Aug. 5, 1952 F. W. BALDWIN 2,605,802

KEY CARRYING CASE

Filed June 14, 1950

FIG. 1.

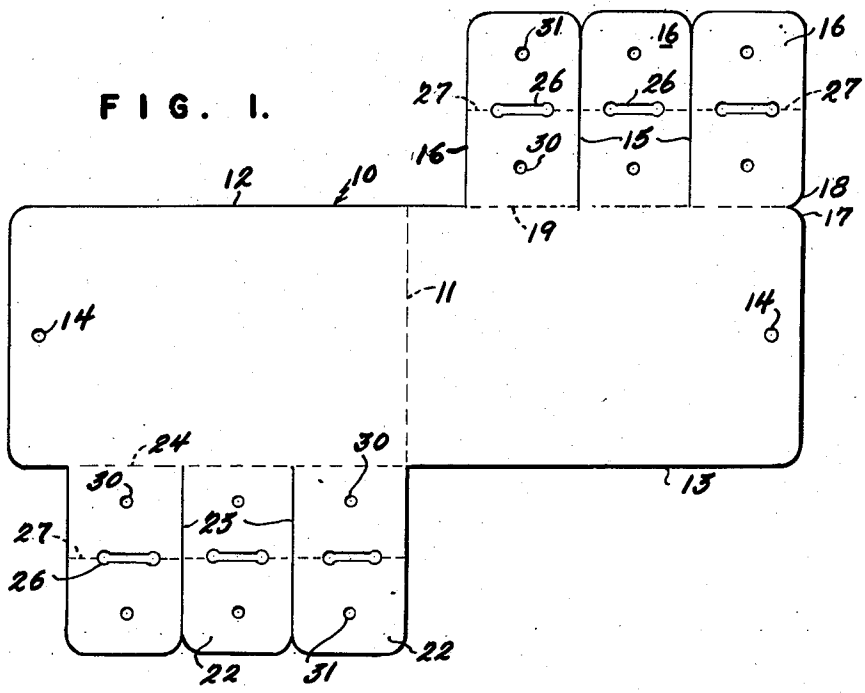


FIG. 2

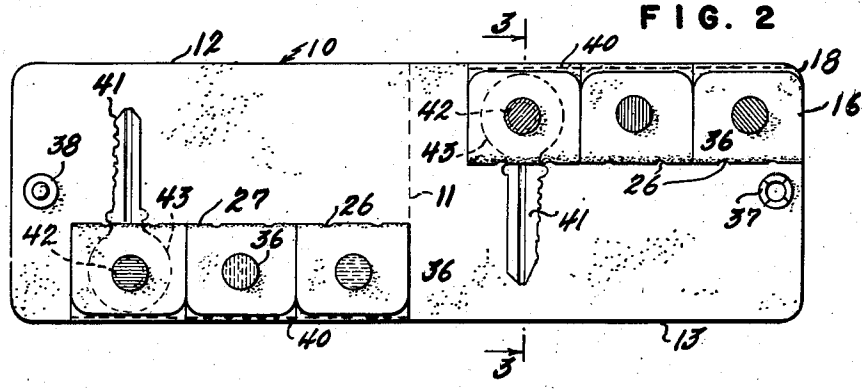


FIG. 4.

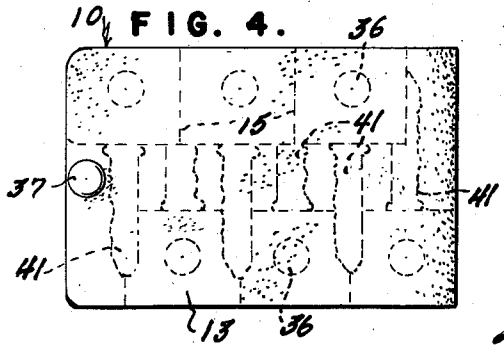
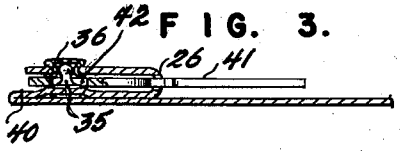


FIG. 3.



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Patented Aug. 5, 1952

2,605,802

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,605,802

KEY CARRYING CASE

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Application June 14, 1950, Serial No. 168,101

5 Claims. (Cl. 150—40)

1

This invention relates to an article carrying case, and more particularly to a key case.

Many types of cases for carrying door and other keys have been devised, most of which are disadvantageous for one reason or another. For example, a commonly employed type of key case used snap hooks adjacent each other for connection with various keys. The keys and snap hooks frequently become entangled with each other, making it difficult to gain free access to a desired key. Moreover, present types of key cases are relatively expensive to manufacture because of the swivels, and the metal plates usually employed for supporting the snap hooks. In some types of key cases which eliminate entangling snap hooks and the like, the structures are relatively bulky and expensive to manufacture because of the number of parts employed and the number of steps which must be performed in the assembling of the devices.

An important object of the present invention is to provide a simplified type of article carrying case, and particularly a key case, which may be folded substantially as flat as a handkerchief and accordingly is comfortable to carry in the pocket, and which is adapted to carry a substantial number of keys.

A further object is to provide a key case for carrying a number of keys, the case being so arranged as to its parts as to positively prevent any twisting or entangling of the keys and the supporting means therefor.

A further object is to provide such a device wherein the keys remain lined up in perfect order, each in a position to be readily grasped and inserted in a lock.

A further object is to provide a key case for carrying a substantial number of keys wherein the flexibility of the body of the device and the structure of the means for holding individual keys readily permits the free use of any selected key without interference from any of the parts of the device or any of the keys carried thereby.

A further object is to provide a folding key case wherein two body sections are adapted to be folded into proximity to each other and wherein each body section is adapted to carry a plurality of keys, the parts being so arranged that the keys carried by one body section are staggered with relation to the keys carried by the other body section so as to minimize the thickness and bulk of the device.

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent during the course of the following description.

2

In the drawing, I have shown one embodiment of the invention. In this showing,

Figure 1 is a plan view of the blank from which the device is made,

Figure 2 is a plan view of the finished device showing keys in position therein,

Figure 3 is a section on line 3—3 of Figure 2, parts being shown in elevation, and

Figure 4 is a face view of the device from one side thereof, the case being shown closed and the positions of keys therein being indicated by dotted lines.

Referring to Figure 1, the numeral 10 designates the body of the device as a whole which may be made of any suitable material, preferably highly flexible, such as leather, imitation leather or various types of flexible sheet plastics which are readily available. The body is adapted to be folded along a line 11 transversely of the body and centrally of its length to form body sections 12 and 13, preferably equal in size and shape. The free ends of these sections are provided with openings 14 to receive the sections of a snap fastener, such a device preferably being used to maintain the case in closed position.

Along one edge of the body within the length of the body section 13, the material of the body is cut along lines 15 to form a plurality of adjacent tabs 16, preferably having their outer edges curved as shown in Figure 1. The corners of the body sections 12 and 13 are preferably curved as at 17 to eliminate sharp corners, and the tab 16 adjacent the curved corner 17 of the section 13 is similarly curved as at 18. The inner ends of the cuts 15 terminate approximately in the line of the adjacent edge of the body sections 12 and 13. The tabs are adapted to be bent in such line as at 19 to lie over the section 13.

Projecting from the edge of the section 12 opposite the tabs 16 is a plurality of similar tabs 22 formed by cutting the body of the device along lines 23 the inner edges of which terminate coincident with the bottom line of the body sections as viewed in Figure 1. The tabs 22 are adapted to be folded over lines 24 to lie over the body section 12. Whereas the tabs 16 are offset outwardly from the fold line 11, the opposite is true of the tabs 22, the inner edge of the inner tab 22 being adjacent the line 11 and the outer edge of the outermost tab 22 being spaced from the end of the body section 12, for a purpose to be described. Intermediate their ends, the tabs 16 and 22 are slotted as at 26, the slots of each set of tabs being in alignment with each other. Each of the tabs is adapted to be folded inwardly along a line 27

passing through the centers of the slots of the associated tabs. Inwardly of each slot **26**, each tab is provided with a punched opening **30**, and a similar opening **31** is formed outwardly of each slot **26**, the openings **30** and **31** of each tab being equidistantly spaced from the slot **26** thereof.

In the making of the finished device, complementary snap fastener elements **35** and **36** are stamped into the openings **30** and **31**, the stud elements of the fasteners being fixed in the openings **30** and the socket elements in the openings **31**. Similar complementary snap elements **37** and **38** are stamped in the openings **14**. The tabs **16** and **22** are then folded over the respective body sections **13** and **12** along the lines **19** and **24**, whereupon each set of tabs is stitched as at **40** parallel to and adjacent the respective lines **19** and **24**, as shown in Figure 2. The tabs **16** and **22** are thus fixed solely along one end adjacent the edges of the body sections to lie thereover while being free to be lifted upwardly therefrom. The device is now ready for use.

Operation

Keys **41** have the shanks thereof inserted through the slots **26**, whereupon the openings **42** in the heads **43** of the keys are placed over the studs of the fastener elements **35**. The free ends of the tabs are then moved downwardly for the connection in the usual manner of the fastener sockets **36** with the studs **35**.

As previously stated, the tags **16** are offset outwardly from the center fold line **11**, while the tabs **22** are offset inwardly toward such fold line and away from the end of the body section **12**. When keys are in position in the case, therefore, the keys carried by the two sets of holders formed by the tabs are offset from each other as shown in dotted lines in Figure 4, the free ends of each key being offset from adjacent keys and from the snap fasteners by which the keys are held in position. Accordingly, the bulk of the device is greatly minimized. When a key is to be used, the body sections **12** and **13** are opened as shown in Figure 2, whereupon any key may be selected for use. Such key may be swung upwardly away from its associated body section, the tab of such key swinging upwardly about the stitching **40** thereof. The key may be held relative to the fingers by grasping opposite sides of the folded tab sections to which the key is fixed, and the flexibility of the device permits the remaining keys, their tabs and associated body portions to drop from the key being used. Accordingly, the key may be used with substantially the same facility as if it were not connected to the key case.

The folded tabs with the shanks of the keys projecting through the slots **26** serve to hold the keys in proper relative position without entanglement of any of the parts. Thus any key readily may be selected. The snap fastener sockets **36** are preferably differently colored to facilitate selection of the proper key. However, the user readily can memorize the positions of the various keys, and their free accessibility permits the ready selection of any key in the dark.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that the body of the device and the tabs are made of a single sheet of flexible material which may be stamped in a single operation to provide the blank shown in Figure 1. The insertion of the fastener elements is a rapid machine operation and the fastening elements are economical in use, both from the standpoint of cost price and the time and labor required for their insertion. Accordingly, the entire device may be produced very economically; it folds relatively thin to be carried in comfort; the keys never become twisted but always remain in proper position for selection, and any key readily may be picked for use. Keys also readily may be changed merely by loosening the snap fastener of the key to be removed, whereupon the key has its shank withdrawn from the associated slot **26**. A new key may be slipped in position in the manner stated.

It is preferred that snap fasteners be used at the points indicated, but of course any desired securing means may be employed. Snap fasteners having somewhat elongated studs are readily available on the market, and preferably are used as the fastening means for the keys to provide the desired clearance for the heads of the keys, as will be apparent.

I claim:

1. A key case comprising a flexible body bendable intermediate its ends to form two body sections overlying each other, and a key holding device carried by each body section, each key holding device comprising a flexible flap secured at one extremity to one edge of the associated body section and being foldable intermediate its ends, and fastening means for securing the two portions of each flap to each other when folded, each flap at the fold therein having an elongated slot for the projection therethrough of a key shank, said flaps being secured to opposite edges of the two body sections and being arranged different distances from the fold in said body to be offset from each other when said body sections are folded together to minimize the thickness of the device.

2. A key carrying case comprising a body foldable transversely thereof to provide relatively overlying body sections, and a key holding device carried by one body section, said device comprising a flexible strip folded along a line intermediate its ends to provide upper and lower flap portions and said strip being provided along such folded line with an elongated slot, said strip being fixed to said one body section solely adjacent the extremity of the lower portion of said strip remote from said slot whereby said strip is adapted to be swung upwardly from said one body section, and a fastening device for securing said portions of said strip together, said fastening device comprising a stud of a size and length adapted to project through the opening in the head of a key, said stud being disposed in alignment with said slot in a position such that the shank of a key supported thereby projects through said slot.

3. A key case comprising an elongated body foldable transversely intermediate its ends to form two relatively overlying body sections, and a plurality of key holders carried by each body section, each key holder comprising a flexible flap secured along one extremity along a longitudinal edge of the associated body section, each flap intermediate the ends thereof having a slot transversely thereof along the line of which the flap is foldable to provide an upper portion overlying an under portion, said flap being secured to the associated body section solely adjacent the extremity of said under portion remote from said slot whereby each flap is adapted to swing outwardly from its associated body section, and fastening means for securing the upper portion of each flap to the under portion thereof, such means comprising a stud adapted to be arranged in the opening in the head of a key shank of which projects through

said slot, all of the flaps of one section being secured along one longitudinal edge thereof and all of the flaps of the other body section being secured along the opposite longitudinal edge thereof and the two sets of flaps being offset from each other when said body is folded to minimize the thickness of the carrying case.

4. A key case comprising a flexible body bendable intermediate its ends to form two body sections overlying each other, and key holding devices secured to opposite edge portions of each body section, each key holding device comprising a flexible flap secured at one extremity to one edge of the associated body section and being foldable intermediate its ends, each flap at the fold therein having an elongated slot for the projection therethrough of a key shank, and separable fastening means for securing together the two portions of each flap when folded, said fastening means having a stud portion adapted to extend through the head of a key and positioned in alignment with said slot to support such a key with the shank thereof projecting through said slot.

5. A blank for an article carrying case comprising an elongated flexible body having parallel longitudinal edges and adapted to be folded transversely intermediate its length to form a pair of body sections, and a plurality of article carrying flaps formed integral with said body and projecting from opposite edges of the respective body sections, the flaps of each body section, when the latter are folded together, being offset from the flaps of the other body section.

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