Aug. 31, 1943. J. RITTER, JR 2,328,099

WARDROBE CASE COVER STAY DEVICE

Filed Sept. 26, 1942

Fig. 4.

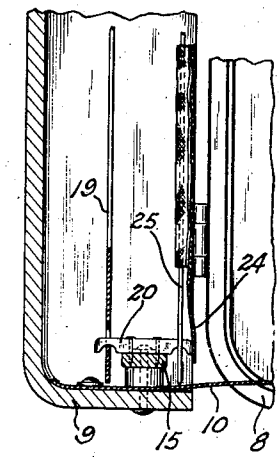
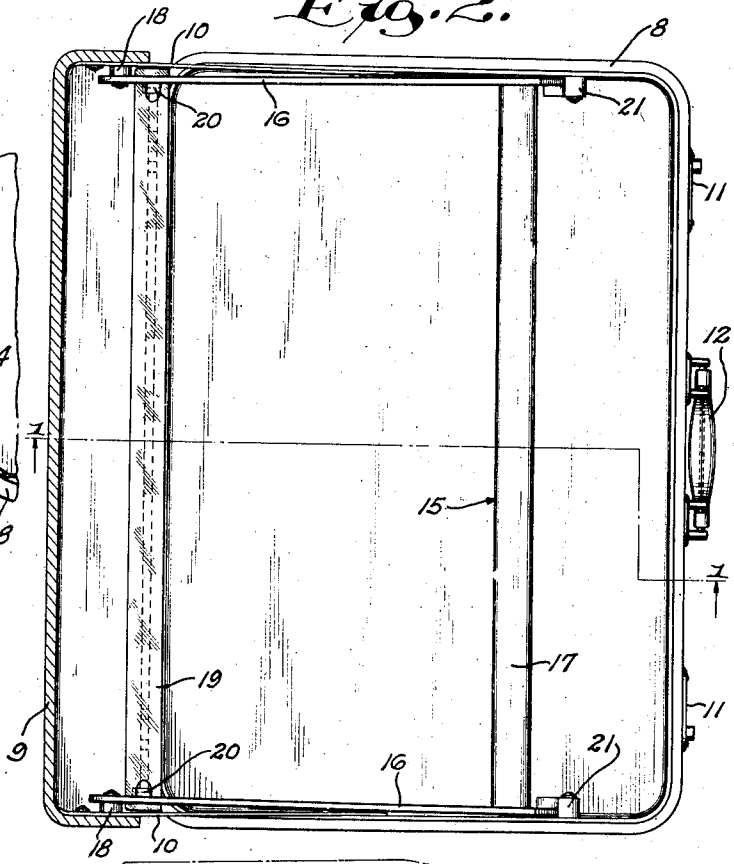


Fig. 2.



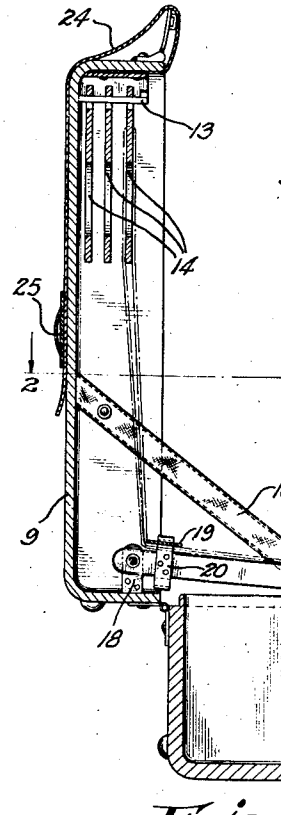


Fig. 3.

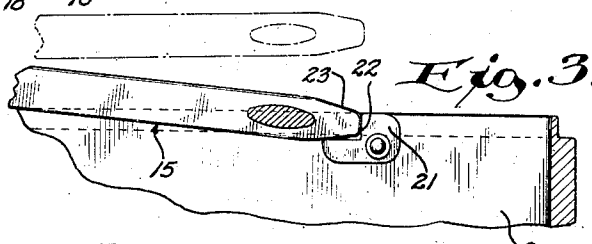


Fig. 1.

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WARDROBE CASE COVER STAY DEVICE

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2 Claims. (Cl. 190—41)

This invention relates to improvements in wardrobe case cover stay devices.

In certain types of wardrobe hand luggage cases, the case cover is hingedly connected to the body section of the case in a manner so that the cover assumes a vertical or upright position when the case is open for packing and unpacking. It was the practice to extend foldable, metallic stays between wall portions of the cover and body to releasably maintain the cover in open, upright position. In that class of cases wherein, during packing operations, long garments are suspended from hangers mounted in the free end of the cover with the garments being draped over the body section of the case, it is especially necessary that the cover be positively retained in its open position to prevent the draped garments from overbalancing the cover and causing it to accidentally gravitate to its closed position. Heretofore, the foldable metallic stays previously mentioned have satisfactorily served the purpose.

With the present shortage and unavailability of metals for civilian commodities, metallic cover stays for wardrobe case covers are prohibited and it is, therefore, a primary object of the present invention to provide a very simple and economical wardrobe case cover retaining means which eliminates the need for metal and which may be formed of wood or other suitable available material.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case cover retaining means which, in part, utilizes the wardrobe case garment frame in its downswung packing position, for releasably securing the case cover in its upright, open position.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case cover retaining means wherein the wardrobe case garment frame functions, in its several operative positions, to automatically retain and release the cover relative to the open position of the latter.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case cover retaining means wherein the wardrobe case garment frame, when swung to its horizontal position for packing, automatically and releasably engages shouldered members on the body section of the case to rigidly and securely retain the cover in its open position.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case cover stay device devoid of edges and crevices such as might catch and damage the sheer fabrics of garments packed within the wardrobe case.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case cover retaining means with which a wardrobe case may be readily equipped without any modification of the case or fixture, and at a minimum of expense.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case cover stay device which is of very simple construction, is automatic in its operation, is neat and attractive in appearance, is strong and durable, and is well adapted for the purposes set forth.

With the above and other objects in view the invention consists of the improved wardrobe case cover stay device, and its parts and combinations as set forth in the claims, and all equivalents thereof.

In the accompanying drawing in which the same reference characters indicate the same parts in all of the views:

Fig. 1 is a vertical sectional view through an open wardrobe case with the garment frame in its downswung position and cooperating with body section carried means to releasably hold the cover in its open, upright position, said view being indicated by line 1—1 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 2 is a horizontal sectional view taken on line 2—2 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is an enlarged, fragmentary, detail sectional view showing the engagement of a free end portion of the downswung garment frame with a shouldered member carried by the wardrobe case body section; and

Fig. 4 is an enlarged, fragmentary, detail sectional view taken horizontally through a portion of the open cover and showing the garment frame in its up-swung packed position and the relation of other elements thereto.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing, it will appear that the wardrobe hand luggage case, shown by way of illustration, and in which the present improvements may be installed, includes a body section 8 and a hingedly connected cover section 9. As shown in the drawing, when the cover is open it is intended to assume a substantially upright or vertical position relative to the body section of the case. As an aspect of the present invention, flexible fabric stays 10 are extended between wall portions of the body and cover sections of the case for the purpose of limiting the opening movement of the cover section. The cover section 9 may, of course, be swung over onto the body section to close the latter for housing and for transportation purposes. Conventional latches 11 are provided for securing the cover section in closed position, and

a side wall of the body section carries a handle 12.

The type of wardrobe case under consideration is equipped with garment carrying and folding fixture members. Within the free end portion of the cover section 9 there is a bracket 13 for releasably hanging and depending a plurality of garment hangers 14. Cooperating with the garment hangers 14 is a U-frame generally indicated by the numeral 15 and including spaced side arms 16 connected at their outer ends by a transverse garment folding bar 17. The inner ends of the side arms of the U-frame 15 are pivotally mounted on brackets 18 secured to inner side wall portions of the cover section 5 adjacent the hinged connection of the cover section with the body section.

The wardrobe hand luggage case through the use of the fixtures described, is adapted to be loaded with garments in the manner shown in Fig. 1. For this purpose the cover is opened to a perpendicular position. Preliminarily one or more of the hangers 14 are removed from the bracket 13 free of the case. If a long garment such as a coat or dress is to be packed, it is hung on a hanger 14 in the usual manner. The swingable U-frame 15 is moved from a position entirely within the cover section 9 to a substantially horizontal position overlying the body section of the case, being supported in this position by certain improvements presently to be described. The fixture apparatus also customarily includes a transverse inner strap 19 which is removed by detaching its apertured end portions from the hooked extremities of lugs 20 rigidly carried by the inner end portions of the side arms 16 of the swingable U-frame 15. A hanger 14, with a garment thereon, is then manually moved toward the upper or free end of the cover section 9, and the hanger is engaged with the bracket 13. Lower and intermediate portions of the garment are draped over the open face of the body section 8 of the case and over the downswung U-frame 15 in the manner depicted in broken lines in Fig. 1. The detachable transverse strap 19 is then engaged with the lugs 20 so as to extend across the inner end of the cover section overlying the supported garment or garments. It may here be stated that after the mounting of the hangers 14, both before and after securing the strap 19 in position, there will be weight and drag imposed on the upper free end of the cover section 9 which, if no means are provided to overcome the same, might cause the cover to accidentally fall or gravitate to its closed position. This of course is undesirable, and heretofore it has been customary to extend rigid but foldable metallic stays between the cover and body sections. In the present invention the use of such metallic stays is eliminated, and it will be observed that the flexible fabric stays 10 do not prevent undesired overbalancing or downward swinging of the open cover section. The present invention has for an object the provision of simple means cooperating with the downswung U-frame 15 for rigidly but releasably holding the cover in its upright open position. For this purpose it will be observed that opposite inner upper side wall portions of the body section 8, toward the front wall, have rigidly mounted thereon shouldered members 21. These members are positioned so that the vertical shoulders 22 formed thereon register with the outer extremities of the side arms 16 of the U-frame. When the U-frame 15 is swung to its lowered position, the rounded or reduced extremities 23 thereof will snap past the vertical portions 22 of the shouldered members 21 permitting the ends of the arms 16 to rest on the horizontal portions of the shouldered members, as shown. Any tendency of the cover 9 to move toward its closed position will react on the side arms 16 of the U-frame 15 and due to the engagement of the outer end portions of the side arms 16 with the shouldered members 21, such tendency will be resisted and the cover section 9 will be rigidly maintained in its upright position against accidental dropping and closing.

In fixture equipped wardrobe cases of the type under consideration, the packing and folding of suspended garments is accomplished by swinging the U-frame 15 from its substantially horizontal position to an upright position entirely within the cover section 9, whereupon the extended garments drape over the transverse folding bar 17 of the U-frame 15. When this manipulation is given to the U-frame 15, it of course disengages the ends of the arm 16 from the shouldered members 21, whereupon the cover may be freely swung to its lowered closing position. As is usual, the open side of the cover section 9 is adapted to be closed by a flexible fabric curtain 24. During packing and unpacking operations the curtain is swung over the free end of the open cover section in the manner shown in Fig. 1. When the case is packed and in condition for transportation, the curtain 24 should be draped over the open side of the cover section and secured thereover to protect the garments packed therein. For this purpose the free or depended end of the curtain has secured therein a transverse strap 25 whose extremities project beyond the side edges of the curtain. These extremities of the strap are apertured and are adapted to be passed over other hooked extremities of the lugs 20, as best shown in Fig. 4.

As previously mentioned, the flexible stays 10 between the cover and body sections are of fabric and the shouldered members 21 may be made of wood, plastic, or other available non-metallic materials. This is likewise true of the U-frame 15.

The simplicity of the device and the automatic operation of the same is readily apparent. When the U-frame 15 is in its down-swung position for packing and unpacking operations, it automatically engages and is supported by the shouldered members 21 to provide effective and rigid stay means for maintaining the cover in its upright position. When the frame is swung into the cover section, after packing or unpacking has taken place, there is no longer any necessity for positively maintaining the cover section in its upright position against undesired overbalancing, and the stay mechanism is automatically released through the normal swinging movement of the U-frame into the cover section.

The improved cover stay device may be installed in a piece of wardrobe hand luggage with little or no modification to the case and at a minimum of expense. The device is furthermore of simple and novel construction and is well adapted for the purposes set forth.

What is claimed as the invention is:

1. In a hand luggage case including a body section and a cover section hingedly connected to the body section, limiting means preventing the cover from moving rearwardly from its open position, but ineffectual upon closing movement of the cover, a garment frame having one end por-

tion pivotally mounted within the inner end portion of said cover section and swingable from within the cover section to a position flatly overlying a portion of the body section, and notched stops carried by the body section and adapted to releasably receive the free end of the frame to hold the frame against forward and downward movement whereby the frame acts as a prop for holding the cover section under the action of its limiting means when the cover is open.

2. In a hand luggage case including a body section and a cover section hingedly connected to the body section and swingable to an open position substantially perpendicular to the body section, flexible stays extended between wall portions of the cover and body sections preventing the cover from moving rearwardly from its open position, but ineffectual upon closing movement of the cover, hangers removably mounted in the free end of the cover section, a garment U-frame formed with side arms, means pivotally mounting the inner end portions of said side arms within the inner end portion of said cover section, said frame being swingable from within the cover section to a position flatly overlying a portion of the body section, means in one plane carried by the body section and adapted to engage the front face of the free end of the frame to hold the frame against forward movement, and means in another plane carried by the body section adapted to engage the bottom face of the free end of the frame to hold the frame against downward movement, the frame when engaged with said means serving as a prop for holding the cover section under the action of the stays when the cover is open, said frame when swung into the cover section releasing the cover and cooperating with said hangers in the draping and folding of garments.

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