Feb. 17, 1970 R. H. SELTMANN, JR., ET AL 3,495,770

WEAPON SLING

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FIG. 1.

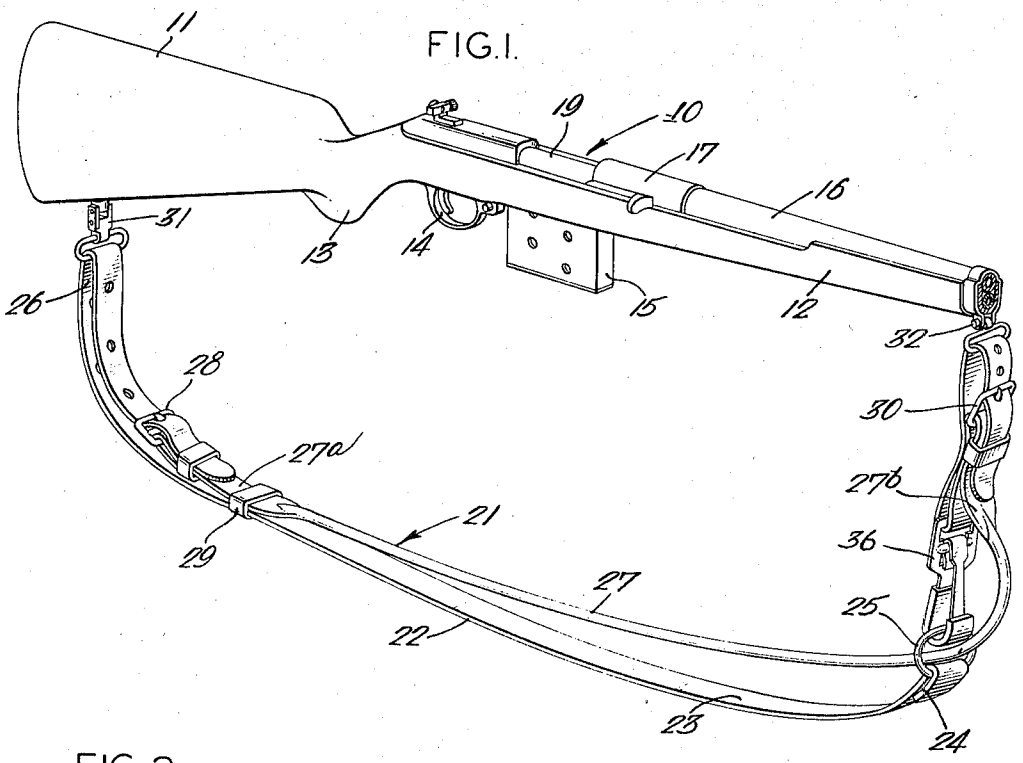


FIG. 2.

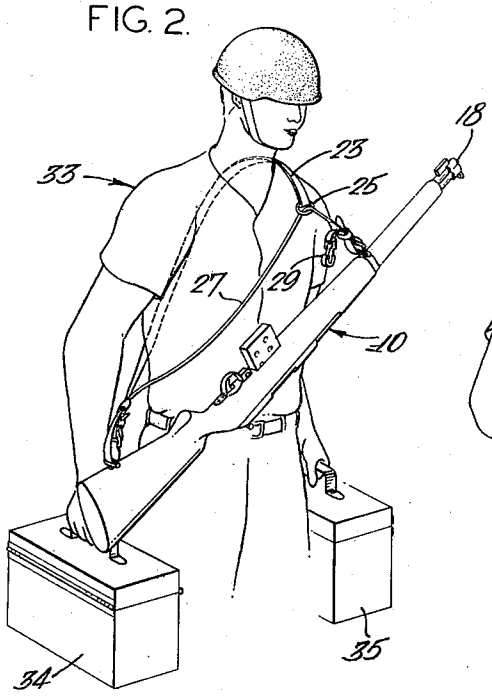
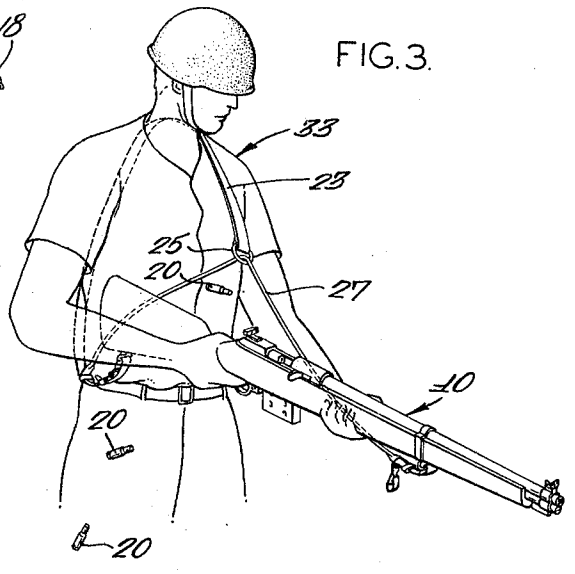


FIG. 3.



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WEAPON SLING

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A firearm having a stock and a forearm is provided with a sling for supporting it diagonally across the front of a rifleman's body. The sling is positioned about the body having a strap portion along the back and a slide cord portion across the front. The slide cord portion is secured at its opposite ends to the stock and forearm, and the strap is secured at one end to the stock, and at its other end is slidably fastened to the slide and releasably connected to the forearm.

This invention relates to weapon slings, and, more particularly, it relates to slings for carrying firearms in front of the body.

Modern warfare, with its emphasis on the firepower of military units, has placed greater demands than ever before upon the soldier. In order to maintain the firepower at its peak effectiveness, the weapons used must be kept well supplied with ammunition and other ordnance. This often requires that the soldier hand-carry this ordnance over rough terrain and, in many instances, in the combat zone. In addition to the transportation of ordnance the soldier must also perform other combat-related duties, including construction work and the evacuation of wounded. When in the combat zone, however, the soldier must constantly be on guard against ambush or surprise enemy attack; therefore, his weapon must be kept in readiness.

In the past, the soldier could carry his weapon in one hand and ordnance items in the other, or, with some difficulty, he could support his weapon on his shoulder by means of a conventional sling to thereby free both hands for performing combat support duties. However, each of these weapon-carrying methods is undesirable. When the soldier carries his weapon in one hand in order to have it readily available in the event of a surprise attack, only his other hand is available for working or transporting ammunition. In situations where the soldier supports his weapon on his shoulder with a sling, both hands are available for carrying ordnance items and performing other duties, but the weapon may not be quickly transferred from its carrying position on the shoulder to a firing position. Thus, the soldier must frequently compromise his personal safety in order to maintain his unit's firepower at its peak.

Similarly to the soldier, the civilian sportsman frequently finds himself climbing slippery and mountainous terrain or transporting equipment while carrying a firearm. Although not confronted with the constant threat of hostile fire as the soldier, the sportsman's safety is enhanced when both hands are free for walking or climbing and his weapon is available for immediate use. Also, when hunting in cold climates the sportsman may often wish

to warm both his hands in his pockets without putting his firearm down. When rapidly moving game is visible for only a short time, the sportsman may lose good shooting opportunities by not having his firearm readily available.

Accordingly, it is a primary object of this invention to provide a sling for supporting a weapon in front of the body, to thereby free both hands for carrying ammunition or transporting equipment over hazardous terrain.

An additional object of this invention is to provide a sling by which a weapon may be supported in front of the body, and which facilitates the transfer of the weapon from a carrying position to a firing position.

As a further object, this invention provides a sling, adapted to be secured to a weapon, and having flexible slide cord means extending between the stock and the forearm of the weapon and strap means extending from the stock and slidably fastened at one end to the slide cord means. The strap means, which is positioned along the back and shoulder of a rifleman, and the slide cord means which is positioned across the rifleman's chest, cooperate to permit the weapon to be carried diagonally across the front of the rifleman's body and, when desired, rapidly transferred from this position to a firing position by permitting the weapon to move relative to the strap means.

Other objects, features and advantages will become apparent from the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an automatic weapon having a sling embodying the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the weapon and sling of FIG. 1 arranged in its carrying position about the body of a rifleman; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the weapon and sling of FIG. 2 illustrating the weapon in firing position after having been transferred from its frontal carrying position.

Referring now to the drawing, FIG. 1 illustrates a conventional automatic weapon **10** of the type presently in use by the military. The weapon **10** may be either a rifle, a carbine, or a shotgun depending upon the particular application for which it is to be used. Although the weapon **10** is of the automatic type, it may be semi-automatic or manually operated if desired. In addition, the civilian version of the weapon **10** may be of the bolt, lever, or pump action type of sporting firearm; it being appreciated that the present invention is equally applicable to civilian as well as military firearms.

The weapon **10** has a stock **11** for cooperating with the shoulder and cheek of the rifleman when the weapon is fired in a conventional manner. The weapon also has a forearm or front grip **12** which assists the rifleman in aiming and firing the weapon. A rear grip **13**, or pistol grip as it is more commonly known, is integral with the stock **11** to enable the rifleman to firmly grip the weapon when firing it either from the shoulder or from the hip as illustrated in FIG. 3. A conventional guarded trigger assembly **14** initiates the firing sequence of the weapon, and a magazine or clip **15** provides the weapon with an adequate supply of cartridges. A barrel **16**, having a breach portion **17** and a muzzle **18**, extends forwardly along the weapon forearm **12**. A sliding breach bolt **19** cooperates with the breach **17** of the barrel for chambering and ejecting spent cartridges **20** (FIG. 3).

In accordance with the primary object of this invention, the weapon **10** is provided with a sling **21** for carrying it in front of a rifleman's body, the sling providing means

for rapidly transferring the weapon from the carrying position (FIG. 2) to a firing position (FIG. 3). To this end, the sling **21** is formed having means **22** forming an elongated strap having a flattened portion **23** for cooperating with the shoulder of a rifleman. The strap means **22** is reversely-turned and secured to itself at one end to form a loop or pocket **24** for mounting a ring-like link or slide **25**. The other end of the strap **22** is also reversely-turned on itself to form a rear loop **26**, larger than the front pocket **24**, for securing the strap to the weapon, for example by a bracket **31**.

For the purpose of rapidly transferring the weapon **10** from its carrying position to a firing position, the sling **21** is provided with means forming a slide cord **27** which cooperates with the slide **25** on the strap means **22** for rapidly and smoothly sliding therealong as the position of the weapon is changed. To effect this cooperation the slide cord means is provided with flattened end portions **27***a* and **27***b* and an intermediate rounded or smoothly contoured surface portion therebetween. The end portion **27***a*, connected to the end of the strap **22** by means of a conventional buckle assembly **28**, is maintained in contact with the body of the strap **22** by a rectangularly-shaped keeper element **29**. The keeper **29** provides light pressure between the strap **22** and the slide cord end portion **27***a* to permit the strap to be drawn therethrough when the sling is adjusted. The other end portion **27***b* is formed into a loop by a buckle assembly **30** and is secured to the forearm **12** of the weapon, for example by a bracket **32**.

The rounded portion of the slide cord **27** extends through the slide **25** for sliding therealong, and, in addition to reducing sliding friction, reduces any tendency to bind or snag which may occur with irregular shapes. Although the slide cord **27** is leather, other materials may be preferable. For instance, in order to further reduce sliding friction along the slide **25**, it may be desirable for at least the intermediate portion to be formed of, or coated with, plastic or some other material having a smooth surface finish. In this manner, the leather end portions **27***a* and **27***b* of the slide cord **27** retain the advantages of leather, and the smooth rounded intermediate portion provides a smooth sliding surface.

Because it often may be desirable to carry the weapon in a conventional manner suspended vertically from the shoulder, means is provided for releasably connecting the slide **25** to the forearm of the weapon. To this end, a releasable fastener or connector **36**, having a spring biased tongue, is secured to the slide cord end portion **27***b* and locks the ring **25** therein to prevent it from inadvertently being disconnected therefrom. Thus, when the ring is connected to the fastener in the manner shown in FIG. 1, the weapon may be supported about the shoulder of the rifleman in a conventional manner, and, when it is desired to support the weapon across the front of the body, the ring **25** is disconnected as illustrated in FIG. 2.

In order to obtain optimum performance from the sling, it should be adjusted to fit the individual rifleman, and, for this purpose, the sling is provided with adjusting means. Referring to FIG. 1, it may be seen that the adjusting means includes the buckles **28** and **30** which are manipulated to engage a series of cooperating holes in the strap **22** and the slide cord end portion **27***b* for varying the length of the sling **21** to fit the individual rifleman.

In accordance with the preferred embodiment of the invention, the sling is secured to the weapon by the swivel-mounting brackets **31** and **32**. In addition to securing the sling to the weapon, these swivel-mounting brackets permit the weapon to properly orient itself with respect to the rifleman's body in order to prevent discomfort while in use. Also, the swivel-mounting brackets permit the slide cord **27** and the strap **22** to be rotated on their axes, so that when the sling is used to support the weapon about the rifleman's shoulder in the conventional manner, the strap **22** rather than the slide cord **27** will engage against the shoulder.

In operation, after the ring-like slide **25** is disconnected from the connector **36**, the strap **22** is separated from the slide cord **27** to provide an opening through which a rifleman **33** may place his shoulder and head. In this manner, the strap **22** is positioned about the rifleman's back with the slide **25** depending downwardly a slight distance from one shoulder as illustrated in FIG. 2. The slide cord **27** is positioned across the rifleman's chest between the slide **25** and the rectangular element **36**. With this sling arrangement, the weapon **10** will be carried diagonally in front of the rifleman's body, and, as may be seen in FIG. 2, both his hands are thereby free to carry ammunition or other boxes **34** and **35**. In the event of an ambush or surprise attack, the rifleman, may drop the boxes, and quickly grip the weapon forearm **12** and the pistol grip **13** to thereby rapidly return the hostile fire.

Thus, with the foregoing in mind, it is apparent that a weapon sling has now been provided, which frees the rifleman's hands for transporting ammunition or equipment while permitting the weapon to be rapidly transferred from its carrying position to a firing position. Although the present invention is particularly useful for military purposes, its suitability for civilian use by sportsman should be equally apparent.

While a preferred embodiment of the invention has been disclosed, various modifications, alterations or changes may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

We claim:

1. A sling for supporting a weapon across the body of a rifleman, the weapon having front and rear grips, said sling comprising flexible slide cord means adapted to be positioned across the front of the body, said slide cord means adapted to be secured at one end to the rear grip and at the other end to the front grip of the weapon, strap means for positioning in back of the body, said strap means adapted to be secured at one end to the rear grip, slide means secured to the other end of said strap means and slidably secured to said slide cord means for relative movement therealong, whereby the weapon may be secured to the strap and supported by the sling in front of the body to enable the rifleman to rapidly transfer it from a carrying position to a firing position, and releasably connecting means interconnected to the front grip of the weapon for releasably connecting said slide means to said front grip so that the weapon may be selectively supported in front of the body or from the shoulder thereof.

2. A sling as recited in claim **1** wherein said slide cord means has a rounded surface portion intermediate its ends, said surface portion cooperating with the strap means to reduce sliding friction therealong.

3. A sling as defined in claim **1** further including means for adjusting the length of said slide and strap means, said adjusting means providing variable sling lengths for selectively carrying the weapon diagonally in front of the body or vertically from the shoulder thereof.

4. A sling in accordance with claim **1** wherein the ends of said slide and strap means are adapted to be secured to the respective grips of the weapon by swivel-mounting bracket means and said strap means has a flattened portion adjacent to said other end, said strap means and said slide means being thereby rotatable about their axes so that said strap engages the shoulder of the rifleman when the weapon is carried in a conventional manner.

5. A sling for supporting a firearm across the chest and shoulder of a rifleman, the firearm having a stock and a forearm, said sling comprising

a flaxible strap adapted to be secured at one end to the stock and having a flattened portion for cooperating with the back and shoulder of a rifleman,

slide means at the other end of said strap,

a flexible slide cord member adapted to be secured at one end to the forearm and having a rounded portion

intermediate its ends slidably received by said slide means, said slide cord member having its other end secured to said strap remote from said slide and extending separately therealong so as to be positioned diagonally across the chest of the rifleman, and

means for releasably connecting said slide means to the forearm,

whereby the firearm may be carried diagonally across the chest of the rifleman to facilitate its rapid transfer from a carrying position to a firing position.

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