

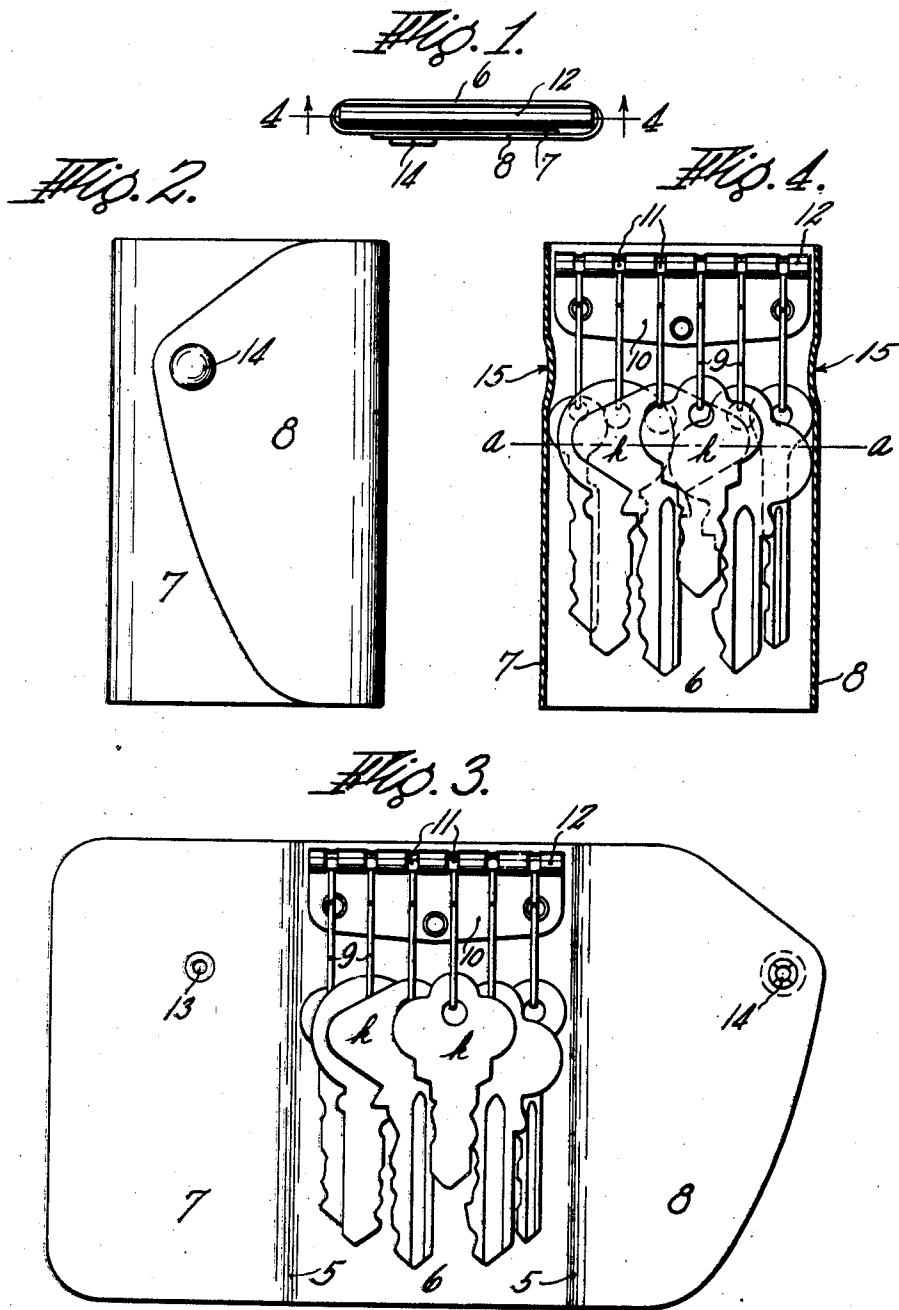
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KEY CASE

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KEY CASE

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This invention relates to improvements in key cases and has to do more particularly with the construction of the leather case or folder as distinguished from the key holders and their supporting structure.

The invention has for an object an improvement in the means for enclosing the keys and key holders and is characterized by the use of a single pair of interengageable fastener elements, applied at a new location to the overlapping flaps, which are adapted to be held together by such elements. By this new location, an important function is accomplished in the prevention of substantial relative pivotal movement of the flaps about the interengaged fasteners as an axis and the keys are firmly bound in place against unintentional escape through the upper and open end of the key case.

This and other features of the invention will more particularly appear from the following description and will be pointed out in the appended claims.

The invention will be disclosed with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:

Figs. 1 and 2 are top plan and side elevational views of a key case embodying my invention, the case being shown as closed;

Fig. 3 is a front elevational view of the key case, shown as open; and

Fig. 4 is a sectional elevational view taken on the line 4-4 of Fig. 1.

Referring to the drawing; the key case includes a folder, usually made of leather or like material and comprising a strip of such material divided off by lines of fold 5 into a central section 6 and two flaps 7 and 8, one on each side of the central section. These flaps are foldable in overlapping relation upon the central section 6 and are fastened together in such relation in a special and improved manner, as will later appear.

The central section carries the key holders 9 which may be of any suitable form. They are supported from a metal plate 10 for swinging movement into and out of the case in the usual or any suitable manner and preferably also for swivelling movement. As indicated, the key holders have ball heads 11 which turn in the hollow cylindrical and transversely slotted upper rolled over part 12 of plate 10. The plate is in turn supported from the central section 6 in any suitable way.

This invention has to do with the closure means of the key case,—that is, the flaps 7 and 8 and the interengageable snap fastener elements 13

and 14, respectively, secured thereto. One of these flaps, such as 7, is nearly the same width as the central section 6 and fully covers all the keys 4 and their supporting key holders. The other flap is specially formed, having its part of greatest width located substantially nearer to the top edge of the key case than to the bottom edge and having its fastener element 14 applied at this part of greatest width. From such part, the flap 8 slopes or curves in any desired way, such as the ornamental way herein shown, towards the two extremities of its line of fold 5. This construction avoids loose free corners, which eventually present a dog-eared appearance after the key case has been in use for some time, and also enables a satisfactory closure to be effected by a single set of fasteners.

The most important feature, however, is in the location of the fastener elements. A single pair of fastener elements have been used heretofore for securing together the flaps of a key case but they have always been centrally applied to the flaps i. e. half way between the upper and lower edges thereof, and cannot accomplish the results of this invention. Two pairs of such fasteners have also been used, one pair near the top and the other near the bottom. The present invention, however, accomplishes all the desired results by the use of a single pair of fasteners located in the special place shown and in conjunction with the special formation of flap 8.

There are in a key case, two factors which limit the extent to which the flaps 7 and 8 can be drawn together. One of these is the rigid plate 10 which extends across the upper part of the central section and restrains the flaps 7 and 8 from bending along lines which are spaced any more closely than the length of this plate. The other factor is the keys themselves, or more properly the heads thereof as these are the more bulky parts of the keys and take up the most room. The overlapping heads of the keys fitting between the lines of fold of the flaps restrict the flaps from being drawn together more closely, just as plate 10 does, and this restriction occurs along a line such as *a-a*, which indicates the level in the key case at which the greatest bulk occurs. This level is somewhat nearer the top than the bottom of the key case and it is usually slightly below the lower extremities of the key holders.

This invention is characterized by the location of the fastener elements at a point intermediate the line *a-a* of greatest bulk and the lower edge of the plate 10. As a practical matter, the fasteners are usually applied at a point between the

lower extremities of the key holders and the lower edge of plate 10. By this location of the fasteners the flaps may be drawn together tightly and fastened at a level intermediate the two levels where restrictions exist and actually the sides of the closed key case may be pinched in, as illustrated at 15 in slightly exaggerated form in Fig. 4. That is, the leather folder encompasses the key holders more tightly here than it does at locations immediately above and below.

The practical and highly useful result of the arrangement is that the keys are effectually bound in place and prevented from falling out or being shaken out from the open upper end of the key holder. The condition, under which the keys can accidentally become dislodged from a closed key case, are set forth in my prior U. S. Patent No. 1,443,937, and illustrated in Fig. 5 thereof. A preventative means of a different nature is there disclosed for overcoming the difficulty. The present invention provides a simpler and better way of securing the same general results in an even more effective way. As a practical matter, the present invention is very desirable in addition to the preventative means of my prior patent. By the novel location of the single pair of interengageable fasteners, the flaps 7 and 8 not only firmly bind the key holders against material swinging movement and form a constriction in the case through which the keys cannot pass in the only path open for them to pass, but it also naturally prevents the pivotal movement of the flaps referred to in the prior patent. Above and below the fasteners, about which the flaps ordinarily may pivot, are restrictions, a metal plate and bulky mass of overlapping key heads, and these elements prevent the flaps from turning on the fasteners as pivots to any substantial degree.

The invention has been disclosed herein for illustrative purposes but the scope of the invention is defined to the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. A key case, comprising, a folder having a central back panel and two side flaps adapted to be folded in overlapping relation over the back panel to form a flat tubular container, a rigid stiffening member extending across the entire width of the back panel near its upper end, a series of rigid key holders pivotally supported from the back panel near its upper edge for

swinging movement into and out of the case in arc-like paths of substantially constant radius, said flaps when folded over the key holders restraining the latter from movement in said paths and maintaining them substantially flat against said back panel with their free and lower ends lying substantially definitely located in a predetermined line extending transversely across the back panel and between the upper and lower edges thereof, and interengageable means on said flaps for fastening them together in overlapping relation at one point only and in a manner enabling relative pivotal movement, said point being located between said support and said line, whereby any keys on said holders will be located for the most part below said line and will spread out and press against the sides of the case, thereby spreading apart the flaps at points below said pivotal means and causing the flaps at points above said means to swing inwardly about said fastening means as a pivot and be pressed against the ends of said rigid support to tightly close the upper end of the case.

2. A key case, comprising, a folder having a central back panel and two side flaps adapted to be folded in overlapping relation over the back panel to form a flat tubular container, a rigid stiffening member extending across the entire width of the back panel near its upper end, a series of rigid key holders pivotally supported from the back panel near its upper edge for swinging movement into and out of the case in arc-like paths of substantially constant radius, said flaps when folded over the key holders restraining the latter from movement in said paths and maintaining them substantially flat against said back panel with their free and lower ends lying substantially definitely located in a predetermined line extending transversely across the back panel and between the upper and lower edges thereof, and interengageable means on said flaps for fastening them together in overlapping relation at one point only and at a point located between said line and support, said fastening means constructed to draw the flaps tightly together and constrict the case in width at a point between said line and rigid support to prevent escape of keys.

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