

PATENT SPECIFICATION

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(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO UMBRELLA CASES.

(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 to 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 cases for umbrellas of the so called "flat" type having a substantially rectangular cross section transverse to the stick axis when closed.

Cases are known for round umbrellas in which the umbrella handle substantially fills an insertion opening at an end of the case and there are retaining means on the handle which co-operate with retaining means of the case wall. For example, the retaining means on the handle may comprise a circumferential groove and the mating retaining means of the case wall is a round string which lies in a hollow gusset in the material of which the case is made. When secured, the round string lays in the groove in the umbrella handle. The resulting constrained positive engagement secures the inserted position of the umbrella in the case, so that the user can hold it by a carrying loop of the handle without the risk that the handle will slide out of the case, either with an increase in the length of the umbrella stick if this is of the telescopic type or with the collapsed umbrella completely sliding out of the case.

In practice, this method can only easily be adopted with umbrella handles having a substantially round cross-sectional shape transverse to the stick axis. In prior art umbrella handles having a rectangular cross-sectional shape transverse to the stick axis particularly for flat umbrellas, no certain positive insertion of the retaining string can be achieved.

In any case, the string may shrink or expand due to the effect of weather, with consequent adverse effects on the reliable retention of the handle in the case.

According to the present invention, a case for a flat umbrella having a substantially rectangular cross section transverse to the stick axis when closed and a handle having a substantially rectangular cross sectional shape transverse to the stick axis, comprises a bottom end wall, two opposed wide side walls, two opposed narrow side walls, the wide side walls extending upwardly from the bottom wall beyond the upper edges of the narrow side walls so that the wide side walls are effectively provided with flaps adjacent to an upper open end of the case, and one of the flaps or an extension of one of the flaps being provided with a retaining means which is arranged to cooperate with a mating retaining means provided on the handle of an umbrella when disposed the case or provided on the other flap or on an extension thereof, to retain an umbrella in the case with the handle lying between the flaps.

The present invention provides a simple construction with a reliable, secure retaining system which is simple to use.

When the umbrella is to be inserted into or removed from the case, the flaps can be folded or bent outwards to assist in guiding the umbrella crown into the case, or to provide access for gripping the handle, respectively. At other times, when the umbrella is in the case, the flaps will overlie and conceal wider sides of the handle. A further advantage of causing the flaps to overlie the handle closely is that the handle can provide a relatively solid back-up bearing surface when the retaining means cooperates with its mat-

ing part. When empty, the case may be arranged to be folded about a transverse axis of the wide side walls, after the narrow side walls and the case bottom have been folded in the manner of a bellows to bring the wide side walls close together, additional retaining means being disposed on one wide side wall for cooperation with the retaining means to hold the case folded. This saves space when the case is empty but is impossible when the case is made of semi-rigid material as is often preferred.

In one example, the retaining means is one part of a press stud, the other part being mounted on the other flap or forming part of the handle of an umbrella.

In another example, the retaining means is one part of a magnetic catch, the other part, such as a soft iron plate, of which is preferably mounted on the umbrella handle. This enables the umbrella to be removed from the case with a snatch action.

In another example, the retaining means is an angular hook which preferably engages over the base of the umbrella handle and may hook into a recess in the handle base.

In a particularly secure construction, the one flap has an extension which is arranged to pass over the umbrella handle across the open end of the case to retain the umbrella in the case, the extension carrying the retaining means.

Preferably, the umbrella handle is provided with a carrying loop which is disposed outside the case when the umbrella is retained within the case so that the umbrella in its case can be carried by the loop. During the closing or collapsing of a shortenable flat umbrella, the case itself can advantageously be used for ordering the umbrella rib ends into groups in lateral rib-receiving compartments in the handle. After partial collapse of the umbrella, a portion thereof may be introduced into the open end of the case. The narrow side walls of the case bend the ribs and force them into the correct position for the subsequent final reduction in length of the umbrella, this reduction being produced by displacement of the handle relative to the case. The rib-receiving compartments in the handle then receive the rib ends. The handle, which then substantially fills the opening of the case, is secured in its inserted position by the retaining means and mating retaining means, without extra components being required. The securing of the handle also locates one or both flaps in position against the handle, so that although the flaps can advantageously be very readily folded back for the insertion of the umbrella, the umbrella always appears to be enclosed in its case. The umbrella can also be readily carried by a carrying loop on the handle without the risk of the handle sliding out of the case. On the contrary, to pull the handle out, the re-

taining means and the mating retaining means must first be released.

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

Figure 1 is a perspective view of one case and umbrella, with a press-stud retaining means;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the top end of a modification of the case and umbrella of Figure 1, with a magnetic retaining means;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the top end of a third example of a case and umbrella;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of a fourth example;

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the top end of a fifth example;

Figure 6 is a perspective view of a sixth example;

Figure 7 is a perspective view of a seventh example;

Figure 8 is a perspective view of an eighth example;

Figure 9 is a side elevation of the folded, empty case of the Figure 8 example; and,

Figure 10 is a plan of the folded case of the Figure 8 example.

The cases shown in Figures 1, 2 and 3 have a bottom end wall, narrow side walls 1 and wide side walls 2 with freely projecting flaps 2' which extend upwardly from the bottom wall beyond the narrow side walls 1, so as to provide lateral finger apertures 3 in the cases. The case side walls 1, 2 are preferably semi-rigid. A shortenable "flat" umbrella disposed in each case has a handle 4 of substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape transverse to the stick axis.

Umbrella rib ends 5 enter compartments 6, 7 in the handle 4. The compartments 6, 7 are disposed laterally of a socket 8 associated with the handle 4 for receiving at least a sleeve of a main slider of the umbrella when the umbrella is shortened. The handle 4 has a carrying loop 9 having ends fixed in the handle.

In at least one wide side, the handle shown in Figure 1 has a bore 10 acting as part of a press-stud. A cooperating press-stud stop portion 11 is mounted on at least one of the flaps 2' of the case. If the two press-stud parts are brought into engagement with one another, the handle alone cannot be pulled out of the case accidentally, accompanied by an increase in the length of the umbrella stick, nor can the whole umbrella be accidentally pulled out of the case.

In the Figure 2 example, the retaining means and mating retaining means are formed by a soft iron plate 12 on each wide side of the handle and a magnet 13 on the inner surface of each flap 2'.

In the Figure 3 example, there is disposed on one of the flaps 2' an angular hook 14

which engages over the base 4' of the handle 4, the free end of the hook lying in a trough-shaped recess 15 in the base 4' of the handle 4. Alternatively, in this embodiment, a hook 14 could be disposed on each of the flaps 2' the hooks preferably being offset in relation to one another, so that by providing two mating trough-shaped depressions the umbrella can be fixed from both wide side walls; this also has the advantage of securing both flaps 2' from folding downwards and outwards.

The cases shown in Figures 4 to 7 also have a bottom end wall, narrow side walls 1 and wide side walls 2. Disposed in the case, folded or collapsed into a rectangular cross-sectional shape is a flat umbrella having disposed on its stick a handle 4 having a base 4', narrow lateral surfaces 4'' and wide lateral surfaces 4'''. The narrow lateral surfaces 4'' and the wide lateral surfaces 4''' are inclined so as to produce a handle which tapers in the direction of the base side 4'.

Even when the umbrella is inserted in the case, the narrow lateral surfaces 4'' of the handle 4 are free, since the case wide side walls 2 project, that is they are longer than the case narrow side walls 1. Hence, finger apertures 3 are provided on the narrow sides of the case.

The umbrella rib ends 5 in this case are also disposed in lateral compartments in the handle 4 when the umbrella is completely folded. The finger holes 3 in the case facilitate the ordering of the rib ends, if this is done when the partially collapsed umbrella is already in the case.

In the Figure 4 example, extending from one case wide side wall 2 to the other case wide side wall 2 in a case closure strap 16. The closure strap 16 is a continuation of a grip strap 17 of a sliding clasp fastener 18, which closes a slit extending down from the upper edge of one of the wide side walls 2. The closure strap 16 has at its free end a press-stud part 19 which can co-operate with a press-stud part suitably disposed on the other wide side wall 2. A decisive factor of the press-stud connection is that the handle 4 is positively supported by engagement with the insides of the wide side walls 2 even though the flaps 2' of the case may be of only semi-rigid construction.

In the example illustrated in Figure 5, a closure strap 16' extends immediately from the edge 20 of one wide side wall 2.

In the example illustrated in Figure 6, closure straps 16'', 16''', which are only half as long as the strap 16', extend from top edges 21, 22 of the two wide side walls. The closure formed by a press-stud, is disposed above the handle base 4', so that in this case also the handle provides a back-up support for closing the press-stud.

In the Figure 7 example, the closure strap comprises a hook 23 which is rigidly mounted

on an edge 24 of one wide side wall flap 2'. The hook 23 is arcuate at its free bent end 23' and is preferably resilient. It retains itself tightly in the closure position, by pressing flap 2'' of the case wide side wall 2 against the handle-side surface 4'''.

In the examples described above with reference to Figures 1 to 7, the handle 4 has a carrying loop 9 or 25. If necessary, the carrying loop can be folded and, lying on the base 4' of the handle 4, can be retained by the closure strap or hook, if people are unwilling or do not desire to carry the umbrella and case by the loop 9 or 25.

The case, illustrated in Figures 8, 9 and 10, again has narrow side walls 1 and wide side walls 2a, 2b, and also a case bottom 26.

Disposed in the case is a flat umbrella of rectangular cross-sectional shape when folded or collapsed and having a handle 4 disposed on the umbrella stick. The handle 4 has a base 4', narrow lateral surfaces 4'' and wide lateral surfaces 4'''. The narrow lateral surfaces 4'' and the wide lateral surfaces 4''' are inclined so as to produce a construction which tapers in the direction of the base 4'. Even when the umbrella is inserted in the case, the narrow lateral surfaces 4'' of the handle 4 are exposed since the wide side walls 2a, 2b are longer than the narrow side walls 1; thus, finger apertures 3 are produced at the narrow sides of the case.

The umbrella rib ends 5 lie ordered in groups in the lateral zones of the handle 4. The finger apertures 3 of the case facilitate any ordering required in these zones if such is performed when the partially collapsed umbrella is already in the case.

Extending from one wide side wall 2a in a case closure strap 27 which extends in the direction of the other wide side wall 2b. The closure strap 27 has a press-stud part 28. A mating press-stud part 29 is disposed on the wide side wall 2b and enables the retaining position of the closure strap to be obtained as shown in Figure 8. Even if the umbrella and case are carried by a carrying loop 30, the strap 27 prevents the umbrella from being pulled out of the case.

The narrow side walls 1 of the case and the case bottom 26 can be folded, along a folding line 31 so that the wide side walls 2a, 2b can be pressed towards one another, flattening the rectangular cross-section of the case. The wide side wall 2a, which is disposed opposite the wide side wall 2b carrying the mating stud part 29, carries at the bottom-side end an extra mating press-stud part 32. As a result of this construction, the empty case can be secured in a position folded around the transverse central axis x—x. Since the narrow side walls 1, including the case bottom 26, can be folded in the manner of a bellows, a relatively flat, shape is produced. If the

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case is made of a resilient, semi-rigid, plastics material, there is the further advantage that after the closure flap 27 has been released from the position shown in Figure 9, the case folds back more or less automatically, and the case then extends in a straight line, as shown in Figure 8, ready to receive an umbrella.

As can be seen more particularly in Figure 9, the extra mating stud part 32 is disposed substantially at a distance from the case bottom 26 which corresponds to the difference in lengths between the wide side walls 2a, 2b and the narrow side walls 1. This ensures that the extra mating closure means lies in an advantageous position in relation to the flaps on the wide side walls 2a, 2b which can approach more closely to one another due to the overlap of the flaps beyond the narrow side walls, to ensure that the other mating closure means 29 does not substantially increase the thickness, even though the other mating closure means 29 also takes the form of a projecting stud.

Features of the cases described in this Specification form the subject matter of the invention of our copending Application No. 9843/69 (Serial No. 1219377).

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A case for a flat umbrella having a substantially rectangular cross sectional shape transverse to the stick axis when closed and a handle having a substantially rectangular cross sectional shape transverse to the stick axis, the case comprising a bottom end wall, two opposed wide side wall, two opposed narrow side walls, the wide side walls extending upwardly from the bottom wall beyond the upper edges of the narrow side walls so that the wide side walls are effectively provided with flaps adjacent to an upper open end of the case, and one of the flaps or an extension of one of the flaps being provided with a retaining means which is arranged to co-operate with a mating retaining means provided on the handle of an umbrella when disposed in the case or provided on the other flap or on an extension thereof, to retain an umbrella in the case with the handle lying between the flaps.

2. A case according to Claim 1, in which each flap is provided with a retaining means which is arranged to cooperate with a mating retaining means on the handle.

3. A case according to Claim 1 or Claim

2, in which the retaining means is one part of a press stud.

4. A case according to Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which the retaining means is one part of a magnetic catch.

5. A case according to Claim 1, in which the retaining means is an angular hook.

6. A case according to any of claims 1, 3, 4, or 5, in which the one flap has an extension which is arranged for passing over the umbrella handle across the open of the case to retain the umbrella in the case, the extension carrying the retaining means.

7. A case according to Claim 6, in which the extension is a strap attached to the clasp of a sliding clasp fastener which closes a slit extending down from the upper edge of one of the flaps.

8. A case according to any one of the preceding claims, which can be folded about a transverse axis of the wide side walls, after the narrow side walls and the case bottom have been folded in the manner of a bellows to bring the wide side walls close together, additional retaining means being disposed on one wide side wall for cooperation with the retaining means to hold the case folded.

9. A case according to Claim 1, substantially as described with reference to any one of the examples illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

10. A flat umbrella having a case according to any one of the preceding claims.

11. A flat umbrella and case according to Claim 10 when dependent on any one of claims 1 to 5, in which the umbrella handle is provided with means for co-operation with the retaining means to retain the umbrella in the case.

12. A flat umbrella and case according to Claim 10 or Claim 11, in which the umbrella handle is provided with a carrying loop which is disposed outside the case when the umbrella is retained within the case so that the umbrella in its case can be carried by the loop.

13. A flat umbrella and case according to Claim 10, substantially as described with reference to any one of the examples illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

For the Applicants,
GILL, JENNINGS & EVERY,
Chartered Patent Agents,
51/52 Chancery Lane,
London, WC2A 1HN.



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6. A case according to any of claims 1, 3, 4, or 5, in which the one flap has an extension which is arranged for passing over the umbrella handle across the open of the case to retain the umbrella in the case, the extension carrying the retaining means.

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8. A case according to any one of the preceding claims, which can be folded about a transverse axis of the wide side walls, after the narrow side walls and the case bottom have been folded in the manner of a bellows to bring the wide side walls close together, additional retaining means being disposed on one wide side wall for cooperation with the retaining means to hold the case folded.

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11. A flat umbrella and case according to Claim 10 when dependent on any one of claims 1 to 5, in which the umbrella handle is provided with means for co-operation with the retaining means to retain the umbrella in the case.

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