

May 25, 1965

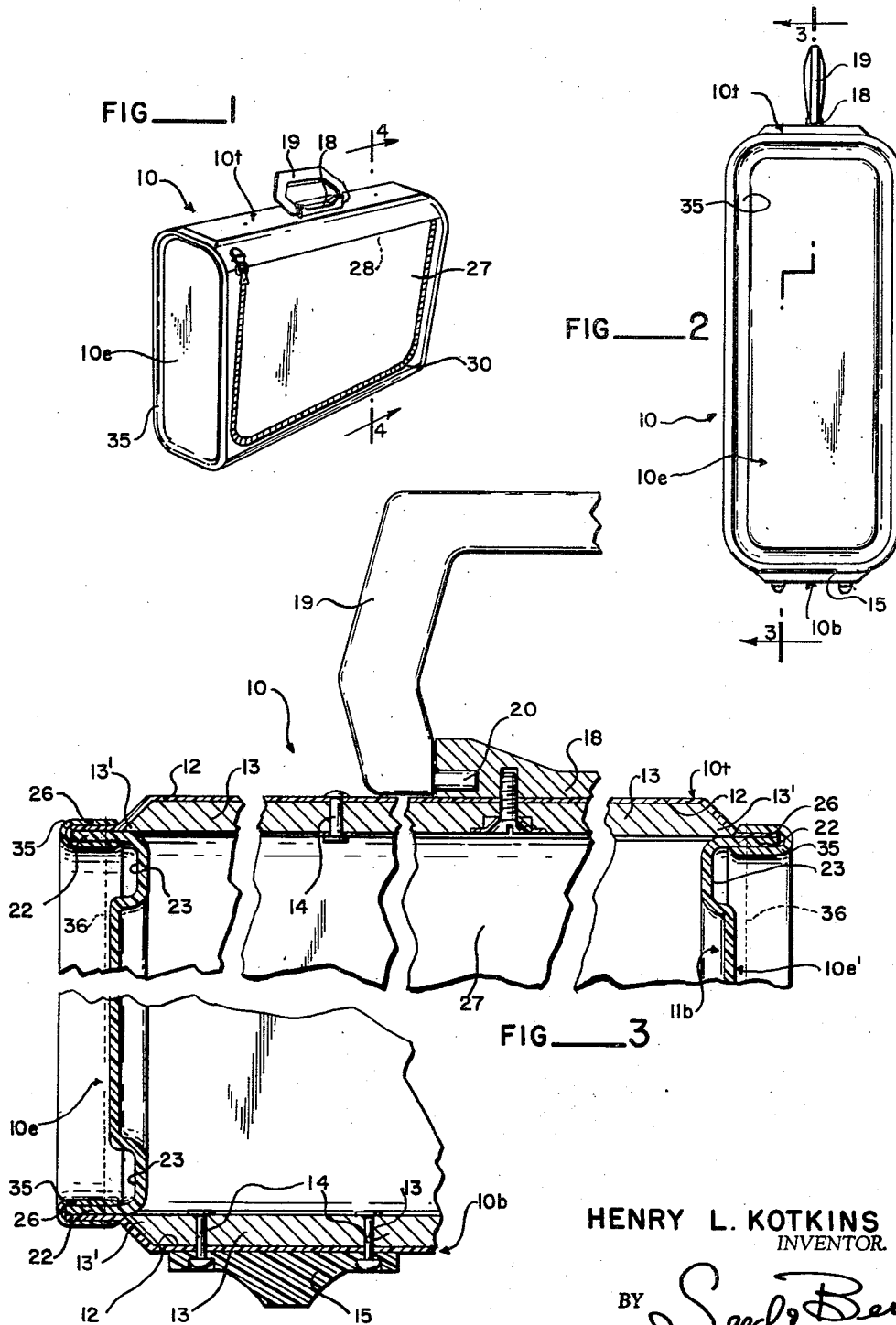
H. L. KOTKINS

3,185,271

LUGGAGE CASE

Filed Jan. 28, 1964

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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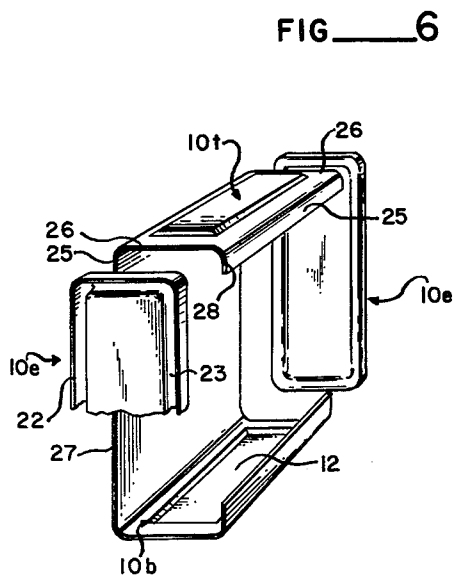
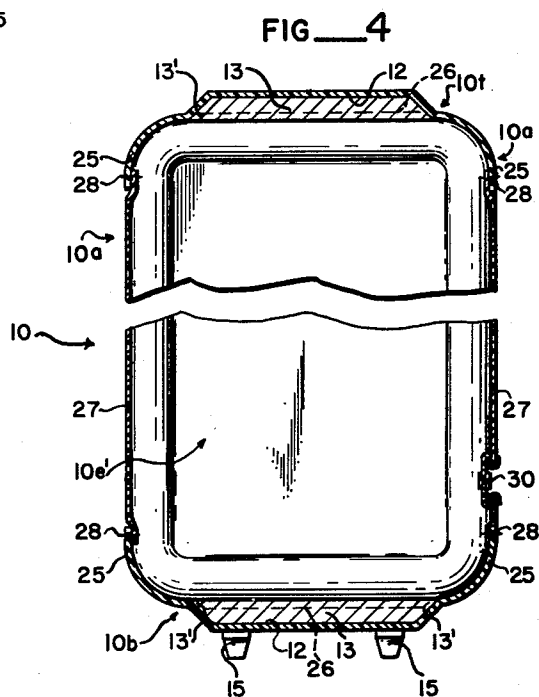
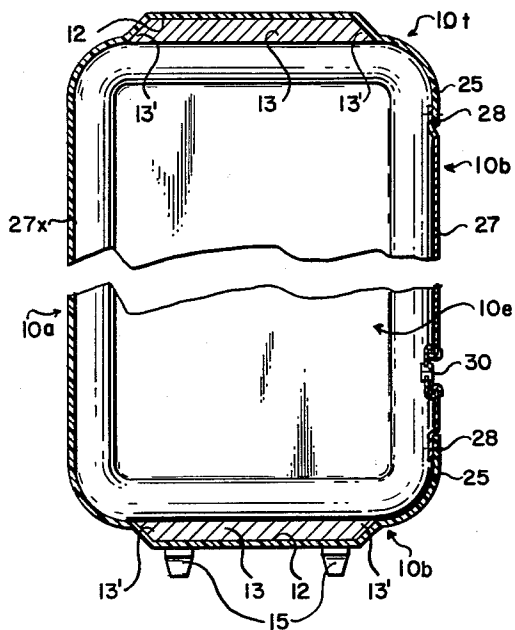
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LUGGAGE CASE

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2 Claims. (Cl. 190-41)

This invention relates to improvements in articles of luggage, particularly those of the conventional suitcase type, and in the using of parts employed for the improving of what have been designated as "soft-sided" luggage cases; this application being a continuation-in-part of my co-pending application, filed on June 5, 1961, under Serial No. 114,911, and now abandoned.

It is the principal object of this invention to provide an improved suitcase that is characterized by the incorporation therein of relatively rigid top, bottom and end wall units that are so shaped as to strengthen and to eliminate the undesirable wear damage to the previously employed case enclosing body of flexible material as featured in the above identified prior application.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a suitcase that is characterized by the use therein of molded, substantially rigid end wall forming plastic panels, assembled and joined with top and bottom wall units of molded plastic; the latter having rounded, longitudinally extending edge flanges that, in the joining of said opposite end panels, impart rigidity, and durability to the article and give it additional protection against undesirable corner and edge wear damage.

A still further object is to provide the suitcase of this invention with at least one soft side wall panel with a "zipper" fastener, designed to provide quick and easy access to the case and its quick closing and securing.

Further objects and advantages of the invention reside in the specific formation of the various molded wall forming sections; and in their manner of assembling and joining, as is hereinafter described.

In accomplishing the above mentioned objects and the various advantages attained by reason of the combination of its parts, as later will be described, I have provided a suitcase with improved details of construction, the preferred forms of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein—

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a piece of luggage designated as a "suitcase" embodying the improvements of the present invention therein.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged end elevation of the suitcase of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is an enlarged, fragmental sectional detail of parts, taken in the vertical plane of line 3—3 in FIG. 2, showing the manner of the joining of the rigid opposite end panels with molded top and bottom panels.

FIG. 4 is a cross sectional detail, taken transversely of the case of line 4—4 in FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 is an enlarged, cross-sectional view of a suitcase of an alternative form of construction, wherein top and bottom wall forming panels are separately molded and have longitudinal edge flanges at one side of the case, joined by an integrally molded side wall section of pliable sheet plastic and at the other side has a "zipper" secured soft panel for easy opening or closing of the suitcase.

FIG. 6 is a view showing in perspective, certain of the plastic case forming sections of FIG. 1 in disassembled or separated relationship for explanatory purposes.

Referring more in detail to the drawings:

An article of luggage of present day suitcase type, and in which the improvements of the present invention have been incorporated, is designated in its entirety in FIG. 1 by reference numeral 10. This article is shown in FIGS. 3 and 4 to comprise a body structure having unitary, individual top and bottom wall forming panels, designated, respectively, by numerals 10a and 10b; opposite side wall

sections designated respectively, by numerals 10a and 10a' that extend between the longitudinal side edge portions of the top and bottom panel units 10t and 10b and which at their end edges are overlapped with and secured to the inturned edge flanges of the opposite end wall units 10e—10e', as presently described.

Each of the top and bottom wall forming panels or units 10t and 10b is a relatively rigid plastic molding and has an outwardly formed depression 12 of uniform depth extending substantially to its full length and full width between its rounded opposite edge flanges, thus providing a shallow depression or seat in which a rectangular stiffening and strengthening panel 13 of wood or other suitable substance is fitted, as noted in FIGS. 3 and 5, wherein it is seen that the end and opposite side edges of the panels 13 are beveled to thin extending edges 13', with the end edges thereof firmly seated, for support, on inturned end flanges 12 of the corresponding end wall panels 10e—10e' as presently explained, the wooden wall panels 13 being secured on their wall depressions or seats 12 by a plurality of rivets 14 applied therethrough and through the depressed bottoms of panels 10a and 10b, as shown in FIG. 3.

It is also shown in FIG. 3 that two wear blocks 15, of plastic or other appropriate material, are suitably attached to the underside surface of the bottom panel 10b near its ends. Also fixed to the top wall panel 10t, medially of its top surface, is a longitudinally directed block 18 to the ends of which the opposite ends of a U-shaped handle 19 are secured by pivot members designated at 20 in FIG. 3.

The opposite end wall forming panels 10e—10e' previously mentioned are alike in shape and size. Each is a rigid plastic molding, formed with a continuous peripheral flange 22 defining the outer boundary of a continuous inwardly facing channel 23. It is to be noted by reference to FIG. 3 that the channels 23 of these end wall panels 10e—10e' face outwardly and also that the flanges 22 extend outwardly at right angles to the plane of the end panels.

It is also to be observed that the top and bottom wall forming units 10t and 10b are molded with outwardly and laterally rounded edge flanges, designated in FIGS. 3, 4 and 5 by reference numeral 25, which flanges merge with the end edges of flanges 26 formed across the opposite ends of these panels 10t and 10b.

It is also to be observed by reference to FIG. 4, showing a preferred construction, that opposite sides of the suitcase 10 are closed by thin flexible, plastic sheets 27 that extend between the longitudinal edges of the inturned flanges 25 of the relatively rigid top and bottom wall units, and also between the inturned edge flanges 22 of the end wall units. It is to be observed that the top and bottom edges of the side wall panel 27 at the left hand side in FIG. 4 are overlapped with and stitched to the flanges 25, as at 28; the sheet 27 that closes the right hand side of the case, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 4, is likewise, stitched as at 28 across its top edge to flange 25 of the top unit 10t and is equipped with a "zipper" fastening 30 across its opposite side and across its bottom edge.

The alternative form of construction seen in FIG. 5 is one in which the edges of the left hand soft sheet, designated by numeral 27x, are molded integral with the longitudinal edges of the flanges 26 at that side of the case. In this modification or alternative device, the end edges of the flexible wall sheets 27x and 27 overlap with the flanges 22 of the side edges of the end wall panels 10e—10e' and are stitched thereto.

In the assembling of the wall forming parts as above described, to form the suitcase of FIG. 4, the opposite end wall units 10e and 10e' are preferably held in parallel, spaced relationship with their peripheral edge flanges 22 directed outwardly. Then the opposite end portions of the top and bottom units 10t and 10b, as joined by sheet

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27x, are applied thereto as in FIG. 3. In this application of top 10t, bottom 10b and side panel 27x, the several parts are handled as a unit, and that unit is wrapped about the end wall panels with the "zipper" attached end of sheet 27' left free. When the parts have been wrapped about and registered with the flanges 22 of the end panels, the free end of right side panel 27 is closed and fastened by the zipper 30. In this wrapping operation, the end edges of the parts 10t, 10b and 27-27x are applied even with the projecting flanges 26 of the top and bottom wall members. Then a plastic edge binding strip 35, U-shaped or channeled in cross-section, are slipped onto the overlapped edge portions, as in FIG. 3, and are stitched in place as at 36. Thus, the assembled parts are held fixed in their relationship.

The corner edges of the case are adequately protected against wear, rigidity of construction is established and a better appearing article of luggage is produced.

I claim:

1. A six-sided hand luggage unit comprising a tubular member forming the body of the luggage unit and having a side wall with a flexible access flap formed therein, rigid panels secured within said tubular member to define top and bottom walls adjoining said side wall, relatively rigid one-piece molded plastic opposite end walls contained within said tubular member adjacent the ends thereof,

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said end walls each including an integral continuous in-turned marginal stiffening channel terminating in an out-turned flange extending about the entire perimeter thereof, each of said rigid panels extending between and overlying said flange portions at the top and bottom of said end walls, and means securing said flanges of the end walls to the overlying portions of said tubular member.

2. The luggage unit of claim 1 wherein said side wall with the access flap and the side wall of the tubular member which is opposite said flap both are formed of relatively flexible material, and wherein the top and bottom portions of the tubular member between said side walls are relatively rigid unitary plastic moldings having central outwardly dished pockets in which said rigid panels are secured and having rounded longitudinal edge flanges secured along their outer edges to the respective longitudinal edges of said side walls.

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