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D. KORCHMAR

3,199,643

ATTACHE CASE

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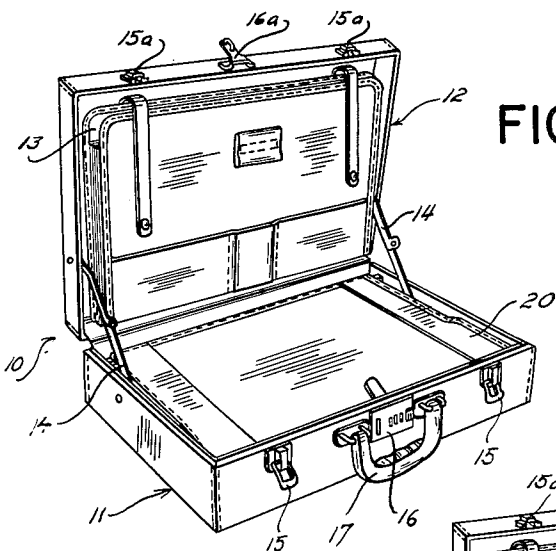


FIG. 1

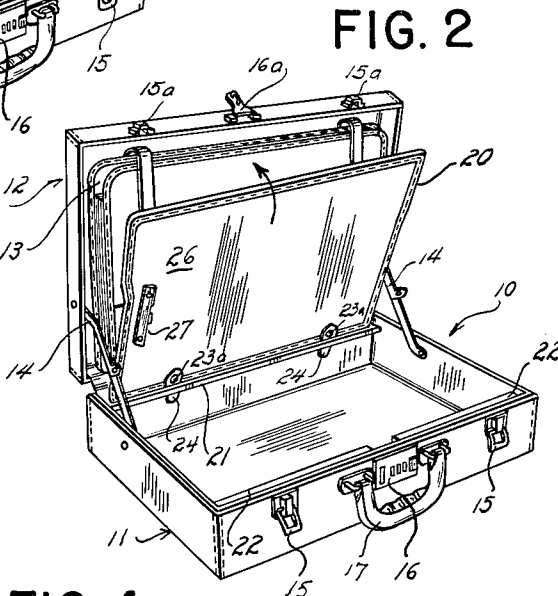


FIG. 2

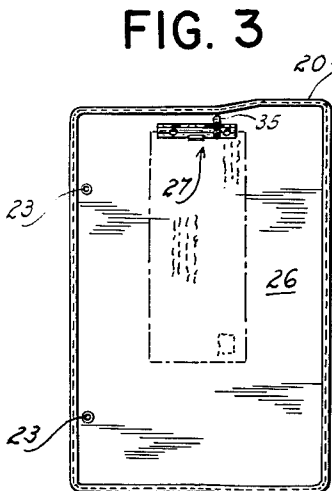


FIG. 3

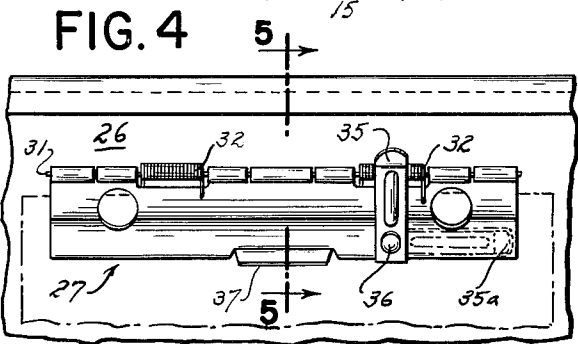


FIG. 4

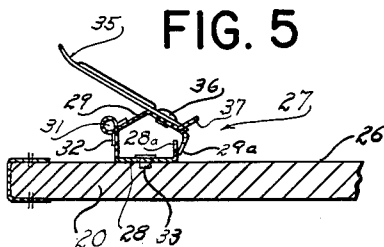


FIG. 5

INVENTOR
Don Korchmar
BY
Burton Perlman
ATTORNEY

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3,199,643

ATTACHÉ CASE

Don Korchmar, Amberley, Ohio
(6885 Fair Oaks Drive, Cincinnati 37, Ohio)
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This invention relates to luggage of appropriate size and capacity to carry business papers, and more specifically to luggage for that use having rigid walls, as, for example, the carrying case commonly known by the term "attaché case."

For a long time business men, lawyers and others who had need to carry documents about depended primarily on brief cases to fulfill their requirements. Brief cases, still in wide use, are distinguished by flexible walls and a top opening into the interior of the case only. However, in recent years an alternative kind of case for this use has found broad favor. This alternative is known as the attaché case, and is distinguished by its rectangular shape, its rigid walls, and a cover portion which may be swung open to expose the entire interior of the case in the manner of a conventional suitcase. The contents of attaché cases are thus readily and easily accessible, and papers carried therein will not be inadvertently bent or folded.

The attaché case offers convenience to the traveller. While in the confined seating space of a plane or train, it may be held on the knees, the case opened and papers perused within the case, a convenience not possible with the brief case.

It is the primary object of the present invention to extend the usefulness of the attaché case. To implement this primary object, I provide a rigid panel member supported within the case, so that when open the case may serve as a desk while being held on the knees, the panel member serving also as the desk surface. The rigid panel member I provide has a spring clip mounted thereon on the side opposite to that used as a writing surface, and by means of this spring clip documents may be secured to the underside of the panel member. The rigid panel member may be removably attached within the interior of the case. Thus, the panel member may be removed from the interior of the case, carrying with it papers held thereto by the spring clip, and thereafter the panel member may be used as a convenient carrier for such papers, or it may be used as a portable writing surface to which paper may be firmly secured by the clip. The panel member may be so mounted within the case to provide not only a desk writing surface, but as well a cover over a substantial storage area within the case.

It is another object of this invention to provide spring clip means which is readily operable to hold or to release papers, yet which when in position within the attaché case, occupies a minimum of space. This is important, for as noted above, the rigid panel member may overlie a storage area. It is clearly desirable that as much of this area be left free for storage purposes as possible. Were the clip to extend into the storage area to an undue extent, the advantages of the clip might be outweighed by the loss of storage space.

How these and many other objects are to be implemented will become clear through a consideration of the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of an attaché case with its cover open to show the rigid panel member disposed as a convenient writing surface;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view similar to FIG. 1 in which the writing surface has been swung upwardly to disclose

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the storage area at the interior of the bottom of the attaché case;

FIG. 3 is a view of the underside of the panel member;

FIG. 4 is an enlarged view of the spring clip mounted on the underside of the panel member as seen in FIGS. 2 and 3; and

FIG. 5 is a cross section taken at 5—5 of FIG. 4.

In the drawings the attaché case is generally indexed 10. The case has a bottom portion 11 and a cover portion 12. As is evident in the drawings, bottom portion 11 provides substantial storage space. The attaché case illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2 shows an expansible folder 13 held within cover portion 12 of the case, such folder being useful to hold various paper files. The bottom and cover portions are hinged together, and hinged restraining elements 14 can support the cover portion 12 in open relationship to bottom portion 11 as seen in FIGS. 1 and 2. Latch elements 15 and 15a and combination lock elements 16 and 16a are used to hold cover portion 12 and bottom portion 11 in closed relationship when they are swung together. Handle 17 may then be utilized as a convenient carrying means for the attaché case.

A panel member 20 is shown within the attaché case, and support elements 21 are secured to the sides of bottom portion 11. It is upon these support elements 21 and 22 that panel member 20 rests when such panel member is disposed within the attaché case in the manner of a knee desk to provide a writing surface, as is best seen in FIG. 1. The panel member 20 is removably held within the attaché case by means of two snap fasteners each having male and female portions 23 and 23a. Portions 23 of the snap fasteners are affixed upon flexible straps 24, which straps are fixedly mounted within the case. When attached by snap fasteners to the straps within the case, panel member 20 may swing in the direction indicated by the arrow in FIG. 2. While in the embodiment illustrated, I show snap fasteners interconnecting panel and case, it will be understood that panel 20 may function as a knee desk when supported within the attaché case upon supports 21 and 22 without interconnection between panel and case.

Attached to the panel member 20 on its underside 26 is a spring clip 27 shown in considerable detail in FIGS. 4 and 5. The spring clip consists of two bracket elements: a bottom bracket 28 having jaw portion 28a; and an upper bracket 29 having jaw portion 29a. Bottom bracket 28 and upper bracket 29 are hinged together about hinge pin 31, and springs 32 at such hinge normally urge upper bracket downwardly to the condition shown in FIG. 5. A rivet 33 secures the spring clip to the panel member 20. A lever 35 is pivotally mounted upon upper bracket 29, pivoting about pivot pin 36. When it is desired to insert a paper into spring clip 27, by means of which the paper will be held against panel member 20, lever 35 is disposed in the operative position shown in solid lines in FIG. 4, and as seen in FIG. 5. When a force is exerted downwardly at the free end of lever 35 as seen in FIG. 5, the upper bracket will tend to be raised, and a sheet of paper may be inserted between bracket jaws 28a and 29a. Upon release of the lever, the sheet will be firmly gripped between the jaws of the spring clip and against the panel member. When it is not desired that lever 35 be in its operative position it may be swung to the inoperative position as seen in dotted lines at 35a in FIG. 4. While in the illustrated embodiment I show the pivotable lever 35 as a means for operating the spring clip, it will be appreciated that the spring clip illustrated could be operated even in the absence of such lever by inserting a thumb nail under thumb grip 37, and lift-

ing jaw portion 29a upwardly by means of the thumb nail.

While I have described and illustrated a specific embodiment of my invention it is apparent that changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from the spirit of my invention.

I claim:

1. In an attaché case comprising a cover portion and a bottom portion hingedly interconnected, the improvement which consists in providing supporting ledges peripherally mounted within the interior of said bottom portion, a panel member normally supported upon said supporting ledges to provide a convenient writing surface, said panel member being removably and pivotably attached to said attaché case, and pivotable away from its normal position to expose interior storage space within said bottom portion of said attaché case, spring clip means mounted upon that side of said panel member facing said storage space to provide means for retaining papers against the underside of said panel and within said interior storage space within said bottom portion of said attaché case, said spring clip means comprising upper and lower elements each in part comprising a jaw portion, a pin upon which said upper and lower elements are both pivotably mounted, and spring means normally urging said jaw portions together, said jaw portions and

said pin being disposed parallel to one side of said panel member, and adjacent to said one side.

2. The improved attaché case claimed in claim 1 including a lever mounted upon said upper element whereby said upper element may be moved away from said lower element when a force is exerted upon said lever, and means for rotatably mounting said lever upon said upper element so that said lever may be moved from operative to non-operative position, and when in non-operative position, said lever will be out of the way of objects stored within the bottom portion of said attaché case.

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JOSEPH R. LECLAIR, *Primary Examiner.*

FRANKLIN T. GARRETT, *Examiner.*