

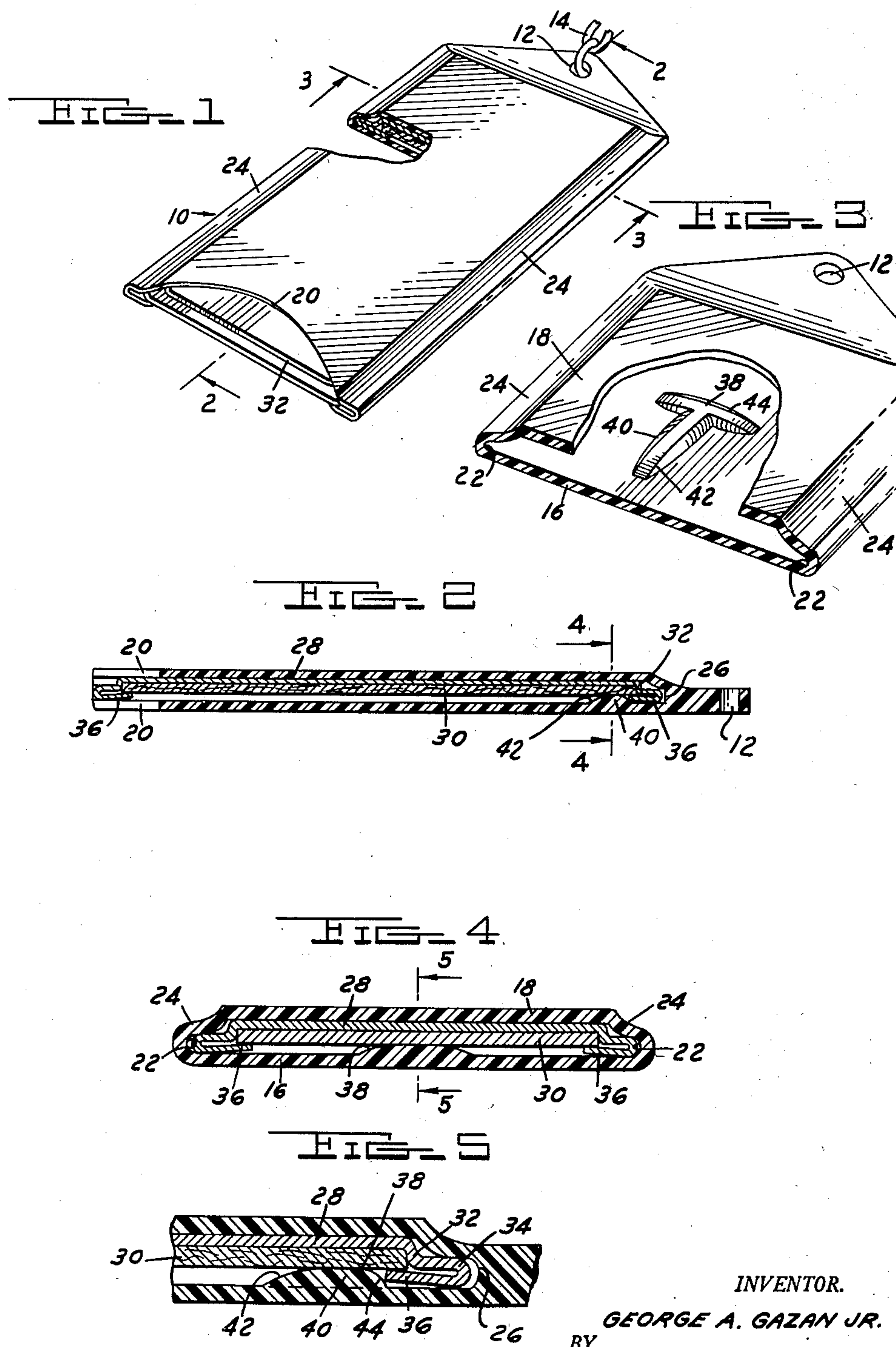
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IDENTIFYING TAG AND CASE THEREFOR

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IDENTIFYING TAG AND CASE THEREFOR

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This invention relates to cases or holders for identifying tags or cards and particularly to an improved case or holder for such tags which serves to enclose the tag and connect the same to a key case or other suitable carrier and enables the tag to be easily withdrawn therefrom for identifying purposes.

Identifying credit plates or checking tags are used extensively by large retail merchandising establishments and are usually carried by the customers for use at the time purchases are made. The credit plates or tags are generally formed in part of metal and include a card bearing the purchaser's name and signature. These tags have been generally loosely carried on the person, usually in the purse. Thus carried, the tag has been difficult to locate at the time of use and may be easily misplaced or lost. Moreover, because the identifying card was unprotected it was very easily soiled in use. When making credit purchases in some merchandising establishments the credit tag is borrowed by the clerk making the sale and inserted into a machine which imprints or otherwise identifies the customer's tag number on the sales slip.

An important object of the invention is to provide an improved case or holder for such tags or credit plates and particularly to a holder of this character which enables the credit plate or checking tag to be connected to a key case and enclosed therein as well as to enable the tag to be conveniently removed from the case if such is necessary to complete a purchase. Another important object of the invention is an improved holder of this character which is thin, flat and occupies very little space and yet at the same time protects the credit tag from being soiled or damaged. A further important object of the invention is to provide a case or holder of this character which is provided with novel means therein for releasably locking the tag in the holder against accidental withdrawal, yet upon exertion of very little force the tag may be conveniently removed from the holder at the time purchases are made.

In carrying out the features of this invention, the holder is preferably constructed of molded plastic material and formed so as to provide two inwardly facing complimentary channels adapted to endwise slidably receive the metal frame of a credit plate or tag. The plastic employed for this purpose is relatively rigid yet is sufficiently flexible such that it may be bent under stress. An important feature of the invention is the provision in the holder of means

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for releasably locking the tag therein. Such feature in general is accomplished by constricting or reducing the width of the pocket in the case in which the tag is received to less than the thickness of the marginal portions of the tag received therein in order that the latter may be grippingly held within the holder or case. In accomplishing this object, the interior of the case is provided with a raised portion which is so located with respect to the tag received therein that it interlockingly engages one edge thereof to hold the same against accidental movement and yet by virtue of the flexibility of the material of the holder, the interior projection may be shifted when intentional force is exerted on the tag to withdraw the same. A novel feature is the location of the interior projection such that regardless of which end of the tag or plate is inserted into the holder it will be releasably held therewithin.

Various other objects, advantages and meritorious features of the invention will become more fully apparent from the following specification, appended claims and accompanying drawings, wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view, partially broken away, showing the case or holder of the present invention and a credit tag in the holder,

Fig. 2 is a longitudinal sectional view taken along line 2—2 of Fig. 1,

Fig. 3 is an enlarged perspective view of the rear end of the case, taken along the section line of 3—3 of Fig. 1, and partly broken away to show the interior and the construction of the releasably locking means,

Fig. 4 is a transverse sectional view taken along line 4—4 of Fig. 2, and

Fig. 5 is a detail longitudinal sectional view taken along line 5—5 of Fig. 4.

The case or holder of the present invention is preferably a one piece article capable of substantially entirely enclosing a checking or credit tag and of releasably retaining the tag in the holder until intentionally withdrawn therefrom. Although it is preferable to construct the case or holder out of molded plastic material, it is understood that other material such as spring steel or the like may be employed. The holder is so constructed interiorly that the tag or credit plate contained therewithin is held from accidental falling out yet permits the tag or plate to be easily withdrawn from the case without difficulty. For this purpose, the material of the holder, whether plastic or metal, has a certain degree of resiliency or flexibility which enables

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the holder to releasibly grip the tag and retain the same therewithin until intentional finger pressure is applied to remove the same.

Referring particularly to the drawings, the holder or case constructed in accordance with this invention is generally indicated at 10. It is preferably a molded plastic body and designed so as to be relatively thin and flat similar to the shape of the tag or plate to be received therein. One end of the case is provided with a hole 12 therethrough to which one end of a flexible connection, such as a link chain 14, may be attached. The opposite end of the chain may be connected to a key case, purse, or any other suitable carrier for the case and tag. The body of the holder comprises two opposed side wall portions 16 and 18 which extend parallel to one another in slightly spaced apart relationship. One side wall, such as 16, may be considered as the bottom of the case, and the other side wall, such as 18, may be considered as the top of the case. The forward end of the case opposite to the hole 12 is constructed to facilitate removal of the credit tag therein. For this purpose, both side walls 16 and 18 are provided with arcuate recesses or indentations, such as indicated at 20 in Fig. 1, which enable the forefinger and thumb to grip the exposed end of the credit plate or tag for removal thereof from the case.

The case or holder is slightly wider and longer than the tag or plate received therein. The top and bottom side portions of the holder are integrally connected together and are shaped to form inwardly facing complementary channels 22—22, as particularly shown in Figs. 3 and 4. The side margins of the top portion 18 may be depressed the full length of the case, as shown at 24—24. The complementary channels 22—22 together with the longitudinally depressed portions 24—24 serve to slidably guide the tag either into or out of the case. The ends of the channels adjacent to the chain receiving hole 12 are closed by a transverse rear wall such as indicated at 26 in Fig. 2. The forward ends of the channels 22—22 are opened, as shown in Fig. 1, and it is through this end of the case that the tag slides for insertion into or removal from the case.

The frame of the credit plate or tag which is received in the holder is shown as a flat sheet of metal or other rigid material and is indicated at 28 in the various figures of the drawing. The sheet forming the frame is of rectangular formation and of a size to be received substantially wholly within the case 10. When fully inserted into the case, one end of the tag is exposed through the recess 20, as shown in Fig. 1, in order that the fingers may grip the tag to withdraw it from the case. The four side portions of the frame are bent to form a shallow tray for receiving an identifying card 30 of cardboard or like material. As shown particularly in Figs. 4 and 5, each side margin of the frame 28 is bent perpendicularly to the plane of the seat, as indicated at 32, which cooperates with the remaining sides to form the tray in which the card 30 is received. Each margin is then bent outwardly from the card, as indicated at 34, and then rebent upon itself substantially 180° to bring its outer edge 36 in overlying relationship to the card 30. In the properly assembled position of the parts, the outer edge 36 of each side margin is bent or crimped inwardly, as shown in Figs. 4 and 5, to engage the card. The frame 28 and the card 30 form a unitary assembly jointly movable into or out of the holder or case 10.

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An important feature of the invention is the provision for releasably holding the tag or plate within the holder against accidental separation therefrom. For this purpose, there is provided in the interior of the case a projection which reduces the width of the pocket in which the tag is received, and by virtue of the fact that the material composing the case or holder 10 is designed to be slightly flexible, the grip of this projection on the tag is easily released upon application of finger pressure. The gripping action is obtained, as illustrated herein, by interengaging the projection with one end of the frame of the tag and particularly with a crimped edge 36 thereof.

Referring to Fig. 3, it is to be noted that the bottom 16 of the case is provided with a T-shaped projection comprising a transversely extending ridge 38 forming the cross of the T and a longitudinally extending ridge 40 forming the leg of the T. The two ridges are preferably integrally joined to the bottom wall 16 at the time the case is molded and both rise to substantially the same level above the bottom wall. The leg 40 is located on the forward side of the transverse ridge 38 and projects toward the open end of the case. The two ridges 38 and 40 are of such a height as to project into the clearance between the card 30 and the bottom 16 of the case, as is clearly evident in Figs. 2, 4 and 5. The transverse ridge 38 is so located with respect to the closed end of the case that when the tag or plate is substantially fully inserted into the case the margin thereof adjacent to the closed end of the case is disposed on the side of the ridge opposite to the opened end of the case. This condition is clearly illustrated in Figs. 2 and 5. In this manner, the edge 36 of the entering end of the tag frame is resistingly held against outward movement by the transverse ridge 38.

In operating the device, the tag comprising the frame 28 and the card 30 is forced into the opened end of the case and when its leading edge approaches the closed end of the case the leading edge 36 of the frame rides up the longitudinal ridge 40 and thereafter over the transverse ridge 38 so as to be disposed on the rear side thereof. To facilitate movement over the ridges, the forward portion of the longitudinal ridge 40 is gradually curved downwardly, as indicated at 42 in Fig. 5. The rear side of the transverse ridge 38 is likewise curved downwardly, but preferably with a shorter radius, as indicated at 44 in Fig. 5. In this manner, the tag may easily slide into the case encountering a slight resistance just before it is fully received in the case.

To withdraw the tag from the case, the thumb and forefinger grasps the end of the tag exposed through the recesses 20 and upon pulling the tag the initial resistance of the projection is overcome. In the early part of the withdrawal movement, the lapped over edge 36 which is disposed on the rear side of the transverse ridge 38 engages the curved surface 44 thereof and depresses the projection and bottom wall 16 downwardly as it rides thereup and over the highest level of the two ridges. The flexibility of the material of which the case is composed enables the bottom wall 16, and to a certain extent the upper wall 18, to yield outwardly away from one another as the inner end of the tag is pulled over the ridges. Once the inner end of the tag is free of the ridges, it may be easily withdrawn from the case with very slight force.

The base of bottom wall 16 covers the card

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side of the tag or credit plate and serves as a protection therefor, preventing the card from being soiled or damaged. The plastic material of the case is preferably colored in order to clearly distinguish the case from other articles with which it may be associated.

What I claim is:

1. A one piece envelope-type holder having a closed end providing a stop and an open end for receiving, enclosing, and retaining credit plates which have a raised type face for printing, a paper card backing portion for carrying indicia for identification, and reversely folded edges for enclosing annexing the paper card backing portion and reinforcing the credit plate so that the type face is rigid for printing purposes, comprising a back-portion and a face-portion spaced sufficiently apart to snugly receive the reversely folded edges of the credit plate therebetween: said face-portion being elevated in the area of the credit plate raised type face to provide snug clearance: side-portions formed integral with said back and face-portions joining said back and face-portions together, a closed end-portion formed integral with said back, face, and side-portions joining same together; and an inwardly projecting ridge portion on the inside of said back-portion formed integral therewith extending into the space between said face-portion and said back-portion a distance substantially equal to one ply of the credit plate reversely folded edge; said back-portion being resiliently deformable so as to be depressable and self-returning in the nature of a diaphragm spring in the area of said ridge portion to permit passage of the credit plate first inserted leading reversely folded edge past said ridge portion and to return said ridge portion behind the credit plate leaving edge bottom ply when the credit plate leading edge abuts said closed end portion to secure the credit plate in the holder to prevent accidental movement of the credit plate out of the holder.

2. A holder for a credit plate, including, a top wall on the holder, a bottom wall on the holder spaced from the top wall to provide a clearance upon the insertion of a credit plate between the walls, the top wall of the holder being depressed at its lateral extremities to provide a spacing relative to the bottom wall for snugly holding the credit plate, a pair of side walls for integrating the top wall to the bottom wall at the lateral extremities of the depressions in the top wall, a recess being provided in the top and bottom walls of the holder at the front end of the holder to provide for the grasp of the credit plate during the insertion of the credit plate into the holder or during the removal of the credit plate from the holder, a rear wall on the holder for integrating the top and bottom walls, the rear wall extending back from a distance to provide a portion for grasping the holder during the insertion or removal of the credit plate, and a ridge portion projecting upwardly into the holder from the bottom surface of the holder at a position towards the rear of the holder, the ridge

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portion being shaped at its front edge to provide for a relatively easy travel of the credit plate over the ridge portion during the insertion of the credit plate into the holder and being shaped at its rear edge to provide for the retention of the credit plate in the holder after such insertion.

3. In combination with a credit plate having its outer edges crimped downwardly and inwardly to retain an identification card, a holder for the credit plate, including, a top wall on the holder, a bottom wall on the holder spaced from the top wall by a distance to provide a clearance with the credit plate upon the insertion of the credit plate into the holder, the top wall being depressed at its lateral extremities to provide a spacing relative to the bottom wall for snugly holding the credit plate upon the insertion of the credit plate into the holder, a pair of side walls for integrating the top and bottom walls at the lateral extremities of the depressions in the top wall, a rear wall integral with the top and bottom walls for closing the holder at the back end of the holder, and a ridge portion projecting upwardly into the holder from the bottom walls of the holder at a position towards the rear of the holder, the ridge portion having a longitudinal portion at the forward end of the holder and a transverse portion at the rear end of the holder, the longitudinal portion being shallowly sloped at its forward end to provide for a relatively easy movement of the credit plate into the holder, the rear end of the longitudinal portion being integral with the forward end of the transverse portion, the transverse portion being steeply sloped at its rear end to retain the downwardly crimped edges of the credit plate after the insertion of the credit plate into the holder.

4. A holder as set forth in claim 3, in which recesses are provided in the top and bottom walls of the holder at the forward end of the holder so as to provide for manual grasping of the credit plate after the insertion of the credit plate into the holder and in which the rear wall extends backwardly for a sufficient distance to provide for a grasping of the holder during the insertion of the credit plate into the holder or during the removal of the credit plate from the holder.

5. A holder as set forth in claim 4, in which the holder is made from a plastic material having diaphragm like properties.

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