July 19, 1949. G. P. SULLIVAN ET AL 2,476,568

CONVERTIBLE EASEL CASE

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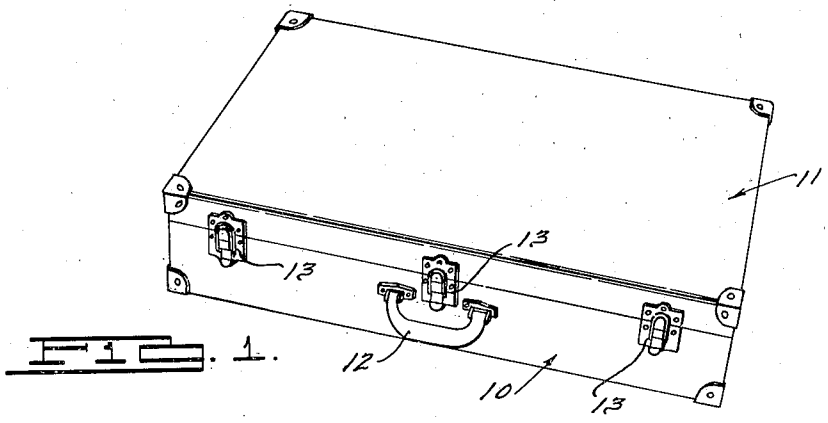


FIG. 1.

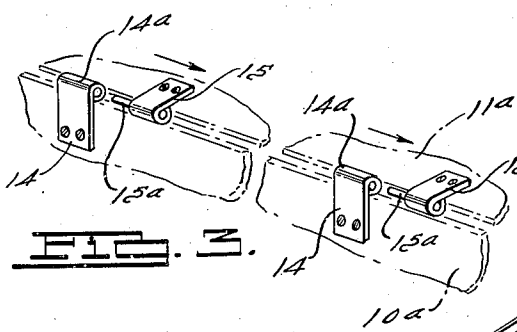


FIG. 3.

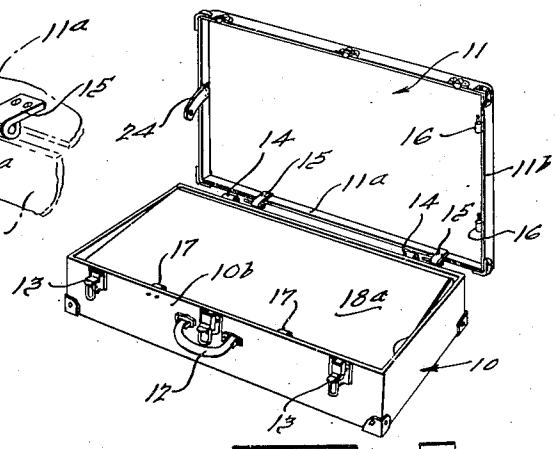


FIG. 2.

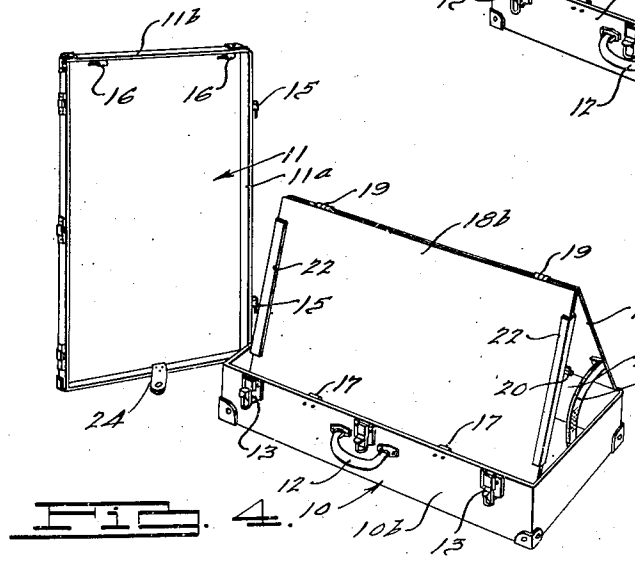


FIG. 4.

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CONVERTIBLE EASEL CASE

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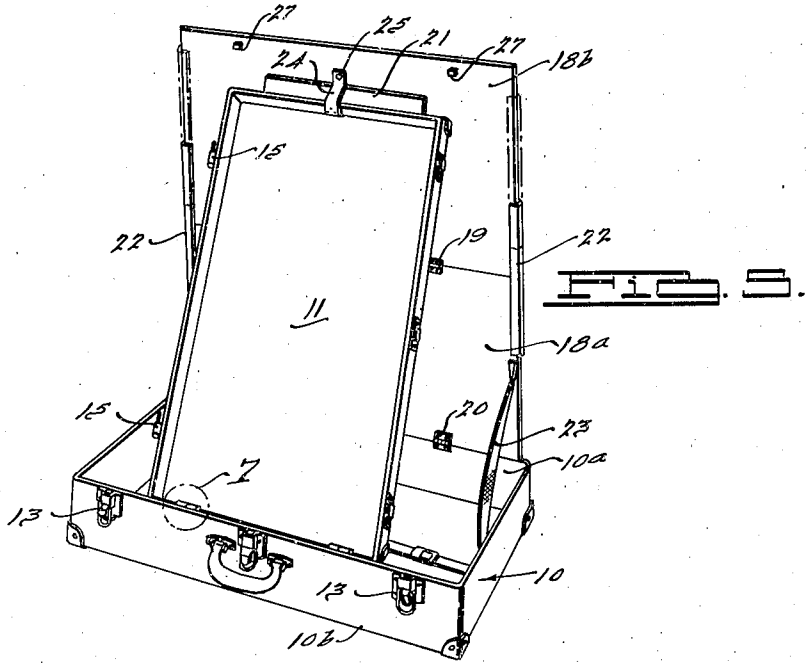


FIG. 3.

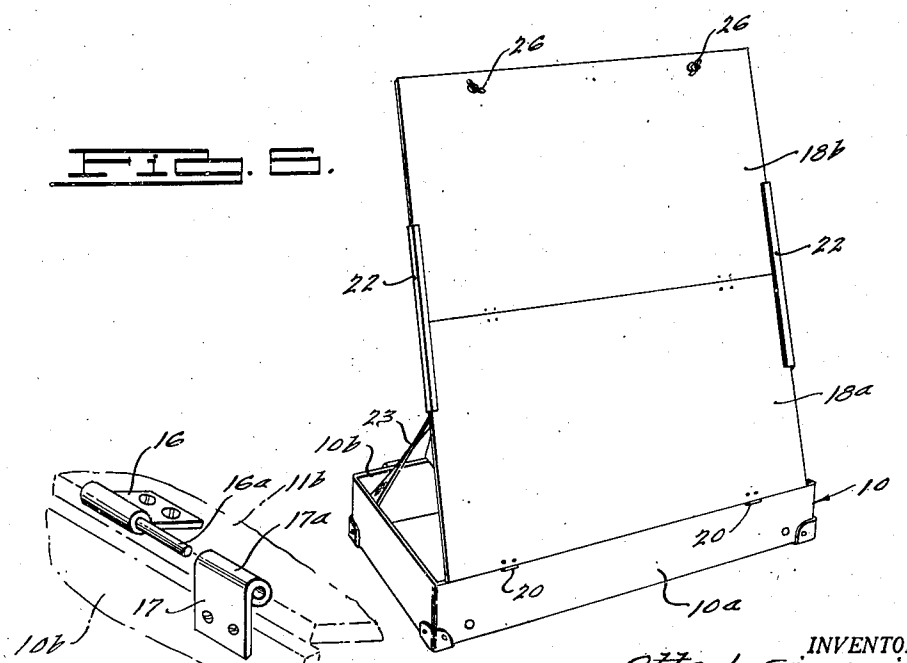


FIG. 2.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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CONVERTIBLE EASEL CASE

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Application January 6, 1948, Serial No. 750

8 Claims. (Cl. 45—69)

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This invention relates to a convertible easel case, an object of the invention being to provide a portable case adapted to be closed by means of a removable hinged cover and carrying therein a foldable easel frame which, when the case is open, may be unfolded into upright position and supported by means of the hinged cover of the case, thereby providing in convenient fashion an easel for supporting charts, drawing or sketch sheets, and the like.

A further object of the invention is to provide a generally rectangular case having a removable hinged cover and carrying a foldable chart or easel frame, the case when closed resembling a conventional suitcase, but being convertible into an easel by utilizing the main section of the case as the base and the removable cover as a back rest for the easel frame when unfolded into upright position.

Another object of the invention is to provide a portable case containing a foldable easel frame which may be converted readily and quickly into an easel for supporting charts, drawing and sketch sheets, and the like, the easel frame when unfolded and supported in upright position having a width and height approximating twice those of the case. In accordance with an important aspect of the invention the hinged cover of the case is detachable from one side of the case and is adapted to be hingedly connected at the opposite side so as to provide an inclined back rest for the easel frame, the sections of which are held rigidly together so as to provide a sturdy inclined sectional board or panel.

Other objects of this invention will appear in the following description and appended claims, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification wherein like reference characters designate corresponding parts in the several views.

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a convertible easel case or the like embodying the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the easel case with the cover in open position and disconnected from the case proper.

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary perspective view illustrating the separable hinge elements for the cover and case.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view illustrating the cover removed and the sectional easel frame in partially unfolded condition.

Fig. 5 is a perspective view illustrating the structure in full converted condition, this view being taken from the rear of the easel frame.

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Fig. 6 is a perspective view of the structure in converted condition, this view being taken from the front of the easel frame.

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary perspective view illustrating the separable hinge elements by means of which the cover may be connected to the case when used as a back rest for the easel frame, this view illustrating the hinge elements enclosed within the circle A in Fig. 5.

Before explaining in detail the present invention it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and arrangement of parts illustrated in the accompanying drawings, since the invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or carried out in various ways. Also it is to be understood that the phraseology or terminology employed herein is for the purpose of description and not of limitation.

In the drawings there is illustrated, by way of example, one embodiment of a convertible easel case or the like which comprises in general a portable case or box 10 of generally rectangular shape, preferably resembling a conventional suitcase, provided with a removable hinged cover 11 within which the foldable easel frame is enclosed when the carrying case is closed in the manner shown in Fig. 1. The case is provided with a conventional handle 12 and fastener devices 13 for locking the cover in closed position when the case is being transported.

In the present embodiment the cover 11 is utilized as a back rest for the easel frame and, accordingly, the cover is hinged to the rear edge of the case by means of a pair of spaced hinge devices comprising separable hinge elements 14 and 15. As shown particularly in Fig. 3, the hinge elements or members 14 are secured in spaced relation to the outside of the back wall 10a of the case 10 near the upper edge thereof, these members terminating in coil portions 14a. The hinge elements or members 15 are secured to the rear edge 11a of the cover 11 and are provided with hinge pins 15a insertable into the coil portions 14a when it is desired to hingedly connect the cover to the case in the manner shown in Fig. 1. In order to set up the easel the cover 11 is opened, as shown in Fig. 2, and is shifted laterally in the direction of the arrows in Fig. 3 in order to disconnect the hinge pins 15a from the coiled hinge portions 14a. By virtue of this construction it will be seen that the cover is readily detachable from the case and may then be converted into a back rest for the easel frame.

For the purpose of supporting the cover 11 in

position as a back rest one side edge 11*b* of the cover and the front wall 10*b* of the case are provided with cooperating spaced hinge devices which comprise separable hinge elements similar to the hinge elements 14 and 15. Referring particularly to Fig. 7, each of these hinge devices, by means of which the cover is supported in back rest position, comprises a hinge member or element 16 secured to the inside of the edge 11*b* of the cover and provided with a projecting hinge pin 16*a*. In addition, each hinge device comprises a hinge member or element 17 secured to the inside of the wall 10*b* of the case near the upper edge thereof. Each hinge element 17 terminates in a coil portion 17*a* adapted to receive the hinge pin 16*a*. Thus, after the cover 11 has been removed from the case in the manner shown in Figs. 2 and 4, it may be turned around at right angles so as to have its longer dimension extending upwardly. The hinge pins 16*a* may then be inserted into the coil portions 17*a*, thereby connecting the cover to the front of the case in the manner shown in Fig. 5.

The case 10 carries a folding easel frame 18 which, in the present instance, comprises a lower section 18*a* and an upper section 18*b* which are permanently hinged together at 19. The sections 18*a* and 18*b* of the easel frame are dimensioned so as to fit within the interior of the case 10 in the manner shown in Fig. 2 with the upper section 18*b* folded underneath the lower section 18*a*, thus enabling the sections to lie snugly within the case. The lower section 18*a* of the sectional easel frame is hinged at its lower edge to the upper edge of the back wall 10*a* of the case by means of interiorly located laterally spaced hinge devices 20. By virtue of this construction the sectional easel frame is permanently connected to the rear wall of the case and may be readily folded into the case or unfolded so as to position the easel sections in a common upwardly inclined plane as shown in Fig. 6.

In order to set up the easel the cover is opened and removed as previously described. The easel sections are then partially unfolded so as to occupy their relative positions shown in Fig. 4. Thereupon the cover 11 is connected to the front wall 10*b* of the case through the medium of the hinge elements 16 and 17. Upon hinging the cover to the front of the case in this manner the easel sections are then fully unfolded so as to extend in upright positions and in a common plane. The cover is then tilted into inclined position so as to engage the upper section of the easel frame and is held in supporting relation by means of a strip 21 secured to the back of the section 18*b* near the upper edge thereof. The strip 21 serves as a rest or abutment engaged at its lower edge by the upper edge of the cover 11 when used as a back rest, as shown in Fig. 5. In order to render the easel sections rigid and prevent relative movement thereof at the hinge joint between the sections, there are preferably provided a pair of channel stiffeners 22. These channel strips may be supported upon the side edges of the easel section 18*b*, when the easel is collapsed, see Fig. 4, and after the easel has been fully set up in the manner shown in Fig. 5 the channel strips 22 may be slid down from their dotted line positions so as to embrace the edges of both easel sections and thereby provide a stiff and rigid supporting board or easel held firmly in inclined upright position by means of the cover 11 when positioned as a back rest. The lower easel section 18*a* may be connected at one side to the case

10 by means of a flexible check strap 23 which limits the outward position to which the easel may be swung when unfolding the same. The upper edge of the cover 11, when positioned as a back rest, is preferably detachably secured to the easel section 18*b* by means of a flexible strap 24 secured to the cover and adapted to be connected to the upper easel section by means of any conventional snap fastener 25. The upper easel section 18*b* also preferably carries bolts 27 extending through the easel board or panel and carrying wing nuts 26 by means of which charts, sketch sheets, etc. may be attached to the easel frame.

We claim:

1. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a case having a compartment, a foldable easel hinged to the case and including sections hinged together, said sections adapted to be folded into said compartment and to be unfolded so as to extend above the case in upright position with the sections disposed in coplanar relation, channel strips embracing the edges of said sections and spanning the hinge joint between the sections, and a cover hinged to one wall of the case and adapted to be arranged in open position to form a back rest for said easel.

2. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a generally rectangular case forming a compartment, a foldable easel supported by said case and including panel sections hinged together along adjacent edges, said sections adapted to be folded together to lie in superimposed relation within the compartment and to be unfolded so as to form in common an upright easel, channel strips adapted to embrace the edges of said sections so as to hold the sections rigidly together in coplanar relation, and a hinged cover for the case adapted to be arranged to form an inclined back rest for said easel.

3. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a generally rectangular case forming a compartment, a foldable easel supported by said case and including panel sections hinged together along adjacent edges, said sections adapted to be folded together to lie in superimposed relation within the compartment and to be unfolded so as to form in common an upright easel, a cover for the case, means for detachably hinging the cover to one wall of the case so as to provide a closure for the compartment, and means for detachably hinging the cover to another wall of the case so as to provide a back rest for the easel.

4. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a generally rectangular case forming a compartment, a foldable easel supported by said case and including panel sections hinged together along adjacent edges, said sections adapted to be folded together to lie in superimposed relation within the compartment and to be unfolded so as to form in common an upright easel, a cover for the case, means for detachably hinging the cover to one wall of the case so as to provide a closure for the compartment, and means for detachably hinging the cover to another wall of the case so as to provide a back rest for the easel, and means for detachably connecting the cover to the easel when the cover is positioned as a back rest.

5. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a case having a bottom and four side walls extending therefrom to form therewith a compartment, a foldable easel hinged to one wall of the case and including panel sections hinged together, said sections being foldable into the compartment and adapted to be unfolded to extend

upwardly from the case in coplanar relation to provide an easel, means for holding the sections rigidly together when unfolded, a cover for the compartment, means for detachably hinging the cover to one wall of the case so as to provide a closure for the compartment, and means for detachably hinging the cover to a wall of the case so as to provide a back rest for the easel.

6. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a case having a bottom and four side walls extending therefrom to form therewith a compartment, a foldable easel hinged to one wall of the case and including panel sections hinged together, said sections being foldable into the compartment and adapted to be unfolded to extend upwardly from the case in coplanar relation to provide an easel, means for holding the sections rigidly together when unfolded, a cover for the compartment, means for detachably hinging one edge of the cover to one wall of the case so as to provide a closure for the compartment, and means for detachably hinging another edge of the cover to a wall of the case so as to provide a back rest for the easel.

7. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a generally rectangular case having a bottom and four side walls extending therefrom to form therewith a compartment, a foldable easel hinged to one wall of the case and including panel sections hinged together, said sections being foldable into the compartment and adapted to be unfolded to extend upwardly from the case in coplanar relation to provide an easel, means shiftable into and out of position for holding the sections rigidly together when unfolded, a cover for the compartment, means for detachably hinging one edge of the cover to one wall of the case so as to provide a closure for the compartment, and means for detachably hinging an adjacent

edge of the cover to the opposite wall of the case so as to provide a back rest for the easel.

8. A convertible easel case or the like, comprising a generally rectangular case having a bottom and four side walls extending therefrom to form therewith a compartment, a foldable easel hinged to one wall of the case and including panel sections hinged toegether, said sections bieng foldable into the compartment and adapted to be unfolded to extend upwardly from the case in coplanar relation to provide an easel, means shiftable into and out of position for holding the sections rigidly together when unfolded, a cover for the compartment, means for detachably hinging one edge of the cover to one wall of the case so as to provide a closure for the compartment, means for detachably hinging an adjacent edge of the cover to the opposite wall of the case so as to provide a back rest for the easel, and abutment means on the upper panel section engaged by the upper edge of the cover when positioned as a back rest.

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