July 9, 1940. J. RITTER, JR 2,207,026

WARDROBE CASE

Filed May 29, 1939 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

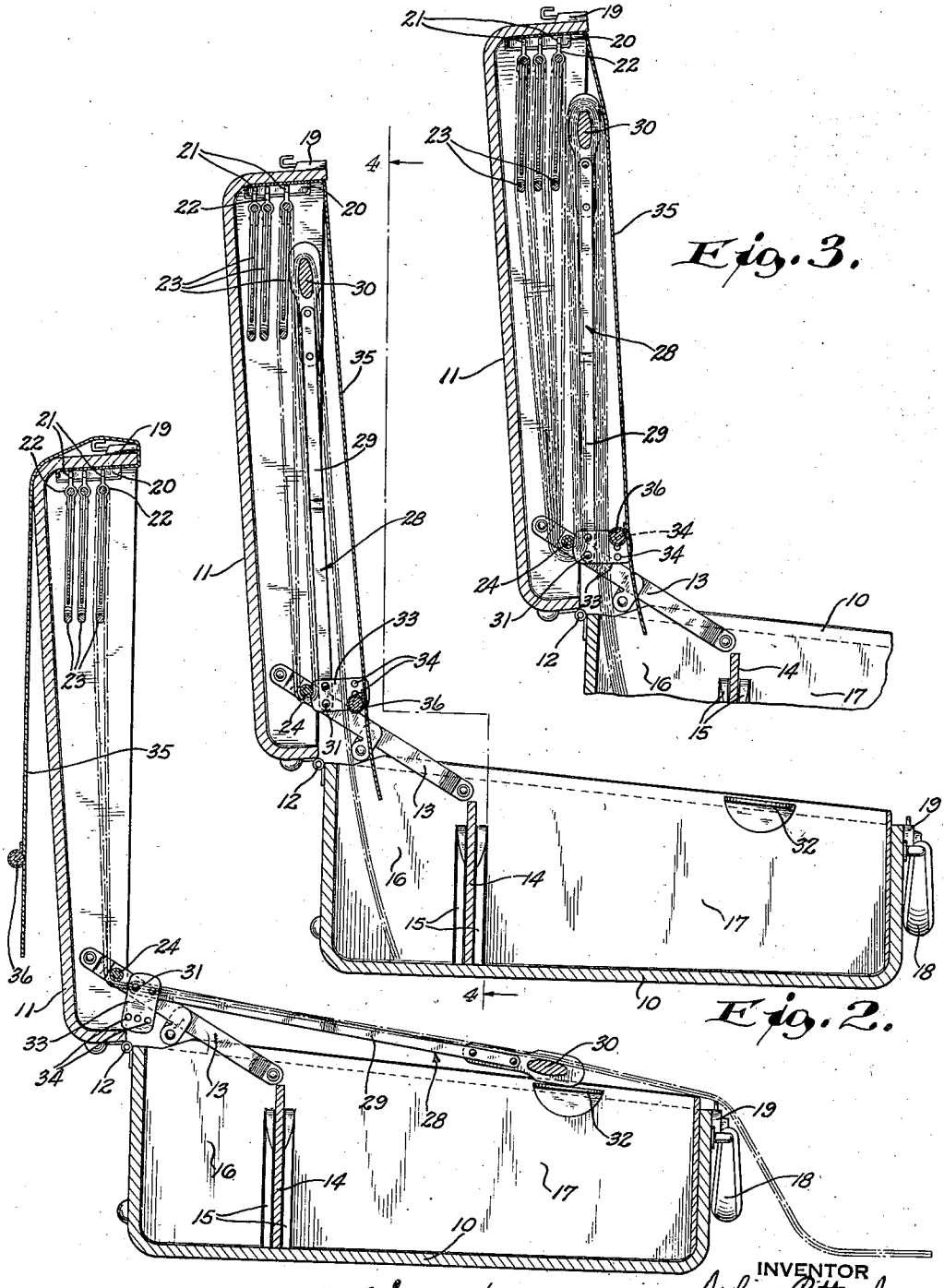


Fig. 3.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 1.

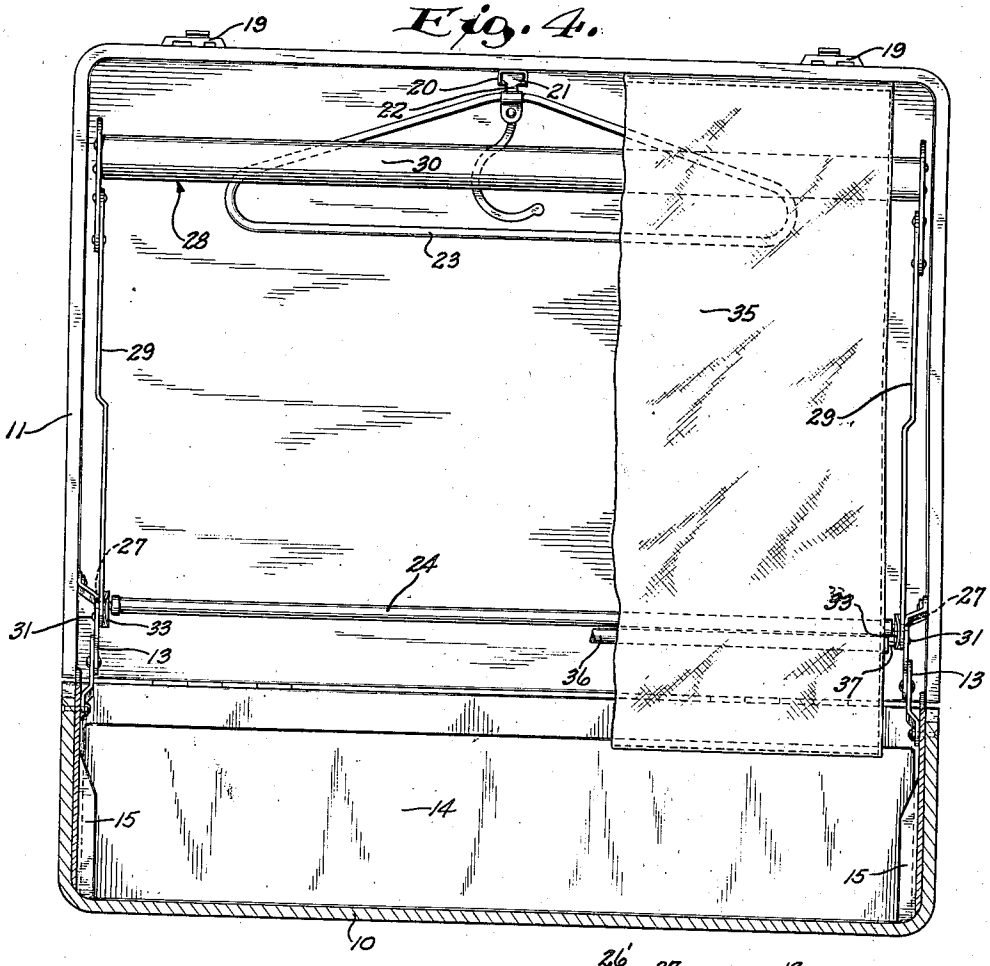
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Fig. 4.



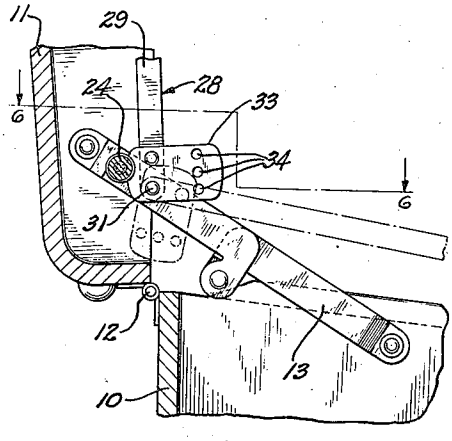


Fig. 5.

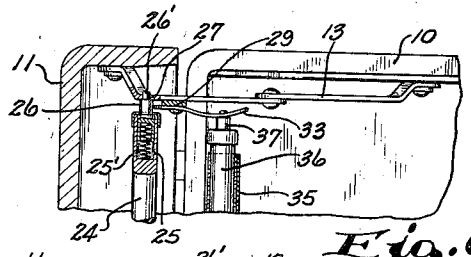


Fig. 6.

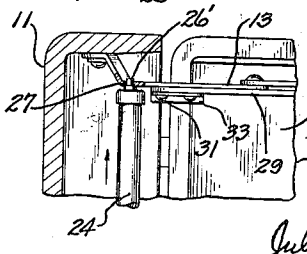


Fig. 7.

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WARDROBE CASE

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4 Claims. (Cl. 190—41)

This invention relates to improvements in wardrobe cases, and more particularly to hand luggage wherein a plurality of elongated garments may be effectively and compactly folded for retention within the case.

Generally defined, a primary object of the present invention is to provide improvements in that form of wardrobe case wherein garments are primarily mounted on and draped from detachable hangers mounted in the free side of the cover of the case and are folded about a removable bar mounted in the hinged end of the same section of the case, and are furthermore folded over the outer end of a pivotal frame whose inner end is hingedly mounted within the hinged end of said section of the case. The present improvements in the afore-mentioned type of luggage case result in a case which is simple and compact in construction, and which is highly efficient in operation, and easy and convenient to manipulate.

In certain forms of wardrobe cases the inner ends of the arms of the swinging garment folding frame are pivotally carried by the folding stays which connect the adjacent, hinged-together sections of the case. In packed position, the swinging frame is lodged within the cover section of the case. When the cover of the case is moved to closed position, if the frame arms are mounted as mentioned, due to the folding of the stays, the frame moves substantially toward the free end of the cover. Substantial movement of the frame in this regard is objectionable as it causes rub and friction on frail garments held thereby and may unduly crush and compact the garment portions at the outer end of the frame against the adjacent end wall of the cover section.

It is, therefore, a specific object of the present invention to provide a wardrobe case of the character described wherein the inner end portions of the swinging frame are pivotally mounted on the stays and in a position and in a manner so that longitudinal shifting of the frame within the cover, when the cover is moved toward closed position, is minimized and is rendered negligible.

Another specific object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case of the character described having novel and effective means for releasably engaging the ends of an inner garment engaging bar, the said means being positive in the retention of the bar and being easily manipulatable.

A further object of the invention is to provide means for automatically locking the garment bar engaging means only when the garment frame is in position within the cover of the case, the arrangement being such as to automatically permit ready access to the bar engaging means to allow ready disengagement and removal of the bar when the garment frame is swung to a position over the body section of the case.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case having a flexible curtain for covering and retaining the swing fixture and garments in the cover section of the case, the lower end of said curtain carrying a rod whose ends are selectively engageable with any of a series of apertures located in plates adjacent the inner end of the cover, whereby the curtain can be secured in adjusted position according to whether it is slack or taut due to packing of garments interiorly thereof and which arrangement will insure a tight securement of said curtain under all conditions to prevent undue downward sagging of the garment frame and garments thereon when the cover of the case is packed and closed.

A further object of the invention is to provide a wardrobe case wherein the major portions of garments are folded and compactly confined within the cover section of the case with provision for extended end portions of garments to drape into a well formed in the inner end of the body of the case, the remainder of the body of the case being free to hold miscellaneous articles of wearing apparel and traveling paraphernalia.

These and other objects and advantages will be apparent from the following detailed description.

In the accompanying drawings in which the same reference characters indicate the same parts in the various views:

Fig. 1 is a transverse vertical sectional view through an open wardrobe case embodying the features of the present invention and showing the garment supporting frame positioned over the body section of the case preparatory to completing the loading and folding of garments;

Fig. 2 is a view similar to Fig. 1 only showing the garment supporting frame moved into the cover section of the case with the protective curtain adjusted thereover in a position relative to a small quantity of folded garments;

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary sectional view similar to the showing in Fig. 2 only showing another adjustment of the secured protective curtain, effective when the cover section is packed with a greater quantity of garments;

Fig. 4 is a front view of the open wardrobe case with the body section of the case in vertical section and with the garment supporting frame moved into the cover section of the case;

Fig. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary detail sectional view showing the relationship of certain of the parts when the garment supporting frame is moved into the cover section, and the means for locking the garment engaging bar against removal in this position of the members;

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary detail sectional view taken on line 6—6 of Fig. 5; and

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary detail sectional view similar to Fig. 6 only showing the garment supporting frame in lowered position whereby removal of the garment engaging bar may be effected.

Although the invention has been shown and described herein as being specifically applied to a certain form of hand luggage, it should be apparent that the novel features are more generally applicable to any type of garment carrying case or container, and it is not the intent to limit the invention by such specific disclosure.

Referring now more particularly to the drawings, it will appear that the wardrobe case comprises in general a body section 10 having a cover section 11 pivotally attached to its rear wall by a hinge 12. The cover and body sections are furthermore connected by hinged stays 13 which serve to limit the opening movement of the cover relative to the body section. Relatively close to the rear wall of the body section and parallel thereto, there is a removable partition 14 having its side edges slidably mounted in guide-ways 15. When in position, this partition provides within the body section 10 a rear well 16, for the purpose hereinafter to be explained, and a main compartment 17 for the accommodation of miscellaneous articles of wearing apparel and traveling paraphernalia. The main section may be provided with the usual carrying handle 18 and the cover section 11 may be swung into engagement with the body section 10 and locked thereto by means of the usual latches 19. Garment supporting and folding mechanism of improved construction is mounted substantially entirely within the cover section 11.

Mounted transversely on the inner face of the front wall of the cover section 11 and intermediate the sides of said cover section is a hollow slotted guide 20 which is adapted to removably receive and enclose the T-shaped heads 21 of pivotal arms 22 carried by upper intermediate portions of garment hangers 23. As shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3, a plurality of hangers 23 are thus mounted within the upper end of the open cover in superimposed relation. Each hanger is adapted to support the upper portion of an elongated garment and the garment is initially draped therefrom, and prior to complete packing the garment is folded at the lower end of the cover and extends out over the body section 10 of the case. The initial fold in the garment is accomplished and maintained by a removable garment engaging bar 24.

Both end portions of the bar 24 are formed in the manner best shown in Fig. 6. It will be observed that a recess 25 in the end of a bar 24 houses a spring 25'. A plunger 26 is normally urged outwardly by the spring and the reduced end portion 26' of the plunger is adapted to releasably engage in an aperture 27 in an inner end portion of a stay element 13. By forcing or shifting the bar longitudinally, as in Fig. 7, the plunger at one end thereof will retract against its spring and sufficient movement of the bar is permitted to disengage the plunger at the other end of the bar from its aperture 27, whereby complete disengagement and removal of said bar may be accomplished. Engagement of the bar 24 with the stays 13 is performed by inserting one of the plungers 26 into its stay aperture 27 and retracting the opposite plunger until it can snap into its aperture 27.

The garment folding and supporting mechanism also includes a pivotal U-frame indicated generally by the numeral 28. This frame is formed of a pair of side arms 29 connected at their outer ends by a rod 30. The inner end of each arm 29 of said U-frame is pivotally attached, as at 31, to a rear or inner portion of a stay element 13. The attachment of said arms to relatively rear portions of the stays is of importance, as will hereinafter appear. When the wardrobe case is open the frame may be swung from the substantially vertical position of Fig. 2, to the substantially horizontal position of Fig. 3. In the latter position its outer end portions engage and are supported by cleats 32 carried by inner side portions of the body section 10 of the case.

The inner ends of the frame arms 29 have riveted or otherwise secured thereto, plates 33. The pivot elements 31 for the frame arms are utilized as some of the securing elements for said plates. Each plate is formed with a series of alined apertures 34, and the plates are resilient or yieldable. When the frame 28 is in position within the open cover of the case, the plates 33 project horizontally rearwardly and the free ends of the same lodge between the stays 13 and the capped ends of the plungers 26 of the removable bar 24. This position of the plates will prevent sufficient normal longitudinal movement of said bar for disengagement of a plunger from a stay aperture 27. Hence, when the frame 28 is in position within the open cover of the case, the bar 24 can not be removed. It is desirable that said bar only be removable when the frame is in the position of Fig. 1 for packing or unpacking. In the latter position the plates 33 are remote from the bar and said bar may be readily manipulated to effect its disengagement and removal.

The numeral 35 indicates a flexible protective curtain formed of a suitable fabric or a like material. One end of this curtain is attached to the inner free edge of the cover section 11 of the case and the purpose of this curtain is to cover the open side of the cover section and to protect the contents thereof when said section is packed. Said curtain, when in secured position, also serves as a means for retaining the frame 28 and garments thereon within the cover section. When the case is open for packing or unpacking purposes, the curtain is released and is thrown over the outer wall portions of the cover section, as in Fig. 1. However, when the case is packed, it is essential that the curtain be secured in protecting and retaining position. To this end the lower or free end portion of the curtain carries a transverse rod 36 whose opposite end portions are provided with yielding plungers 37 similar to the plungers 26 of the bar 24. Said plungers are selectively engageable with any of the apertures 34 in the plates 33. The particular apertures selected for receiving the plungers 37 will depend on whether the curtain is slack or outwardly bulged, depending on

the amount and bulk of the garments packed within the cover section 11.

When the improved wardrobe case is to be packed, the cover section is first opened relative to the body section in the manner shown in Fig. 1 and the curtain 35 is released and is swung to the out-of-the-way position shown. Next it is desirable to swing the frame 29 to the position over the body section to thereby permit release of the garment engaging bar 24. One or more of the hangers 23 are next removed from the slotted guide 20. A hanger then has a garment, coat or dress, supported thereon in the usual manner and the hanger is replaced within the slotted guide 20. If the garment is of an elongated character it will hang vertically down the cover section and it is then extended out over the frame 28 and over the outer side of the body section 10, as indicated in broken lines in Fig. 1. Thereafter the garment engaging bar 24, which had previously been removed, is replaced. The frame member 28 should next be swung upwardly so as to lodge entirely within the cover section 11, as in Fig. 2. The curtain 35 is next thrown over the open side of the cover section and it is secured in a desired condition of tautness by inserting the ends of the plungers 37 of the rod 36 into suitable apertures 34 of the plate member 33. If only one of the hangers 23 is utilized for garments and if the cover section is relatively loosely packed, the lowermost apertures 34 in the plate 33 may be utilized, as in Fig. 2. However, if the cover section is packed with a relatively large quantity of garments, the same may bulge outwardly somewhat and in order to confine the frame and garments it may be desirable to secure the curtain rod 36 in one of the upper apertures of the plate 33. This condition is shown in Fig. 3. When the cover section is thus packed, it will be noted that the garment carrying and folding mechanism has a garment arranged thereabout in the following manner: the garment hangs from a hanger 23 and extends, medially of its ends, about the bar 24 and it is furthermore then extended along the frame 28 and folded over the rod 30 at the free end of the frame. If the garment is particularly long, it hangs down along the front face of the frame and the extremity thereof may drape into the rear well 16 in the body section of the case.

After the cover section has been thus packed and the curtain has been secured over the open side of the cover section, the body section of the case may be packed in the usual manner with various articles of apparel and traveling paraphernalia. The cover section is ultimately swung to closed position relative to the body section of the case and is thereto secured by means of the latch elements 19. When the case is carried, the hangers 23 are in the uppermost end of the case and the garments supported thereby hang naturally therefrom and this is likewise true of the portions of the garments folded over the end rod 30 of the frame 28.

As has been mentioned heretofore, when the frame 28 is in position within the cover section of the case, the ends of the plates 33 are interposed adjacent the end portions of the removable bar 24 and the bar cannot be sufficiently manipulated to effect its removal. Removal of the bar is only possible when the frame is swung to the position of Fig. 1. The plates 33 are resilient and are easily engaged by the end portions of the curtain rod 36. When the curtain is in secured position, it is desirable to have it relatively taut so that when the cover section of the case is ultimately swung down toward the body section, the frame and garments will be prevented, by the curtain 35, from undue sagging and this will also prevent edge portions of garments from possibly bulging out of the sides of the curtain to interfere with proper closing of the cover.

It has heretofore been pointed out that the inner ends of the arms 28 are pivotally connected to relatively rear portions of the stays 14. Consequently when the cover of the case is closed relative to the body section, there is relatively little longitudinal shifting of the frame and consequently the frame rod 30 does not move too close to the end of the cover section. This prevents wear on the garments and undue crushing of the same against the inner end of the cover section of the case.

It is obvious that unpacking of the case is accomplished by operations reverse to those described in connection with the packing operations. It should furthermore be pointed out that the slotted guideway 20 may accommodate a plurality of hangers which are arranged in superimposed condition and access to an inner garment may be had by removing the hangers which are forwardly of the hanger carrying the desired garment.

It should be understood that it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact details of construction herein shown and described, for various modifications within the scope of the claims may occur to persons skilled in the art.

What is claimed as the invention is:

1. In a fixture equipped luggage case, the case including hingedly connected complementary body and cover sections and the fixture including a swinging frame having a pair of side arms, foldable stays pivotally connected at their ends to inner portions of the cover and body sections respectively, each stay having an aperture therein relatively close to its point of pivotal connection with the cover section, a transverse garment engaging bar having shouldered and yielding plunger equipped ends adapted to enter said stay apertures for the removable mounting of said bar, and plates carried by the inner ends of the frame arms in a manner so that edge portions of said plates will position adjacent the shouldered portions of said bar to restrict longitudinal movement and consequent removal thereof from the stay apertures when the frame is swung into the cover section of the case, said plates being remote from said bar when the frame is swung to a position out of the cover section of the case.

2. In a fixture equipped luggage case, the case including hingedly connected complementary body and cover sections, and the fixture including a swinging frame having a pair of side arms, foldable stays pivotally connected at their ends to inner portions of the cover and body sections respectively, each stay having an aperture therein relatively close to its point of pivotal connection with the cover section, a transverse garment engaging bar having shouldered and yielding plunger equipped ends adapted to enter said stay apertures for the removable mounting of said bar, a curtain having one end secured within the free end portion of the cover section and being adapted to drape over and cover the open side of said cover section, a transverse member carried by the opposite end portion of said curtain and having prongs at its ends, and yielding plates carried by the inner ends of said frame

arms in a manner so that edge portions of said plates will position adjacent the shouldered portions of said bar to restrict longitudinal movement and consequent removal thereof from the stay apertures when the frame is in one position but being remote from the bar when the frame is in another position of adjustment, said plates also having apertures therein for removably receiving the prongs on the curtain transverse member to secure the curtain in protecting and retaining position.

3. In a fixture equipped luggage case, the case including hingedly connected complementary body and cover sections and the fixture including a swinging frame having a pair of side arms, yieldable folding stays pivotally connected at their ends to inner portions of the cover and body sections respectively, each stay having an aperture therein relatively close to its point of connection with the cover section, a transverse garment engaging bar having shouldered and yielding plunger equipped ends adapted to enter said stay apertures for the removable mounting of said bar, a flexible curtain having one end secured within the free end portion of the cover section and being adapted to drape over and cover the open side of said cover section, a transverse rod carried by the opposite end portion of said curtain, said rod having spring urged, plunger-like end portions, and yielding, metallic plates carried by the inner ends of said frame arms in a manner so that edge portions of said plates will position adjacent the shouldered portions of said bar to restrict longitudinal movement and consequent removal thereof from the stay apertures when the frame is in one position but being remote from the bar when the frame is in another position of adjustment, the opposite edges of said plates being outwardly flared and each plate being provided with a series of alined apertures whereby selected apertures in the plates may removably receive the plunger ends of the curtain rod to adjustably secure the curtain in a taut protecting and retaining position.

4. In a fixture equipped luggage case, the case including hingedly connected complementary body and cover sections, and the fixture including a swinging frame having a pair of side arms, socket members within opposite sides of the hinged end of one of the case sections, a transverse garment bar having shouldered and plunger equipped ends, which plunger ends are adapted to enter said socket members for the removable mounting of said bar, and plates carried by the inner ends of the frame arms in a manner so that edge portions of said plates will position adjacent the shouldered portions of said bar to restrict longitudinal movement and consequent removal thereof from said socket members when the frame is swung into the cover section of the case, said plates being remote from said bar when the frame is swung to a position out of the cover section of the case.

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