Sept. 5, 1967 E. B. GERALD 3,339,875

COMBINATION BOOK PROTECTOR AND READING PROP

Filed Aug. 11, 1965 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1

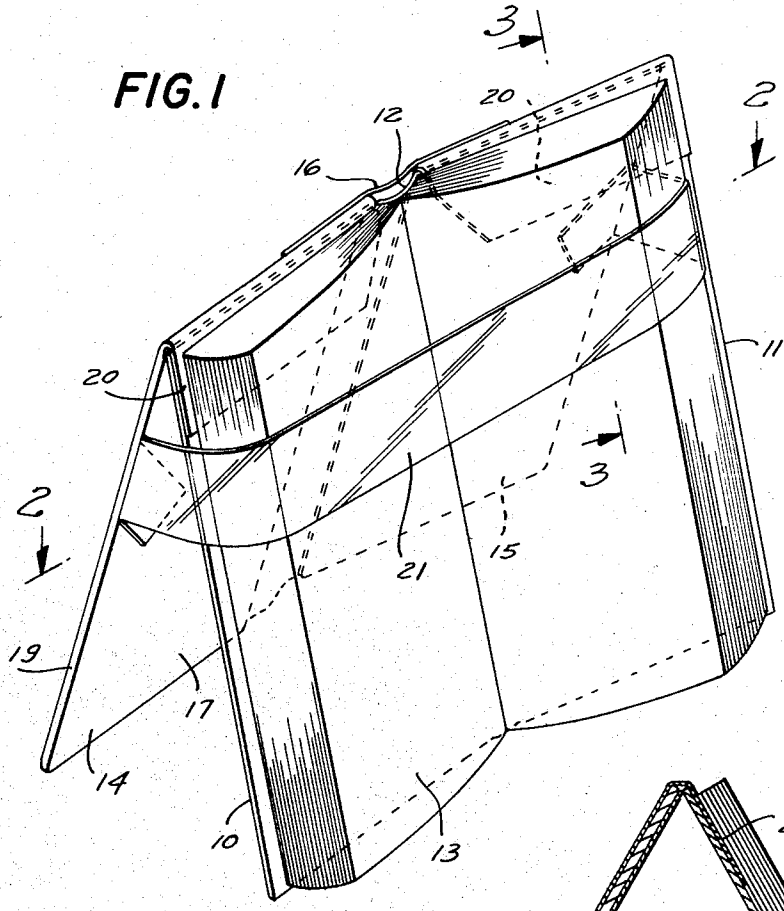
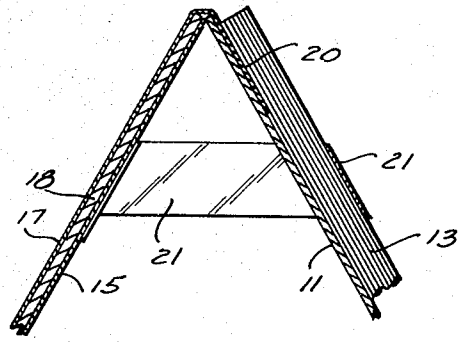


FIG. 3



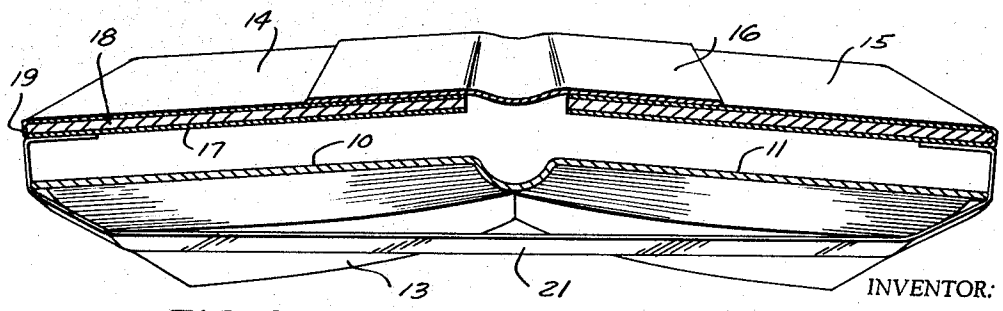


FIG. 2

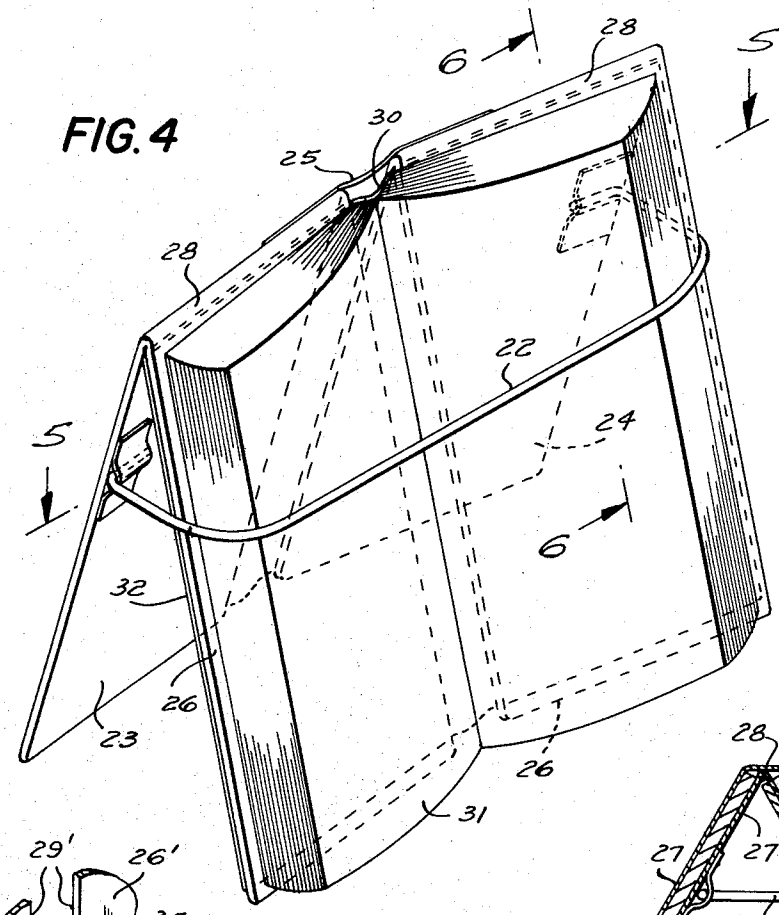
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COMBINATION BOOK PROTECTOR AND READING PROP

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FIG. 4



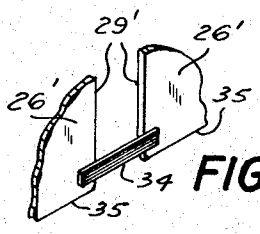


FIG. 7

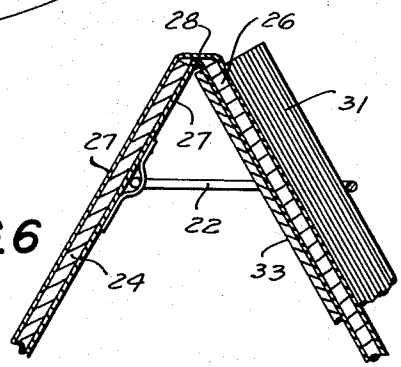


FIG. 6

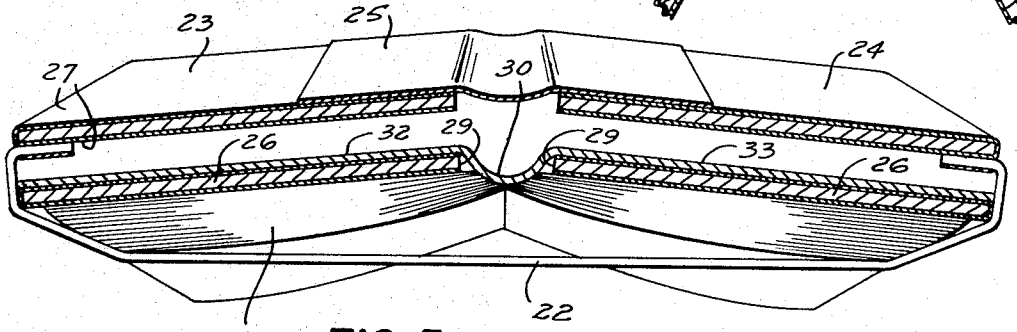


FIG. 5

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United States Patent Office 3,339,875 Patented Sept. 5, 1967

3,339,875

COMBINATION BOOK PROTECTOR AND READING PROP

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Filed Aug. 11, 1965, Ser. No. 478,814
6 Claims. (Cl. 248—463)

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A pair of book-cover-size panels are joined by a flexible web, so that when book is closed one panel overlies each book cover and web overlies book spine. Flaps hinged to upper edges of panels are located against inner surfaces of book cover to connect panels to covers. Panels may be swung rearwardly to serve as book prop. Flaps may be adhesively secured to covers.

A flexible band, which may be stretchable, is secured at its ends to the panels and extends around pages of opened book to hold pages down and limit rearward swing of panels.

This invention relates generally to book accessories, and has particular reference to a combination book protector and reading prop.

A device constructed in accordance with this invention is intended for use with a conventional book having front and back covers and an intermediate spine to which the pages are bound. When associated with such a book, it serves as an effective book cover and protector when the book is closed, and can be adjusted to serve as a rear prop for the book when the book is opened. A special feature of the invention resides in the provision of a flexible band adapted to extend around the opened book in a generally horizontal direction so as to hold the pages down and thus help to keep the book open.

A general objective of the invention is to provide a thoroughly practical device in the form of a unitary assembly of elements, easily applicable to the book to be protected, inexpensive from a manufacturing standpoint, and attractive in appearance. A more specific object is to provide an article of commerce that lends itself readily to varying ornamental treatments, so that it can serve, in addition to its utilitarian functions, as an attractive ornamental embellishment.

The device consists, in brief, of a pair of stiff panels having a size comparable to that of the book covers and adapted to be placed against the outer surfaces of the book covers, a flexible connector betwen the panels, a means for bringing the upper edges of the panels into a hinged relation to the upper edges of the book covers, and a flexible band adapted to encircle the opened book.

In one embodiment of the invention, the hinging is achieved by flaps extending from the upper edges of the prop panels and adapted to be adhesively secured to the inner surfaces of the book covers. In another, and preferred, embodiment of the invention, the flaps are made of stiff material, hingedly connected to the upper edges of the panels, and adapted to lie flat (without adhesive) against the inner surfaces of the book covers.

These two embodiments of the invention are illustrated, by way of example, in the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a combination book protector and reading prop shown in association with a

conventional book, the book being in opened and propped condition;

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view substantially along the line 2—2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view substantially along the line 3—3 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a view similar to FIG. 1, showing another embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view substantially along the line 5—5 of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view along the line 6—6 of FIG. 4; and

FIG. 7 is a fragmentary perspective view of a slightly modified construction of the type shown in FIGS. 4–6.

The book chosen for illustration in FIGS. 1–3 has front and back covers **10** and **11**, a spine portion **12**, and the usual pages **13** bound to the spine **12**. The accessory forming the subject of this invention is optionally applicable to the book and comprises a pair of stiff panels **14** and **15**, a flexible connector **16** extending between the panels and adapted to extend across the spine **12** when the book is closed, and a means for articulating the panels **14, 15** to the covers **10, 11** of the book, respectively, along the upper edges.

The panels **14, 15** have dimensions comparable to those of the book covers themselves, and the connector **16** is made to have a width substantially equal to the width of the spine **12** of the book with which the accessory is to be used. It may be convenient to make the panels **14, 15** of rectangular elements of stiff material such as cardboard or the like, and to provide these elements with a covering of relatively thin paper or its equivalent. In the device chosen for ilustration, such a thin covering is shown at **17** (see FIGS. 2 and 3) and it is caused to extend across the entire inner and outer surfaces of the intermediate stiff element **18**, the outer edge of the latter being also enclosed as indicated at **19**. The connector **16** may be of any suitable flexible material, and is conveniently secured to the adjacent margins of the panels **14, 15** by adhesive.

The hinging means provided for in the device of FIGS. 1–3 consists of flaps **20** of flexible material hingedly connected to the upper edges of the panels **14, 15** and adapted to be folded down over the inner surfaces of the book covers **10, 11** respectively. Where the panels **14, 15** embody thin coverings **17** of paper or the like, the flaps **20** may be conveniently formed as integral extensions of the covering on the outside. The flaps **20** may be provided with adhesive on their inner surfaces, or they may in any other convenient manner be secured in the overlying positions with respect to the book covers **10, 11**. This establishes a hinged articulation between the props **14, 15** and the book covers **10, 11**, respectively, along the upper edges of latter.

The device includes also a flexible band **21** whose ends are secured to the panels **14, 15**, respectively, by adhesive means or otherwise. The band **21** may have any desired width and may be composed of any suitable material. It extends in a generally horizontal direction and is adapted to encircle the opened book, as shown in the drawings, to hold the pages of the book down and thus help to maintain the book in opened condition. The band **21** serves also as a means for limiting the rearward swinging movement of the panels **14, 15** when they are adjusted into the book propping disposition.

The practical nature of the device, and the ease with which it may be used, will be readily apparent. Having

chosen a book protector whose flexible connector **16** is comparable to the width of the spine **12** of the book, the user merely secures the flaps **20** to the inner faces of the book covers **10**, **11**, and the band **21** is caused to extend forwardly around the book. When the book is closed, the band folds itself into an enclosed condition within the book, and may be employed as a book mark. The panels **14**, **15** lie flat against the outer faces of the book covers and serve in an effective manner to cover the book and thus protect it. By appropriate choice of materials, the outer surfaces of the book-protecting panels **14**, **15**, and of the connector **16**, may serve as attractive ornamentation. When the book is to be held in a propped condition, it is opened to an extent in which the covers **10** and **11** lie substantially in a single plane, whereupon the panels **14**, **15**, along with the connector **16**, can be swung rearwardly to a propping condition. The band **21** limits the extent of this swinging movement.

In FIGS. 1–3 the band **21** has been shown, by way of example, in the form of a strip of transparent plastic or the like. In the device chosen for illustration in FIGS. 4–6, the band **22** is in the nature of a cord, and under certain circumstances it may be caused to embody a degree of stretchability.

The cord **22** is secured at its ends to the outer margins of stiff propping panels, **23**, **24**, joined by a flexible connector **25**. These panels may be constructed as hereinbefore described, i.e., of rectangular elements of stiff cardboard or the like enclosed within a thinner coating of paper or its equivalent. However, the attachment flaps are in this case composed of relatively stiff material and may consist, for example, of relatively stiff elements **26** of cardboard or the like. The elements **26** are in hinged relation to the panels **23**, **24**, respectively, and the articulation may be attained by extending the covering layers **27** forwardly over the front and back surfaces of the elements **26**. This is most clearly shown in FIG. 6, and creates a flexible hinge connection at **28**.

A distinctive feature of the attachment flaps **26** shown in FIGS. 4–6 is the provision, on each flap, of an inner edge **29** adapted to lie directly adjacent to the binding of the book along the spine **30**. This binding is connected in usual and conventional fashion to the pages **31** of the book, and the front and back covers of the book are designated by the reference numerals **32** and **33**, respectively.

The location of the edges **29** directly adjacent to the binding helps to lock the attachment flaps in position without the aid of any adhesive. The desired effect can be enhanced by making each of the attachment flaps of a size comparable to that of the book cover with which it is associated.

FIG. 7 shows a possible inclusion in the structure of an elastic connector **34** between the lower edges **35** of the attachment flaps **26'**. When the flaps **26'** are in position against the inner surfaces of the front and back book covers, the connector **34** positions itself beneath the pages of the book, and thus helps to hold the flaps **26'** in place and prevent accidental disengagement of the device from the book. When a connector **34** is employed, the inner edges **29'** of the flaps **26'** need not necessarily lie directly adjacent to the binding as shown in FIG. 5.

The use of the device shown in FIGS. 4–7 is similar to that previously described. The user applies the accessory device to the book by slipping the stiff panels **26** (or **26'**) beneath the front and back covers of the book. This establishes the desired hinged relationship between the book covers and the propping panels **23**, **24**. The band **22** is caused to extend forwardly around the book. When the book is closed, the panels **23** and **24** lie closely against the outer faces of the book covers, and serve as protective enclosures. The cord or band **22** may serve as a useful book mark. When the book is opened, it can be propped into the condition shown in the drawings by adjusting the book covers into substantial alignment and then swinging the panels **23**, **24** rearwardly. The extent of this swinging movement is limited by the end regions of the band **22**.

It will thus be seen that a device of thoroughly practicable character has been devised, readily adaptable for use with any conventional book to serve as an effective book protector and as a reading prop.

It is to be understood that some of the details herein described and illustrated may obviously be altered by those skilled in the art without necessarily departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as expressed in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. For use with a conventional book having front and back covers and an intermediate spine to which the pages are bound, a combination book protector and reading prop comprising

a pair of stiff panels having a size comparable to that of the book covers and adapted to be placed against the outer surfaces of the book covers respectively,

a flexible connector between said panels adapted to extend across the spine of the book,

means articulating the upper edges of said panels in hinged relation to the corresponding upper edges of the book covers,

whereby the panels can overlie and protect the book when it is closed and can be swung rearwardly away from the book covers to serve as props when the book is opened, and

a flexible band extending forwardly and adapted to encircle the opened book in a substantially horizontal direction, said band serving to hold the pages down and thus helping to keep the book open when the book is being propped in a standing position by said panels, the ends of said flexible band being secured to said prop panels so that said band serves simultaneously to limit the rearward swing of said panels and to hold the book pages down.

2. A combination book protector and reading prop as defined in claim **1**, in which said articulating means comprises flaps hingedly connected to the upper edges of said panels and adapted to be adhesively secured to the inner surfaces of said book covers respectively.

3. A combination book protector and reading prop as defined in claim **1**, in which said articulating means comprises flaps of stiff material hingedly connected to the upper edges of said panels and adapted to lie flat against the inner surfaces of said book covers respectively, said flaps having inner edges located to lie directly adjacent to the binding of the book.

4. A combination book protector and reading prop as defined in claim **3**, in which said flaps are comparable in size to the book covers themselves, the book covers thus being protectively sandwiched between the panels and the flaps when the book is closed.

5. For use with a conventional book having front and back covers and an intermediate spine to which the pages are bound, a combination book protector and reading prop comprising

a pair of stiff panels having a size comparable to that of the book covers and adapted to be placed against the outer surfaces of the book covers respectively,

a flexible connector between said panels adapted to extend across the spine of the book,

means articulating the uper edges of said panels in hinged relation to the corresponding upper edges of the book covers, said articulating means comprising flaps of stiff material hingedly connected to the upper edges of said panels and adapted to lie flat against the inner surfaces of said book covers respectively, and

an elastic connector extending between said flaps at their lower edges,

whereby the panels can overlie and protect the book when it is closed and can be swung rearwardly away from the

book covers to serve as props when the book is opened, and

a flexible band extending forwardly and adapted to encircle the opened book in a substantially horizontal direction, said band serving to hold the pages down and thus helping to keep the book open when the book is being propped in a standing position by said panels.

6. A combination book protector and reading prop as defined in claim 1 wherein said flexible band is stretchable to permit adjustment of the angle between each book cover and its respective prop when the book is opened.

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