

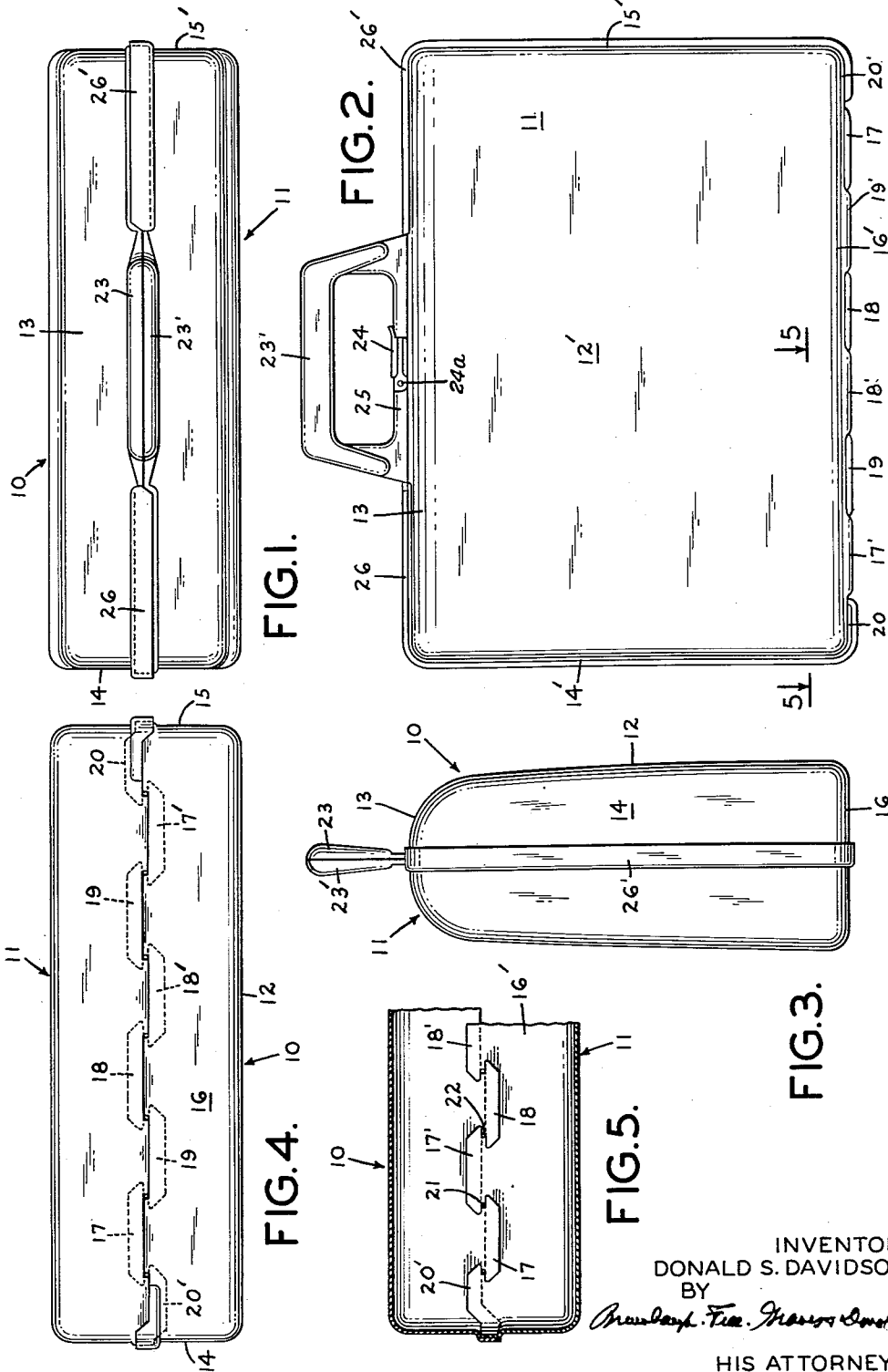
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TRAVELING CASE

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TRAVELING CASE

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This invention relates to improvements in luggage and relates particularly to a simple, economical and lightweight traveling case suitable for use by passengers in airlines, buses and the like.

The overnight bags which are furnished by airlines to their passengers are made of fabric and have a zipper-type closure. Usually, for advertising purposes, the bags bear the name or initials of the airline or other transportation system. Due to the fact that such bags are flexible and collapsible, they afford little protection to the contents thereof and are not very attractive in overall appearance although they do have considerable passenger appeal.

In accordance with the present invention, a novel type of traveling case is provided which affords very substantial protection to the contents thereof, yet is very light and can be appropriately provided with the initials or name of the airline or other transportation system thereby forming an attractive and useful piece of luggage and having the same travel significance and passenger appeal as the prior bags. Travel cases of the type embodying the invention must be furnished to the passengers without cost or at very low cost. They must be inexpensive and, at the same time, attractive. Moreover, they must be of such construction that a great many of them can be shipped, handled, transported and stored without occupying much space.

Traveling cases according to the present invention have all of the above-mentioned advantages.

In accordance with the invention, the cases are made up of two thin, flexible shells made of a tough, resilient plastic such as polyethylene. The shells making up the two halves of the bag are identical or as nearly identical as it is possible to make them by a conventional molding operation. Each shell includes a side panel bounded by top, side and bottom walls and having an open side. At the edge of the bottom wall of a shell are formed hinge elements which are constructed and arranged to cooperate with similar interfitting hinged elements on an opposing shell so that they can be readily connected to join the shells in hinged relation. Each shell may be provided with a handle portion so that when the two shells are brought together in confronting relation, the handle portions coincide and are opposed and form, in effect, a single grip. One of the handle portions may be provided with a latch mechanism to enable the two shells to be latched together in opposing relation.

The shells are formed so that they can be telescoped and stacked in a relatively small space.

Appropriate edge flanges are provided on the shells to form an overlapped edge structure which protects the contents of the cases and they may be provided with the usual tie ribbons or tapes, if desired, to hold clothing or the like securely in the cases. Inasmuch as the shells are formed of a resilient plastic, they are impact resistant and afford good protection to the contents thereof. Moreover, due to the strength and resiliency of the shells, they may be relatively thin so that the weight of a case as a whole is kept to a minimum.

For a better understanding of the present invention reference may be had to the accompanying drawing in which:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a typical traveling case embodying the present invention;

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FIGURE 2 is a side elevation view of the traveling case; FIGURE 3 is an end elevational view thereof;

FIGURE 4 is a bottom plan view thereof; and

FIGURE 5 is a view in section taken on line 5-5 of

FIGURE 2.

Over-night bags or traveling cases of the type embodying the present invention may be made in many different sizes and shapes depending upon requirements. However, for purposes of description, the traveling case described herein is relatively small and suitable for overnight use. The traveling case embodying the present invention is made of two hollow shells 10 and 11, these shells being substantially identical. In the drawings the numerals applied to elements on shell 11, corresponding to like numbered parts on shell 10, are designated by a prime. For convenience, in the following description, unprimed numbers are mainly used. It should be understood that each such reference to a particular part by an unprimed number also includes reference to the corresponding part designated by a primed number. The shells may be molded from a resilient plastic, such as polyethylene, a high impact styrene resin or other flexible or resilient material. Each shell includes a side panel 12, a topwall 13, sidewalls 14 and 15, and a bottomwall 16 extending around the periphery of the side panel 12. As illustrated in FIGURE 3, the bottom wall 16 may be flat while the top wall 13 may be curved and the sidewalls flared slightly outwardly so that shells can be telescoped one inside the other for shipment and storage. Each shell is provided along the edge of the bottom wall 16 with a series of ears 17, 18 and 19. As shown in FIGURES 4 and 5, the ears 17, 18 and 19 are equally spaced apart a distance somewhat less than their over-all length and they are unsymmetrically disposed with respect to the bottom of the panel, so that the ear 17 is closer to the wall 15 than the ear 19 is to the wall 14. Each row of ears includes a shorter ear 20 adjacent to the wall 14. Due to the lack of symmetry of the arrangement of the ears, when two of the shells such as the shells 10 and 11 are brought into confronting relation with their open sides in opposition, the ears 17, 18, 19 and 20 on shell 10 will be offset from the corresponding ears on shell 11. Inasmuch as these ears are of greater length than the spaces between them, each of the ears 17, 18 and 19 is undercut or provided with notches 21, 22 at opposite ends thereof and the ear 20 is undercut at its inner edge so that the ears on the shells can be flexed and snapped into interlocking relation with each other with the notches of the ears interfitting. Due to the relatively loose fit afforded by the notches 21 and 22 in the ears and the flexibility inherent in the ears themselves, they form a hinge which enables the case formed of two 10 and 11 shells to be opened fully or to be closed with the shells in confronting relation and the sidewalls thereof essentially in alignment. It will be apparent that the ears facilitate easy assembly of the two shells and yet due to the interlocking relation of the ears, the shells cannot be unintentionally separated.

In order to facilitate handling of the traveling case, each shell is provided with a handle portion 23 along the free edge of the top wall 13 of the shell. The handle portion 23 may be of any desired configuration and, as illustrated, it is of somewhat trapezoidal form in front elevation and has its outer surface rounded. The inner surface may be flat or substantially so. When the two shells are closed, the handle sections 23 on the shells have their flat sides or surfaces in face to face engagement. Both sections may be readily gripped to hold the shells closed. To insure that the traveling case will remain closed, the shell 10 may be provided with a pivoted latch 24 such as a metal clip of channel-like form which straddles webs 25 extending upwardly from each of the

shells 10 and 11 between the inner ends of the handle 23. The latch 24 may be connected by means of a rivet or pin 24a to one of the webs 25 and is lifted to enable the two shells to be separated and is pushed downwardly to straddle the webs 25 to hold the case closed. It will be understood, of course, that the latch is applied to either of the shells and that only one such latch is required.

The contents of the case may be protected further by providing each shell with an outwardly offset flange 26 which extends from one end of handle section 23 along the free edge of the sidewall 15 and downwardly to and partially across the bottom 16 of the case about to the end of the ear 17. The flange 26 does not have to extend completely around the case because the corresponding flange 26' on the opposing shell affords protection to the opposite end of the case. The flange 26 on each of the shells provides an overlapping joint which protects and prevents loss of the contents of the traveling case.

From the foregoing description it will be apparent that a useful and ornamental, light-weight traveling case is provided which can be manufactured at such low cost that it can be furnished as a gift or premium. The relationship of the elements of the case enable it to be assembled easily and stored in large numbers in a relatively small space.

It will be understood that the surface of the case can be provided with appropriate indicia or ornamentation and it can be provided with any desired surface finish. Moreover, the size and over-all appearance of the case may be modified as, for example, in the shape of the handle, dimensions, and so forth. Therefore, the form of traveling case described herein should be considered as illustrative.

I claim:

1. A traveling case comprising a pair of substantially identical shell members, each having an open side, a side panel, and bottom, top and end walls disposed around the periphery of said side panels, a handle member extending upwards from the top wall of each said shell member adjacent the open side, and a row of undercut ears along and projecting outwardly from the edge of the bottom wall of each shell member, the ears on each shell member being substantially equally spaced apart along the bottom wall a distance less than the greatest dimension of the ears lengthwise of said bottom wall, and the ear adjacent one end of the row being closer to said one end wall than the ear at the opposite end of said row is to the opposite end wall and the ears on one shell member being interposed between and interlocked with the ears on the other shell member to form a hinge connection

between said shell members to enable said shell members to be spread apart and moved into confronting engagement, said handle members coinciding when said shell members are closed.

2. The traveling case set forth in claim 1 comprising a flange secured to and offset outwardly from the edge of one sidewall of each said shell member and extending from said sidewall along the edge of said top wall and terminating adjacent to said handle member thereon, the flange on one shell member overlapping the edge of the opposed sidewall of the other shell member.

3. A traveling case comprising a pair of substantially identical plastic shell members, each having an open side, a side panel and bottom, top and end walls disposed around the periphery of said side panel, each shell member having a row of substantially symmetrical ears projecting from the bottom wall substantially coplanar therewith, the ears being substantially equally spaced apart along the bottom wall a distance less than the greatest dimension of the ears lengthwise of said bottom wall, and the ear adjacent one end of the bottom wall being closer to said one end wall than the ear at the opposite end of said row is to the opposite end wall to dispose the ears on one shell member between the ears on the other shell member when the shell members are assembled with their open sides opposed and their walls substantially in alignment, and notches in said ears to enable them to interfit and interlock and form a hinge connection between said shell members.

4. The traveling case set forth in claim 3, comprising a handle portion extending outwardly from the outer edge of the top wall of each shell member at about the middle thereof.

5. The traveling case set forth in claim 3 in which said ears are inside said shell members when said case is closed.

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