May 10, 1932. P. A. GARDNER, JR 1,857,146

KEY CASE

Filed April 4, 1931

Fig. 1.

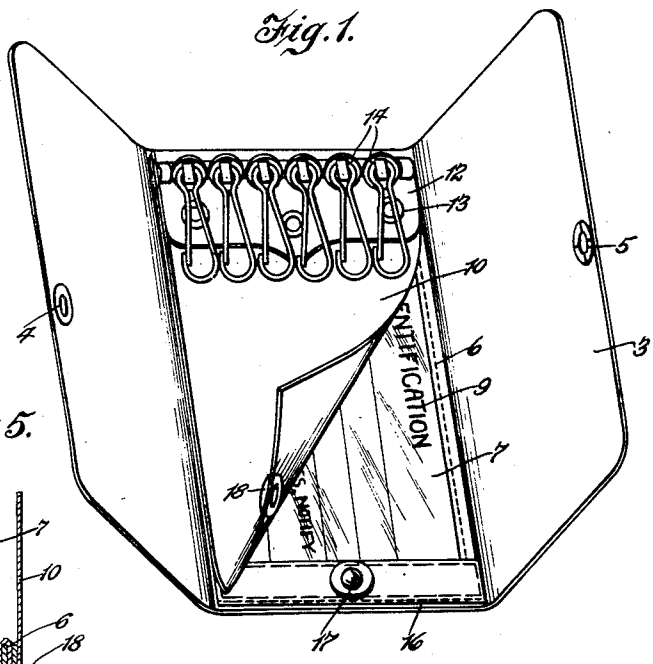


Fig. 5.

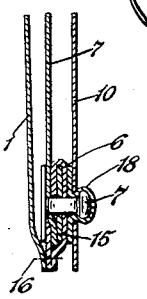


Fig. 2.

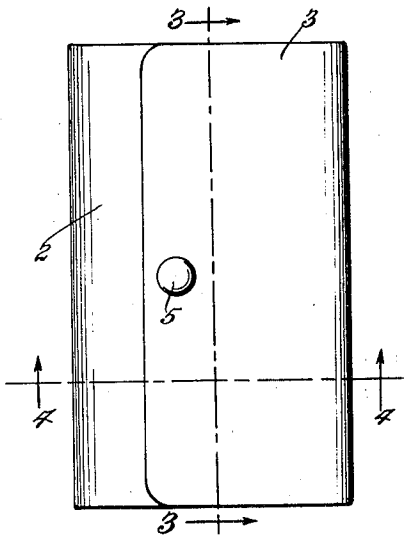


Fig. 3.

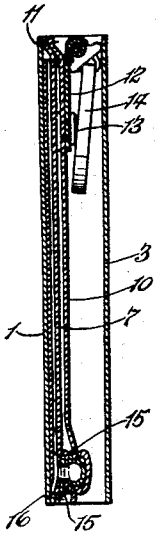
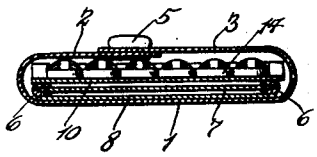


Fig. 4.



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Patented May 10, 1932 1,857,146

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

PRINCE ALBERT GARDNER, JR., OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

KEY CASE

Application filed April 4, 1931. Serial No. 527,654.

This invention relates to key cases for enclosing a plurality of keys; and the invention comprises an improved key case including a central body portion having at one end a series of hooks for supporting the individual keys, and having at both ends stiffening members which prevent bending of the central portion of the key case along both its end portions, in combination with members attached to the central portion of the key case and to said stiffening members and cooperating therewith to form pockets.

An object of the invention is to provide an improved key case comprising a section of flexible material having a central body portion in combination with a stiffener attached to one end of said body portion and extending substantially the full width thereof and supporting a series of key hooks, a separate stiffener attached to the opposite end of the body portion and extending approximately the full width thereof, a wall forming member having its ends attached to said stiffeners and cooperating with the central portion of the key case to form a receptacle, and an additional protecting member having one end attached to the first named stiffener and provided with means whereby the opposite end may be detachably connected to said second stiffener in order to provide a cover for said wall forming member, and to cooperate therewith to form an additional receptacle.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved key case embodying the construction, combination and arrangement of parts herein disclosed, reference being made to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a key case embodying the invention and having the side flaps thereof open.

Fig. 2 is a front side elevation of the key case.

Fig. 3 is a longitudinal sectional view of the key case approximately on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 4 is a transverse sectional view approximately on the line 4—4 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 5 is a detail sectional view showing the stiffener at the lower end of the key case and the means for holding said stiffener in position.

The improved key case shown comprises a section of flexible material including a back portion 1 and flaps 2 and 3 integrally united with said back portion and designed and arranged to fold in overlapping relationship so as to cover one side of the back portion. The edge of the flap 2 is provided with a ball member 4 and the edge of the flap 3 is provided with a socket 5 designed and adapted to engage the ball 4 so as to secure the flaps in folded relationship.

A frame 6 extends approximately the full length and the full width of the back portion 1 of the key case and is secured to the marginal portions of a flexible transparent member 7. The side portions of the frame 6 and the side edges of the window 7 are detached from the back portion 1 of the key case, so that it is possible to insert cards or other elements 8 into the pocket formed between and by the cooperation of the back 1 of the key case and the window member 7. A purpose of providing the transparent window 7 is to enable the user of the device to observe and read notations 9 printed or impressed upon the cards or other elements 8 contained in the pocket described.

A purpose in leaving both side edges of the frame 6 and the window 7 detached from the back portion 1 of the key case is to facilitate and expedite the insertion and removal of the cards. The pocket may be easily opened to permit the insertion of a card, by inserting one of the fingers under one side edge of the frame 6, so as to space said frame 6 from the back portion 1 of the key case and hold the pocket open while the card is being inserted into the opposite side of the pocket. Removal of the card from the pocket is also facilitated by this construction, since the finger may be inserted in one side of the pocket and engaged against the card, and the card thereby pushed a short distance so that the opposite edge of the card protrudes beyond the pocket a sufficient distance to be engaged by the thumb and forefinger of the other hand.

My invention comprises a member connected with the upper end of the key case and cooperating with the window to form an additional pocket and also functioning to protect the window from being damaged by the keys. This additional member comprises a section 10 of flexible material having its upper edge even with the upper edge of the window 7 and with the upper edge of the back portion 1 of the key case. Thus, three plies of material are formed at the upper end of the key case, said plies comprising the back portion 1 of the key case, the window 7, and the member 10. These members are permanently secured together by a transverse row of stitches 11. Thus, the member 10 may be raised or moved away from the window 7 so as to disclose the notation 9; or said member 10 may be secured to the window 7 at both ends, as presently described.

A stiffener element 12 is permanently attached to the member 10 by fasteners 13 and supports a pivoted series of hooks 14 designed and adapted to support individual keys. The stiffener 12 extends the full width of the back member. This stiffener is at one end of the key case and is substantially inflexible, making it impossible to fold or to bend the adjacent portion of the key case. The stiffener 12 serves as a protection for the key case and also for the window 7 and member 10. This stiffener 12 prevents these parts from becoming damaged by repeated bending or folding, and holds the key case flat.

The lower end of the frame 6, opposite from the stiffener 12, encloses a transverse stiffener plate 15 which extends the full width of the back portion 1, which is also the full width of the frame 6 and the member 10. The lower end of the frame 6 is attached to the lower end of the back portion 1 of the key case by stitches 16 or other appropriate fastening means, so that this stiffener is held in permanent connection with the lower end of the key case. The stiffener 15 is substantially inflexible and cooperates with the stiffener 12 thoroughly to protect the key case from bending transversely of either of said stiffener members. These stiffeners hold the key case flat.

A ball 17 is permanently attached to the stiffener 15 approximately midway of the ends of said stiffener, and is designed and adapted to be engaged by a socket 18 attached to the lower end of the member 10, so that said member may be detachably fastened to the lower end of the key case. When the lower end of the member 10 is detachably fastened to the lower end of the key case, said member cooperates with the window 7 to form a receptacle between said window 7 and said member 10. This receptacle is in addition to the receptacle or pocket between the window 7 and the back portion 1 of the key case. The fastener member 18 may readily be detached from the fastener member 17 so as to open the receptacle provided by said member 10 and disclose the notation 9, or the contents of the pocket formed between the window 7 and the back portion 1 of the key case.

It must now be apparent that I have provided an improved key case of novel and useful construction which possesses many advantages. This key case will be held flat and will not bend at its ends. The pocket forming devices provide receptacles for receiving and retaining cards and the like, and these pockets are so constructed that articles may be more easily inserted therein and removed therefrom than is possible in other arrangements.

The specific construction and arrangement of the parts comprising this invention may be varied within the scope of equivalent limits without departure from the nature and principle thereof. I do not restrict myself unessentially, but what I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:—

1. A case of the character described comprising a body of flexible material including a back portion having flaps in connection with the sides thereof and movable to overlapping position across said back portion, a sheet of transparent material covering the inside of said back portion and cooperating therewith to form a pocket, separate stiffeners extending the full width of said back portion and attached thereto at opposite ends of said back portion and holding said back portion of said case from folding at its ends, a flexible member approximately coextensive with said transparent member and having its upper end attached to said stiffener at the upper end of said case, and a releasable fastener device for holding the lower end of said flexible member in connection with said stiffener at the lower end of said case.

2. A device of the character described comprising a section of flexible material forming a back portion and side flaps in connection with the sides of said back portion and adapted to be folded in overlapping relationship across said back portion, separate stiffeners extending the full width of said back portion and secured thereto at opposite ends of said back portion, a flexible member having one end permanently attached to one of said stiffeners and its side edges detached from said back portion, and a releasable device for detachably connecting the opposite end of said flexible member to said other stiffener at the opposite end of said device.

3. A device of the character described comprising a section of flexible material forming a back portion and side flaps in connection with the sides of said back portion and adapted to be folded in overlapping relationship across said back portion, separate stiffeners extending the full width of said

back portion and secured thereto at opposite ends of said back portion, a flexible member having one end permanently attached to one of said stiffeners and its side edges detached from said back portion, a releasable device for detachably connecting the opposite end of said flexible member to said other stiffener at the opposite end of said device, and an intermediate member having its ends attached to said stiffeners, said intermediate member and said flexible member being approximately co-extensive.

4. A device of the character described comprising a body of flexible material including a back portion having flaps in connection with the sides thereof and movable to overlapping position across said back portion, separate stiffeners extending transversely of and attached to the opposite ends of said back portion and holding said back portion of said device from folding at its ends, a sheet of transparent material covering the inside of said back portion and having its ends attached to said stiffeners and both of its side edges detached from said body and cooperating with said back portion to form a pocket open at both sides, a flexible member approximately coextensive with said sheet having one end permanently attached to one of said stiffeners, and means detachably securing the opposite end of said member to the other stiffener.

PRINCE ALBERT GARDNER, JR.