Nov. 13, 1928. 1,691,608

F. A. KING ET AL

KEY CASE

Filed Feb. 10, 1927

FIG. 1

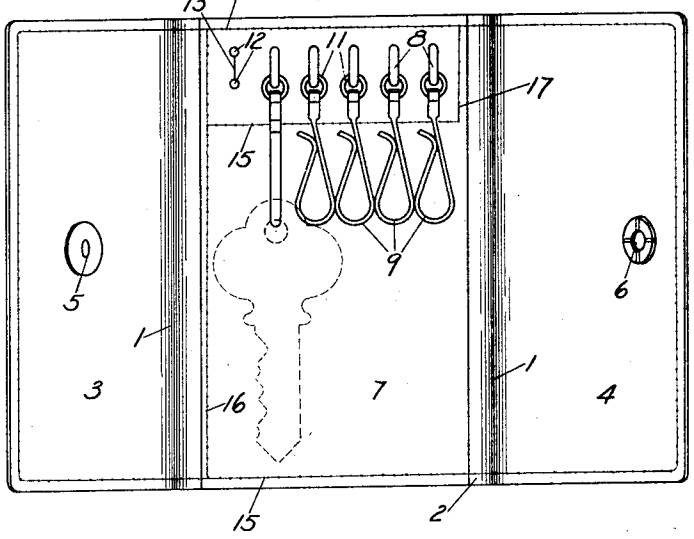


FIG. 2

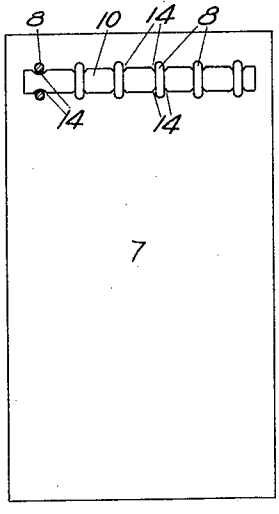


FIG. 3

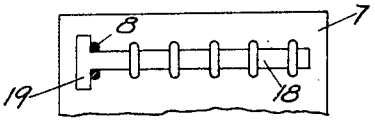


FIG. 4

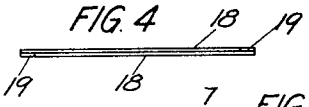


FIG. 5

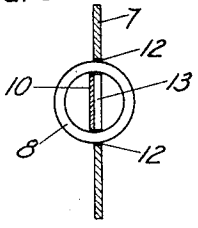
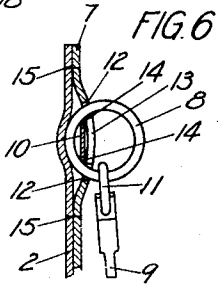


FIG. 6



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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KEY CASE.

Application filed February 10, 1927. Serial No. 167,091.

Our invention relates to improvements in containers or cases designed to receive and hold keys and the like, and consists essentially of a strip of flexible material, such as leather, foldable so that the end portions overlap the central or intermediate portion of said strip, and thus produce an enclosing member or element, a perforated backing attached to said intermediate portion to stiffen the same and serve as a direct support for other parts and members, a plurality of key-holding or -supporting elements consisting in part or including closed rings receivable in the perforations in said backing, and a lock strip or strips of thin and flexible material, such as steel, passed through said rings, behind said backing, together with such other parts and members as may be necessary or desirable in order to render the case complete and serviceable in every respect, all as hereinafter set forth.

One object of our invention is to produce a case, of the class described, that is simple and comparatively inexpensive in construction, convenient, durable, reliable, and withal highly practical and efficient.

Another object is to afford means for easily, quickly, and cheaply attaching the key-holding members to the case proper and fastening said members thereto or securing them in place therein.

Heretofore thongs of leather, or of combination leather and fabric, have been used as fastening means for the rings which support or form parts of the key-holding members, but such thongs are objectionable because, if too thin, they are liable to be pulled out in part or in whole through the perforations for said rings, in the backings, and, if of sufficient thickness to avoid this liability, they increase to an objectionable extent the thickness of the cases at their upper ends. A further object is, therefore, to obtain the advantages, such as simplicity, ease and cheapness of construction, and adaptability generally, for example, of fastening means of this general character, and at the same time eliminate or avoid the disadvantages of the same. Furthermore, by using a lock strip of very thin and flexible metal we avoid unduly stiffening the case at the top, it being well understood that one of the most desirable features of a case of this character is its flexibility.

Other objects and advantages will appear in the course of the following description.

We attain the objects and secure the advantages of our invention by the means illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a front elevation of a key case which embodies a practical form of our invention, the flaps being open; Fig. 2, a rear elevation of the backing with the rings attached thereto by the lock strip; Fig. 3, an elevation similar to the upper part of the elevation shown in the preceding view, but illustrating a modified form of lock strip; Fig. 4, a plan of two lock strips which may be used in place of the single lock strip shown in Fig. 3; Fig. 5, an enlarged, sectional detail illustrating the manner in which the preferred lock strip initially is inserted in portions of the rings behind the backing, and, Fig. 6, an enlarged, sectional detail showing the normal positions and conditions of the lock strip and rings in the completed case.

Similar reference characters designate similar parts throughout the several views.

In the first view, one of the swivel snap hooks is omitted to disclose the particular type of perforation provided in the backing to receive the ring by means of which the eye of each hook is supported from and in the case.

As illustrated in the first three and last views, this key case comprises a strip of flexible material divided by two vertical creases or bending portions, indicated at 1—1, into a back 2 and flaps 3 and 4, the two latter being respectively provided with male and female parts 5 and 6 of a glove fastener: a backing 7 attached to said back; a plurality of rings 8 from which depend swivel snap hooks 9, there being six of said rings in the present example, but there may be more or less than that number, and a lock strip 10 by means of which said rings are held in place in said backing.

The flap 3 is adapted to be folded over onto the front of the backing 7 and the rings 8 and hooks 9, and over any key or keys carried by said hooks, and the flap 4 is adapted to be

folded over onto the outside of said first-named flap, when the female member 6 is snapped into engagement with the male member 5, thus inclosing the contents of the case and securing the flaps in closed position. Upon disengaging the fastening members and opening the flaps access is had to the contents of the case. Structurally and functionally these folding parts and their fastener are not unlike corresponding parts and fasteners in other key cases, and may be varied to a considerable extent.

The backing 7 is a stiffening sheet of flexible material, such as is commonly used in key-case construction, and is disposed on the inner face of the back 2 and secured to said back by lines of stitching, of which further mention will be made hereinafter. If desired, one vertical edge of the backing 7, throughout the greater portion of its length, may be left unsecured to the back 2 to provide an entrance to the space between said back and backing and thus convert said space into a pocket accessible from the outside.

The hooks 9 are of the ordinary snap and swivel type, and each has at its upper end an eye 11 with which is engaged one of the rings 8. The present construction enables the rings 8 to be attached to the backing 7 after said rings have been attached to the eyes 11, which is an advantage because the hook units can be made up complete initially, and then with the utmost facility mounted in place as elements of the case. To this end the backing 7 has sets of upper and under holes, as 12, connected by slits, as 13, punched therein, and the lock strip 10 is provided.

The lock strip 10 has, in the longitudinal edges thereof, oppositely-disposed recesses or notches 14, there being as many pairs of notches as there are rings 8. The maximum width of the lock strip 10 is approximately equal to the interior diameter of any ring 8—see Fig. 5; while the width of said lock strip between the notches 14 in any pair is approximately equal to the cord of the arcuate portion, inside, of said ring which is behind the backing 7, when the ring is normally disposed—see Fig. 6.

This case being designed to include six hooks 9, there must be a corresponding number or sets of holes 12 and slits 13. These are located side by side in the backing 7 near the upper edge thereof, and in each set are two holes 12, one above the other, and a vertical connecting slit 13, as clearly shown in Fig. 1. Each ring 8, with the eye 11 of one of the hooks 9 attached thereto, is pushed through one of the slits 13 until approximately one-half of said ring is behind the backing 7, and portions of said ring are in the holes 12 at the top and bottom of said slit. After the ring has been pushed through the slit the edges of said slit come together again inside of the ring. The rings 8 having all been inserted in the backing 7, in the manner just described, the lock strip 10 is thrust through the portions of said rings which are behind said backing, until a pair of the notches 14 is inside of every ring, and then said rings are drawn forwardly into said notches. The lock strip 10, now extends across the slits 13, and is pressed against the back side of the backing 7, and prevents said rings from being drawn completely out of said backing. Due to the engagement of the rings 8 with the notched portions of the strip 10, said strip is held against any great amount of longitudinal movement. Being so thin, and so comparatively narrow in the parts that engage the rings 8, the strip 10 positions said rings so that only comparatively small portions of the same project behind the backing 7. The strip 10 is of sufficient length to extend a short distance beyond the outermost rings.

After the rings 8 have been inserted in the perforations in the backing 7 and secured by means of the lock strip 10, said backing is stitched to the back 2, there being two lines of stitching 15 adjacent to the top and bottom of said backing, and a line of stitching 16 adjacent to one longitudinal or vertical edge of the backing, also a line of stitching 15 below the strip 10, and a short vertical line of stitching 17 adjacent to the opposite longitudinal edge of the backing. If no entrance to the space between the back 2 and the backing 7 is to be provided, both longitudinal edges of said backing are stitched to said back throughout their entire length. The stitching adjacent to the ends of the strip 10 assist in holding said strip against endwise movement to an extent that would cause the strip to become displaced relative to any of the rings 8, in the event all of said rings were forced inwardly far enough to release the strip.

The engagement of the lock strip 10 with the rings 8 is not sufficiently rigid, however, to prevent said rings from being swung sideways to the extent required.

Keys are engaged with the hooks 9 in a similar manner as keys are engaged with the hooks of other cases, and this case as a whole is used in practically the same way as are others.

Each hook 9 is swiveled to its eye 11 and therefore free to rotate, said eye is loosely held by the ring 8 above, and said ring has a certain amount of lateral movement as hereinbefore explained, consequently a key attached to said hook is capable of being turned about in almost any direction without being impeded by the case, which is an important advantage in an article of this kind.

As shown in Fig. 3, a lock strip 18 may be employed in place of the lock strip 10. The strip 18 is only as wide approximately as is the strip 10 between the oppositely disposed notches 14 therein, and said first-named strip

has a cross-head 19 at one end. The strip 18 can be passed through the rings 8 without initially pushing said rings so far through the perforations in the backing 7 as is necessary for the strip 10, and the cross-head 19 is adapted to bear against one of the outermost rings and thus positively limit the longitudinal movement of said strip in one direction.

If desired two of the strips 18 may be employed side by side, with their cross-heads 19 oppositely disposed, as shown in Fig. 4. In this case, the strips 18 are passed from opposite directions through the rings 8, until one cross-head 19 is against one of the outermost rings, and the other cross-head 19 is against the other outermost ring. Thus double, instead of single, fastening means for the rings is provided. When two lock strips 18 are used they may be made of extremely thin metal.

Inasmuch as the lock strip permits the greater portions of the rings to project in front of the backing, and also permits said ring to be swung sideways to some little extent, the upper part of this key case is or may be quite thin as compared with many other key cases. And, in any event, the construction here eliminates undue bulk or thickness through the parts of the back and backing with which the key-holding members are most intimately or closely associated.

Being of hard material and engaged as it is with or by the rings, the lock strip can not be pulled out through the slits 13.

More or less change in the shape, size, construction, and arrangement of some or all of the parts of this key case, in addition to those hereinbefore specifically pointed out, may be made, without departing from the spirit of our invention or exceeding the scope of what is claimed.

What we claim as our invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In a key case, a flexible back, a perforated flexible backing, rings in the perforations in said backing and projecting behind the same, a thin flexible lock strip, rectangular in cross section, and flat-sided throughout, said strip passing through said rings behind said backing, and lines of stitching between said backing and said back outside of the ends of said strip to assist in holding the same in place.

2. In a key case, a flexible back, a flexible backing having slits therein far enough below the upper edge thereof to afford space for stitching said backing and back together, rings in said slits and projecting behind said backing, a thin flexible lock strip, rectangular in cross section, flatsided throughout, having a maximum width approximately equal to the inner diameter of said rings, passing through said rings behind said backing, and having in the longitudinal edges thereof oppositely disposed notches to receive the rings, when the latter are drawn forward in said slits, whereby said strip is prevented from becoming disengaged from said rings, and lines of stitching above and below said slits to hold said backing and said back together.

3. A key case comprising a flexible member consisting of a back and flaps, a flexible backing having slits therein far enough below the upper edge thereof to afford space for stitching said back and backing together, rings extending through said slits and projecting behind said backing, said rings carrying swivel snap hooks, a thin flexible lock strip passing through said rings behind said backing, said strip being rectangular in cross section and flat-sided throughout, having notches in its longitudinal edges to receive said rings, and of a maximum width approximately equal to the inner diameter of said rings, lines of stitching between said back and backing above and below said slits, and lines of stitching between said back and backing and outside of the ends of said strip to assist in holding the latter against endwise movement.

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