EXPANSIBLE CARRYING CASE FOR CAMERA
PARTS OR THE LIKE

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Application March 29, 1952, Serial No. 279,416

5 Claims. (Cl. 150—52)

This invention relates to new and useful improvements in carrying cases.

More particularly the invention is concerned with an expansible carrying case such as, for example, a case suitable for holding camera parts and photographic gadgets of various types, viz. a so-called “gadget bag.”

Expansible carrying cases of various types have been heretofore proposed. These prior cases have, however, generally suffered from the drawback that their expansible is not controllable, and once expanded, it is not readily possible to return them to their original shape. As a result, once upon a repeated use, soon becomes unsightly and disfigured and does not hold snugly articles placed in it unless filled completely to expanded capacity. Further, the case becomes bulky even when empty and is difficult to carry and handle. In addition, this case not being visible, and detract from the appearance of the article. There have been proposals which are directed to the avoidance of some of these disadvantages and drawbacks of prior carrying cases but these proposals have not been entirely effective in solving the problem.

It is an object of the invention to provide an expansible carrying case which has normally-concealed expansible structural features.

It is another object of the invention to provide an expansible carrying case of the character indicated which can be easily and rapidly returned from an expanded condition to its normal condition at will.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a carrying case having a plurality of expansible portions embodying structural features of the type indicated.

It is a still further object of the invention to provide an expansible carrying case which avoids the deficiencies and drawbacks of prior cases.

In accordance with the invention, there is provided a carrying case, or bag, having at least one expansible portion comprising a longitudinally-extending gusset having its portion of widest expansion along the bottom of the case. The gusset is enclosed within the case by the bottom and end walls of the case and these portions of the case are formed with a continuous slit provided with closure means for normally holding the slit in closed position. Opening of the closure means to free the edges adjacent to the slit frees the gusset from restraint by the bottom and end walls and permits it to be expanded freely by articles placed in the case. Closing of the closure means again returns the gusset and the case to its normally contracted position and completely conceals the gusset.

In one form of the invention, the carrying case has formed on one of its side walls a supplementary holding compartment or pocket having a closable continuous slit in its bottom and end walls and an interior gusset permitting controlled expansion of the compartment.

The carrying case is also advantageously provided with means disposed in its interior for adapting it for use for holding various articles, said means including pockets, partitions, and the like.

For further comprehension of the invention, and of the objects and advantages thereof, reference will be had to the following description and accompanying drawings, and to the appended claims in which the various novel features of the invention are more particularly set forth.

On the accompanying drawings forming a material part of this disclosure:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a carrying case embodying features of the present invention;
Fig. 2 is an end elevation of the case illustrated in Fig. 1, showing the continuous slits in closed position;
Fig. 3 is another end elevation of the carrying case of Fig. 1 but showing the slits in open position to expose the interior expansible gussets;
Fig. 4 is a bottom view of the case shown in Fig. 3;
Fig. 5 is a top plan view of the case shown in Fig. 1 with its top open and the cover flap for the auxiliary compartment cut away to show details of construction of the compartment;
Fig. 6 is a transverse sectional view taken approximately along the line 6—6 of Fig. 5;
Fig. 7 is a sectional view of a carrying case according to the invention having expansible means of modified structure; and
Fig. 8 is a sectional view of another carrying case embodying features of the invention but having a modified expansible structure.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, the reference numeral 10 designates generally a photographic gadget bag constructed in accordance with the invention and illustrated in Figs. 1—6. Bag 10 is formed from leather, artificial leather, plastic or other convenient material of this type and has a bottom 12, side panels 14 and 15 and end walls 17 and 18 which, in the embodiment illustrated are integral with the bottom 12, and define an elongated strip 19, the integral bottom and end wall strip being secured, as by stitch-
An auxiliary pocket or compartment 30 extends outwardly from side panel 15 and comprises an elongated strip 32 secured along one edge to panel 15, and providing bottom portion 34 and end wall portions 36, and an outer side wall 38. A cover flap 40, secured to side panel 15, overlies the top opening of auxiliary pocket 30 and its securable to side wall 33 by a clasp 42. In accordance with the invention, the bag 10 has a normally concealed expansible means permitting ready expansion of the bag interior to accommodate additional articles and also permitting easy return to normal, non-expanded condition when desired. For this purpose, the strip 19 is formed with a continuous slit 45 extending from a point near the upper end of end wall 17 to point near the upper end of end wall 18. The edges of the slit 45 are provided with cooperating portions of a closure means which in the embodiment illustrated is a slide fastener 46. The slide fastener portions are on the usual fabric strips which are stitched to the portions of the strip 19 adjacent the edges of slit 45. Interiorly of the bag, the opposite sides of the slit 45 are joined by a gusset 50 which, when the slide fastener is closed, is folded and extends inwardly into the bag. The ends of the gusset adjacent the ends of the slit 45 are folded against and secured to the end walls 17 and 18 as by rivets 52. With the slide fastener closed, the edges of the strip 19 are held together and the bag has its normal capacity. When, however, it is desired to increase the capacity of the bag to accommodate additional articles, it is merely necessary to open the slide fastener 45. This permits the side panels 14 and 15 to be spread apart along the bottom and at its ends, the gusset 50 simultaneously opening to preserve the continuity of the interior lining of the bag at its increased capacity. The bag 10 then assumes the position shown in Figs. 3 and 4. When it is then desired to return the bag to its normal capacity and its original neat and compact shape, it is necessary only to close the slide fastener 45. This draws together the edges of the slit 45, returns the gusset 50 to its folded position, and the bag 10 assumes the shape shown in Fig. 2.

As shown in Figs. 1-4, the auxiliary pocket or compartment 30 is similarly advantageously provided with expansible means. The elongated strip 32 is formed with a continuous slit 45 extending along the bottom portion 34 and a substantial distance up the end wall portions 35. The edges of the slit 45 are provided with the cooperating elements of slide fastener 57 mounted on the usual fabric strips. Interally, auxiliary pocket 30 is formed with a gusset 60 having its edges secured on opposite sides of the slit 55. The upper ends of gusset 60 are folded over and secured to the end wall portions 36, as by rivets 61. As described above in connection with the expansible features of the main portion of bag 10, the gusset 60 and the slit 55 closable by the slide fastener 57 permit expansion of the auxiliary pocket when desired, as shown in Fig. 2, and return to normal non-expanded position, as shown in Fig. 2.

Interiorly, gadget bag 10 is advantageously provided with various pockets and partitioned portions to facilitate the storage and ready accessibility of the articles placed in the bag. Thus, in the embodiment illustrated, and as shown more particularly in Figs. 5 and 6, the inner surface of top 20 has secured to it a pocket 65 with a closure flap 66 securable to the body portion of the pocket by snap fasteners 68. The interior of the main portion of the bag 10 is partitioned by a flexible partition wall 70 secured along its side edges and bottom to a support member 70* (see Fig. 6) which is attached to side panel 14. An additional pocket 72 is removably secured, as by snap fasteners, to end wall 17.

While in the embodiment of the invention above described and illustrated in Figs. 1-6, both the main body portion of gadget bag 10 and the auxiliary pocket 30 are with the expansible features of the invention, it will be apparent that, alternatively, the bag 10 may be constructed to provide expansible means for only one of these. It will be understood that the invention may be embodied in a bag which does not have an auxiliary pocket 30, nor does it have the interior pockets and partitions shown in Figs. 5 and 6. Bags formed in accordance with the invention may also have a structure using strips which are adaptable from that shown in Figs. 1-6. Figs. 7 and 8 show some of the possible variations in the expansible means which characterize the invention.

Referring more particularly to Fig. 7, there is shown a cross-sectional view of a bag similar in construction to bag 10, but having a modified expansible structure. Bag 75, shown in Fig. 7, has side panels 77 and 78 and a bottom and end wall-defining strip 80 constructed as in the embodiment of Figs. 1-5. Support 77 is secured to panel 14. As in bag 10, strip 80 is formed with a longitudinally extending slit 81, opposite edges of which are joinable by a slide fastener 82. The gusset 85, however, instead of being secured to the strip 80 adjacent both edges of the slit 81, extends from one side edge of strip 80 to the other. The auxiliary pocket 86 is similarly formed with the gusset 87 extending between the side edges of strip 88.

In Fig. 8, in which the expansible features of the invention are embodied in a bag which does not have a side auxiliary pocket, there is shown a bag 90 which is similar in construction to the main body portion of bag 10, and comprises side panels 91 and 92 and a strip 93 which forms the bottom and end walls of the bag. Support member 90* is secured to panel 14. Whereas in the previously described embodiments the slit in the bottom and end wall-forming strip was positioned adjacent one of the side edges of the strip, in bag 99 the slit 95 extends centrally of the strip 93. The gusset 98, like the gusset 50 of bag 10, has edges secured adjacent the edges of slit 98.

In all of the above described embodiments, there is provided a readily expansible bag which may be expanded to a substantial extent to accommodate additional items to be carried but which may with equal ease be returned to its initial non-expanded condition at will. When
the bag is in its closed, non-expanded condition, the expansible means are concealed, and the bulky, unattractive appearance of prior expansible bags is avoided.

While we have illustrated and described the preferred embodiments of our invention, it is to be understood that we do not limit ourselves to the precise constructions herein disclosed and the right is reserved to all changes and modifications coming within the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new, and desire to secure by United States Letters Patent is:

1. An expansible carrying case comprising spaced-apart side walls and means defining a bottom and end walls secured between said side walls to define an enclosure having a top opening, a hinged cover for said top opening, said bottom and end walls being provided with a continuous slit extending longitudinally along said bottom and a distance along each of said end walls, closure means for joining the longitudinal edges of said slit, and a gusset interiory of said case having its sides secured to said bottom and end walls on each side of the slit, said gusset being expansible to define an enlarged enclosure upon opening of said closure means.

2. An expansible carrying case comprising spaced-apart side walls and means defining a bottom and end walls secured between said side walls to define an enclosure having a top opening, a hinged cover for said top opening, said bottom and end walls being provided with a continuous slit extending longitudinally along said bottom and a distance along each of said end walls below said opening adjacent one longitudinal edge thereof to a point below said top opening, closure means for joining the longitudinal edges of said slit, and a gusset interiory of said case having its sides secured to said bottom and end walls on each side of said slit, said gusset being expansible to define an enlarged enclosure upon opening of said closure means.

3. An expansible carrying case comprising spaced-apart side walls and a continuous strip defining a bottom and end walls secured between said side walls to define an enclosure having a top opening, a hinged cover for said top opening, said bottom and end walls being provided with a continuous slit extending longitudinally along said slit from a point close to one end thereof to a point close to the opposite end thereof, closure means for joining the longitudinal edges of said slit, and a gusset interiory of said case having its sides secured to said top on each side edge thereof, said gusset being expansible to define an enlarged enclosure upon opening of said closure means.

4. An expansible carrying case comprising spaced-apart side walls and a continuous strip defining a bottom and end walls secured between said side walls to define an enclosure having a top opening, a hinged cover for said top opening, said bottom and end walls being provided with a continuous slit extending longitudinally along said strip from a point close to one end thereof to a point close to the opposite end thereof, closure means for joining the longitudinal edges of said slit, and a gusset interiory of said case having its sides secured to said strip on each side edge thereof, said gusset being expansible to define an enlarged enclosure upon opening of said closure means.

5. An expansible carrying case comprising spaced-apart side walls and means defining a bottom and end walls secured between said side walls to define an enclosure having a top opening, a hinged cover for said top opening, said bottom and end walls being provided with a continuous slit extending longitudinally along said bottom and a distance along each of said end walls below said opening, slide fastener closure means for joining the longitudinal edges of said slit, and a gusset interiory of said case having its sides secured to said bottom and end walls on each side of said slit, said gusset being expansible to define an enlarged enclosure upon opening of said closure means.

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