April 16, 1957 E. B. BANNER 2,788,827

FLATWARE CASE

Filed June 26, 1953 4 Sheets-Sheet 1

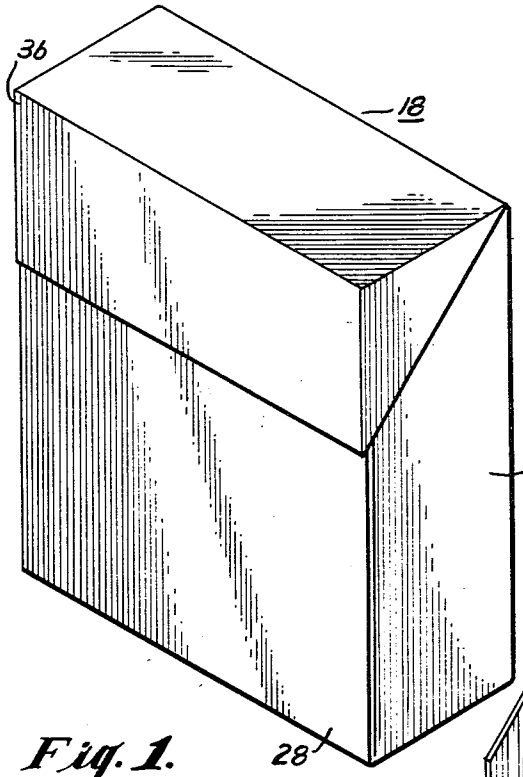


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

INVENTOR.
EDWIN B. BANNER
BY Leonard L. Kalish
ATTORNEY.

April 16, 1957 E. B. BANNER 2,788,827

FLATWARE CASE

Filed June 26, 1953 4 Sheets-Sheet 2

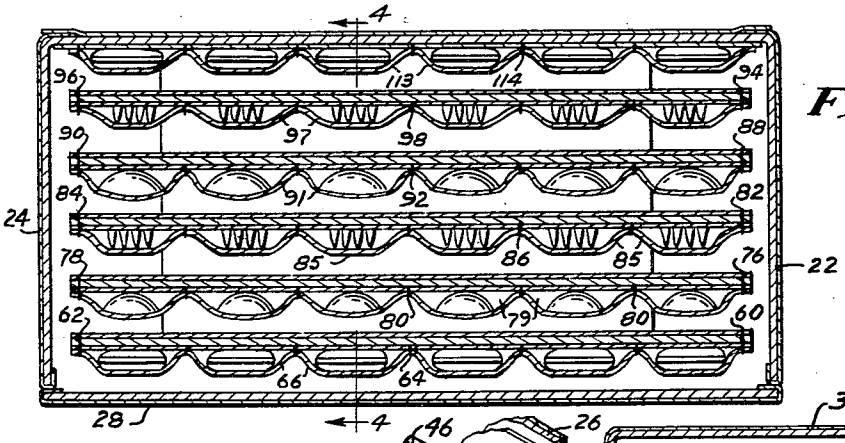


Fig. 5.

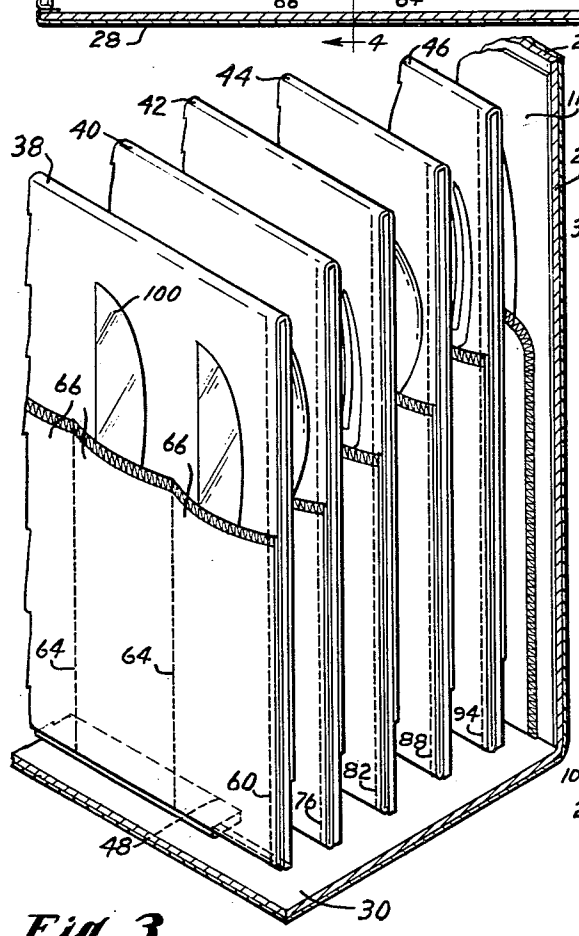


Fig. 3.

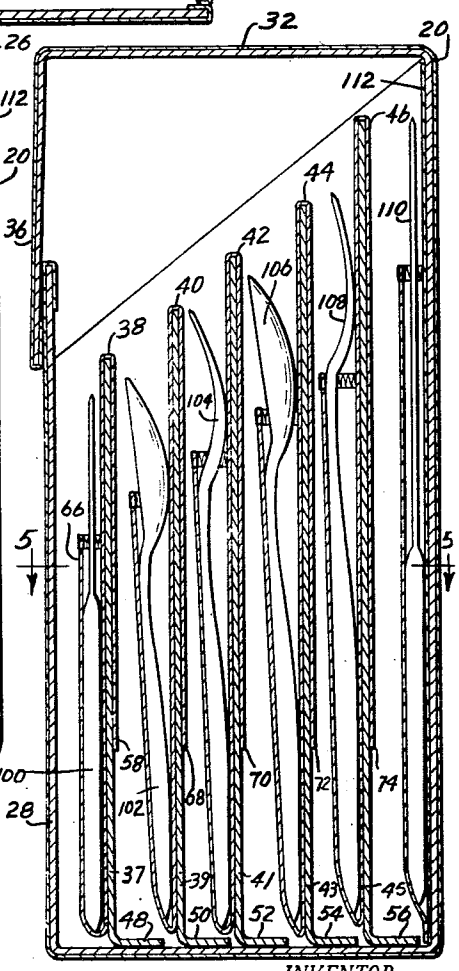


Fig. 4.

INVENTOR.
EDWIN B. BANNER
BY
Leonard L. Kalish
ATTORNEY.

April 16, 1957 E. B. BANNER 2,788,827

FLATWARE CASE

Filed June 26, 1953 4 Sheets-Sheet 3

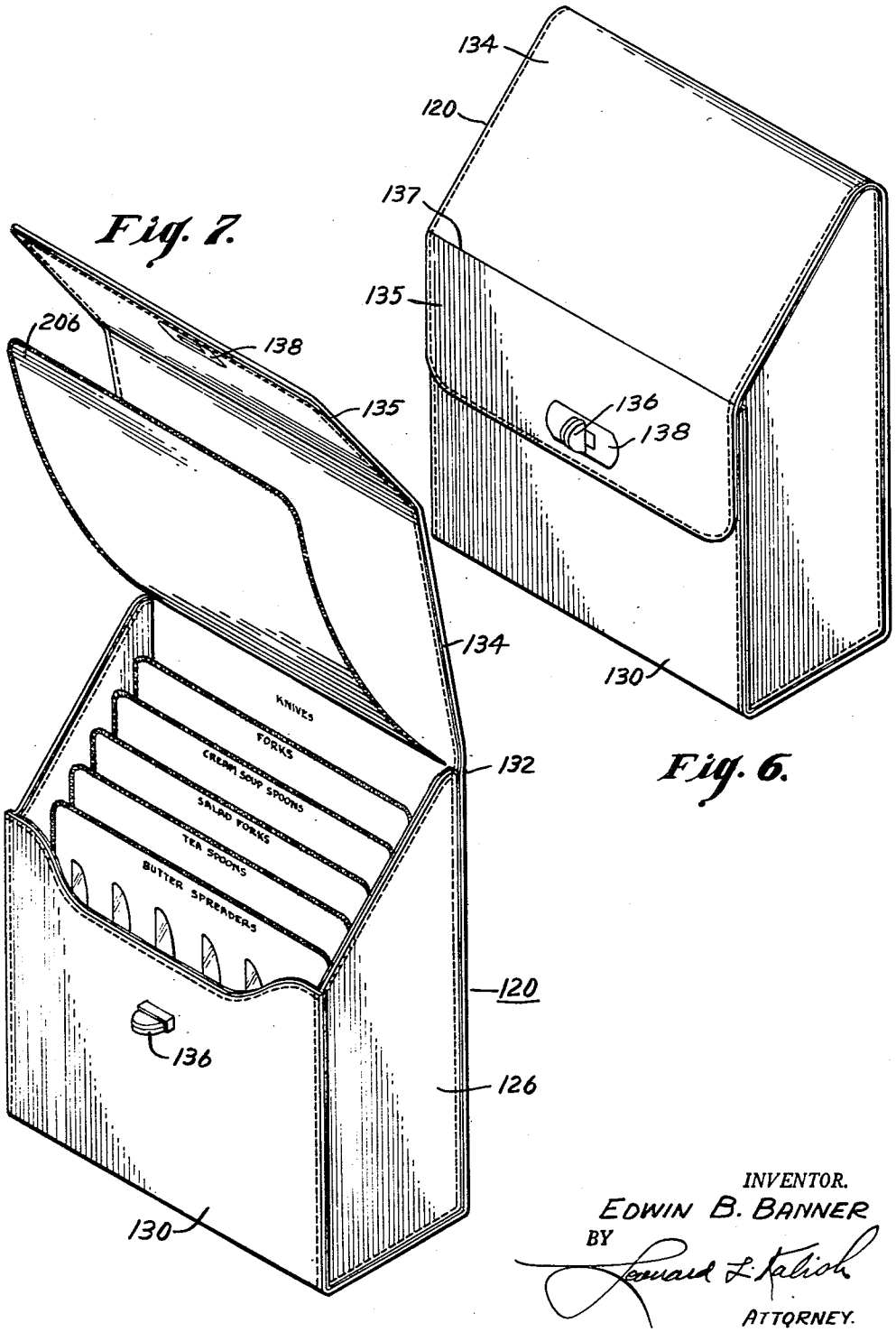


Fig. 7.

Fig. 6.

INVENTOR.
EDWIN B. BANNER
BY
Leonard L. Kalish
ATTORNEY.

April 16, 1957 E. B. BANNER 2,788,827

FLATWARE CASE

Filed June 26, 1953 4 Sheets-Sheet 4

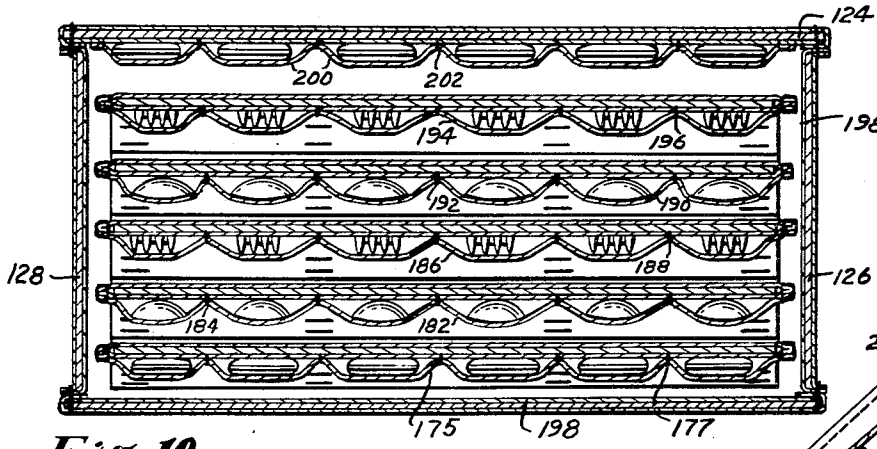


Fig. 10.

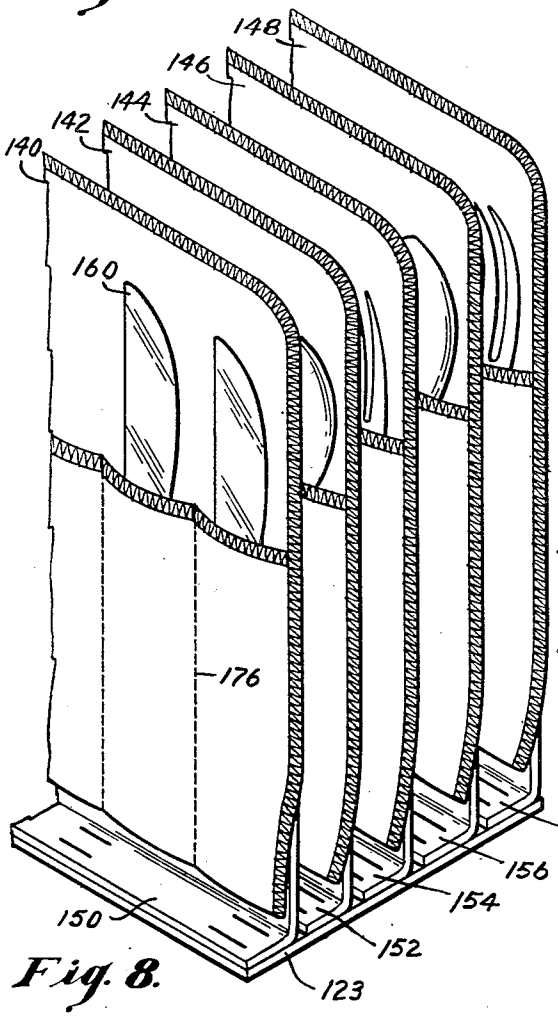


Fig. 8.

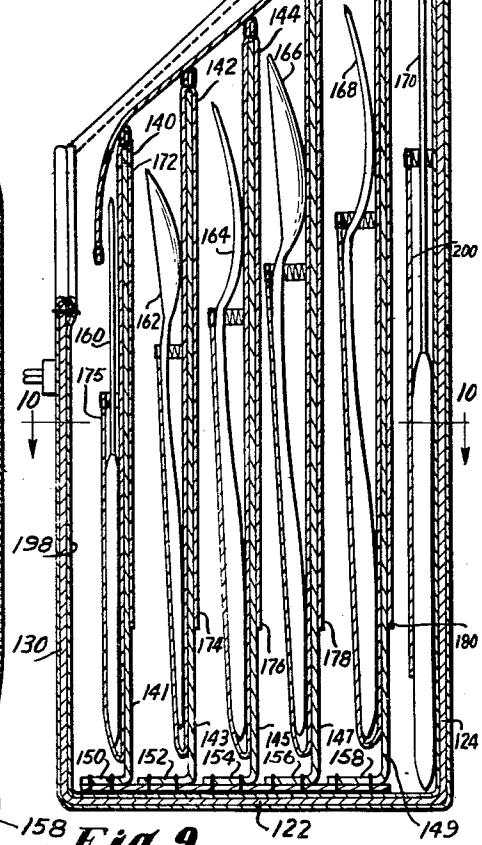


Fig. 9.

INVENTOR.
EDWIN B. BANNER
BY
Leonard L. Kalish
ATTORNEY.

United States Patent Office 2,788,827 Patented Apr. 16, 1957

2,788,827

FLATWARE CASE

Edwin B. Banner, Haddonfield, N. J., assignor, by mesne assignments, to Reeve & Mitchell Mfg. Co., Inc., New York, N. Y., a corporation of New York

Application June 26, 1953, Serial No. 364,246

3 Claims. (Cl. 150—52)

The present invention comprises a flatware case for all types of flatware, and relates more particularly to a flatware case for silver flatware such as sterling silver or plated flatware, readily subject to tarnishing, wherein multiple place-settings may be conveniently stored and retained when not in use.

One of the objects of the present invention is to provide a flatware case for domestic use, in which a plurality of place-settings may be stored and encased.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a flatware case which will permit convenient and ready access to its contents.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a flatware case in which the contents thereof can be maintained in a tarnish-free condition, and in which scratching and abrasion of the flatware contents are avoided.

With the above objects in view, together with other objects which will appear more fully from the following description and accompanying drawings, the present invention contemplates a multi-compartmented flatware case comprising a generally rectangular base having front, rear and side walls extending generally upward therefrom. A plurality of flatware-retaining partitions of form-retaining material is provided within the case intermediate the front and rear walls thereof and positioned in generally parallel planes in respect thereto when the case is closed. The width of each of the flatware-retaining partitions is somewhat less than the internal width of the case and each partition is pivotally hinged in respect to the base. The clearance between the edges of the partition and the side walls permits pivotal movement of the partitions within the case. Each separator is provided with a fabric covering, preferably a tarnish-inhibiting silver cloth on at least one face, preferably the forward face. Flatware-retaining elements such as pockets are formed from the fabric to retain the flatware within the case. The case is provided with a case-closing cover extending from the rear wall over the tops of the flatware retaining partitions, the case-closing cover engaging with the upper portion of the front wall of the case.

For the purpose of illustrating the invention, there are shown in the accompanying drawings forms thereof which are at present preferred, although it is to be understood that the various instrumentalities of which the invention consists can be variously arranged and organized and that the invention is not limited to the precise arrangements and organizations of the instrumentalities as herein shown and described.

Figure 1 represents a perspective view of a flatware case embodying the present invention in closed position.

Figure 2 represents a perspective view of the flatware case of Figure 1 shown in open position.

Figure 3 is a fragmentary perspective view showing the flatware-retaining partitions carrying flatware.

Figure 4 is a vertical cross-sectional view of the flatware case of Figure 1.

Figure 5 is a plan cross-sectional view of the flatware case of Figure 1 taken on line 5—5 of Figure 4, the flatware not being shown in section but in perspective view as seen from above.

Figure 6 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the dinner flatware case of my invention in closed position.

Figure 7 is a perspective view of the flatware case of Figure 6, shown in open position.

Figure 8 is a fragmentary perspective view of the flatware-retaining partitions, mounted on platform, of the embodiment of the flatware case of my invention shown in Figures 6 and 7.

Figure 9 is a vertical cross-sectional view of the flatware case of Figure 6.

Figure 10 is a plan cross-sectional view of the flatware case of Figure 6, taken on line 10—10 of Figure 9, the flatware not being shown in section but in perspective view as seen from above.

As shown in Figures 1 through 5, the flatware case of the present invention comprises a box or case **18**. In the embodiment shown in Figures 1 through 5 the box is prepared from flexible form-retaining material, such as cardboard, covered with cloth or paper, having a generally rectangular base **30** with rear wall **20**, side walls **22** and **24** and front wall **28** extending generally perpendicularly upward therefrom. Side walls **22** and **24** slope downward from the upper edge **26** (see Figure 2) of rear wall **20**. Alternatively, the rear wall **20** and front wall **28** may be of form-retaining material, with the side walls **22** and **24** of flexible material, such as cloth, in which case the side walls **22** and **24** may be gusseted.

Front wall **28** is pivotally hinged to base **30** of silver flatware case **18** at its lower edge and can be pivoted in respect thereto. Front wall **28** is normally urged to the open position shown in Figure 2, wherein it is not engaged with side walls **22** and **24**. Alternatively, front wall **28** may be engaged by means of a gusset with side walls **22** and **24** when in open position.

Cover **32** of the flatware case is pivotally hinged at the upper edge **26** of rear wall **20**. Cover **32** is closely adjacent such as contiguous to or engaged with the upper edges of side walls **22** and **24** and front wall **28**. As shown in Figure 4, in the embodiment shown in the drawings, when cover **32** is in closed position (see also Figure 1), front wall **28**, which extends upward for a distance above the front corner of the upper edge of side walls **22** and **24** is covered by the overlap **36** of cover **32** so that front wall **28** is retained in position by operative engagement with front edges of side walls **22** and **24** and forward flange **36** of cover **32**.

Alternatively, cover **32** may be closely adjacent the upper edge of front wall **28**; or front wall **28** may be pivoted inwardly between side walls **22** and **24**, with its upper portion closely adjacent with cover **32**.

Positioned within the flatware case **18** are flatware-retaining partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** and **46**. The partitions are narrower than the internal width of flatware case **18**, and are attached or hinged to base **30** by means of rear flanges or projections **48**, **50**, **52**, **54** and **56**, which project rearwardly for a major portion of the width of each partition, for a distance somewhat less than the distance separating the partitions. Flanges **48**, **50**, **52**, **54** and **56** may be pasted to the base **30** as shown in Figures 3 and 4, or, if desired, may be stapled or sewn thereto. In place of flanges **48**, **50**, **52**, **54** and **56**, partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** and **46** may be pivotally attached to base **30** by other means, such as by means of cloth extensions sewn or stapled to the base **30**.

Partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** and **46** comprise separators or walls **37**, **39**, **41**, **43** and **45** of form-retaining mate-

rial, such as cardboard, paperboard or the like. In the instant embodiment, the separators or walls **37**, **39**, **41**, **43** and **45** are integral with their respective flanges **48**, **50**, **52**, **54** and **56** but due to their flexible nature are pivotal in respect thereto so that when the flatware case **18** is opened as shown in Figure 2, the partitions, such as partition **38** in Figure 2 (broken line) can be pivoted forward to permit ready access to the flatware retained in the subsequent partitions.

As seen in Figures 2 and 4, partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** and **46** are graduated in size, the smallest partition **38** being adapted to receive the smallest of the flatware (butter spreaders **100**) and the largest of the partitions **46** adapted to receive the next to the largest of the flatware (forks **108**). The remaining partitions **40**, **42** and **44** are graduated in progressively increased sizes and retain flatware of progressively increased size, namely tea spoons **102**, salad forks **104** and cream soup spoons **106**. Preferably, each of the partitions bear printed matter at the upper portion of each flatware-retaining partition designating the type of flatware to be inserted therein, as seen in Figure 2, the printed matter in each case being readily read when the case is opened.

Referring, particularly to Figures 3, 4, and 5 it is seen that each of the form-retaining walls **37**, **39**, **41**, **43** and **45** of respective partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** and **46** is partially covered with a relatively thin layer of material comprising a flatware-retaining fabric covering, such as flannel, plastic, etc. When the flatware intended to be stored in the case comprises tarnishable metal such as silver, the fabric covering preferably comprises a conventional tarnish-inhibiting cloth known in the art as "silver cloth."

Such silver cloth can be prepared by immersing a cloth, such as flannel in an aqueous solution containing a water-soluble salt of a heavy metal, such as lead or zinc, which preferentially absorbs hydrogen sulphide from the atmosphere more rapidly than metallic silver, and subsequently drying the impregnated cloth. Thus, silver cloth may be prepared by impregnating flannel with a solution of lead acetate, and permitting the lead acetate to dry and be retained in the fibers of the flannel.

In the illustrated embodiment of the invention which contemplates a preferred embodiment thereof, the silver cloth covers the front face of the separator of each partition and extends downwardly over a major portion of the rear face thereof. It is of course, to be understood, that if desired the silver cloth can cover the rear face of any or each partition, or cover a lesser portion of the rear face of any or each partition than shown in Figures 3 and 4.

As seen in Figures 3 and 5 the silver cloth **58** for partition **38** is stitched at each end by means of stitches **60** and **62** to the form-retaining separator **37**.

If desired, the silver cloth may be somewhat wider than the form-retaining separator **37** of partition **38** and the peripheral edges of silver cloth **58** can be sewn together so as to obscure the peripheral edges of the form-retaining separator from view.

Silver cloth **58** is lapped in the front portion and vertically stitched by means of vertical stitches **64** to form a series of flatware-retaining elements, in the instant case, pockets, such as pockets **66**, in which the flatware (butter spreaders **100**) is retained. The upper edge of the lapped pocket **66** is merrow-stitched or overlocked stitched to confer strength. In the embodiment shown in Figures 1 through 5, each of partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** and **46** are provided with six pockets, so that six-place settings can be retained in the flatware case.

It is of course to be understood, that a larger or smaller number of pockets can be sewn on each of flatware-retaining partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, and **46** depending upon the width of the flatware case so that a smaller or larger number of place settings can be retained in the case.

Each of partitions **40**, **42**, **44** and **46** is similarly provided with silver cloth, namely respective silver cloths **68**, **70**, **72** and **74** which are similarly positioned over the front faces of the partitions to form pockets and sewn at the edges in a similar manner as flatware-retaining partition **38**. Thus in the case of flatware-retaining partition **40**, silver cloth **68** is retained in position by means of end stitches **76** and **78**, and a series of pockets **79** are formed therein by means of vertical stitching designated **80**. Similarly, flatware-retaining partition **42** is provided with silver cloth **70**, which is retained in position by means of end stitches **82** and **84**, and a series of pockets designated **85** are formed therein by means of vertical stitching designated **86**.

Flatware-retaining partition **44** is provided with silver cloth **72**, which is retained in position by means of end stitches **88** and **90**, and a series of pockets **91** are formed therein by means of vertical stitching designated **92**. Flatware-retaining partition **46** is provided with silver cloth **74**, which is retained in position by means of end stitches **94** and **96**, and a series of pockets designated **97** are formed therein by means of vertical stitching designated **98**.

The inner surface of rear wall **20** is covered with silver cloth **112**. Silver cloth **112** is pasted to the inner surface of rear wall **20** and is provided with a series of pockets designated **113** which are formed thereon by means of vertical stitching designated **114**. The largest of the flatware, namely knives **110** are positioned in the pockets **113** in silver cloth **112**. As shown in Figure 2 silver cloth **112** bears printed matter designating the type of flatware to be inserted therein.

In the instant embodiment, the flatware are retained solely on the front face of partitions **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** and **46**. However, if desired, additional flatware-retaining pockets can be provided on the rear face of each partition.

An alternative modification of the silver flatware case of my invention is shown in Figures 6 through 10 in which the silver flatware case **120** comprises a box or case **120** having a rectangular base **122**, with rear wall **124**, side walls **126** and **128**, and front wall **130** extending upward therefrom. Side walls **126** and **128** slope downward from the cover-flap hinge at the upper edge **132** (see Figure 7) of rear wall **124**, and may be planar (as shown in the drawings) or gusseted.

A cover or cover-flap **134**, extends integrally from rear wall **124** from hinge edge **132** and overlaps a significant but minor portion of the outer upper surface of front wall **130**, the overlap **135** extends downward from creased front corner **137**. As shown in Figure 9, cover **134** may be integral with rear wall **124**. The cover **134** can be locked over front wall **130** by means of lock **136** which is adapted to operatively be engaged with an aligned socket in clasp member **138** located on overlap **135** of cover **134**. The operative engagement of lock **136** in clasp **138** is shown in Figure 6.

Positioned within the flatware case are flatware-retaining partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148**. The partitions are narrower than the internal width of the flatware case **120**, and are attached or hinged to a platform **123** of form-retaining material by means of respective forward flanges or projections **150**, **152**, **154**, **156**, and **158**, which project forwardly from each of the partitions for the entire width of the partition for a distance somewhat less than the distance separating the partitions. Platform **123** may be pasted to base **122** or operatively engaged with but not connected with base **122**. In the latter embodiment platform **123** and flatware-retaining partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** can be removed from case **120** as a unit.

If desired, flanges **150**, **152**, **154**, **156** and **158** can be sewn to platform **123** or attached thereto by other means, or alternatively, partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** may be pivotally hinged directly to base **122** by cloth extensions or the like.

As shown in Figures 8, 9 and 10 flanges **150**, **152**, **154**, **156** and **158** are integral with respective partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148**. However, if desired, partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** may be hinged to flanges **150**, **152**, **154**, **156**, and **158** by means of an overlapping flap or sleeve. The pivotal hinging of partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** at their base, coupled with their width being somewhat less than the internal width of the silver flatware case permits them to be pushed forward so that the silver flatware retained within the case may be handled or examined when the case is opened.

Partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** comprise separators or walls **141**, **143**, **145**, **147** and **149** of form-retaining flexible material, such as cardboard, paperboard or the like. As heretofore indicated, separators or walls **141**, **143**, **145**, **147** and **149** are integral with respective flanges **150**, **152**, **154**, **156** and **158**, but due to their flexible nature are pivotal in respect thereto, so that when silver flatware case **120** is opened the partitions can, as heretofore mentioned, be pivoted forward to permit ready access to the flatware retained therein.

As shown in Figures 7, 8 and 9 partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** are graduated in size, the smallest partition **140** being adapted to receive the smallest of the flatware, namely butter spreader **160**, and the largest of the partitions **148** being adapted to receive the next to the largest of the flatware namely forks **168**. The remaining partitions **142**, **144**, and **146** are graduated in progressively increasing sizes, and retain flatware of progressively increasing size, namely teaspoons **162**, salad forks **164**, and cream soup spoons **166**. Preferably, each of the partitions bear printed matter designating the flatware to be inserted therein, as seen in Figure 7.

Referring, particularly to Figures 8, 9 and 10, it is seen that each of the form-retaining walls **141**, **143**, **145**, **147** and **149** of respective partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** is covered with a relatively thin layer of material comprising flatware-retaining fabric, preferably conventional tarnish-resisting cloth (known as "silver cloth"), which is pocketed into flatware-retaining elements on the front face of each partition.

In the illustrated embodiment of the invention the silver cloth covers the front face of the retaining wall of each partition and extends downwardly over a major portion of the rear face thereof. While this constitutes a preferred embodiment, if desired, the silver cloth can cover and be pocketed on solely the front face of any or each partition or cover and be pocketed on the front face and cover a minor portion of the rear face of any or each partition or cover a minor portion of the front face and cover and be pocketed on the rear face of any or each partition or cover and be pocketed on both the front and rear faces of any or each partition.

As seen in Figure 9, in the instant embodiment the silver cloth **172** for partition **140** is somewhat wider than the form-retaining separator **141** for a major portion of its height, being slipped over form-retaining separator **141** with only the bottom portion of silver cloth **172** being co-extensive with the width of form-retaining separator **141**. The peripheral edge of silver cloth **172** is stitched by means of merrow stitching or over-lock stitching to confer strength. If desired, silver cloth **172** can be glued to form-retaining wall **141**, although this is usually not necessary since if silver cloth **172** is stretched over form-retaining wall **141** it will adhere thereto. The front face of silver cloth **172** is provided with a series of silver cloth pockets designated **175** formed by means of vertical stitching designated **177** on the overlapped silver cloth **172**. The upper edge of these pockets is merrow stitched to provide greater strength.

Each of partitions **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** is similarly provided with silver cloth, namely, respective silver cloths **174**, **176**, **178** and **180**.

Thus, in the case of flatware-retaining partition **142**, silver cloth **174** is fitted over form-retaining separator **143**, with only the bottom portion of silver cloth **174** being co-extensive with the width of partition **142** and engaged with the front face of form-retaining separator **143**. The peripheral edge of silver cloth **174**, is merrow-stitched or over-locked stitched to confer strength. The front face of silver cloth **174** is provided with a series of pockets designated **182** formed by the vertical stitching designated **184** partitioning the overlapped silver cloth **174**. The upper edge of these pockets is merrow-stitched to provide greater strength.

Silver cloths **176**, **178** and **180** are engaged with respective retaining walls **145**, **147** and **149** in an analogous manner to that heretofore described for silver cloths **172** and **174**. Pockets designated **186** of overlapped silver cloth **176** are formed on the front face of form-retaining wall **145** by means of vertical stitching **188**. Pockets designated **190** of overlapped silver cloth **178** are formed on the front face of form-retaining wall **147** by means of vertical stitching **192**. Pockets designated **194** of overlapped silver cloth **180** are formed on the front face of form-retaining wall **149** by means of vertical stitching **196**.

The inner surface of flatware case **120** is covered with silver cloth **198** which covers the entire inner surface of front wall **130**, base **122**, side walls **126** and **128**, rear wall **124** and cover **134**.

The silver cloth **198** on the rear wall **124** is covered with a series of silver cloth flatware-retaining elements designated **200**, formed by stitching an external section of silver cloth to silver cloth **198** by vertical stitches designated **202**. The upper edge of flatware-retaining element **200** is merrow-stitched to provide greater strength. As seen in Figure 9, flatware-retaining elements **200** are open at the base, unlike pockets **175**, **182**, **186**, **190** and **194** which are formed from lapped silver cloth. The largest flatware, namely, knives **170** are retained in flatware-retaining elements **200**, and silver cloth **198** on rear wall **124** bears the printed matter "Knives."

As seen in Figure 10, each flatware-retaining partition is provided with six pockets there also being space for six knives in flatware-retaining elements **200** on rear wall **124**. Accordingly, six place-settings can be retained in the flatware case. However, if desired, a larger number or smaller number of pockets and correspondingly place settings can be provided.

An inner protective cover **206** comprising silver cloth extends downwardly from the silver cloth **198** on cover **134** in the region of hinge **132** and covers the upper edge of flatware-retaining partitions **140**, **142**, **144**, **146** and **148** in the manner shown in Figure 9. The peripheral edge of inner cover **206** is merrow-stitched as shown in Figure 7. In place of single inner protective cover **206**, separate silver cloth covers can be provided for each partition, extending downwardly from the top thereof.

The present invention permits a plurality of place-settings to be stored and encased in an attractive fashion with convenient and ready access to the flatware. Moreover, scratching and abrasion of the flatware is prevented notwithstanding the transporting or moving of the case since metal-to-metal contact is avoided. In addition, the flatware contents, in particular, silver flatware, in the preferred embodiment employing silver cloth are maintained in tarnish-free condition, rendering their polishing to remove discoloration due to atmospheric oxidation unnecessary or infrequent.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential attributes thereof, and it is therefore desired that the present embodiments be considered in all respects as illustrative, reference being had to the appended claims rather than to the foregoing description to indicate the scope of the invention.

Having described my invention, I claim:

1. A multi-compartmented flatware case comprising a generally rectangular base, a rear wall extending upward

from said generally rectangular base, a front wall extending upward from said base, side walls extending upward from said generally rectangular base intermediate said front and rear walls, a plurality of flatware-retaining partitions comprising separators of form-retaining material positioned within said case intermediate said front and rear walls and positioned, when said case is closed, in generally parallel planes in respect to said front and rear walls, the width of said flatware-retaining partitions being somewhat less than the internal width of said case thereby providing clearance with said side walls, said separators being of gradually increasing height from front to rear, a fabric covering on at least one face of each separator, said fabric covering forming relatively flexible fabric flatware-retaining elements on each separator, a pivotal hinge extending from the bottom portion of each of said separators and operatively secured to the base, pivotally hinging each of said separators in respect to said generally rectangular base, and a case-closing cover extending from said rear wall over the tops of said flatware-retaining partitions closely adjacent the upper portion of the front wall of said case.

2. A multi-compartmented flatware case comprising a generally rectangular base of form-retaining material, a relatively wide rear wall of form-retaining material extending generally perpendicularly upward from said generally rectangular base, a relatively wide front wall extending upward from said base, said front wall being substantially lower than said rear wall, relatively narrow side walls extending upward from said generally rectangular base intermediate said relatively wide front and rear walls, a plurality of flatware-retaining partitions comprising separators of form-retaining material positioned within said case intermediate said front and rear walls and positioned when said case is closed with their width dimension in generally parallel planes in respect to said front and rear walls, said width dimension being somewhat less than the internal width of said case thereby providing clearance with said side walls, said separators being of gradually increasing height from front to rear, a fabric covering on the forward face and on at least a major portion of the rear face of each separator, said fabric covering forming relatively flexible fabric flatware-retaining elements comprising overlapped fabric pockets on the forward face of each separator, the top of each of said pockets terminating below the top of its separator, a fabric covering on the inner face of said rear wall forming flatware-retaining elements thereon, a pivotal hinge comprising a flange extending from the bottom portion of each of said separators and joined to said base pivotally hinging each of said separators in respect to said generally rectangular base, and a case-closing cover extending from said rear wall over the tops of said flatware-retaining partitions closely adjacent the upper portion of the front wall of said case.

3. A multi-compartmented flatware case comprising a generally rectangular base of form-retaining material, a relatively wide rear wall of form-retaining material extending generally perpendicularly upward from said generally rectangular base, a relatively wide rigidly-positioned front wall of form-retaining material extending generally perpendicularly upward from said base, said front wall being substantially lower than said rear wall, relatively narrow side walls extending upward from said generally rectangular base and joining said relatively wide front and rear walls, a plurality of flatware-retaining partitions comprising separators of form-retaining material positioned within said case intermediate said front and rear walls and positioned when said case is closed with their width dimension in generally parallel planes in respect to said front and rear walls, said width dimension being somewhat less than the internal width of said case thereby providing clearance with said side walls, said separators being of gradually increasing height from front to rear, a fabric covering on each separator, said fabric covering forming relatively flexible fabric flatware-retaining elements on each separator, a pivotal hinge extending from the bottom portion of each of said separators pivotally hinging each of said separators in respect to said generally rectangular base, and a case-closing cover extending from said rear wall over the tops of said flatware-retaining partitions and closely adjacent the upper portion of the front wall of said case.

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