Sept. 2, 1924. 1,507,492

E. LA VINE

KEY CASE

Filed March 31, 1923

Fig. 1.

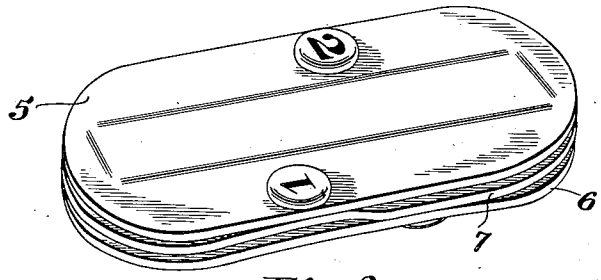


Fig. 2.

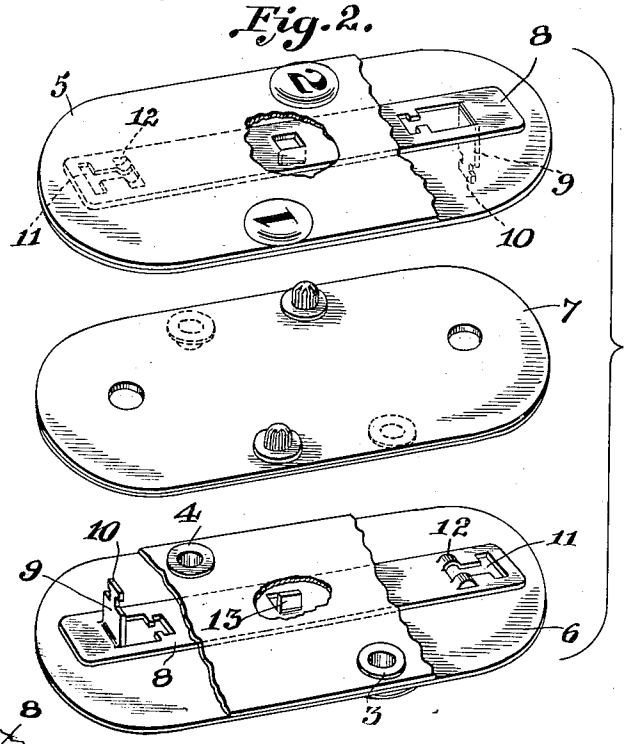


Fig. 3.

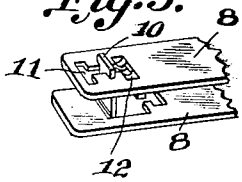
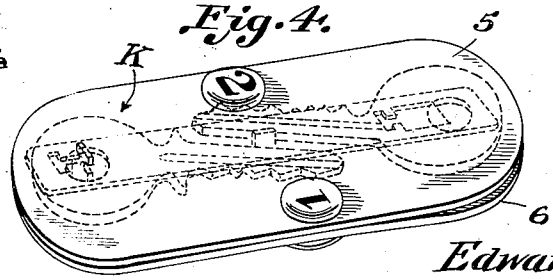


Fig. 4.



Inventor

Edward La Vine

By Mason Fenwick & Lawrence,

Attorneys

Patented Sept. 2, 1924. 1,507,492

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EDWARD LA VINE, OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

KEY CASE.

Application filed March 31, 1923. Serial No. 629,125.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EDWARD LA VINE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Los Angeles, in the county of Los Angeles and State of California, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Key Cases; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention relates to key cases and has for its object to provide a key case of such construction that any particular key can be immediately identified. The key case is so constructed that each key has its individual berth and means are provided for releasably maintaining the keys within their berths.

The invention also contemplates the provision of a key case which can be readily loaded with keys and which shall be simple in construction and of a shape that will readily fit the vest pocket.

The key case is more particularly designed for carrying flat keys such as are commonly employed for operating cylinder locks.

The various features of novelty and invention will appear from the detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying sheet of drawings forming part of this specification.

In the drawings Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the improved key case forming the subject matter of this invention; Fig. 2 is a perspective view showing the parts in separated relation; Fig. 3 is a fragmentary view in perspective of the preferred means for maintaining the key case walls in spaced and interlocked relation, and Fig. 4 is a perspective view showing the key case minus the partition and showing how the keys are positioned within the case.

Referring to the drawings 5 and 6 indicate the walls of the key case and 7 a partition therebetween. In the form of the invention shown in the drawings the walls 5 and 6 are preferably made from flexible material such as leather, two layers or thicknesses of leather comprising each wall.

The walls 5 and 6 are held in spaced relation by novel spacing means and are also maintained in normally interlocked position by said means. The spacing and interlocking means comprise a pair of plates generally indicated by numeral 8.

One end of the plate 8 has a tongue 9 struck up therefrom and the tongue is provided with a T-head 10 which is adapted to be received in a key hole or T-slot 11 formed in the second plate 8. The bottom of the T-slot is provided with a pocket 12 for receiving the head 10 of the tongue 9.

It will be understood that the plates are exact duplicates. One end of each plate will have the T-head tongue 9 and the other end will have the T-shaped slot 11. The T-head 10 on the tongue 9 is of less width than the latter, whereby there are constituted shoulders against which the plates abut. It will, therefore, be seen that the plates are maintained in a definite spaced relation by means of the tongues.

The plates are assembled by inserting the T-heads 10 in the T-slots 11 and relatively moving the plates until the heads 10 are seated into pockets 12. As soon as the T-heads 10 are seated in the pockets 12 the plates are impositively locked to one another as will now be clear. It may also be pointed out at this time that each plate is sheathed by its respective wall, it being, of course, understood that the tongue will project through one side of the wall. It may also be noted that when the T-head 10 is seated in the pocket 12 the outer layer of the wall will tend to prevent displacement of the said head from the said pocket. It may be further noted that no special means are needed to prevent relative movement between a plate and its wall, inasmuch as the tongue 9 serves to hold the plate in place by reason of the fact that it extends through a slit or small opening in one face of the wall. There is also struck up from each plate intermediate the ends thereof a relatively short tongue 13. These tongues also serve to prevent displacement of their respective plates within the walls. These tongues 13 will also serve as abutments or stops against which the free ends of the keys will rest so as to prevent the keys from swinging directly through the case from one side to the other as will presently more fully appear. The tongues 13 also prevent approach of the walls between their ends and maintain the same in a definite spaced relation, the ends of the said tongues abutting each other.

Each tongue 9 is adapted to receive one or more keys as shown in dotted lines in Fig. 4. The keys will be swingably mounted on said tongues and the free end of each key

will abut against the tongues or stops 13, as has already been pointed out. It may also be noted that the end of each key extends beyond the stop 13 and it will therefore be seen that the keys are disposed in the case not longitudinally thereof but diagonally thereof. This arrangement of the keys is an important feature of the invention since it permits the case to be made much shorter than the combined length of the two keys. The result is a very compact case which may be readily carried in a short pocket such as a vest pocket.

In order to prevent the keys from swinging out of the case snap-fasteners are provided at the sides of the case, one snap-fastener being provided for each key and the same being located in a line which is not far removed from the arc defined by the end of the key as it swings out of the case.

The snap-fasteners will preferably bear a legend or suitable indicia to identify the particular key which the snap fastener controls. In the drawings such legends are shown as consisting of large numerals 1 and 2 on one face of the key case and the other side of the key case will bear numerals 3 and 4. If desired the heads of the snap fasteners may be made luminous so as to be visible in the dark. It has been pointed out that the plates 8 are impositively locked to one another through the medium of the T-head 10 and the pocket 12. Such impositive locking means is highly desirable but not absolutely necessary by reason of the fact that the snap fasteners will serve to prevent sliding movement between the plates. This will be readily understood when it is pointed out that at least two snap-fasteners will be provided with each key case one on each side thereof for controlling the two keys, which are swingably mounted one on each tongue 9. Only one key will be used at a time consequently one snap-fastener will always be fastened. The snap-fasteners may therefore be considered as means for preventing sliding movement between the plates 8 and for holding the walls of the key case in operative relation.

Fig. 4 shows the key case as consisting of two walls without any partition between them. But as indicated in Figs. 1 and 2, a partition 7 may be used between the walls so as to increase the capacity of the key case by providing individual berths for the keys. The partition is preferably a flexible piece of material and has openings at its ends through which the tongues 9 may pass. The partition will carry the mating elements of the snap-fasteners the heads of which appear on the outside face of the walls. By employing the partition the capacity of the case will be increased from two keys to four keys, as will be readily understood.

The key case is readily loaded by unsnapping all the snap-fasteners and sliding the plates relatively to each other to disengage the T-heads from their pockets 12 and T-slots, the keys being slipped over the tongues 9, and if a partition is used will also be positioned in alignment with the T-slots 11 so that the tongues may be readily passed therethrough in the operation of interlocking the plates.

It may be pointed out that when a partition is used between the walls of the case, the stops or short tongues 13 need not pass through the partition, inasmuch as the partition will be clamped between the said abutments and collapse of the case thereby prevented as effectually as if the abutments were long enough to pass through the partition and abut each other.

While the invention has been described with considerable particularity of detail, it is to be understood that no limitations are intended except as may be imposed by the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, spacing elements between the walls at either end thereof on which keys are adapted to be swingably suspended, said elements each constituting a lateral projection at one end of each wall and having a T-head terminal, and a T-head slot at the other end of each wall to receive the T-heads of the respective projections.

2. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of flexible walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, spacing elements projecting in opposite directions from the walls at either end thereof on which keys are adapted to be swingably suspended, means cooperating with the spacing elements for releasably holding said walls together, and snap fasteners at the sides of the walls intermediate the ends thereof for holding the free ends of the keys within the case.

3. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of flexible walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, spacing elements projecting in opposite directions from the walls at either end thereof on which keys are adapted to be swingably suspended, a slidable interlocking connection between the walls and spacing elements, and snap fasteners at the sides of the walls normally preventing disengagement of the said interlocking connection.

4. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, a metal plate extending the length of each wall and secured thereto, a tongue struck up from one end of each of the plates and constituting a spacing element between the walls and means at

the other end of each of the said plates co-operating with the tongue to maintain the plates in fixed spaced relation.

5. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of flexible walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, spacing elements projecting from the walls at either end thereof and in opposite directions on which keys are adapted to be swingably suspended, a partition disposed between the aforesaid walls and snap fasteners adapted to connect the walls with the partition.

6. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of flexible walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, a narrow metal plate extending lengthwise of each of the walls, means projecting from the ends of the plates for spacing them apart, and means cooperating with the spacing elements for releasably holding the walls in fixed relation.

7. The combination of a pair of plates each having a tongue struck up from one of its ends, the other end having a key hole slot for receiving the end of the tongue of the other plate, the tongue having T-heads for locking engagement with said slots and shoulders for spacing the plates from each other.

8. The combination of a plate having a tongue struck up from one end thereof and having a T-head, the other end of the plate having a key hole slot of a size to receive the same sized T-head as that at the other end of the plate, and a duplicate plate oppositely disposed, said plates adapted to interlock by means of said tongues and slots.

9. The combination of a plate having a T-head tongue struck up from one end thereof, the other end of the plate having a key hole slot to receive the same sized T-head as that at the other end of the plate, said slot having a pocket adjacent one end thereof into which the cooperating T-head will drop for impositive locking therein.

10. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, spacing elements between the walls at either end thereof on which keys are adapted to be swingably suspended, means cooperating with the spacing elements for releasably holding said walls together, and means intermediate the ends of the said walls preventing approach of the walls by interlocking and also serving as stops against which the free end of the keys may abut.

11. The combination as in claim 9, and oppositely disposed and aligned abutments, one of each plates intermediate the ends thereof, preventing approach of the walls by interlocking, and also serving as stops against which the free end of the keys may abut.

12. A key case comprising a pair of housing walls, means at the ends of the walls for securing them in spaced relation and on which keys may be swingably mounted, means intermediate the ends of the walls preventing the keys from swinging through from one side to the other of the case, and snap buttons for each key at the side edge of the case for retaining the key within the case or releasing the same therefrom, said buttons permitting but a single key in the case to be swung out for use.

13. The combination as in claim 15, each of said snap buttons bearing an index character relating to the key which it controls.

14. A key case comprising in combination, a pair of walls between which keys are adapted to be housed, means at either end of the case on which the keys may be swingably mounted, a key stop intermediate the ends of the case and between the sides thereof, snap-fasteners connecting the walls of the case at points removed from the said stop, the ends of the keys adapted to lie on either side of the stop, the case being of less length than the combined length of two keys.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

EDWARD LA VINE.