D. WITBECK.

WARDROBE SUITCASE.

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1,438,737.

Patented Dec. 12, 1922.

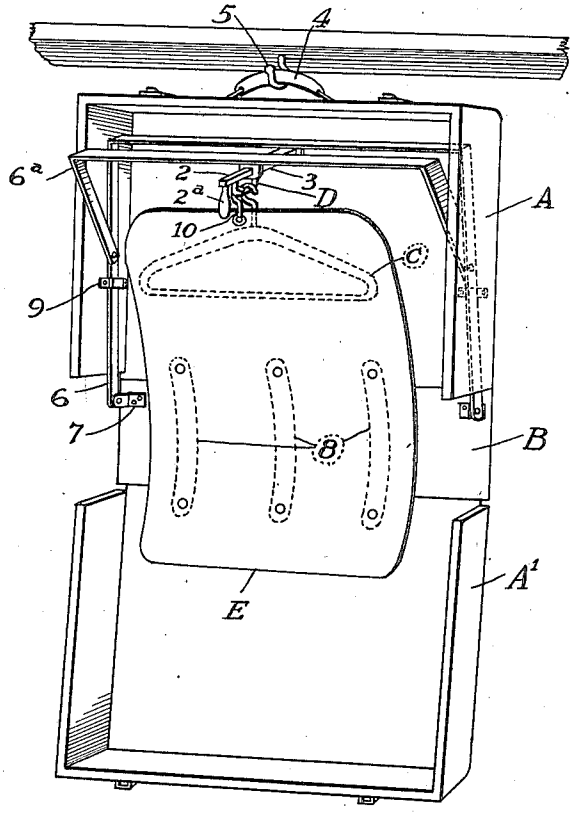


Fig. 1

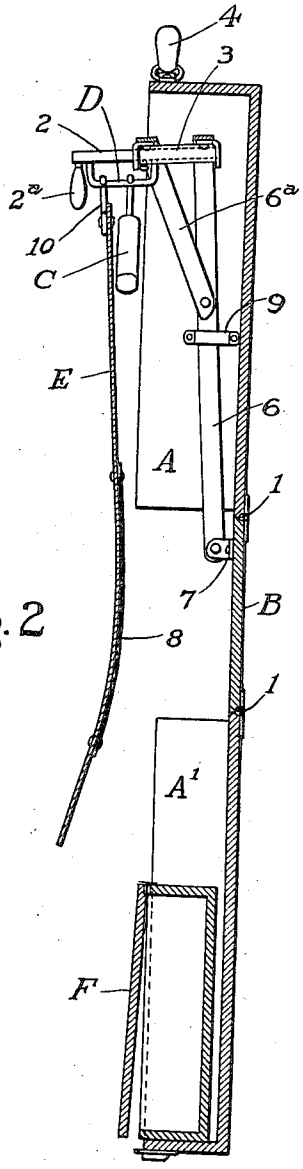


Fig. 2

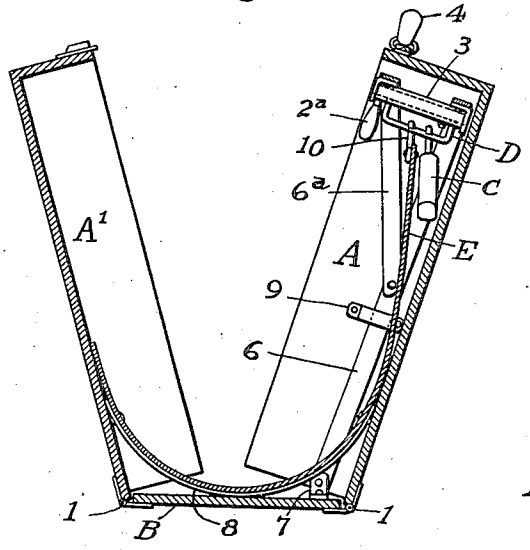


Fig. 3

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WARDROBE SUITCASE.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, DESFORD WITBECK, a citizen of the United States, residing at St. Louis, Missouri, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Wardrobe Suitcases, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention relates to suit cases.

The main object of my invention is to provide a practicable suit case of substantially the same size as the conventional suit case that has the principal desirable features and characteristics of a wardrobe trunk, namely, means for holding one or more suits of clothes in such a way as to prevent them from wrinkling when the suit case is in transit, and coat hangers from which the suits can be suspended in a vertical position after the traveler has arrived at his destination. Other objects and desirable features of my invention will be hereinafter pointed out.

To this end I have devised a suit case that is equipped with one or more coat hangers for receiving clothes, a support for said hangers, and means whereby the operation of closing the suit case causes the clothes or suits on the hangers to be pressed against a portion of the suit case and held in such a way as to prevent them from wrinkling. The suit case is preferably composed of a number of sections connected together in such a way that they can be opened out flat or in longitudinal alignment with each other when the suit case is being packed, and suspended in a vertical position from a clothes hook in a closet when the suit case is not in transit. An extensible rail or support is preferably provided for the coat hangers, and means are provided for clamping the suits at one point or exerting pressure on same and for bodily moving or shifting said rail during the operation of closing the suit case, so as to draw the suits taut or exert sufficient tension on same to take up the slack and hold the suits in such a way as to prevent them from wrinkling.

Figure 1 of the drawings is a perspective view of a wardrobe suit case constructed in accordance with my invention, illustrating how the suit case is intended to be arranged when it is not in transit.

Figure 2 is a vertical longitudinal sectional view of said suit case; and

Figure 3 is a transverse sectional view, illustrating the suit case partly closed.

Referring to the drawings, which illustrate the preferred form of my invention, A, A′ and B designate three sections connected together in such a manner that they can be opened out flat or arranged in longitudinal alignment with each other, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, or arranged in such a way that the section B forms the bottom of a suit case whose sides, top and end walls are formed by the sections A and A′, as shown in Figure 3. In the form of my invention herein illustrated the sections A and A′ each forms practically one half of the suit case and the intermediate section or bottom section B is connected to said side sections A and A′ by hinges 1. I wish it to be understood, however, that my invention is not limited to a suit case composed of sections of the particular kind herein illustrated as the enclosing walls of the suit case can be formed in various other ways without departing from the spirit of my invention.

The suit case is equipped with one or more coat hangers C and a supporting means or rail D is provided for said coat hangers, the supporting rail D being preferably of the extensible type and consisting of a yoke-shaped member that depends from a bar 2 which is slidingly mounted in a slotted guide 3 in such a manner that the rail D can be pulled forwardly into its extended position, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 when the suit case is open or pushed inwardly into its retracted position, as shown in Figure 3, when the suit case is closed. The bar 2 is provided with a handle 2^a that the user grasps during the operation of extending and retracting the coat hanger rail, and the section A of the suit case is provided with a handle 4 that is intended to be used for carrying the suit case and also for suspending the suit case in a vertical position from a clothes hook 5 in a closet when the suit case is open.

The coat hanger rail D is arranged inside

of the suit case in such a way that the coat hangers C will extend lengthwise of the section A in parallel relation to the side wall of said section, and means is provided for bodily moving said rail D in such a manner during the operation of closing the suit case as to take up the slack in the suits mounted on the hangers C. This can be accomplished in various ways without departing from the spirit of my invention, but one convenient way of effecting this bodily shifting of the coat hangers during the operation of closing the suit case is to support the guide 3 on the cross piece of a yoke-shaped member 6 whose side pieces are pivotally connected at their free ends to brackets 7 on the bottom section B of the suit case, and equip the suit case with a means that tends to press the suits against the bottom section B and against the side wall of the section A, said means preferably consisting of a follower E formed from a sheet of flexible fibre or other suitable material and provided on its rear side or under side with a plurality of strips 8 of flat spring material. The side pieces of the yoke-shaped member 6 pass through guides or loops 9 on the inside faces of the end walls of the section A, and the follower E is provided at its upper end with a hook 10 that can be hooked over the coat hanger rail D.

To pack the suit case, the suits are first arranged on the coat hangers C and said hangers are then hooked onto the rail D, it being possible to arrange the hangers on said rail either when the suit case is suspended in a vertical position, as shown in Figure 1, or spread out flat on the floor, the distance between the top wall portion of the section A and the top wall portion of the section A′ being considerably greater than the length of a man's coat and the depth of the section A being sufficient to accommodate a number of suits arranged one upon the other. After the coat hangers have been mounted on the rail D, the follower E is placed upon the top suit and the rail D is pushed inwardly into its retracted position shown in Figure 3. Thereafter, the two sections A and A′ are moved towards each other, the bottom section B acting as a base or support on which the hinged sections A and A′ turn. The follower E is of such length that when the sections A and A′ approach each other, the section A′ engages the free end of the follower E and exerts pressure on said follower in a direction tending to cause the follower to press the suits against the bottom section B and also against the side wall of the section A. Thereafter, as the sections A and A′ continue to move inwardly towards each other, the coat hangers exert an upward pull on the suits, sufficient to automatically take up the slack produced by folding the suits, due, of course, to the fact that the coat hangers are carried by the swinging yoke-shaped member 6 which rocks on an axis located at one side of the longitudinal center of the base section B against which the suits are being pressed by the follower E. By comparing Figures 2 and 3 it will be readily seen how the "draw" is obtained during the operation of closing the suit case, the cross piece of the yoke-shaped member 6 being considerably farther away from the top wall of the section A when the suit case is open, as shown in Figure 2, than it is when the suit case is closed, or partially closed, as shown in Figure 3. Any device or means that will tend to clamp the suits against the bottom section B during the closing operation can be used in place of the follower E, and while I have stated that the follower E is provided with flat springs 8, this is not essential. The essential thing is to equip the suit case with a means that tends to clamp or exert pressure on the lower end portions of the suits and mount the coat hangers in such a way that they will move sufficiently during the closing operation to take up the slack in the suits produced by doubling or folding the suits.

In the form of my invention herein shown the yoke-shaped member is provided with a forwardly inclined brace 6ª that is connected to the guide 3, so as to prevent said guide from deflecting downwardly when the coat hanger rail D is in its extended position, but it will be obvious that any other suitable kind of supporting structure for the coat hanger rail could be used without departing from the spirit of my invention. The underclothing, handkerchiefs and other small articles of wearing apparel can be conveniently packed in a removable container F that can be arranged in the section A′ upon the lower end portions of the suits, or in the space between the lower ends of the coats and the top wall of the section A′.

A suit case of the construction above described will hold several suits in such a manner when the suit case is in transit that the suits will not wrinkle, and when the traveler reaches his destination, he can open up the suit case and suspend it from a hook, thus enabling the suits to hang straight from coat hangers the same as in a wardrobe trunk. Moreover, the rail on which the coat hangers are mounted can be extended the same as in a wardrobe trunk, so as to permit the coat hangers to be easily removed from or mounted on said rail. The suit case is of practically the same size and weight as the conventional suit case, and as there is sufficient space inside of same to receive a removable container in which small articles of wearing apparel, toilet articles, etc., can be packed, it has all of the advantages of a

wardrobe trunk and also the advantages of a clothes receptacle that a traveler can carry.

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

1. A wardrobe suit case provided with a coat hanger, and means whereby the operation of closing the suit case shifts said hanger relatively to the case and thus causes the clothes on the hanger to be placed under sufficient tension to prevent the clothes from wrinkling.

2. A wardrobe suit case equipped with a coat hanger or other suitable clothes supporting device, means for clamping the clothes against a portion of the suit case, and means for bodily shifting said clothes supporting device in such a direction during the operation of closing the suit case that the clothes will be placed under sufficient tension to prevent them from wrinkling.

3. A suit case provided with a coat hanger arranged in such a manner that the coat thereon will be folded intermediate its ends during the operation of closing the suit case, a resilient means for clamping the coat adjacent the point where it is folded, and means for bodily moving said hanger so as to cause it to exert an endwise pull on the coat sufficient to take up the slack in the coat and prevent it from wrinkling.

4. A wardrobe suit case, consisting of a substantially oblong-shaped container adapted to have a suit arranged therein with the back of the suit extending parallel to one of the side walls of the container, and means for moving the suit relatively to the container when the container is being closed so as to hold the suit under sufficient tension to prevent it from wrinkling.

5. A wardrobe suit case, consisting of a clothes receptacle provided with a hinged or pivotally mounted portion on which a coat can be arranged flatwise, and means whereby the operation of closing said hinged portion causes the coat to be doubled or folded over, clamped yieldingly against said portion and also moved bodily with relation to said portion so as to automatically take up the slack produced by folding the coat.

6. A wardrobe suit case, consisting of a clothes receptacle having a bottom and a hinged or pivotally mounted side portion, a coat hanger arranged in parallel relation to said side portion and adapted to have a suit mounted thereon, means that tends to clamp the suit against the bottom of the receptacle when the receptacle is closed, and means for moving said coat hanger relatively to said side portion in such a way during the operation of closing the receptacle that the suit will be subjected to a slight endwise pull.

7. A wardrobe suit case composed of a plurality of sections connected with each other in such a manner that they can be opened out flat or arranged in longitudinal alignment with each other, coat hangers or other suitable clothes supporting devices arranged in one of said sections, and means whereby the operation of closing the suit case shifts said hangers and thus causes the clothes thereon to be stretched slightly and held under sufficient tension to prevent them from wrinkling.

8. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a plurality of sections connected together in such a manner that they can be opened out flat or arranged in longitudinal alignment with each other, a coat hanger on which a suit can be arranged, resilient means for clamping the lower portion of the suit against one section of the suit case when it is being closed, and means for bodily shifting the coat hanger in such a direction with relation to said section during the closing operation as to stretch the suit lengthwise and prevent the suit from wrinkling.

9. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a plurality of sections connected together in such a way that they can be arranged in longitudinal alignment with each other and suspended in a vertical position from a supporting device, coat hangers arranged in the upper section, and means for automatically shifting said coat hangers bodily with relation to said section during the operation of closing the suit case, for the purpose described.

10. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a plurality of sections connected together in such a way that they extend in longitudinal alignment with each other when the suit case is open and at an angle to each other when the suit case is closed, coat hangers in one of said sections, a shiftable means that carries said coat hangers, and a follower for clamping the clothes against one of said sections when the suit case is in its closed condition and means for bodily moving said coat hanger carrying means during the operation of closing the suit case.

11. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a bottom section and two side sections hinged together, coat hangers arranged in one of said side sections, a supporting means for said coat hangers pivotally connected to the bottom section of the suit case, and means on one of said side sections for swinging said means into an upright position during the operation of closing the suit case.

12. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a bottom section and two side sections pivotally connected together, a supporting structure pivotally connected to said bottom section and provided with coat hangers, and a sliding connection between one of said side sections and said supporting structure that

causes said structure to swing into an upright position during the operation of closing the suit case.

13. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a bottom section and two side sections pivotally connected together, a supporting structure pivotally mounted on said bottom section, an extensible coat hanger rail carried by said supporting structure, and a sliding connection between said supporting structure and one of said side sections that causes said structure to swing into an upright position during the operation of closing the suit case.

14. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a bottom section and two side sections hinged together, coat hangers in one of said sections from which clothes can be suspended, and a follower arranged in such a manner that it will be flexed into substantially U-shape, thus causing it to exert pressure on the clothes when said side sections are brought together, said follower consisting of a sheet of flexible material provided with flat springs.

15. A wardrobe suit case, comprising a bottom section, two side sections pivotally connected to said bottom section, a substantially yoke-shaped member pivotally connected to said bottom section and arranged in one of said side sections, sliding connections between said side section and the side pieces of said yoke-shaped member, an extensible coat hanger rail carried by said yoke-shaped member, and a follower arranged so that it will exert pressure on the clothes when the two side sections of the suit case are brought together.

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