Oct. 11, 1949. E. C. BISHOP 2,484,547

SAFETY IGNITION KEY HOLDER

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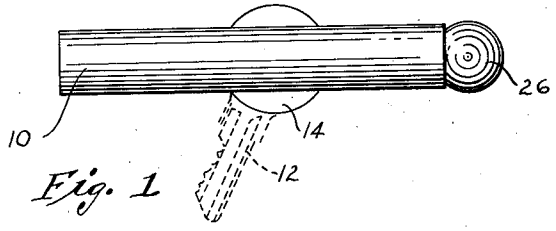


Fig. 1

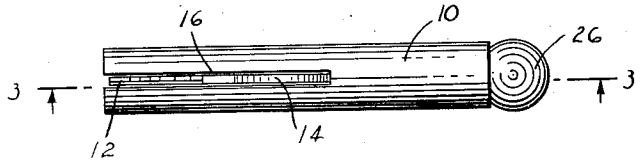


Fig. 2.

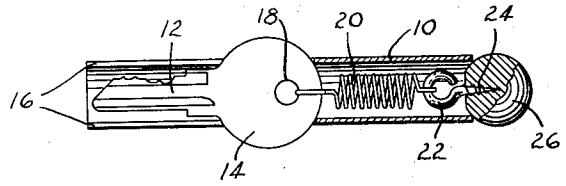


Fig. 3.

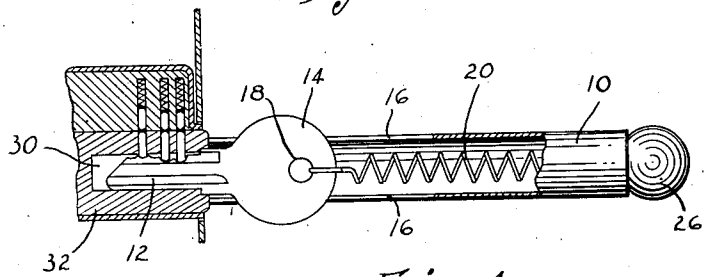


Fig. 4.

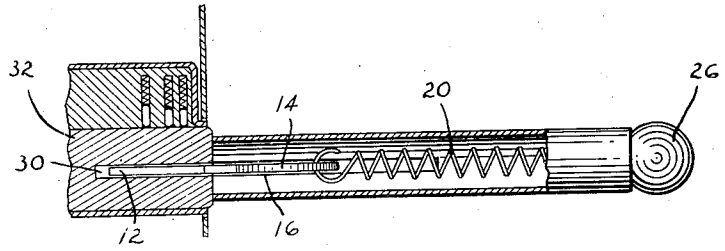


Fig. 5.

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SAFETY IGNITION KEY HOLDER

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1 Claim. (Cl. 70—456)

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The present invention relates to keyholding devices, and aims to provide a novel form of keyholder design embodying improved features for allowing use of the key and thereafter automatically retracting the key into the holder for safekeeping.

It is one special object of the invention to provide a novel keyholder construction of the character indicated which is particularly adapted for use with keys such as ignition switch keys and designed to safeguard against the inadvertent leaving of the key in the switch assembly.

Accordingly I have devised an efficient and improved keyholder device in which the key is held normally inside the holder by yielding means adapted to permit the key to be projected outside the holder in position for use in the switch and thereafter operating automatically to retract the key back into the holder on completion of the operation of the key for turning off the switch.

It is also an object of the invention to provide an extremely simple and compact device of neat and attractive appearance and adapted to be made at small cost from relatively inexpensive materials.

With the foregoing general objects in view, the invention will now be described by reference to the accompanying drawing illustrating one satisfactory form of construction which has been devised for the embodiment of the proposed improvements, after which those features and combinations which are deemed to be novel and patentable will be particularly set forth and claimed.

In the drawing—

Figure 1 is a plan view of a keyholder device constructed in accordance with the present invention, with the key retracted into enclosed position within the holder, the dotted lines representing the key swung into outwardly projecting relation for a purpose hereinafter referred to;

Figure 2 is a side view, in a plane at right angles to the plane of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a longitudinal sectional view, representing a section taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 2;

Figure 4 is a vertical sectional view on a slightly larger scale, illustrating the key as in outwardly projecting position and inserted into an ignition switch preparatory to turning of the latter; and

Figure 5 is a similar sectional view, representing the key as having been given a quarter turn for operating the ignition switch.

Many forms of keycases or keyholders are in common use, which protect the key when not in actual use and also permit the key to be moved

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or projected outside the holder when necessary to make use of the same. The ignition switch keys of automobiles, whether these are carried in keyholders or in entirely detached relation, are often carelessly or inadvertently left in the ignition switch, which is objectionable for numerous reasons, an important objection being that this leaves the automobile an easy and tempting prey for use of the car by some unauthorized person. It is accordingly an object of my invention to provide a convenient and efficient holder device for such keys in particular, which will properly safeguard against leaving them in switch-operating position.

Referring now to the accompanying drawing in detail, this illustrates a construction comprising a cylindrical tube or case 10 which may be constructed of any suitable material such as metal, plastic or like material having sufficiently rigid properties to serve as the body of the holder. The diameter of the tube 10 will preferably be just sufficient to enclose the shank portion 12 of the key, while the handle or head portion 14 of the key is allowed to project out through a pair of longitudinal slots 16 formed on opposite sides of the tube 10 as illustrated in Figures 2 and 3.

To the opening 18 in the head of the key is attached one end of a coil spring 20, the other end of which is attached to the eye of a screw 24 which is threaded into a ball element 26 of sufficient diameter for providing retaining engagement with the unslotted end of the tube or case 10.

By means of the foregoing construction it will be seen that the spring connection 20 serves to hold the key in normally retracted position, or enclosed within the holder tube 10, and that the head portion 14 of the key is thereby held normally in abutting engagement with the inner ends of the slots 16, as illustrated in Figures 1 to 3.

When desired to make use of the key, as by insertion of the same into an ignition switch, the key may be projected by engaging its exposed head portion and forcing it outward, which enables the shank 12 of the key to be projected and inserted into the opening 30 of the ignition switch 32, as shown in Figure 4. After turning the key for operating the switch as illustrated in Figure 5, the shank of the key is of course held and retained within the switch, and at the same time the action of the spring 20 operates to maintain the slotted end of the tube 10 in engagement with the outer face of the switch. However, on reversing the movement of the key as required for turning off the switch, as soon as the key is re-

leased it is instantly retracted by the action of said spring into its initial position within the tube or case 10, as represented in Figures 1 to 3.

With this construction, therefore, it is apparent that the key is automatically disengaged from the switch so that it can not be inadvertently left in the switch at any time after the switch has been turned off. However, if it should be desired to leave the key, intentionally, in the switch in its inoperative position, such result may be accomplished by leaving the key in its retracted position and turning the tube at an angle to the key, so that the shank of the key is swung entirely to one side of the slotted end of the tube, in which position the key may be used without subjecting it to the retracting action of the spring, as represented by the dotted line position in Figure 1 of the drawing.

It will therefore be apparent that I have devised a neat, compact and efficient arrangement and construction of keyholder, for the carrying out of all the desired objects of my invention; and while I have illustrated and described one practical form of construction for embodying the proposed features of improvement, I desire to be understood as reserving the right to such changes or modifications as may fairly fall within the scope of the appended claim.

What I claim is:

A keyholder construction comprising a slotted tubular casing, a key normally enclosed by said casing and projectable therefrom into operative position, said key having the head portion thereof extending through the slotted portion of the casing to prevent relative rotative movement of the key and casing, and means acting automatically on release of the key from its operative position to retract the same within the casing, said key having a pivotal connection with said retracting means to permit swinging of the key, when in its retracted position, into outward angularly projecting relation to said casing.

EDWARD C. BISHOP.

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