Sept. 21, 1954 S. H. MARKS 2,689,631

COLLAPSIBLE LUGGAGE

Filed April 21, 1953 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

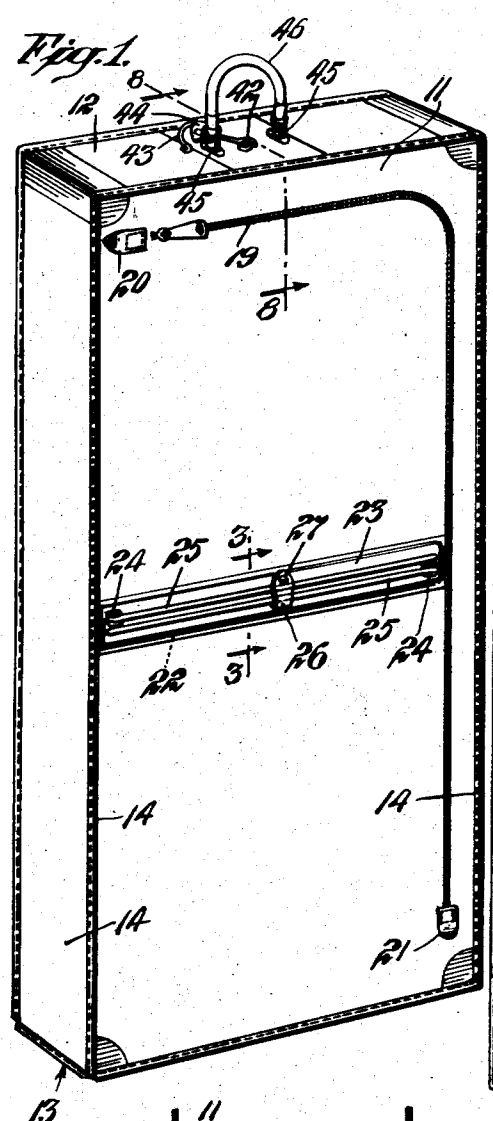

Fig. 2.

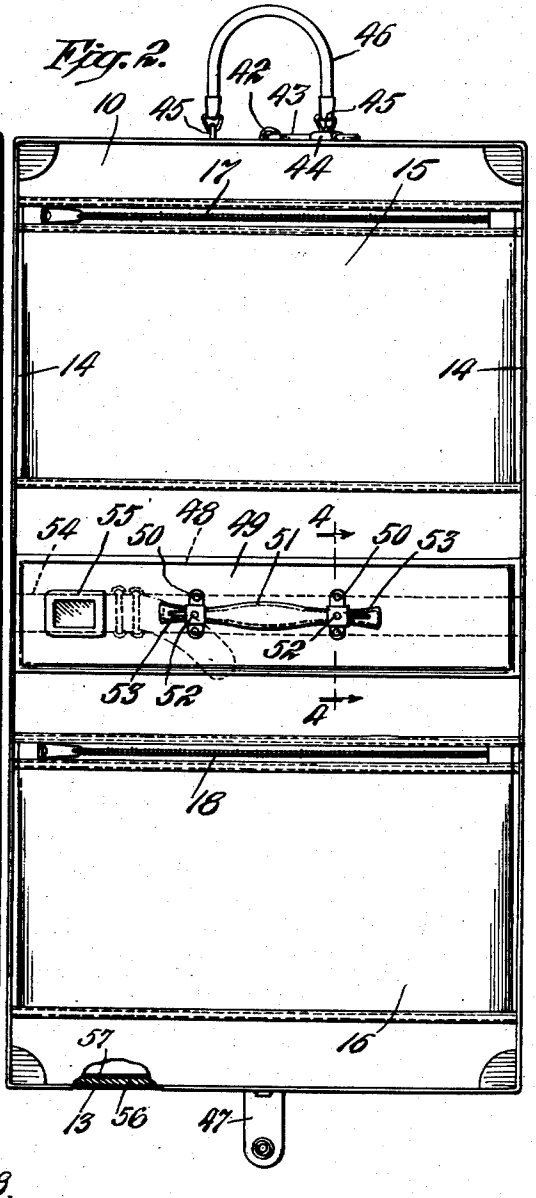

Fig. 3.

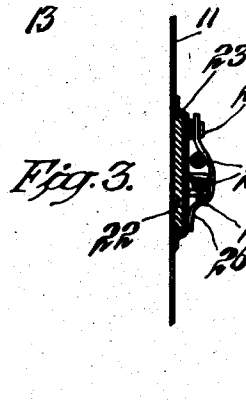

Fig. 4.

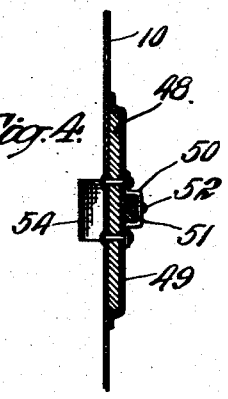

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Fig. 5.

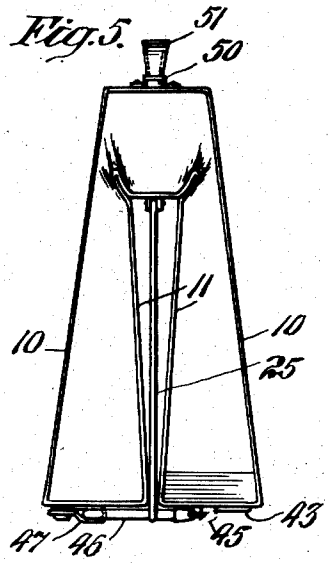


Fig. 6.

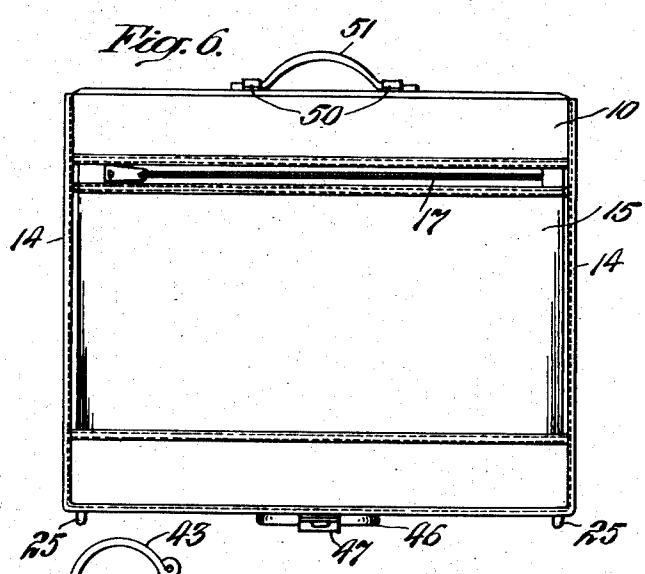


Fig. 7.

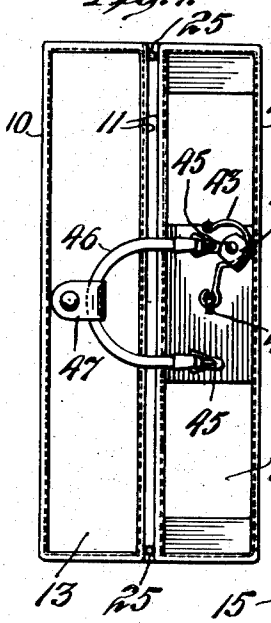


Fig. 8.

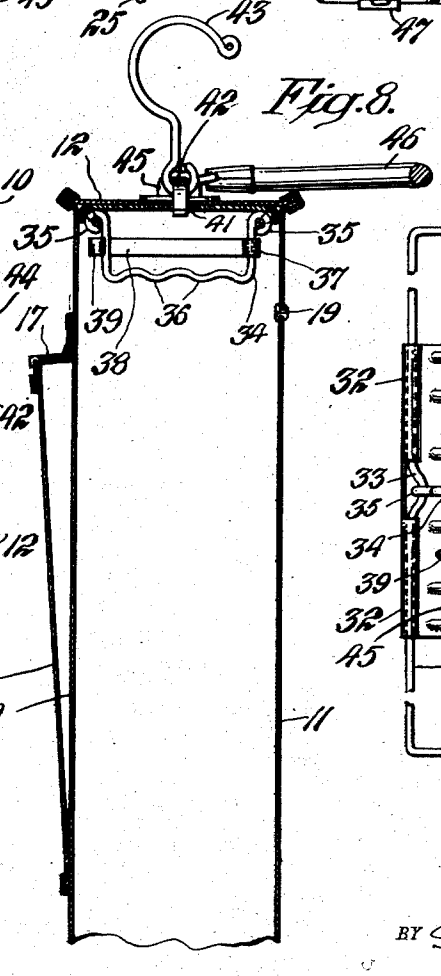
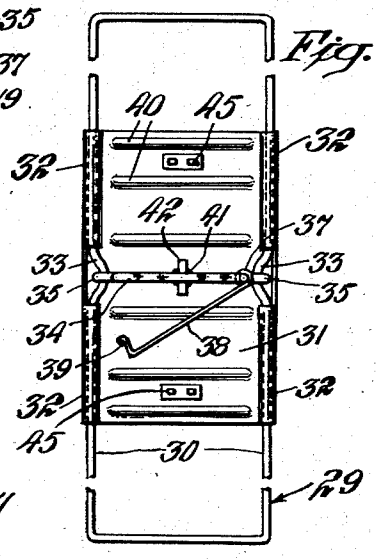


Fig. 9.



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Patented Sept. 21, 1954

2,689,631

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,689,631

COLLAPSIBLE LUGGAGE

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Application April 21, 1953, Serial No. 350,047

8 Claims. (Cl. 190—18)

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This invention relates to collapsible luggage of the type and kind where garments can be hung in a long wardrobe type of container, and then folded substantially centrally to bring end portions in close proximity to each other in forming a relatively small rectangular piece of luggage which can be conveniently carried about. More particularly, the invention deals with luggage of the kind under consideration wherein means is provided to retain the end portions of the luggage in collapsed relationship when carried as a small piece of luggage.

Still more particularly, the invention deals with the provision of reinforcing and supporting rods for supporting the folded luggage in upright position on a support in the manner of a normal bag or case, said means being normally collapsible within boundaries of the luggage when not in use.

The novel features of the invention will be best understood from the following description when taken together with the accompanying drawing, in which certain embodiments of the invention are disclosed, and in which the separate parts are designated by suitable reference characters in each of the views, and in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a flexible and collapsible luggage shown in its extended wardrobe position;

Fig. 2 is a rear view of the luggage as seen in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is an enlarged section on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is an enlarged section on the line 4—4 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 5 is an end view of the luggage in collapsed position showing one of the supporting rods in operative position;

Fig. 6 is a side view of the structure as seen in Fig. 5;

Fig. 7 is a bottom plan view of the structure as seen in Fig. 5;

Fig. 8 is an enlarged sectional view substantially on the line 8—8 of Fig. 1, showing the upper portion of the luggage in position for hanging; and

Fig. 9 is a bottom detailed view of the top supporting frame construction which I employ, with parts of the construction broken away.

In practice, I provide a flexible and collapsible luggage defined generally by elongated outer and inner walls 10 and 11, the term outer and inner being appropriate in considering collapsed luggage when assuming the case environment, as seen in Figs. 5, 6 and 7 of the drawing. The flexible luggage also includes a top wall 12, bot-

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tom wall 13 and side walls 14, the top, bottom and side walls being suitably stitched to peripheral edges of the front and back walls, and these junctures may be reinforced in any suitable way as with other luggage of this type and kind.

Stitched to the front wall 10 are two pocket-forming sheets 15 and 16, note Fig. 2, having one open edge, this open edge being closed by a separable fastener closure as at 17 and 18 respectively. In Fig. 8 of the drawing, I have shown in part a sectional view through the sheet 15 to clearly illustrate the formation of one of the pockets. These pockets can be utilized for the support of accessory garments in addition to the hanging of garments within the main body portion of the luggage.

The rear wall 11 has a large L-shaped opening, as clearly noted in Fig. 1 of the drawing, which opening is closed by a long separable fastener 19, suitable pull tabs 20 and 21 being employed at ends of the opening to facilitate operation of the fastener. This construction gives access to the interior of the luggage for the insertion of garments into the luggage and removal of the same therefrom. Thus, the opening is arranged adjacent one side wall and the top wall 12 as clearly indicated.

Centrally of the rear wall 11 and arranged upon the inner surface thereof is a reinforcing and fold strip 22 arranged in a protective fabric casing 23. The strip 22 terminates short of the opening controlled by the fastener 19, as clearly shown. The strip 22 facilitates folding of garments in movement of the luggage from the position shown in Fig. 1 to the position shown for example in Fig. 5, and this strip eliminates creasing where the garments are folded. Pivoted to end portions of the strip 22, as at 24, are two supporting rods or legs 25 which are normally held in collapsed position longitudinally of the strip 22 by a center strap 26 held in position by a snap fastener device 27. However, these supporting rods or legs can be extended into operative position, as indicated in Figs. 5 and 7 of the drawing, so as to provide a rigid support for the luggage, maintaining a position substantially similar to that diagrammatically shown in Fig. 5 of the drawing. In other words, luggage of the kind under consideration, when in position shown in Fig. 5, would normally have the outer sides defined by the wall 10 bulge laterally with the top part of the resulting luggage case in much closer relationship to the bottom thereof than to the relationship shown. Actually when garments are in the luggage, there would be a slight rounding of the wall 10, but the spac-

ing between the top and bottom of the luggage would be maintained.

Supported within the top wall 12 is a hanger frame unit, which is shown in detached detail in Fig. 9 of the drawing and in part in section in Fig. 8 of the drawing. The unit comprises an oblong rectangular wire frame 29 which defines the peripheral edges of the top wall 12 of the resulting luggage. Secured centrally of the side members 30 of the frame 29 is a transverse plate 31, having pairs of curled edge portions 32 which envelop the side members 30, the side members 30 having downwardly and inwardly offset loops 33 centrally thereof and between the spaced curled edge portions. This construction centralizes the plate 31 on the frame and also provides means for coupling a U-shaped garment hanger rod 34 with the frame.

The hanger rod 34 has looped ends 35 engaging the loops 33, as clearly illustrated in Fig. 9 of the drawing. The crosshead of the rod 34 is preferably corrugated, as seen at 36, to give rigidity thereto and also to provide spacing of hangers thereon. Hingedly supported on the rod 34 at 37 is a hanger retaining strap 38 having a spring catch end 39 to frictionally engage the hanger 34, as will be apparent. By swinging the strap 38 outwardly, the garment hangers can be readily detached from the rod 34.

The plate 31 is preferably reinforced by a plurality of transverse ribs or beads 40, as noted in Fig. 9 of the drawing. Centrally of the plate 31 is an aperture 41 adapted to receive a loop 42 with which a hanger hook 43 is coupled, as clearly seen in Fig. 8 of the drawing. The loop 42 is free to rotate in the aperture 41 so that the hook can be swung into position shown in Fig. 8, and also moved into the position shown in Figs. 1 and 7, in which latter position a strap 44 similar to the strap 27 will engage the hook to hold the same in a definite position on the wall 12.

End portions of the plate 31 are also apertured to receive other handle supporting loops 45 with which a handle member 46 is coupled. The bottom wall 13 of the luggage has a strap 47 similar to the strap 27 to engage the handle member 46 to support the same in defined position on the bottom of the luggage when the luggage is in the position shown in Figs. 5, 6 and 7 of the drawing.

The front wall 10 has substantially centrally thereof an elongated rectangular reinforcing strip 48 secured thereto and covered by a facing sheet 49, note Fig. 4 of the drawing. Secured to this strip at spaced intervals centrally thereof are metal straps 50 for support of another handle member 51, the straps 50 having center pins 52 which operate in elongated slots 53 of the handle, note Fig. 2, so that the handle can be retained in a flat position on the wall 10, as indicated in Fig. 2, and also extended for use as indicated in Figs. 5 and 6. Also secured centrally of the bag inwardly of the wall 10 is a transverse strap, indicated in dotted lines at 54 in Fig. 2 of the drawing, the strap having buckle means as at 55, and this strap is adapted to engage the central portion of garments hung within the luggage to hold them in firm position preparatory to folding the luggage into the position shown in Figs. 5, 6 and 7 of the drawing.

In the use of the luggage, the same can be laid upon a surface or support with the wall 10 arranged downwardly, the garments can be laid in the luggage after attachment of hangers therewith, the hangers being coupled with the hanger rod 34 as will be apparent. After the main compartment of the luggage has been packed with the garments, the fastener 19 can be closed, then the strap can be opened to release the rods 25 and the rods swung into position perpendicularly to the strip 22, whereupon the luggage can be folded into the position shown in Figs. 5, 6 and 7, and the luggage placed on the floor or other support, the luggage being maintained substantially in the position shown in Fig. 5, which position will be governed largely by the thickness of the garments which would be disposed between the strip 22 and the strip 48. The two pockets formed by the facings 15 and 16 can be filled with the other luggage pieces prior to, or after, the luggage has been brought into the position shown in Fig. 5. When in this position, the luggage will be much the same as an ordinary suitcase having flexible side walls, the only difference being that the degree of flexibility of the side walls might be enlarged upon with this luggage, particularly from the standpoint that the transverse dimensions of the top portion of the luggage are materially less than that of the lower portion of the luggage. The handle member 51 forms means for carrying the luggage when in collapsed position.

In this connection, it will be understood that the lower wall 13 of the luggage has a stiffening and reinforcing strip 56 which will be faced on the inner surface of the luggage by a facing 57, as noted in part in Fig. 2 of the drawing, the strip 56 being generally similar to the strip 48 to which the handle 51 is coupled. It will thus be apparent that the strip 56 together with the frame 29 will provide a relatively large rectangular base to the luggage, as shown in Fig. 5, and bulging of the walls 10 will most likely take place at the upper portions of the luggage, as seen in Fig. 5.

It will be understood that the entire luggage or casing, except for the reinforcing strips and hanger frame, is entirely flexible so that the luggage can be compactly folded for packaging, storage, and the like, into a relatively thin package of a length and width defined substantially by the reinforcements employed. The handle member on the top wall can be utilized in carrying the luggage with the luggage fully opened, as shown in Fig. 1 of the drawing, particularly in conveying luggage of this type from a home to a motor car in which the luggage can be hung. On the other hand, in general transportation of the luggage, it is collapsed or folded into the position shown in Fig. 5, and while in such position it is practical to maintain the bracing and supporting means, such as the leg members 25, in operative position so that the luggage can be placed on a supporting surface at any time with assurance that the luggage will maintain its more or less upright position. It will be understood that in the upright position of the luggage in the folded position of the luggage, the garments themselves aid in giving stability to the luggage, particularly in maintaining the top and bottom walls in relationship to each other. This latter being further aided by the coupling of said walls one with the other through the coupling means employed, namely the coupling of the handle member 46 with the strip 47.

Having described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. In flexible walled luggage, an elongated rectangular casing defined by inner and outer walls and top, bottom and side walls, an oblong

rectangular wire hanger frame supported within the top wall, said frame including a garment hanger rod centrally of the frame and transversing said top wall, the inner wall of the luggage having a long L-shaped closure controlled by a separable fastener, said closure freeing said wall to give access to the interior of the luggage for arrangement of garments on said hanger rod, the central portion of the luggage having a wide reinforcing strip fixed to the outer wall and a narrow reinforcing strip fixed to the inner wall, said hanger frame having a central reinforcing plate, means coupled with said plate and extending through the top wall for supporting a handle member externally of the top wall, and the wide strip fixed to the outer wall having a handle member secured thereto, said last named handle member being utilized as carrying means for the luggage in collapsed position of the latter with the top and bottom walls disposed at the lower part of the collapsed luggage.

2. In flexible walled luggage, an elongated rectangular casing defined by inner and outer walls and top, bottom and side walls, an oblong rectangular wire hanger frame supported within the top wall, said frame including a garment hanger rod centrally of the frame and transversing said top wall, the inner wall of the luggage having a long L-shaped closure controlled by a separable fastener, said closure freeing said wall to give access to the interior of the luggage for arrangement of garments on said hanger rod, the central portion of the luggage having a wide reinforcing strip fixed to the outer wall and a narrow reinforcing strip fixed to the inner wall, said hanger frame having a central reinforcing plate, means coupled with said plate and extending through the top wall for supporting a handle member externally of the top wall, and the wide strip fixed to the outer wall having a handle member secured thereto, said last named handle member being utilized as carrying means for the luggage in collapsed position of the latter with the top and bottom walls disposed at the lower part of the collapsed luggage, and means on the bottom wall engaging the handle member of said top wall to maintain said top and bottom walls against relative movement.

3. In flexible walled luggage, an elongated rectangular casing defined by inner and outer walls and top, bottom and side walls, an oblong rectangular wire hanger frame supported within the top wall, said frame including a garment hanger rod centrally of the frame and transversing said top wall, the inner wall of the luggage having a long L-shaped closure controlled by a separable fastener, said closure freeing said wall to give access to the interior of the luggage for arrangement of garments on said hanger rod, the central portion of the luggage having a wide reinforcing strip fixed to the outer wall and a narrow reinforcing strip fixed to the inner wall, said hanger frame having a central reinforcing plate, means coupled with said plate and extending through the top wall for supporting a handle member externally of the top wall, and the wide strip fixed to the outer wall having a handle member secured thereto, said last named handle member being utilized as carrying means for the luggage in collapsed position of the latter with the top and bottom walls disposed at the lower part of the collapsed luggage, means on the bottom wall engaging the handle member of said top wall to maintain said top and bottom walls against relative movement, and a pair of leg members pivotally supported to said narrow strip and adapted to extend downwardly at the sides of the luggage when in collapsed position for support of the luggage against collapsing between the wide strip and said top and bottom walls.

4. In collapsible flexible luggage of the character described, comprising an oblong rectangular casing defined by inner and outer walls bordered by narrow side and top and bottom walls, the top and bottom walls having reinforcing means maintaining said walls in firm substantially rectangular position, the front wall having centrally thereof a reinforcing strip extending the full width thereof, said strip forming the top of the luggage when in collapsed position, the top and bottom walls forming collectively the bottom of the collapsed luggage, means for maintaining the reinforcing means of said walls in edge to edge relationship in the collapsed position of the luggage, and bracing means secured to said luggage and extending from a point substantially in alignment with the bottom of the collapsed luggage to the upper portion of the luggage for supporting the upper portion of the luggage in spaced relation to the bottom.

5. In collapsible flexible luggage of the character described, comprising an oblong rectangular casing defined by inner and outer walls bordered by narrow side and top and bottom walls, the top and bottom walls having reinforcing means maintaining said walls in firm substantially rectangular position, the front wall having centrally thereof, a reinforcing strip extending the full width thereof, said strip forming the top of the luggage when in collapsed position, the top and bottom walls forming collectively the bottom of the collapsed luggage, means for maintaining the reinforcing means of said walls in edge to edge relationship in the collapsed position of the luggage, bracing means extending from a point substantially in alignment with the bottom of the collapsed luggage to the upper portion of the luggage for supporting the upper portion of the luggage in spaced relation to the bottom, and said last named means comprising a pair of rods pivotally supported to the luggage and normally collapsed along the inner wall of the luggage.

6. In collapsible flexible luggage of the character described, comprising an oblong rectangular casing defined by inner and outer walls bordered by narrow side and top and bottom walls, the top and bottom walls having reinforcing means maintaining said walls in firm substantially rectangular position, the front wall having centrally thereof a reinforcing strip extending the full width thereof, said strip forming the top of the luggage when in collapsed position, the top and bottom walls forming collectively the bottom of the collapsed luggage, means for maintaining the reinforcing means of said walls in edge to edge relationship in the collapsed position of the luggage, bracing means extending from a point substantially in alignment with the bottom of the collapsed luggage to the upper portion of the luggage for supporting the upper portion of the luggage in spaced relation to the bottom, said last named means comprising a pair of rods pivotally supported to the luggage and normally collapsed along the inner wall of the luggage, and means transversing the luggage for bracing said inner wall in support thereof by said bracing means.

7. In collapsible flexible luggage of the char-

acter described, comprising an oblong rectangular casing defined by inner and outer walls bordered by narrow side and top and bottom walls, the top and bottom walls having reinforcing means maintaining said walls in firm substantially rectangular position, the front wall having centrally thereof a reinforcing strip extending the full width thereof, said strip forming the top of the luggage when in collapsed position, the top and bottom walls forming collectively the bottom of the collapsed luggage, means for maintaining the reinforcing means of said walls in edge to edge relationship in the collapsed position of the luggage, bracing means extending from a point substantially in alignment with the bottom of the collapsed luggage to the upper portion of the luggage for supporting the upper portion of the luggage in spaced relation to the bottom, said last named means comprising a pair of rods pivotally supported to the luggage and normally collapsed along the inner wall of the luggage, means transversing the luggage for bracing said inner wall in support thereof by said bracing means, and the reinforcing means of said top wall including an outwardly extending handle member secured to said reinforcing strip.

8. In collapsible flexible luggage of the character described movable from a fully extended position into a centrally folded position, defining a piece of luggage having two bottom walls and one top wall joined through the medium of the flexible walls of said luggage, means secured to and normally collapsible on one wall of the luggage adapted to extend into vertical position between the two bottom walls and single top wall in maintaining the top wall in predetermined spaced relationship to said bottom walls.

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