UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,554,215

FLAT OPENING CASE

Horace R. Schell and Clarence F. Schell,
Cincinnati, Ohio

Application June 7, 1949, Serial No. 97,562

1 Claim. (Cl. 150—1,6)

This invention relates to brief cases of the type that are folded double when closed and are laid flat when open, and more particularly to a case so arranged that the handle may be attached to the fold line of the case, that is at a location which ordinarily is regarded as the bottom of the case.

An object of the invention is to provide a brief case as above set forth having a slide fastener closure for the opposite sides and the bottom thereof, and having a handle at the top secured to the fold line thereof.

Another object of the invention is to provide a case of the type set forth above having interior pockets which open towards the fold line thereof so that papers carried in the brief case will not become entangled in the slide fastener.

A further object of this invention is to provide a flat opening case having a single handle and pockets for carrying papers which pockets open toward the handle so that the pockets are upright when the case is carried.

A further object of this invention is to provide a flat opening case having side panels which open flat and which are provided with a slide fastener closure about the edges of the side panels, paper carrying pockets being attached to the side panels which pockets open away from the slide fastener so that edges of papers in the pockets do not interfere with the slide fastener.

Briefly, this invention provides a flat opening case having a back or fold portion to which a handle is attached and side panels hinged to the back portion which side panels hang downwardly when the case is closed. The side panels may carry pockets that open toward the back portion so that when the case is carried by the handle, the pockets are upright.

The above and other objects and features of the invention will in part be apparent and will in part be obvious from the following detailed description and the drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing a slide fastener case constructed in accordance with an embodiment of this invention, the case being shown open and in closed position;

Figure 3 is a view in section taken along a line III—III in Fig. 2;

Figure 4 is a view in section taken along a line IV—IV in Fig. 3;

Figure 5 is a plan view showing a metal plate which forms a part of the handle assembly of the case illustrated in Figs. 1 to 4 inclusive;

Figure 6 is a perspective view showing an underarm case having a handle constructed in accordance with this invention; and

Figure 7 is a fragmentary view in transverse section showing the construction of the back of a ring binder case having a handle constructed in accordance with this invention.

In the following detailed description and the drawings, like reference characters indicate like parts.

In Figs. 1 to 5 inclusive is shown a slide fastener case having a central back or fold portion 10 and side panels 12, the back portion and side panels being formed from a single sheet of flexible material, preferably top grain leather. Between the back portion 10 and side panels 12, the leather forms hinge sections 13 which the side panels can be folded so that the side panels may be laid parallel and in alignment with the back portion when the case is open, as shown in Fig. 2, or the side panels may be folded into registry, as shown in Fig. 1, when the case is closed. Gussets 14 attached to the free edges of the side panels carry slide fastener elements 16, and the slide fastener elements may be attached together as shown in Fig. 1, to hold edges of the side panels in engaged relationship when the case is closed. A conventional slide 18 is provided for causing the fastener elements to engage and disengage.

Pocket members 17 are attached to the side panels on the same side as the gussets. The pockets 17 have accordion pleated sides so that the pockets can be expanded, and the pockets open toward the back portion of the case, i.e., toward the center of the case when the case is open. Thus, papers which may be carried in the pockets extend away from the slide fastener elements 16 so that the papers in the pockets do not interfere with the fastener elements.

A handle 18 is attached to the outside of the back portion of the case. The handle 18 may be formed from a strip of leather or the like. A metal strip or plate 19 is mounted inside the back portion of the leather sheet which covers the case and is attached thereto by rivets 21. Details of the plate 19 are shown in Fig. 5. The plate is in the form of a channel having a wide web 22 and low flanges 23. The web includes perforations 24 for the rivets 21 and, in addition, a pair of aligned slots 26 which extend crosswise of the case and are adapted to receive rivets 27 which are attached to ends of the handle strip 18.

The rivets 27 are mounted in the slots 26, one end of each rivet being slidable along one of the slots. The other end of each rivet extends
through a slot 28 in the leather backing portion and is attached to an end of the handle 18 so that the handle is adjustable between an extended position, shown in Fig. 4, and a retracted position in which the handle is substantially flush with the back portion of the case. Appropriate washers may be mounted on the rivets 27 to serve as bearings which slide along the slots 28 with the rivets 27 as shown in Fig. 3, an inner or cover strip 29 of leather or the like covers the metal strip on the inside of the case. The flanges of the metal strip hold the cover strip 29 away from the rivet heads.

As will be clear from the drawings, when the case is carried by the handle 18, the pockets open upwardly and papers in the pockets will normally be held in place by gravity. However, when the slide fastener is opened or closed, it cannot interfere with papers in the pockets, for the papers extend away from the slide fastener elements.

In Fig. 6 is shown an underarm case which has side panels 31, a narrow back portion 32, a handle 33 and slide fastener elements 34. The slide fastener elements are attached directly to edges of the side panels 31, and the case shown in Fig. 6 differs from that shown in Figs. 1 to 5 inclusive in that no gussets are provided between the side panels and the slide fastener elements. However, in other details, the case shown in Fig. 6 may correspond with the case shown in Figs. 1 to 5 inclusive, and the case shown in Fig. 6, may if desired, include pockets opening toward the handle, though such pockets are not essential to this type of case.

In Fig. 7 is shown a ring binder case having a similar handle construction. The case illustrated in Fig. 7 includes a back portion 36 inside which a metal plate 37 is mounted, the metal plate being similar in detail to the plate 19. An inner leather strip 38 covers the metal plate 37, and rivets 39 extend through the strip 38 to attach the strip 38 to the inner leather strip and to the back of a ring binder element 41. Rivets 42 extend through slots in the metal plate 37 and are attached to ends of a handle 43 which handle may be adjustable between retracted and extended position in the same manner as the handle of the case shown in Figs. 1 to 5 inclusive. As will be understood, the ring binder case shown in Fig. 7 may include side panels hinged to the back portion 38 which side panels can cover papers held by the rings of the ring binder in the usual manner.

The cases described above and illustrated in the drawing are of the flat opening type and may be laid flat upon a table or desk, but in the case, the case requires only a single handle centrally located at the back portion rather than the pair of handles which has been common heretofore with flat opening cases.

The embodiments of the invention described above and illustrated in the drawings are subject to modification without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claim.

Having described our invention, what we claim as novel and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

In combination with a case having a back portion and a pair of side panels attached to and extending in opposite directions from the back portion, an elongated metal plate on the inside of said back portion, said plate containing a pair of spaced aligned slots extending lengthwise of the back portion, the back portion of the case having a pair of slots in registry with the slots in the plate, a rivet mounted in each slot of the plate and extending through the slot in the back portion in registry therewith, and a handle of flexible material on the outside of the back portion opposite ends of said handle being attached to said rivets, said rivets being slidable in said slots between a handle extended position in which the central portion of the handle is spaced from the back portion of the case and a handle retracted position in which the handle is substantially in abutting relation with the back portion of the case.

HORACE R. SCHELL.
CLARENCE F. SCHELL.

REFERENCES CITED

The following references are of record in the file of this patent:

UNITED STATES PATENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,554,215</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,009,553</td>
<td>Mashek</td>
<td>Mar. 17, 1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,149,634</td>
<td>Crigler</td>
<td>Aug. 10, 1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,586,719</td>
<td>Hering</td>
<td>Sept. 7, 1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,736,640</td>
<td>Waterer</td>
<td>Nov. 19, 1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,091,531</td>
<td>Stelljes</td>
<td>Aug. 31, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,105,911</td>
<td>Garfinkel</td>
<td>Feb. 1, 1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,173,120</td>
<td>Liffon</td>
<td>Sept. 19, 1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,181,308</td>
<td>Sats</td>
<td>Nov. 28, 1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,214,632</td>
<td>Brown, Jr.</td>
<td>Sept. 10, 1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,226,387</td>
<td>Reuben</td>
<td>Dec. 24, 1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,493,182</td>
<td>Beder</td>
<td>Jan. 3, 1950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>