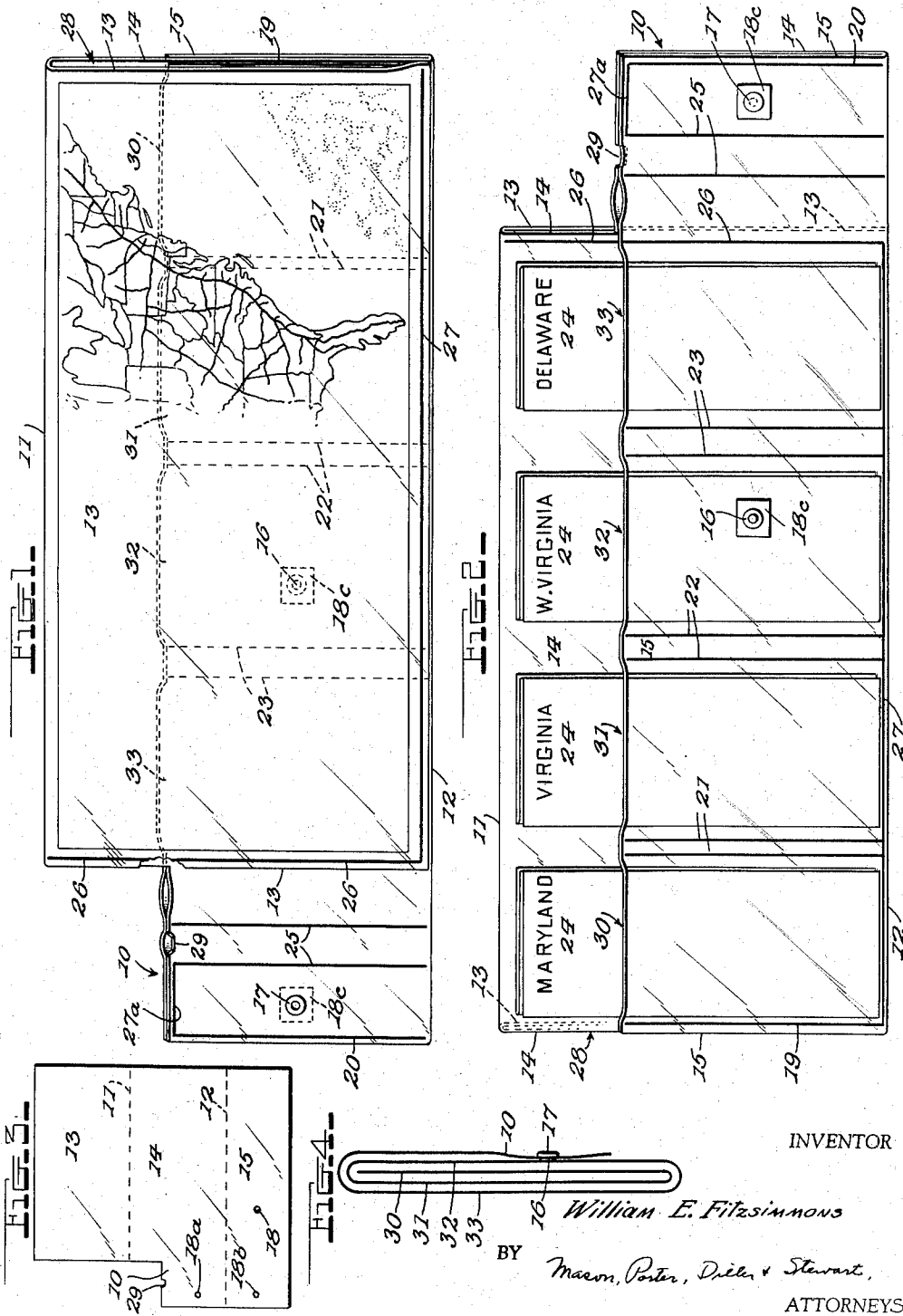


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MAP HOLDER AND PROTECTOR

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MAP HOLDER AND PROTECTOR

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This invention relates to a holder and protector for maps.

An object of the invention is the provision of a folding holder and protector of transparent flexible material which is resistant to moisture and wear, and covers a portion of a map which is in use, and has pockets for other maps which are effective in the holder to stiffen and support the map which is in use.

Another object is the provision of a holder and protector which can be folded compactly when not in service and which has multiple pockets for maps whereby a selected map is ready for inspection upon opening the device.

A further object is the provision of a holder and protector which can be cheaply made from a single blank of flexible transparent plastic, with its parts connected at predetermined portions for providing multiple pockets for maps.

A further object is the provision of a folding holder and protector comprised of three panels of flexible material, in which two panels are connected by seams at edges thereof and between end edges for defining a plurality of pockets, said panels having end projections beyond the third panel, said third panel being of transparent material and connected at three of its edges to said two panels for providing a large pocket for a map having an area thereof visible through said third panel.

With these and other objects in view, as will appear in the course of the following description and claims, a preferred embodiment is shown on the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a view of the device in open condition, exposing for view an unfolded map;

Fig. 2 is a view of the other side of the device, showing pockets for other maps;

Fig. 3 is a view, on a smaller scale, of a blank for forming the device of Figs. 1 and 2;

Fig. 4 is a conventionalized view, showing an end of the device in folded condition.

The map holder and protector is formed by three panels which can be cut from flexible material and assembled, with the limitation that at least the outer panel for covering a working area of a map shall be transparent. It is presently preferred to make the cover from a single unit blank of material having like transparency for its entire area.

The blank of Fig. 3 may be formed of a suitable flexible material, such as polyethylene, which is transparent whereby the indicia on a map may be read therethrough. It is formed with a portion 10 at one end, which projects beyond the corresponding end of panel 13, and can be folded at the dotted lines 11, 12 to provide three panels 13, 14, 15. Panel 13 is of a height greater than the vertical dimension of folded maps (see Fig. 2), and of a length to provide a large pocket (see Fig. 1) in which the map to be viewed, or a pertinent part thereof, can be placed. Panel 14 is of the same height, but is lengthened by the part of the projecting portion 10 which is

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above the fold line 12 (Figs. 1 and 2). Panel 15 is of lesser height, and is lengthened by the rest of the projecting portion 10.

In assembly, the part 16 of a snap fastener is secured in the hole 18 provided in the panel 15. The blank is then folded about line 12 and then the upright edges (Fig. 2) of the panels 14, 15 are joined by seams 19, 20. The other part 17 of the snap fastener is secured in the holes 18a, 18b provided in the panels 14, 15 (Fig. 3). It is preferred to provide stiffeners 18c for strengthening the material around the holes; these stiffeners can be secured over their areas to the faces of the panels, to avoid cumbersome projections by curling in response to articles wedging between the projections and the panels. With polyethylene and other thermo-adhesive materials, these seams 19, 20 can be formed by heating along seam lines for limited widths, until the material of the panels bond together. In this assembly step, also, other seams 21, 22, 23 are provided in pairs parallel to the seams 19, 20, to provide a number of pockets, four in the illustrated form, each for receiving a folded map 24: preferably, with hot-seaming, pairs of seams are provided, for strength and to hold the folded maps 24 apart so that the assembly can be easily folded into compact form. Seams 25 are also provided, likewise parallel, on the folded extension 10, to provide pockets for a pencil, a scale, etc.

The panel 13 is then folded about the fold line 11, and a seam 26 is provided for bonding the three panels together adjacent the folded extension 10 and completing a pocket therein and the right-hand (Fig. 2) pocket for a folded map. A seam 27 is provided along the longer edge of panel 13 for bonding this panel to panels 14, 15 adjacent the fold at line 12. Thus a large pocket, substantially coextensive with panel 13 is provided, which is open at the end 28 of the device in the preferred and illustrated form.

The preferred form is shown as having a notch 29 provided in a horizontal edge (Fig. 3) of the blank, thus permitting easy entrance into a pencil pocket provided in the folded extension 10. In the illustrated form, the snap fastener element 17 is secured through both panels 14, 15, and a seam 27a can be employed at the upper edge, between the end seam 20 and the adjacent pocket seam 25, for stiffening the end margin of the folded projection 10.

The assembled structure is light and compact. Road maps are standard articles, and may have three or four panels separated by horizontal fold lines, and a number of vertical fold lines so that the map can be folded to a pack about 4 to 4½ inches wide and 9 to 9½ inches high. In the illustration, the panels 13, 14 are about 10 inches high and the pockets defined between seams are illustratively 4½ inches wide for the two left-hand pockets, and 4¾ inches wide for the two right-hand pockets. Thus, each pocket can receive one or more folded maps (Fig. 2) of standard road map dimensions and folds which serve to stiffen the holder when open. In this illustrative form, the panel 15 is of lesser height, about 6½ to 7 inches, so that upper parts of the folded maps protrude, for easy access. Therewith, two successive blanks can be cut from a length of material, without waste. A portion of a map one panel high and four panels wide can be introduced through the end 28, and thus is visible (Fig. 1) over this area.

In the illustrated embodiment, the pairs of seams 21, 22, 23 are at successively greater distances, so that wider portions are successively provided for extending past already-folded parts of the device and maps therein. In the illustrative form with the dimensions stated, the pairs of seams 21, 22, 23 may be separated by ¼, ½ and ¾ inches.

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Upon folding together with the left-hand pocket 30 in Fig. 2 innermost, the folded extension is outermost, and the snap fasteners 16, 17 can be engaged to secure the parts. The folded sections then appear as shown in Fig. 4 in conventionalized form with a single line denoting the three wall thicknesses, for clarity, with the walls at pocket 30 innermost, then the walls at pockets 31, 32, 33 successively wrapped around, and finally the folded extension 10 outermost for quick access to the pencil, ruler, etc., therein.

When open, the unfolded map in the longer pocket is protected from rain, perspiration and other stains, and frictional rubbing, but is visible. The folded maps in pockets 30--33 form a stiffening support for unfolded maps, whether the device is fully or only partly opened.

It has been found that commercially available materials include polyethylene and other flexible sheet materials which have a frosted or semi-transparent appearance of themselves, but which permit visibility of a map in a holder made therefrom. When a holder is made from such a material, with the slightly roughened surface outward as shown at 40 in Fig. 1, marks may be made on such surface with a pencil, to designate map locations for a trip, and then overlie the visible portion of the map. Such marks are easily removed by a damp cloth, thus restoring the surface for marking when a new map is introduced.

It will be understood that the illustrated embodiment is not restrictive, and that the invention may be employed in many ways within the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A map holder and protector formed of first, second and third panels, the first and second panels being connected along their bottom edges and upright edges and also having connections parallel to the upright edges for defining a plurality of pockets for receiving folded maps, the third panel being connected to the second panel along the top edge and one upright edge of the third panel for providing a large pocket open at an upright edge of the panels for receiving a map unfolded for inspection, said third panel being transparent for visibility of the working area of said unfolded map, whereby folded maps in said plurality of pockets stiffen the working map.

2. A map holder as in claim 1, in which the material is of a thermo-adhesive substance, and the said connections at the upright edges and parallel thereto and the connection at the top edge of the third panel have been formed by hot-joining.

3. A map holder and protector formed of first, second and third panels formed by folding an integral blank of transparent flexible material about two parallel lines; the folded blank having a first seam securing the panels

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together along one edge parallel to the fold lines, a second seam at right angles to said first seam and at one end of the folded blank and securing the three panels together, and third seams connecting the first and second panels only and parallel to said second seam for providing first pockets for receiving folded maps, said second and third panels being joined integrally along one edge at a fold line and seamed together adjacent the other fold line and by said second seam for providing a large pocket for an unfolded map, said large pocket having an access opening extending between the fold lines.

4. A map holder as in claim 3, in which said third seams are in pairs, the seams in successive pairs being spaced farther apart for effecting folding of the device with folded maps in said first pockets.

5. A map holder as in claim 3, in which the first panel is of less dimension than the second panel from the fold line between them, and in which said first and second panels have end projections integral and folded therewith, and seams connecting the projecting portions for providing pockets therein.

6. A map holder as in claim 5, in which fastener elements are provided on the first panel and on the projecting portion of the second panel, for interengagement when the holder has been folded about lines parallel to said third seams.

7. A map holder and protector formed of first, second and third panels of flexible sheet material resistant to moisture, the first and second panels being connected along their bottom edges and upright edges and also having connections parallel to the upright edges for defining a plurality of pockets for receiving folded maps, the third panel being connected to the second panel along the top edge and one upright edge of the third panel for providing a large pocket open at an upright edge of the panels for receiving a map unfolded for inspection, the material of said third panel being transparent for visibility of the working area of said unfolded map, and having a roughened outer surface competent of receiving markings, whereby folded maps in said plurality of pockets stiffen the working map and provide a support during marking upon the said outer surface.

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