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EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

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54 Eating plate with curved inner wall having drainage section.

57 An eating plate (2) has a circumferentially extending concavely curved inner wall (6, 8) for aiding the handicapped or the like in keeping food on the plate (2) when bringing the food to the edge of the plate with an eating utensil. The curved inner wall (6, 8) is interrupted by a drainage section (16) to prevent residual food from being trapped in the plate (2) when washing the plate. Indicia (18, 20) are provided to indicate the proper orientation of the drainage section (16) when washing the plate (2).

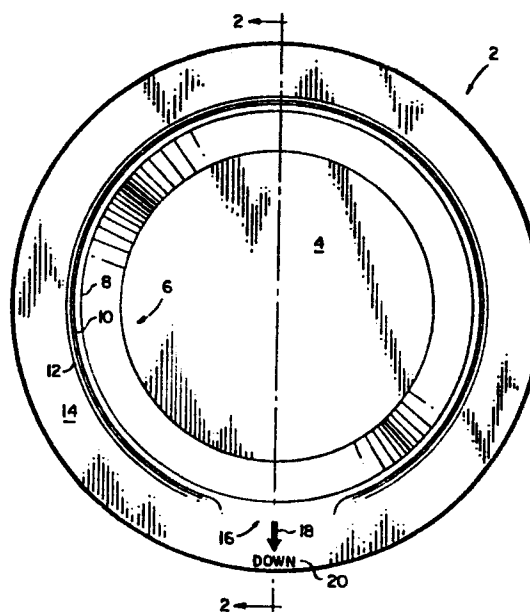


FIG. 1

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EATING PLATE WITH CURVED INNER WALL
HAVING DRAINAGE SECTION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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Eating plates with curved inner walls are designed for use by the elderly of the handicapped as an aid in self-feeding. The curved inner wall is shaped to act as an extra implement against which the user can trap particles of food. The curved inner wall holds the food particles on the plate while the user brings an eating utensil such as a fork or a spoon to the edge of the plate, and thereby prevents spills and makes eating a much more enjoyable experience for those who have need for such plates.

A problem exists in cleaning plates of the type described. There is a tendency for food to become trapped by the curved inner wall and hence the plate cannot be cleaned to the extent desired. This trapping occurs because, prior to the present invention, the curved inner wall has extended continuously around the circumference of the plate, and no means have been provided for draining residual food when the plate is washed, as in a dishwasher. The present invention overcomes this problem by interrupting the curved inner wall with a suitable drainage section.

Accordingly, it is the object of this invention to provide an eating plate with a curved inner wall for the purposes described, and which curved inner wall is interrupted with a drainage section to enhance washing of the plate.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention contemplates an eating plate with a concavely curved inner wall extending around the circumference of the plate. The curved inner wall is interrupted with a drainage section, whereby residual food which would otherwise be trapped by the curved inner wall is drained from the plate when the plate is washed. Indicia may be provided on the plate to indicate the proper orientation thereof when being washed to provide said drainage.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

Figure 1 is a top plan view of a plate according to the invention. Figure 2 is a section view taken along line 2-2 in Figure 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

With reference to the Drawing, an eating plate is designated generally by the numeral 2. Plate 2 has an inner bottom 4 and an inner wall designated generally by the numeral 6. Inner wall 6 has a concavely curved portion 8 extending around the circumference thereof and terminating in an inner lip 10 contiguous an upper edge 12 of the plate. A ledge 14 extends outwardly from edge 12. The structural relationship between inner bottom 4, inner wall 6, inner lip 10, edge 12 and ledge 14 is best shown in Figure 2.

So far the plate described is similar to that shown in U.S. Design Patent 226,674 issued to Nicholas J. Bruno on April 10, 1973, and assigned to Maddak, Inc., Pequannock, New Jersey, and which plate is used for the purposes described.

Thus, when using the described eating plate as intended as an aid for the handicapped or the like is self-feeding, concavely curved portion 8 of inner wall 6, and particularly inner lip 10, helps to keep food on the plate when a user brings food to plate edge 12 via an eating utensil. Spilling of the food is thereby avoided and easier access thereto is provided.

In order to properly clean plate 2 after it has been used, and to insure that residual food is not trapped within curved portion 8 of inner

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wall 6, and particularly by inner lip 10, the inner lip is interrupted by a drainage section 16. Drainage section 16 eliminates a portion of inner lip 10 and is contoured to blend in with the concavely curved portion 8 of inner wall 6 and with edge 12.

5 It will now be understood that when the plate is being washed as in a dishwasher, if it were not for drainage section 16, residual food would have no means for being removed from the plate, and the tendency would be for the food to remain lodged within the plate, particularly under inner lip 10. By providing drainage section 16 as described and shown, a passage
10 is provided for said residual food and washing of the plate is enhanced.

With particular reference to Figure 1, it has been found advisable to provide indicia on plate 2 indicating the appropriate orientation of the plate, as in a dishwasher, to provide the aforementioned drainage. Thus, as shown in the Figure, an arrow designated by the numeral 18 and the
15 legend "down" designated by the numeral 20, or some other such suitable indicia, are suitably marked on plate ledge 14 adjacent drainage section 16.

In accordance with the aforementioned description of the invention a plate with a curved inner wall for use by the elderly or the handicapped
20 as an aid in self-feeding has been described. The curved inner wall is interrupted by a drainage section to enhance washing of the plate. Indicia are provided on the plate to indicate the proper orientation of the plate so that the aforementioned drainage occurs as intended and washing is enhanced. The width of drainage section 16 and its particular shape may be varied
25 depending on the size and the aesthetic characteristics of the plate as will now be appreciated.

With the foregoing description of the invention in mind, reference is made to the claims appended hereto for a definition of the scope of the invention.

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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An eating plate of the type for use by the handicapped and the like as a self-feeding aid, characterized by:

5 the plate having an inner bottom and an upper edge, and an inner wall leading from the bottom to the edge;

the inner wall having a concavely curved portion extending around the circumference thereof;

the concavely curved portion having a terminating portion contiguous
10 the upper edge, said concavely curved portion and terminating portion thereof tending to hold food particles on the plate when a user brings said food particles from the inner bottom to the upper edge of the plate with an eating utensil; and

a drainage section interrupting the portion of the concavely curved
15 portion of the inner wall terminating contiguous the upper edge, whereby residual food is drained from the plate through the drainage section when washing the plate.

2. An eating plate as described by claim 1, characterized by:

the drainage section being contoured to blend in with the concavely
20 curved portion of the inner wall and the upper edge of the plate.

3. An eating plate as described by claim 1, further characterized by:

a ledge extending outwardly from the upper edge of the plate; and
indicia carried by said ledge adjacent the drainage section for
indicating the proper orientation of said plate for achieving the drainage
25 of residual food through said drainage section when washing the plate.

4. An eating plate as described by claim 1, further characterized by:

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the portion of the concavely curved portion of the inner wall terminating contiguous the edge being an inwardly extending lip;

said lip tending to hold the food particles on the plate when a user brings said food particles from the inner bottom to the upper edge of the
5 plate with an eating utensil; and

the drainage section interrupting the inwardly extending lip, whereby residual food is drained from the plate through the drainage section when washing the plate.

5. An eating plate as described by claim 1, further characterized by:
10 the drainage section eliminating a section of the terminating portion of the concavely curved portion of the inner wall.
6. An eating plate as described by claim 4, further characterized by:
the drainage section eliminating a section of the inwardly extending lip.
- 15 7. An eating plate as described by claim 1, further characterized by:
indicia carried by the plate adjacent the drainage section for indicating the proper orientation of said plate for achieving the drainage of residual food through said drainage section when washing the plate.

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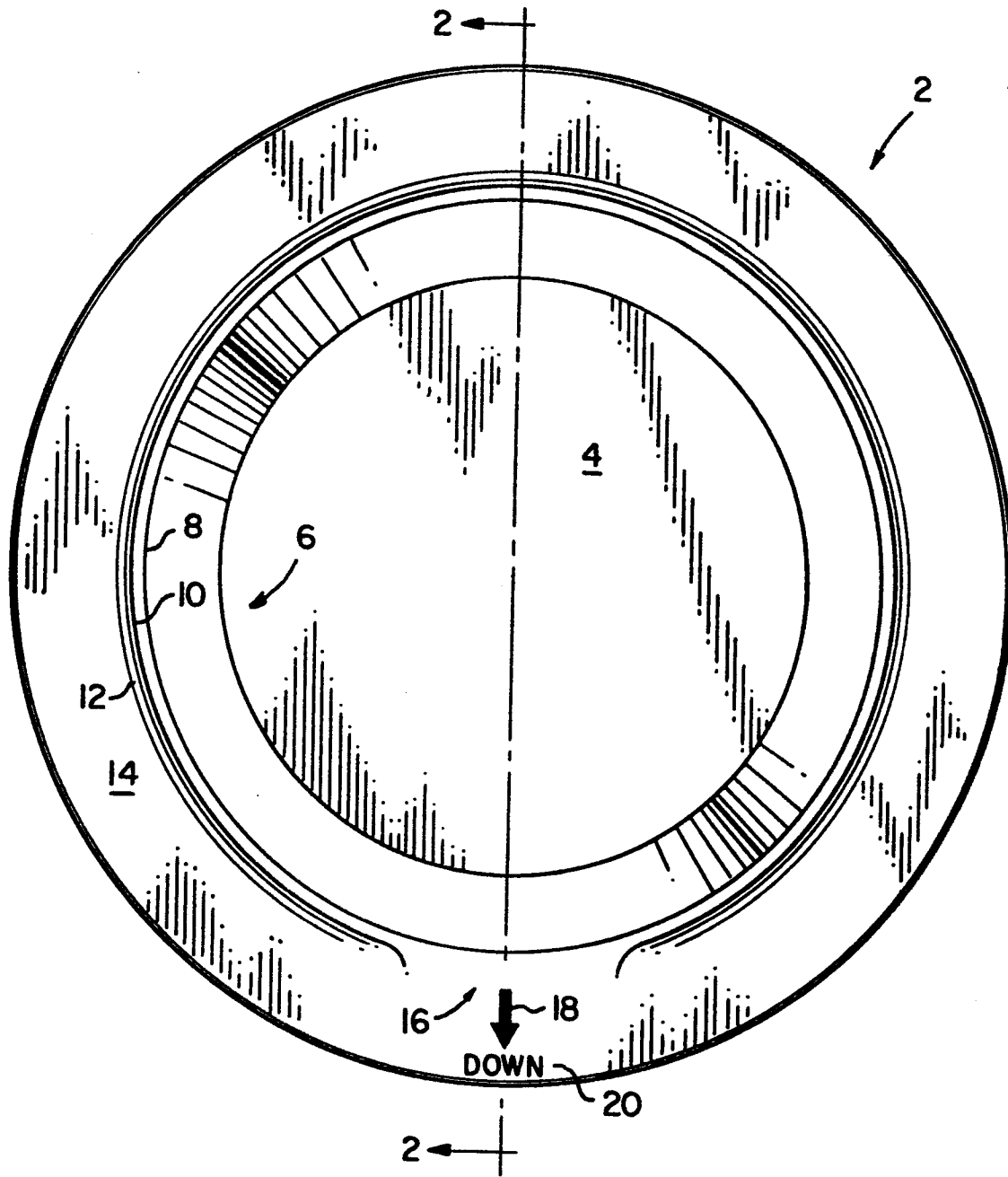


FIG. 1

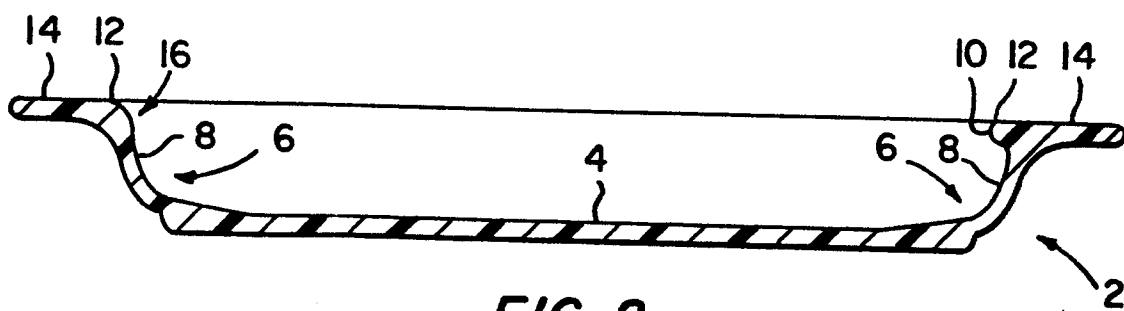


FIG. 2



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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Application number

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			EP 86200154.2
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.4)
X	CH - A - 176 879 (WÖHREL) * Totality * --	1,4	A 47 G 19/02
X	GB - A - 1 206 541 (RUSSEL) * Totality * --	1,4	
X	US - A - 2 672 697 (LA TOUR) * Fig. 3 *	1,4	
X	DE - A1 - 2 543 048 (EBERLEIN) * Totality * --	1,5	
X,D	US - DESIGN PATENT - 226 674 * Totality * ----	1	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.4)
			A 47 G
Place of search VIENNA		Date of completion of the search 12-01-1987	Examiner TRATTNER
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			