

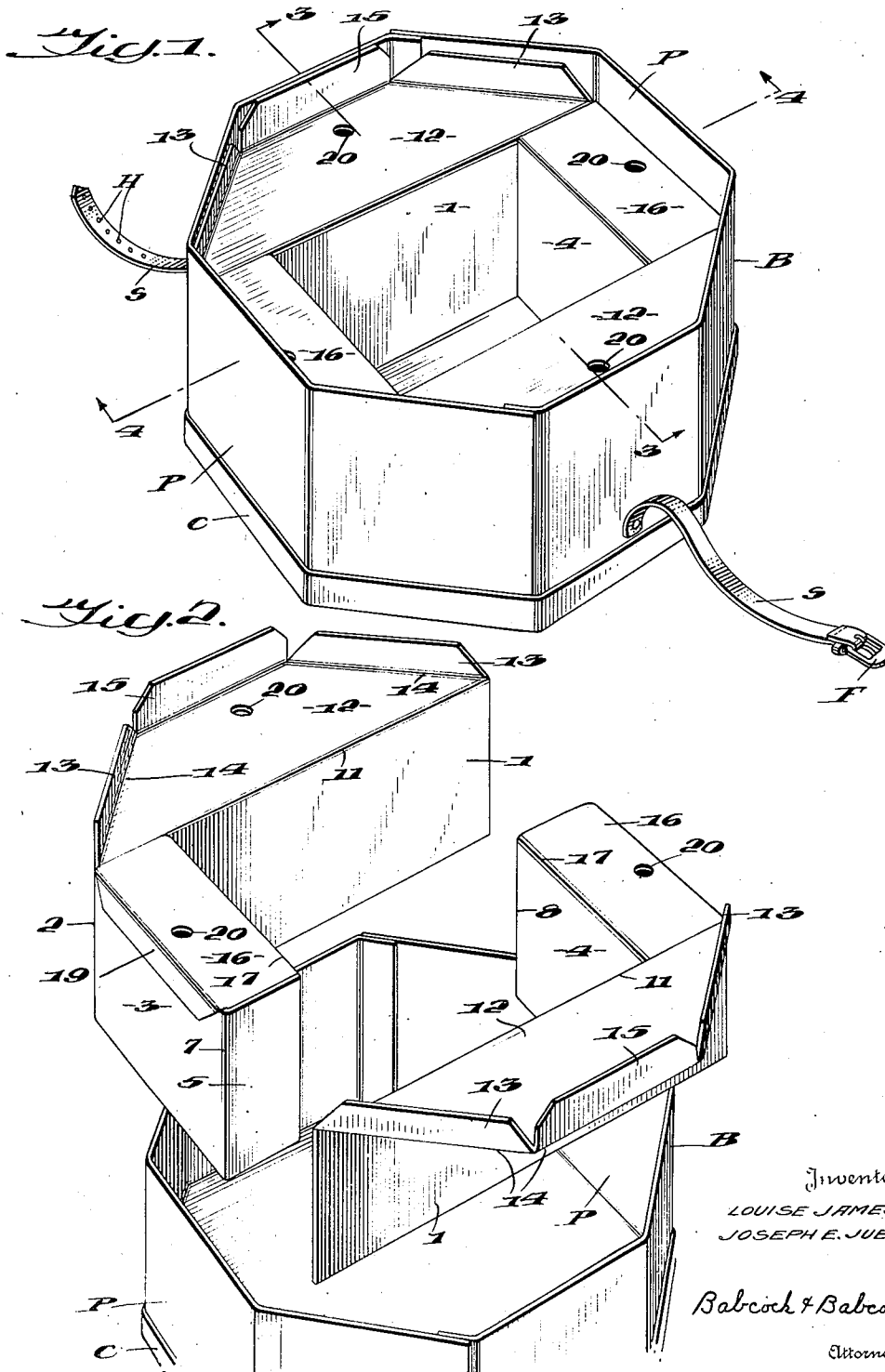
June 7, 1949.

L. JAMES ET AL
COMBINED HAT STAY AND COMPARTMENTING
MEANS FOR HAT BOXES

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2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 3.

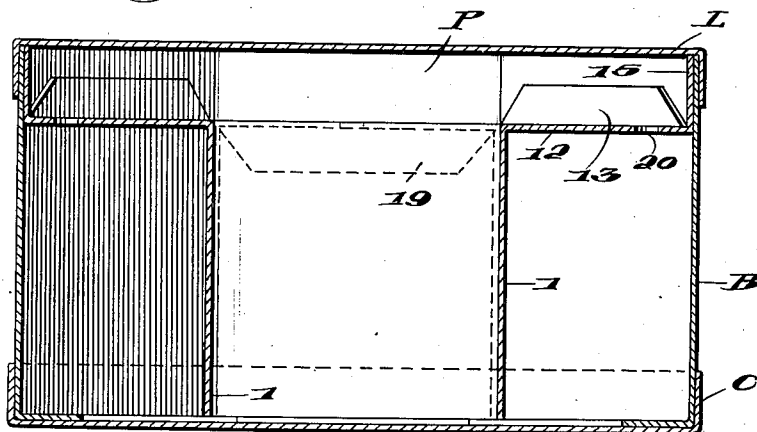


Fig. 4.

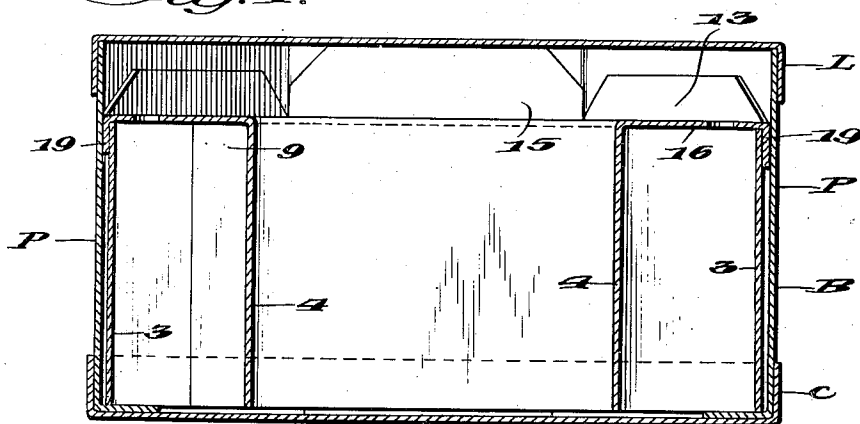
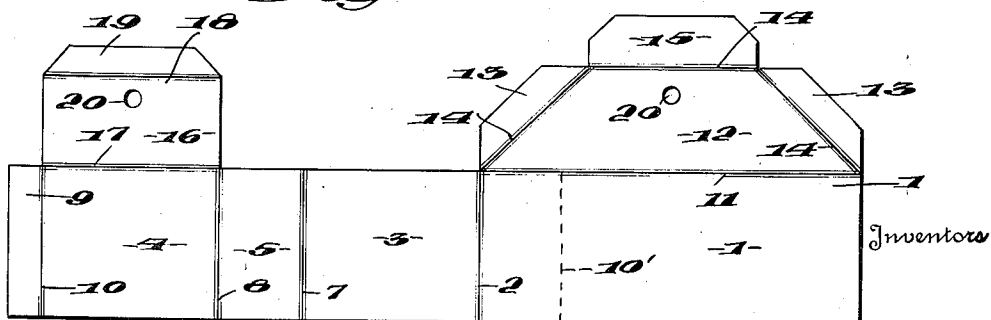


Fig. 5.



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COMBINED HAT STAY AND COMPARTMENT-
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3 Claims. (Cl. 206—8)

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This invention relates to a combined hat stay and compartmenting means for a hat box to increase the utility of same in travelling.

Where hats are packed in conventional hat boxes there is normally a substantial volume of waste space within the boxes surrounding the hats, and it has heretofore been impractical to utilize this waste space for any useful purpose since the packing of additional articles or objects therein is apt to result in crushing or damaging the hats. This has been a disadvantage to travelers inasmuch as they are required to provide additional luggage in which to pack other articles of clothing, toilet articles etc. even though the amount of these is quite small.

The present invention has been conceived and developed with the foregoing in mind and accordingly has for its primary object to provide means occupying this heretofore waste space within a hat box and serving as a hat stay to center a hat within the box, while defining in said space a plurality of luggage compartments to accommodate various additional objects and maintain same in a readily accessible condition out of engagement with the hat.

In order to accomplish this, the combined hat stay and compartmenting means of the invention is arranged to divide the hat box into a plurality of luggage compartments surrounding a central hat crown well, these compartments being provided with lids or closures which together form a composite hat brim supporting tray or platform.

Additional objects are: to provide such a device which is self centering within the hat box, thus requiring no positive connection thereto and being removable therefrom at will where its use is not required; to provide such a device which may be readily collapsed as a unit to flat condition for storage; to provide such a device which may comprise a pair of identical units or elements each formed from an integral sheet material blank; and, to provide a novel sheet material blank for forming said elements.

The foregoing objects are attained by the preferred embodiment of the invention shown by way of illustration in the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 represents a perspective view of a hat box having combined hat stay and compartmenting means associated therewith in accordance with the invention, the top closure or lid of the box being omitted to permit a view of its interior;

Figure 2, an "exploded" perspective view show-

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ing the two elements or members of the device prior to their assembly and insertion into the hat box;

Figure 3, a cross-section on the line 3—3 of Figure 1, looking in the direction of the arrows, the strap S, shown in Figure 1, being omitted;

Figure 4, a cross-section on the line 4—4 of Figure 1, looking in the direction of the arrows; and,

Figure 5, a plan view of the sheet material blank from which each of the identical elements or members of the preferred embodiment of the invention are formed.

Referring now in detail to the accompanying drawings, the reference character B therein designates the body of a usual cardboard, fiber board or other sheet material hat box of polygonal, preferably octagonal cross-section, having at least one pair of relatively opposed parallel side walls or wall panels P. A usual bottom or lower end closure C is applied to the bottom of such a box, and a usual cover or lid L is removably applied to the top thereof, as in Figures 3 and 4.

Suitable cover fastening means for maintaining the lid L on the box body B may comprise a pair of cooperating straps S fixedly secured as by riveting to opposite sides of the box body. The free ends of these straps S are arranged to be connected across the lid L after same is applied. To this end, one strap S is provided with a usual buckle F, and the other strap S is formed with a series of spaced perforations H therein adapting it for cooperation with said buckle in usual manner. Such straps S also form a convenient handle for the box.

The box aforementioned merely represents one form of usual hat box which is adapted for use with the combined hat stay and compartmenting means of the invention, and the box per se constitutes no part of the invention.

Each of the two preferably identical elements or members comprising the preferred embodiment of the invention is preferably formed from an integral flat blank of suitable sheet material such as cardboard, fiber board, or other relatively strong stiff material, as shown in Figure 5, though obviously these members may be formed in other ways.

Such a blank comprises a main partition 1, and a longitudinal compartment forming extension which is separated from partition 1 by a vertical fold or score line 2. Such extension comprises rectangular end partitions 3 and 4 respectively, between which is interposed a rectangular side panel 5, same being connected to the respective

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end partitions 3 and 4 along vertical fold or score lines 7 and 8.

An attaching flap or tab 9 may be hingedly connected to the free end partition 4 along a vertical fold or score line 10.

Secured to the upper horizontal edge of the main partition 1, along the fold or score line 11, is a side compartment closure flap 12, the shape and dimensions of which correspond to the horizontal cross-section of the side compartment which will be formed in the box by partition. Such shape and dimensions may be varied to adapt the invention for use with various sizes and types of boxes.

Preferably suitable resiliently foldable box engaging tabs 13 and 15 are joined along score or fold lines 14 to the free edges of the closure flap 12.

The vertical dimension or height of the partition 1 will be substantially less than the depth of the box body B, and the tabs 15 will be of such vertical dimension or height that the combined vertical dimensions of the partition 1 and tab 15 of the blank will substantially equal the depth of the box body B.

An end compartment closure flap 16 is provided to cover the end compartment formed by the longitudinal extension when same is folded into erected condition. Preferably such flap 16 is foldable along the score or fold line 17 defining the upper horizontal edge of the free end partition 4, such flap 16 preferably having a tab 19 foldable along the score line 18 relatively thereto.

The dimensions of the closure flap 16 will be such that when the blank is folded into erect condition with the flap covering the end compartment formed therein, such flap will extend across and rest on the upper edge of the end partition 3, which thus serves as a stop and positioning means for the flap 16; while the tab 19 of said flap may be folded downwardly against the outer face of said end partition 3, as shown in Figure 2 of the drawings.

Both of the closure flaps 12 and 16 may be provided with usual finger holes 20 to facilitate operation thereof.

In erecting the blank the several partitions 3 and 4 and the side panel 5 of the compartment forming extension are folded on their respective score lines 2, 7 and 8 to form an enclosure or end compartment of parallelogram cross-section in a horizontal plane, using the adjacent end portion of the main partition 1 as one of the side panels thereof, the attaching tab 9 being folded along its score line 10 and suitably secured flush against the face of the partition 1, as by glue, staples or other usual means, with the fold line 10 thus being in the position indicated by the dotted line 10' in Figure 5.

After thus folding two blanks to form erected elements having end compartments therein as aforementioned, these elements are assembled in the manner shown in Figures 1 and 2, with the respective main partitions 1 thereof disposed in relatively coextensive parallel relation, and the end partitions 3 and 4 of both end compartments extending transversely between the partitions 1 at opposite ends thereof. Preferably the side panel 5 of each end compartment is suitably anchored, as by gluing or stitching, flush against its corresponding end portion of the relatively adjacent partition 1, though such anchoring is not essential inasmuch as the two elements or members of the invention may be maintained in assembled

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relation by the confining action of the box when assembled therein.

With the two elements of the device thus assembled, the various closure flaps 12 and 16 are folded outwardly to a substantially horizontal position, where they will be disposed in a substantially common plane, as in all of the assembled views of the invention, these flaps 12 and 16 being so shaped and proportioned that their respective free edges or fold lines 14 and 17 will jointly define a polygon similar to the cross section of the box B.

Then, with the tabs 13, 15 and 19 all folded into substantially vertical planes, the assembled elements of the invention are inserted downwardly into the box body B to the position shown in Figure 1.

Preferably the tabs 13 and 15 will be folded upwardly so that when inserted in the box the upper edges of the tabs 15 will be contiguous to the lower surface of the box lid L to provide a positive means for preventing inadvertent upward displacement or opening of the flaps 12 when the box is jarred or inverted. All of the tabs 13 and 15 will press outwardly against the box sides to frictionally retain the closure flap 12 in closed position.

The tabs 19 will preferably be folded downwardly adjacent the outer surfaces of the respective end partitions 3 to be frictionally retained between their respective panels or partitions 3 and the adjacent box side panels P.

In this assembled relation of the invention in the hat box it will be seen that the relatively parallel main partitions 1 extend across the interior of the box normally to the opposed parallel side wall panels P—P thereof, thus dividing the interior of the box into a rectangular medial space bounded by said partitions 1—1 and end partitions 3—3, and side compartments on opposite sides of said medial space.

The relatively adjacent transverse end partitions 4 serve to subdivide this medial space into an upwardly opening central hat crown well disposed between them, and end compartments occupying opposite end portions of said medial space.

The various side and end closure flaps 12 and 16 not only cover their respective compartments, but also by their engagement with the box sides serve to center the device in the box. Further, it will be seen that these respective flaps 12 and 16 when in operative closed position all lie in a common horizontal plane substantially below the plane of the box top L to form a composite supporting tray or platform around the central hat crown well for the purpose of supporting the brim of a hat having its crown disposed in inverted position in said central well.

In the use of the invention, which is believed to be apparent from the foregoing, access to the various side and end compartments may be had by raising their respective closure flaps 12 and 16, whereupon various articles of clothing, toilet articles or other objects may be placed therein as desired. Thereafter, with these flaps in closed operative position, a usual hat may be inverted and placed in the box in such manner that its crown is received in the central well aforementioned, while its brim rests on the composite tray or platform defined by the flaps 12, 12 and 16, 16.

Thus the several partitions defining this central well engage the hat crown to center the hat in the box so that in handling of the box the

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brim can not be collapsed and/or crushed against the box sides, and the various articles in the side and end compartments are maintained out of engagement with the hat to avoid crushing or deforming same. Where the hat brim is flexible this will permit the flaps 12 and 16 to be at least partially opened to gain access to their respective compartments without removing the hat.

Where it is desired to use the hat box B without the device of the invention, said device may be removed as a unit from the box and collapsed to flat condition for storage in a minimum amount of space. To collapse the device after removing same from the box, it is necessary to first swing the flaps 12 and 16 upwardly into substantially vertical planes, whereupon the respective main partitions 1 may be moved in opposite endwise directions, thus causing all of the relatively parallel transverse partitions 3 and 4 to swing into a substantially common plane between main partitions 1.

The device of the invention may obviously be used to considerable advantage when it is desired to travel lightly, with a minimum of baggage, as it serves the combined functions of a hat box and a suit case. Because of this it will be the only piece of luggage required on overnight or week end trips.

In this application we have shown and described only the preferred embodiment of our invention, simply by way of illustration of the practice thereof, as by law required. However we recognize that our invention is capable of other and different embodiments and that the various details thereof may be modified, all without departing from our said invention. Therefore the drawings and description herein are to be considered as merely illustrative and not as exclusive.

Having thus described our invention, we claim:

1. In a hat box of polygonal cross sectional shape having relatively opposed parallel pairs of vertical side wall panels, a hat stay and compartmenting means comprising a pair of relatively spaced vertical main partitions extending between the side wall panels of one of said pairs and dividing the interior of said box into a medial space between said partitions and side compartments on relatively remote sides thereof, in combination with integral extensions respectively extending from opposite longitudinal ends of said partitions, each said extension comprising a plurality of relatively folded vertical panels defining an end compartment of parallelogram cross sec-

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tion collapsible into flat condition against its respective main partition, said end compartments being disposed at opposite ends of said medial space and being relatively spaced to define between them an upwardly opening central well adapted to receive the crown of a hat and center same in inverted condition in said box, said partitions and their respective extensions having linear upper edges lying in a substantially common horizontal plane below the top of the box, and closure flaps for each of said side and end compartments hinged to said upper edges and operatively folded into the plane thereof to form a composite hat brim supporting tray around said central well.

2. A combined hat stay and compartmenting means comprising a main partition, an integral extension carried at one end of said partition, said extension comprising a plurality of relatively folded vertical panels defining an end compartment of parallelogram horizontal cross-section collapsible into flat condition against said main partition, the upper edges of said main partition and said panels all being in the same horizontal plane, and closure flaps associated with said partition and said end compartment and foldable into said horizontal plane.

3. A sheet material flat blank for forming one unit of a combined hat stay and compartmenting means for hat boxes comprising a rectangular main partition, an integral extension projecting longitudinally from one end thereof and separated therefrom by a lateral fold line, said extension comprising a pair of rectangular identical end partitions and a rectangular side panel interposed therebetween, said side panel being joined to said respective end partitions along lateral fold lines, and an attaching tab secured along a lateral fold line to one of said end partitions remote from said main partition, in combination with closure flaps respectively connected along longitudinal fold lines to said last mentioned end partition and to said main partition.

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