April 23, 1940. H. L. FISCHER 2,198,109

KEY CASE

Original Filed March 11, 1936

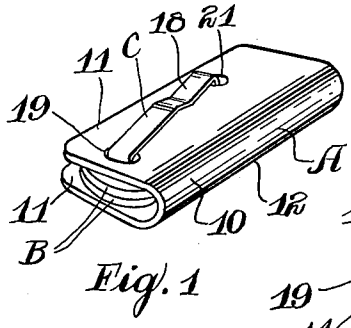


Fig. 1

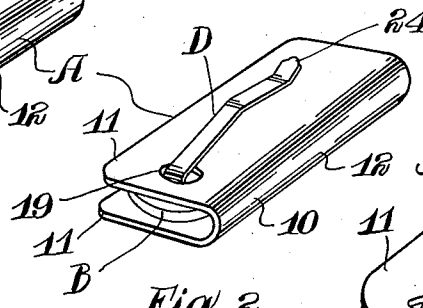


Fig. 2

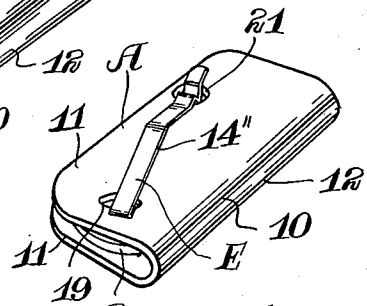


Fig. 3

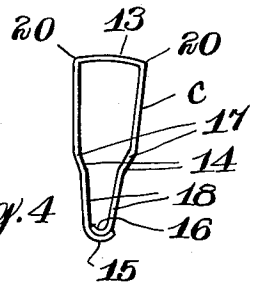


Fig. 4

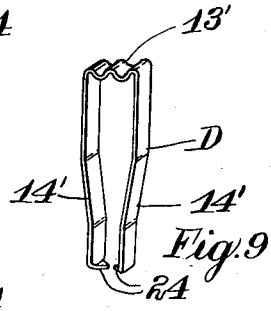


Fig. 9

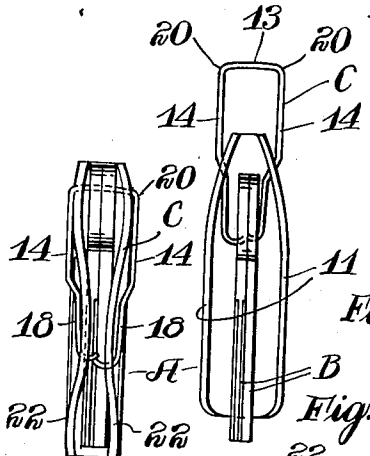


Fig. 6

Fig. 7

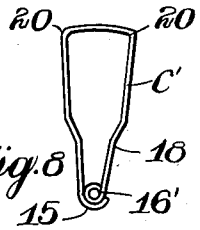


Fig. 8

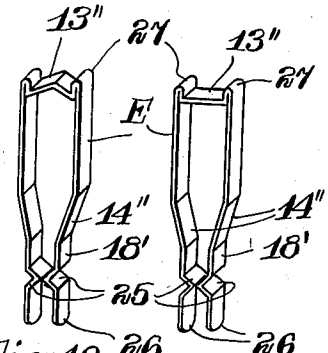


Fig. 10

Fig. 11

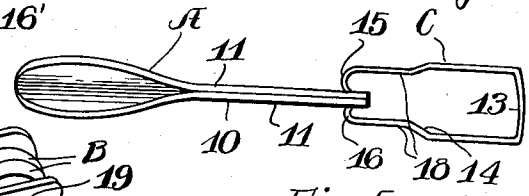


Fig. 5

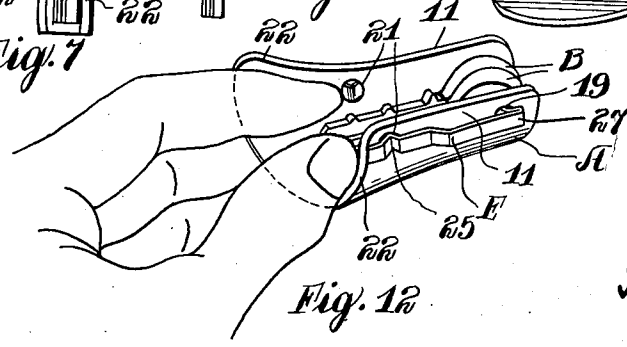


Fig. 12

Inventor

Howard L. Fischer

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,198,109

KEY CASE

Howard L. Fischer, St. Paul, Minn.

Application March 11, 1936, Serial No. 68,234
Renewed October 10, 1939

6 Claims. (Cl. 150—40)

This invention relates to key cases which are designed to support a series of keys between the side walls of the case in a manner so that the keys may be readily accessible when desired. A feature resides in a simple construction, wherein the case portion is formed from sheet material such as leather or other similar material, folded at the center so that the sides thereof fold together like the covers of a book to form a case or guard around the keys when the same are held between the sides thereof.

This case is designed with a loop clasp for supporting the keys which is provided with a shank on which the keys may turn out of the key case into operative position, or back in between the side walls of the case. The clasp is also formed with spring arms extending from the shank portion which tend to hold the sides of the key case together so as to close the open side of the key case to inclose the keys therein. Further, the spring arms are formed with hook ends which engage in openings in the sides of the case and which openings permit the hook ends to engage each other in a manner to form a spring catch which locks the ends of the clasp together, thereby locking the key case closed. Then the case may be opened by engaging the sides of the cover, placing a strain against the case to cause the same to spring open so that the keys may be rotated on the shank out into operating position.

A further feature of my key case resides in a clasp means made in a single piece of wire which can be readily attached to the cover forming the key case and which does not require any means for holding the clasp to the cover. This single-piece clasp does away with a screw post formerly used on key cases of this nature for supporting the keys and it also does away with the spring catch which locked the sides of the case together. The clasp may be quickly attached by sliding the hook ends of the spring arms over the outside of the squeezed together side walls of the case, and sliding the hook ends into the openings for the shank in the cover. The simplicity of this clasp is extremely important as well as the fact that it provides a means for holding the keys in the case against accidental disengagement such as might take place in the old form where the screw post was used to hold the keys and where the screw post would separate, letting the keys fall out of the case.

The drawing illustrates the different forms of the key case and clasp to provide a means for supporting a number of keys in a small case. These key cases are commonly used for automobile keys, house keys, or other places where a few keys are desired to be supported in a small case.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a perspective, showing one form of the key case.

Figure 2 is a similar perspective of another form.

Figure 3 illustrates still another perspective of still another form.

Figure 4 illustrates the clasp of the key case removed from the cover, showing the snap ends of the same closed.

Figure 5 illustrates the clasp being attached or disengaged from the cover of the key case.

Figure 6 illustrates a front edge view of the key case, showing the manner in which the keys are attached to the spring arms of the clasp.

Figure 7 is a front edge view of the key case with the snap of the clasp disengaged and the sides of the cover partially open.

Figure 8 illustrates another form of the clasp.

Figure 9 illustrates a perspective of still another form of the clasp.

Figure 10 illustrates a form of the clasp.

Figure 11 illustrates another form of the clasp.

Figure 12 is a perspective showing the manner of spreading the cover of the case open wherein the clasp is of the form of Figures 10 or 11.

The drawing illustrates the key case A which is made up of a cover portion 10 of leather or other suitable flexible material which is adapted to form side walls 11. The cover 10 is folded longitudinally along the back edge 12 so that the walls 11 are folded toward each other and are virtually equal in dimensions. The walls 11 provide the sides for the cover 10 to shield the keys B in the case A. In the key case A illustrated in Figure 1, a spring metal clasp C is employed which is of the construction illustrated in Figure 4. The clasp C is made of flat wire or other spring material and is formed with a key receiving shank 13 upon which the keys B are adapted to rotate when held in the case A. The clasp C is formed with spring arms 14 on each side extending from the shank 13 and the free ends of the arms 14 are formed into hooks 15 and 16. The hook end 15 is adapted to engage over the hook end 16 to form a snap or catch lock for the free ends of the spring arms 14. The arms 14 are bent with the offset portions 17 therein so as to provide the virtually parallelly disposed portions 18 extending between

the offset portions 17 and the hook ends 15 and 16. The parallel portions 18 of the spring arms 14 are adapted to provide a means of bearing against the side walls 11 of the cover 10 to hold the walls together to form a closure about the keys B within the case A.

The walls 11 of the cover 10 are formed with the holes 19 at one end of the same, which are adapted to receive the shank portion 13 of the clasp C when the clasp is in working position with the cover 10. The manner of attaching the clasp C to the cover 10 is illustrated in Figure 5. The arms 14 of the clasp C are formed with the shank 13 in a manner so that they will tend to press toward each other to cause the parallel portions 18 to normally press against the side walls of the cover 10 to tend to hold the same closed under spring tension of the arms 14. In placing the clasp C on the cover 10 the hook ends 15 and 16 will spread sufficiently apart while the walls 11 are pressed together, as illustrated in Figure 5, to permit the hook ends to slide over the outside of the cover until the hooks 15 and 16 enter the openings 19. Then by pushing the arms 14 into the position illustrated in Figure 6, the hook ends 15 and 16 will be between the side walls 11 of the case A, as illustrated. In this position the keys B can be readily snapped between the hooks 15 and 16 and onto the arms 14.

After the keys B are placed on the arms 14 they may be slid along one of the arms 14 while the clasp C is partially withdrawn, and the hook ends 15 and 16 are slid through one of the openings 19 to slide the clasp C around so that the shank 13 engages the hole in the keys and the shank 13 is positioned extending between the walls 11 of the cover 10 and with the corners 20 extending through the openings 19. When the clasp is in this position, the spring arms 14 can be swung around and spread sufficiently to engage over the sides 11 of the case and the ends 15 and 16 hooked into the openings 21 as illustrated in Figure 7. In this position the clasp C is as illustrated in Figures 1 and 7, with the portions 18 bearing against the side walls tending to press the same together under spring tension of the arms 14 to tend to close the case A. The hook ends 15 and 16 engaging into the openings 21 hold or lock the clasp C to the cover 10. It will be apparent that by engaging the portions 22 or by spreading the same as illustrated in Figure 12, the cover 10 may be spread apart to expose the keys B and to spread the arms 14. Thus the hook ends 15 and 16 function to hold the clasp C in position with the arms extending along the side walls 11 and to prevent any misplacement of the clasp C in relation to the cover 10.

When it is desired to remove a key from the shank 13 of the clasp C, the hook ends 16 are disengaged from the openings 21 and the clasp is slid around so that the hook ends lie between the side walls 11 as illustrated in Figure 6. To close the key case A with the clasp C, it is only necessary to place the portions 18 toward each other and the hook ends which extend through the openings 21 will engage each other and will snap into locked position, overlapping as illustrated in Figure 4.

The clasp for my key case may be made in several forms, however, the functions are the same, acting primarily to provide a shank 13 upon which the keys may be rotated and swinging the spring arms of the clasp around into a position with the side walls 11 so as to hold the clasp in locked position so that the keys cannot come off of the shank 13. The form D of the clasp illustrated in Figures 2 and 9, shows the spring arms 14' with pointed ends 24 which bite into the side walls 11 of the case to hold the clasp D in operative position as illustrated in Figure 2. The shank 13' of the clasp such as is illustrated in Figure 9 may be corrugated as illustrated, to shorten the same for a less number of keys and to lengthen the same by flattening out the corrugations with a pliers or other instrument if desired.

The clasp E is illustrated in Figures 3, 10 and 11. In this form of the clasp, the spring arms 14'' are provided with inwardly extending indentations 25 which are adapted to engage into the openings 21 to hold the arms 14'' in line along the side walls 11 of the case A. The arms 14'' are also provided with parallelly disposed ends 26 which provide bearing fingers acting virtually as extensions to the parallelly disposed portions 18' in this form of the clasp, such as E. The clasp E is also formed with ears 27 projecting above the shank 13''. The ears 27 act as shoulders to hold the clasp E against sliding longitudinally when the key case A is spread as illustrated in Figure 12.

I have also illustrated a clasp C' in Figure 8, which is virtually the same as the clasp C, excepting the end 16' is rolled to form a small eye over which the hook end 15 engages.

The simplicity of my key case will be apparent and its utility in holding such keys as the ignition and other keys for an automobile, or for any other purpose where a small compact key case of an inexpensive nature is desired. It will also be apparent that heretofore key cases with threaded shanks on which the keys rotated have been used, however, these threaded posts or shanks are apt to unscrew and drop the keys. Further, these old types of key cases required a separate snap fastener for holding the side walls together. The clasps C, D, or E of my key case are formed of a single piece of material and accomplish not only the function of holding the keys but lock the keys on the shank 13 and also provide a snap fastener for closing the case when desired, as well as providing the spring arms which normally automatically keep the sides of the case closed.

In accordance with the patent statutes I have described the principles of my key case, and while I desire to have it understood that these are only illustrative of manners of carrying out my invention, obvious changes may be made within the scope of the following claims without departing from the spirit of the invention.

I claim:

1. A key case including a cover, a spring clasp comprising a key receiving shank, spring arms extending from said shank and hook ends formed on said arms, holes in said cover for receiving said clasp at the shank portion, and holes for receiving the hook ends of said arms, whereby said clasp is locked in position to said cover and said hook ends may act as a snap lock for the free ends of said arms.

2. A key case including a cover made of flexible material, side walls having equal proportions folded onto each other, holes in said side walls at one end of said cover, holes formed near the free edge of the cover and spaced from said first holes, and a resilient key receiving clasp adapted to engage with said side walls to hold said free

edges together by spring tension and formed to provide opposed spring arms and a connecting shank on which the keys are adapted to rotate to expose the same from between the side walls of said cover said shank extending through said first mentioned holes, and the arm ends extending into said second named holes.

3. A key case including a flexible cover portion formed of leather or other suitable material, said cover being folded centrally to provide overlying side walls and having aligned openings through said side walls, a key receiving clasp extending through said openings in the side walls and having resilient means for engaging the outer surface of the side walls to press and lock the same together under spring tension.

4. A key case including a flexible cover formed from a single piece of leather or other suitable material and folded to provide a closed longitudinal back portion with equal side walls, said side walls having aligned openings therethrough, said cover having three open sides between which the keys to be contained therein are adapted to rotate in knife-blade fashion, and a spring clasp extending through said openings in the side walls of said cover forming a shank upon which the keys may pivot and to overlie the same along a portion thereof to hold the sides of the cover closed by spring pressure of the clasp, said clasp being provided with means for locking the sides of the cover in closed position.

5. A key case including a cover of flexible material folded upon itself to provide side walls, and a combination key support and closure; said combination key support and closure comprising a shank portion extending through said side walls and adapted to support keys thereon between said side walls, and a spring arm on each end of said shank portion adapted to overlie said side walls to hold them normally closed by spring pressure.

6. A key case including cover means having side walls, a wire-like spring clasp formed with a transverse shank to extend from wall to wall of said case, freely disposed ends extending from said shank along said side walls, recesses formed in said side walls, inwardly projecting portions formed on said free ends of said clasp to releasably hold said spring clasp to said side walls by engaging in said recesses.

HOWARD L. FISCHER.