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(54) **SECURE TRAVEL WALLET**

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(76) Inventor: **Clifford N. Rushlow**, Westerly, RI (US)

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Correspondence Address:

Richard C. Litman
LITMAN LAW OFFICES, LTD.
P.O. Box 15035
Arlington, VA 22215 (US)

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ABSTRACT

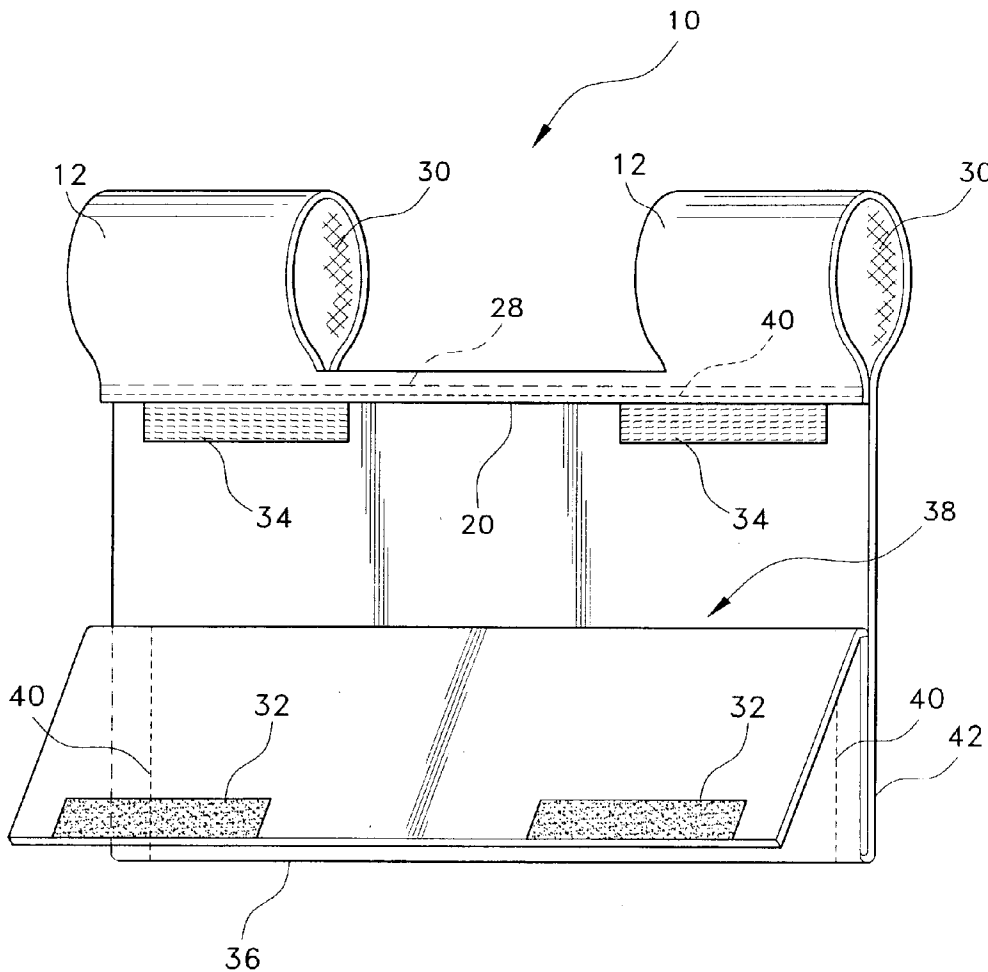
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Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 60/367,217, filed on Mar. 26, 2002.

A secure travel wallet having a flat rectangular base panel with a pocket. Attached to the top edge are two belt loops. The pocket has mating pieces of hook and loop fabric located on corresponding surfaces of the pocket and base panel.



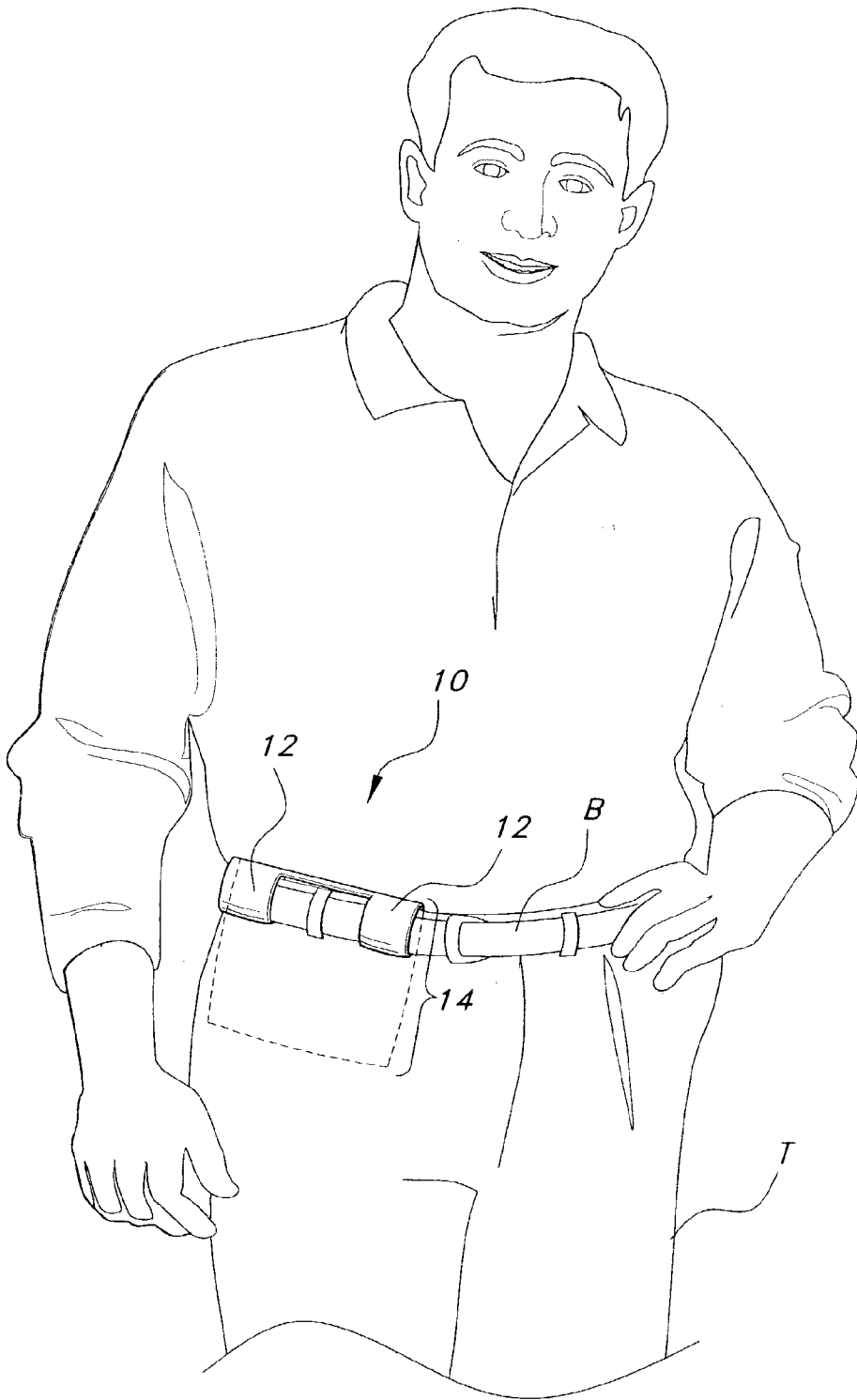


Fig 1

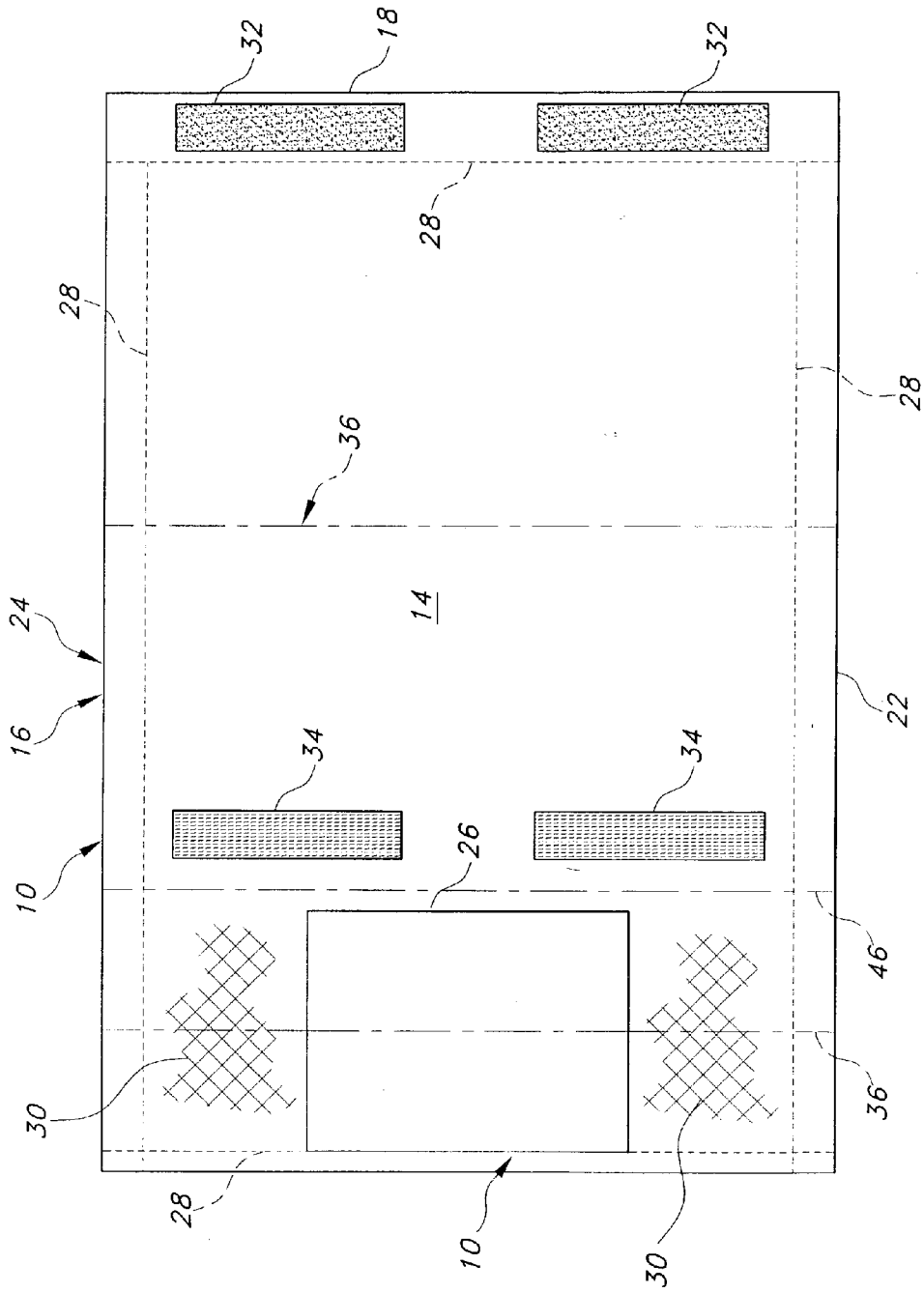


Fig 2

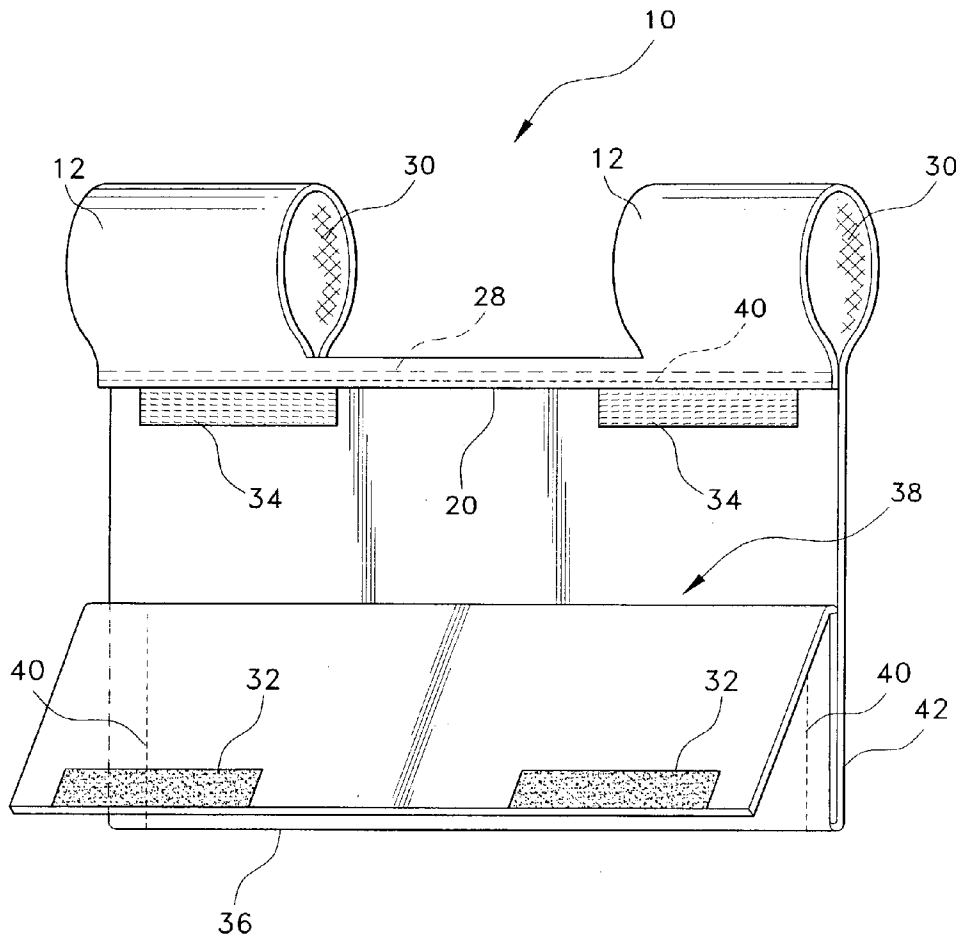


Fig 3

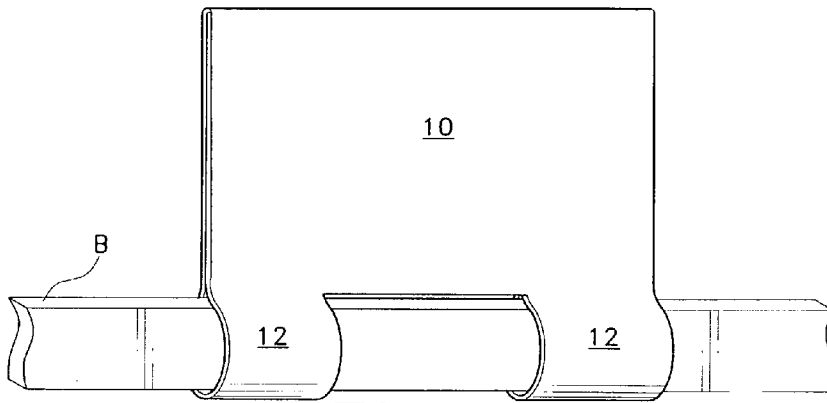


Fig 4A

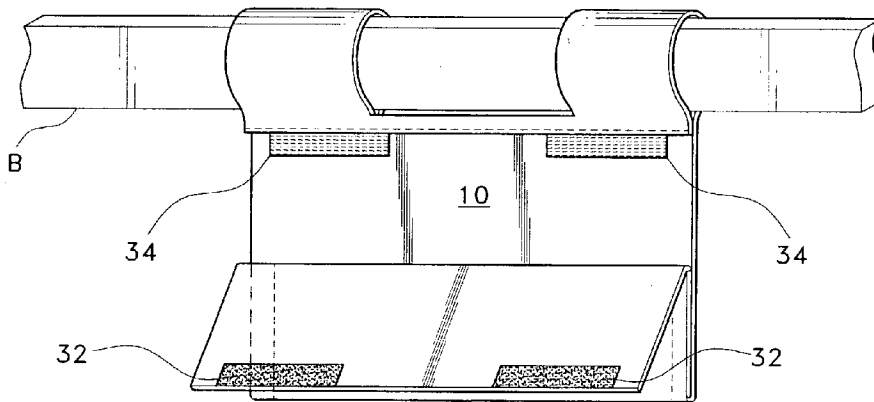


Fig 4B

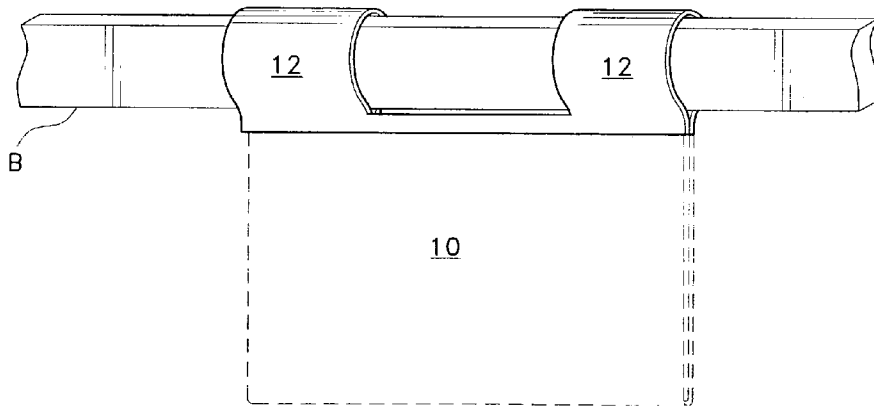


Fig 4C

SECURE TRAVEL WALLET

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/367,217, filed Mar. 26, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates generally to articles designed to hold and conceal valuables. More specifically, the invention is a secure travel wallet held by a belt and tucked inside the pants.

[0004] 2. Description of Related Art

[0005] Travelers and especially international travelers must often keep passports, credit cards and cash on their person. That is one reason why many pickpockets target travelers, and especially travelers in tour groups. There is therefore a need for a wallet which is concealable and can be fastened securely enough to a traveler's person so as to deter theft, but still retain its functionality and ease of use.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 4,416,315, issued on Nov. 22, 1983, to Newman C. Foley describes a device for carrying valuables comprising a closeable container having a hanger member such as a clip movably secured thereto. The present invention differs from the present device in that the present invention has belt loops which prevent it from being removed by a pickpocket. The clip used in the Foley invention does not offer such protection.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 4,705,086, issued on Nov. 10, 1987, to James J. O'Neill describes a wallet for joggers which can be secured inside the waistband of a pair of trousers using an attached clip. The wallet can be fully functional as a runner's wallet, but the clip used to secure it to a waistband will not deter theft like the belt loops of the present invention. The present invention also can be stored inside the clothing of the wearer, thereby concealing it from view.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 4,779,655, issued on Oct. 25, 1988, to Gaylen R. Olson describes an accessory wallet made of pliable fabric with a plurality of pockets. The accessory wallet is adapted to fold over the waistband of an article of clothing. Unlike the present invention, the accessory wallet does not have a means for securing itself so as to deter theft.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 5,551,496, issued on Sep. 3, 1996, to Hugh H. Gray, Jr. describes a concealable wallet having a pocket for storing items and an attachment strap for securely attaching the wallet member to the garment while in use. The wallet is designed to attach to the inside of a waist band, and differs from the present invention in that it does not have belt loops for attachment to a belt. The wallet also requires the use of a zipper which can be uncomfortable when positioned next to the body.

[0010] None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant invention as claimed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] The present invention is a secure travel wallet which has a pair of belt loops attached to the top of a flat,

rectangular storage pocket. The wallet is to be worn on a belt threaded through its belt loops, and to be concealable under a person's trousers or skirt. The storage pocket is designed to hold credit cards, currency, and passports, and is easily accessed by opening the flap which is secured with hook and loop fasteners. The storage pocket can be moved from a concealed position inside the trousers or skirt to an accessible position outside the trousers or skirt without removing the belt loops from the belt.

[0012] Accordingly, it is a principal object of the invention to provide a travel wallet with theft deterrent features.

[0013] It is another object of the invention to provide a travel wallet which is concealable on one's person whether a man or a woman.

[0014] It is a further object of the invention to provide a theft deterrent travel wallet which retains its functionality.

[0015] It is an object of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof in an apparatus for the purposes described which is inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing its intended purposes.

[0016] These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] FIG. 1 is an environmental, perspective view of a secure travel wallet worn by a man according to the present invention.

[0018] FIG. 2 is a top plan view of the present invention before final assembly.

[0019] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the present invention with the front portion of the wallet bent forward to expose the hook and loop fastening strips.

[0020] FIG. 4A is an environmental front elevational view of the present invention illustrating the initial installation of the travel wallet.

[0021] FIG. 4B is an environmental front elevational view of the present invention illustrating the second installation step of bending forward and downward with a partial opening of the pocket to insert valuables.

[0022] FIG. 4C is an environmental front elevational view of the present invention illustrating the third and final installation step of flipping the loaded travel wallet over and inserting behind the belt and pants top.

[0023] Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0024] FIG. 1 illustrates the present invention 10 attached to a belt B and concealed behind the top portion of a pair of trousers T. The invention can also be used with almost any garment with a waistband and a belt such as a woman's skirt, and is not intended to be limited to usage only with trousers. The belt B passes through two belt loops 12, 12 attached to the security wallet 10. Attached to the belt loops 12, 12 is a storage area 14 which ordinarily hangs down behind the front surface of the trousers T.

[0025] FIG. 2 depicts the security wallet 10 in a pre-sewn condition. The wallet has a base panel 16 which is preferably made from a single piece of a high strength fabric, but can also be made from natural leather, synthetic leather, denim, silk, plastic, or any other suitable non-bulky, tightly woven, flexible material, including combinations of materials described herein. The base panel 16 has a bottom edge 18, a top edge 20, a left edge 22, and a right edge 24. Preferably the top edge 20, the bottom edge 18, and the sides 22 and 24 of the base panel 16 are peripherally hemmed as indicated by dashed lines 28. The aforementioned edges can also be glued into hemmed position with a durable fabric glue. A pair of plastic loops 12 backed with an open mesh fabric 30 are spaced by top and bottom strip portions 26 and sewn to the top edge 20 of the base panel 16 to form the hem 28 with doubled stitching as shown in FIG. 3.

[0026] Two mating and spaced strips of hook 32 and loop 34 fastening material are positioned proximate the bottom edge 18 and the top edge 20, respectively, of the base panel 16 as illustrated in FIG. 2. The hook strips 32 and the loop strips 34 can be either sewn or glued into position, and optionally placed in opposite positions than illustrated. Optionally, the hook and loop strips 32 and 34, respectively, can be single strips. Preferably, the loop strips 34 are located as indicated because of less irritation when the pocket is opened. In order to convert the base panel 14 into a functioning secure travel wallet 10, one fold at 36 is made as shown in FIG. 2.

[0027] As shown partially open in FIG. 3, the aforementioned folding at 36 of the back panel 14 allows space in the top edge 18 for the attachment of two belt loops 12 and a pocket 38. The belt loops 12 are secured in position along the top edge 20 with stitching 40 and/or glue, and the pocket 38 is reinforced along the bottom side portions 42 half-way up only with either stitching 40 and/or glue.

[0028] FIGS. 4A-C describe the application steps of the secure travel wallet 10 on the belt B. In FIG. 4A, the folded wallet 10 is inverted and the loops 12 positioned on the belt B with the pocket portion hidden. In FIG. 4B, the wallet 10 is folded downward over the belt B, the wallet opened, and valuable items such as credit cards, driver's license, copy of the passport, and medical cards, and the like are inserted. The pocket is sealed by the hook and loop strips, 32, 34, respectively. Finally, as illustrated in FIG. 4C, the wallet 10 is folded back over the belt B and tucked inside the garment. Even if a prospective thief were to identify this wallet 10, the thief would have difficulty removing the wallet 10 from the belt B.

[0029] The overall dimensions of the pocket 38 are such that it can secure credit cards, passports, paper currency and the like. Exemplary dimensions are as follows: overall dimensions are 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. in height and 5 in. wide; the pocket is 4 in. in height and 5 in. wide; the loops 12 are 2 in. square or 2 in. wide and 4 in. in total length; and the hook and loop fastening strips are 1.5 in. in height and $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide. The wallet colors can be varied to match the color of the belt B to be less noticeable.

[0030] Thus, a convenient and unobtrusive belt-hung travel wallet with an opening that extends half the distance of the pocket height has been shown to protect the traveler's valuables with assurance that a pickpocket could not steal while hidden on the traveler's belt.

[0031] It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the sole embodiment described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

I claim:

1. A secure travel wallet for positioning on one's belt and hidden behind the belted garment comprising:

a rectangular, flat base panel having a front surface, a back surface, a top edge, a bottom edge, a left edge, and a right edge;

a pocket formed by folding the base panel and having a rectangular front panel disposed upon the front surface of said base panel, open on top and substantially coextensive with the base panel;

said front panel consisting of a front surface, back surface, a top edge, a bottom edge, a left edge, and a right edge;

four strips of hook and loop fastening material, two of the loop strips being disposed on the top edge of the front surface of said base panel, and two of the hook strips being disposed on the bottom edge of the back surface of said base panel, whereby said strips of hook and loop fastening engage one another when said front panel is placed against said back panel; and

two belt loops disposed on the top edge of said base panel positioned adjacent the left and right edges thereof.

2. The secure travel wallet according to claim 1, wherein said base panel, said pocket and said belt loops are all made of a material selected from the group consisting of synthetic leather, natural leather, denim, silk, plastic, and combinations thereof.

3. The secure travel wallet as in claim 2, wherein said base panel, said pocket and said belt loops are all made of synthetic leather.

4. The secure travel wallet as in claim 2, wherein said base panel, said pocket and said belt loops are all made of natural leather.

5. The secure travel wallet as in claim 2, wherein said back panel, said pocket and said belt loops are all made of denim.

6. The secure travel wallet as in claim 2, wherein said back panel, said pocket and said belt loops are all made of silk.

7. The secure travel wallet as in claim 2, wherein said back panel, said pocket and said belt loops are all made of plastic.

8. The secure travel wallet as in claim 2, wherein said back panel, said pocket and said belt loops are all made of combinations of synthetic leather, natural leather, denim, silk, and plastic.

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