

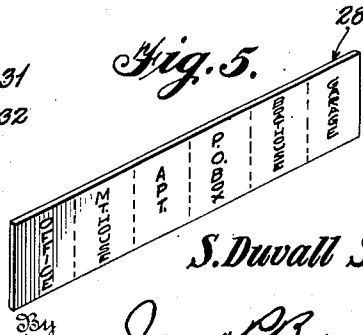
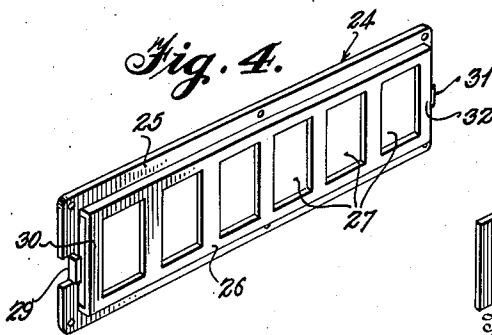
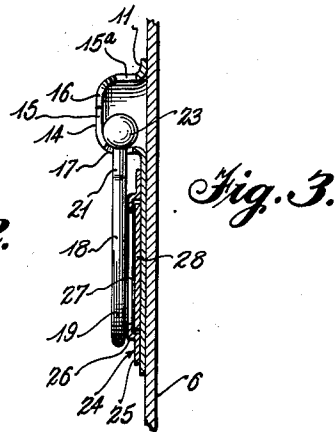
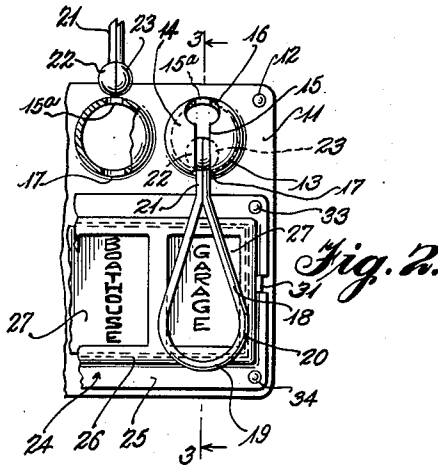
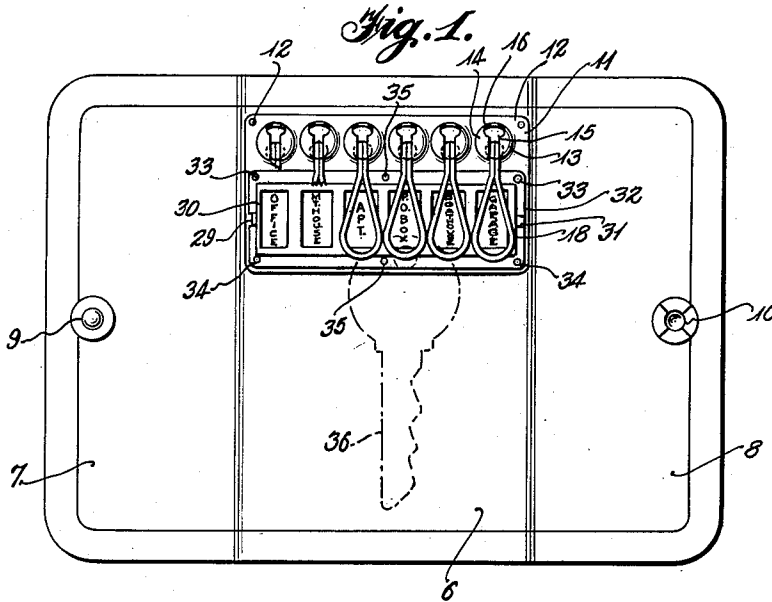
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2,254,582

KEY CASE

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KEY CASE

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3 Claims. (Cl. 40—17)

This invention relates to key cases and, more particularly, to a case adapted to enclose a plurality of keys and to maintain them in a definite and individually identifiable relationship.

It is one of the primary objects of my invention to provide a key case having a plurality of key suspending elements, arranged in spaced relationship, and an indicia-bearing member, associated with the key suspending elements in such manner that identification is provided for each of the keys suspended from the key suspending elements.

Another important object of my invention is to provide a key case having key suspending and identifying means which can be manufactured from inexpensive materials with a minimum of machining operations and which, therefore, readily lends itself to quantity production at low cost.

Another object of my invention is to provide key-identifying means for a key case which is so arranged and positioned that it does not increase the bulkiness or over-all dimensions of the key case, and in which the key-identifying means for each individual key is readily visible upon opening the case.

Other objects and advantages of my invention will be in part obvious and in part pointed out in the following description of the preferred embodiment of the invention. In this description, reference is made to the accompanying drawing, wherein:

Figure 1 is a plan view, showing the key case open and showing portions of some of the key-suspending elements broken away;

Figure 2 is an enlarged view of a portion of the rigid plate which supports the key-suspending elements and the key-identifying means;

Figure 3 is a sectional view, looking in the direction of the arrows along the line 3—3 of Figure 2;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of the frame which receives and supports the indicia-bearing member; and

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the indicia-bearing member.

In the drawing, the reference numeral 6 designates the body portion of the key case, preferably constructed of flexible material such as leather, and provided with foldable flaps 7 and 8 at the sides thereof. The flaps 7 and 8 are adapted to be folded over the main portion and secured together by any convenient means such as a resilient head 9 and a socket 10.

Near the upper end of the inside of the body

portion 6, there is secured a plate 11, preferably constructed of a sheet of rigid metal. The upper edge of the plate 11 is shown as secured to the body portion 6 by means of rivets 12. As is best shown in Figures 2 and 3, spaced areas of the plate 11 are struck upwardly from the plane of the plate and are slotted to form sockets for receiving and retaining key suspending elements. These sockets may be formed by a stamping operation using properly shaped dies to form the upwardly struck portions 13 and 14 with the metal intermediate these two portions being entirely severed from the plate 11 to form the slot 15. The slot 15 is provided with a circular enlargement just below the upper end thereof as indicated by the reference numeral 16. A portion of the slot 15 will, therefore, extend above the enlargement 16, this portion of the slot being designated by the reference numeral 15a. The slot 15 is also provided with a circular enlargement 17 at the lower end thereof which is of somewhat smaller diameter than the circular enlargement 16.

The sockets formed by the upwardly struck areas 13 and 14 are designed to receive and retain stirrup-like key-suspending elements, designated generally by the reference numeral 18. The key-suspending element 18 includes a middle portion 19 which is bent to form a key-receiving loop 20. The ends of the key-suspending elements 18 are arranged in adjacent parallel relationship to form a narrow shank 21 which is adapted to pass through the enlarged lower end 17 of the slot 15. The ends of the key-suspending element 18 are provided with hemispherical enlargements 22 and 23, which are of sufficient size to prevent their passage through the lower enlargement 17 of the slot 15, but to permit their being withdrawn by slight force through the upper enlargement 16 of the slot 15. It will be understood that a key-suspending element 18 may be lifted upwardly through an angle of approximately 170 degrees from the position in which it is shown in Figures 2 and 3, and the enlargements 22 and 23 withdrawn through the enlarged opening 16 near the upper end of the slot 15. The ends of the key-suspending element 18 may then be forced apart due to the inherent resiliency of the metal from which the key-suspending element is formed and a key may be placed within the loop 20. The key-suspending element 18 may then be replaced in the socket by merely reversing the procedure above described for removing the key-suspending element. In the normal use of the key case, a key

may be grasped and the key case suspended therefrom as when a key is inserted in its lock. In this event, the key-suspending element 18 will be turned through an angle of 180 degrees and the shank 21 of the key-suspending element will be received by the extreme upper end 15a of the slot 15. There will thus be no likelihood of the hemispherical enlargements 22 and 23 on the key-suspending element being unintentionally withdrawn through the circular enlargement 16.

Although I have shown the key case as being provided with six sockets and key-suspending elements, it will be understood that any convenient number may be provided. Since the sockets and key-suspending elements are all identical, it is believed that a description of one such assembly is sufficient to an understanding of this feature of the invention.

Secured to the plate 11 immediately below and in parallel relationship to the horizontal row of sockets for receiving the key-suspending elements, I provide a frame which is designated by the reference numeral 24 and which is clearly shown in perspective in Figure 4. The frame 24 is preferably formed by stamping a flat rectangular strip of sheet metal. This frame consists of a base 25 having the rectangular center portion thereof struck upwardly from the plane of the base to form the raised portion 26 which is provided with a plurality of openings designated by the reference numerals 27. There is thus provided a recess or space of rectangular shape behind the raised portion 26 of the frame. The openings 27 are equal in number to the sockets for receiving the key-suspending elements and are in similarly spaced relationship so that an opening 27 underlies each socket.

The rectangular recess or space behind the raised portion 26 of the frame 24 is adapted to receive a suitable indicia bearing member such as that shown in Figure 5 and designated by the reference numeral 28. The indicia bearing member 28 may be of good quality cardboard or any other material capable of receiving written or printed key identifying characters or information. At one end of the frame 24 a portion 29 of the base 25 projects upwardly toward the end of the raised portion 26 which is designated by the reference numeral 30. Just sufficient space is left between the portion 29 and 30 to permit the insertion of the indicia-bearing member 28 and to permit its intentional withdrawal, without, however, allowing the indicia-bearing member 28 to unintentionally escape from the recess. At the opposite end of the frame 24, a portion of the base 25, designated by the reference numeral 31 extends upwardly and into contact with that portion of the end of the raised portion 26 which is designated by the reference numeral 32. The portions 31 and 32 thus cooperate to prevent escape of the indicia-bearing member 28 from this end of the frame 24.

The frame 24 may be secured to the plate 11 by any convenient means such as rivets 33, 34 and 35. If desired, these rivets may extend not only through the base 25 and the plate 11, but also through the body portion 6 of the case.

In Figure 1, I have shown in dotted lines a key 36 secured to one of the key-suspending elements. It will be noted that the openings in the loops 20 of the key-suspending elements 18 immediately overlie openings 27 in the frame 24 and that identifying information on the indicia-bearing member 28 is clearly visible. By this arrangement, the identifying information for each individual key is immediately visible upon opening of the key case, and shifting or manipulation of the keys is made unnecessary.

It will be readily apparent that the plate 11 may have the sockets for receiving the key-suspending elements formed therein in a single stamping operation and that the entire frame 24 may also be formed in a single stamping operation. It is then only necessary to assemble the body portion 6 of the case, the plate 11 and the frame 24, and to insert the key-suspending element 18 within the socket in the plate 11. Inexpensive materials may be used for forming the various parts of the key case and the case, therefore, readily lends itself to quantity production at low cost.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. A key case comprising a rigid plate provided with a plurality of spaced socket forming deformations, a plurality of key-suspending means disposed in horizontal alignment mounted in said socket forming deformations on said plate, a frame having a plurality of openings therein secured to said plate in such manner that an opening in said frame lies adjacent to each of said key-suspending means, a recess between said plate and said frame, and an indicia bearing member in said recess adapted to expose indicia through each of said openings for identifying the key on the adjacent key-suspending means.

2. A key case comprising a plate, a plurality of key-suspending elements hinged to said plate in horizontal alignment, a frame having a plurality of openings therein secured to said plate below said key-suspending elements in such position that an opening in said frame lies adjacent to each of said key-suspending elements, a recess between said frame and said plate, and an indicia bearing member in said recess adapted to expose indicia through each of said openings for identifying the key on the adjacent key suspending element.

3. A key case comprising a rigid plate, a plurality of slotted sockets in spaced relationship intermediate the edges of said plate, a key suspending loop having an enlargement at one end thereof secured in each of said slotted sockets, a frame having a plurality of openings therein secured to said plate in such manner that an opening in said frame lies adjacent to each of said sockets and underlies each of said key-suspending loops, a recess between said frame and said plate, and an indicia bearing paper strip in said recess adapted to expose indicia through each of said openings in said frame and through each of said key-suspending loops for identifying the key suspended therefrom.

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