

Nov. 9, 1948.

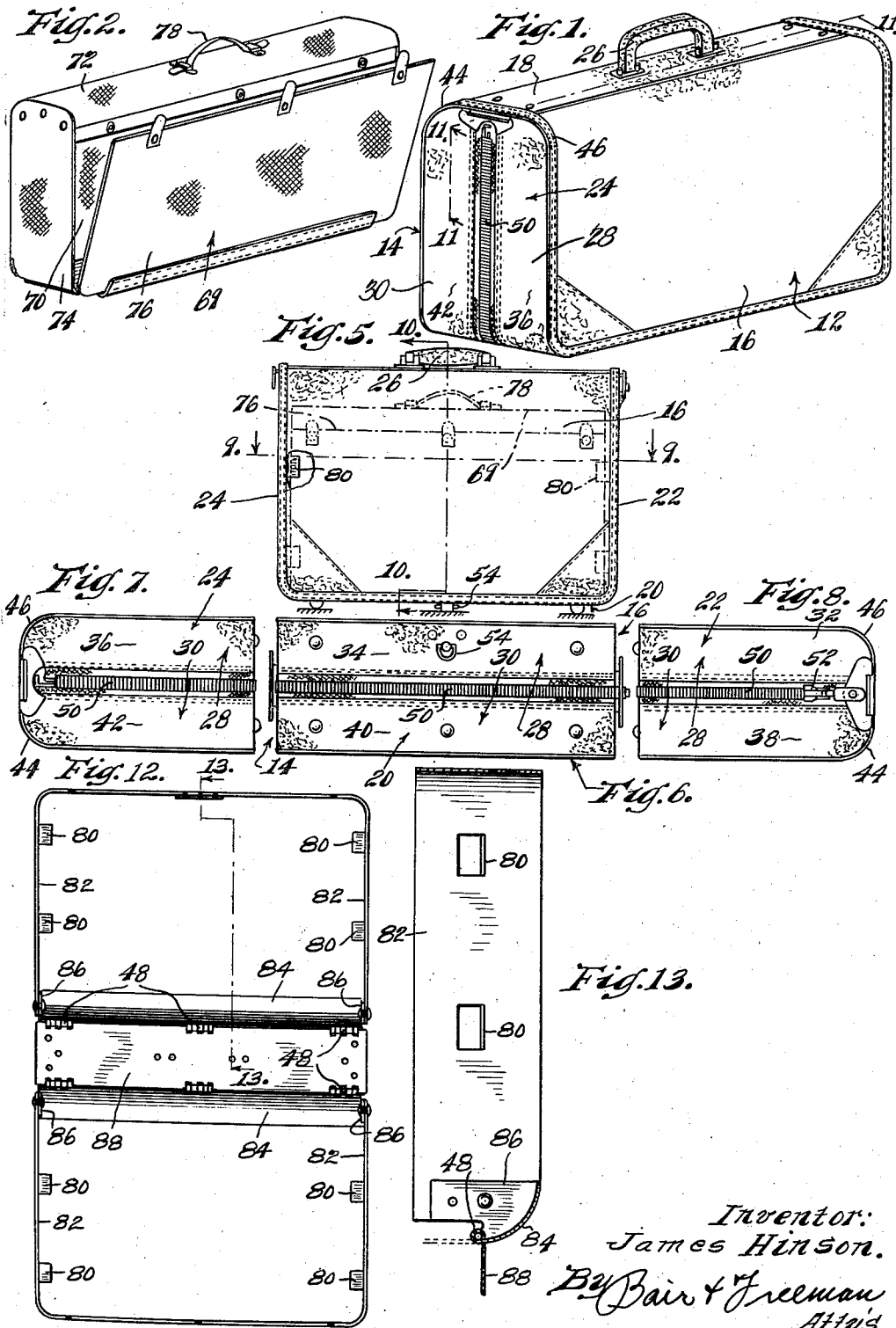
J. HINSON

2,453,663

WARDROBE SUITCASE

Filed March 29, 1946

3 Sheets-Sheet 1



Inventor:  
James Hinson.  
By Bair & Freeman  
Atty's.

Nov. 9, 1948.

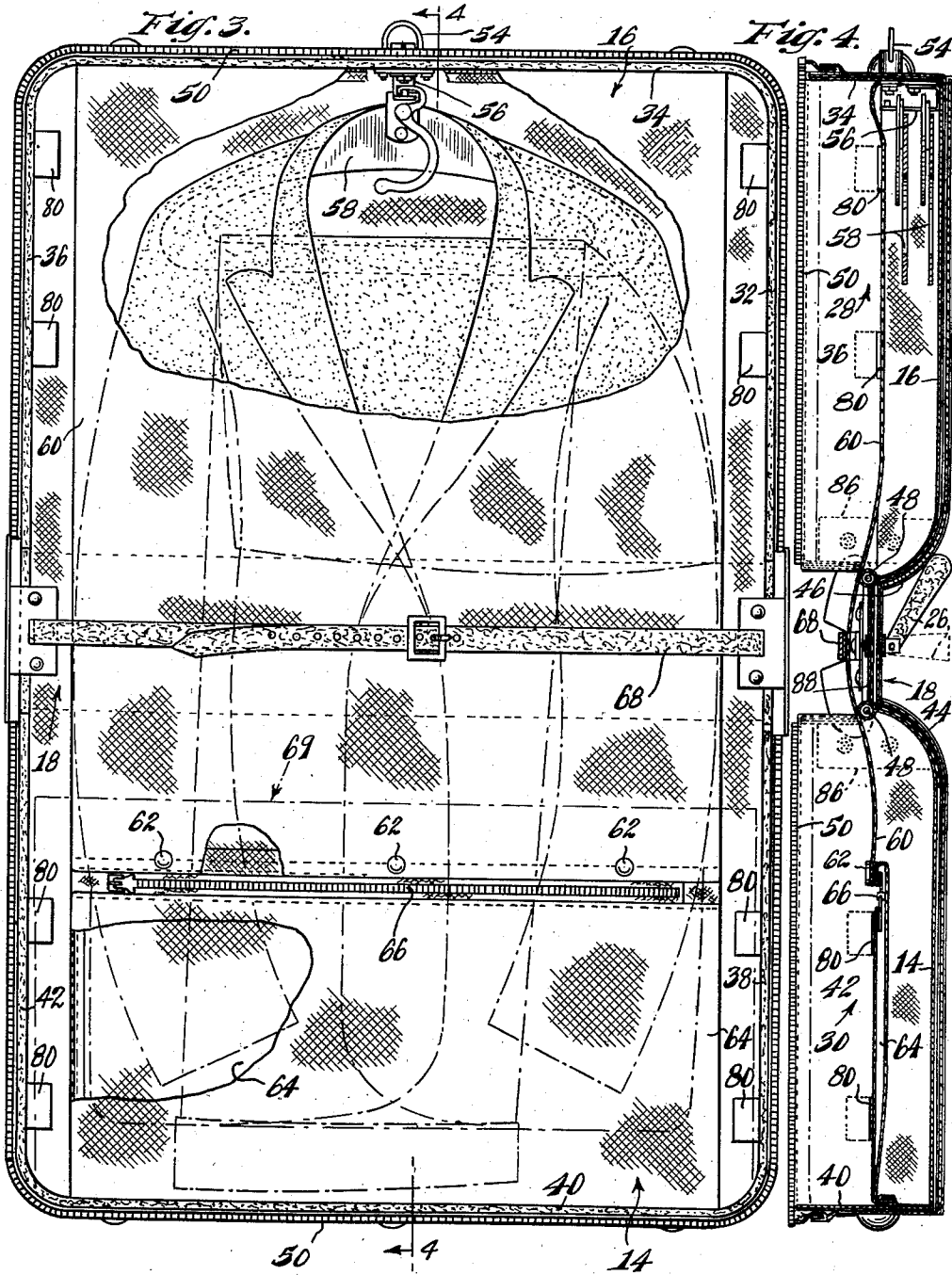
J. HINSON

2,453,663

WARDROBE SUITCASE

Filed March 29, 1946

3 Sheets-Sheet 2



Inventor:  
James Hinson.  
By Bair & Freeman  
Attys.

Nov. 9, 1948.

J. HINSON

2,453,663

WARDROBE SUITCASE

Filed March 29, 1946

3 Sheets-Sheet 3

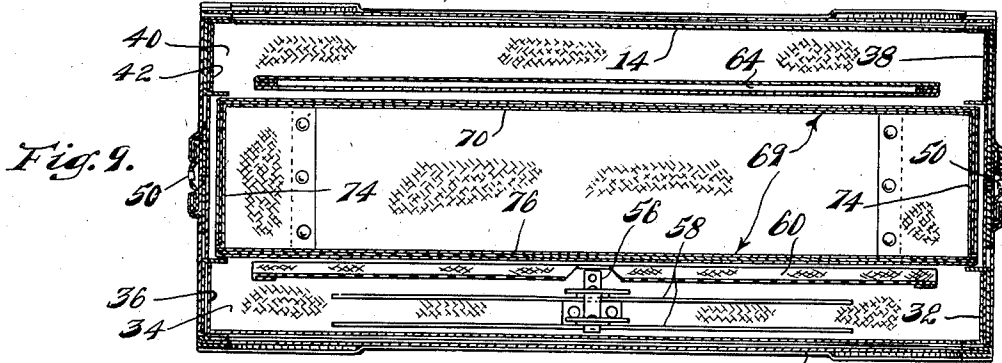


Fig. 9.

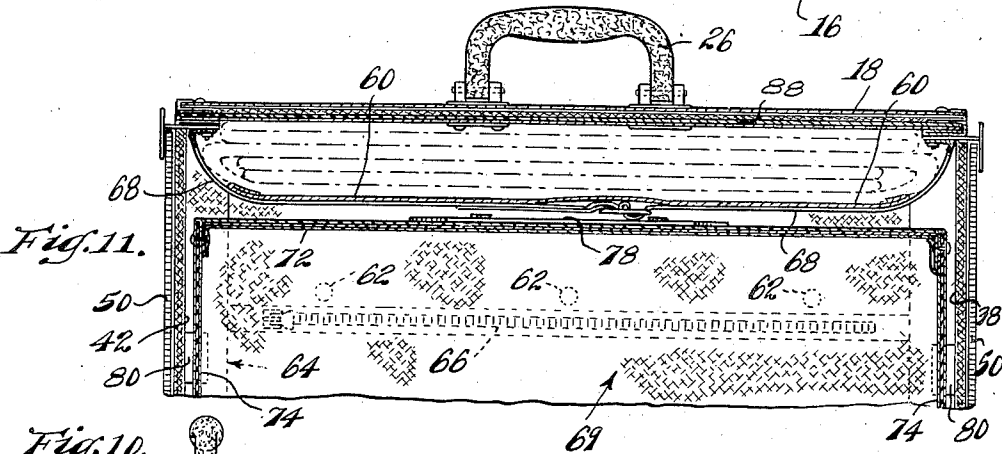


Fig. 11.

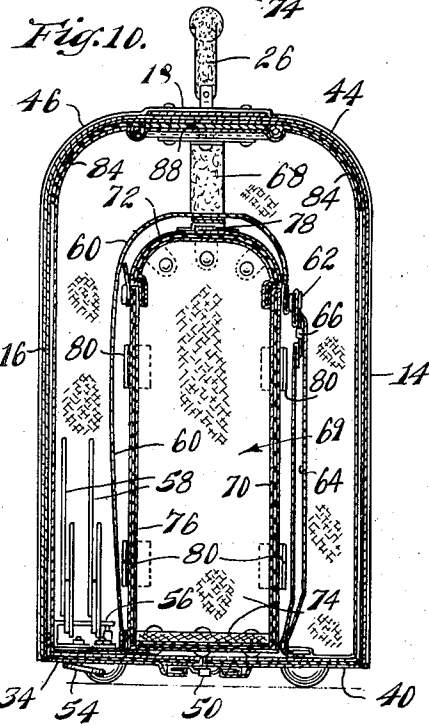


Fig. 10.

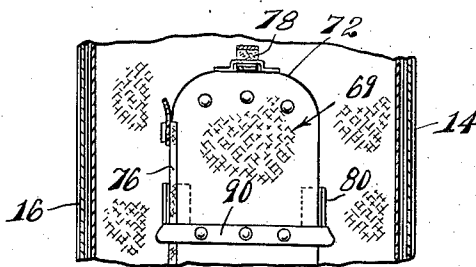


Fig. 14.

Inventor.  
 James Hinson  
 By *Bair & Freeman*  
 Attys.

## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,453,663

## WARDROBE SUITCASE

James Hinson, Waterloo, Iowa, assignor to The  
Hinson Manufacturing Company, Waterloo,  
Iowa, a corporation of Iowa

Application March 29, 1946, Serial No. 658,127

## 1 Claim. (Cl. 190—49)

1

This invention relates to folding bags in the nature of wardrobe suitcases.

A principal feature and advantage of the invention is that the bag can be opened out to a considerable length and suspended in a vertical position whereby clothes can be hung in their full length. The bag can then be folded to a convenient size for carrying.

Another advantage resides in the provision of a separate container for smaller items, such as shirts, which is fitted in the bag.

A further advantageous feature of the invention is the manner in which the inner container retains the clothes in fitted position when the bag is folded. The size and shape of the inner container are such that there is a convenient spacing between the inner container and the walls of the bag; and the surface of the inner container which contacts the clothes at the point where they are folded is rounded to provide a smooth bearing surface to prevent the clothes from bunching or wrinkling.

Another advantage is that when the bag is folded and closed, the inner container is secured therein from shaking against the side walls of the bag and against the clothes in those directions. The inner container actually defines uniform spaces between itself and the side walls and the top of the bag. When the bag is folded and closed the inner container then rests on the part that forms the bottom where there are no clothes for it to interfere with.

With these and other objects in view the invention consists in the construction, arrangement and combination of the various parts of the device whereby the objects contemplated are attained, as hereinafter more fully set forth, pointed out in the claim, and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Fig. 1 is an isometric view of the bag in folded, carrying position;

Fig. 2 is an isometric view of the inner container;

Fig. 3 is a view showing the travelling bag opened up in position for hanging, and showing clothes hanging therein in full length;

Fig. 4 is a vertical sectional view of the open bag as taken on the line 4—4 in Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 is a front view of the folded bag;

Fig. 6 is a bottom view of the folded bag;

Figs. 7 and 8 are views of the opposite ends of the folded bag;

Fig. 9 is a cross sectional view taken on line 9—9 of Fig. 5;

2

Fig. 10 is a vertical sectional view taken on line 10—10 of Fig. 5;

Fig. 11 is a vertical longitudinal view of the upper portion of the folded bag, taken on line 11—11 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 12 is a plan view of the rigid framework of the bag proper;

Fig. 13 is a view taken on line 13—13 of Fig. 12; and

Fig. 14 is a fragmentary vertical cross sectional view of the folded bag showing a modification for securing the inner container in place.

Referring in detail to the drawings, the travelling bag as a whole is indicated at 12 and contains a pair of foldable side members 14 and 16. For the purposes of identification, certain other elements will be referred to as sections of the folded bag, but they lose their identity as such when the bag is opened. These sections include a top wall 18, a bottom wall 20, and two end walls 22 and 24. As the bag is shown in Fig. 1, it is in the position for carrying, and a handle 26 is secured to the top wall 18 for that purpose. In Figs. 3 and 4, the bag is shown opened out and in position for hanging, where the side member 16 becomes the upper member, the side member 14 becomes the lower member, and the top member 18 becomes an intermediate member, and may at times be referred to as a bottom member; but this latter appellation is applicable only when the bag is open, or when the user is in the midst of packing and closing the bag.

Fig. 2 shows the inner container which will be described later in connection with the method of use of the bag as a whole.

The bottom wall 20 and the end walls 22 and 24 exist as such only when the bag is closed. These walls are made up of a first continuous rigid strip 28 which is secured to the side member 16, together with a second rigid strip 30 which is secured to the side member 14, both the strips extending at right angles from their respective side members. The two rigid strips 28 and 30 are each made up of individual elements; referring to Figs. 3, 6, and 7, in that order, the strip 28 comprises elements 32, 34 and 36, respectively; and the strip 30 comprises elements 38, 40 and 42, respectively. The top of the side members 14 and 16 when the bag is folded, have rounded portions 44 and 46 curving transversely to the planes of the side members, and, when the bag is folded, curving toward each other, the top piece 18 being hinged to the inner extremities of the rounded portions by means of hinges 48, by which the bag can be opened and closed. It will be noted that the top

or intermediate strip 18 is not as wide as the width of the bag when folded, but is compensated for by the lateral dimensions of the rounded portions 44 and 43. The combined width of the top 18 and the transverse dimensions of the rounded portions 44 and 46, is equal to the combined transverse dimensions of the strips 28 and 30. The rounded portions 44 and 46 provide a generally rounded contour to the top of the bag, while the inclusion of the top strip 18 prevents the existence of a projecting connection between the side members 14 and 16 when the bag is open. Referring to Fig. 4, it will be noted that when the bag is open the hinge connections 48 are positioned well in the interior of the open bag, while if it were not for the inclusion of the top 18, the hinge connections 48 would extend to the outer edge of the open bag, or to the extreme left edge of Fig. 4. By virtue of this feature there is provided a substantially continuous vertical space for hanging clothes.

When the bag is folded, the free edges of the rigid strips 28 and 30 meet and are secured by a slide fastener device 50 provided with a slider 52 which is locked on the end 22 of the bag (Fig. 8) and slides completely off the fastener device on the end 24 of the bag (Fig. 7). The slide fastener 50 and the locking means may be of any desired type. As best seen in Fig. 4, the inner end of the rigid strips 28 and 30 are separated when the bag is opened.

For purposes of hanging the bag, a hook or loop 54 is secured to the wall element 34 on the side member 16. When the bag is opened the bag may be suspended by this loop in any convenient place. Secured to the inside surface of the same end of the open bag, that is, on the inner side of wall element 34, is a bracket 56 extending inwardly from the wall element 34, or downwardly when the bag is open and hanging. This bracket 56 may be of any conventional type, but is preferably arranged so that hangers 58 may be detachably suspended therefrom so that clothes hanging thereon may be easily removed from the bag. As seen in Fig. 3, the length of the bag when open is such as to conveniently accommodate a suit so that the coat is hanging in full length, and the trousers may be hung over the bar of the coat hanger without wrinkling them.

A flexible curtain member 60, shown partially broken away in Fig. 3, is secured to the wall elements 34 and 40 and extends the full length of the open bag, and is of substantially the same width as the open bag. Fig. 3 shows the curtain 60 of slightly less width than the open bag, but the object of the curtain is to completely, or nearly so, cover the clothes when the bag is hanging so that it is not necessary to close the bag after using it each time in order to keep the clothes clean. The curtain 60 is made up of two parts, each secured to a wall element 34 or 40, and the free edges are secured together by suitable snap or other securing means 62. The parts of the curtain 60 can be unfastened, the top part drawn back, and the bottom part will drop down, exposing the clothes hanging in the bag. The bottom part of the curtain 60 is in the form of a pocket 64, having an inner and outer wall of the same material, that is, any flexible material such as fabric. The upper part of the pocket 64 is closable by a slide fastener 66. This pocket 64 can be conveniently used for small articles as ties and handkerchiefs, which are not bulky. A strap 68 is secured at the sides of the open bag to the ends of the intermediate member 18, and is provided

with a buckle for securing the clothes and curtain member 60 in position.

The inner container 69 for the bag, shown in Fig. 2, is of a type the construction of which is not particularly new, but which is specifically adapted for the bag. It consists of a back 70, a top 72 and end and bottom walls 74, with one side open which is closed by a hinged cover 76 provided with suitable snaps for securing it closed. A handle 78 is secured on the top wall 72 for ease in carrying the container. The length of the container 69 is such as to fit snugly in the bag with the ends of the container in contact, or substantially so, with the interior surfaces of the end walls 22 and 24 of the bag. The width of the container is substantially less than that of the bag, as is its height or vertical extent. The upper surface 72 of the inner container 69 is of generally rounded formation, that is, the transverse corners are rounded while the portion between the rounded corners is more flat, which conforms generally to the contour of the top of the bag as a whole when folded. The inner container need not be exactly concentric with the bag, but the top surface of both the inner container and the bag give a generally rounded effect, leaving no sharp corners, and providing a generally uniform space between them on the sides and top.

When the clothes are hung in the open bag, the strap 68 is secured thereacross to keep the clothes temporarily in place, and the bag is laid flat in open position. The inner container 69 is then placed in either end of the bag, over the curtain 60, so as to rest on lugs 80. There are two of these lugs formed in each of the four end wall elements 32, 38, 36 and 42 on the inside of the bag, and they extend inwardly substantially parallel with the side members 14 and 16. When the inner container 69 is placed in the lower half of the bag as shown in Fig. 3, it is fitted with its bottom surface against the inner surface of the wall element 46, and it extends toward the intermediate strip 18 to the dot-dash line 69 in Fig. 3. The bag can then be closed, after which the lugs 80 in the other half 14 of the bag fit on the upper side of the inner container 69, and the slide fastener 50 on the bag is then closed.

Fig. 10 shows the position of the inner container 69 with respect to the side members 14 and 16 and the top wall 18 when the bag is closed, the lugs 80 being spaced laterally a proper distance for engaging the sides of the inner container 69, and securing it against lateral displacement. The height of the inner container being less than that of the bag, there is an appropriate space between the two at that point, resulting in a continuous, substantially uniform space on three sides, i. e., from the wall element 34, upward along the side member 16, across the top along the top wall 18, and downward again along the side member 14, terminating at the wall element 40.

The inner container 69 is free of any positive obstruction from sliding toward the top wall 18, but the lugs 80 are spaced laterally to have a reasonably tight fit with the inner container 69, which normally retain the container in the position in which it is placed. In addition, when the bag is carried as intended when folded, gravity would naturally keep the inner container 69 at the bottom of the folded bag; and, finally, when clothes are hung in the bag and the bag is folded, the clothes substantially fill the spaces between the inner container 69 and the walls of the bag, including the space at the top of the bag, whereby

the inner container 69 is held in the position shown in Fig. 10, or at the bottom of the bag.

It will be seen from the foregoing that when clothes are hung in the bag and the bag is folded, the clothes rest over the top of the inner container 69, preventing them from bunching or wrinkling, the rounded top surface 72 of the inner container 69 being well designed to carry out that purpose.

The flexible curtain 60, in addition to providing an enclosure for the clothes when the bag is open, also forms a liner for the clothes when the bag is closed, so that the inner container 69 does not have rubbing contact with the clothes. In normal use of the bag, the inner container, when taken out and set down, tends to become soiled, and when replaced in the bag would tend to soil the clothes. This curtain feature, together with the fact that the inner container is prevented from knocking and rubbing against the clothes, insures that the clothes will be kept clean and in reasonably pressed condition.

The skeleton structure for the bag proper is made up of a rigid framework, as shown in Figs. 12 and 13, and is preferably made of steel for furnishing sufficient strength. The framework includes two U-shaped pieces 82 which form structural members for the rigid walls 28 and 30. The lugs 80 are stamped out of the arms of the U-shaped pieces 82 as shown in Fig. 13. A rounded steel plate 84, having end lugs 86, is secured between the free ends of the arms of each U-shaped piece 82 by riveting thereto, in such a manner that the rounded portions extend transversely of the plane of the U-shaped piece. It is these rounded plates 84 which provide the curved surfaces 44 and 46 of the side members 14 and 16. An elongated steel strip 88 furnishes the means for securing the two U-shaped pieces 82 together by hinges 48, referred to earlier, the strip 88 forming the structural member for the top wall 18. The framework is covered with suitable outer covering such as leather, and a suitable lining, preferably some form of fabric. The outline structure of the bag is therefor rigid, including the curved surfaces 44 and 46, and the covering material being stretched across the open faces of the U-shaped frames 82 forms the surfaces of the side members 14 and 16, and while both of the side members 14 and 16 proper are not rigid, the outline of the bag is rigid, and presents a very strong and rugged article of luggage. The hinges 48, as will be seen from Fig. 13, are set inwardly from the outer contour of the top of the bag, whereby when the bag is opened, the strip 88 will be held at substantially right angles to the rounded plates 84 at its point of attachment thereto, so that the bag when opened will be retained in substantially a continuous straight line. The strip 88 has suitable holes punched therein for securing the handle 26 thereto.

Fig. 14 includes a modification for securing the inner container 69 in place. Lugs 80, the same as used in the previous embodiment, are shown

formed in the end elements 32, 38, 36 and 42. A bar, or cross piece, 90 is secured to each end of the inner container 69 extending beyond the sides thereof and engaging lugs 80 on the surface which is on the under side when the bag is folded. This is a means for positively securing the inner container 69 in lowered position and preventing it from being jarred around inside the bag.

While I have herein shown and described a preferred embodiment of my invention, manifestly is is susceptible of modification and rearrangement of the parts without departing from the spirit and scope thereof. I do not, therefore, wish to be understood as limiting my invention to the precise form herein disclosed, except as I may be so limited by the appended claim.

I claim as my invention:

A wardrobe suitcase including a pair of rigid metal shells, each shell having inner and outer open sides and comprising a U-shaped member having substantial depth as measured between the planes of the inner and outer open sides, the ends of the legs of each U-shaped member opposite the web being connected by a curved partial closure plate, the closure plate having its inner and outer longitudinal edges parallel to the web, the outer longitudinal edge lying in the plane of said outer open side and the inner longitudinal edge lying between the planes of said open sides, an intermediate metal strip hinged to the inner longitudinal edges of the curved closure plates for enabling the shells to be folded together, the combined depth of the intermediate strip and the curved closure members when the shells are folded together being equal to the combined depth of both U-shaped members, the legs of each U-shaped member having lugs stamped therefrom and extending inwardly in a plane substantially parallel with the plane of the respective inner open side, said lugs being adapted to receive an inner container therebetween in the suitcase, said suitcase having a flexible covering extending over the exterior surface of the shells and over the outer open sides.

JAMES HINSON.

#### REFERENCES CITED

The following references are of record in the file of this patent:

#### UNITED STATES PATENTS

Number	Name	Date
677,942	Christie	July 9, 1901
1,520,444	Domadka	Dec. 23, 1924
1,562,417	Schuck	Nov. 17, 1925
1,823,403	Krueger	Sept. 15, 1931
2,002,638	Lee et al.	May 28, 1935
2,313,547	Hinson	Mar. 9, 1943
2,341,104	Kleber	Feb. 8, 1944

#### FOREIGN PATENTS

Number	Country	Date
756,539	France	Sept. 25, 1933