March 26, 1968 J. A. BATOR 3,374,899

TOWEL BAR WITH FOLDING RACK

Filed May 13, 1966 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

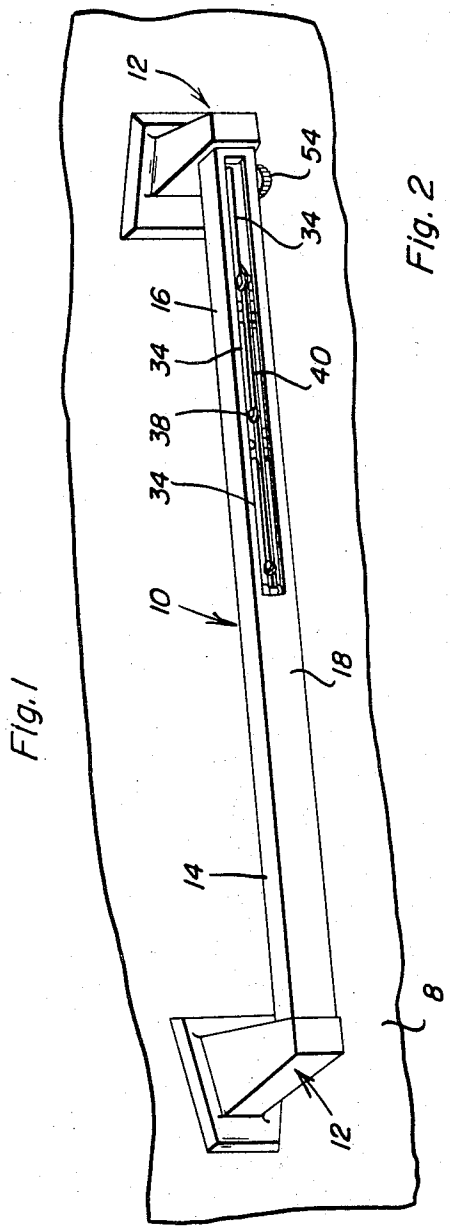


Fig. 1

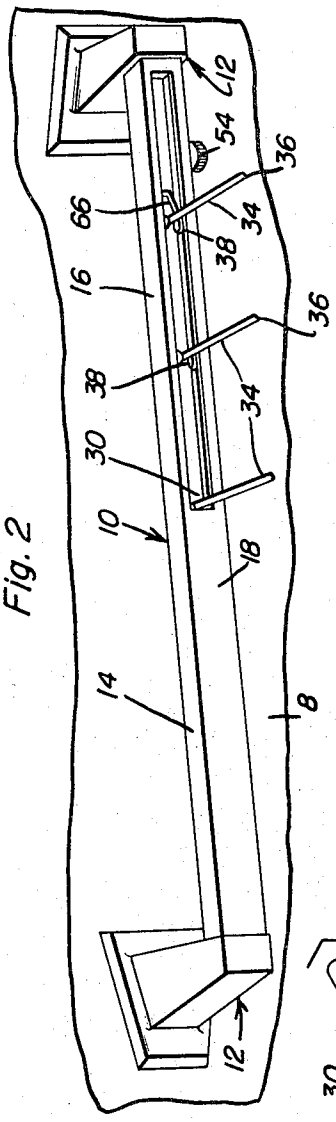


Fig. 2

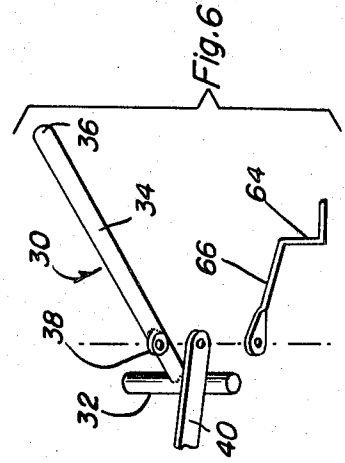


Fig. 6

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TOWEL BAR WITH FOLDING RACK

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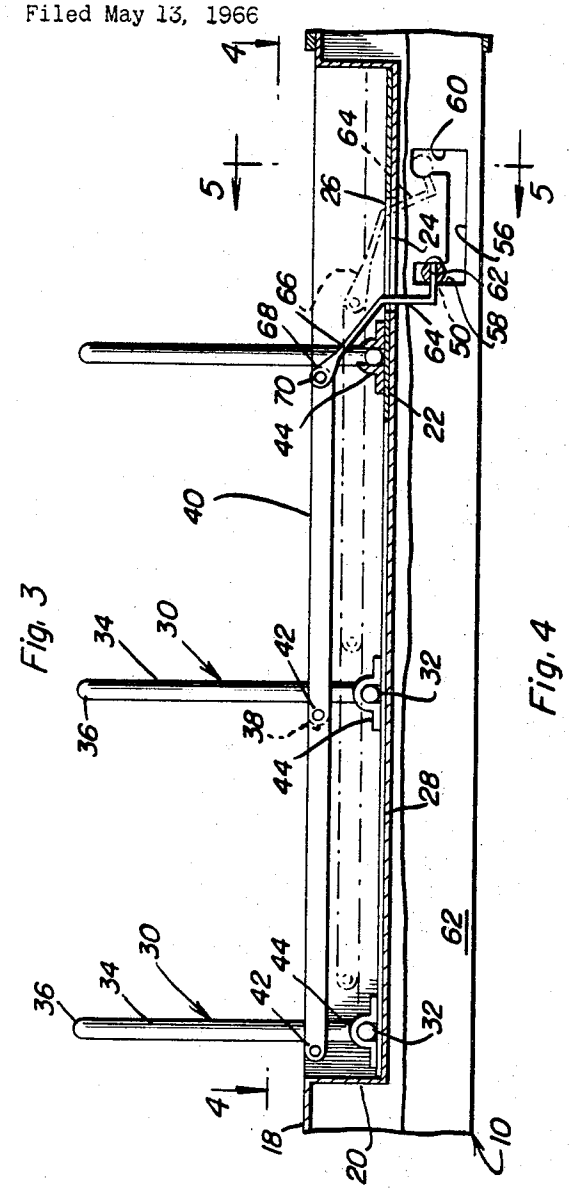


Fig. 3

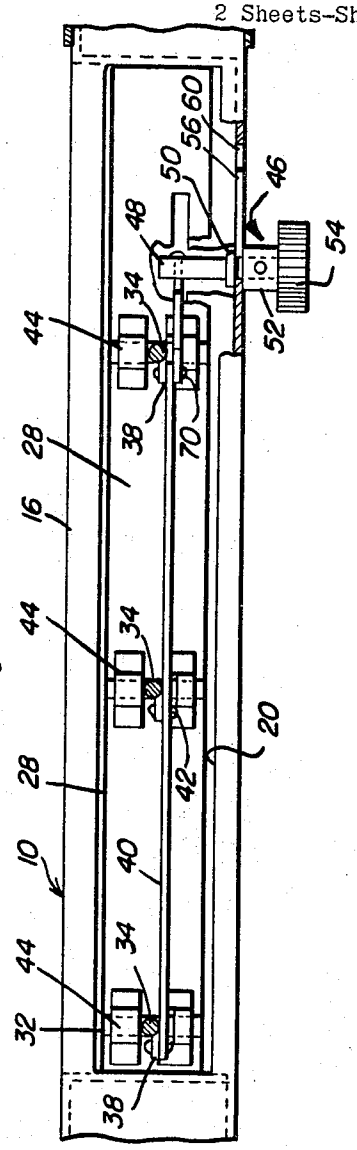


Fig. 4

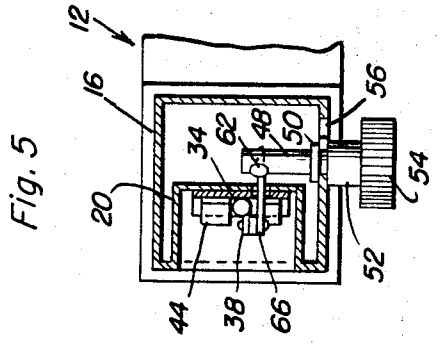


Fig. 5

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TOWEL BAR WITH FOLDING RACK

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The towel bar shown is unique in that one half-portion is equipped with a built-in small article utility rack. This rack is characterized by several projectable and retractable arms pivoted in a recess in a manner that these arms can be completely folded within the recess. When thus folded the entire rod is available for one or more towels. When the arms are projected they can be used in whatever manner desired while the other half-portion of the bar can be used without hindrance. Also, the arms are linked for simultaneous cooperation and the linking means is operable by a knob-equipped slide.

This invention relates to a towel bar for use in bathrooms and kitchens and wherever towel bars are commonly installed and pertains, more particularly, to a towel bar having ends thereof secured by suitable fixtures or brackets to a room wall, door or the like and which is unique in that it features a novel built-in or self-contained folding rack for readily available small articles such as, for example, hand and face towels, wash rags, hosiery, undergarments, robes and the like.

A towel rack embodying complimental means for supporting and drying wash rags, articles of apparel, and the like is not broadly new. For verification reference may be made, if so desired, to the towel rack revealed in Patent 2,388,366 issued to Peterson et al. This patent shows a towel rod or bar having groove means in which selectively usable article supporting arms are retracted and stored when not in use and which arms can be caught hold of by hand, swung out on suitable pivot pins and brought into play.

An objective in the instant matter is to improve upon Patent 2,388,366 and any known similar prior art towel holders and, in so doing, to advance this line of endeavor. For example, whereas the patented structure has to do with left and right pairs of pivoted hanger arms, the latter must be handled individually. In the herein disclosed adaptation the arms are confined to one half-portion and the other half-portion is free of arms. It follows that this more modern approach is highly desirable and is possessed of compactness and convenience, namely, a towel bar to the left of the center and a utility rack for miscellaneous articles to the right of the center. Moreover, the left portion is square in cross-section and the foldaway arms are nicely pocketed and stored in the channel-like pocket or recess at the right. The resultant device is simple, practical, saves valuable space and well serves the purposes for which it is designed and uniquely adapted for use.

Briefly summarized, the present invention has to do with a pair of spaced coplanar companion brackets designed and adapted to be affixed to and assume operative relationship on a relatively stationary wall, door or an equivalent support, a horizontally disposed bar bridging the space between and having end portions operatively connected with said brackets, one half-portion of said bar being adapted to permit a towel or the like to be manually draped or otherwise accessibly hung for convenient use and replacement thereon, and projectable and retractable rack means built into and constituting a self-contained component part of the other half-portion of said bar.

More specifically, novelty is predicated on the aforementioned rack means characterized by a plurality of individual pivotally mounted arms. These arms are confined to associative relationship in the last-named half-portion of the bar, said bar being hollow, rectangular in cross-section from end to end and having a pocket-like recess embodied in the right hand half-portion. The pivoted ends of the arms are located and anchored in the recess and these arms, when retracted, are folded to assume out-of-the-way positions confined within the limits of the pocket or recess. The operation of the arms is semi-automatic; that is, the several arms are joined through the medium of a tie link, said link being pivotally connected to lugs provided therefor on median portions of the arms and the link and arms all folding when not in use within the confines of the pocket or recess.

Stated somewhat more explicitly, the invention pertains to a towel bar which is rectangular or square in cross-section from end to end and which has its respective ends mounted in suitable brackets or wall fixtures. One end or half-portion of the front wall of the bar is provided with an indentation which defines an elongated channel-shaped depression which in turn provides a pocket-like recess. This recess is ideal for the location therein of an elongated plate which is superimposed on the bottom of the recess and fixedly secured in place. The plate is provided with a plurality of adapter brackets which are properly paired and provided with bearings. These bearing-equipped brackets serve to accommodate the T-shaped members in that the crosshead portions of the T-members constitute and provide journals. The journals are mounted or journaled for oscillation in the respectively paired bearings. Then, an elongated push-pull link bridges and hingedly joins lugs which are provided therefore on the projectable and retractable arms. Furthermore, an operating slide is shiftably mounted for use in slot means provided therefor in the front wall of the hollow towel bar. The utilization of a simple or U-shaped slot in the front wall serves to accommodate a knob-equipped slide and the slide is arranged to impart movement to a trip lever. The lever in turn is pivotally joined to the link whereby to thus project and retract the linked arms in a novel and feasible manner.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a view in perspective of a towel bar with foldaway utility rack means constructed in accordance with the invention and showing the same supported for use and also showing the arms of the rack collapsed or retracted into the recess means provided therefor.

FIG. 2 is a view in perspective and virtually the same as FIG. 1 except that it serves to illustrate the special utility arms swung out to projecting or article-supporting positions.

FIG. 3 is an enlarged view with parts in section and elevation detailing the right hand portion or half of the aforementioned bar and showing with particularity the recess means and the assembly comprising the plate, arms and linking means fitted in the recess and showing the arms projecting in full lines and retracted in phantom lines.

FIG. 4 is a section taken approximately on the plane of the line 4—4 of FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a cross-section taken on the plane of the section line 5—5 of FIG. 3.

And FIG. 6 is a view in perspective with certain of the component parts exploded and with other associated parts omitted for clearness of illustration.

Referring now to FIGS. 1 and 2 in particular the relatively stationary support, which may be a room wall, door or the like is denoted by the numeral **8**. The elongated horizontally disposed improved towel bar is denoted by the numeral **10** and has its end portions appropriately mounted in and supported by fixtures or brackets **12** which are mounted in any convenient manner on the surface of the support wall **8**. It is evident that the essence of the invention relates to the construction of the unique towel bar. This bar is preferably horizontally elongated and made of suitable stainless steel, plastic, aluminum or other material. It is also preferably hollow and is characterized, generally speaking by a left hand portion **14** and a complemental right hand half-portion **16**. The left hand portion **14** is intact and constitutes and provides, as is obvious, a somewhat conventional type of towel bar. The right hand half-portion **16** is improved in that it is provided with self-contained or built-in utility small article racking means. To the ends desired the front wall **18** is provided, that is the half-portion **16**, with an elongated indentation **20** whose bottom wall is denoted at **22**. This indentation provides a satisfactory elongated pocket-like recess or receiver for the principal component parts which go to make up the special rack assembly means. This recess is of requisite depth and channel-like in cross-section and the open side thereof opens through the front wall **18** as clearly shown. An elongated slot **24** is provided at the right as shown in FIG. 3, this slot being in the bottom wall. The slot **24** is in communication with a similar complemental slot **26** which is formed at the right hand end portion (FIG. 3) of the base plate **28** which serves as a mounting for the arms. Any number of article hanging arms may be provided. In the form of the invention disclosed several such arms are provided and each arm, considered as a unit, is the same in construction. This is to say each member or arm is substantially T-shaped in cross-section as denoted at **30** (see FIG. 6). The relatively short crosshead is cylindrical in cross-section and is denoted at **32**. The angularly disposed stem is denoted at **34** and has a rounded free or terminal end **36**. This part **34** constitutes the arm proper. That portion of the arm adjacent the crosshead is provided with a ring-like integral lug **38**. These lugs serve to accommodate co-acting portions of a tie member here referred to as an arm coordinating and operating push-pull link **40**. Portions of the link overlap the lugs or ears **38** and are pivotally connected thereto as at **42** whereby to thus interconnect the several T-shaped members and to cause them to operate in unison. Each crosshead is rockably or pivotally mounted by way of bearings embodied in opposed or paired adapter brackets **44**. These brackets are best shown in FIG. 4 where it will be seen that pairs of brackets are arranged at longitudinally spaced points and equal distances from each other relative to the supporting or assembling base plate **28**.

Attention is now directed to the operating slide, denoted by the numeral **46** in FIG. 4. The slide comprises a pin **48** having a washer **50**, provided with a hub **52** and a finger gripping and actuating knob **54**. The hub and washer portion is slidable in the component portions **56**, **58** and **60** of a substantially U-shaped slot provided in the wall **62** in the manner shown in FIGS. 3 and 4. This knob-equipped slide can be operated back and forth in the main slot **56** and can be kept in a locked position in either of the branches **58** or **60**. An end portion **62** of a crank **64** at one end of a link-operating lever **66** is connected with the slide, that is the pin **48**. The flattened end **68** of the lever is joined by a pin **70** to an adjacent one of the aforementioned lugs **38** as is brought out in FIGS. 3 and 4 and also shown exploded in FIG. 6.

As is evident from FIG. 1 the article-supporting arms **34** can be considered as normally collapsed or folded within the confines of the pocket-like recess means **20**. When one desires to bring the arms into play all that is necessary is to operate the slide means **46**, that is to catch hold of the knob **54** and to operate the same by way of the component portions of the U-shaped slot means and, in so doing, to trip or actuate the lever means **66**. The lever means in turn acts on the push-pull link means **40** which, joined with the several arms serves to swing the arms outwardly through the open side of the slit to assume the article-supporting relationship illustrated at the right in FIG. 2.

It is believed that a careful consideration of the specification taken in conjunction with the views of the drawing will enable the reader to obtain a clear and comprehensive understanding of the component parts, their construction and featured combination and relationship. Moreover, the views of the drawing considered in conjunction with each other serve to clearly show the manner in which the towel bar **14** and rack-equipped half-portion **16** function. Accordingly, a more extended description is deemed to be unnecessary.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A multipurpose device of the class described comprising: a pair of spaced coplanar companion brackets designed and adapted to be affixed to and assume operative relationship on a relatively stationary wall, door or an equivalent support, a horizontally disposed towel bar bridging the space between and having end portions operatively connected with and supported by said brackets, one half-portion of said bar being adapted to permit a towel or the like to be manually draped or otherwise accessibly hung for convenient use and replacement thereon, and projectable and retractable rack means for supporting and drying miscellaneous small articles built into and constituting a self-contained component part of the other half-portion of said bar, said rack means comprising a plurality of individual pivotally mounted arms, said last-named half-portion of said bar having an elongated pocket-like recess embodied therein, the pivoted ends of said arms being located and anchored in said recess and all of said arms, when retracted, being folded to assume out-of-the-way positions within the confines of said recess and, when in use, projecting simultaneously outwardly through and beyond the open face of said recess, said bar being straight, of uniform cross-section and non-circular from end to end, said recess being channel-shaped in cross-section and commensurate in length with said last-named half-portion, said arms being T-shaped in elevation.

2. The device according to claim **1**, and means hingedly connecting and linking said arms together for united simultaneous operation.

3. The device according to claim **2**, and wherein said last-named means comprises a single rigid push-pull link bridging median portions of said arms and pivotally connected to link-mounting lugs carried by the respective arms.

4. A device of the class described comprising: an elongated hollow towel bar rectangular in cross-section having means at its respective ends for mounting said bar on a customarily usable wall or the like, an end portion of the front wall of said bar being indented and defining an elongated channel-shaped depression providing a pocket-like recess, a plate fittingly secured in the bottom of said recess, a plurality of duplicate T-shaped rod members, each member having a cross head and an elongated stem, the latter providing a small article racking and supporting arm, pairs of adapter brackets fixed atop said plate at equidistant places, said brackets having bearings, the cross-heads of said T-shaped members providing mounting journals and being journalled for oscillation in their re-

spectively cooperable bearings, an elongated push-pull link bridging and hingedly joined to lugs provided therefor on said arms, an operating slide shiftably mounted for use on the front wall of said towel bar, and a trip lever having one end pivotally connected with an end of said link and its other end connected with said slide.

5. The device according to claim 4, and wherein said front wall is provided with a substantially U-shaped slot, and said slide comprising a pin slidable in selective component portions of said slot, said pin having a finger-grippable slide operating and retaining knob, said trip lever having said other end connected to said slide by way of said pin.

6. A device of the class described comprising: an elongated towel bar having means at its respective ends capable of mounting said bar on a stationary wall or the like, an end portion of the front wall of said bar having an elongated pocket-like recess, the other end portion of said bar being intact, a plurality of duplicate T-shaped rod members, each member having a crosshead and an elongated stem, said stem providing a small article racking and supporting arm, brackets fixed in said recess at equidistant longitudinally spaced places, said brackets having bearings, the crossheads of said T-shaped member providing mounting journals and being journaled for oscillation in their respectively cooperable bearings, an elongated push-pull link bridging and hingedly joined to said arms, a manually actuatable operating slide shiftably mounted for use on an accessible wall of said towel bar, and a trip lever having one end pivotally connected with an end of said push-pull link and its other end operatively connected with said operating slide.

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