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C. W. BURNHAM

RACK FOR FLAT TABLEWARE

Filed Nov. 8, 1926

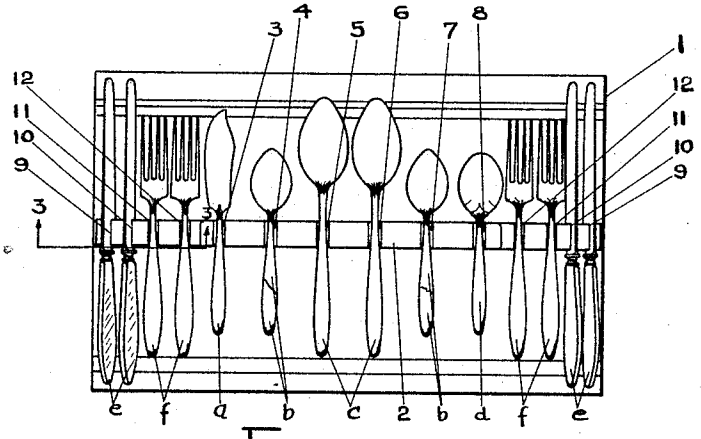



Fig. 1.

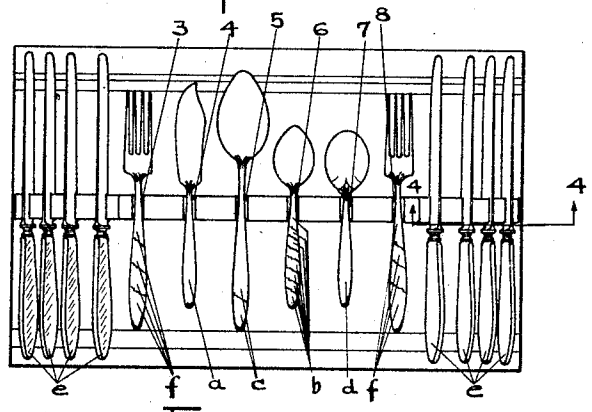



Fig. 2.

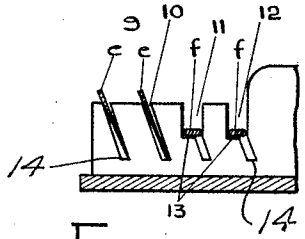



Fig. 3.

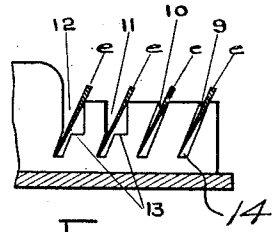



Fig. 4.

Inventor
Chester Walbridge Burnham

By his Attorneys
Philipp Thompson Rice & Kennedy

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHESTER WALBRIDGE BURNHAM, OF ONEIDA, NEW YORK, ASSIGNOR TO ONEIDA COMMUNITY, LIMITED, OF ONEIDA, NEW YORK, A CORPORATION OF NEW YORK.

## RACK FOR FLAT TABLEWARE.

Application filed November 8, 1926. Serial No. 146,902.

This invention relates to improvements in racks for flat tableware, that is to say, for knives, forks, spoons, etc.

Such tableware is usually sold in sets, and the usual minimum set is for four persons and consists of four knives, four forks, four teaspoons, two tablespoons, one butter knife, and one sugar spoon.

In the racks provided for sets of flat tableware, there are notches for the knives, in which the knives are snugly held and supported edgewise, that is to say, with their faces or blades in a substantially vertical position, and there are notches for forks, spoons, etc., in which the latter are supported flatwise or with their faces in a substantially horizontal position.

In such racks the notches have been such that a special rack had to be provided for each set of tableware, that is, a rack for a four-person set, another rack for an eight-person set, and so on. The reason for this is that the notches which snugly held and supported the knives, for example, with their faces substantially vertical, could not be used for so holding and supporting the forks, etc., for example, flatwise or with their faces in a substantially horizontal position because such notches were too narrow; nor could the notches for the forks, etc. be used for snugly holding and supporting the knives, for example, in their substantially vertical position, because such notches were too wide.

As a result, the manufacturer or the dealer had to keep on hand racks for different sets of tableware; for example, one rack for a four-person set, another rack for an eight-person set, etc., while the housewife who started with a four-person set and a rack therefor and increased this to an eight-person set, had to obtain a new rack for the latter to take the place of the rack for the four-person set.

It is the object of the present invention to provide a rack which may be used, by the dealer or by the housewife, for knives, etc., of a four-person set or an eight-person set etc., thus doing away with the necessity, on the part of the dealer, for keeping different racks for each set, and the necessity, on the part of the housewife, for obtaining another rack when, for example, she increased a four-person set to an eight-person set, etc.

These objects are attained by the provision of a rack having notches which are so shaped that they will receive and snugly hold and support either knives, for example, in the usual edgewise or substantially vertical position, or forks, spoons, etc., in the usual flatwise or horizontal position.

In the accompanying drawing,—

Fig. 1 is a plan view of a rack, and a support therefor, for a four-person set of tableware,

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the same rack used for an eight-person set.

Fig. 3 is a vertical section on the line 3–3 of Fig. 1, and

Fig. 4 is a vertical section on the line 4—4 of Fig. 2.

Referring to said drawing, 1 represents the rack support and 2 the rack. The latter, as shown in Fig. 1, is slotted vertically to provide six vertical notches, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, midway of its length, adapted to receive a butter knife *a* (notch 3), two teaspoons *b* (notch 4), two tablespoons *c* (notches 5, 6), two more teaspoons *b* (notch 7), and a sugar spoon *d* (notch 8), and in addition, two sets of four notches 9, 10, 11, 12, at opposite ends of the rack. Each of the notches 9, 10, is adapted for receiving and snugly holding a knife *e* while each of the notches 11, 12, is so shaped as to also adapt it to so receive and snugly hold forks *f* or other articles which, like forks, are to be supported flatwise or in a substantially horizontal position, as shown in the drawing.

The notches 11, 12 are adapted for so receiving and holding either a knife or a fork or the like by cutting away one wall of the notch so as to provide a seat 13 or shelf midway of its depth on which the shank of the fork or the like may rest flatwise and by providing a seat 14 at the lower end of the notch on which a knife, for example, may be supported edgewise, as shown in Fig. 3.

One advantage of this construction of the notches 11, 12, is the obvious one that each of such notches may be used for receiving and snugly supporting either a knife edgewise or receiving and so supporting a fork or the like flatwise.

A very important advantage, however, in providing a rack with notches such as 11 and 12 is that the rack, as shown in Fig. 1 for example, may be used not only for supporting and holding a four-person set, as there shown,—consisting of four knives,

four forks, four teaspoons, two tablespoons, one butter knife and one sugar spoon,—but also for supporting and holding an eight-person set, as shown in Fig. 2, consisting of eight knives, eight forks, eight teaspoons, two tablespoons, one butter knife and one sugar spoon.

In order to utilize the rack 2 for an eight-person set as shown in Fig. 2 all that is necessary to do is to place both of the tablespoons *c* in the notch 5, for example; move the two teaspoons *b* from notch 4 to notch 6; move the two teaspoons from notch 7 to notch 6; add four more teaspoons in that notch; move the butter knife *a* to notch 4 and sugar spoon *d* to notch 7; move the four forks *f* from notches 11, 12, at the ends of the rack to the notches 3, 8; add two forks in each of said notches; and insert a knife in each of the four vacated notches 11, 12.

The rack and rack support for flat tableware articles is usually provided with a covering, of plush for example, which is also folded down into the notches, such covering being used to improve the appearance of the rack and support and also to provide a soft bed or cushion for the articles. The folds of this covering in the notches also provides for the snug holding of the articles; the hold being sufficient to yieldingly hold the articles in their desired position in the rack and on the support while, at the same time, permitting the ready removal of the articles from the notches. Such plush or other covering is omitted from the drawing here because a showing thereof is unnecessary for the purposes of the present invention.

What I claim is:

1. A rack for flat tableware articles comprising a set of article-receiving notches each formed with a slot having a seat intermediate its length on which an article may be supported flatwise and below said seat another seat on which an article may be supported edgewise.

2. A rack for flat tableware articles comprising two sets of article-receiving notches, one set having each a notch formed with a slot having a seat on which an article may be supported flatwise and the other set having each a notch formed with a slot having a seat intermediate its length on which an article is supported flatwise and below said seat another seat on which an article may be supported edgewise.

3. A rack for flat tableware articles comprising a set of article-receiving notches in which articles may be supported flatwise and at each end thereof another set of article-receiving notches each formed with a slot having a seat intermediate its length on which an article may be supported flatwise and below said seat another seat on which an article may be supported edgewise.

4. A rack for flat tableware articles comprising a set of article-receiving notches each formed with a slot having a seat intermediate its length on which a spoon, fork or the like may be supported flatwise and below said seat another seat on which a knife or the like may be supported edgewise.

5. A rack for flat tableware articles comprising two sets of article-receiving notches, one set having each a notch formed with a slot having a seat on which a spoon, fork or the like may be supported flatwise and the other set having each a notch formed with a slot having a seat intermediate its length on which an article is supported flatwise and below said seat another seat on which a knife or the like may be supported edgewise.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand.

CHESTER WALBRIDGE BURNHAM.