Jan. 24, 1956 H. SMALLBERG 2,732,046

LUGGAGE COVERS

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Fig. 1

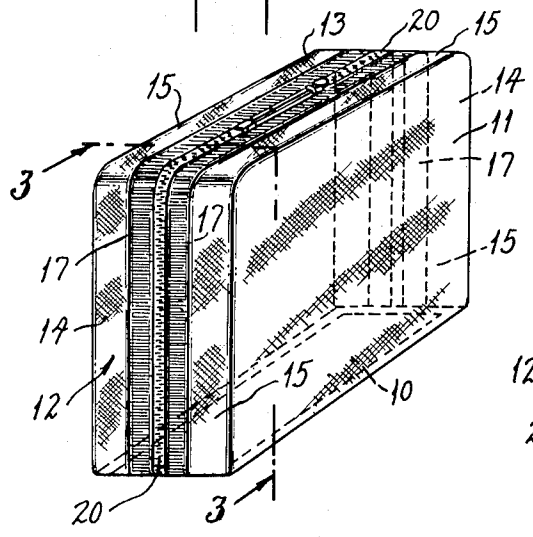


Fig. 2

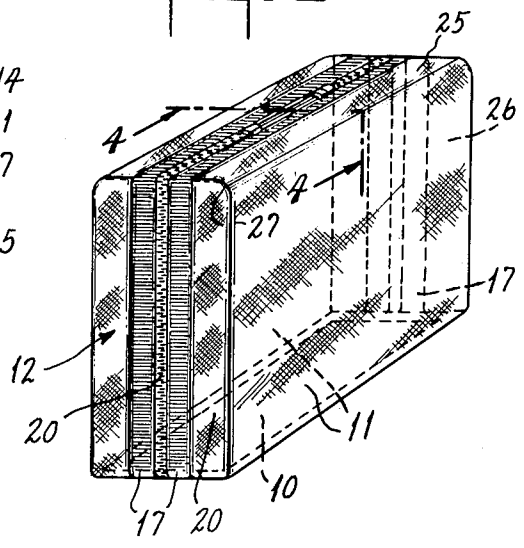
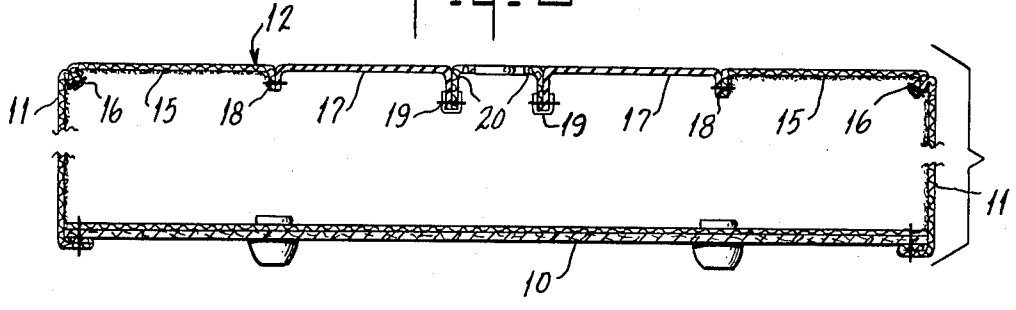


Fig. 3



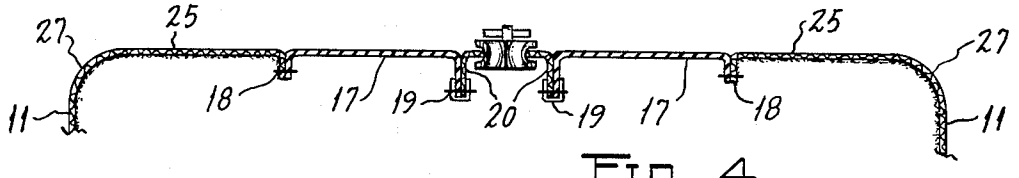


Fig. 4

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LUGGAGE COVERS

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4 Claims. (Cl. 190—26)

The present invention relates to a case or cover for an article of luggage, and more particularly to a cover for rigid-walled luggage of generally rectangular cross section, which cover is characterized by having elastic portions that provide for a snug fit and allow for slight variations in the size of the luggage.

Luggage cases or covers of the same general character as described above incorporating elastic gussets or top and end walls have heretofore been known. However, such covers as heretofore known required the preparation and the keeping in stock of a different width of elastic fabric for each different size of luggage cover, and thereby required a substantial investment in materials used in their commercial production. Additionally, the luggage covers as heretofore made were formed with elastic portions or gussets extending the entire width of one of the top and end walls of the article of luggage and, therefore, necessitated the use of a maximum amount of the relatively more expensive elastic fabric, thereby increasing materially the cost of each cover. Furthermore, because of the practice of making the elastic gusset encompass the complete width or thickness of the luggage, the covers of the prior art could only be made to fit snugly around articles of luggage that were bound along the edges of the side walls, which articles of luggage therefore had transversely squared top end corners and could not be properly formed for use with luggage that was bound or taped around the end walls and normally having transversely rounded or curved top end corners; the reason being that the taking of any darts in the elastic material to compensate for the roundness of the corners would destroy the effectiveness of the cover because the elasticity at that point would be destroyed.

It is, therefore, the object of the present invention to provide luggage covers of the character described in which a minimum amount of elastic fabric is used, to thereby make possible the practice of economy in the cost of the covers.

It is another object of the present invention to provide elastic luggage covers of the character described in which elastic fabric strips of uniform width may be used for substantially all sizes of luggage, to thereby enable the practice of economy in the commercial production of such luggage covers.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide elastic luggage covers of the character described which may snugly fit end bound luggage having curved top end edges as well as length bound luggage with squared top end edges.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide luggage covers of the character described which are strong, sturdy and attractive in appearance and which fit snugly about the articles of luggage for which they are intended.

The foregoing and other advantages and superiorities of the elastic luggage covers of the present invention will become more readily apparent to those skilled in the art from the several embodiments thereof shown in the accompanying drawings and from the description following. It is to be understood, however, that such embodiments are shown by way of illustration only, to make the principles and practice of the invention more readily comprehensible, and without any intent of limiting the invention to the specific details therein shown.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of one form of a luggage case or cover of the present invention shown in fully closed position;

Fig. 2 is a similar view of another form of a luggage case of the present invention;

Fig. 3 is a fore-shortened, sectional view taken on line 3—3 of Fig. 1; and

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary, sectional view taken on line 4—4 of Fig. 2.

The articles of luggage for which the covers or cases of the present invention are intended consist of two modifications of or forms of one generic type. One such form of luggage is generally described as side bound and the other as end bound. Both modifications of the articles of luggage consist of two approximately equal hinged halves. Each of the halves consists of an approximately rectangular side wall, which provides the larger dimension of the article of luggage, a bottom wall section, a top wall section and end wall sections; all of said wall sections being connected in one way or another to the side wall, and the end wall sections being connected as well to the top and bottom wall sections. The two halves are joined together by hinges connecting the free edges of their bottom wall sections.

In one of the modifications the end wall sections and the top wall sections are formed integrally and are continuous and are each joined to the three corresponding edges of the side wall by means of a relatively heavy tape or strip of leather binding or the like. This type of luggage is called side bound. In the other embodiment of the luggage, the top wall section of each half is formed integrally with the side wall and the end wall sections are formed separately and connected to the top wall section and to the side wall by binding tape and are known as "end bound" luggage. In the latter form the top end corners are rounded transversely in conformity with the curvature which is formed by the bending of the board or the like forming the body of the luggage at the junction of the integral side wall and top wall sections.

Referring now to the accompanying drawing, Fig. 1 shows one embodiment of a cover of the present invention designed for a side bound article of luggage, and Fig. 2 illustrates a cover of the present invention designed for use upon an article of luggage that is end bound.

The luggage cover or case of Fig. 1 comprises a unitary bottom wall, 10, which may be formed of one or two-ply of materials, a pair of side wall sections, 11, each formed of a flexible woven fabric, secured in any suitable manner by one of their longer edges to a long edge of the bottom wall 10, and a pair of gusset sections, generally designated as 12, of substantially equal size, each forming top wall portions, 13, and a pair of end wall portions, 14, continuous with the top wall portion 13, and secured by the free ends of the end wall portions to the bottom wall 10 in any suitable conventional manner, as by sewing.

Each of the gusset sections 12 consists of a pair of strips of material; one of the strips, the inner strip 15, is formed of a flexible woven fabric, preferably identical with the fabric forming the side wall 11, and is connected by one of its longitudinal edges to the end and top edges of the side wall 11, as by the inturned sewn seams, 16. The other of the strips comprises a transversely elastic preferably woven fabric, 17, which is

connected by one of its longitudinal edges to the adjacent longitudinal edge of the strip **15**, as by sewn seams, **18**, and has secured to its other longitudinal edge, as by seam, **19**, one tape, **20**, of a slide fastener device.

The slide fastener device may preferably come in two sections, one extending from the bottom of one end wall portion **14** to a point short of the center of the top wall portion **13**, and the other extending from the bottom of the other end wall portion **14** to a point short of the center of the top wall portion **13**, leaving an open space in the center.

The embodiment of Fig. 2 differs from that of Fig. 1 in that the fabric part of the gusset section **12** is not comprised of a continuous strip, as in the embodiment of Fig. 1, but consists of a top wall portion, **25**, which is integral and continuous with the side wall **11** and separate end wall strip portions, **26**, each of which is secured to a side edge of the side wall and to the side edge of the top wall portion **25**, as by sewing with a continuous line of stitching and which forms a curved corner, **27**, at the junction of the side wall and top wall section **25**, adapted to fit snugly about the end bound article of luggage for which this form of cover is intended. It will be noted that in this form of cover the elastic strip **17** is continuous and is identical with the strip utilized in the embodiment of Fig. 1.

It may here be stated that in producing the luggage covers of the present invention, great economies in the cost of materials as well as in the supply of materials necessarily kept on hand, particularly with respect to the elastic portions thereof are possible. Such economies result from the possibility for the manufacturer to utilize elasitc strips of the same width for luggage covers of different sizes. Since the elastic strips of the present invention are of lesser width than the entire gusset, the cost of the expensive elastic fabric utilized is considerably less than heretofore possible.

Also, since the elastic strips may be of the same width for the different sizes of luggage covers, the manufacturer need not cut and keep in inventory strips of different widths to correspond with the different widths of covers of different size, thereby reducing his investment in the manufacture of the covers. It may here also be stated that such economies are made possible without any sacrifice in the essential elasticity and the snug fitting characteristics of the luggage covers of the present invention or in the ease and facility of their use.

It will also be apparent that by utilization of elastic fabric only along the central portion of the gusset, the present invention makes possible the production of elastic covers for articles of luggage that have transversely rounded top edges by enabling the rounding of the corner portions of the cover edges, which are formed of inelastic fabric, without interference with the elasticity of the central part of the gusset, a procedure not possible with covers in which the entire gusset is formed of elastic fabric.

This completes the description of the luggage covers of the present invention. It will be apparent that numerous variations and modifications in the luggage covers of the present invention may be made by anyone skilled in the art, in accordance with the principles of the invention hereinabove set forth and without the use of any inventive ingenuity. I desire, therefore, to be protected for any and all modifications and variations that may be made within the spirit of the present invention and the scope of the claims hereto appended.

What I claim is:

1. A cover for an article of luggage of the character described comprising a unitary bottom wall of substantially rectangular shape, side walls of flexible inelastic woven fabric, each connected by one edge to an edge of said bottom wall, and a pair of gusset sections, each forming top and end wall portions of the cover and each consisting of an outer portion of inelastic woven fabric extending from the side and top edges of a side wall and from an end edge of the bottom wall, and a continuous elastic strip connected by one longitudinal edge to the contiguous edge of the inelastic fabric portion of the gusset section and by its end edges to the end edges of the bottom wall and having slide fastener tape connected to the other longitudinal edge thereof.

2. A cover for an article of luggage of the character described comprising a unitary bottom wall of substantially rectangular shape, substantially rectangular side walls of flexible inelastic woven fabric, each connected by an edge to an edge of said bottom wall, and a pair of gusset sections, each gusset section forming top and end wall portions of the cover, and each gusset section consisting of an outer portion of woven inelastic fabric connected to the top and side edges of a side wall and to each of the end edges of the bottom wall, and a continuous elastic strip connected by one longitudinal edge to the contiguous edge of the inelastic fabric portion of the gusset section and by its end edges to the end edges of the bottom wall, the elastic strips of each of the gusset sections being of substantially the same width and each having cooperating fastening elements on its free inner edge for separable fastening to the other.

3. A cover for an article of luggage of the character described comprising a unitary bottom wall of substantially rectangular shape, side walls of flexibel inelastic woven fabric, each connected by one edge to an edge of said bottom wall, and a pair of gusset sections, each forming top and end wall portions of the cover, each of said gusset sections comprising an outer portion formed of inelastic woven fabric and an inner portion formed of elastic fabric, said outer portion of woven fabric comprising a top portion continuous with a side wall and arcuately connected thereto, and end portions each connected to an edge of the bottom wall, a side edge of said side wall and an end edge of said top wall portion of the gusset, said elastic gusset portion comprising a continuous strip connected by its end edges to the end edges of the bottom wall and by one longitudinal side edge to the edges of said inelastic end wall gusset portion and top wall gusset portion, the two elastic strips of the two gusset sections being of substantially the same width and each having on its free edge a cooperating fastener element adapted to be separatively engaged with the element on the other.

4. A cover for an aritcle of luggage of the character described comprising a unitary bottom wall of substantially rectangular shape, side walls of flexible inelastic woven fabric, each connected by one edge to a side edge of said bottom wall, and a pair of gusset sections, each forming top and end wall portions of the cover and each consisting of a continuous inelastic woven fabric strip connected by its end edges to the end edges of said bottom wall and by a longitudinal side edge to the side and top edges of a side wall, and a continuous elastic strip connected by its end edges to the end edges of said bottom wall and by one longitudinal side edge to the other longitudinal side edge of said inelastic gusset strip and having at its other longitudinal edge separable fastener elements arranged to cooperate with the separable fastener elements of the other strip for opening and closing the cover.

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