

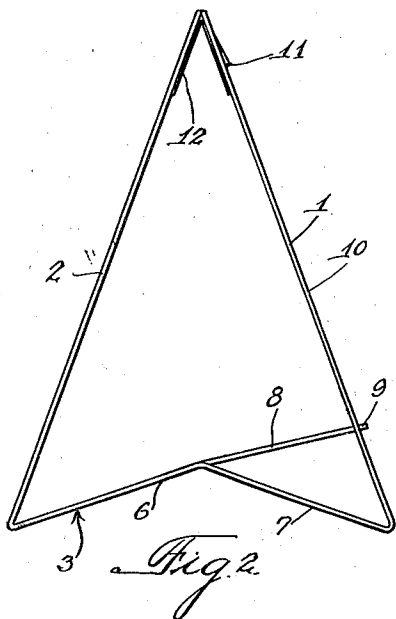
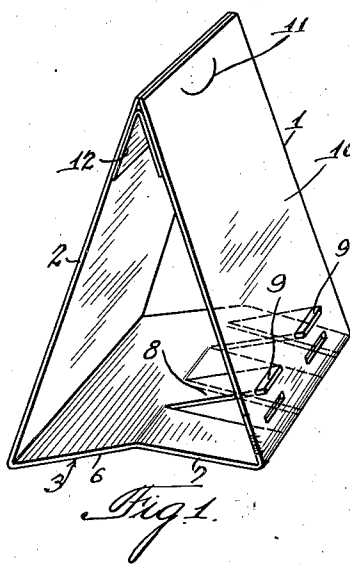
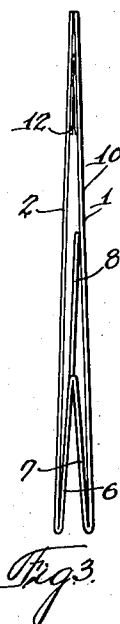
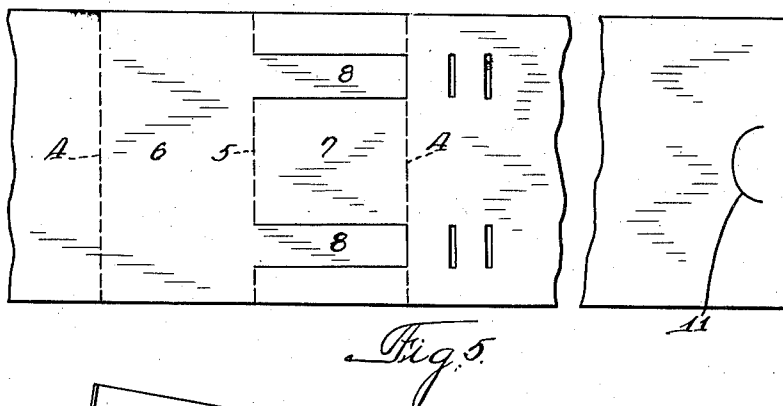
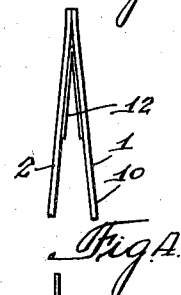
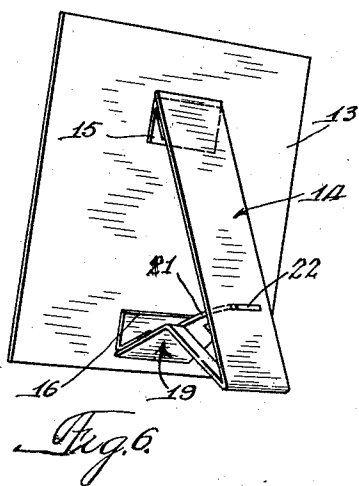
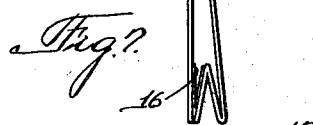
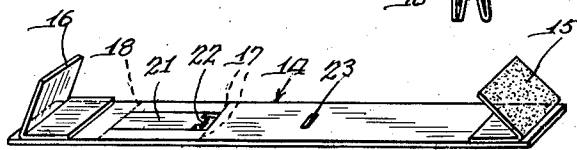
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EASEL

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,252,571

EASEL

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15 Claims. (Cl. 40—124.1)

This invention relates to easels and more particularly to easels made of flexible sheet material for the purpose of supporting display cards or photographs or the like.

One embodiment of the invention is particularly adapted for use as a place card or for similar purposes. It is an object of the invention to provide an easel or card of the character described which is normally collapsed and may be opened or expanded to easel form and in which automatic locking means is provided for retaining the easel in self supporting condition.

A further object is to provide an easel of the character described which may be formed of ordinary cardboard or similar comparatively thin sheet material; also, in which substantially the entire easel may, if desired, be formed of a single piece of sheet material, and in which all of the smaller and more fragile portions thereof are enclosed within the protecting sheets when the easel is collapsed.

An important object of the invention is the provision of a type of hinge between the front of the easel and the supporting means which will provide a substantial spring tension tending to collapse the easel, and which also tends to resiliently retain the locking means in place when the easel is expanded.

A further object is to provide an easel of the character described which will be of few parts, cheap to manufacture, easy to assemble, and which will not easily get out of order in use; also wherein the easel is automatically locked in open position by a single manual operation.

Further objects will be apparent from the specification and the appended claims.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a perspective front view of one embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 2 is a side elevation of the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a side view illustrating the easel in its normal collapsed condition.

Fig. 4 is an enlarged view of the upper end of the easel and illustrates the novel hinge arrangement.

Fig. 5 is a view of the blank from which the main portion of the easel may be formed, a portion being broken away for convenience in illustration.

Fig. 6 is a rear perspective view of another embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 7 is a side elevation of the embodiment shown in Fig. 6 in its collapsed form.

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of the blank form-

ing the supporting portion of the embodiment shown in Figs. 6 and 7 with the hinge members attached thereto.

Referring to the drawing in detail, the embodiment illustrated in Figs. 1 to 5, inclusive, comprises two display panels 1 and 2 and an intermediate portion 3 connecting the lower edge of the walls or panels 1 and 2. The panels 1 and 2 and the intermediate portion 3 are preferably formed of a single piece of cardboard or other suitable resilient sheet material, and the blank may be scored, as shown by the dotted lines 4 and 5 in Fig. 5, to provide hinge joints connecting the intermediate portions with the panels and a hinge joint 5 preferably on the median line of the intermediate portion 3, as shown, so that the intermediate portion 3 will normally tend to fold inwardly in the form of an accordion plait when the easel is collapsed as shown in Fig. 3. The intermediate portion 3, therefore, provides two inwardly extending hinge members 6 and 7 which are hinged at their outer ends to the panels 1 and 2 with their inner edges hinged together as shown.

In the embodiment illustrated, the portion 7 adjacent the panel 1 of the easel is sheared as shown in Fig. 5 to provide tongues 8 which form integral extensions of the portion 6 and these tongues normally remain in substantially the same plane as the member 6 and merely form semi-rigid inwardly extending continuations thereof. The tongues 8 normally extend upwardly between the side walls of the easel when it is collapsed as shown in Fig. 3, and, when the walls 1 and 2 are expanded, the ends of the tongues will move downwardly along the inner surface of the front wall as the accordion plait expands until the ends of the tongues automatically engage in slots 9 in the front wall of the easel, as shown in Fig. 1, to thereby lock the easel in open position.

The ends of the tongues 8 may extend through the slots 9 sufficiently to enable a card or photograph to be supported on the ends of the tongues as shown by the dotted lines 10. The panel 1 is sheared, preferably somewhat as shown in Fig. 1 and adjacent the upper edge thereof, to provide one or more downwardly extending tabs 11 which may extend over the upper edge of the card or photograph and retain it snugly in place with its lower edge supported on the outwardly extending ends of the tongues 8.

The upper ends of the panels 1 and 2 are secured together by means of a hinge member 12. This hinge may be in the form of a folded strip

of adhesive tape or any suitable material, preferably paper tape, which is adhesively secured to the side walls in the manner shown in Fig. 4, with the upper or pivotal edge of the hinge somewhat below the upper edge of the walls 1 and 2. In other words, the upper edges of the panels 1 and 2 extend somewhat beyond the pivot point of the hinge so that these walls tend to resist the opening of the easel and a resilient structure is thereby formed which normally tends to collapse the easel, and, when the easel is pulled open against this tension, the ends of the tongues 8 will move downwardly along the inner surface of the panel 1 until they automatically snap into the slots 9 and the normal tension supplied by the hinge will tend to hold the easel in the locked position shown.

The panel 1 of the easel may be provided with a plurality of vertically aligned transverse slots 9 so that the tongues 8 may be engaged in any selected pair of slots to thereby provide supports for any desired size of card or photograph. It will, of course, be understood that either or both of the panels may bear illustrations or printed matter for display purposes.

The embodiment illustrated in Figs. 6, 7, and 8 is very similar to that previously described except that any suitable card 13 may be used for the front of the easel and a strap-like supporting member 14 is provided adjacent its upper end with a hinge 15 which may be similar to the hinge 12. The upper pivotal edge of this hinge 15 is positioned slightly below the upper end of the strap member 14 so that, when the strap and the card 13 are secured together by the hinge, the supporting member tends to collapse as shown in Fig. 7.

The lower end of the strap member 14 is secured to the card 13 by means of a hinge member 16 which may be similar to the hinge member 15; that is, it may be formed of a folded strip of adhesive tape having one side secured to the member 14 and the other side secured to the card 13 to provide a suitable hinge 16. This lower pivotal edge of the hinge 16 may be positioned slightly above so that this hinge also tends to resiliently resist opening of the easel.

The strap member 14 may be transversely creased or scored or otherwise formed along lines corresponding to the dotted lines 17 and 18 to provide a collapsible accordion hinge portion 19, as shown, whereby this entire hinge section tends to collapse between the body portion 14 and the card 13 when the easel is closed, as shown in Fig. 7. The construction of the accordion hinge portion 19 in this embodiment is similar to the intermediate collapsible portion 3 of the easel previously described except that in this structure any suitable card or panel 13 may be used and the supporting portion or strap 14 may be attached thereto by means of the hinge members 15 and 16.

The position of the pivotal point of the hinges 15 and 16 in the relationship shown at 20 in Fig. 7 causes the resilience of the supporting member to tend at all times to collapse the easel and to hold it rigidly in position when opened, as shown in Fig. 6.

The strap portion 14 is sheared and slotted as shown in Fig. 8 to provide a locking tongue 21. The tongue 21 forms an integral portion of one side of the accordion hinge member 19 and automatically engages in a slot 23 in the strap 14 when the easel is opened, as shown in Fig. 6. In this embodiment the strap portion 14, includ-

ing the adhesive tape hinge members 15 and 16 applied thereto, may be manufactured and sold as a separate unit and may be attached to any suitable card such as the card 13 by merely securing the free ends of the adhesive hinges 15 and 16 thereto as shown in Fig. 6.

Modifications may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention, and it is therefore desired that the invention be limited only by the prior art and the scope of the appended claims.

Having thus described this invention, what is claimed and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. A collapsible easel comprising a strip of sheet material transversely folded to provide two oppositely disposed panels and an intermediate normally collapsed accordion plait therebetween, said panels being further secured together adjacent their opposite free ends whereby said panels cooperate to resiliently resist opening of said accordion plait, and means formed integral with one side of said plait and adapted automatically to engage in a slot in one of said panels when said easel is opened and to retain said easel open.

2. A collapsible easel comprising two oppositely disposed panels having an accordion plait therebetween adjacent the lower ends, the upper ends of said panels being hingedly connected together with the pivot line of the hinge below the upper edges whereby said panels resiliently resist opening movement, and a plurality of inwardly extending elongated tongues integral with one side of said accordion plait and extending in the same plane therewith and automatically operative to releasably engage in slots in the opposite panel to retain said easel open.

3. A collapsible easel comprising front and rear panels hinged together adjacent their upper edges, a separator portion hingedly connected to each lower edge and having an intermediate reverse hinge whereby said separator portion may fold inwardly between said panels when said panel is collapsed, and an inward extension being cut out from and integral with said separator portion and extending from adjacent the apex of said reverse hinge and in the plane thereof and adapted automatically to engage in a slot in one of said panels when said easel is expanded to lock said panels in open position.

4. A collapsible easel comprising front and rear panels hinged together adjacent their upper edges, a separator portion hingedly connected to each lower edge and having an intermediate reverse hinge whereby said separator portion may fold inwardly between said panels when said panel is collapsed, an inward extension from adjacent said reverse hinge and adapted automatically to engage in a slot in one of said panels when said easel is expanded to lock said panels in open position, said extension extending through said slot sufficiently to form a support for a card, and a tongue adjacent the upper edge of the slotted panel to engage over the upper edge of said card.

5. In an article of manufacture a panel support comprising a strap-like member having a body portion, means for hingedly securing the free end of said body portion snugly to a card with the hinge pivot slightly below the free edge of said portion whereby said edge resiliently resists the movement of said support away from said card, the opposite end of said strap-like member being scored and sheared to provide an

accordion plait when folded, means to hingedly secure the free end of said plait to said card, one side of said plait having an inwardly extending tongue integral therewith and adapted to cooperate with said body portion to retain said support in open position relative to said card.

6. In an article of manufacture a panel support comprising a strap-like member having a body portion, means for hingedly securing the free end of said body portion snugly to a card with the hinge pivot slightly below the free edge of said portion whereby said edge resiliently resists the movement of said support away from said card, the opposite end of said strap-like member being scored and sheared to provide an accordion plait when folded, means to hingedly secure the free end of said plait to said card, one side of said plait having an inwardly extending tongue integral therewith with its free end adapted automatically to engage in a slot in said body portion when said support is moved to open position, and a shoulder on said tongue to prevent closing of said support.

7. An article of manufacture comprising a strap-like member of cardboard or the like, said member being scored adjacent one end to provide an accordion plait when folded, said plait being formed to provide an elongated tongue forming an inward extension of the outer side of said plait and adapted to engage in a slot in the body portion of said member when said plait is partially open, and means to hingedly secure the free ends of said member respectively adjacent the top and bottom of a card.

8. An easel attachment for a display card comprising a strap-like member formed of cardboard or the like having an adhesive tape-like flap secured to the inner face of each end and forming a hinge flap adapted to be adhesively attached to a card with the pivotal points of said hinges positioned to cause said strap to resiliently resist movement of said strap away from said card, said strap having an aperture and being scored and formed adjacent one end to provide an accordion hinge between the main body of said strap and said card, and a tongue member integral with said strap cooperating between said accordion hinge and the aperture of said body portion to automatically lock said strap in card supporting position when said strap is pulled away from said card.

9. In an article of manufacture a panel support comprising an apertured strap-like member having a body portion, means for hingedly securing the free end of said body portion snugly to a card, the opposite end of said strap-like member being scored and sheared to provide an accordion plait when folded, means to hingedly secure the free end of said plait to said card, said plait having a locking tongue member attached thereto and adapted automatically to engage with the aperture in said body portion thereby to lock said body portion when said support is moved to open position, and a shoulder on said tongue to prevent closing of said support.

10. In an article of manufacture a panel support comprising a strap-like member having a

body portion, means for hingedly securing the free end of said body portion snugly to a card, the opposite end of said strap-like member being scored and sheared to provide an accordion plait when folded, means to hingedly secure the free end of said plait to said card, one side of said plait having an inwardly extending tongue integral therewith and adapted to cooperate with said body portion to retain said support in open position relative to said card.

11. A collapsible easel comprising a strip of sheet material transversely folded to provide two oppositely disposed panels and an intermediate normally collapsed accordion plait therebetween, and means forming an extension of one side of said accordion plait and extending in the same plane therewith and cooperating with the opposite panel to releasably lock said easel in open position said last mentioned means being cut out from and integral with said plait.

12. A collapsible easel comprising a strip of sheet material transversely folded to provide two oppositely disposed panels and an intermediate normally collapsed accordion plait therebetween, and means formed integral with one side of said plait and adapted automatically to engage in a slot in one of said panels when said easel is opened and to retain said easel open.

13. A collapsible easel comprising two oppositely disposed panels having an accordion plait therebetween adjacent the lower ends, the upper ends of said panels being hingedly connected together, and a plurality of inwardly extending elongated tongues integral with one side of said accordion plait and extending in the same plane therewith and automatically operative to releasably engage in slots in the opposite panel to retain said easel open.

14. A collapsible easel comprising two oppositely disposed sheet material members having an accordion plait member therebetween adjacent the lower ends, the upper end of one of said members being hingedly connected with the other of said members at a point remote from the lower end thereof, and an inwardly extending cut-out tongue integral with one side of said plait and extending in substantially the same plane therewith and automatically operative to engage the opposite member to retain said easel open.

15. A collapsible easel comprising two oppositely disposed sheet material members, a separator portion hingedly connecting said members adjacent the lower edges thereof and having an intermediate reverse hinge whereby said separator portion may fold inwardly between said members when said easel is collapsed, the upper end of one of said members being hingedly connected with the other of said members at a point remote from the lower edge thereof, and an inward extension being cut out from and integral with said separator portion and extending from adjacent the apex of said reverse hinge and in the plane thereof and adapted to engage in a slot in one of said members when said easel is expanded to lock said easel in open position.

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