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(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO UMBRELLAS

(71) We, BREMSHEY & Co., a German Kommanditgesellschaft, of 5—7 Ahrstrasse Solingen-Ohligs, Germany, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to so called "flat" shortenable umbrellas, having a substantially rectangular cross section transverse to the stick axis when closed, and their associated cases.

In known cases for shortenable umbrellas the insertion opening is closed by a cover or wall having a sliding clasp fastener. Such fasteners are expensive to manufacture and disadvantageous in handling. More particularly, considerable difficulties occur if such cases are intended to receive flat umbrellas in which the handle, of rectangular cross section transverse to the stick axis, is formed on its side adjacent the umbrella stick with pockets receiving the umbrella rib ends. The result is that when an umbrella of this kind is introduced into a case, usually a final adjustment of the umbrella rib ends must be carried out to produce the correct grouping of the rib ends to enter the pockets in the handle.

It is an object of the present invention to construct a simple umbrella case which is convenient to use and for which no extra cover is needed to close the case completely and/or prevent the umbrella from dropping out of the case.

According to the present invention, in a cased shortenable flat umbrella having a substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape transverse to the stick axis when closed, the case has a correspondingly rectangular cross-sectional shape formed by two opposed wide side walls and two opposed narrow side walls, with a bottom closure at one end and an insertion opening at the other upper end, the wide side walls extending upwards beyond the narrow side walls to provide flaps on opposite sides of the opening such that after insertion of the umbrella into the case through the opening the umbrella handle lies between the flaps, and there being a strap which extends over the opening and is attachable to the narrow side walls in two alternative positions in one of which the strap firmly engages the handle to hold the umbrella securely in the case and in the other of which the strap provides a carrying loop for the cased umbrella.

Advantageously the strap is attachable to the narrow side walls by press-studs. The strap preferably has a width substantially equal to the width of the narrow side walls. Furthermore, in its one position, the strap advantageously closes both end faces of the case, the strap thus constituting the case bottom closure. In one example the length of the strap substantially corresponds to the periphery of a wide side wall.

The strap may form a part of the case or a part of the umbrella. In the latter case, the strap may extend through two apertures in the umbrella handle. The strap may then extend through rib end receiving pockets in the handle.

The invention provides a simply constructed case well adapted to contain a flat umbrella. The umbrella, when closed, can be introduced in to the insertion opening in the top of the case. The umbrella rib ends are pregrouped to a certain extent by the flap parts of the wide side walls of the case. Since the narrow side walls are shorter, the user can introduce his fingers from outside to perform the final grouping of the rib ends. This can readily be done in such a way that the rib ends enter corresponding pockets in the handle when the latter is then inserted into the case during the final retraction of the umbrella stick. The lateral apertures formed in the case

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between the side edges of the flaps can then be closed by tightly tensioning the strap. In this tensioned position, the strap at the same time bears against the handle, thus producing at that place also a closure wall without the necessity of an extra cover. In addition to its carrying function, therefore, the band strap may alternatively perform a retaining function. The lateral apertures enable the umbrella to be readily moved by pulling the handle, when the strap is not tightly tensioned, without the projecting flap parts of the wide side walls having to be hinged downwards.

If the strap has substantially the same length as the periphery of a wide side, both end faces of the case may be covered by the strap and thus both end faces of the case can be open since the case bottom will be constituted by the strap. In addition to the fact that the umbrella can be introduced or removed optionally from either end of the case, there is the advantage that removal is further facilitated, since the umbrella can be pushed out from one end. Even with easy-action retraction of the umbrella, therefore, the umbrella can very readily be removed without the umbrella stick being extended. The construction is also attractive in apperance and is durable.

When the strap is attached to the handle of the umbrella, there is a carrying handle even when the case is closed. The length of the strap forming the carrying loop can be varied by one or both ends of the strap being drawn to a varying length through the apertures in the handle before attaching to the narrow side walls of the case. The or each press-stud-retaining means at the end or ends of the strap prevent the carrying loop from being completely pulled out. The press-stud retaining means also provide a secure connection between the umbrella and the case. When being carried by the loop, the umbrella cannot slip out of the case. With a suitable arrangement of latching retaining means, the strap end portions can be made to bear tightly against the case narrow side walls, the result again being that the umbrella cannot accidentally slip out of the case. It also guarantees that the handle cannot even be pulled so far out of the case, while extending the length of the umbrella, that the umbrella rib ends emerge from the associated pockets in the handle.

Some examples of cased umbrellas constructed in accordance with the invention are illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:—

Figures 1, 2 and 3 are perspective views of a first example, clearly showing the various ways in which the carrying and retaining strap may be used;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of a second example;

Figure 5 is a perspective view of a third example;

Figure 6 is a view corresponding to Figure 5, showing the carrying loop ready to be grasped;

Figure 7 is a partial longitudinal sectional view through the top end of the case of Figures 5 and 6;

Figure 8 is a plan of the underside of the handle of the umbrella in the case of Figures 5 to 7; and

Figure 9 is a section taken along the line IX—IX in Figure 8.

Referring now to the drawings, a case 1, which receives a flat umbrella having a substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape transverse to the stick axis when closed, has narrow side walls 2 and wide walls 3. In the example of Figures 1, 2 and 3, one end face 4 of the case is closed, while the opposite end face is formed with an insertion opening 5. The wide side walls 3 extend past the narrow side walls 2 to produce opposite lateral handle apertures and flaps 3′. The umbrella has a handle 6 having a rectangular cross-sectional shape such that its narrow sides 6′ are adjacent the handle apertures in the case, its wide sides 6″ being covered by the projecting flap 3′. The handle 6 substantially fills the insertion opening 5. This type of case and handle construction is the subject of our copending application No. 9843/69 (Serial No. 1,219,377).

The case 1 has a strap 7 permanently attached to one end 7′ to one narrow side wall. On assembly of the case a free end 7″ of the strap is pulled through a loop 8 in the region of the insertion opening 5 and is provided with an end stop 9. The end stop 9 prevents the strap 7 from being accidentally pulled back through the loop 8. The free end 7″ has a press-stud top portion 10, press-stud bottom portions 11, 11′ being disposed on one narrow side wall 2.

Figure 1 shows the largest possible arcuate carrying loop form of the strap 7, in which position the end stop 9 abuts the loop 8. This position is suitable, for instance, to enable the user to put his or her arm through the loop aperture to carry the umbrella on his or her shoulder.

Figure 2 shows an intermediate size of the arcuate shape of the carrying loop strap 7. In this position, the press-stud top portion 10 is connected to the press-stud bottom portion 11. The case 1 can readily be carried in the user's hand.

Figure 3 shows the strap 7 in a position in which it bears against and covers the handle 6; the strap 7 at the same time also closing the lateral apertures in the case. In this position, the press-stud top portion 10 is pressed onto the press-stud bottom portion 11′. The umbrella is thus firmly retained in the case.

The example shown in Figure 4 is similar to that shown in Figures 1 to 3, except that the case 1′ itself is open at both ends, the case bottom closure means being constituted by a portion of the strap.

The upper end opening is again substantially filled by the handle 6, the matching botton opening 5′ being filled by a crown 12 of the umbrella which has the same cross-sectional shape as the handle 6. The strap 13 has a length substantially corresponding to the periphery of a wide side wall.

Both ends 13′, 13″ of the strap 13 are provided with press-stud top portions 10. Associated therewith are press-stud bottom portions 15, 15′ disposed on a narrow case side wall 2 at similar distances from the end openings.

Immediately adjacent the two end openings 5, 5′ on both narrow side walls 2, are loops 16 those on one of the walls 2 co-operating with end stops 9 on the strap to prevent the strap ends from being pulled away from the case.

When both press-stud connections are made, the two end openings 5, 5′ are closed and covered. The provision of two end openings 5, 5′ offers the special advantage of facilitating the removal of an umbrella from the case, since the umbrella can be used in the removal direction through the bottom end opening 5′. The cases in both the above examples are preferably made of semi-rigid material.

The ribs 17 of the umbrella enter pockets 18, 19 in the handle 6; the pockets 18, 19 are disposed outside a socket 20 of the handle for introducing at least a sleeve portion of a slider (not shown).

The third example shown in Figures 5 to 9, again includes an umbrella having a handle 22 of rectangular cross-section disposed on an umbrella stick 21 which is constructed with provision for retraction by means of telescopic tubular members in known manner.

The sleeve 23 of the slider (not shown) which controls the opening of the ribs 27 enters a socket 24 in the handle 22. The handle has on either side of the socket 24 pockets 25, 26 for receiving the rib ends 27.

The handle base wall 28 is formed with apertures 29 through which a strap 30 extends. The two ends 30′ of the strap are provided with press-stud parts 31. Multiple matching studs 32 on the narrow side walls of the case 33 are associated with the press-stud parts 31 on the strap.

The case 33 is also preferably made of a semi-rigid material and is formed with an end face insertion opening 34 which is closed by the handle 22. The side surfaces 22′ of the handle 22 are exposed because of lateral apertures 35 in the case 33. The length x of the apertures 35 is greater than the length y of the side walls 22′ of the handle 22.

Strap portions 30′ extend through the pockets 25, 26 of the handle 22, and lie outside the rib ends 27. Due to the multiple matching studs 32, the effective length of the strap when acting as a carrying loop 30 can be varied. The size of the arcuate carrying loop portion which is available to be grasped in the user's hand changes in dependence on which studs 32 are used.

Studs 32′ are so disposed that, when they are used, the strap 30 bears flat against the handle (Figure 5) to secure the umbrella in the case.

A stud 32″ can also be disposed further down on one narrow wall, one end 30′ of the strap 30 being attached to the stud 32″ if the other end is pulled right through as far as the handle 22.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A case shortenable flat umbrella having a substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape transverse to the stick axis when closed, wherein the case has a correspondingly rectangular cross-sectional shape formed by two opposed wide side walls and two opposed narrow side walls, which a bottom closure at one end and an insertion opening at the other upper end, the wide side walls extending upwards beyond the narrow side walls to provide flaps on opposite sides of the opening such that after insertion of the umbrella into the case through the opening the umbrella handle lies between the flaps, and there being a strap which extends over the opening and is attachable to the narrow side walls in two alternative positions in one of which the strap firmly engages the handle to hold the umbrella securely in the case and in the other of which the strap provides a carrying loop for the cased umbrella.

2. A cased umbrella according to Claim 1, wherein the strap is attachable to the narrow side walls by press-studs.

3. A cased umbrella according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the strap has a width substantially equal to the width of the narrow side walls.

4. A cased umbrella according to any one of Claims 1 to 3, wherein the length of the strap corresponds substantially to the peripheral length of a wide side wall.

5. A cased umbrella according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the strap, in its one position, both closes the opening and constitutes the bottom closure.

6. A cased umbrella according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the strap is a part of the umbrella and extends through two apertures in the umbrella handle.

7. A cased umbrella according to Claim 6, wherein the strap extends through rib end receiving pockets in the handle.

The example shown in Figure 4 is similar to that shown in Figures 1 to 3, except that the case 1' itself is open at both ends, the case bottom closure means being constituted by a portion of the strap.

The upper end opening is again substantially filled by the handle 6, the matching botton opening 5' being filled by a crown 12 of the umbrella which has the same cross-sectional shape as the handle 6. The strap 13 has a length substantially corresponding to the periphery of a wide side wall.

Both ends 13', 13'' of the strap 13 are provided with press-stud top portions 10. Associated therewith are press-stud bottom portions 15, 15' disposed on a narrow case side wall 2 at similar distances from the end openings.

Immediately adjacent the two end openings 5, 5' on both narrow side walls 2, are loops 16 those on one of the walls 2 co-operating with end stops 9 on the strap to prevent the strap ends from being pulled away from the case.

When both press-stud connections are made, the two end openings 5, 5' are closed and covered. The provision of two end openings 5, 5' offers the special advantage of facilitating the removal of an umbrella from the case, since the umbrella can be used in the removal direction through the bottom end opening 5'. The cases in both the above examples are preferably made of semi-rigid material.

The ribs 17 of the umbrella enter pockets 18, 19 in the handle 6; the pockets 18, 19 are disposed outside a socket 20 of the handle for introducing at least a sleeve portion of a slider (not shown).

The third example shown in Figures 5 to 9, again includes an umbrella having a handle 22 of rectangular cross-section disposed on an umbrella stick 21 which is constructed with provision for retraction by means of telescopic tubular members in known manner.

The sleeve 23 of the slider (not shown) which controls the opening of the ribs 27 enters a socket 24 in the handle 22. The handle has on either side of the socket 24 pockets 25, 26 for receiving the rib ends 27.

The handle base wall 28 is formed with apertures 29 through which a strap 30 extends. The two ends 30' of the strap are provided with press-stud parts 31. Multiple matching studs 32 on the narrow side walls of the case 33 are associated with the press-stud parts 31 on the strap.

The case 33 is also preferably made of a semi-rigid material and is formed with an end face insertion opening 34 which is closed by the handle 22. The side surfaces 22' of the handle 22 are exposed because of lateral apertures 35 in the case 33. The length x of the apertures 35 is greater than the length y of the side walls 22' of the handle 22.

Strap portions 30' extend through the pockets 25, 26 of the handle 22, and lie outside the rib ends 27. Due to the multiple matching studs 32, the effective length of the strap when acting as a carrying loop 30 can be varied. The size of the arcuate carrying loop portion which is available to be grasped in the user's hand changes in dependence on which studs 32 are used.

Studs 32' are so disposed that, when they are used, the strap 30 bears flat against the handle (Figure 5) to secure the umbrella in the case.

A stud 32'' can also be disposed further down on one narrow wall, one end 30' of the strap 30 being attached to the stud 32'' if the other end is pulled right through as far as the handle 22.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A case shortenable flat umbrella having a substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape transverse to the stick axis when closed, wherein the case has a correspondingly rectangular cross-sectional shape formed by two opposed wide side walls and two opposed narrow side walls, which a bottom closure at one end and an insertion opening at the other upper end, the wide side walls extending upwards beyond the narrow side walls to provide flaps on opposite sides of the opening such that after insertion of the umbrella into the case through the opening the umbrella handle lies between the flaps, and there being a strap which extends over the opening and is attachable to the narrow side walls in two alternative positions in one of which the strap firmly engages the handle to hold the umbrella securely in the case and in the other of which the strap provides a carrying loop for the cased umbrella.

2. A cased umbrella according to Claim 1, wherein the strap is attachable to the narrow side walls by press-studs.

3. A cased umbrella according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the strap has a width substantially equal to the width of the narrow side walls.

4. A cased umbrella according to any one of Claims 1 to 3, wherein the length of the strap corresponds substantially to the peripheral length of a wide side wall.

5. A cased umbrella according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the strap, in its one position, both closes the opening and constitutes the bottom closure.

6. A cased umbrella according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the strap is a part of the umbrella and extends through two apertures in the umbrella handle.

7. A cased umbrella according to Claim 6, wherein the strap extends through rib end receiving pockets in the handle.

* C L M S *

8. A cased umbrella according to Claim 1, substantially as described with reference to Figures 1 to 3, or to Figure 4, or to Figures 5 to 9, of the accompanying drawings.

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