Nov. 1, 1932. F. E. SAMUELSON 1,885,483

TRAY

Filed June 7, 1929

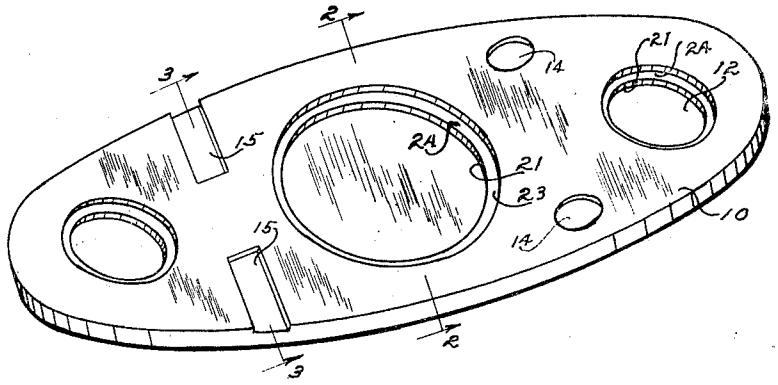


FIG - 1

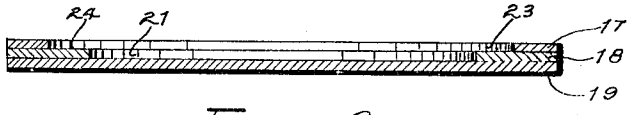


FIG - 2

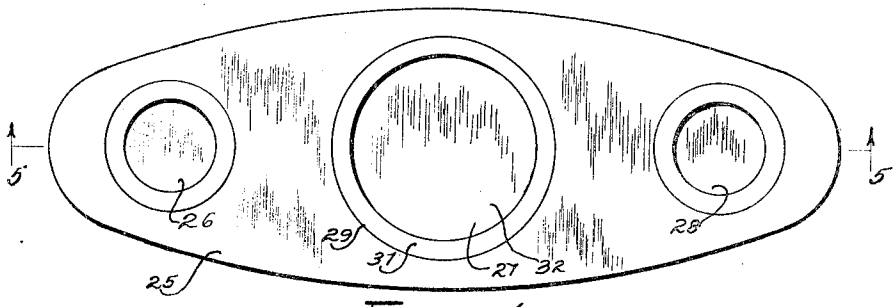


FIG - 4

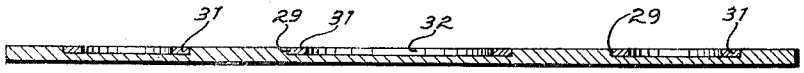


FIG - 5



FIG - 3

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Patented Nov. 1, 1932 1,885,483

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

FRANK E. SAMUELSON, OF JAMESTOWN, NEW YORK

TRAY

Application filed June 7, 1926. Serial No. 369,084.

This invention relates to an improvement in trays and more particularly to lap trays for individuals.

Prior to this invention no attempt has been made to provide a lap tray for the serving of buffet luncheons and the like which would prevent slipping or sliding of the dishes thereon and the consequent upsetting, breakage and spilling of the contents from careless or unsteady carriage or support of the tray. In its preferred embodiment this invention is directed to the provision of a lap tray formed with suitable depressions in which to receive dishes of varied sizes to retain them from sliding about.

The principal object of this invention is to provide a device of this class which is light in weight, easily handled, and having a series of depressions in which to receive and retain dishes placed thereon.

A further object is to provide a device of this class incapable of breakage through dropping and which may be easily and economically manufactured.

Other and further objects of this invention will appear from a consideration of the following specification when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing; and in which

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of one modification of this invention;

Fig. 2 is a transverse sectional view taken substantially on the line 2—2 of Figure 1 and shows the multi-sized plate retaining means;

Fig. 3 is a vertical sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 1;

Fig. 4 is a plan view of a slight modification of this invention; and

Fig. 5 is a longitudinal vertical sectional view taken on the line 5—5 of Figure 4 and shows ring inserts by which dishes or plates of varying size may be accommodated.

Referring to Figure 1, this invention is generally indicated by the reference numeral 10 and is comprised of three or more ply of wood, pasteboard, beaverboard or the like, secured together in any desired manner, as by gluing. As shown in the present embodiment, a plurality of dish retaining depressions 12 are formed in the upper face of the tray. Adjacent one side of the center depression small oval shaped depressions 14 are formed in which spoon bowls may conveniently rest. Adjacent the opposite side of the center depression 12 are formed rectangular slots 15 which extend from the edge of the tray toward the center. The slots 15 accommodate the head and handle of a fork and prevent its dislodgment.

In the present embodiment the tray 10 is formed of three ply strips of veneer or the like 17, 18 and 19. The ply or strip 19 is a solid member and constitutes the base of the tray. The strip 18, being of a circumferential contour similar to the strip 19, has formed therein openings 21. When the strip 19 is placed against the strip 18 it seals or closes the lower side of the opening 21 and creates of said opening a recess or depression in the strip 18. The uppermost ply or strip 17 is formed with annularly shaped openings 23 which are of a diameter somewhat greater than the openings 21 formed in the strip 18. The strip 17 is also fitted with rectangular slotted openings 15 and oval shaped openings 14. When this strip is placed upon the strip 18, the uncut portions of the latter strip form a bottom to each of the openings 14 and slots 15. Since the diameter of the openings 23 is greater than that of the openings 21, said first openings will be provided with a ledge-like base wall 24 created in the strip 18.

After the strips 17 and 18 have been provided with the openings above described, they are applied to each other and the base strip 19 is secured to the underside of the strip 18. In the present showing this is accomplished by gluing the strips together and supporting until dry in a press. It is contemplated to use any other suitable means of securing these strips together as the occasion demands. When the strips are assembled, it will be found that the depressions 12, due to the annular ledges 24, are of a larger diameter above said ledge than below. The purpose of providing double diametered depressions is to accommodate dishes or plates of different sizes. For example, the right hand depression shown in Figure 1 of the drawing may be used to accommodate a salad

plate, the base of which will rest upon the ledge 24 and the edges of which will be somewhat loosely engaged by the walls of the opening 23. If, however, it is desired to place a tumbler in this depression, said tumbler, being of a lesser diameter, will fit within the opening 21 of the strip 18 and the vertical edges of said opening will engage and prevent sliding of the tumbler. The center depression 12 may therefore, in view of the above illustration, be used to accommodate a tea or dinner plate, the tea plate fitting in the opening 21 and the dinner plate, being of greater diameter, within the opening 23.

The modified tray 25, shown in Figures 4 and 5 of the drawing, is contemplated to be formed of either ply or solid material. The depressions 26, 27 and 28 are approximately half the thickness of the tray. If the tray 25 is of two or more ply, openings 29 are formed only in the uppermost ply, whereas, if formed from a solid piece of material, the openings are cut to approximately half the material thickness. Each opening 29 is formed to accommodate the largest dish or plate for that portion of the tray in which it is located, for example, the diameter of the opening 29 in the depression 27 is of sufficient size to accommodate a dinner plate.

Ring inserts 31, having an outside diameter slightly less than the diameter of the openings 29 are adapted to be set into said openings when it is desired to accommodate dishes or plates of a lesser diameter. The rings 31 have openings 32 therein which may be of varying size. In other words, it would be possible to utilize the depression 29 to retain a salad dish by placing one of the rings 31 therein and said ring having an inner opening 32 of a diameter only slightly greater than the diameter of said dish. Likewise the depression 28 may be converted from a salad dish retainer to one for tumblers by placing a ring 31 therein, the inner opening of which is approximately the diameter of said tumbler. A tray of this type, with very little changing and through the use of variously sized rings, may be adapted to accommodate any size dish, tumbler or saucer.

While only two modifications of this invention have been shown and described, applicant does not intend to be limited thereto since it is obvious that other modifications or adaptations may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of this invention other than as set forth in the hereunto annexed claims.

Having thus set forth my invention what I claim as new and for which I desire protection by Letters Patent is:

1. A lap tray for individual use comprising a body member formed from several ply of suitable light weight material, annular openings in the top ply of said member, lesser diametered concentrically disposed openings in the center ply of said member whereby to create two different sized openings when said top and center ply are mounted upon the base ply of said member.

2. A lap tray for individual use comprising a body member formed from several ply of suitable material, small openings cut into the top ply of said member, annular openings formed in said top ply, lesser diametered concentrically disposed openings in the center ply of said member whereby when said top and center ply are mounted upon the base ply of said member, said tray will receive and horizontally retain dishes and glass ware of various sizes and silverware.

3. A lap tray for individual use comprising a body member formed from suitable strong light weight material, annular depressions in one face of said member, small shallow recesses in said face for retaining silverware, and means in said depressions, said means constituting an annular step or ledge by which said depressions are adapted to support and horizontally retain dishes and glassware of various sizes.

In testimony whereof I have affixed my signature.

FRANK E. SAMUELSON.