

F. L. CROMBIE.
ELECTRICALLY HEATED TRAY.
APPLICATION FILED MAY 8, 1911.

1,005,166.

Patented Oct. 10, 1911.

Fig. 1.

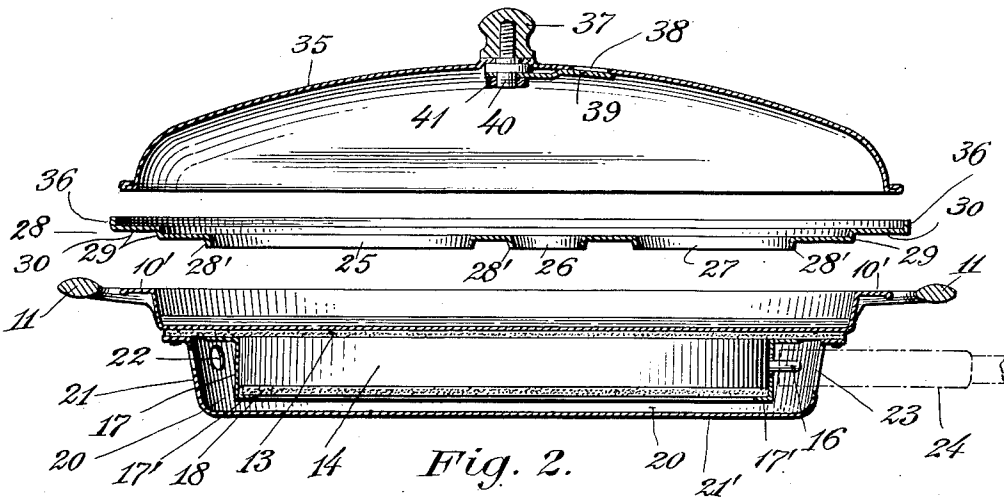
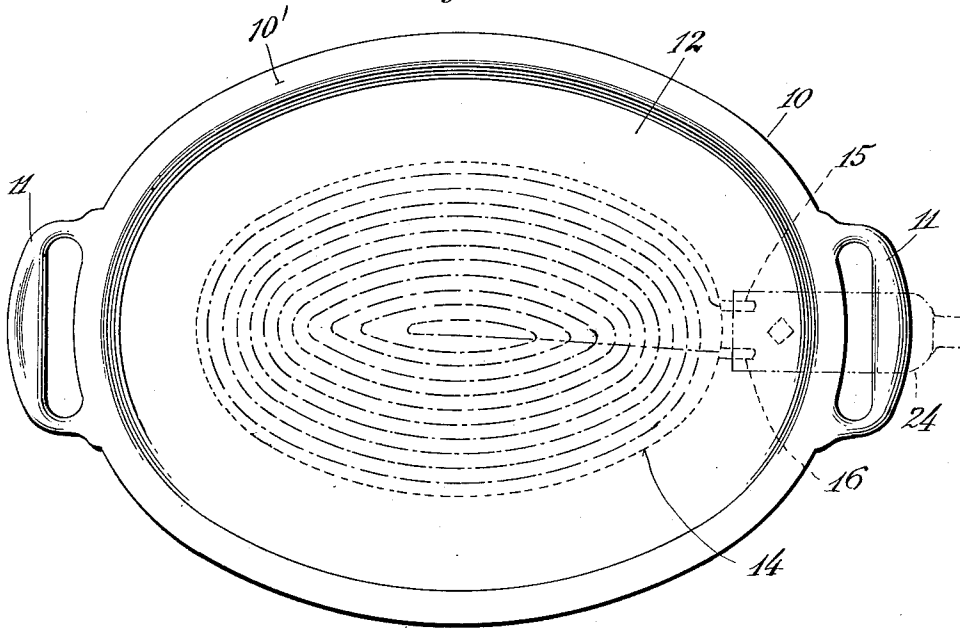


Fig. 2.

Witnesses

Frank C. Ernst
Anna C. Parlier.

Inventor

Florence L. Crombie,

By

[Signature]
Attorneys

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FLORENCE L. CROMBIE, OF DETROIT, MICHIGAN.

ELECTRICALLY-HEATED TRAY.

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Specification of Letters Patent.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FLORENCE L. CROMBIE, a citizen of the United States of America, residing at Detroit, in the county of Wayne and State of Michigan, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Electrically-Heated Trays, of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

This invention relates to electrically-heated serving trays, and it has for one of its objects the provision of a portable device which is adapted to hold dishes containing cooked food, and to preserve the same in hot and palatable condition.

The invention has furthermore for its objects the provision of a tray which is adapted to contain water subjected to heat applied to the bottom of the tray, and the combination therewith of a false top perforated to receive dishes which project therethrough into the steam space above or even into the water.

Further objects of the invention will hereinafter appear and be particularly defined in the claims.

The invention has been clearly illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which similar characters denote similar parts, and in which—

Figure 1 represents a top view of the tray, *per se*, and Fig. 2 illustrates in vertical section the tray, its false top, and cover.

Briefly stated, the present invention is designed particularly for use in hospitals where sanitary conditions are requisites and where it is some considerable distance between the kitchens and the bedside of the patient to be served. Even under the most favorable conditions it is practically impossible to preserve some foods in what may be termed "appetizing" or palatable condition, and in the case of patients, the discrimination frequently becomes acute to such an extent as to render perfectly palatable food unappetizing.

Even the smell of the food often turns a patient against the same, and in connection with the dry hot dishes the evaporation of the moisture of the food is naturally accelerated, therefore leaving the latter dry and the plates gummy and discolored. In other words the "life" of the food has entirely disappeared when the patient receives it, and during the time of consuming it the conditions become worse and more aggra-

vating on account of the food's cooling. It is therefore the particular aim of the present invention to provide a tray which is adapted to receive a certain number of dishes in the kitchen; which may then be covered and carried to the patient with certainty that the food will be in proper condition; and which may be placed in front of the patient and used like a set table; while at the same time the tray and its contents may be kept hot by the application of electricity whereby a small quantity of water will be heated and thus keep the plates and the food thereon warm without danger of drying or burning the same.

Referring to the drawings, 10 denotes a tray of ordinary construction provided with a pair of handles 11 and having at the underside of its flat bottom 12 a sheet of asbestos 13. Secured to the bottom 12 and contacting with the asbestos 13, is an electric heating unit 14, the terminals 15, 16 of which project freely through an aperture provided therefor in a retainer or cap-member 17 secured to the bottom of the tray and having a pad 18 of asbestos between the flange 17' and the unit 14. The upper sheet of asbestos 13 is comparatively thin as compared with the lower sheet 18, so that heat may be transmitted through the upper sheet onto the tray bottom 14, while the radiation from the bottom of the heat-unit is minimized. An air space 20 surrounds the heat-unit which is inclosed by a casing or shell 21 having a flat bottom 21' and its wall perforated with vent-apertures 22 through which heat is permitted to escape from the air space 20 and thus keep the bottom 21' in cool condition, so that when the tray in its entirety is placed upon a table or on the bed of a patient, no harm will result. The side wall is provided with an opening 23 at a point opposite the unit-terminals 15, 16 to permit the ready insertion and withdrawal of the plug end 24 of a cable whereby electric current may be applied to the unit.

In the present instance the tray 10 is sufficiently deep to retain a small quantity of water which becomes heated and the steam of which tends to retain the food in the dishes in the upper part of the tray, in moist and palatable condition. These dishes are placed and held in position in properly shaped apertures 25, 26, 27 provided in a false top-plate 28, the edges of the apertures being preferably flanged as shown at 28' to

serve as stiffening ribs for the plate 28, the main body of which is fitted and seated in the tray by virtue of a peripheral-shoulder 29 and a horizontal flange 30 which is adapted to rest on the flange 10' of the tray, and may be removed therefrom when desired.

A cover 35 may be placed on the flange of the top-plate 28 and be held in place thereon by a vertical flange 36 projecting from the latter, as shown. This cover has a knob or handle 37 which serves at the same time as an actuator for a vent-closure which may be opened or closed over an aperture 38 in the cover. The closure consists of a resilient plate 39 secured to a stud 40 by a nut 41, said stud projecting through the cover so as to be rotatable therein, and being secured to the knob 37 in any desired manner.

Many changes may be made in the particular combination and general organization of my improved tray without departing from the spirit of the invention.

I claim:

1. A serving tray having a flat bottom, a sheet of asbestos extending across the underside of said bottom, a heat-unit attached to

the underside of said asbestos sheet, and a flat-bottom casing entirely surrounding said heat-unit in spaced relation thereto and having a flange seated against asbestos sheet and insulated against the transmission of heat from the tray bottom and heat-unit.

2. A serving tray having a flat bottom, a sheet of asbestos extending across the underside of said bottom, a heat-unit attached to the underside of said asbestos sheet, and a flat-bottom casing entirely surrounding said heat-unit in spaced relation thereto and having a flange seated against asbestos sheet and insulated against the transmission of heat from the tray bottom and heat-unit, said casing having vent apertures in its upper portion, whereby heat generated by said unit will be allowed to escape from said casing to preserve the latter in cool condition.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

FLORENCE L. CROMBIE.

Witnesses:

F. E. ERNST,
C. R. STICKNEY.