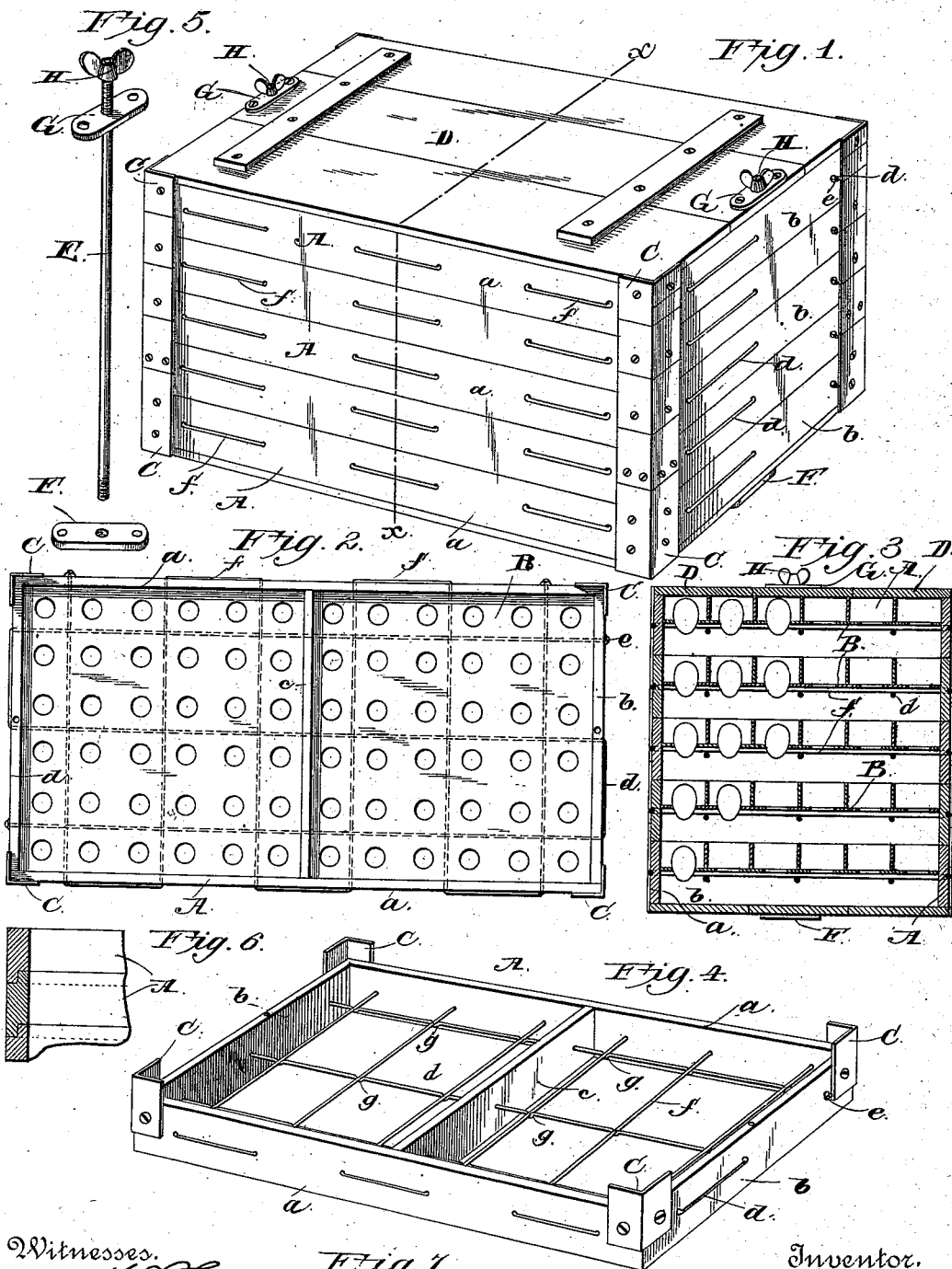


(No Model.)

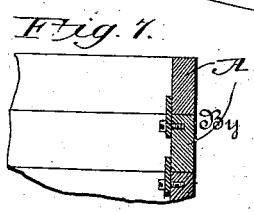
J. L. RITTER.
EGG CRATE AND TRAY.

No. 382,622.

Patented May 8, 1888.



Witnesses.
M. Fowler.
E. Siggers



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN L. RITTER, OF MILNES, VIRGINIA.

EGG CRATE AND TRAY.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 382,622, dated May 8, 1888.

Application filed January 31, 1888. Serial No. 262,557. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN L. RITTER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Milnes, in the county of Page and State of Virginia, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Egg Crates and Trays, of which the following is a specification.

My invention is an improved egg-crate and tray therefor; and it consists in the improved construction hereinafter set forth, whereby a simple, efficient, and durable arrangement is provided.

In the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification, Figure 1 is a perspective view of an egg-crate embodying my improvements. Fig. 2 is a plan view of one of the trays. Fig. 3 is a sectional end view of the crate made up. Fig. 4 is a perspective view of one of the trays. Fig. 5 is a detail perspective view of the fastening device employed at each end of the crate. Figs. 6 and 7 are detail views of modified forms.

The body of the crate is made up of a series of suspended trays, A, each of which is composed of longitudinal side bars, *a*, end bars, *b*, and intermediate bar, *c*. A wire, *d*, is knotted at one end, *e*, and is then passed through a perforation about midway between the upper and lower edges of one of the end bars, *b*. As shown in the drawings, the relative distance which said hole is located from the adjacent side of the tray is about one-sixth the width of the end bar. This said wire *d* is then led longitudinally through the frame of said tray in about the central horizontal plane thereof, and said wire passes through a perforation in the central bar and also through one in the opposite end bar, both perforations being in alignment with that first referred to. The said wire is then led for a short distance horizontally along the outer face of said bar until it arrives at another perforation therein in about the same horizontal plane, at which point it is passed through the opening and led back through the central and opposite end bars. This operation of leading the wire back and forth is continued until the entire width of the interior of each tray is provided with a series of longitudinal wires equidistantly arranged. A transverse wire, *f*, is then passed back and forth in the same horizontal plane through the side bars, the longitudinal wire being provided

with depressions *g* for receiving said transverse wire, so that the contiguous parts will not be objectionably irregular.

The tray is provided with a bottom, B, of pasteboard or like material, which rests upon and is supported by the crossed wires. A series of perforations is made in each bottom B for the reception of the eggs. Each perforation is relatively so located that it will be within the limits of each rectangular section of the crossed wires.

At each outer corner of the tray is secured an angle-plate, C, which is located in position in a higher plane than the frame of the tray, so that the upper part of the plate extends above the upper edge of the tray. This arrangement, when the trays rest upon each other, permits their intimate contact, but holds them rigidly against lateral displacement. By reference to Fig. 1 it will be seen that the upper projecting portion of each bracket embraces the lower exposed portion of the corresponding corner of the tray next above. The arrangement of plates, therefore, forms an overlapping corner connection that insures the proper retention of the several trays in position.

When the trays have been arranged in position to the desired number, a top, D, is placed upon the upper tray and the entire series and the top are rigidly connected together at each end by means of a vertical rod, E, which passes through perforations in the top and end bars of the successive trays and is threaded at its lower end to engage a threaded opening in a metal plate, F, secured on the under side of the bottom tray. The top D at each end is provided with a plate, G, perforated to register with the opening therein, and through which projects the upper threaded end of the rod E. A winged nut, H, engages the upper threaded portion of the rod E. This nut can be so adjusted that it will bear upon the plate G, and thus firmly clamp the top and trays between the upper and lower plates.

From the preceding description it will be seen that the individual trays are of exceedingly simple, durable, and useful construction, and that they can be quickly and conveniently assembled in any desired number to present a crate of any required capacity.

While I have explained with particularity

the specific arrangement of interlacing wires, I desire it understood that the construction set forth discloses but one arrangement of such wires, and many arrangements of such wires may be resorted to without departing from my invention. In such modifications it will only be necessary that the wires form supports for the bottoms or cells.

The outer faces of the sides and ends of each tray are provided with horizontal grooves to receive the external portions of the wires and protect the latter against jars or shocks.

In each of the several trays I use the regular cells to prevent lateral displacement of the eggs.

In Figs. 6 and 7 I show modifications of the connection between the trays in lieu of the corner plates or brackets. The under and upper sides of the end rails of each tray in Fig. 6 are rabbeted to provide projecting shoulders, which interlock and prevent lateral displacement.

In Fig. 7 the same result is produced by tacking a strip on the inner side of the end rails of each tray, so as to cause said strip to project upward and catch or engage the tray above. It will be observed that in each of the three forms shown the same generic feature is preserved—*i. e.*, the end rails of the tray are provided with projecting shoulders which interlock and prevent lateral displacement.

I do not wish to restrict the use of my crate to carrying and storing eggs, as it may be employed to advantage as a fruit-crate.

Having described my invention, I claim—

1. An egg-tray having a bottom of wires, a perforated sheet of pasteboard or like material resting on the wires, and egg-cells resting on the board, as set forth.

2. An egg-crate composed of a series of superimposed trays each having a bottom of wires, a perforated sheet of pasteboard or like material resting on said wires, and cell-cases resting on said board, as set forth.

3. An egg-crate consisting of a series of superimposed trays vertically perforated at the ends, a top, a perforated plate on the bottom tray and having a threaded opening, a perforated plate on the top, and a rod passing through said perforations, threaded at its lower end to engage said bottom plate and threaded at its upper end to receive a clamp-screw, substantially as specified.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in presence of two witnesses.

JOHN L. RITTER.

Witnesses:

JOHN H. SIGGERS,
E. G. SIGGERS.