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CONTAINER FOR KEYS, SALES INFORMATION, AND THE LIKE

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Fig. 1.

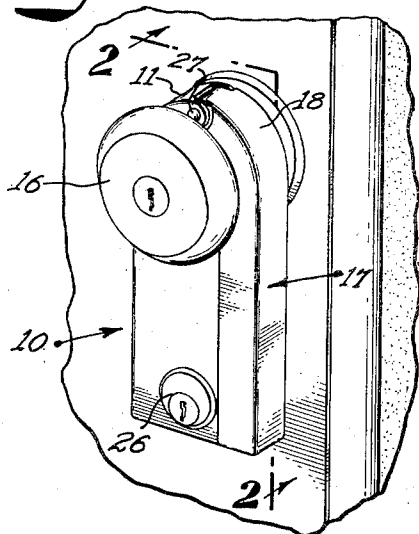


Fig. 2.

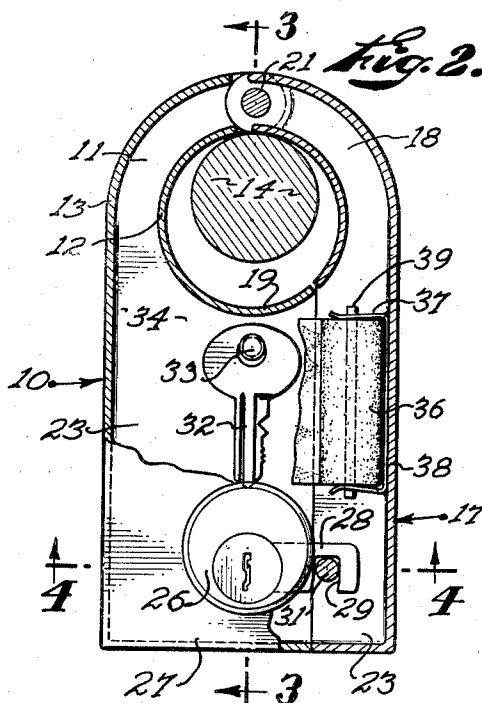


Fig. 3.

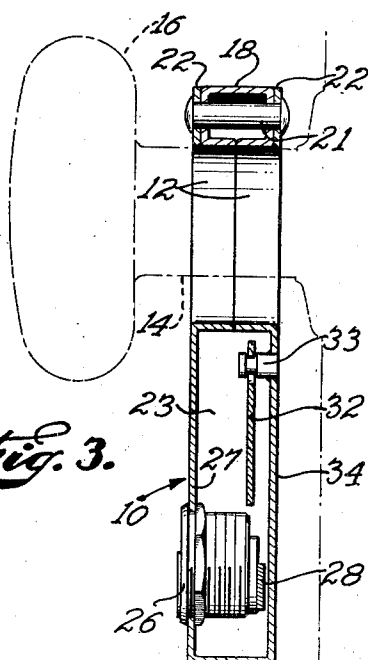
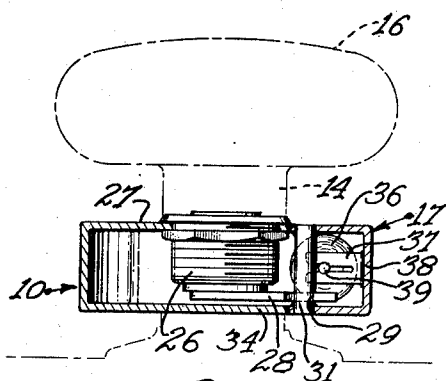


Fig. 4.



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1

2,813,620

CONTAINER FOR KEYS, SALES INFORMATION, AND THE LIKE

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5 Claims. (Cl. 206—1)

This invention relates to a container for keys, sales information, and the like. More particularly, the invention relates to a device adapted to be locked onto a door-knob or handle and to define a locked chamber for a key.

In the selling of houses and automobiles, and in a number of other situations, it is frequently necessary for a substantial number of people to gain access, at different times, to an enclosure locked by a lock having only one or several keys. For example, in the selling of real estate where the multiple listing system is employed, it may occur that fifty or more real estate brokers are authorized to show prospective purchasers through an empty house which must be kept in locked condition. To make fifty duplicate keys for such a house would be expensive, and would be otherwise undesirable in that the purchaser of the house would be required to change the locks in order to insure that one of the many duplicate keys would not fall into unauthorized hands and be used for purposes of burglary. On the other hand, if no such duplicate keys are made it is necessary for the real estate brokers to make long and repeated trips to a central point or office where the few keys for the house are kept, with resultant great wasting of time and money.

A somewhat similar situation occurs in the selling of used automobiles on an open lot. These automobiles should be kept in locked condition in order to prevent tampering and theft, and must be readily unlocked by salesmen who are moving from one car to the next in order to show them. Where a large number of cars are shown, it is necessary for the salesman to carry an excessive number of keys which frequently become confused or lost, with consequent wasting of time, loss of customers, and the like.

In view of the above factors characteristic of the selling of houses, automobiles, and other locked structures, it is an object of the invention to provide a container adapted to be opened by a master key and to contain the key for a particular house, automobile, etc., so that persons having such a master key may gain access to a substantial number of enclosures.

A further object is to provide a device adapted to contain keys, written information, or other material, in locked condition and without possibility that the container and its contents may be removed without authorization from the desired location.

An additional object is to provide a key container incorporating a single lock means adapted to lock the container onto an anchoring structure and to form a closed and locked chamber within the container, by a single locking action.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention will be more fully set forth in the following specification and claims, considered in connection with the attached drawing to which they relate.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a perspective illustration showing a container, constructed in accordance with the present inven-

2

tion, as mounted in locked condition on the front door of a house;

Figure 2 is an enlarged central sectional view of the key container, taken on line 2—2 of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a transverse section on line 3—3 of Figure 2; and

Figure 4 is a horizontal section taken on line 4—4 of Figure 2, and looking upwardly as indicated by the arrows.

Stated generally, the container of the invention comprises a hollow body to which is pivoted a cover, these elements being so constructed that when the cover is rotated to closed position against the body a doorknob or handle may be locked therebetween. It follows that the locking of the cover to the body, as by a suitable key, will form a closed chamber for reception of a second and different key, printed information, etc., and will also prevent removal of the entire key container from the doorknob or handle.

More particularly, and with reference to the drawing, the body is illustrated as being elongated and generally rectangular in shape, and has been given the reference numeral 10. A locking arm portion 11 is formed integral with the upper end of body 10, being constructed with inner and outer walls 12 and 13 which curve around the smaller diameter portion 14 of a conventional doorknob 16. The cover element, indicated at 17, has a lower portion shaped correspondingly to body 10 except that it is substantially thinner, and a locking arm portion 18 formed correspondingly to portion 11 except that it is curved in the opposite direction. Locking arm portions 11 and 18, together with a curved wall or flange 19 at the upper end of body 10, form a complete circle about the smaller diameter portion of doorknob 16.

A hinged joint, comprising a hinge pin 21 which extends through ear portions 22 of locking arm 11 and also through the side walls of locking arm 18, is provided at the junction of locking arms 11 and 18 to permit pivotal movement between the cover element 17 and body 10.

Body 10 and cover element 17 are preferably formed of heavy gauge sheet metal, so as to resist prying and tampering, and are so shaped that when they are pivoted to the closed position shown in the drawings, their open edge portions will meet along continuous lines to form a continuous closed chamber 23. This chamber is, because of the substantially fully closed construction of the body and cover elements, relatively protected from the effects of rain or snow.

It is pointed out that the cover element 17 may be made sufficiently narrow to fit through the door handle of an automobile or the like, to thus permit locking of the key container on the automobile.

The cover member 17 is locked in closed position on body 10 by means of a lock device 26 which is suitably supported on the front wall 27 of the body. The lock device may be of conventional construction, and incorporates an arm 28 adapted to be rotated upon insertion of a key into the lock device. The arm is notched at 29 to fit over a cross-pin 31 which is rigidly secured in the opposite walls of cover 17 at a point relatively remote from the hinge, that is to say at the lower portion of the container. The lock device 26 is of strong construction, and is preferably provided with a large number of keys so that any one of a substantial number of people may open the container and gain access to its contents.

The key for the doorknob 16 is indicated at 32, and is mounted in chamber 23 on a pin 33 which projects inwardly from the rear wall 34 of body 10.

In order that persons gaining access to the container may be informed as to price, taxes, floor area, and other information relative to the property in question, means

3

are provided to mount a roll of paper 36 in the cover 17 and in such position that the paper will be fully exposed to the viewer upon opening of the container. The roll of paper 36 is mounted by means of a spring-clip 37 which is secured to a wall 38 of the cover and is adapted to removably mount an axis or roll element 39 for the paper.

In the use of the device in connection with selling houses, the price and other information are written on the extended end portion of the paper roll 36, and the house key 32 is mounted on pin 33 within body 10. The container is then closed upon the doorknob by pivoting the cover element 17 about the hinge pin 21. The locking arms 11 and 18 thus fit about the small diameter knob portion 14 and prevent removal of the container from the doorknob. The locking device 26 is, of course, operated to cause arm 28 to be in such a position that notch 29 is latched over cross pin 31.

Any person having the master key for the container may then operate the locking device 26 to unlocked condition and pivot the cover 17 outwardly to expose the paper roll 36 and house key 32. The house key 32 is then used to open the house, and the price information is read from the end portion of paper roll 36. After the house has been inspected, the person who has inspected the house re-mounts key 32 on pin 33, and closes and locks the container. Another person having a master key may then repeat the operation and inspect the house without the necessity of going to a central location to obtain the key.

During the entire time, the house key is maintained safe in its enclosure which, in turn, is prevented from theft due to the locking action relative to the doorknob.

In the use of the device on a used car lot, for example, the operation is the same except that, normally a large number of key containers will be provided and which may be opened by the same key. It is then possible for a person with a master key to go from car to car and unlock and inspect it without carrying substantial numbers of car keys, which may become lost or intermixed.

Various embodiments of the present invention, in addition to what has been illustrated and described in detail, may be employed without departing from the scope of the accompanying claims.

I claim:

1. A container for keys and other material, which comprises a recessed body, a locking arm portion extending

4

from said body, a cover adapted to fit over the recess in said body to close the same, a locking arm portion extending from said cover and in spaced relation from the locking arm portion extending from said body, said locking arm portions coming into proximate relationship at a point remote from said body, hinge means to connect said locking arm portions at said proximate location, and lock means mounted remote from said hinge means to lock said cover to said body to thus prevent entrance into said recess, and additionally to maintain said locking arm portions on opposite sides of a doorknob or handle to prevent removal of the container from such knob or handle.

2. The invention as claimed in claim 1, in which means are provided in said recess for mounting of a key therein.

3. The invention as claimed in claim 1, in which means are provided to mount paper in said recess in order that a person gaining access to said recess may read information written on said paper.

4. A container for keys and other material, which comprises a generally rectangular hollow body formed of sheet metal and having a relatively narrow curved locking arm portion extending from one end thereof, a hollow relatively narrow cover member having a locking arm portion extending from one end thereof and curving toward the end of said first-mentioned locking arm portion which is remote from said body, hinge means to connect said locking arm portions at a point remote from said body, said body and said cover being adapted when said cover is pivoted about said hinge means and against said body to define a continuous chamber in said body and also in said cover, key-operated lock means mounted in said chamber remote from said hinge means and adapted to lock said cover in closed position against said body, and means to mount a key in said chamber.

5. The invention as claimed in claim 4, in which a spring-clip is mounted in said cover and is adapted to receive a shaft upon which is mounted a roll of paper, whereby information relative to price and the like may be written on said paper and imparted to the person gaining access to said chamber.

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