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(54) **Improved travel case**

(57) A travel case, in particular but not exclusively a beauty case, comprises a container (1) for articles and a band (21), in particular but not exclusively for support-

ing a ribbon of elastic material (210), mounted inside the container. Means (20, 19, 190, 26-28) are provided for forming a geometric coupling between the band (21) and the container (1).

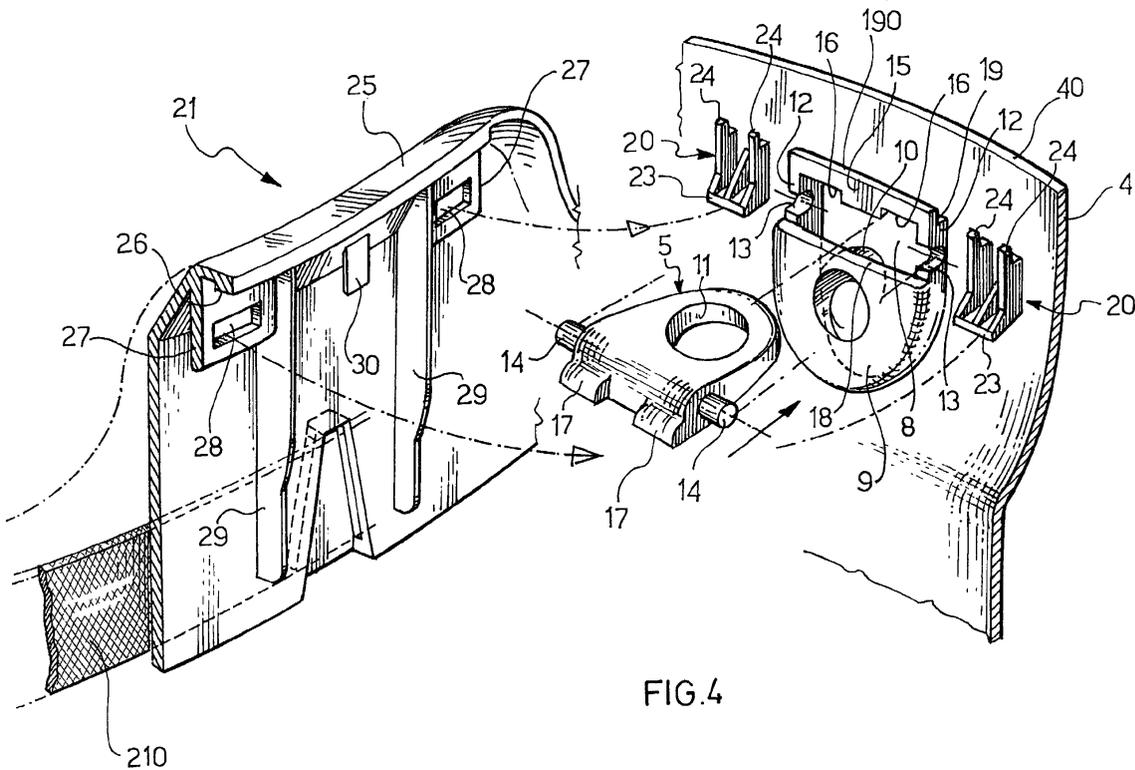


FIG.4

Description

[0001] The subject of the present invention is an improved travel case, in particular a beauty case, and even more particularly, but not exclusively, a rigid beauty case.

[0002] Known rigid beauty cases comprise a container of varying shape - usually of rectangular shape in plan view - and a lid, which together form a rigid shell. Various different items, typically cosmetic products, can be housed inside the container.

[0003] An essentially annular band, usually made of plastic, which performs two main functions, is mounted on the internal wall of the container. A first function provided by the band is to support a ribbon of elastic material which, attached to the band in such a way that it forms a series of loops, formed by essentially taut sections of the ribbon, is able to hold articles such as bottles, tubes, etc. in place, preventing these from falling in a jumble inside the container of the beauty case. A second function provided by the band is to support a tray, which can be removably housed at the top of the container, having compartments designed to accommodate trinkets.

[0004] In the prior art, the band is fixed to the internal wall of the container using screws, rivets or similar components.

[0005] This is disadvantageous since, in the first place, it requires additional metal components and, in the second place, it makes the process used to assemble the beauty case complex or, at the very least, slow.

[0006] An object of the present invention is to provide a travel case, in particular but not exclusively a beauty case, that does not have the disadvantages exhibited by the prior art.

[0007] In accordance with the present invention, this object is achieved by means of a travel case comprising a container for articles and a band, in particular but not exclusively for supporting a ribbon of elastic material, mounted inside the container, characterized in that it comprises means for forming a geometric coupling between the band and the container.

[0008] The characteristics and advantages of the present invention will become clearer in the following detailed description of one of its possible practical embodiments, illustrated purely by way of non-limiting example in the appended drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a travel case according to the present invention, in particular a beauty case;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the beauty case, with a shoulder strap attached;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of only the container of the beauty case, without the lid, with a band for supporting a ribbon of elastic material attached;

Figure 4 is an exploded perspective view, opened out like a book, of a detail of the container and of

the band shown in Figure 3;

Figure 5 is a view in section on the cutting plane V-V of Figure 3;

Figure 6 is a view in section on the cutting plane VI-VI in Figure 3;

Figure 7 is an axonometric view of an area of the band designed to accommodate and hold in place a strip of an internal covering for the lid; and

Figure 8 is a view in section on a transverse cutting plane VIII-VIII shown in Figure 7.

[0009] With reference to the drawings, in particular to Figures 1 and 2, a beauty case comprises a container 1 and a lid 2 which is hinged to the container 1 at 100, so that it can be closed on the container to form a shell, and so that it can be opened by rotating it about an axis X parallel to a top edge 101 of a rear wall 102 of the container 1 in order to afford access to the latter.

[0010] The top of the lid 2 is fitted with a handle 200, hinged to the lid, via which the container is lifted and transported and which, when not in use (Figure 2), is advantageously housed flush in a recess 201 formed in the lid 2 in order to give an essentially uninterrupted lid surface.

[0011] Provided at the front of the container 1 is a closure device 300 of any type, for example a lever hinged in a median position close to a top edge 104 of the front wall 103 of the container 1 and having a hooked end designed to engage in a corresponding counter-hook formed on or fixed to the front of the lid 2 in order to close the beauty case (Figures 1 and 2).

[0012] The container 1, which is usually of rectangular shape in plan view with rounded corners, accommodates a fastening ring 5 in each of two side walls 3, 4, in an essentially median position close to the top edges 30, 40 of the said walls respectively, which ring 5 can be pulled out in order to fasten one end of a shoulder strap 7 to it (Figure 2).

[0013] When the fastening rings 5 are not being used, as shown in Figures 1, 3 and 6, they are housed within respective recesses 6 formed by shaping the side walls 3, 4. Each of the recesses 6 has a slot 8 at the top which is generally rectangular in shape and is open towards the inside of the container 1; each also has a boxed portion 9 which is closed at the back, with a generally U-shaped profile that projects into the the container 1. Approximately in the centre of the boxed portion 9 there is a projecting part 10 of generally circular profile which slopes in from the top to the bottom and extends outwards, while still remaining level with the external surface of the side wall, even at its point of maximum projection. When the fastening ring is not in use, the projecting part is housed within a through hole 11 of complementary shape formed in the ring; this through hole 11 also enables one end of the shoulder strap 7 to be attached when the fastening ring 5 is in use, in other words when it has been pulled out of its recess 6. A hollow is formed in the middle of the projecting part 10 in

order to make it easier for the user to pull the fastening ring 5 out using his or her fingertip.

[0014] A frame that surrounds the slot 8 is formed on the internal surface of the side walls 3, 4, around the said slot 8. The frame has two sides 12, with a slit 13 formed in each to accommodate opposite pins 14 of the fastening ring 5 such that they can rotate.

[0015] A bottom edge of a top side 15 of the frame has a couple of notches 16 which are designed to accommodate two teeth 17 on the fastening ring when the fastening ring 5 is not in use. When the fastening ring 5 is rotated and pulled out of its recess, the teeth 17 abut against the edge 18 of the bottom side of the frame, thereby forming a stop for the fastening ring 5. The edge 18 of the bottom side of the frame is formed by the top edge of the boxed portion 9 of the recess.

[0016] A groove 19 is also formed in the top edge of the top side of the frame, behind the internal surface of the side wall 3, 4, and defines an extended tooth 190. Formed on the internal surface of the side wall 3, 4 of the container 1, on either side of the slot 8, are two fastening elements 20 for an essentially annular band 21 which is to be attached to the inside of the container 1. The band 21 supports a ribbon 210 of elastic material which is coupled to the band 21 by means of tabs 211, made in one piece with the band, in order to form loops of essentially taut elastic ribbon.

[0017] Each fastening element 20 comprises a pair of essentially vertical ribs 22 which project out from the internal surface of the side wall 3, 4 and are joined together at the bottom by a transverse rib 23. Each of the vertical ribs has an L-shaped profile at its top end, forming a tooth 24 which is separated from the internal surface of the side wall 3, 4 by a space that is the ideal continuation of the groove 19; the teeth 24 are therefore the ideal continuation of the extended tooth 190.

[0018] The band 21 has, at least in a couple of sections extending between two corresponding fastening elements 20, a top edge 25 that is shaped so as to form a ridge 26 which faces downwards and is designed to engage in the groove 19 and therefore to work in conjunction with the extended tooth 190 and with the teeth 24 on the fastening elements 20 to form a geometric coupling with the side walls 3, 4 of the container 1. In addition, lugs 27 project downwards from the band 21 and in front of the fastening elements 20, each lug containing an aperture 28 having a shape essentially complementing that of the transverse ribs 23 of the fastening elements 20. The lugs 27 are designed to engage with a snap-action over the transverse ribs 23 of the fastening elements 20.

[0019] Two vertical ribs 29 are formed on the band 21 between the two lugs 27, essentially to the side of each of these; these ribs 29 are designed, once the band 21 has been attached to the container, to close off the back of the slits 13 which rotatably house the pins 14 of the fastening ring 5, thereby preventing them from coming out of their seats. A tongue 30 also projects downwards

from the band 21, in a median position between the two ribs 29; once the band has been mounted, this tongue 30 acts as an elastic element for returning the fastening ring 5 back into its rest position, retracting it into its recess 6 so that it will not be subject to unnecessary and undesirable flapping movements.

[0020] The fastening elements 20 and the frame around the slot 8 - the top of which defines the extended tooth 190 - are preferably made in one piece with the walls of the container 1; similarly, the ridge 26 and the lugs 27 are made in one piece with the band 21.

[0021] All that needs to be done in order to mount the band 21 onto the container 1 is to lower the band 21 into the container 1, pushing it downwards. At a certain point, the ridge 26 engages in the groove 19 and the ideal continuation of the latter which defines the teeth 24. Then, continuing to push downwards, the lugs 27, which are initially urged to bend towards the inside of the container 1 by the transverse ribs 23, reach the bottom end of the transverse ribs 23, which penetrate into the apertures 28. The lugs 27 snap back towards the wall of the container 1, thereby coming into snap-engagement with the fastening elements 20.

[0022] Thus, the ridge 26 associated with the top edge of the band 21, the extended tooth 190 and the teeth 24 constitute fastening means for attaching the band to the container; the lugs 27 and the transverse ribs 23, on the other hand, constitute snap-fastening means which are activated once the fastening means have been activated, in order to hold the band in place and prevent it from slipping out of the container.

[0023] Once the band 21 has been mounted, the closure device 300 can also be mounted, the latter being fixed by means of screws or rivets 70 (Figure 3), thereby also helping to hold the band 21 in place at the front.

[0024] Also visible in Figure 3 is an element 71 which is fitted to the back of the band 21 in order to fasten one end of a strip of an internal covering for the lid 2; the said strip acts as a covering for the hinges, via which the lid is rotatably connected to the container 1. As shown in greater detail in Figures 7 and 8, the element 71 - which is made in one piece with the band 21 - comprises a groove 72 which extends parallel with the rear wall 102 of the container 1, essentially along the top edge 101 of the said wall. The groove 72 is designed to accommodate and hold in place an enlarged end 73 of a strip 74 of an internal covering 75 for the lid, the said end 73 being inserted laterally into the said groove 72. The end 73 can, for example, house a bar which prevents it from slipping out of the groove 72 once it has been inserted into the said groove.

[0025] It is thus possible to fix the covering strip for the hinges without having to carry out any riveting, as is the case in the prior art.

[0026] By virtue of the present invention, mounting the band 21 to the inside of the container 1 does not require separate fixing elements such as screws, rivets or similar components, since mounting takes place simply and

effectively using reciprocal geometric coupling means to join the container and the band together.

[0027] It is in itself an advantage, and this should be noted, not to have fixed fastening rings for the shoulder strap, as is the case in known beauty cases, but to have them sitting flush within recesses formed in the side walls of the container 1 and for them to be able to be pulled out, for example by rotating them about an axis, from the said recesses in order to fasten each ring to one end of the shoulder strap. Having fixed fastening rings is disadvantageous from several standpoints. Firstly, they are likely to be broken, and can even be downright dangerous; also, they are wholly unaesthetic. On the other hand, having recessed fastening rings means that they do not protrude from the external surface of the beauty case when the shoulder strap is not being used.

[0028] According to the invention, the fastening rings are advantageously held in their recesses by the band 21 itself, once it has been mounted.

[0029] It is clearly possible to vary and/or add features to the embodiment described above and illustrated.

[0030] Firstly, although the above description has referred to a band for supporting a ribbon of elastic material, it is evident that this does not limit the invention since the latter can be applied any time it is necessary to mount a band - irrespective of the function that it performs - inside the container of a beauty case.

[0031] For instance, although in the example illustrated and described the elements for fastening the band to the wall of the container are located in only two areas, approximately in the centre of the side walls of the container, it is evident that similar fastening elements can also be provided in other areas of the container, and may be provided one after the other along its periphery.

[0032] Furthermore, the fastening elements in the example illustrated and described constitute only one specific example and can be substituted with fastening elements of a different type or with other elements that form a reciprocal geometric coupling between the band and the container.

[0033] Lastly, it goes without saying that the invention does not apply solely to a beauty case but more generally to a travel case.

Claims

1. Travel case comprising a container (1) for articles and a band (21), in particular but not exclusively for supporting a ribbon of elastic material (210), mounted inside the container, characterized in that it comprises means (20, 19, 190, 26-28) for forming a geometric coupling between the band (21) and the container (1).
2. Travel case according to Claim 1, characterized in that the said geometric coupling means (20, 19,

190, 26-28) comprise fastening means (19, 190, 26).

3. Travel case according to Claim 2, characterized in that the said fastening means (19, 190, 26) comprise hook means (26) associated with the said band (21) and counter-hook means (19, 190) associated with the internal surface of the walls (3, 4) of the container (1) in a position corresponding to that of the hook means (26).
4. Travel case according to Claim 3, characterized in that the said hook means (26) are made in one piece with the said band (21) and the said counter-hook means (19, 190) are made in one piece with the walls (3, 4) of the container (1).
5. Travel case according to Claim 4, characterized in that the said hook means (26) are associated with a top edge (25) of the said band (21).
6. Travel case according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the said geometric coupling means (20, 19, 190, 26-28) comprise snap-coupling means (27, 28, 23).
7. Travel case according to Claim 6, characterized in that the said snap-coupling means (27, 28, 23) comprise elastically deformable lugs (27) which project out from the said band (21) and contain seats (28) for accommodating, by means of- elastic return to a rest position, engagement elements (23) which project out from the container (1).
8. Travel case according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it comprises at least one pair of gripping elements (5) for fastening to each end of a shoulder strap (7).
9. Travel case according to Claim 8, characterized in that the said gripping elements (5) can move between a rest position in which they are recessed into the container (1) and a use position in which they project out from the container (1).
10. Travel case according to Claim 9, characterized in that the said gripping elements are attached to the container (1) so that they can rotate between the said rest position, in which the gripping elements (5) are housed so that they sit flush within a corresponding recess (6) formed in the container, and the said use position.
11. Travel case according to Claim 10, characterized in that the said band (21) works in conjunction with the container (1) to form the rotatable coupling between the gripping elements (5) and the container (1).

12. Travel case according to Claim 11, characterized in that the said gripping elements (5) each comprise a pair of pins (14) which can be rotatably housed in corresponding seats (13, 29) defined by the container (1) and by the said band (21). 5
13. Travel case according to Claim 12, characterized in that the band (21) comprises means (30) for urging the gripping elements into the said rest position. 10
14. Travel case according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising a lid (2) which is hinged to the container (1), characterized in that the said band (21) is fitted with means (71, 72) for fixing a strip of an internal covering (75) for the lid (2), the said strip covering an area in which the lid (2) is hinged to the container (1). 15
15. Travel case according to Claim 14, characterized in that the said means (71, 72) comprise a groove (72) 20 designed to accommodate an enlarged end (73) of the said strip (74), the said end (73) being inserted laterally into the said groove (72).
16. Travel case according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it is a beauty case. 25
17. Travel case comprising a container (1) for articles and at least one pair of gripping elements (5) for fastening to each end of a shoulder strap (7), characterized in that each of the said gripping elements is attached to the container so that it can move between a rest position in which it is recessed into the container (1) and a use position in which it projects out from the container (1). 30 35

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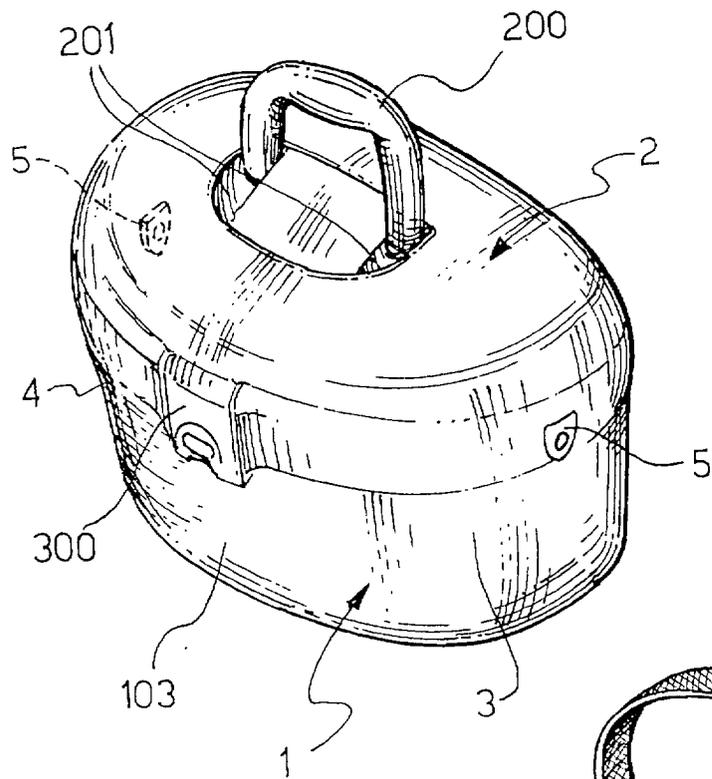


FIG.1

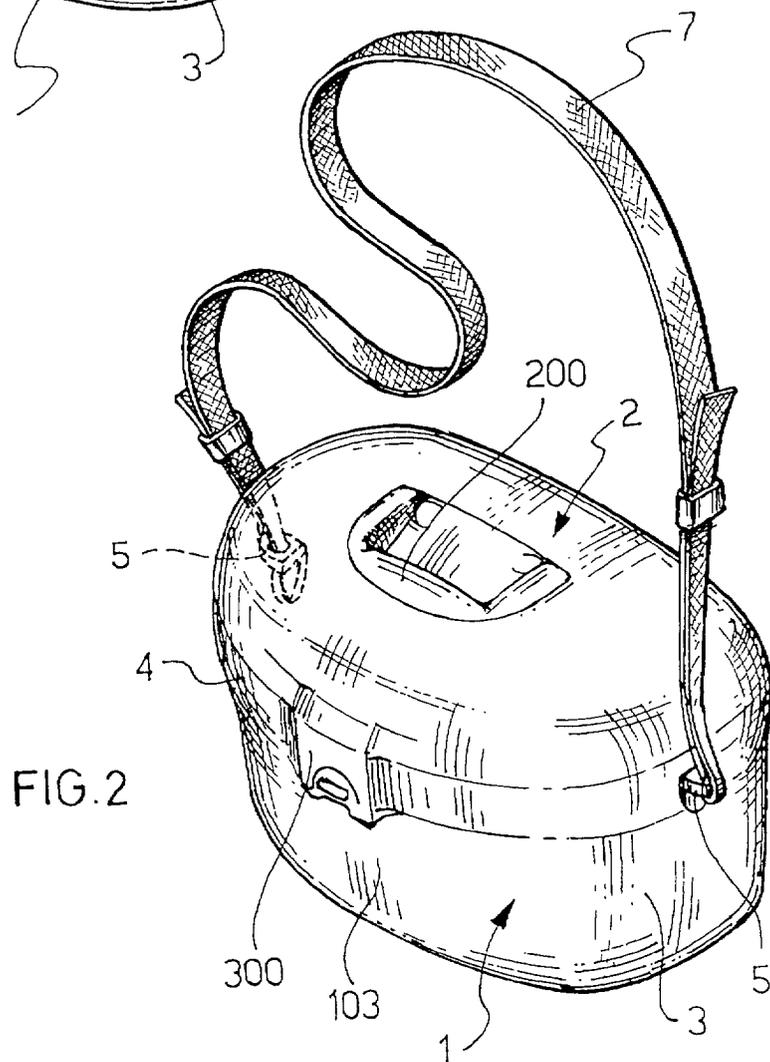


FIG.2

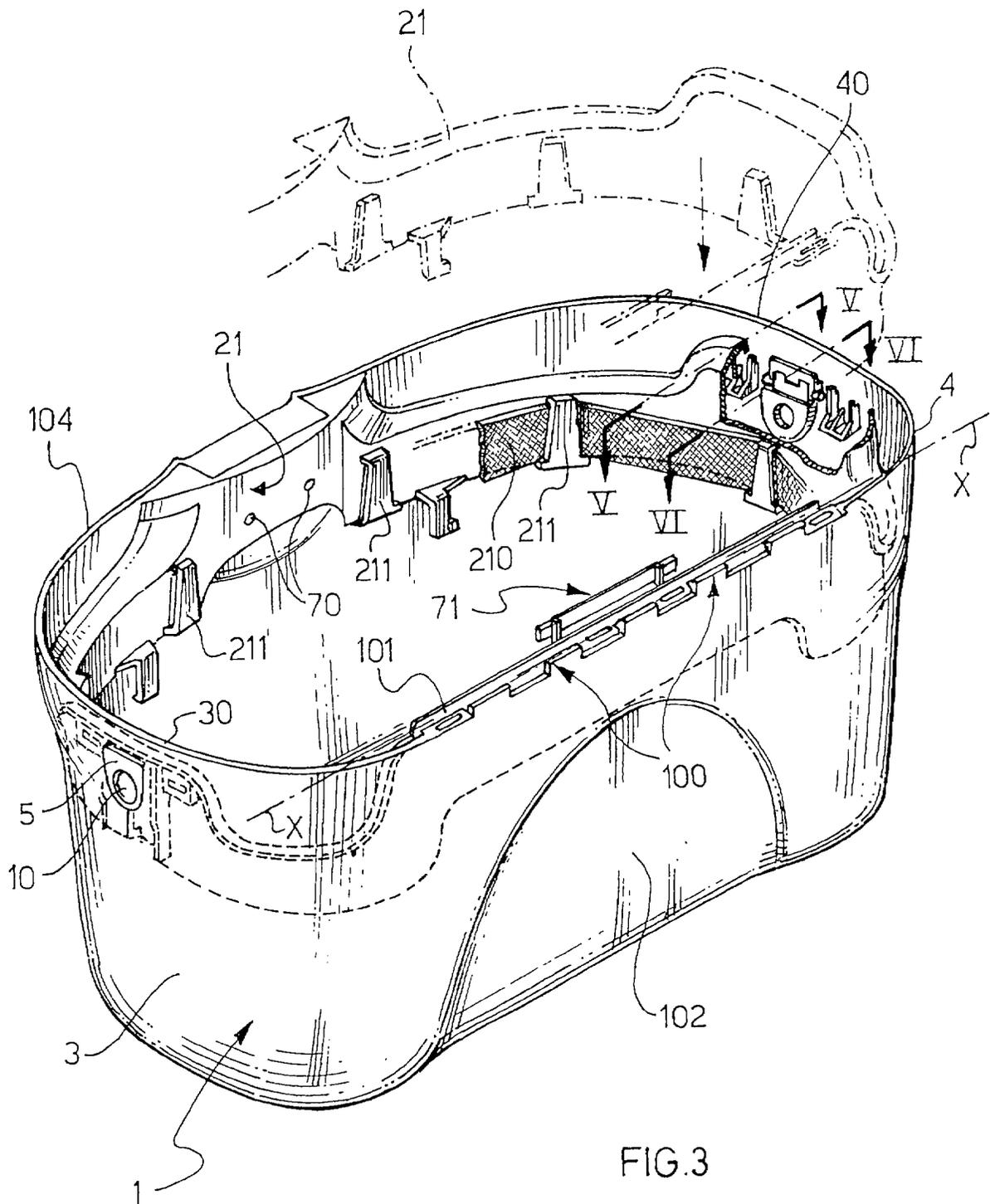


FIG.3

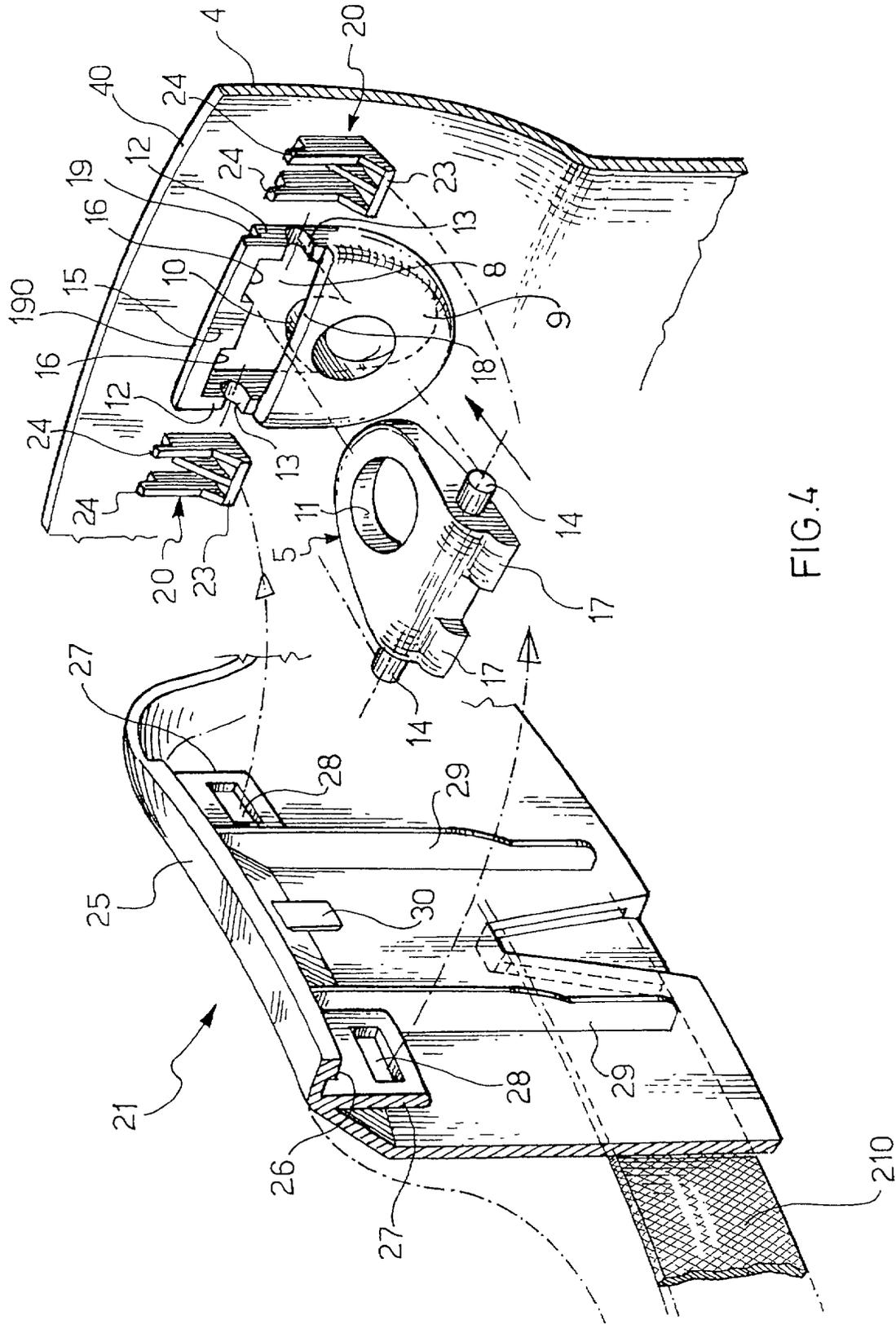


FIG.4

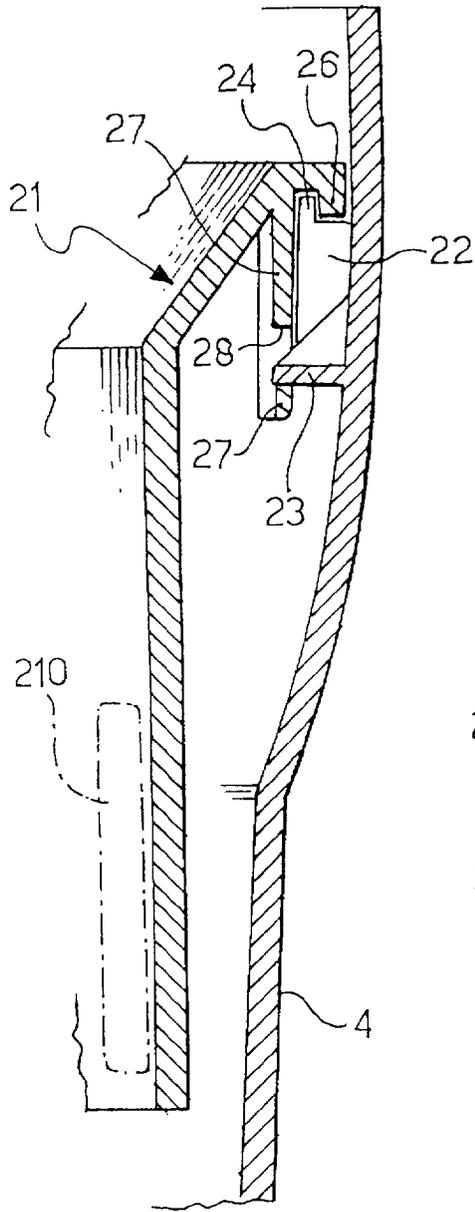


FIG. 5

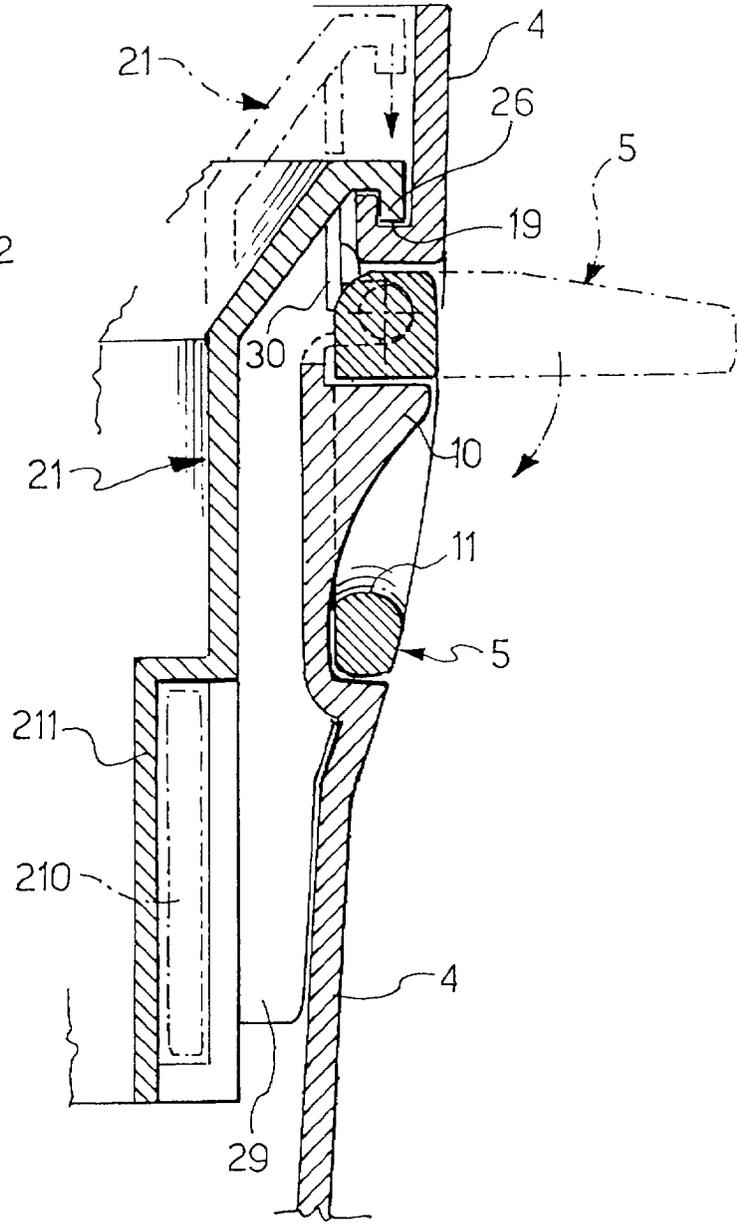
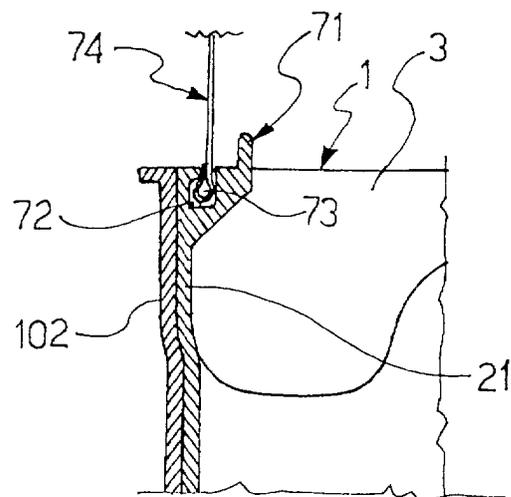
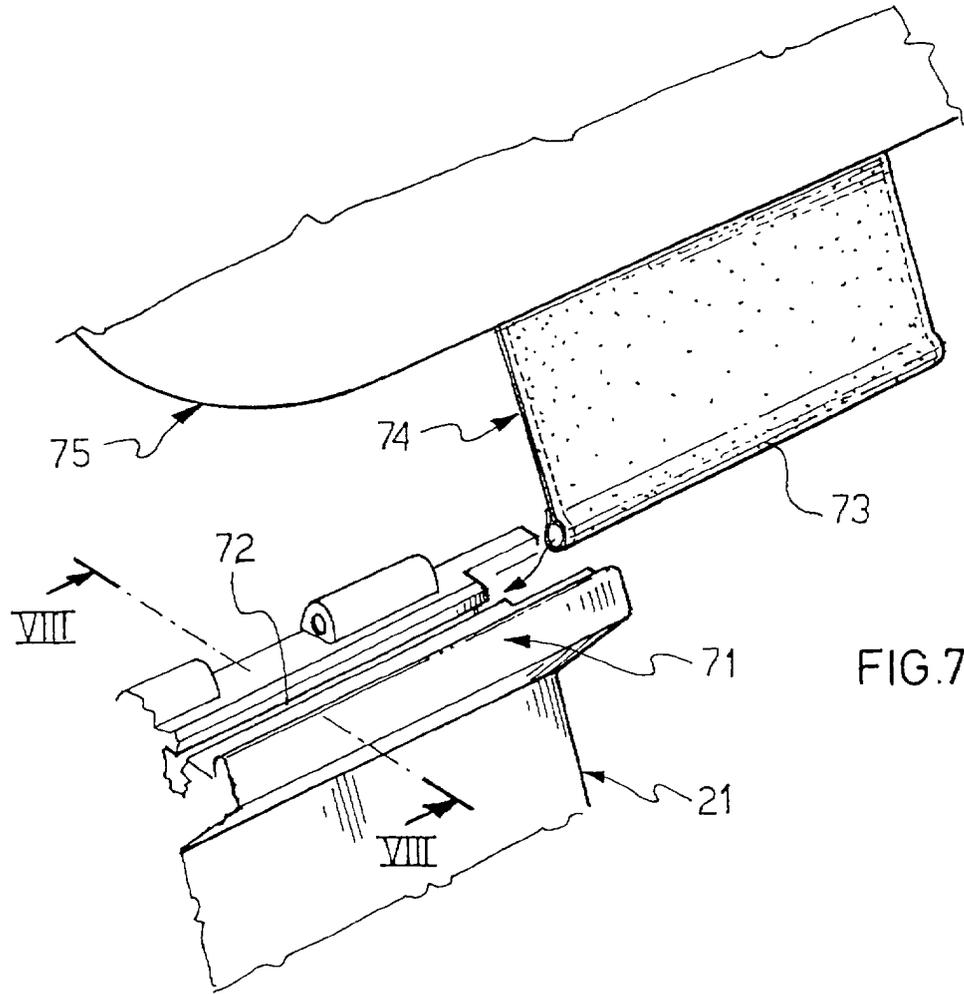


FIG. 6





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Application Number
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Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
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