

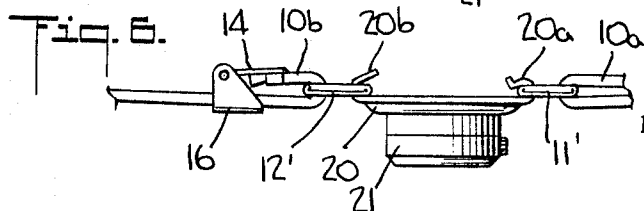
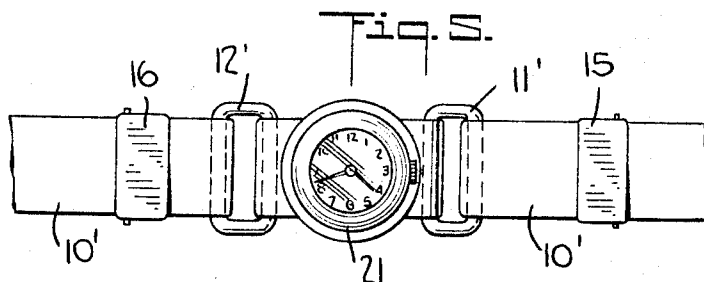
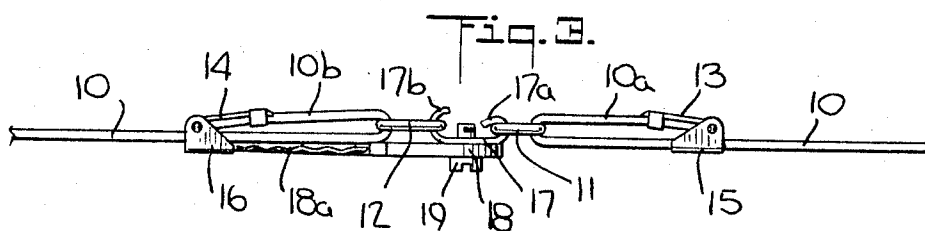
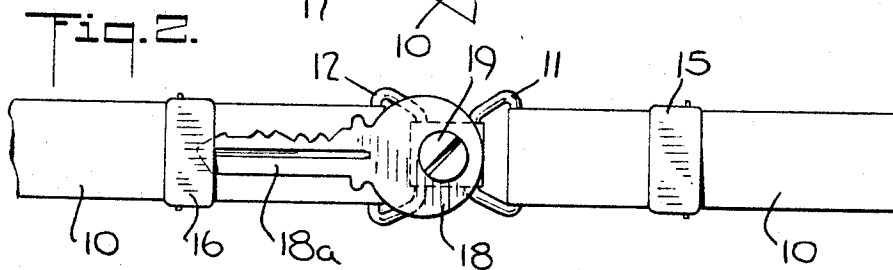
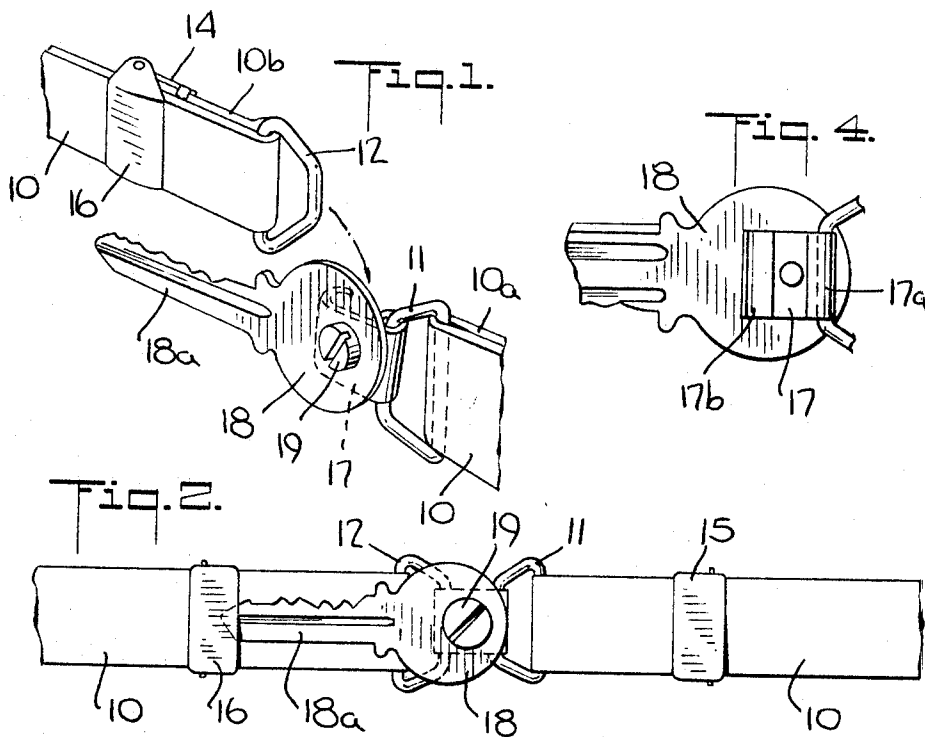
Sept. 13, 1966

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3,272,410

KEY-BELT

Filed Aug. 28, 1964



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3,272,410
KEY-BELT

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Filed Aug. 28, 1964, Ser. No. 392,701
2 Claims. (Cl. 224-5)

This invention relates to belts, and in particular to buckle constructions for belts.

Belts worn around the waist are generally provided with buckle constructions which, although they may differ in details of mechanical structure and esthetic design from one belt to the next, nevertheless have but one utilitarian function, to wit, to fasten the opposite ends of the respective belts to one another.

It is a principal object of the present invention, therefore, to provide a novel class of belts characterized by buckle constructions possessed of at least one other utilitarian function besides the standard belt-fastening function.

One of the foundations of the present invention is the recognition that the tendency of people frequently to forget or lose such items as keys, watches and the like may turn out to be a source of both embarrassment and inconvenience, since ordinarily no replacements for these items will be readily at hand.

A particular object of the present invention, consequently, is the provision of a novel type of belt characterized by a buckle construction having a key incorporated therein.

It is also an object of the present invention to provide such belts which are adapted for adjustment to accommodate key bits of different lengths.

Similarly, it is an object of the present invention to provide a novel type of belt characterized by a buckle construction having a watch incorporated therein.

The foregoing and other objects, characteristics and advantages of the present invention will be more clearly understood from the following detailed description thereof when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary front perspective view of a belt characterized by a buckle construction according to one aspect of the present invention, the buckle being shown in opened condition;

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary front elevational view of the belt shown in FIG. 1, with the buckle in its closed condition;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary side edge view of the structure shown in FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary rear elevational view of a portion of the buckle construction of the belt shown in FIGS. 1 to 3;

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary front elevational view of a belt characterized by a buckle construction according to another aspect of the present invention; and

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary side edge view of the structure shown in FIG. 5.

Referring now first to FIGS. 1 to 4, the belt 10 there shown is extended at its opposite end regions through a pair of rigid loop members 11 and 12 and folded back along itself, as shown at 10a and 10b, the folded-back portions being secured at their respective extremities to the back plates 13 and 14 of a pair of auxiliary adjustment buckles having respective clamping members 15 and 16 pivoted to said back plates. Since the main reach of the strip of which the belt is made passes through the two spaces defined between the respective back plates 13 and 14 and their associated clamping members 15 and 16, both of these buckles may be employed for adjustment of the overall length of the belt. The buckle 14-16, however, is principally intended for a different function which

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will be more fully comprehended as the description proceeds.

The loop member 11 at that portion thereof not enfolded by the belt 10-10a supports a mounting plate 17 in the form of a short strip of rigid metal one end 17a of which is bent or crimped about the outer portion of the loop member so as to prevent its becoming separated therefrom, and, if desired, with sufficient clearance to permit some angular movement therebetween. The other end of the mounting plate is bent into a curved hook, as shown at 17b, adapted to be passed through the loop member 12 and about that portion thereof not enfolded by the belt 10-10b. In this manner, therefore, the two ends of the belt may be attached to each other. The loop members 11 and 12 and the interconnecting member 17-17a-17b thus are seen to constitute that portion of the main buckle construction designed for the primary function thereof, to wit the opening and closing of the belt.

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, the main buckle construction for the belt 10 also comprises a key 18 which is secured to the mounting plate 17 by means of a screw, bolt or like fastener 19 passing through the hole in the head of the key and through a corresponding hole in the central web of the mounting plate. This hole may be internally threaded, thereby permitting the screw 19 to be directly screwed into the plate 17. Alternatively, of course, the hole in the plate 17 need not be tapped, in which case the screw would be secured to the plate with the aid of a nut (not shown).

It will, of course, be clear to those skilled in the art that when the main buckle, according to this embodiment of the invention, is closed by hooking the mounting plate end portion 17b over the loop member 12, the bit 18a of the key 18, not being curved, may not follow the contours of the wearer's waistline, depending on the location of the buckle, and thus may tend to extend angularly away from the body of the wearer. This possibility is avoided by virtue of the presence of the second auxiliary adjustment buckle 14-16 which is so adjusted (see FIGS. 2 and 3) that the free end or tip of the bit 18a of the key 18 can be inserted under the adjacent edge of the clamping member 16. In this manner, when the belt is being worn, the key is constrained to lie flat thereagainst, which enhances the esthetic appearance of the belt while at the same time the chance of the wearer being accidentally injured by the key projecting from the belt is substantially eliminated.

A belt of this type, with the key 18 being the house key of the wearer, for example, will be readily appreciated to be a most helpful accessory for any persons who might otherwise at some time find themselves in the embarrassing or annoying position of having lost or forgotten or mislaid their house keys. Since the key 18 is effectively a permanent part of the belt of the wearer, its chance of being lost or forgotten is practically nil and in any case no greater than the chance of the wearer losing or forgetting to don the belt itself. The main belt buckle construction according to this embodiment of the present invention thus also serves as a non-fastening function, to wit, the retention of the key in such a manner and in such a location that it is always immediately available for use and, for all practical purposes, cannot be lost or mislaid once the belt has been put on.

Referring now to FIGS. 5 and 6, in accordance with another aspect of the present invention, the main belt buckle comprises a mounting plate 20 one end 20a of which is bent or crimped about the outer portion of the loop member 11' and the other end of which is bent into the form of a hook 20b adapted to be passed through the other loop member 12' of the belt. The non-fastening function of the main buckle is in this case provided by a watch or like time piece 21, the casing of which is secured

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in any suitable manner to the mounting plate 20. A belt of this type may serve either as a decorative accessory or as a necessary adjunct to the garb of a person unwilling or unable to wear a wrist watch.

Belts having multiple function buckle constructions according to the present invention may, of course, be made of any suitable materials, such as leather, fabric, elastic and non-elastic webbings, synthetic plastic sheet materials, etc. As will be apparent, in any belt which lacks the length-adjusting feature 13-15, the fastening parts of the buckle construction may be secured directly to the end regions of the belt. Also, in any key-equipped belt which lacks the specific adjusting feature 14-16 another type of corresponding adjustable member for constraining engagement with the key bit may be provided. Quite obviously, the principles of the present invention are applicable to belts for both male and female adults as well as children.

It will be understood that the foregoing description of preferred embodiments of the present invention has been made for purposes of illustration only, and that the several structural features and relationships disclosed may be modified in various ways none of which involves a departure from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A belt, comprising an elongated strip and a main buckle construction at the opposite end regions of said strip, said main buckle construction comprising a mounting plate secured at one end to one of said end regions of said strip and having fastening means at its other end for releasable engagement with the other end region of said strip, a key secured to said mounting plate in such position that the bit thereof extends over said other end region of said strip upon engagement of said fastening means with the latter, and retaining means adjustably connected with said other end region of said strip in spaced relation to the point of engagement between said fastening means and said other end region of said strip, said retaining means being engageable with said bit of

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said key to constrain the same to lie flush against said one end region of said strip.

2. A belt, comprising an elongated strip, a pair of rigid loop members, said strip at the opposite end regions thereof being passed through said loop members, respectively, and folded back over itself, a first clamping buckle connected with the first folded-over portion of said strip defined by passage of the latter through one of said loop members and releasably engageable with the adjacent part of the main reach of said strip for adjusting the overall length of the belt, a mounting plate secured at one end to said one loop member and having a hook at its other end for releasable engagement with the other of said loop members, a key secured to said mounting plate in such position that the bit of said key extends over said other loop member upon engagement of said hook with the latter, and a second clamping buckle connected with the second folded-over portion of said strip defined by passage of the latter through said other loop member and releasably engageable with the adjacent part of the main reach of said strip for adjusting the belt portion from said other loop member to said second clamping buckle to a length slightly less than the length of said key bit, whereby the tip region of the latter may be confined by said second clamping buckle to constrain said key to lie flush against said belt portion.

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