

June 2, 1964

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3,135,532

EASEL-BACK BINDER

Filed Aug. 28, 1961

3 Sheets-Sheet 1

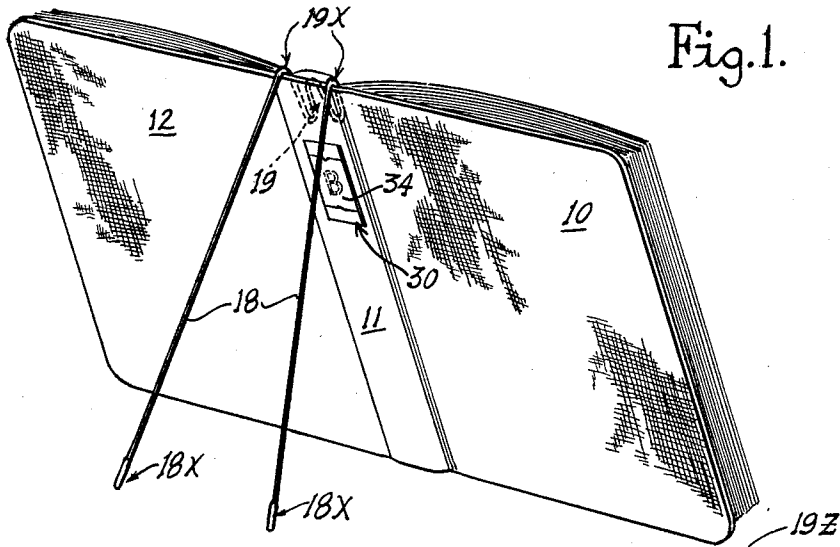


Fig. 1.

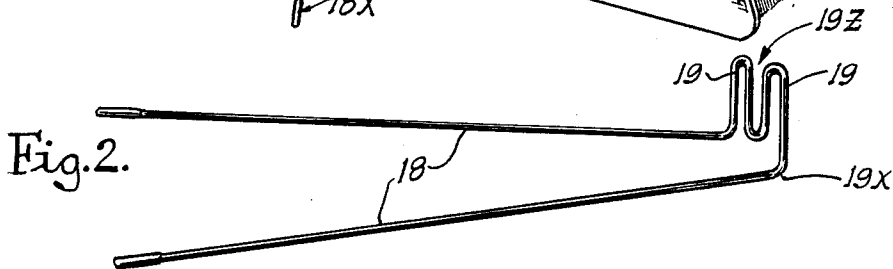


Fig. 2.

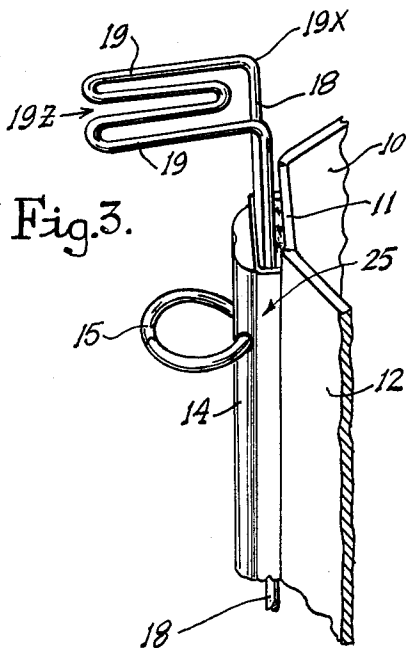


Fig. 3.

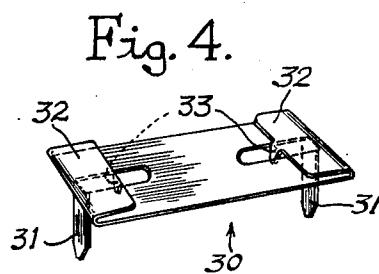


Fig. 4.

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Fig. 10.

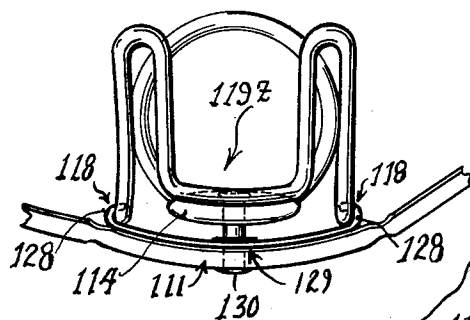


Fig. 9.

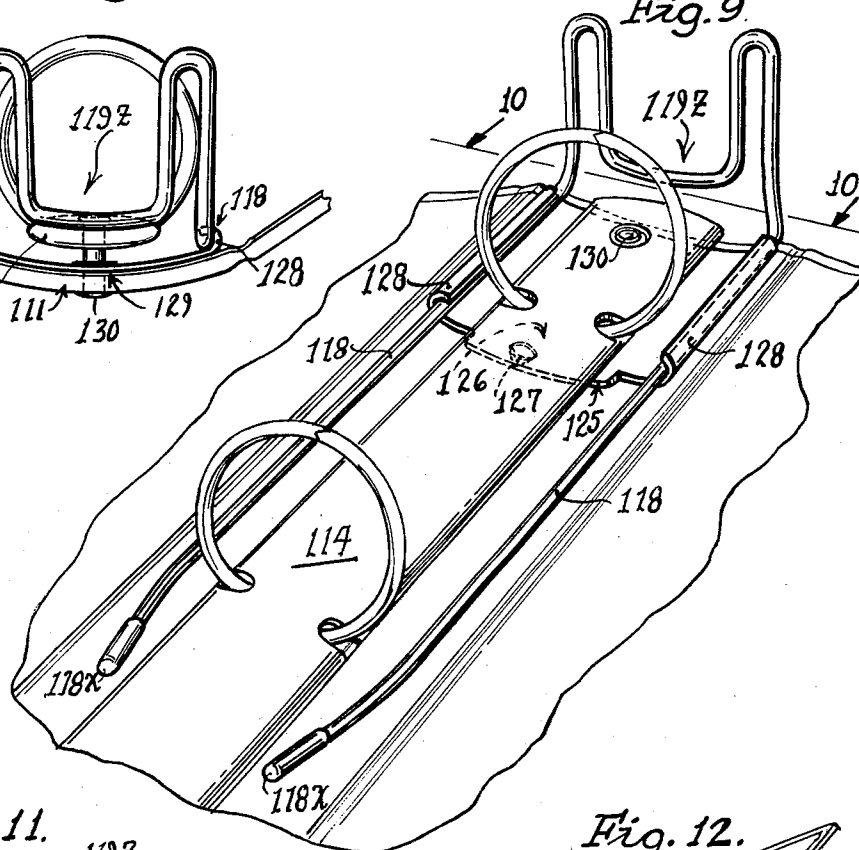


Fig. 11.

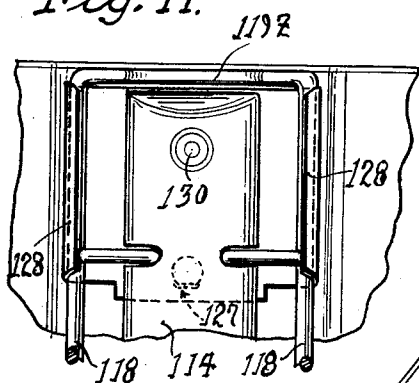
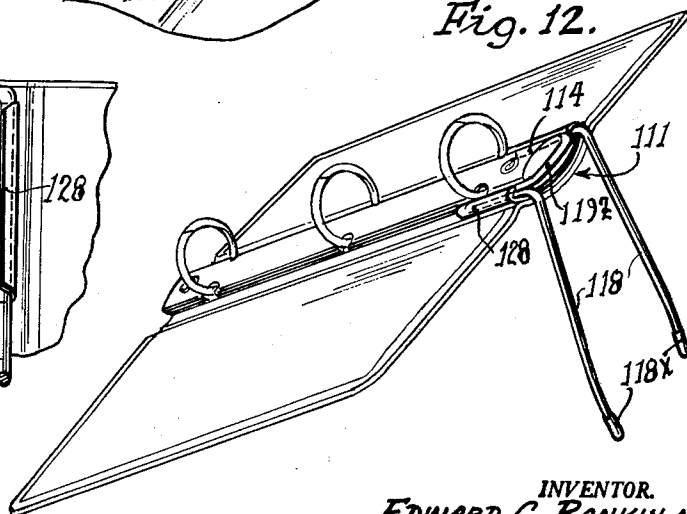


Fig. 12.



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EASEL-BACK BINDER

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Filed Aug. 28, 1961, Ser. No. 140,621
13 Claims. (Cl. 281-33)

This invention relates to books and sheet binders including particularly, but not by limitation, loose-leaf binders, and has as its principal object the provision of an easel-back binder characterized by simplicity, low production cost, and practicality in manufacture and use, this application being a continuation in part of our copending application Serial No. 26,846, filed May 4, 1960, entitled Easel-Back Binder now abandoned.

A variety of easel-back constructions have been proposed from time to time with indifferent success, most of these devices being objectionable because of bulk cost, unsightliness, or impracticality in use.

In accordance with the present disclosures, the construction is such that the book or binder, as such, is so slightly altered in construction as to render the new binder scarcely distinguishable in appearance, bulk, or weight, from the strictly conventional binders of this class, to the extent that if the easel-leg appendages are not supplied with the binder proper, the latter may nevertheless be sold as, and will have substantially the same appearance as, a conventional binder.

The last-mentioned advantage arises from the fact that the novel easel-back construction comprises an easel-leg unit which is fully separable from the binder, and the latter is provided with a receptacle for the easel unit which becomes in effect an inconspicuous part of the backbone of the book or of the binding mechanism carried by such backbone.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a bipod easel structure so shaped that the two legs thereof are insertable into a receptacle secured behind the binding mechanism in a manner such that one leg lies on each side of said mechanism in a compact, and if desired, concealed condition without adding any perceptible bulk or complexity or disfiguration to the otherwise conventional type of ring binder.

A still further object is the provision of a bipod easel configuration which can be supplied in long or short lengths, depending upon the angle at which the book is to stand, and which is receivable in either a closed or an open channel receptacle attached to the inside face of the backbone of a book or a binder alone or conjointly with a binding mechanism, in such manner that the two legs lie close along the hinge margins of said backbone.

Yet another object is the provision of a bifurcated or bipodal structure in the form of a unitary piece of metal having two legs joined at one end by a U-shaped bight which is offset from the plane of the legs and has a yoke or inflection separating two short prongs in a manner to permit the insertion of said prongs into a receptacle to flank the attaching rivets for said receptacle and the binder mechanism and dispose the easel legs in operative position to support the binder in the desired reading position.

Additional advantages and aspects of novelty and utility characterizing the improved easel means will become apparent as the following description proceeds in view of the annexed drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the binder with easel applied;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the easel-leg unit;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective detail illustrating insertion of the easel unit;

FIG. 4 is a perspective detail of the label holder;

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FIG. 5 is a perspective of the binder in open condition with easel fully inserted;

FIG. 6 is a magnified fragmentary cross-section along lines 6-6 of FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is a cross-section along lines 7-7 of FIG. 5;

FIG. 8 is a perspective detail of the sister strip;

FIG. 9 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view of a modified form of the invention;

FIG. 10 is an end view looking in the direction of lines 10-10 of FIG. 9;

FIG. 11 is a top plan view of the construction seen in FIG. 10;

FIG. 12 is a perspective view showing the modified easel structure in operative reading position.

The improved easel structure is applicable to any conventional book structure having a backbone or spine with attached front and rear covers, but is shown by preference in combination with a loose-leaf ring binder of the type depicted in FIG. 5 in which the front and rear covers 10 and 12 hingedly are attached by cover cloth 13 to the usual backbone strip 11 with a so-called binding "metal" 14 consisting of a set of snap-closing rings 15 of conventional construction, carried on the inner side of the backbone, as will more fully appear hereinafter.

Such binders are frequently used to advantage in the standing reading position shown in FIG. 1, wherein the covers 10 and 12 are substantially fully open and maintained at a suitable angle by the legs 18 of an easel unit having the construction shown in FIG. 2 and supportably engaging means at the head of the backbone 11, in accordance with the detailed structural features hereinafter described.

The easel-leg unit depicted in FIG. 2 is preferably formed from lengths of heavy gauge rod stock bent back upon itself to provide the two legs 18 and having a plurality of recurving seating prongs or bends 19 situated at the bight formed between the legs, said seating prongs being offset to lie in a plane substantially at right angles to the plane containing the legs 18.

As viewed in FIGS. 1 and 2, the easel legs 18 are slightly diverged and extend from their bight or prong section at an angle to each other so as to afford a wider supporting base at their respective foot portions.

The wire rod stock is sufficiently hard to afford a springiness focussed at the bight so that the legs 18 may be squeezed from their normally diverged conditions, as in FIGS. 1 and 2, into substantial parallelism as seen in the cross-sectional view of FIG. 6 to permit stowing the easel into the special scabbard means to be described.

At their respective foot portions, each of the legs is provided with a small plastic sheathing or boot 18X preferably applied by dip-coating. This plastic-booting or tipping serves the several purposes of preventing marring, providing a footing, and providing a glider means facilitating the insertion of the legs into the scabbard.

Means providing a substantially concealed sheath or scabbard for stowing the easel unit when not in use comprises the construction seen in FIGS. 6 and 7 which is superimposed upon an otherwise conventional type of "manufactured" cover or casing consisting, for example, of the two covers 10 and 12 hingedly joined to a backbone strip 11 suitably adhered to the cover cloth 13, which is turned around the edges of the boards to the inner faces thereof for trim.

The superimposed sheath structure further includes a sister backbone strip 21, such as shown in FIG. 8, made of suitable binder's board, chip board, or the like, which is prepared separately and usually provided with decorative headband cloth strips 22 and a set of rivets 23 having flush-embedded heads. This sister strip is firmly attached by adhesive to the inside face of the main backbone strip, it being also desirable usually to adhere a paper liner or

facing 16 over the entire inner surface of the binder including the sister strip (FIG. 6).

The superimposed binding and scabbard means is completed by application of an inverted channel piece 25 of elongated form on top of the sister strip, and laying upon the channel the binding "metal" 14 with the sister-strip rivets 23 projecting through registered holes in the channel and metal and headed over onto the latter (FIG. 7), a stack of fibre or like washers or sleeving 24 being placed over the rivet shanks to provide an inside supporting collar for the bottom 9 of the channel strip.

As viewed in FIGS. 6 and 7, the channel piece 25 is of sufficient depth and width to receive the legs 18 of the easel unit, one on either side of the rivet and washer assembly 23—24, the end portion of the channel at the head of the backbone, at least, being slightly shorter than the full length of the backbone so as to leave room for the offset bends 19X (FIG. 7) to fit well within the overall marginal confines of the book, as a result of which the easel bracket parts 19 will appear to be contained within the binder when the easel is stowed and the covers are closed; and will further neatly appear to be a mere appendage to the binding mechanism itself when the book lies open and flat, as in FIG. 5.

In the use of the form of the novel easel structure depicted in FIGS. 1 through 7, the easel-leg unit may be withdrawn from its backbone housing or receptacle from the stowed condition shown in FIG. 5, fully detached from the book in the condition seen in FIG. 2, and in this action the legs 18 will spring apart to the divergence shown, the device being mounted in operative position by insert of the bracket loops 19 into the head of the channel piece 25, as in FIG. 1, in which condition one of each of the loops 19 will lie on each side of the stack of stabilizing washers 24 and the offsetting bends 19X will seat down upon the top margin of the backbone, the open bight portion 19Z of the bracket loops being of a width to fit snugly around the stock of washer 24 so that the easel is firmly disposed in such operative condition.

On returning the easel unit to stowed condition, the two legs are easily squeezed toward each other into approximate parallelism and slipped into the channel piece with one leg on each side of the rivet and washer parts means 23—24, as in FIGS. 3 and 6, FIG. 3 showing the easel partially withdrawn from, or approaching, inserted condition.

Easel-backed binders of the class described are useful for catalogue and inventory sheets and like reference purposes, which may require suitable identifying labels, for which purposes the present binder is provided with the novel label holder 30 shown in FIG. 4, and consisting of a strip of bendable metal having two endwise prongs 31 punched therein with adjacent endwise portions 32 turned over to provide label confining flanges, each of which has a small, sharp prong 33 struck down from its edge to overlie the opening left by one of the attaching prongs.

Such label holders may be applied to the backbone of the binder in the manner shown in FIG. 1, the sharp prongs 31 being bent as required for insertion and anchoring in the cover cloth; and suitable paper labels 34 can be captured beneath the flanges 32 by pressing the same down and piercing the label with the small teeth 33, and when made of suitably thin stock, may also be bent onto the curved type of backbone.

For some purposes, for instance, loose-leaf reference works such as cook books, it may be desirable to provide shorter easel legs so that the reading angle will be flatter, as illustrated in FIG. 12, in which case the legs 118 are made shorter and the offset bight 119Z joining them is made considerably wider, as in FIGS. 9 and 10, in order that there may be a sufficiently wide spread between the booted or sheathed feet 118X to ensure good stability, this form of easel structure, like that of FIG. 1, being likewise made of springy rod stock with the legs biased apart at the bight so that there is the same tendency of the

feet to spring outwardly to the widest feasible base when freed from the stowing receptacle or holder.

This short-legged form of the easel can be housed in the inverted channel scabbard or receptacle 25, as in FIG. 6, or it may be stowed in the smaller receptacle 125 seen in FIG. 9, which also consists of a length of metal plate stamped into a U- or channel-shape and providing a bottom wall 126 having opposite upset margins affording a pair of rod-confining side walls 128, 128 sufficiently curved inwardly to prevent escape of the legs of the easel when the latter are either sprung or slid into stowed condition therebetween, as in FIGS. 9 and 10.

The modified smaller channel-shaped receptacle 125 of FIG. 9 is especially suited to use in open-faced condition with books having a curved backbone 111, for which purpose the bottom wall 126 of the receptacle can be curved as required to nest flush down into the gutter of such a backbone, there being at least one rivet hole 129 (FIG. 11) punched into this stamping to pass the attaching rivet 130 for the "metal" or binding mechanism 114. It should be noted, however, that the inverted channel 14 of FIG. 6 can also be seated down upon a curved backbone without special changes or shaping.

Conversely, if desired, the smaller channel-shaped receptacle or holder 125 may be stamped with a flat bottom wall and mounted so that its open side faces downwardly, as in the case of the channel of FIG. 6, in which event the easel legs must be inserted (e.g. FIG. 3) through the open end and cannot be directly sprung into the holder as in the open-faced mode of mounting shown in FIG. 9.

The bend at the bight 119Z (FIG. 10) is made wider than in the case of the construction at 19Z in FIGS. 3 and 6 in order that the width of the binding mechanism can be straddled when the easel is inserted in the reading position (FIG. 12) to provide a compact, unobtrusive assembly.

While the long bipod easel of FIGS. 1 and 2 gives a potentially wider springing-out range for added stability of the feet, and is suited to holding a book in a more nearly upright position for reading from a sitting position or from a lectern or the like, and the longer easel can also be stowed satisfactorily in the smaller holder 125, whether mounted channel-top or channel-down, the inverted channel sheath or scabbard of FIG. 1 is deemed better suited to the long-leg easel to conceal the legs altogether and prevent any tendency of the portions near the feet to spread over beyond the hinge margins of the covers, which can occur if the open-faced or upwardly-opening channel holder 125 is relatively as short in length as shown in FIGS. 9 and 11 for use with the short-legged easel.

Whereas the long channel 25 will be fixed in position by the same two rivets 23 which secure the binder "metal," the shorter channel 125 will usually be held by only one rivet 130, and a stabilizing tang or barb 127 is struck out of the bottom 126 to bite into the backbone and prevent any tendency for the holder to pivot about rivet 130.

It will be apparent that the channel means for housing and securing the easel-leg unit changes the appearance of the binder so slightly as to be hardly apparent to the casual observer, and the pertinent structural and assembly modifications do not add greatly to production costs. Moreover, the one-piece leg structure with simple offset end means for operative insertion in the channel, is a simple and inexpensive construction and of a character such that for certain classes of trade the easel legs may be omitted without impairing the marketability or appearance of the binder alone.

It will also be appreciated that the simple character of the easel legs is such that they provide, in an automatic sense by spreading, as wide a footing base as may be desired, yet fit very easily and inconspicuously into a narrow and an equally inconspicuous receptacle which actually seems to be a part of the binding mechanism itself.

If the spreading wide-base feature is not needed, the

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leg unit may be stamped from sheet metal in similar offset configuration.

We claim:

1. An easel-back binder construction comprising in combination with a set of binder covers hingedly attached to a backbone portion carrying on the inner side thereof a binding mechanism, including a base structure, improvements as follows, namely: rigid means interposed and secured between the base of said binding mechanism and the inner side of said backbone portion providing a rigid housing cavity extending beneath the said binding mechanism, and an easel support comprising an elongated leg structure having an offset bracket portion at one end and both of dimensions such that the leg structure will fit substantially entirely into said cavity, and said offset bracket portion likewise fits firmly into said cavity and thereby disposes said leg portion at an angle to the backbone suitable to support the binder on a table surface in a predetermined upright reading position with said covers spread to an open condition, said bracket portion being of a short dimension in a direction laterally of a plane containing the remainder of the easel structure so as to project only a short distance above the backbone and gutter of the book and lie wholly within the confines of the book when the covers are closed.

2. An easel-back binder structure comprising, in combination with a set of binder covers of the type including a backbone portion and a sheet-binding mechanism carried by said backbone portion, the following, namely: a channel-shaped member mounted in inverted condition upon said backbone portion beneath said binding mechanism, with the latter seated upon said channel member and secured with the same to said backbone portion, said channel member having an open end portion subjacent one end of the backbone portion; and easel means in the form of a member having a pair of elongated legs joined together in a unitary structure at one end by offset means lying in a plane approximately at right angles to a plane containing said legs, said offset means being of such dimension as to fit snugly into said open end portion of the channel with said legs extending at an angle to the binder covers in open condition to support the same in a predetermined upstanding reading position, said legs being of a length and thickness to fit firmly but removably and fully into said channel member through said open end thereof so as to be securely stowed and concealed therein with said offset means lying in a position to be included within the over-all confines of the binder in closed condition.

3. An easel-back book structure comprising a back panel portion having a pair of flanking covers hingedly attached thereto; means defining a shallow chamber on the inner side of the back panel running substantially the length thereof between said covers; means cooperatively assembled with said chamber means for retaining book leaves between said covers in hinging attachment with said backbone panel portion; said chamber means having at least one open end situated adjacent to, and a short distance inwardly of the margin of, one of the ends of said back panel portion; and easel means in the form of a pair of legs adapted to lie in a plane and joined at one end in springing relation with an offset prong structure angled to lie in another plane at a substantial angle to the plane of said legs, said prong structure being shorter than the legs and of a dimension to fit securely into said open chamber end to dispose said legs at an angle to said backbone panel portion to support the same and said covers on a table surface or the like in open relation thereto in an upstanding reading position; said legs being normally sprung apart a predetermined amount wider than said chamber to afford a firm easel footing, and being springable toward each other to fit frictionally into said chamber through said open end for stowage therein.

4. An easel-back loose-leaf binder comprising a backbone with book covers hingedly attached thereto along

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opposite sides thereof; a formed receptacle mounted on the inside of the backbone and being of substantially U-shaped cross section and a width substantially equal to the width of the backbone; loose-leaf binding means also carried on the inside of the backbone and including an elongated base part mounted upon said receptacle and attached to said backbone by rivet means situated centrally along said back panel and receptacle, the receptacle providing a pair of leg-receiving passages on opposite sides of said attaching means and respectively located on opposite sides of said binder base and attaching means; and an easel member comprising two long easel legs joined at one end by a bight portion offset from a plane containing said legs, said legs each being slidable respectively into one of said passages along an appertaining one of the opposite sides of said binding means and base for stowing and attachment to the inside backbone portion of the book, said bight portion also being formed to fit slidably and firmly into said receptacle with said legs projecting at an angle to the backbone whereby to support the binder in a desired upstanding reading position on a table surface.

5. In a loose-leaf binder of the type including a binding mechanism having an elongated base with binding rings supported thereby and adapted for mounting on the inside face of a backbone panel between a set of covers hingedly attached to said panel, easel means comprising, namely: a bipod easel consisting of a pair of legs connected at one end by a bight which is offset to lie in a plane approximately at right angles to the plane containing said legs, said bight including bends defining a pair of spaced prongs and an intervening U-shaped bend of a width and form to dispose said legs in spaced relation to fit respectively on opposite sides of said base and alongside the latter, and render said U-shaped bend fittable around an end of said base; and a holder for said easel in the form of a channel-shaped stamping including a bottom wall flanked by a pair of parallel-leg confining side wall flanges spaced apart a distance greater than the width of said base, said holder being mounted on the inside face of said backbone panel beneath said base and secured conjointly with the latter to the panel, the spacing of said prongs being such as to render the same frictionally forcible into retaining interfit between said flanges in a binder-supporting condition with said legs projecting at an angle to the backbone to support the binder in reading position on a table surface or the like, said prongs being disengageable from said holder for the purpose of stowing the easel within the binder with said legs confined by said flanges of the holder to lie respectively along opposite sides of said base.

6. An easel construction as defined in claim 5 and further characterized in that said holder is mounted with said bottom wall uppermost in confrontation with the underside of said base whereby to define a chamber beneath said binding mechanism closed except at its ends and of a length to conceal at least a part of the length of the leg portions confined therein, as aforesaid, with said bight portions exposed at one of the ends of the chamber which is not closed and projecting upwardly from said base in a direction inwardly of the binder so that the easel in the stowed condition is confined substantially wholly within the binder in the closed condition of the latter.

7. The easel construction defined in claim 5 in which said base of the binding mechanism and said holder are of substantially the same length nearly equal to the length of said backbone panel such that substantially the entire length of the leg portions of the easel are receivable in confinement therein in a condition with said bight portion projecting upwardly of the base and inwardly of the binder at a location closely adjacent one of the ends of the back panel whereby the entire easel is confined within the binder in the closed condition of the same.

8. The easel construction defined in claim 5 further

characterized in that said legs have spring bias to spread apart a distance greater than that between said sidewall flanges and said holder is of a length substantially shorter than the length of said legs and said base is mounted beneath the latter with the said bottom wall thereof fitted against the backbone panel of the binder and said base disposed between said flanges interiorly of the channel and said flanges are curved for catching interfit each with portions of one of the legs of the easel, and are each spaced outwardly from a side of said base such that said legs can optionally be sprung directly into holding interfit with the appertaining side wall flanges for stowage, or may be stowed in interfit as aforesaid by insertion of the legs endwise of the base and holder channel slidably into holding interfit with the corresponding side wall flanges.

9. An easel structure for books of the type having a pair of covers hingedly attached to a back panel, said structure comprising a pair of easel legs formed from a unitary length of rod having some inherent rigidity and springiness and bent into a form to afford two substantially parallel legs spaced apart a predetermined normally-diverged distance from a juncture respectively with a connecting bight portion consisting of three contiguous bends all lying in a common plane at a substantial angle to a plane containing said legs, two outer ones of said bends constituting a pair of spaced prongs flanking a middle U-shaped bend, said legs tending to spring apart from said juncture to said normally-diverged condition to afford a widened easel footing and for spring-pressing interfit with spaced leg-retaining means in a holder; and means providing a holder for said easel comprising a length of metal having opposite side portions formed over to define a pair of leg-retaining walls spaced apart a certain distance approximately equal to the width of the back panel and less than said normally-diverged distance between the legs so as to receive the latter in spring-pressing interfit therebetween, said holder being adapted for mounting on the inside face of said back panel with one of its ends closely adjacent one lateral end margin of the panel, said prongs being spaced apart a distance to fit frictionally in between said retaining walls with said legs disposed outwardly at an angle to said back panel for support of the book in a reading position on a table surface or the like.

10. The construction defined in claim 9 further characterized in that said book has a binding mechanism with a base of a certain width secured to said back panel and said holder is attached to the back panel as aforesaid beneath the base by means of a member projecting at least from the bottom of said base and through the bottom of the holder into attachment with the back panel substantially close to said lateral margin of the panel, and said middle bend is of a width, and said prongs and middle bend are of a length, to pass on either side of the base of the attaching member in flanking relation to the latter on insertion of the prongs into the holder in the aforesaid reading position thereof.

11. In book type structure of the type having a backbone panel with flanking cover members hingedly attached thereto, an easel structure comprising a holder mounted upon the inside face of the backbone panel near one end thereof and having a length to extend a predetermined substantial distance along said panel inwardly away from said end, said holder including a pair of spaced-apart elongated rod-securing grooves disposed along opposite sides thereof in substantially parallel relation to each other and to the respective hinge axes of said cover members, and a bipod easel member comprising a length of substantially rigid wire rod bent upon itself to form a pair of spaced apart legs each connecting to a yoke-shaped bight which is turned into a plane to lie at a substantial angle to a plane containing said legs, the latter being

spaced apart at their conjunction with the bight a distance substantially equal to the distance to the appertaining outer margins of the bight and also the distance between said grooves that said legs and said bight at the outer margins thereof will both fit snugly in between said grooves in holding engagement therewith.

12. An easel structure for books comprising a pair of leg members joined at one end by a bight which is turned substantially out of the plane of the legs, the distance laterally across the legs to the outermost margins thereof between the turn and the bight being the same as the corresponding lateral distance across the bight to the outermost margins thereof, and a channel shaped holder including a member adapted for mounting against the backbone of a book having covers attached to the opposite sides thereof, said member having opposite channel walls along its sides spaced apart to adjoin the hinge joint of said covers of the book in which it is to be mounted and spaced apart slightly less than said lateral distance whereby either the legs or the bight may be forced into the channel and be releasably retained therein for stowage in the case of the legs and to dispose the legs securely in book-supporting position in the case of the bight.

13. The combination with a book structure of the known type, including an elongated backbone panel having a pair of flanking covers hingedly joined thereto along the opposite longitudinal margins thereof, improvements comprising, namely: an easel receptacle in the form of a member attached to the inside of said backbone panel with one of its ends substantially aligned with an end of said panel at the head of the book structure, said member being of U-shaped cross-section and including a bottom wall having substantially the same width as said panel and having a pair of opposite side portions respectively turned up out of a plane containing said bottom wall to form leg-confining flange portions for a bipod easel structure, each of said flange portions being approximately aligned with one of the hinge juncture between the backbone panel and covers such that the covers may be closed in the usual manner of a book with said receptacle disposed within the confines of the inside margins of the backbone panel; means for hingedly binding pages in said book structure with the hinge margins thereof confronting the inner side of said panel and the receptacle attached thereto as aforesaid; and an easel structure formed of a length of substantially rigid wire rod turned back on itself to define two conjoined legs of even length not longer than the backbone panel and each having a short offset of identical length turned out of a common plane containing the legs, said offsets being joined by a third short lateral rod length to space said offsets from each other a distance substantially equal to the distance between said turned up flange portions of the receptacle, said offset and third length defining a bight structure having a press fit between said flange portions in the receptacle whereby the appertaining legs are disposed at an angle to the backbone panel to support the book structure in a reading position on a table surface or the like, said legs having a springiness at the bight region tending to diverge them to give a predetermined wide footing spread and permitting the legs to be sprung toward each other to fit into said receptacle between said flange portion for stowage with each leg lying on an opposite side of a longitudinal center line through the backbone panel in adjacency to one of the hinge junctures of the latter.

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