July 2, 1957 O. KATZMAN 2,797,462

INDICIA MOUNTING MEANS FOR BELT BUCKLES AND THE LIKE

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Fig. 1.

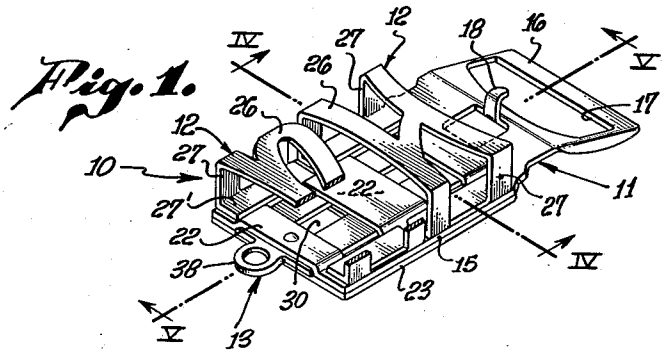


Fig. 2.

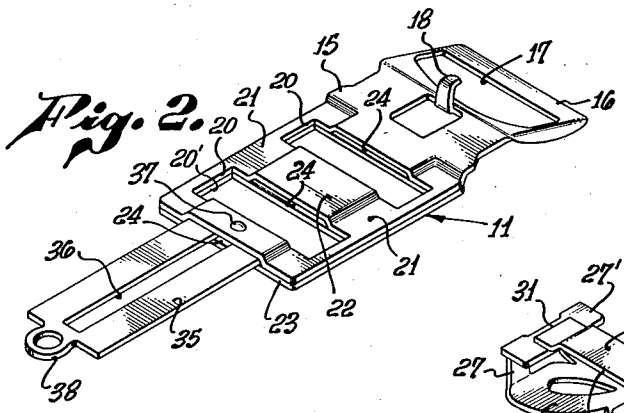


Fig. 3.

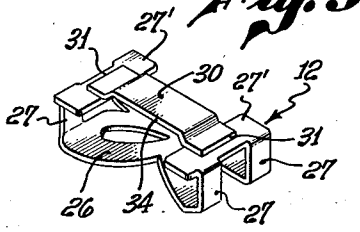


Fig. 4.

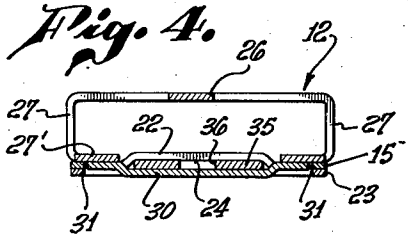
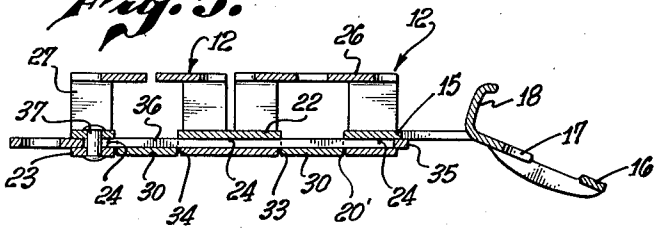


Fig. 5.



INVENTOR.
OSCAR KATZMAN,
BY
ATTORNEY.

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INDICIA MOUNTING MEANS FOR BELT BUCKLES AND THE LIKE

Oscar Katzman, Los Angeles, Calif.

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2 Claims. (Cl. 24—163)

This invention relates to an improved belt buckle and more particularly to a belt buckle upon which interchangeable, ornamental indicia, initial letters, insignia and the like, may be easily mounted and removed.

The buckle of this invention principally relates to a personalized buckle adapted to carry and display the initial letters of the person using the buckle. Obviously, other selected ornamental designs or insignias may be mounted on the buckle, if desired, and while the invention is described and related to a belt buckle, it is understood that the construction described herein may be employed for mounting various other ornamental designs and insignias upon a base or mounting member.

In such belt buckles, the structure and arrangement for mounting selected initial letters must be simple so that a clerk may quickly, positively and accurately position and secure the selected initials in the buckle mounting member. The construction must be easily operable so that at the time of sale the assembly of the selected initials and base member which form the buckle may be readily accomplished.

Prior proposed belt buckles have included interchangeable or removable initial letters or other insignia which were positioned and mounted by sliding the selected initials in parallel, opposed grooves formed on a mounting portion of the buckle. Various means were employed to hold the initials in proper spaced relationship and to retain them securely so that they would not be separated during buckling or unbuckling of the buckle. The prior proposed belt buckles of this type had several disadvantages. The employment of parallel, spaced grooves in a buckle member, which was made usually of soft metal, resulted in difficulty in the insertion and sliding of the initial members in said grooves. The soft metal of the buckle was likely to be bent slightly out of shape during handling so that the initials could not be freely slidable in the grooves. In addition, a slightly roughened spot on the walls of the grooves would cause difficulty in sliding the initial letters into their proper position. Such prior belt buckles often employed a construction wherein the initials became loose during buckling and unbuckling. In such prior constructions the initials were often the principal part of the buckle grasped by the wearer when the belt was unbuckled and such grasping caused the initials to change position and sometimes become disassembled from the mounting member.

This invention contemplates a simple, effective buckle construction wherein a minimum number of parts are employed and each of said parts is simply made and capable of easy assembly. The belt buckle contemplated by this invention eliminates the use of parallel, spaced grooves for slidably positioning the indicia members. The indicia members employed in the belt buckle of this invention are quickly and easily located by employing large openings in the base or mounting member of the buckle which are easily seen and which are spaced apart a predetermined distance. The indicia member of this

invention is inserted into said openings from the front so that the appearance of the buckle may be quickly and readily determined. The belt buckle of this invention utilizes indicia members which serve as and form keeper elements for the belt at the buckle and are so arranged that in the case of initial letters, the material of the belt serves to provide a background for the silhouette of the initial letters. The buckle of this invention employs a simply operable, friction-type, locking key which is used to retain and secure the initial letters from disassembly with the buckle.

The primary object of this invention, therefore, is to disclose and provide an improved arrangement or mounting means for removably securing and retaining selected, interchangeable, ornamental members or indicia in a desired relationship.

An object of this invention is to disclose and provide an improved belt buckle wherein a minimum number of parts are employed to form a belt buckle.

Another object of this invention is to disclose and provide a belt buckle wherein mounting of interchangeable indicia letters is facilitated and is substantially foolproof in assembly and disassembly of said buckle.

A further object of this invention is to disclose and provide a novel construction of an indicia member and a mounting member cooperably arranged to hold the indicia member against lateral, longitudinal and rearward displacement with respect to the mounting member.

A still further object of this invention is to provide a locking means for securing selected interchangeable indicia members with respect to the mounting member.

A more specific object of this invention is to disclose and provide a mounting member for removably carrying selected indicia wherein the mounting member is provided with a laterally arranged opening and aligned, centrally disposed, through passageway means on opposite sides of said opening, so that a locking element may be slidably movable in said passageway means to extend across said opening for retaining an indicia member having a rear portion fitted within said opening.

Other objects and advantages of this invention will be readily apparent from the following description of the drawings in which an exemplary embodiment of the invention is shown.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary belt buckle embodying this invention, a fragment of one of the initial members being broken away.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a base or mounting member used in the belt buckle shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the back portion of an indicia member employed with the buckle shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a transverse sectional view taken in the plane indicated by line IV—IV of Fig. 1.

Fig. 5 is a sectional view taken in the plane indicated by line V—V of Fig. 1.

In the exemplary belt buckle generally indicated at **10**, Fig. 1, it will be noted that the buckle generally comprises four parts; namely, a base or mounting member **11**, for two belt keeper indicia members **12**, and a locking means or key **13** to maintain the indicia members in assembled relation with the mounting member **12**. It is understood that while two indicia members **12** are shown, one or more of such indicia members may be employed. Also while alphabet letters are illustrated so as to form initials of the user of such a belt buckle it is understood that various other insignia, indicia, and ornamental members may be carried by mounting member **11** to provide a desired ornamental jewelry accessory other than a buckle.

The mounting member **11** may be made of suitable metal material and may be fabricated from one or more metal parts. In the illustration, two metal parts are shown

secured together in any suitable manner as by brazing, welding, or riveting.

The mounting member **11** may be of elongated generally rectangular shape and includes a top portion **15** provided with a bail member **16** at one end thereof for attachment to one end of a belt. The bail member **16** is defined by an opening **17**. Inwardly of the bail member **16** may be provided an upstanding tongue **18** which is adapted to engage a selected hole in the free end of the belt.

The top portion **15** may be provided with two longitudinally spaced laterally extending rectangular openings **20**, the openings **20** extending almost entirely across the member **15**. Longitudinal side margins of the top portion **15** adjacent to openings **20** may be slightly depressed as at **21** so as to form a longitudinally extending centrally disposed, raised, or embossed section **22** which lies in a plane spaced from and parallel to the plane of the side margins.

A bottom portion **23** of rectangular form corresponding in pattern to the section of the top portion having the openings **20** may be secured to the top portion in any suitable manner. The flat bottom portion **23** is likewise provided with laterally extending openings **20'** corresponding to openings **20** and thereby forms with the central raised sections **22** of the top portion longitudinally aligned centrally disposed passageway means **24** extending from opposite sides of the openings **20** and opening thereinto.

It is understood that in the above description of mounting member **11**, both top and bottom portions **15** and **23** may be suitably stamped from a single integral sheet of metal to form a mounting member **11**. It is understood that the underlying bottom portion may be integral with one edge of the top portion and folded thereunder so as to produce the passageway means. Another way of making the mounting member may be to form the bottom underlying portion integral with both longitudinal edges of the top portion and to fold outwardly extending metal portions rearwardly and into parallel face-to-face relation with the bottom surface of the top portion. Obviously, various other methods and means may be employed for making the mounting member **11** either from one integral sheet of metal as by stamping or by fabricating the member from several pieces of metal.

The indicia member **12** as mentioned above may include any suitable design or insignia. In the example, each indicia member **12** includes a front portion **26** suitably configured to represent a letter of the alphabet so that when a belt is passed beneath the front portion **26** the alphabet letter will be silhouetted thereagainst. The front portion **26** may be integral with rearwardly extending end walls **27** spaced apart virtually the same distance as the width of mounting member **11**. The end walls **27** serve to space the front portion from the mounting member so as to form in combination with the mounting member a keeper means for the free end portion of the belt. The end walls **27** may be infolded to form longitudinally extending flanges **27'** lying in a plane parallel to portion **26** adapted to seat against and in the longitudinally extending parallel marginal depressions **21** formed in the mounting member **11**. The flanges **27'** are thus seated upon the top surface portions of the mounting member and serve to prevent rearwardly displacement of the indicia member when assembled with the mounting member.

Each indicia member **12** may be of loop section and includes a rearwardly offset laterally extending strap-like portion **30** secured, as in the example, to the rear surface of flanges **27'** and extending therebetween. The strap-like portion **30** is shaped to correspond to the configuration of the opening **20** and is adapted to be accommodated within said opening when the indicia member is assembled with the mounting member. The offset portion **30** lies below the planar zone of passageway means **24** and the rear surface of the offset portion **30** lies generally in the same plane as the rear surface of the mounting member.

The accommodation of the rearwardly offset strap-like portion **30** within an opening **20** in the mounting member provides means for limiting lateral displacement of the indicia member with respect to the mounting member. In Fig. 4, it will be noted that the strap-like portion **30** is provided with longitudinally extending edge faces or shoulder **31** which are adapted to abut against the end walls defining opening **20**. The abutment of shoulders **31** with the end walls positively limits lateral movement of the indicia member.

Means for limiting longitudinal displacement of the indicia member with respect to the mounting member is provided by abutment as at **33** of the side edge faces **34** of the rear strap-like portion **30** against side edges of opening **20'** in the bottom potrion **23** of the mounting member.

Means for securing the indicia members after they have been positioned as above-described on the mounting member may include an elongated locking element or key **13** comprising a flat bar **35** of generally rectangular form and having a width and depth readily accommodated within the passageway means **24**. The locking bar **35** has a longitudinally extending centrally disposed slot **36** therein extending for substantially the entire length of the key. The slot **36** slidably receives a pin or rivet **37** which extends across the passageway means at the end of the mounting member opposite to bail member **16**. The slot and pin arrangement prevents disassembly of the locking key from the mounting member while permitting the locking key to be fully extended outwardly from the mounting member so as to fully open and leave unobstructed the openings **20**.

The locking bar **35** is arranged to be slidably movable within the passageway means **24** for substantially the entire length of said passageway means. The locking bar **35** extends over the rearwardly offset strap portion **30** of the indicia members and thereby positively holds the indicia members against disassembly by forward displacement of the indicia members from the openings **20**. The locking key is frictionally held in position by frictional engagement with the strap-like portion **30** of the indicia members and the internal surfaces of the passageway means on the mounting member. Since the locking key is provided in a portion of the mounting member which is not visible when a belt is worn and which is not grasped by the user when unbuckling the buckle, it will be readily apparent that the locking key will positively secure and retain the indicia members in assembly with the mounting member.

The locking bar **35** may be provided with an eye **38** at one end thereof to facilitate withdrawing of the locking key from the passageway means. A suitable element such as the end of a pencil or nail may be inserted in the eye in order to provide a gripping or engaging means for withdrawing the locking key.

It is important to note that the assembly of indicia members on the mounting member is performed by dropping from the front selected indicia members into said pair of openings (with the locking key withdrawn or extended) in desired relationship so as to represent the initials of the wearer. The indicia members readily position themselves because of the flanges **27** which seat against front surfaces of the mounting member and the corresponding configuration of the rear strap-like portion **30** of the indicia member with the opening **20**. After being seated in position in the mounting member the locking key is slidably moved through the passageway means and over the rear portions of the indicia members. This is easily accomplished because the forward surface of the rear strap-like portion lies at or slightly below the planar zone of the passageway means. The indicia members are thus securely retained on the mounting member and in the example serve as keepers for the belt to maintain

the tongue 18 within a selected opening in the free end of the belt. It will be apparent that the indicia members are securely held by simply constructed and positively operable means which are invisible when the belt buckle is worn and which are not subject to displacement or wear when the belt buckle is being buckled or unbuckled.

It is understood that the indicia member may be made by stamping the member from a single sheet of metal with the necessary shoulders and configuration of the rear strap-like portion. The strap-like portion in such an instance may be divided centrally so that the ends of the stamped blank of sheet metal may be folded inwardly.

It is understood that the exemplary arrangement of mounting an indicia member on a base member for a belt buckle as above-described may also be employed and utilized in the mounting of various other ornamental forms and designs upon base or mounting members for other purposes such as cuff links or other accessories for wear or display. It is understood that the indicia member need not be formed as a keeper means for a belt and any ornamental design may be used.

It is understood that various modifications and changes may be made in the structure described above and all such modifications and changes coming within the scope of the appended claims are embraced thereby.

I claim:

1. In a belt buckle, the combination of: an elongated mounting member provided with longitudinally spaced, laterally arranged, parallel openings and longitudinally aligned, centrally disposed, through passageway means on opposite sides of said openings; an ornamental belt keeper member for each opening having a rearwardly offset, strap-like portion fitted within the associated opening and having a rear flange seated on front surfaces of the mounting member, the offset portion lying below and adjacent to the extended planar zone of said passageway means; and an elongated locking key longitudinally slidable in said passageway means and over each of said offset portions for holding said ornamental keeper member in assembled relation with the mounting member.

2. In a belt buckle, the combination of: an elongated mounting member provided with a laterally arranged opening and longitudinally aligned, centrally disposed passageway means on opposite sides of said opening; an ornamental belt keeper member for said opening having a rear portion fitted within said opening and seated on front surfaces of the mounting member, the rear portion lying below the planar zone of said passageway means; a locking key slidable in said passageway means over said rear portion for holding said ornamental member in assembled relation with the mounting member; said locking key including a longitudinally extending slot; and said mounting member including a pin extending across said passageway means and through said slot for retaining the key in assembly with the mounting member.

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