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A. WEISSENBACH

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TRAVELING CASE

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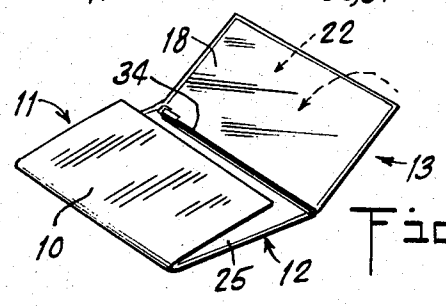
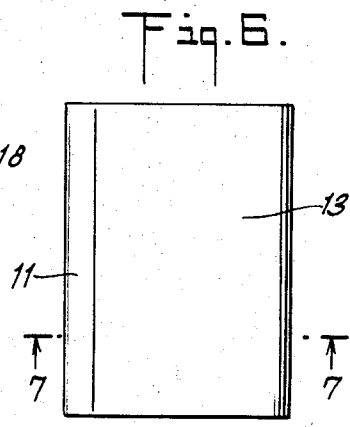
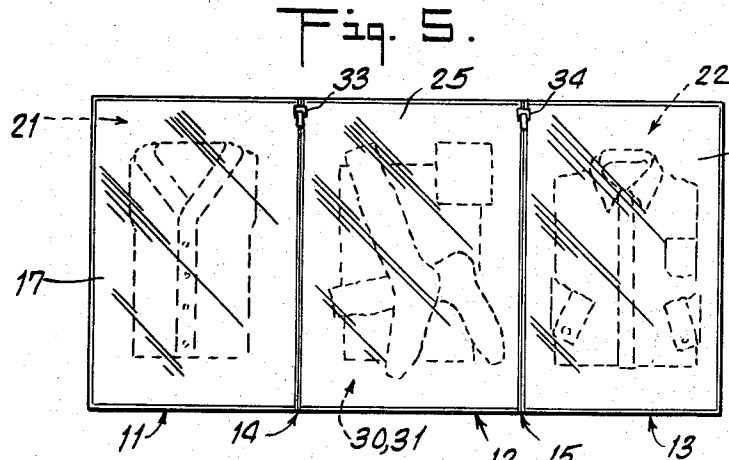
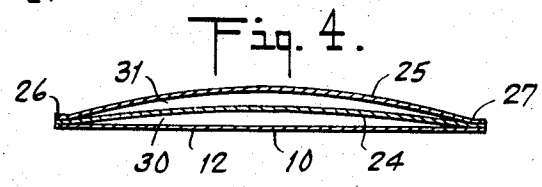
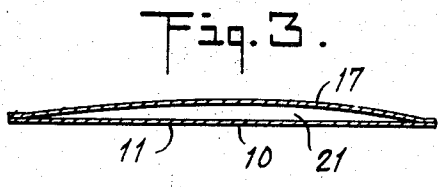
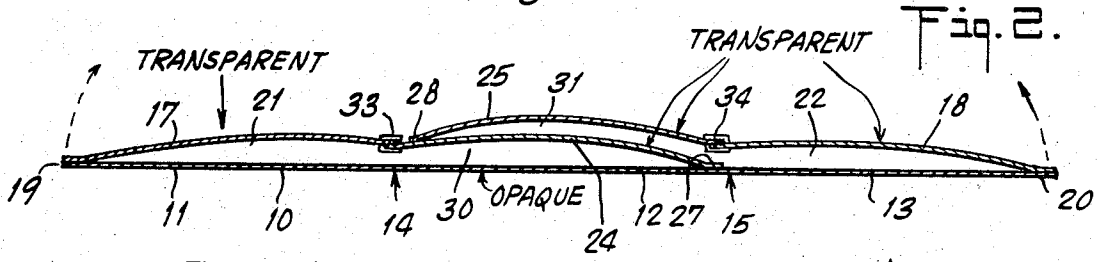
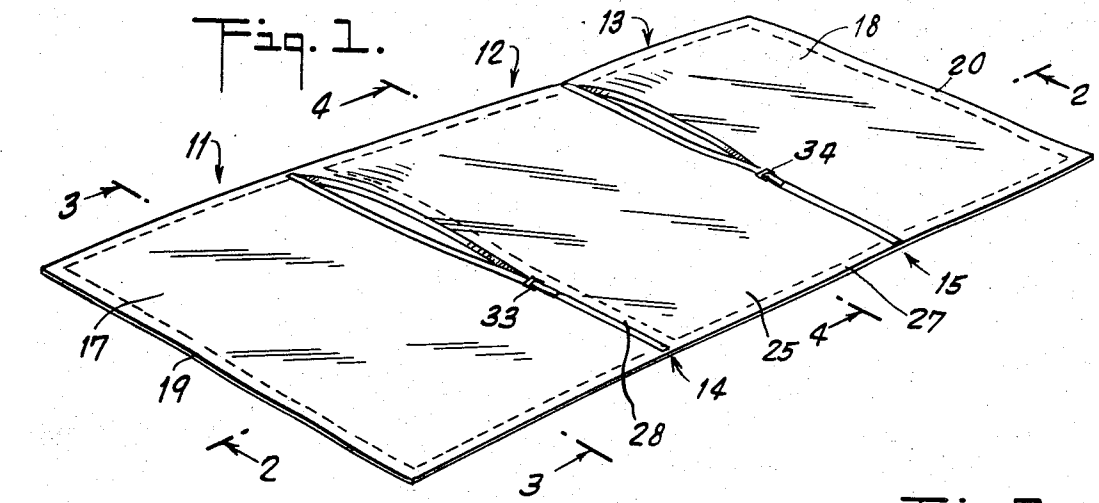


Fig. 8.

INVENTOR.
ALFRED WEISSENBACH
BY
Robert S. Dunham
ATTORNEY

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Alfred Weissenbach, 235 W. 76th St.,
New York, N.Y. 10023
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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A traveling case for articles of clothing comprises three pocket-forming sections that are foldable over each other for carrying, and that are each enclosed on one side by a portion of an outer, flexible, opaque sheet, the sections being enclosed on their opposite sides by flexible, transparent material, and being arranged to open pocketwise at the lines of fold, the center section comprising superposed, oppositely open pockets, and the flexible, transparent walls at each fold line being separably connected by slide fasteners to close the pockets covered by such walls.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to traveling cases, and more particularly to light, very easily portable devices of luggage adapted to modern modes of transportation yet suited to ease of packing and of removal of selected articles of clothing and the like. In a specific sense, the invention is concerned with cases of lesser components of wardrobe such as undergarments, shirts, hosiery, nightwear, rather than larger items of apparel of the nature of suits, jackets and similar items, and is designed to provide a device that can be carried by itself or alternatively can be packed in a larger piece of luggage that accommodates other kinds of wearing apparel and personal articles.

While it might be supposed that an almost infinite variety of luggage devices have been conceived, the fact remains that available articles are essentially of the structure of conventional suitcases, valises and bags, sometimes expanded with bulky provision for packing suits, dresses and the like on hangers. Attempts at compartmentation have usually required considerable addition in weight, or awkward external pockets, while efforts to lighten the overall article have either jeopardized the strength of a structure built only to withstand, by rigidity, the vicissitudes of baggage handling by public carriers or establishments of public accommodation, or have so over-simplified the piece as to be no more than an enclosure wherein personal things are or soon become jumbled almost beyond retrieval.

A primary object of the invention is to provide a new luggage device which is extremely light in weight, even when fully packed, which is proportioned and dimensioned to be manually carried with practically no effort, which is specially designed to receive the lesser or intimate items of wardrobe, and which in particular is so compartmented and arranged as to lodge such items in a classified or organized manner, facilitating both packing and removal of the articles and indeed making it practically impossible for the user to place and withdraw his things in other than an orderly manner. A further purpose is the accomplishment of these objects with an article which when open reveals the location of the several types of items, yet may be closed to provide full protection for the contents and for the case itself. Thus it is contemplated that by permitting the user to organize articles according to type, withdrawal for use is greatly facilitated, and indeed the established organization is essentially self-maintaining. An over-riding object is to provide a traveling case which attains these functions with a new and extremely simple structure of coating

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parts, minimizing the number of both the enclosure elements and the fastening devices, without sacrifice of convenience durability and effective closure against rain, weather and accidents of handling.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

To these and other ends, the invention, in its preferred embodiment, contemplates a case made wholly of flexible fabric, notably durable plastic sheet material such as vinyl sheet, organized in opaque, relatively rugged portions to constitute the outer, covering parts, and in transparent portions for defining the inner compartmentation and allowing visibility of the sorted contents when the device is packed. In particular the device comprises a plurality of commodious pocket enclosures, foldable over each other to place the device in comparted, self-covered condition to be carried, the enclosures being arranged to open toward each other with a single fastening means, e.g. a slide fastener, to join their flaps for simultaneously, in effect, providing internal closure for both adjoining pockets. A specific feature of the invention, in combination with the above-defined structure, is a central pocket assembly consisting of the opaque backing sheet and two transparent sheets superposed thereon and on each other and so interconnected at respectively opposite edges as to constitute two oppositely-opening pockets, substantially coextensive, each thus opening next to the opening of an outer pocket and each having what is in effect a free edge to be joined with the edge of the adjoining outer pocket by a slide fastener having the dual closing function described above.

More specifically, the outer pockets and the superposed central pockets are thus constituted by transparent sheet portions, peripherally joined to the outer, opaque backing sheet, and arranged to open along lines at the edges of the central pockets, the latter having their openings at respectively opposite edges. In the preferred structure, the pockets are in effect closed by only two slide fasteners, respectively along the above lines, and the device as a whole is closed for carrying by folding the outer portions (at approximately the stated lines) over the center portion (and each other), whereby the closed case is effectively protected by the opaque backing sheet.

The device completely satisfies all of the above-stated objects, and when packed and in use provides a case that is unusually simple and neat in appearance, e.g. resembling a wallet-type brief case or the like, can be easily carried under the arm or by hand, or alternatively stowed inside a regular suitcase or the like if desired, and preserves its contents in neat, fresh, unwrinkled condition, fully protected from weather, dust and damage. The articles of clothing are readily organized by type, and the user can readily see, when the case is opened, what is present in each compartment. The soft nature of the case facilitates handling and stowing and permits construction with a minimum of weight, yet without sacrifice of any of the above attributes of convenience and protection. Finally, all of this is attained with and by reason of an unusual structural arrangement of coating parts, that can be manufactured very economically.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a simplified perspective view of an advantageous example of the case of the invention, spread open for packing or unpacking;

FIG. 2 is a section on line 2—2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a section on line 3—3 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a section on line 4—4 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is a plan view of the device as in FIG. 1;

FIG. 6 is a folded plan view of the device, for carrying;

FIG. 7 is a section on line 7—7 of FIG. 6; and

FIG. 8 is a perspective view similar to FIG. 1, showing a manner of folding the device for closure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring to the drawings, the illustrated case comprises a backing element 10 of moderately large rectangular shape, composed of flexible opaque sheet material appropriate for the outer part or sheath of envelope-type luggage, preferably a moderately heavy plastic, such as vinyl sheet which can be provided in any of various attractive colors, with a grained or like outer surface if desired. Considering the sheet 10 as if divided into three approximately equal, side-by-side, rectangular areas 11, 12 and 13, mutually separated by transverse lines at 14, 15, the side portions 11, 13 are respectively covered, on their inner faces, by substantially coextensive, transparent sheets 17, 18, e.g. transparent vinyl, which are heat-sealed or otherwise joined around three edges, as at 19, 20, to the backing sheet 10 adjacent its edges, whereby two commodious pockets 21, 22 are formed, respectively opening at the lines 14, 15.

A like rectangular, transparent sheet 24 is disposed over the central area 12 and over the sheet 24 a similar transparent portion 25, both substantially coextensive with the region 12. These elements are secured at their opposite shorter edges 26, 27 to corresponding edge portions of the backing sheet portion 12, e.g. by heat sealing or otherwise, as for example by so sealing the inner sheet 24 to the sheet 10 and by like joining of the uppermost sheet 25 to edge regions of the sheet 24. Along one long edge 27 of the sheet 24 (across the sheet 10) it is joined, e.g. by heat sealing, to the backing sheet 10, i.e. approximately along the line 15, while along the opposite longer edges 28 of the two sheets 24, 25, the latter are joined together, again for example by heat sealing. In this fashion two, superposed, central pockets 30, 31 are formed, respectively covered by the sheets 24, 25 and respectively opening in opposite directions approximately at the lines 14, 15.

By this arrangement there are provided at the line 14 two essentially free or flap edges in mating relation, one being the fourth, inner edge of the transparent sheet 17 and the other being the composite edge of the joined sheets 24, 25. Accordingly a fastening means, notably a slide fastener 33, is provided for separably connecting these two edges. While other fasteners, even snap devices or serrated zippers, can be used, special advantage and simplicity are achieved with a slide fastener of the interlocking groove type: thus the mating edge portions are dimensioned to overlap, and appropriate longitudinal locking grooves are heat-molded or otherwise formed (as in separately adhered strips) at the lapped faces, designed to be interlocked or separated by means of a coacting slider. Since devices of this type are known, full details thereof are omitted from the drawing. A like fastening means 34, e.g. preferably an identical interlocking-groove type of slide fastener (with appropriate overlap of the flap edges) is provided for separably joining the fourth, inner edge of the transparent sheet 18 and the fourth, unattached edge (extending crosswise of the assembly) of the transparent sheet 25, i.e. approximately along the line 15.

The resulting structure thus constitutes, when laid out flat for packing or for removal of packed articles, a case which has two outer transparent-faced pockets 21, 22, and two superposed central likewise transparent-faced pockets 30, 31. By opening the single fastener 33, the pockets 21, 30 are made accessible, and similarly the pockets 22, 31 when the fastener 34 is opened. The traveler can very conveniently pack the case with various categories of clothing articles, e.g. as indicated by sketch in FIG. 5, for instance, nightwear in pocket 21, shirts in pocket 22, and other articles such as ties, socks, handkerchiefs, underwear and the like suitably organized in pockets 30 and 31. The contents, or classes of articles are readily visible in each section, for ease of retrieval,

yet the articles are kept neatly and in good order. While the case has been illustrated for use with men's apparel, it is of similar utility for intimate or similar articles of women's clothing, with like advantage of organization and ease of use.

It will be understood that the elements 17, 18, 24 and 25 require only sufficient transparency as to reveal clearly the nature of the enclosed articles and thus need not have an absolutely clear, transparent nature but may have the degree of semi-transparency or translucence which characterizes some vinyl or like plastic materials of durable thickness and fully pliant flexibility but through which immediately adjacent objects are nevertheless readily visible; the term transparent is accordingly used in this broad sense, unless otherwise noted. It is found, moreover, that the interior of the inner central pocket 30 is generally well visible through the pocket 31 over it (with transparent material of the type described), it being furthermore obviously feasible for the user to pack the pocket 31 with smaller articles that do not form a total screen for the under pocket 30.

When the case is packed, with the slide fasteners 33, 34 closed, it is then conveniently folded into a compact, overlapping configuration as in FIGS. 6 and 7, i.e. approximately, or as near as may be, along the lines 14, 15, an advantageous consequence being that each of the four pockets is then closed by the fold from the pocket which opens toward it, and there is no possibility of contained articles shifting from one pocket to another. FIG. 8 more clearly illustrates one preferred mode of folding the case, the section 11 being brought over the central section 12, and the other side section 13 being shown in course of being folded down to overlap the section 11.

While other dimensions, i.e. in a range of sizes suitable for the described kinds of articles of clothing or like personal articles, can be used, an advantageous size for the complete rectangle, e.g. as laid out flat in FIGS. 1 to 5, is about 38 inches by 18 inches, thus in effect providing pockets each approximately 12 inches by 18 inches opening along their longer dimension. When packed and folded into carrying configuration, the case then has dimensions of about 18 inches by 12 to 14 inches, appropriate to hold under the arm, or by grasp of the hand, or indeed to be placed in a suitcase or other, larger piece of luggage. With the entire structure preferably made of soft, pliant fabric, e.g. vinyl or other like plastic which also has good toughness and durability, it is notably comfortable to carry and easy to place in racks, alongside or under seats, or otherwise in airplanes, trains, buses, automobiles or other vehicles of transportation. The contents are at all times fully protected and concealed in the neat, simple enclosure, yet special convenience is afforded for packing and for finding and withdrawing any desired article, all of the above-mentioned objects and functions being fully attained. During at least many trips, it is not necessary to unpack the case completely at a single time, or until return. Moreover, for persons who have occasion to undertake business travel on very short notice, the case is conveniently such that it can be kept packed and ready with at least a minimum supply of fresh articles of clothing.

The invention is not limited to the specific structures herein shown and described but may be embodied in other forms without departure from its spirit.

I claim:

1. A traveling case for articles of clothing comprising three pocket-forming structures of flexible sheet material that have a common rear wall extending over them and that are successively adjacent to constitute respectively a center structure and two structures at sides of the center structure foldable over the center structure, in overlapping relation to each other, at two lines that respectively bound two sides of the center structure, each of the side structures having a front wall terminating in a free edge at the adjacent one of said lines to constitute a pocket

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opening at said adjacent line, and said center section having superposed middle and front walls respectively terminating in free edges at said lines to constitute two superposed pockets respectively opening at said lines.

2. A traveling case as defined in claim 1, in which the aforesaid common rear wall comprises flexible, opaque, plastic sheet material.

3. A traveling case as defined in claim 1, in which each of the pocket-forming structures has a wall, opposite the common rear wall, constituted of transparent sheet material.

4. A traveling case as defined in claim 1 which includes slide fastener means respectively along said two lines for closing together the walls, opposite the common rear wall, that constitute the pockets respectively opening at the lines.

5. A traveling case as defined in claim 1 in which: the aforesaid common rear wall comprises flexible, opaque, plastic sheet material; each of the side, pocket-forming structures has a wall of flexible, transparent plastic sheet material; and at least the front wall of the center structure consists of flexible, transparent, plastic sheet material.

6. A traveling case as defined in claim 5 in which both of the middle and front walls of the center section consist of flexible, transparent sheet material, and which includes slide fastener means respectively along said two lines for closing together the walls, opposite the common rear wall, that constitute the pockets respectively opening at the lines.

7. A traveling case for articles of clothing, and the like, comprising a rectangular backing sheet of flexible opaque material foldable on two, spaced, parallel lines dividing the sheet into three parts being respectively a central part between the lines and two outer parts, two transparent

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sheet sections secured to the backing sheet respectively over said outer parts to provide corresponding pockets opening at the said lines, two transparent central sheet sections superimposed over each other and said center part of the backing sheet, one of said central sections being secured at three of its edges to the backing sheet to provide a pocket opening at a first one of said lines and the other of said central sections being secured at two, opposed edges to the backing sheet and at a third edge to the edge of the first sheet that is adjacent the first one of said lines, to provide a pocket opening at the second one of said lines, whereby at each of said lines there are two transparent-faced pockets opening in opposite directions and respectively terminated by edges of two transparent sheet sections at each line, and a pair of separable fastening devices respectively for closing together, at each line, the two edges of transparent sheet sections that terminate the pockets at the line.

8. A traveling case as defined in claim 7, in which each of the fastening devices is an interlocking-groove slide fastener including mutually engageable longitudinal grooves along the sheet edge portions to be fastened.

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DONALD F. NORTON, Primary Examiner

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