Jan. 18, 1955 M. MARK ET AL 2,699,667

KEY HOLDER

Filed March 3, 1953

Fig. 4.

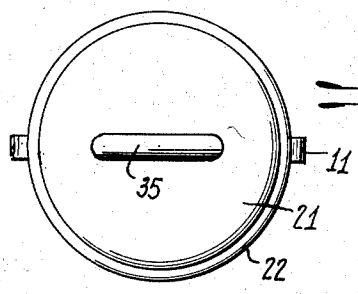



Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 1.

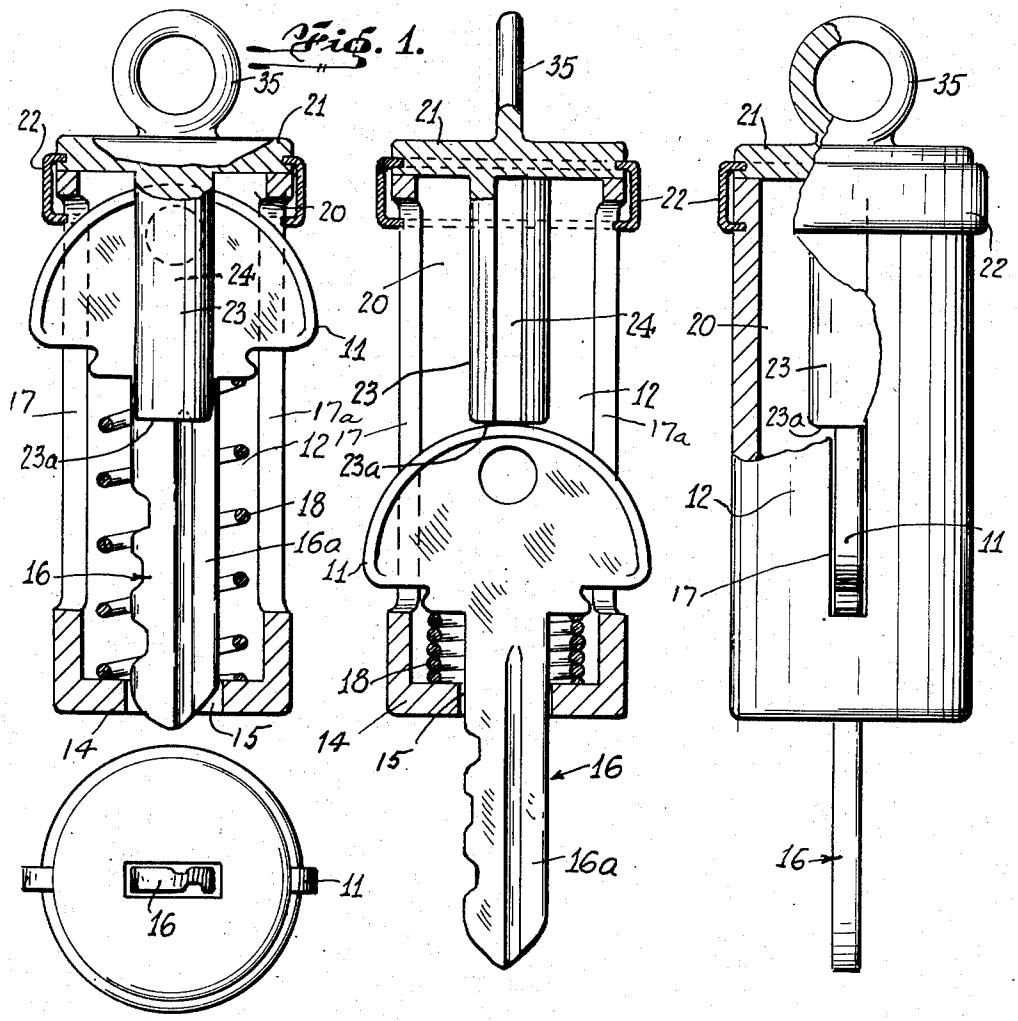






Fig. 5.

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# KEY HOLDER

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3 Claims. (Cl. 70—414)

This invention relates to a new and improved article of manufacture for holding and keeping a flat key, preferably an ignition key of an automobile, or the like, where it is essential not to forget to take out said key after having secured or locked the locking means to which the key belongs.

Objects and advantages of the invention will be set forth in part hereafter and in part will be obvious herefrom or may be learned by practicing the invention, the same being realized and attained by means of the instrumentalities and combinations pointed out in the appended claims.

An object of the present invention is to provide a container for a key which has a spring for biasing the key within the container when the key is not otherwise held against retraction.

Yet another important object of the present invention is to provide in a key holder having a key-ejecting spring, a locking device for maintaining the key in protruding retained position whereby the key will not be ejected by the spring when the lock is operated to turn off the ignition. By so doing, the key in "off position" will remain in the lock.

A still further object of the present invention resides in the provision of a holder for a flat key or the like having a container closed at both ends and being provided with a slot in the one end thereof to allow the shank of the key to slide through, and being further provided with longitudinal slots oppositely disposed in the walls of the container, resilient means being provided within the container to retract the key into the container.

A further object of the present invention is to provide for a mechanism by which the key is held firmly under tension while in outward and operating position such as in those types of locks that permit withdrawal of the key even though in "on position."

Another object of the present invention is to provide for means of securing the key in its operating position so that it may not snap back inadvertently out of the locking means and back into its container.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide for an attractive, practical, efficient, and reliable instrumentality which comprises a smooth container for a flat key, resilient means to slide said key automatically back into said container when released and not in operation and securing means for keeping said key in a position protruding from said container when in use.

A further object of the present invention is to provide for a useful article of manufacture of the class described which can be produced economically and inexpensively.

Another object of the present invention is to provide for an article of manufacture of the class described which comprises a sturdy, simple and easily operable mechanism.

Various further and more specific objects, purposes, features and advantages will clearly appear from the detailed description given below taken in connection with the accompanying drawings which form a part of this specification and illustrate merely by way of example some embodiments of the device of the invention.

The invention consists in such novel features, arrangements and combinations of parts as may be shown and described in connection with the device herein disclosed by way of example only and as illustrative of some preferred embodiments.

In the following description and in the claims, parts



will be identified by specific names for convenience, but such names are intended to be as generic in their application to similar parts as the art will permit. Like reference numbers and characters denote like parts in the several figures of the drawing.

Referring now to the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a front view, partly in section of a key holder showing the key in a retracted position;

Fig. 2 is a view similar to Fig. 1, partly in section showing the key holder of Fig. 1 in protruding and secured position;

Fig. 3 is a side view (partly broken away) of Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a top plan view of Fig. 1; and

Fig. 5 is a bottom view of the key holder shown in Fig. 1.

Referring now in more detail to the drawings illustrating a typical embodiment by which the invention may be realized, a flat key **16**, for example an ignition key of an automobile, is kept slidably in a keyholder comprising a container **12** consisting of plastic material, light metal, die cast metal, stainless steel or the like.

The container **12**, open on its upper end and having the hollow space **20**, is closed at its upper end by a cap **21** rotatably arranged and kept together with said container **12** by means of a channel-shaped ring **22** or other suitable mechanism. The container **12** is closed at its bottom **14**, the latter having a slot **15**. Two longitudinal slots **17**, **17***a* are disposed oppositely in the walls of container **12** through which slots the head or handle **11** of the key **16** protrudes above container end **14**. A spring **18** is located within the container, its one end resting on end **14** while its upper end supports the key **16** by contacting key head **11**. Protruding from said cap **21** into the interior of said container **12** is a slotted member **23** into which the handle or head **11** of the key **16** will fit when the slot **24** and the handle or head of the key **16** are in line, but against the lower end **23***a* of which the handle or head **11** of said key **16** abuts when said cap **21** together with its protruding member **23** is turned at a right angle to said handle or head of said key **16**. Therefore, if the key **16** is pushed outwardly of said container **12** through slot **15** and if said cap **21** with its protruding slotted member **23** is turned at a right angle to the handle or head **11** of said key **16** as shown in Fig. 2, said key will be kept against the tension of the compressed spring **18** in its outwardly position. Reversing the manipulation by simply turning the container **12** and the cap **21** in the opposite direction will line up said slot **24** and the handle or head of said key **16** again and allow automatically said spring **18** to retract said key **16** back out of the key slot of the locking device to which the key belongs and to retract into said container **12**.

The key is inserted in the container by sliding shank **16***a* of key **16** through one of the slots **17**, **17***a* of the container **12** and into top opening of spring **18**. Spring **18** is then compressed by pushing the key out so that shank **16***a* comes through slot **15** of the container. The key will automatically spring into position with the head **11** of the key protruding from both slots **17**, **17***a*. To remove the key the above procedure is reversed.

From the foregoing it is apparent that there has been provided a key holder for a key **16** having a shank **16***a* and a head **11**, which key holder comprises a container **12** having a closed end **14** provided with a slot **15** adapted to permit the shank **16***a* to extend therethrough when the key is positioned in the container, the container having oppositely disposed longitudinal slots **17**, **17***a*, through which the key head **11** may project and move when the key is inserted in the container, an element **21** rotatably arranged at the other end of the container, this element **21** having a slotted member **23** protruding into said container, resilient means, such as a helical spring **18** normally urging the key within the container, the slot **24** in member **23** being adapted to slidingly accommodate at least the upper portion of the key head when the latter and the slot in member **23** are brought in alignment and the key is retracted by spring **18**, member **23** being adapted to maintain the key with its shank **16***a* in extended condition against the tension of spring **18** when it is turned with its slot out of alignment with the key head.

A ring 35 or a chain (not shown) may be provided for attaching other keys thereto.

While the invention has been described and illustrated with respect to a particular preferred example which gives satisfactory results, it will be understood by those skilled in the art after understanding the principle of the invention, that various changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention and it is intended, therefore, in the appended claims to cover all such changes and modifications.

What we claim is:

1. In a holder for a substantially flat key the combination of a container closed on one end and having a slot therein allowing the shank of said key to slide through, longitudinal slots oppositely disposed in the walls of said container, a cap rotatably arranged on the other end of said container having a slotted member protruding into said container, the slot in said slotted member being wide enough to allow the head of said key to slide thereinto, and resilient means within said container to retract said key into said container automatically, when the slot in said slotted member of said rotatably arranged cap is lined up with the longitudinal slots in the walls of the container by turning the cap.

2. A key holder for a key having a shank and a head, comprising a container having a closed end provided with a slot adapted to permit said shank to extend therethrough when the key is positioned in the container, said container having oppositely disposed longitudinal slots through which said key head may project and move when the key is inserted in said container, an element rotatably arranged at the other end of said container, said element having a slotted member protruding into said container, resilient means normally urging said key within said container, the slot in said member being adapted to slidingly accommodate at least the upper portion of said key head when the latter and the slot in said member are brought in alignment and the key is retracted by said resilient means, said member being adapted to maintain said key with its shank in extended condition against the tension of said resilient means when it is turned with its slot out of alignment with said key head.

3. A key holder according to claim 2, wherein said resilient means comprises a helical spring seated within said container adjacent said closed end.



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