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STIRRUP BUCKLE

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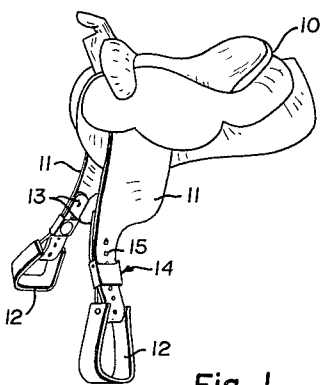


Fig. 1

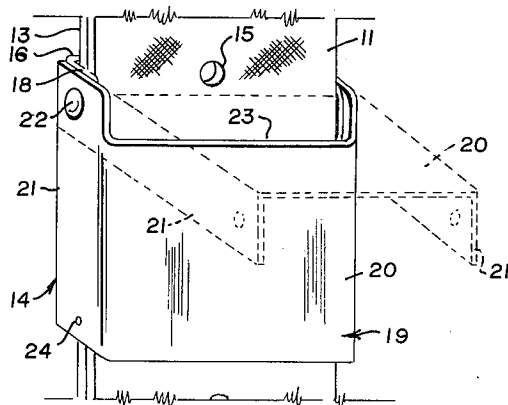


Fig. 2

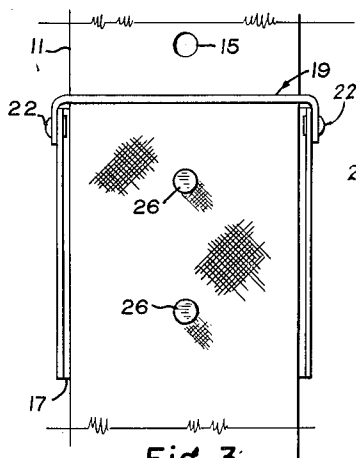


Fig. 3

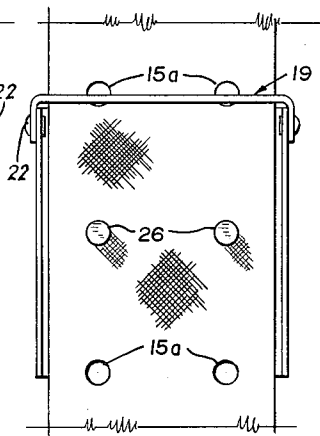


Fig. 4

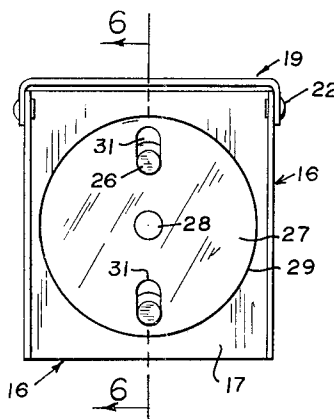


Fig. 5

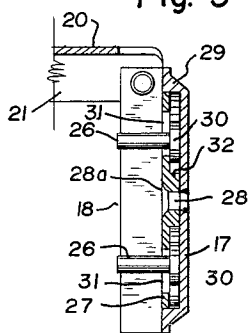


Fig. 6

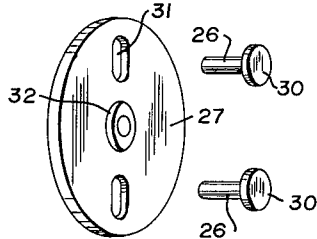
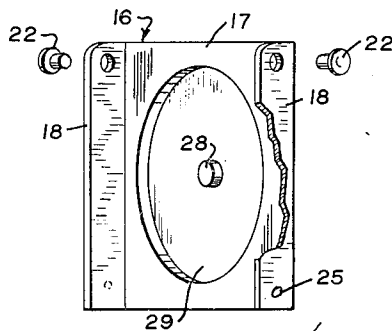


Fig. 7



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STIRRUP BUCKLE

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This invention relates to saddles and more particularly to buckles for fastening the stirrup-holding straps of saddles.

The art of saddle construction includes several arrangements of attaching stirrups to the saddles, but the most common practice is to provide a comparatively wide, heavy leather strap at each side of the saddle. The lower end of this strap is wrapped about the stirrup and secured thereabove by a buckle. The straps are provided with rows of holes to receive tongue-type buckles to permit the height of the stirrups to be easily adjusted.

The sizes of such straps have become standardized to such an extent that many stirrups are interchangeable from one saddle to another. However, while the stirrup straps of various saddles are practically standardized as to their width and thickness, they are adapted for use with several different types of buckles, and the holes in them are formed in various ways and usually either as a centered, single row along the strap or as two spaced rows. It is a common practice to provide a permanent buckle for each stirrup and an interchange of buckles is not always possible because of slight variations in the spacing of the buckle holes or of the spacing between two adjacent rows of holes if two rows are used.

In modern horsemanship considerable attention is paid to appearance and display of the trappings associated with such activity. The saddles, costumes and other components are often worked with intricate designs and are individualized to a considerable degree. A stirrup buckle is at an excellent location for display, and there has been a demand for individualized buckles. Such a buckle can be of an especially neat and attractive appearance, can carry special designs, and can be used in conjunction with individualized stirrups. As such, it should be adapted to be shifted from one saddle to another as the need arises.

The difficulty of supplying an individualized buckle is related directly to the fact that various stirrup straps are arranged with different hole patterns for holding buckles, common types including both single and double rows of holes. The need is, therefore, a buckle construction which is sufficiently versatile in the arrangement of its components to fit and lock upon any of the more common types of stirrup straps.

The present invention was conceived and developed to meet this need, and it comprises, in essence, a stirrup-strap buckle which will be hereinafter called a buckle, having a rotatable, shiftable pair of connector studs within it which will engage and fit into the hole pattern of any common type of stirrup strap.

It follows that an object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved buckle for a stirrup strap which will be of a simple, neat form with a face portion which may be of a simple, flat pattern or which may be embellished by designs placed on it or by engraving to individualize the same.

Another object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved individualized buckle which may be used with various types of stirrup straps and changed from one stirrup strap to another as saddles are changed.

Another object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved individualized buckle which fits any ordinary stirrup strap and which facilitates changing from saddle to saddle as required, and which is of a simple, neat, rugged, durable and economical construction.

With the foregoing and other objects in view, all of

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which more fully hereinafter appear, my invention comprises certain constructions, combinations and arrangements of parts and elements as hereinafter described, defined in the appended claims and illustrated in a preferred embodiment in the accompanying drawing, in which.

FIGURE 1 is a perspective, somewhat diagrammatic, side view of a saddle and showing a stirrup strap depending therefrom, a stirrup carried by the strap and the improved buckle being used to hold the strap and stirrup in place.

FIGURE 2 is a pseudo-perspective view of a portion of the strap and buckle thereon, as shown at FIG. 1, but on a greatly enlarged scale, and with broken lines indicating the manner in which the buckle lid is lifted to release it from the stirrup strap.

FIGURE 3 is a front elevational view of the belt portion shown at FIG. 2, and buckle thereon, but with the buckle lid being lifted to its open position to better illustrate the manner in which the strap is secured within the buckle.

FIGURE 4 is a front elevational view similar to FIG. 3, but showing the buckle as being connected to a stirrup strap having a two-row arrangement of holes therein.

FIGURE 5 is a front elevational view similar to FIG. 3, but showing the buckle per se, as with the strap being removed.

FIGURE 6 is a sectional elevational view as taken from the indicated line 6—6 at FIG. 5, but with a fragment of the lid being broken away to conserve space.

FIGURE 7 is an exploded pseudo-perspective view of the components of the buckle excepting the lid thereof.

Referring more particularly to the drawing, the saddle 10 depicted at FIG. 1 includes a stirrup strap 11 depending from each side thereof which is wrapped about the head of a stirrup 12 with the end portion 13 of the strap being folded upwardly to lie against the strap and be secured thereto by a buckle 14. The arrangement is essentially conventional and the straps 11 are more or less standardized in size, being approximately two inches wide and one-fourth inch thick. It is also a common practice to provide one or two rows of holes 15 along the strap. These holes are approximately one-fourth inch in diameter and are about an inch apart. Ordinarily the tongue components of a buckle are passed through registering holes in the strap 11 and the folded end portion 13 to lock the stirrup on the strap.

The improved buckle 14 is formed generally as a flat, box-like member having open ends through which the strap 11 and its end portion 13 may pass, with the width and thickness of the buckle being proportioned to provide a free-sliding, but not an unduly sloppy fit of the buckle on the strap portions 11 and 13. Its length, in the direction of the strap, is more or less the same as its width to present a rectangular force which is approximately square or nearly so.

The base 16 of this buckle will ordinarily be positioned at the inner side of the saddle, and is formed generally as a flat, rectangular back 17 and opposing side flanges 18 which upstand from the back to lie alongside the sides of the strap portions 11 and 13. Rotatable and shiftable strap-connecting lugs upstand from the face of this base as will be hereinafter further described.

The lid 19 is formed generally as a flat, rectangular face 20 having opposing side flanges 21 which are turned downward from the face to overlie the base flanges 18 in a close-fitting relationship. The lid flanges are hinged to the base flanges by rivets 22 adjacent to the top edge thereof, such permitting the lid to be lifted from the base to open the buckle as in the manner illustrated. To provide strap clearance when the lid is so lifted, the top edge 23

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of the face 20 is recessed to lie between the flanges as in the manner clearly illustrated at FIG. 2. This lid 19 is adapted to be ordinarily held and secured in a closed position over the base as by a locking means at each bottom flange opposite to the hinge rivets 22, and a preferred and simple means for accomplishing this locking action is to provide an indentation 24 in each lid flange 21 which nests in a similar indentation 25 in each base flange 18 whenever the lid is closed.

The strap 11 and its end portion are secured to the base 16 of the buckle by a pair of lugs 26 each of which upstands from the back 17 to extend through registering pairs of strap holes 15 as in the manner clearly illustrated in FIG. 3. It is further contemplated that this pair of lugs 26 may also be arranged to lie transversely across the buckle to fit in a transverse arrangement of pairs of strap holes 15a as in the manner clearly illustrated at FIG. 4. This shifting of the lug positions is accomplished by mounting the lugs upon a disc 27, which, in turn, is affixed to the back 17 of the buckle base as upon a central pivot 28. The disc 27 and pivot 28 are conveniently positioned within a circular recess 29 within the base face 17, which is formed as a socket-like member adapted to hold the disc flush with the face of the back. The end of the pivot 28 may be expanded as at 28a, FIG. 6, to hold the disc 27 in place.

Where the gage or spacing between the holes of a single longitudinal row of holes and the distance between the transverse holes or a double-row strap is the same, the lugs 26 may be affixed to the disc 27 and no further adjustments will be needed; however, where the buckle is to be used on various straps where this gage and spacing will vary from strap to strap, it is essential that the lugs be shifted to accommodate the hole spacings of the various straps. To do this, each lug 26 is formed with a flat inside head 30 and opposing slots 31 in the disc 27 to receive and hold the lugs 26. The recess 29 is further deepened to accommodate the heads of the lugs back of the disc as in the manner clearly illustrated at FIG. 6, and a central spacer washer 32 is formed on the inner side of the disc 27 to balance the assembly.

It is contemplated that the base of this buckle may be manufactured by a die-casting process or the like where the recess may be formed in the back 17 without significant additional cost and the other components may be manufactured in other conventional ways to obtain a good quality product at a minimum cost. It is to be noted that the face of the buckle may be either plain or it may be made heavier than that illustrated to receive engraving. Also, plaques and the like may actually be fastened to this face as by rivets or soldering.

In use, this buckle may be transferred from one saddle to another as the stirrups are transferred, or otherwise according to the desires of the owner, and it is to be noted that a change in the hole spacing in a stirrup strap or a change from a single row to a double row pattern in the strap will not prevent the buckle from being used.

I have now described my invention in considerable detail; however, it is obvious that others skilled in the art can build and devise alternate and equivalent constructions which are nevertheless within the spirit and scope of my invention. Hence, I desire that my protection be limited, not by the constructions illustrated and described, but only by the proper scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. In combination with stirrup straps having one or two rows of regularly spaced locking holes along the reach of the straps, an adjustable buckle adapted to fasten a loop of the strap about a stirrup by holding an end portion of the strap against an upper portion thereof, with locking holes in the end portion and in the upper portion, being in mutual registration and comprising in combination therewith:

(a) a U-shaped base having a flat, substantially rectangular back and opposing side flanges with the back

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and the flanges being proportioned to provide a width and depth sufficient to receive two overlying strap portions with the side flanges being at the edges of the strap portions;

(b) a U-shaped lid having a flat, substantially rectangular face and opposing side flanges which are proportioned to snugly overlie the side flanges of the base and with means adapted to interconnect the lid flanges and the base flanges to enclose the two strap portions between the base and the lid;

(c) a carrier disc pivotally mounted upon the back portion of the base; and,

(d) a pair of lock lugs outstanding from the carrier disc and being adapted to be extended into pairs of lock holes in said strap portions, said disc being adapted to rotate to place the lugs in a longitudinal position to fit into a strap having a single central row of lock holes, and to rotate further to a transverse position to receive the lock holes of a strap having two rows of holes within it.

2. In the organization set forth in claim 1, wherein said base back is formed with a recess and said disc is mounted within the recess to provide for a substantially flush inner face of the back.

3. In the organization set forth in claim 1, wherein said lugs are shiftably mounted on the carrier disc and are thereby adapted to be spread apart and pulled together to fit the hole spacing in the strap portions.

4. In combination with stirrup straps of the types having one and two rows of locking holes along the reach of the straps, an adjustable buckle adapted to fasten a loop of a strap about a stirrup by holding an end portion of the strap against an upper portion thereof with the locking holes in the end portion and in the upper portion being in mutual registration and comprising in combination therewith:

(a) a substantially flat buckle body unit having flat portions constituting the front and back and narrower interconnecting side portions, and being adapted to embrace and hold together the said strap, end and upper portions, and wherein the inner face of one of the flat portions is formed with a shallow circular socket having a diameter at least greater than the spacing between adjacent locking holes of a single-row-type strap and the row spacing of a two-row-type strap;

(b) a disc arm means pivotally mounted in said socket and being adapted to rotate therein through an arc of at least 90 degrees; and,

(c) a pair of lock lugs outstanding from the surface of the disc arm means adapted to fit through pairs of registering locking holes of the two strap portions and to be rotated to one position to fit two adjacent locking holes of a single-row-type strap and to a second position to fit a locking hole in each row of a two-row-type strap.

5. In the combination defined in claim 4, wherein said disc arm means is formed with a pair of diametrically-opposing, radially aligned slots and each lock lug is shiftably carried in a slot whereby to permit shifting of the lock lug spacing to fit various spacings between the locking holes of different straps.

6. A buckle for stirrup straps of the type having one row of locking holes and stirrup straps of the type having two rows of locking holes, adapted to fasten a loop of the strap about a stirrup by holding an end portion of the strap against the upper reach portion thereof with locking holes in the end, and the upper reach portions being in registration, and comprising, in combination therewith:

(a) a shallow U-shaped base having a flat substantially rectangular back and opposing side flanges, and being sufficient in width and depth to receive the two overlying strap portions;

(b) a lid adapted to lie against the side flanges of the

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base when the lid is against the opposite side of the strap portions, with said lid being adapted to be secured to the side flanges of the base to thereby enclose the strap portions between the base and the lid;

- (c) a pair of lock lugs outstanding from the surface of the base back and being adapted to extend through pairs of registered locking holes in the said two portions of strap; and,
- (d) lock-lug shifting means carried on the buckle and holding the lock lugs and being adapted to position the lock lugs in a longitudinally aligned spacing to permit them to fit into adjacent holes of a single-row-

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type strap and in a transversely aligned spacing to permit them to fit into a locking hole of each row of a two-row-type strap.

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