

# United States Patent

Schesso

[15] 3,654,880

[45] Apr. 11, 1972

[54] **PORTABLE SAFE**

[72] Inventor: **Leroy R. Schesso**, 821 Minnesota Avenue,  
St. Paul, Minn. 55102

[22] Filed: **Nov. 10, 1970**

[21] Appl. No.: **88,326**

[52] U.S. Cl. .... **109/25**

[51] Int. Cl. .... **E05g 3/00**

[58] Field of Search ..... 109/25, 32, 33, 36, 37, 43

[56] **References Cited**

**UNITED STATES PATENTS**

784,805	3/1905	Peterson .....	109/25
2,035,498	3/1936	Navis et al. ....	109/25

3,053,416 9/1962 Harner.....109/32

**FOREIGN PATENTS OR APPLICATIONS**

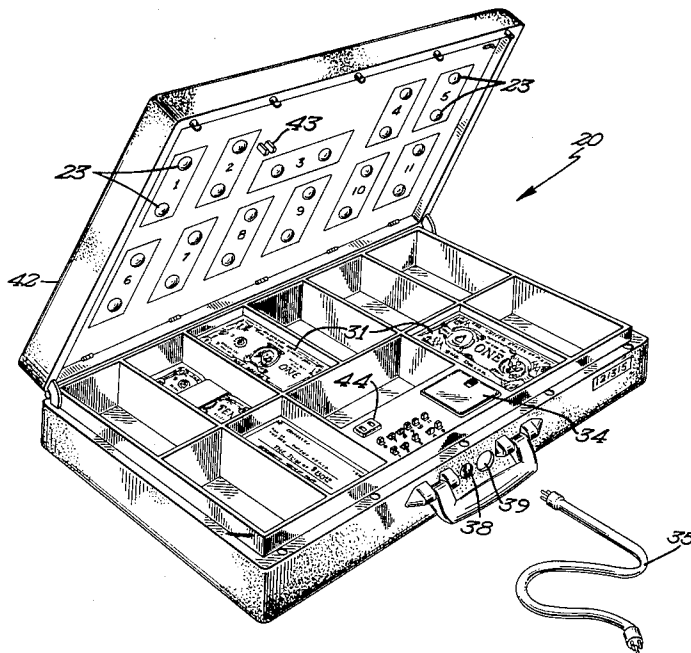
885,245 12/1961 Great Britain.....109/25

*Primary Examiner*—Reinaldo P. Machado  
*Attorney*—Schroeder, Siegfried & Ryan

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A depository for the storage and/or transport of negotiable papers, including currency, is disclosed, which includes a means for punching at least one hole through the papers by an electrically activated punch in the event the container for the paper is forced open by a thief.

**7 Claims, 2 Drawing Figures**



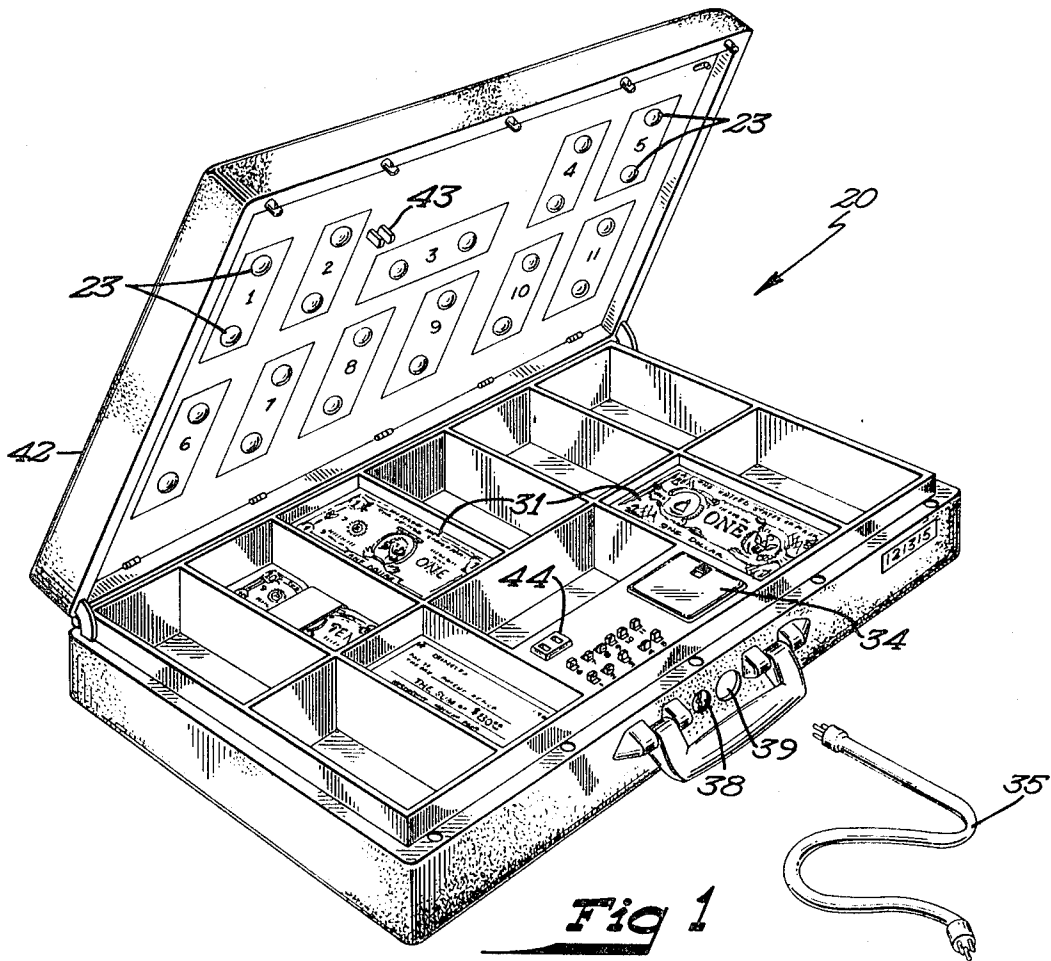


Fig 1

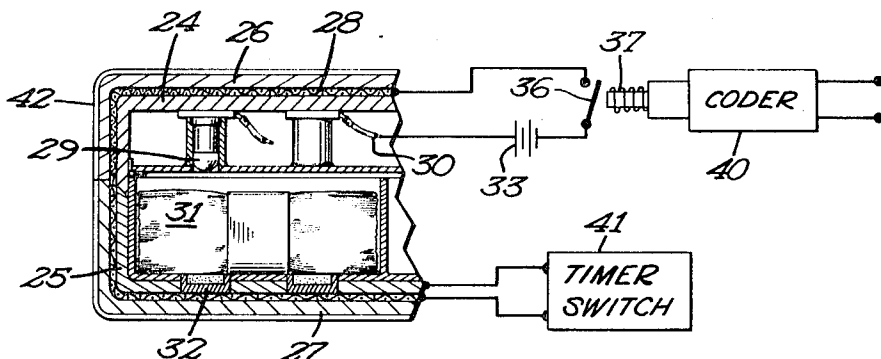


Fig 2

INVENTOR.  
LEROY R. SCHESSO  
BY  
*Schroeder, Siegfried  
& Ryan* ATTORNEYS

1  
PORTABLE SAFE

My invention is directed to the problem of the safe storage and transportation of valuable papers such as currency. The increasing crime rate has made the storage and transport of monies by small businesses and private individuals a high risk proposition. Through the use of my invention, the transport or storage of monies is made under a condition wherein the profit to the potential thief is removed, and therefore the risk of theft is markedly decreased.

Briefly, my invention relates to a storage container for money which includes a means for producing punctures through the monies in the event the container is forced open or otherwise tampered with by a thief. The punched money is readily identified as having been improperly obtained, and therefore the thief is unable to realize a profit from his actions. If the money is accidentally mutilated, the person having the legal right to the money can have it converted to good currency by bringing it to a federal reserve bank.

My invention is equally applicable to the storage of money in safes which are relatively immovable, as well as in briefcase-like carrying containers for the transporting of money from a place of business to a bank. It is with regard to this latter idea that my invention will be described in detail. It should be appreciated that essentially all of the remarks which follow are equally applicable to either a portable or to a relatively stationary depository for currency and other valuable papers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a briefcase for carrying currency in accordance with the invention;

FIG. 2 is a partially cross-sectional view and a partially schematic circuit view of the briefcase of FIG. 1.

In FIG. 1 there is illustrated a carrying case for currency which takes the form of a briefcase generally identified 20. Case 20 includes a lower box-like member 21 and an upper lid or closure member 22. The lower box-like member 21 has been subdivided into a number of compartments of a size such as to readily receive currency in the form of paper money. Also illustrated is a compartment containing checks. The upper lid member 22 contains a plurality of elements identified 1 through 11, which are superimposed when the case is closed over the individual compartments of the lower member 21. These superimposed members include circular punch elements 29 and are illustrated as having two of these punch members in superimposable relationship to the compartments of the lower chamber.

The construction of the case 20 is best seen in sectional view in FIG. 2. In the figure there is illustrated a construction in accordance with the invention showing the case in closed position. An interior formed metal member 24 of the upper lid member and a lower formed metal member 25 of the lower member when the case is closed form a continuous electrical conductor. Surrounding members 24 and 25 are formed members 26 and 27, which may also be of a metallic material. An outer decorative coating 42 covers the case. Desirably, it would be marked to identify the fact that theft of the case would destroy the contents' value. Interspaced between members 24 and 26 and 25 and 27 is an array of insulated wires 28 which completely surround the case. Wires 28 are in electrical isolation from members 24 through 27 under normal conditions. Should any forced entry be attempted into the case, the insulation that is provided on these wires is of such a thin nature that an electrical contact will be brought about between the wires and the case by such forced entry. The purpose of such electrical contact will be described with regard to the circuit portion of FIG. 2.

Also located in the upper portion 22 is the punch member identified 29. This may take the form of a cartridge 23 having a projectile forward portion 29. The cartridge is mounted within its chamber so as to be in electrical contact with members 24 and 25. A second electrical contact is provided via lead 30. Lead 30 acts in cooperation with electrical contact

2

member 24 to complete a cartridge ignition means. This may be a simple resistance wire which becomes heated to a point capable of igniting a powder charge within cartridge member 23 when an electrical current is passed therethrough. Upon the ignition of this charge, projectile 29 is discharged from the cartridge and penetrates through the stack of currency identified 31 within the lower compartment. A reinforcing member 32 is provided in back of the currency both to act as a punch receiving compartment and to stop the motion of the projectile 29. In passing through currency 31, projectile 29 provides a hole therethrough. As illustrated in the figures, two such holes are provided—one at each end of the currency. Such holes will provide a positive identification of the fact that the currency had been improperly obtained. In the event of inadvertent triggering of the punches or upon a restoration of money that had been punched back to its rightful owner, the punching will not provide such a defacing of the currency as to prevent its exchange at a federal reserve bank for uncut money. The punch 29 may have a variety of shapes to give a code for identification of the source of money that has been punched.

The power for bringing about triggering of punch member 23 is provided by a battery 33, which is contained within the compartment generally identified 34 in FIG. 1. The battery would desirably be of the rechargeable type and would be recharged in situ by means of cord 35, which also performs a second function in one modification of my invention.

A switch means 36 is provided which serves to electrically disconnect the battery from the system to prevent inadvertent triggering when the case is in an open position. The switch 36 is desirably of a type that is electrically actuated. In the form illustrated, the switch is controlled by means of an electromagnet 37 powered by cord 35. The switch is preferably one which is coupled to a magnetic latching arrangement so that upon closing of the lid of the case electrical contact is provided and a locking mechanism simultaneously is activated. The switch and locking mechanism would both remain closed until properly released.

In actual use, the person who wished to convey money would place it within the various compartments of the case and upon closing the case would close switch 36, thereby activating the system against possible theft by breaking into the case. A key-type lock 38 is provided in the face of the case which mechanically locks the case and also would close the access to an electrical connection contained within opening 39. Even if the thief should succeed in opening the lock 38, he still would not be able to open the case because the switch means 36 would be coupled to an electromechanical locking means such as a solenoid that would only be released if the proper input signal was placed through coder 40. Coder 40 could take a variety of forms, such as an electronic counter that would only actuate a circuit to operate electromagnet 37 if the proper input signal was provided. Unless the proper input signal was provided, the switch 36 would not be opened and the electromechanical locking means, plus the activation of the circuit, would not be released to permit the opening of the case.

As an additional safeguard against possible theft of the case and opening thereof without triggering punch members 23, I contemplate the enclosing of a timer switch 41 within the case. Such a timer switch would be set by the person intending to deliver currency to a place of safe keeping such as a bank. The timer switch would be activated at the time delivery was started and, if the case were not properly opened within the time set, the timer would close the circuit between lead 30 and member 24 to activate the punch members. This would limit the amount of time that a thief would have to gain access to the case. Thus, even if the thief were successful in evading the locking mechanism, he would have to do this within a relatively short period of time or the timer would automatically deface the currency therewithin.

Various modifications of my invention can be made. For example, in the lower half of the case in FIG. 1, there is a series

of button members identified 1 through 11 which correspond to the numbers 1 through 11 identified in the upper portion as being punch members. If only a portion of the compartments were filled, it would only be necessary to activate those punches which were in cooperating relationship with the filled compartments. This could readily be obtained through appropriate wiring. Rather than relying upon the conduction obtained through physical contact of the upper and lower compartments, one may also make use of the male and female electrical plus members 43 and 44 to provide the electrical contact between the upper and lower case members. Other variations within the scope of my invention will suggest themselves to the reader.

I claim:

1. A depository for storage and transport of valuable papers including currency, comprising:

- a. a box member including a closure member therefor, the wall portions of said members including first and second electrical conductors separated by an insulator, said conductors constructed and arranged so that a penetration of said walls will provide electrical connection therebetween;
- b. means for locking said members in closed relationship;
- c. means for positioning valuable papers in stacked configuration within said box;
- d. battery means within said box and electrically connectable from one side thereof to one of said conductors; and

e. electrically actuated punch means positionable over and interior of the edge of said papers, said punch means including means for electrically connecting said punch to the other of said conductors and means for electrically connecting said punch to one side of said battery so that a forced opening of the box will complete the electrical circuit defined by said conductors, said punch means and said battery thereby activating said punch to deface said papers.

2. A depository in accordance with claim 1 wherein said locking means includes a switch means which is connected between said battery and at least one of said electrical conductors.

3. A depository in accordance with claim 1 wherein said positioning means for said papers is a compartment.

4. A depository in accordance with claim 1 wherein said punch is driven by a chemical mixture ignited by passage of electrical current through said electrical connecting means.

5. A depository in accordance with claim 1 wherein a plurality of punches are positioned over each valuable paper.

6. A depository in accordance with claim 1 wherein said first conductor is a sheet of metal and said second conductor is an insulated wire arranged in a pattern over the surface of said first conductor.

7. A depository in accordance with claim 1 wherein a time switch is connected between said first and second conductors.

\* \* \* \* \*

30

35

40

45

50

55

60

65

70

75

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE  
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,654,880 Dated April 11, 1972

Inventor(s) LeRoy R. Schesso

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

Title page showing inventor's address:

delete "Minnesota Avenue", insert "--Watson--"

Signed and sealed this 1st day of August 1972.

(SEAL)

Attest:

EDWARD M. FLETCHER, JR.  
Attesting Officer

ROBERT GOTTSCHALK  
Commissioner of Patents