June 24, 1941. L. G. STANLEY 2,247,320

ARTICLE OF LIMP SHEET MATERIAL

Filed Jan. 25, 1938 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig 1

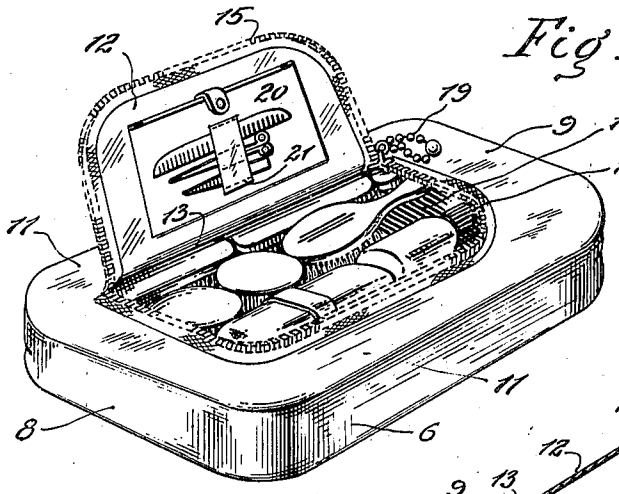


Fig 2

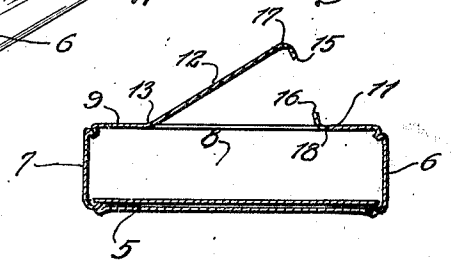


Fig 4

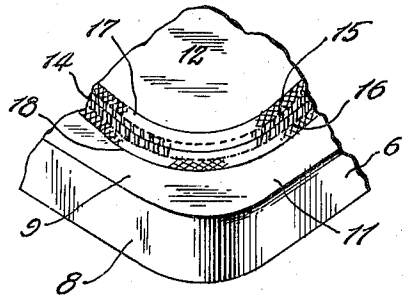
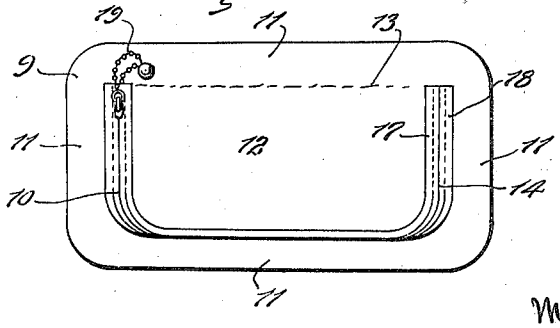


Fig 3



INVENTOR:
Leopold G. Stanley
BY
Morrison, Kennedy & Campbell
ATTORNEYS.

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Fig. 5.

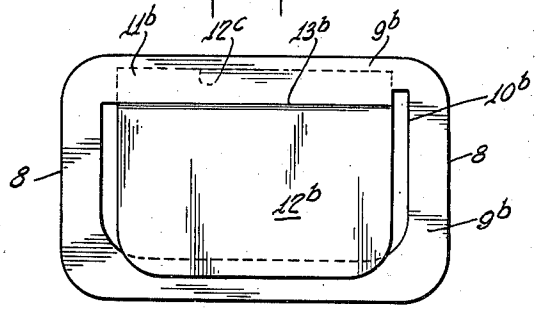


Fig. 6.

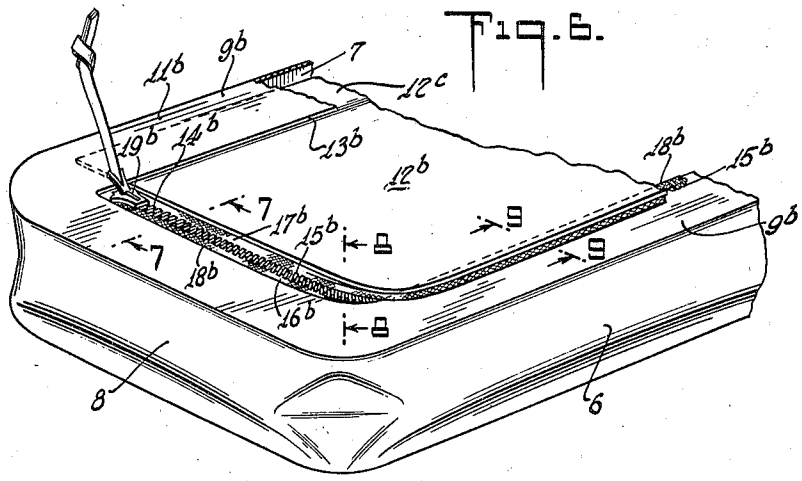


Fig. 7.

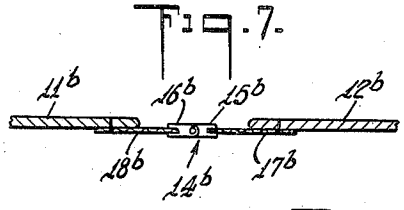


Fig. 8.

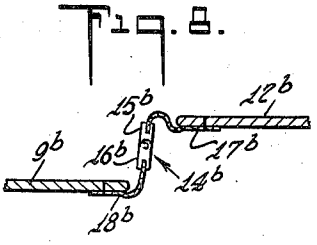
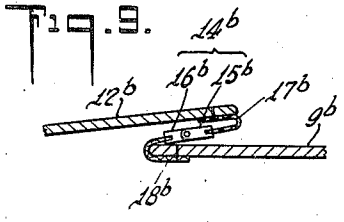


Fig. 9.



INVENTOR
Leopold G. Stanley.
BY
Morrison Kennedy & Campbell
ATTORNEYS.

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2,247,320

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,247,320

ARTICLE OF LIMP SHEET MATERIAL

Leopold G. Stanley, Maplewood, N. J.

Application January 25, 1938, Serial No. 186,770

2 Claims. (Cl. 150—46)

This invention is a novel leather article or utility case or box particularly of the kind which is of relatively small size and adapted, for example, to be packed away with other goods inside of a suitcase or other luggage or container. In referring to leather it is understood that any limp sheet material of suitable strength is included, the case being therefore generally limp and soft and well adapted for packing away as described. Specifically, the utility case hereof is of squatty character, by which is meant that it is relatively shallow in its vertical as compared with its horizontal dimensions or area.

The general objects of the present invention include convenience of handling, ease of packing, and adaptability to receiving and holding odd or miscellaneous articles, to be inserted and stowed away compactly, the case in this sense being distinguished from the so called "fitted" cases having attaching means for locating specific contents. A common use for such a utility case is to contain toilet articles, such as small containers for soaps, creams and the like, razors and brushes. Other contents may consist of small articles of clothing, handkerchiefs, and the like. It is usefully available for holding certain commodities such as tobacco. The case is adapted to be placed on sale containing gift goods such as golf balls.

Further objects of the invention are to afford certain advantages as will be described, among which may be enumerated that the case as a whole is believed to constitute an attractive novelty. It is roomy in capacity, having an extended peripheral volume as will be described. It is adapted to be closed by a continuous or Zipper type fastening and in a protective sealing manner, and it securely accommodates the contents both in open and closed positions. When packed there is substantially no waste in volume, the combined walls of the case, being generally limp, constituting a mere skin or glove-fitting shell, enclosing securely the assemblage, and being readily compressible when not overpacked.

In the general aspect of an article of limp sheet material, the object is the improvement of the continuous system of fastening between the edges of an aperture in the sheet material and the edges of a closing flap therefor, as will be more particularly described.

In the accompanying drawings Fig. 1 is a perspective view of an article of manufacture, specifically a utility case of leather or similar limp material constructed in accordance with the present invention, the same being shown in open position and supplied with contents of miscellaneous articles.

Fig. 2 is a vertical cross-sectional view taken in a fore and aft direction, of the article shown in Figs. 1 and 3.

Fig. 3 is a top plan view with the case in closed position.

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary perspective view on an enlarged scale to show in part the disposition of the fastening means when the case is closed.

Fig. 5 shows a modified construction in top plan view, the fastening being omitted and the lid or flap being shown closed.

Fig. 6 is a perspective view, generally similar to Fig. 1, but embodying the modification of Fig. 5, and with the lid or trap door cover shown closed and fastened.

Figs. 7, 8 and 9 respectively are cross section views taken on the lines 7—7, 8—8 and 9—9 of Fig. 6.

In all the figures the showing is somewhat diagrammatic in that thicknesses and other proportions are not strictly adhered to on account of the difficulties in illustrating structures of this class.

The figures show an article of manufacture of which the top wall may be considered as a sheet of limp material in which the continuous fastener improvement is embodied; but first the aspect of a utility case or box will be described in detail.

The illustrated utility case is shown as of squatty proportions, as already stated, and as of generally limp and easily packable character. It has a flat bottom wall 5 which is preferably relatively stiff, having a reinforcing or cardboard layer which however is bendable. The case also has a series of limp or pliable peripheral or upstanding walls, shown as including a front side wall 6, a back side wall 7 and end walls 8, all of which may consist of a single piece of leather or equivalent material bent or shaped around to the peripheral shape of the case, which is illustratively shown as oblong, with rounded corners, carrying out the general plan. There is also a substantially flat top wall 9 of outline similar to the bottom. It is a characteristic that the peripheral walls are combined unitarily with both the bottom and top walls, at all their meeting edges.

For access, the top wall is formed with a single large aperture 10 having an outline substantially smaller than that of the top wall thereby leaving a peripheral ledge or overhang 11 of substantial width standing inward from the upper corner

edges of the case and providing storage room thereunder.

For a closure to the access aperture there is provided a trap door 12, of proper dimension to close the aperture, said door being in the nature of a flap, united along its substantially straight rear edge 13 with the rear edge of the aperture, thereby permitting it to hinge upwardly and downwardly for opening and closing, as illustrated. The trap door 12 is sometimes an integral part of the limp top wall, as shown, being produced by slitting the top wall to the outline of the aperture around three sides but not at the rear or hinged edge thereof. The contours of aperture and closing flap, other than at the hinge line, are generally similar, each having curved portions, but being free of angles, as is necessary for this type of fastening.

For a fastening means the free edges of the trap door and the corresponding edges of the overhanging ledge are provided with a continuous or Zipper type fastening 14, carried around the edges of the door except at the hinged edge, and adapted for quick fastening and unfastening. Thus the Zipper fastening 14 is shown as consisting of the upper fastening element or series 15 on the trap door and the corresponding lower series on the top wall ledge 16. For reasons that will be explained these Zipper fastenings are applied not directly on the leather or wall parts but upon narrow flexible as cloth strips 17 and 18, respectively, so that the Zipper fastening may adapt itself to the different situations presented at the straight and at the curved portions of the outline. The Zipper or sliding fastening means is completed by the usual runner or slider 19 having a handle by which the runner may be pulled around the outline to be fastened, thus interlocking the hooks of the complementary members.

The trap door 12, constituting a portion of the top wall 9, is preferably somewhat stiff, and may be partly fitted, with flat fittings such as a pocket flap 20 and a strap 21, to hold certain flat articles, for example as illustrated.

In Fig. 3 the preferred proportions of top wall and trapdoor or lid are shown, the ledge 11 being narrow and its edges free so that all contents may be in view when the door is opened.

The joints or seams between walls may be secured by stitches. Thus the vertical peripheral walls may be composed of a single limp strip attached to itself at the rear by a sewed seam. Similarly, this strip may be connected by seams with the bottom and top walls. The ledge or overhang 9 preferably extends completely around the case, providing an underneath volume in which to stow away various articles. In practical use, the contained articles may first be positioned underneath the overhang, and the centrally disposed articles set in place thereafter, and of course there may be more than one layer of articles inserted, until the case is reasonably full. When articles of wear, such as silk stockings are packed in the case, the limp walls may be composed of or covered with a fabric of ornamental texture and dainty coloring.

In the use of the Zipper type fastener, as is preferred, there may be a special relation between the attaching parts, as shown. The access aperture and the trap door are of a contour free of angles, having rounded front corners. A conventional Zipper fastening is not adapted to be carried around a substantial curve in its own plane, and therefore the fastening must stand upright at the front curves referred to, as Fig. 4 shows. On the other hand, the fastening may lie flatwise where the connected edges are straight. The slit or gap between the end ledges and the ends of the trap door is therefore made wide along its straight length, the two edges being spaced somewhat apart, and the Zipper fastening being disposed horizontally in this space. At the front and at the bends however the slit is narrow, and the Zipper disposes itself vertically, as shown, being allowed to take this position by reason of the flexible strips 17 and 18. The Zipper is well able to take the necessary twist between its horizontal straight portion and its vertical curved portion.

In the preferred embodiment of Figs. 5 to 9, a different relation between the top wall 9^b and trapdoor cover 12^b is shown. The trapdoor is shown as composed of a separate piece of leather, extended under and attached by its extension 12^c to the rear overhanging ledge 11^b, its main portion substantially closing the access aperture 10^b. Another difference is that the trapdoor cover is extended forwardly further than in Fig. 3, so as to overlap the front ledge, thereby tending to prevent the trapdoor slipping down through into the interior of the case.

At the ends the trapdoor in Figs. 5 and 6 is shown as spaced away from the end ledges of the top wall, similarly to Fig. 3, and attaching strips and Zipper type fastener elements are shown, corresponding with those shown in the previous figures. However, to facilitate the hinging action of the trapdoor, the gap between the door and the right hand ledge is shown as extended rearwardly beyond the hinge line 13^b, thereby to accommodate the Zipper runner.

It is characteristic of all the disclosed embodiments, in a specific aspect, that the apertured top wall or ledge to which the trapdoor or lid is hinged and the trapdoor itself closing such aperture are both of them flat and level. And they all show the advantageous Zipper type of fastening, which can readily bend out of its own plane, and can twist, but does not readily bend in its own plane to an appreciable extent. The complementary Zipper parts should have identical lengths, and this is allowed for in the form of Figs. 1 to 4 by the fabric strips 17 and 18, which usually come with the Zipper and which dispose themselves to accommodate the mode in which the Zipper metal parts must be disposed when closed. The lengths of the contours of the trapdoor and the aperture are different in this form and so require an unnatural lay of the closed Zipper, which the cloth strips take care of. In Figs. 5 to 9, however, the door, being shorter than the aperture, is also made wider, thus equalizing these two contours or peripheries and allowing a more natural and easy lay of the Zipper fastening when the case is closed. The trapdoor or the top wall or the vertical side and end walls may be made of tough pliable transparent sheet materials, of which several are known, thus giving a view of contents which may be desirable to be seen when the case is closed.

The embodiment of Figs. 5 to 9 is characterized in that the flap contour falls partly inside the aperture edge, as at the ends, leaving gaps, but partly outside thereof, as at the front, producing an overlap. By reason of the extents to which this is done the two complete contours are rendered substantially equal. Thus the two contours depart from exact conformity and give

a spacing which is that which the Zipper members need for their accommodation. All difficulty in applying the fastening to such kind of use is thus obviated. As shown in Fig. 6, the combined fastening elements, when closed, dispose themselves flatwise in the gap portions, as further shown in Fig. 7, but twist at the curves, as Fig. 8 shows, and take an inverted position, as at the front, where the widened flap overlaps the edge of the aperture or instanding ledge, as Fig. 9 shows.

There has thus been described a limp sheet material article or utility case embodying the principles and attaining the advantages of the present invention; and since various matters of arrangement, combination and construction may be modified without departing from the principles, it is not intended to limit the invention to such matters except to the extent set forth in the appended claims.

I claim:

1. An article of limp sheet material comprising a limp wall formed with an aperture of substantial area, and a closing flap member flexibly joined to the wall along a straight hinge line, and a continuous or slider type fastening means having its complementary members disposed around the edges of the respective contours of aperture and flap other than at such hinge line and with a slider member movable around the contour of the fastening means for fastening and unfastening the same; said article characterized in that the contours of the aperture and flap comprise curves but are free of angles around their corresponding edges other than at such hinge line, and that the aperture and flap have general similarity of contour but are slightly out of conformity, namely, by reason of the flap contour falling partly inside that of the aperture, leaving a gap, and partly outside thereof, producing an overlap, to such extents that the total contours of the aperture and flap respectively are closely equal in length; whereby the fastening when fastened disposes itself in relatively inverted positions at the respective parts whereat the flap edge falls inside and outside of the aperture edge.

2. An article of limp sheet material, comprising a limp wall formed with an aperture of substantial area, and a closing flap member flexibly joined to the wall along a straight hinge line, and a continuous or slider type fastening means having its complementary members disposed around the edges of the respective contours of aperture and flap other than at such hinge line and with a slider member movable around the contour of the fastening means for fastening and unfastening the same; said article characterized in that the contours of the aperture and flap comprise portions which are free of angles around their corresponding edges other than at such hinge line, namely, a front portion opposite to the hinge line and end portions between the hinge line and front portion, and that the aperture and flap have a general similarity of contour but are out of conformity to the extent that the flap contour at both ends falls inside that of the aperture, leaving a gap at each end, but at the front falls outside thereof, producing a front overlap, whereby the total contours of the aperture and flap respectively are substantially equal in length, and the fastening when fastened disposes itself in relatively inverted positions at the front portion and the two ends respectively.

LEOPOLD G. STANLEY.