivot point is along the top edge of the table. This enables the table section tops to be folded together to provide protection of the table tops during transit or storage.

Normally the table of the present invention is stored or carried in folded form as shown in FIGURE 4 only with the first and second table tops abutting. Erection is accomplished by swinging the first and second table tops apart until they are both in the same plane and extending the folding legs.

An additional embodiment of the present invention might have the hinge pivot point between the two table sections along the bottom edge of the inner flanges 6. Thus if strong enough materials were used the hinge would support the table and anything placed on it so that no inner legs would be needed.

Obviously many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in the light of the above teachings. It is therefore to be understood that within the scope of the appended claims the invention may be practiced otherwise than specifically described.

I claim:

1. A folding table adapted for use as a platform above the floor of an automobile comprising a first table top, a second table top having a length substantially the same as said first table top, hinge means pivotably connecting one edge of said first table top to a corresponding edge of said second table top, said edges including opposed inside end flanges for mounting said hinge means, said hinge means being connected across the full width of said table and having a pivot point extending transversely along the full width of the upper surface of said table, said flanges extending downwardly from said pivot point at substantially right angles to said table tops, a pair of spaced supports extending transversely across the bottom of each of said first and second table tops, said supports dividing said table tops into three substantially equal sections, outside end flanges of each of said first and second table tops forming the edges of said table tops opposite from said first mentioned edges, a pair of outside legs mounted on each of said first and second table tops adjacent said outside end flanges, a pair of inside legs mounted on each of said first and second table tops adjacent the one of said transverse supports closest to said inside end flanges whereby all of said pairs of legs are substantially equally spaced from each other a distance equal to two of said table top sections, each of said legs including a mounting hinge whereby said legs are adapted to be independently pivoted out of the way and a brace element for retaining said legs in an extended position for supporting said table when in use, the pair of inside legs on one table top being positioned a sufficient distance from the pair of inside legs on the other table top to accommodate the drive shaft of said automobile.

2. The combination of claim 1 wherein said mounting hinges for each of said pairs are mounted at 90° angles with respect to each other whereby one of each of said pairs of legs is positioned transversely of the respective table top and the other of each of said pairs is positioned longitudinally when said table is in the folded position.

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