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E. ARTZT

3,040,406

EARRING SECURING DEVICE

Filed Dec. 23, 1959

FIG. 1

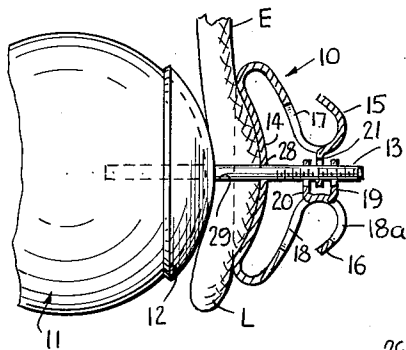


FIG. 2

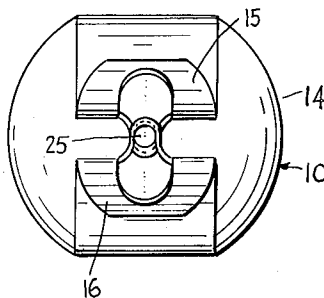


FIG. 3

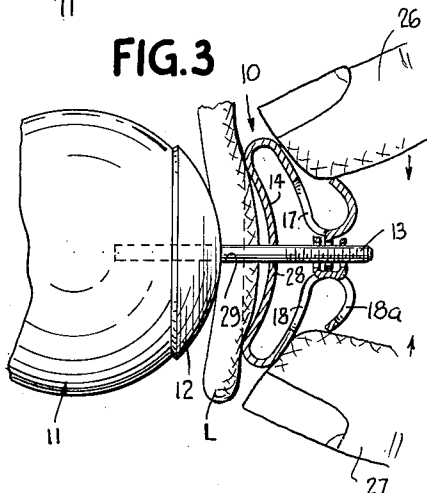


FIG. 4

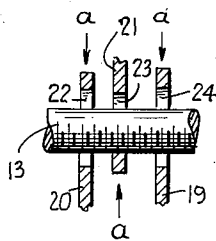


FIG. 5

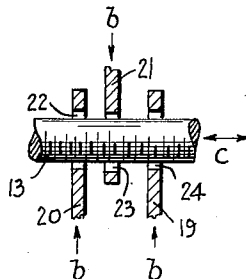


FIG. 6

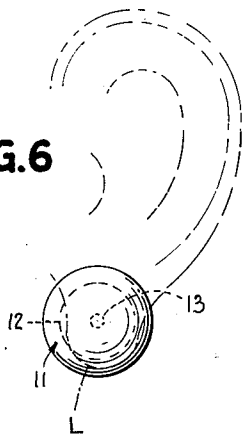
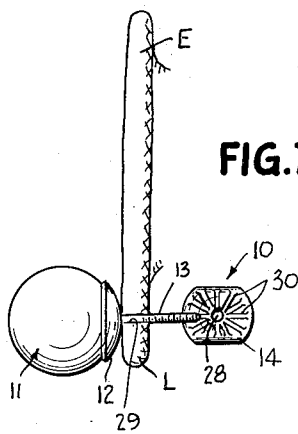


FIG. 7



INVENTOR

EMANUEL ARTZT

BY

Erwin Schreier
ATTORNEY.

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EARRING SECURING DEVICE
Emanuel Artzt, 7 W. 45th St., New York 35, N.Y.
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This invention relates broadly to earrings, and it has more specific reference to earrings for pierced ears providing means to removably retain an earring in the pierced opening in an ear lobe.

Many ladies have pierced ear lobes for the passage therethrough of the ear wire of an earring thereby removably retaining the ear wire in the opening. Means must then be provided to lock the ear wire in the opening. Locking devices which are now on the market generally comprise a concave locking element having a threaded opening therein, into which the threaded end of an ear wire is entered. Many ladies are annoyed by this procedure and find it time consuming. Furthermore, the thread at the end of the ear wire wears out in time, so that the earring will not be firmly locked and can be lost.

To overcome these disadvantages, it is the principal object of the present invention to provide locking means for an earring, which are spring actuated and do not depend upon threads for their retention.

A further aim of the present invention resides in the provision of locking means of this character, whereby manual pressure upon the locking member will widen its loops, thereby permitting the ear wire to be slipped into the opening in the locking member easily and with a minimum of effort and time.

And a yet further purpose of the present invention resides in the provision of locking means of this character, wherein release of pressure upon against the locking element will clamp the loops of the locking element about the ear wire entered therebetween.

And yet another aim of the present invention resides in the provision of a retaining element for the purpose described, which may be provided with guide means to facilitate the finding of the opening in the retaining element, since the retaining element is positioned in back of the ear lobe where it cannot be seen by the user.

And yet another feature of the present invention resides in the provision of a locking means for the purpose referred to, which is very simple to use, requires a minimum of time to apply and provides a positive gripping arrangement for the ear wire engaged therein.

These and other meritorious aims and advantages, which will become more fully apparent as the description hereof proceeds, are attained by the novel construction, combination and arrangement of few and simple parts, hereinafter described, and illustrated on the accompanying drawing, forming a material component of this disclosure, and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a side elevational view, drawn on an enlarged scale, of an earring secured to the pierced opening in an ear lobe, and showing the locking arrangement which constitutes the subject matter of the present application, the locking member being illustrated as being partly in section and partly broken away and in locked position.

FIGURE 2 is a right hand end view of the earring and retaining member illustrated in FIGURE 1.

FIGURE 3 is a view similar to FIGURE 1, but showing the locking member in an open or unlocked position, the tips of two human fingers being illustrated in broken lines in the process of applying pressure against the locking element whereby to open it.

FIGURE 4 is an enlarged sectional detail view of the

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locking element having an ear wire entered therein, the locking member being in locked position.

FIGURE 5 is a view similar to FIGURE 4, but showing the locking element in open or unlocked position.

FIGURE 6 is a front elevational view in broken lines of a human ear having an ear wire retained through the pierced opening the ear lobe.

FIGURE 7 is a side elevational view of FIGURE 6, showing a modified locking element, the locking element provided with guide means to facilitate finding the opening in the locking element for the ear wire to pass through.

Referring in greater detail to the drawing, the numeral 10 refers broadly to the locking device of the present invention, whereby to removably retain the ear wire 13 of an earring 11 in the pierced opening 29 in an ear lobe L, the shell of the ear being referred to by the letter E. One end of the ear wire 13 is provided with a cup 12 which serves as a seat for an element of ornamentation, here illustrated as being a pearl. Obviously, the element of ornamentation may be secured to the end of stem 13 in a manner other than that here illustrated, since the ear ring per se does not constitute a part of the present invention.

The locking element which constitutes the subject-matter of the present invention comprises a locking plate 14, preferably concavely shaped, having a central opening 28 therein for a purpose which will presently become more fully apparent. From opposite edges of locking plate 14 extend a pair of rearwardly and inwardly directed, spaced apart elements made of spring wire and so curved that they form a relatively narrow neck portion therebetween, as illustrated FIGURES 1 and 3. The said rearwardly and inwardly directed elements are turned outwardly and upwardly at their ends, forming a pair of pressure receiving elements 15 and 16 respectively. The element 14, 17 and 15, and the element 14, 18 and 16 are each so curved that they are each substantially S-shaped. At the relatively narrow neck portion, element 16 has a substantially U-shaped tab element formed therewith, the legs 19 and 20 of which extend normally upwardly. A pair of spaced-apart openings 18 and 18a respectively are provided in element 16 at its narrow portion, adapted to permit movement therein of legs 19 and 20 of the U-shaped tab element formed with the said element 16 for a purpose to be presently more fully described. Element 15 has a tab 21 formed therewith which extends downwardly between legs 19 and 20 of the tab element on element 16. Element 15 is provided with an opening 17 for tab 21, as will hereinafter be more fully explained.

Legs 19 and 20 of the U-shaped tab on element 16 each are provided with an elongated opening substantially centrally thereof, respectively referred to by the numerals 22 and 24, and depending tab 23 on element 15 is provided with an elongated opening 23 therein, the said openings 22, 23 and 24 aligned to form a joint opening referred to by the numeral 25.

Locking plate 14 may be modified as illustrated in FIGURE 7 by having its inner concave surface provided with grooves or other guide means 30 extending radially from the central opening 28 outwardly towards its outer edge for a purpose which will presently be more fully explained.

The device is used in the following manner:

When it is desired to retain an earring in the pierced opening of an ear, the free end of ear wire 13 is passed through the pierced opening 29 in ear lobe L, the position of the ear ring being such that the free end of the ear wire will pass through the pierced opening and the ornamentation which constitutes the front of the earring will rest against the ear lobe in an obvious manner. The

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end of ear wire 13 which passes through opening 29 is preferably though not necessarily threaded, as is illustrated throughout the drawings. Locking element 10 is then held between finger 26 and thumb 27 as illustrated in FIGURE 3 and pressure receiving elements 15 and 16 are urged towards each other. Legs 19 and 20 are thereby urged upwardly and tab 21 urged downwardly thereby increasing the size of opening 25 so that ear wire 13 can easily be slid into and through opening 25. Release of pressure against elements 15 and 16 will cause elements 19, 20 and 21 to retain ear wire 13 therebetween and hold it in adjusted position until pressure against elements 15 and 16 permits its free and easy withdrawal.

When the ear wire 13 is threaded, the tabs will grip the wire between the threads, but the clamping element can be used just as effectively and satisfactorily on a smooth and unthreaded surface.

Inasmuch as the locking member is applied behind the ear, where the user cannot see what she is doing, it might be desirable to provide the concave surface of front plate 14 with a guide arrangement to facilitate locating the small opening 28 in plate 14. This guide may take the form of grooves, flutes or other suitable and desirable means, extending radially outwardly from the opening 28 towards the outer edge of plate 14. The end of wire 13 need then only be brought into contact with a groove or other guide and passed toward the center of the plate where the opening can readily be found.

There has thus been shown and described a locking element whereby to lock an earring removably in the pierced opening of an ear lobe in the preferred form of its embodiment and in one modification thereof. Other modifications are apparent and still others will become apparent through use. For instance, the contour of the front plate and of the several other elements may be altered and the several parts shown as being made of a unitary piece of spring wire may be made in several parts and joined together by soldering or otherwise.

Applicant therefore desires that it be understood that the present disclosure is to be regarded as illustrative and descriptive of the best known forms of his invention and not as limitative or restrictive to the exact details shown, applicant reserving the right to make such changes and modifications in the construction of his invention as might come within the scope of the appended claim, without thereby departing either from the spirit or the scope of the present invention.

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Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new and desired to secure by Letters Patent, is:

An attachment for removably retaining the ear wire of an earring in a pierced ear lobe, said attachment comprising a locking plate, said locking plate having an opening centrally therethrough for the passage of the ear wire therethrough, a pair of resilient gripping elements extending normally rearwardly from opposite edges of said locking plate, said gripping elements curved toward each other whereby forming a narrow passageway therebetween, the ends of said gripping elements curved away from each other whereby forming a pair of opposed pressure receiving elements, a substantially U-shaped tab extending from one of said gripping elements, each of said gripping elements and the pressure receiving element formed therewith curved to form substantially an S-shaped configuration, into said narrow passageway, each leg of said U-shaped tab having an elongated opening therein in alignment with each other and with said opening in said locking plate, a tab extending from said other gripping element into said narrow passageway, said tab extending between said legs of said U-shaped tab member, said last named tab having an elongated opening therein in alignment with said openings in said legs of said U-shaped tab member and said opening in said locking plate, the ear wire adapted to pass through said openings in said tabs, and release of pressure on said pressure receiving elements decreasing the relative size of said tab openings.

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