

Feb. 24, 1953

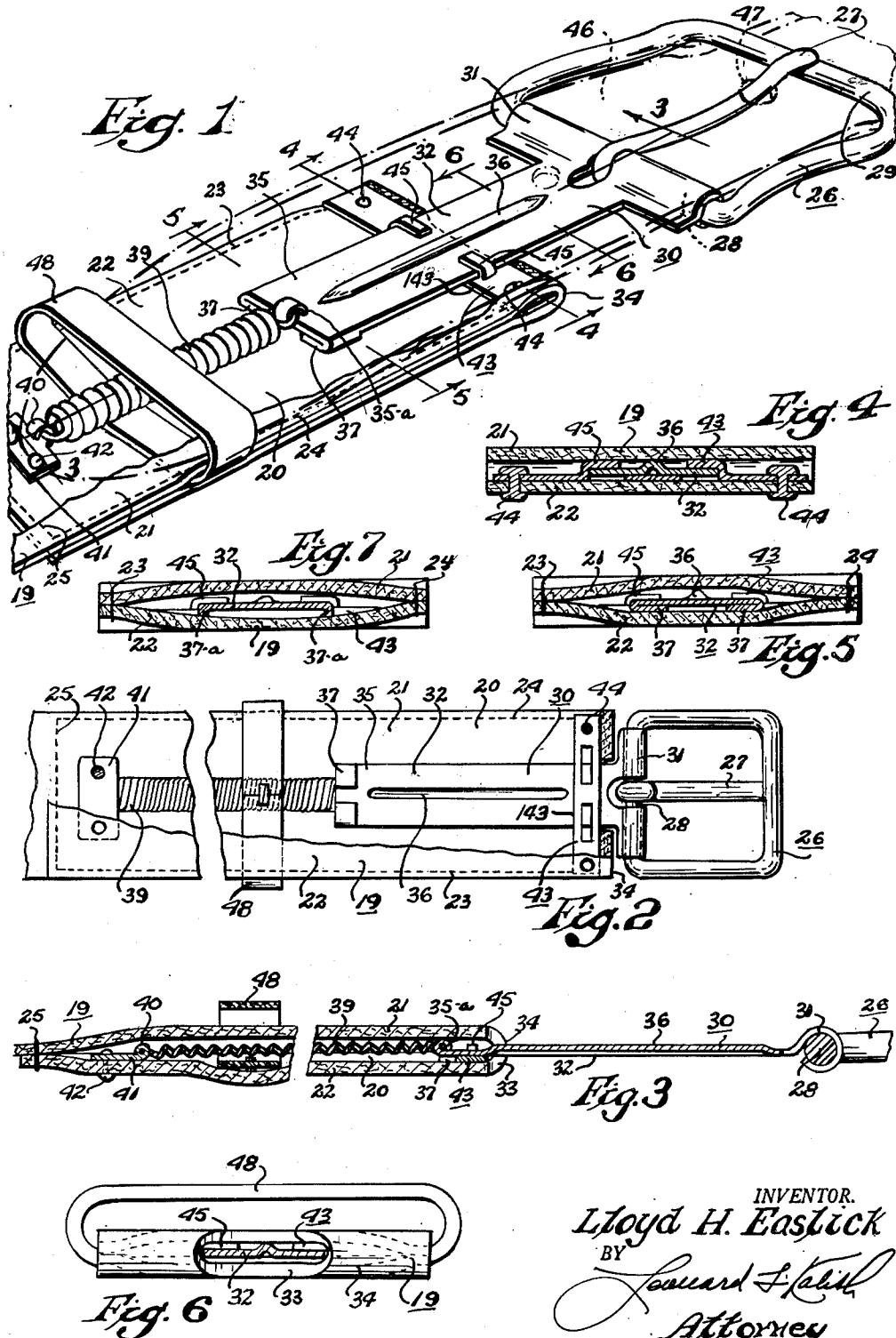
L. H. EASLICK

2,629,104

EXPANSIBLE BELT

Filed April 1, 1948

3 Sheets-Sheet 1



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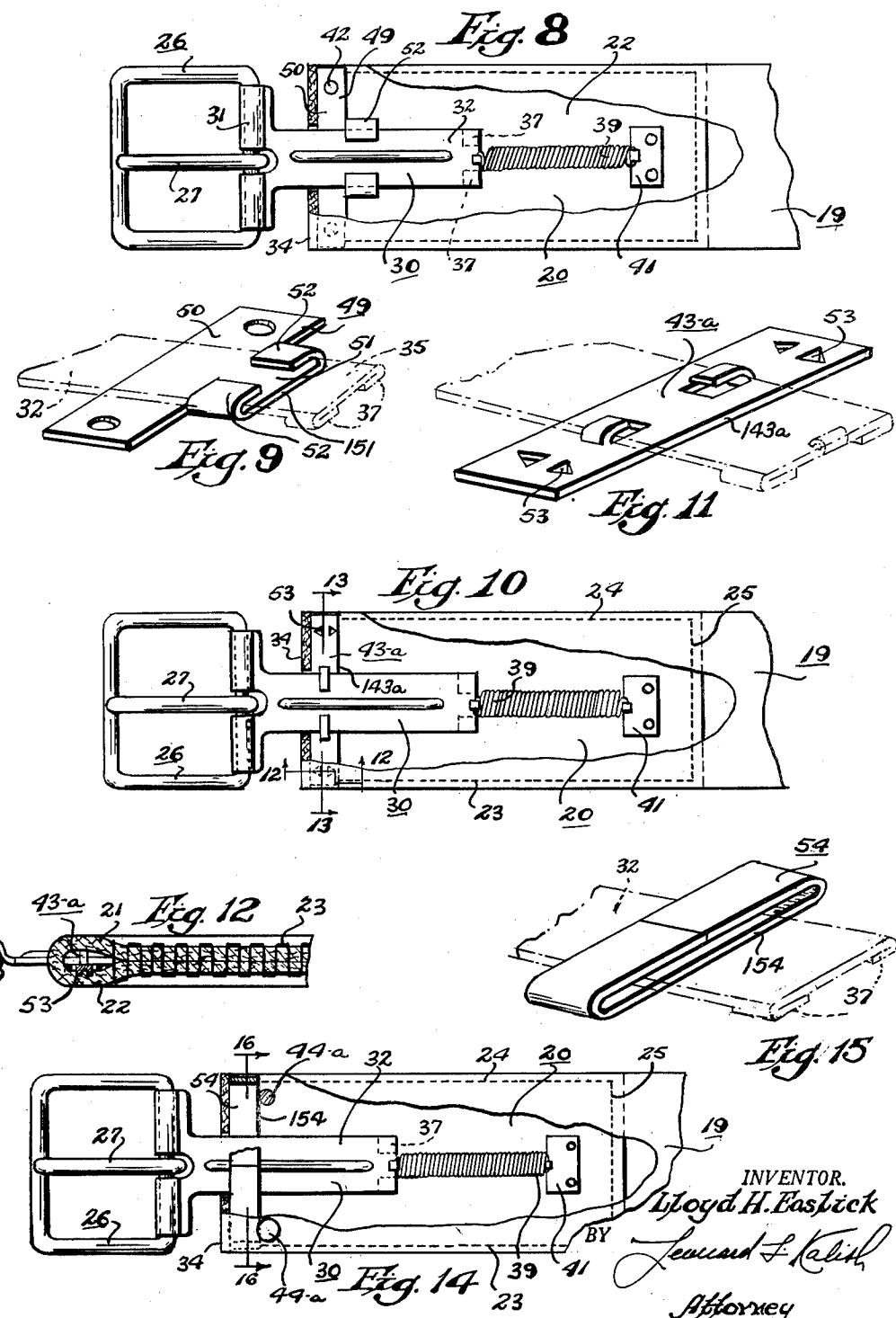
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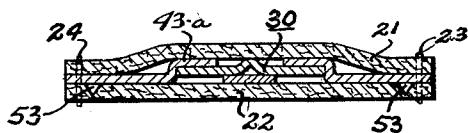


Fig. 13

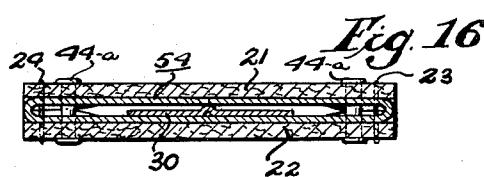


Fig. 16

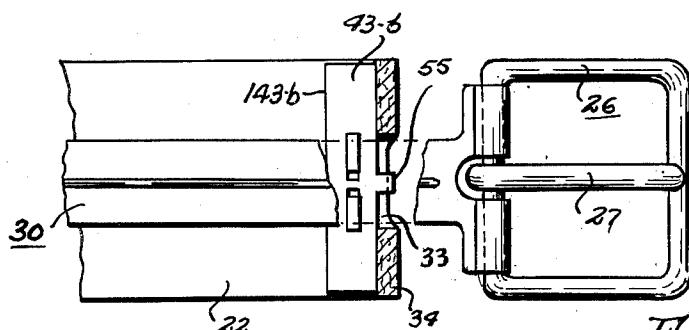


Fig. 17

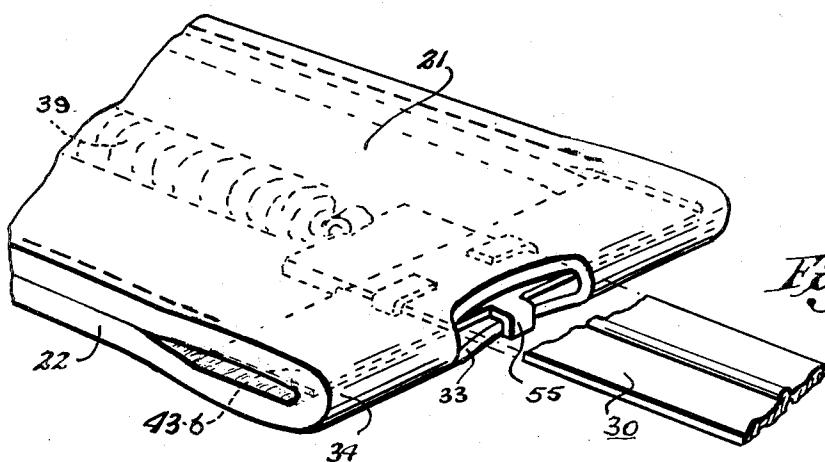


Fig. 18

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,629,104

EXPANSIBLE BELT

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13 Claims. (Cl. 2—322)

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The present invention relates to trouser belts and similar fastening and supporting members for clothing and it relates more particularly to trouser belt constructions wherein the buckle is made resiliently movable relative to the belt to provide greater comfort for the wearer.

An object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved construction for trouser belts and like fastening and supporting members for clothing. Another object of the present invention is to provide a neat, comfortable, inexpensive, dependable and long-lasting construction for a trouser belt or the like wherein the buckle or similar fastening element is made resiliently movable relative to the belt.

Other objects and advantages of the present invention are apparent in the following detailed description, appended claims and accompanying drawings.

It has heretofore been proposed to provide a trouser belt construction wherein the buckle is made resiliently movable relative to the belt so that there is a slight "give" or expansibility to the belt, when worn, thereby providing a greater degree of comfort than is possible with non-resilient belt constructions.

However, none of these prior resilient-buckle belts has proven entirely satisfactory since they are relatively expensive to manufacture and since they provide relatively bulky and clumsy constructions and since they tend to fail upon prolonged use due to inherent shortcomings in the structure.

According to the present invention, there has been developed a trouser belt having a resiliently movable buckle construction which eliminates the shortcomings of the prior-art and which permits an inexpensive construction, much less bulky and neater in appearance, and which is much more dependable and longer-lasting and less prone to fail.

Generally speaking, the present invention comprehends a construction for trouser belts or the like wherein the buckle is pivotally carried by a connector having an elongated thin flat shank passing through a slot formed in a folded or looped end of the belt (which is of flexible material such as leather, synthetic plastic or fabric), the inner end of the shank being connected to a spring tensioning it inwardly; a stop-member of metal or the like being immovably secured within the fold or loop of the belt adjacent the slot to limit the outward movement of the connector member and buckle by providing an abutment for a raised or thickened portion formed adjacent the inner end of the shank.

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For the purpose of illustrating the invention, there are shown in the accompanying drawings forms thereof which are at present preferred, although it is to be understood that the various instrumentalities of which the invention consists can be variously arranged and organized and that the invention is not limited to the precise arrangements and organizations of the instrumentalities as herein shown and described.

10 Referring to the accompanying drawings in which like reference characters indicate like parts throughout:

Figure 1 represents a fragmentary perspective view, on an enlarged scale, showing one embodiment of the present invention with the buckle in partially-extended position; parts being broken away better to reveal the construction thereof.

15 Figure 2 represents an elevational view showing the inner or under side of the embodiment of Figure 1 but with the buckle shown in fully-retracted position; parts being broken away better to reveal the construction thereof.

20 Figure 3 represents a cross-sectional view generally along the line 3—3 of Figure 1 but with the buckle shown in fully-extended position.

25 Figure 4 represents a cross-sectional view generally along the line 4—4 of Figure 1.

Figure 5 represents a cross-sectional view generally along the line 5—5 of Figure 1.

30 Figure 6 represents a cross-sectional view generally along the line 6—6 of Figure 1.

35 Figure 7 represents a cross-sectional view generally like that of Figure 5 but showing a modified form of stop-shoulder construction.

Figure 8 represents a front elevational view of another embodiment of the present invention; parts being broken away better to reveal the construction thereof.

40 Figure 9 represents a perspective view, on an enlarged scale, showing the stop-member and connector-shank of the embodiment of Figure 8.

Figure 10 represents a front elevational view generally like that of Figure 8 but showing still another embodiment of the present invention.

45 Figure 11 represents a perspective view like that of Figure 9 but showing the embodiment of Figure 10.

Figure 12 represents a cross-sectional view generally along the line 12—12 of Figure 10.

50 Figure 13 represents a cross-sectional view generally along the line 13—13 of Figure 10.

Figure 14 represents an elevational view like those of Figures 8 and 10 but showing still a further embodiment of the present invention.

55 Figure 15 represents a perspective view like

those of Figures 9 and 11 but showing the embodiment of Figure 14.

Figure 16 represents a cross-sectional view generally along the line 16-16 of Figure 14.

Figure 17 represents a fragmentary elevational view, generally like that of Figure 8, but showing still another embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 18 represents a fragmentary perspective view on an enlarged scale, of the embodiment of Fig. 17, showing the relationship of the slot, stop-member and connector shank; parts being broken away better to reveal the construction thereof.

In one embodiment of the present invention shown generally in Figures 1-6, I may provide a trouser belt including an elongated strap or belt 19 of leather or fabric or synthetic plastic or other flexible material, one end of which is folded back upon itself to provide a loop or pocket or compartment 20 having a front panel 21 and a rear panel 22 which are sewn together at their upper and lower edges by rows of stitching 23 and 24; a transverse row of stitching 25 closing the end of the loop generally adjacent the free edge of the rear panel 22.

A buckle 26 of generally conventional construction, including a tongue 27 rotatably mounted upon the rear bar or bridge 28 and adapted to bear, with its free end, against the front bar 29 of the buckle 26, is constructed and arranged to be mounted exteriorly of the loop 20 in a manner to be more fully described hereinbelow.

The buckle 26 is rotatably held by one end of 35 a connector member 30 which includes a pair of laterally-spaced curved sleeves 31 constructed and arranged to embrace the rear bar or bridge 28 (on either side of the tongue 27) so as to permit the buckle to pivot relative to the connector member 30.

The connector member, which is preferably integrally formed of metal or the like, also includes a thin flat elongated shank 32 which extends in continuation of the sleeves 31 and passes through a thin transverse slot or opening 33 formed in the central portion of the fold-line 34 of the loop 20 with its inner free end 35 terminating inside the loop 20 which, as indicated particularly in Figure 5, is bulged slightly intermediate the stitching 23 and 24 to provide an inner compartment to receive the shank 32.

The shank 32 (which, as indicated particularly in Figure 6, has a transverse dimension somewhat less than that of the slot 33, so that it can be inserted into the loop through said slot) may be provided with a longitudinally-extending strengthening rib 36 pressed outward therefrom to provide greater rigidity and resistance to bending or twisting.

The inner end 35 of the shank 32 is provided with a pair of integrally-formed rearwardly and centrally bent stop shoulders 37 which serve to increase the thickness or front-to-rear dimension of the end 35 without enlarging its transverse dimension, as indicated particularly in Figures 1, 2 and 5.

Instead, the shoulders may be formed as at 37-a, as shown in Figure 7, in which case they are simply rearwardly extending projections (without being also bent centrally).

The inner end 35 is also provided with an integrally-formed central loop 35-a to which one end of a helical spring 39 is connected. The other end of the helical spring 39 is connected

to a tongue 40 of an attachment plate 41 of metal or the like which is fastened to the rear panel 22 adjacent the innermost end of the loop 20 by a pair of rivets 42.

5 The connector member 30, the spring 39 and the attachment plate 41 are so dimensioned and positioned that the spring normally retains the connector and buckle in the retracted innermost position shown in Figure 2 (wherein the sleeves 31 are closely adjacent the fold-line 34).

It is apparent that, when pull is applied to the buckle 26, it will move away from the fold-line 34 of the loop 20 carrying the connector member 30 to the partially-pulled out position shown in 15 Figure 1, against the retaining action of the spring 39. It is apparent also, that when the pull on the buckle is terminated, the spring 39 will operate to retract the connector member 30 and to return the buckle to its original position, as 20 shown in Figure 2.

In order to limit the outward movement of the connector member and buckle, a relatively strong and rigid stop-member 43 is mounted within the loop 20 adjacent the fold-line 34 in a manner to be more fully described hereinbelow.

The stop-member 43, which is preferably integrally formed of metal or the like, preferably takes the form of a thin, flat plate extending transversely of the loop 20 and passing to the rear of the shank 32. The inner edge 143 of the stop-member 43 forms an abutment portion as will be described hereinbelow. A pair of rivets 44 fasten the stop-member 43 to the rear panel 22 of the loop 20 so that the stop-member is retained in position closely adjacent the fold-line 34, as shown particularly in Figure 3. As indicated particularly in Figures 1, 4 and 6, the stop-member 43 extends transversely substantially beyond the slot 33 and terminates just short of the upper and lower edges of the loop 20; the stitching 23 and 24 preferably terminating somewhat short of the fold-line 34 to accommodate the ends of the stop-member as shown especially in Figure 1.

45 A pair of ears 45 are struck out integrally from the stop-member 43 and are bent frontwardly and centrally so as to overlie and embrace the transverse edges of the shank 32; the ears 45 permitting in-and-out movement of the shank while holding it against lateral or front-to-rear displacement relative to the fold-line 34 and the slot 33.

50 As indicated particularly in Figure 4, the ears 45 maintain the rear or underside of the shank 32 in juxtaposition to the main portion of the stop-member 43.

55 As can be seen particularly in Figures 3 and 5, the rearwardly directed shoulders 37 formed on the inner end 35 of the shank 32 lie in generally the same plane as the stop-member 43 so that they cannot pass beyond the inner edge or abutment portion 143 of the stop-member.

In other words, the outward movement of the buckle and the shank is limited to the point at 60 which the shoulders 37 contact the inner edge or abutment portion 143 of stop-member 43, as indicated in Figure 3.

65 It is apparent that when the trouser belt of the present invention is worn with the other end 43 of the strap 19 positioned through the buckle 26 (with the buckle-tongue 27 inserted into one of the holes 47 formed adjacent the end 46) and inserted within the retaining-loop 48 set into the loop 20 near the inner end thereof, there will be 70 a tendency for the buckle 26 to be pulled out to

some extent due to the fact that a trouser belt is usually worn somewhat tightened. It is a simple matter to adjust the point at which it will "give" under the proper pulling force affording the greatest comfort to the wearer. In other words, the spring should not be too "strong" since this would require the belt to be tightened excessively before the spring-action came into effect and, accordingly, would render the belt uncomfortable.

On the other hand, the spring should not be too "weak" since this would cause the buckle and connector to be pulled all the way out to the fully extended position shown in Figure 3 before the belt is tightened sufficiently to permit it to function properly, so that the resilience would be lost.

Thus, when the belt is worn normally, the buckle and connector are in the partially extended position shown in Figure 1, wherein the spring provides a resilient connection which "gives" with the movements of the wearer to provide maximum comfort.

In assembling the novel trouser belt construction of the present invention, the buckle 26, the connector member 30, the spring 39 and attachment plate 41 are first pre-assembled as a more or less integral unit.

The slot 33 may then be formed transversely along the strap 19 along a line which will subsequently become the fold-line 34. The pre-assembled buckle-connector-spring-attachment plate unit may then be inserted through the slot 33 and the rivets 42 affixed.

The stop-member 43, with its ears 45 in projecting unbent position may then be placed intermediate the shank 32 and the rear panel 22, adjacent the fold-line 34 and the rivets 44 affixed to lock the stop-member in position.

Thereafter the ears 45 are bent into the final position shown in Figures 1 and 4 (wherein they overlap the shank 32) and, as the final assembly step, the rear panel 22 (to which the attachment plate 41 and the stop-member 43 have been attached by the rivets 42 and 44) is brought into juxtaposition with the front panel 21 (thereby encasing the attachment plate 41, spring 39 and shank 32 as well as one-half the retaining loop 48 which has theretofore been positioned so as to encompass the spring 39 and the front panel 21) and the stitching 23, 24 and 25 applied to complete the formation of the closed loop 26. The foregoing method of assembly is purely by way of illustration, it being understood that the manner of assembly can be varied considerably without departing from the spirit of the present invention.

Various modifications of the embodiment of Figures 1-6 are readily apparent.

Thus, the shoulders 37 (or 37-a) could be bent forwardly instead of rearwardly so that they make contact with the ears 45.

Similarly the stop-member 43 could be turned around so that the ears 45 are disposed on the rearward side of the shank 32.

The stop-member 43 could be riveted or otherwise fastened to the front panel 21 (instead of the rear panel) or to both the front and rear panels (in which latter case the rivets 44 would pass through both of the panels of the loop 26 as well as through appropriate openings in the stop-member).

It is also obvious that other kinds of buckles could replace the tongue type buckle 26. Thus, for example, the conventional friction type buckle

(wherein the free end of the strap is frictionally held within the buckle by a corrugated cam-bar or the like) could be employed. Similarly, a hook-and-eye or other quick attachable and detachable connection could be employed.

While particularly well adapted for men's trouser belts, the novel resilient buckle-construction of the present invention can be used equally well for garters, arm-bands, wristwatch-straps, 10 women's belts, etc.

In Figures 8 and 9 there is shown another embodiment of the present invention which generally resembles the embodiment of Figure 1 except in the construction of its stop-member 49.

The stop member 49 is integrally formed from a strip of sheet-metal or the like, and includes a transversely extending fastening element or bar 50 constructed and arranged to be fastened within the loop 20 adjacent the fold-line 34 thereof by rivets 42 extending through the rear panel 22 (in the same manner described hereinabove in connection with the embodiment of Figure 1) and also includes an inwardly-disposed collar-portion 51 having bent over ears 52 constructed and arranged to fit over the side edges of the shank 32 so as to hold the connector member 39 against transverse displacement and front-to-rear displacement while permitting it to slide in-and-out relative to the loop 20.

As can be seen particularly in Figure 9, the shoulders 37 formed on the inner end 35 of the shank 32 strike the continuous under side or abutment portion 51 of the collar-portion 51 so as to limit the outward movement of the connector member.

While, in Figures 8 and 9, the fastening bar 50 is shown as disposed on the rear or under side of the shank 32 with the ears 52 extending on the outer or upper side of the shank, it is obvious that this could be reversed and that the fastening bar 50 could be disposed on the front side of the shank with the ears 52 extending on the rear side thereof. In such case, the shoulders 37 on the inner end 35 of the shank 32 may be bent so that they lie on the outer side rather than the inner side so as again to contact the continuous side of the collar portion 51 (which has somewhat greater strength than the ears 52).

In Figures 10-13 there is shown still another embodiment of the present invention which generally resembles the embodiment of Figure 1 except that, in place of the rivets 42, the stop-member 43-a is provided with integrally-formed teeth or prongs 53 struck out adjacent the ends of the stop-member and protruding generally rearwardly and into the leather of the rear panel 22 so as to anchor the stop-member 43-a to the panel 22.

The fastening provided by the teeth 53 is supplemented by the stitching 23 and 24 which terminate closely adjacent the inner edge of the stop-member 43-a and which thereby not only offer additional resistance to inward displacement of the stop-member but also assist in retaining the stop-member closely adjacent the rear panel 22 so as to prevent the teeth or prongs 53 from pulling out of the leather of the panel 22.

Indeed, the teeth 53 (as well as the rivets of the other embodiments herein discussed) can be omitted entirely and the stitching 23 and 24 can be relied on to maintain the stop-member in position adjacent the fold-line of the loop 26.

The inner edge or abutment portion 43-a of the stop-member 43-a serves to limit the outward movement of the stop-shoulders 37 in the manner

described above in connection with the embodiment of Figure 1.

In Figures 14-16 there is shown still a further embodiment of the present invention wherein the stop-member 54 takes the form of a flattened loop of metal or the like disposed in a generally transverse plane and encircling the shank 32 with relatively slight front-to-rear clearance so that the stop-shoulders 37 of the shank 32 strike the inner edge or abutment portion 154 of the stop-member to limit outward movement of the connector member 30.

In this embodiment, a pair of rivets 44-a pass through both the front panel 21 and the rear panel 22 directly inward of the inner edge of the stop-member thereby to retain it against displacement from adjacent the fold-line 34.

As in the embodiment of Figure 10 described above, the lines of stitching 23 and 24 run up to the stop-member 54 and serve as additional retaining means.

It is apparent, of course, that rivets like those of Figure 1 could be employed to connect the stop-member 54 to only the rear panel 22. It is also apparent that rivets 44-a passing through both the front and rear panels of the loop 20 could be employed with the embodiments discussed hereinabove (in place of the rivets 44 or the teeth 53).

In Figures 17 and 18 there is shown still a further embodiment of the present invention which generally resembles that of Figure 1 except that the stop-member 43-b (instead of being riveted to the rear panel 22) is provided with a rearwardly bent locking-nose 55 formed at the center of its outer edge. The locking-nose 55 is adapted to be inserted within the slot 33 in the fold-line 34 so that its rearmost tip protrudes outwardly and rearwardly beyond the edge of said slot thereby to prevent inward movement of the stop-member 43-b.

The installation of the embodiment of Figures 17 and 18 is somewhat simplified since riveting of the stop-member to the rear panel is eliminated and, instead, the locking of the stop-member in position is accomplished simply by manually pulling the buckle outward to its limit whereupon the stop-shoulders 37 contact the inner edge or abutment portion 143-b and force the stop-member outwardly until the locking-nose 55 clears the slot 33 and locks in position, as described above. Thereafter, release of the buckle will return the connector member to its retracted position but will not disturb the locked outermost position of the stop-member.

The novel construction of the present invention affords several important advantages over constructions heretofore employed.

Thus, in order to permit assembly of the connector member relative to the belt-loop, it is necessary to make the slot sufficiently large to permit the inner end of the connector shank to be inserted therethrough during assembly.

It has been found that even with the retaining shoulders heretofore proposed on the inner end of the connector member, the flexibility of the strap has sometimes permitted the connector member to be pulled out all the way through the slot so that the end of the retaining springs protrudes. This, of course, is highly undesirable since it prevents the buckle from snapping back to the retracted position and since it is unsightly and uncomfortable.

By the construction of the present invention, on the other hand, the non-flexible stop-member

of metal or the like provides a positive stop beyond which the inner end of the shank of the connector member cannot be pulled.

Additionally, the use of the fabric at the fold-line of the belt loop to stop the outward movement of the connector member has resulted in relatively great strain and wear upon the belt material at the fold-line and, as a result, the belt has sometimes worn through completely after 10 prolonged use so as to cause it to fail.

The novel stop-member of the present invention completely eliminates this abnormal wear on the fabric at the fold-line.

Resilient-buckle constructions have heretofore 15 usually employed two transversely-spaced retaining springs to minimize the impact of the inner end of the connector member upon the leather or other material of the belt at the fold-line.

According to the present invention, it has been found that a single retaining spring can provide the proper degree of tension, since the metal stop-member precludes the possibility of injury to the belt material at the fold-line thereof.

This, of course, permits a substantial saving in 20 the cost of constructing the novel resilient-buckle belt of the present invention, as compared to the two-spring construction heretofore employed.

In addition, the use of a single centered spring provides a much less bulky and much neater appearance than in the case of constructions which 30 require two side-by-side springs. That is, since the front-to-rear bulkiness of the shank and spring of the present invention is confined to the center zone of the loop 20, it is apparent that the 35 loop can be made to taper greatly from the center toward the upper and lower edges whereas, when two side-by-side springs are employed, the center zone of bulkiness must necessarily be correspondingly larger.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential attributes thereof, and it is therefore desired that the present embodiments be considered in all respects as illustrative and 45 not restrictive, reference being had to the appended claims rather than to the foregoing description to indicate the scope of the invention.

Having thus described my invention, I claim as new and desire to protect by Letters Patent:

1. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot and having a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position 55 within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, and a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank.

2. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one

end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, an enlarged stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, and a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-disposed element constructed and arranged to guide said shank so as to permit only in-and-out movement thereof relative to said slot and including an abutment portion disposed in alignment with said stop-shoulder, and a fastening element positively securing each end of said stop member to the material of said belt.

3. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, an enlarged stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-disposed element constructed and arranged to guide said shank so as to permit only in-and-out movement thereof relative to said slot and including an abutment portion disposed in alignment with said stop-shoulder, and a bent locking-nose formed at the outer edge of said stop-member and constructed and arranged to protrude from said slot in locking relationship with the slot-defining edge of one of the compartment-forming panels.

4. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, an enlarged stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said

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buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-disposed element constructed and arranged to guide said shank so as to permit only in-and-out movement thereof relative to said slot and including an abutment portion disposed in alignment with said stop-shoulder, and a rivet fastening each end of said stop-member to one of the panels of said compartment.

5. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, an enlarged stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-disposed element constructed and arranged to guide said shank so as to permit only in-and-out movement thereof relative to said slot and including an abutment portion disposed in alignment with said stop-shoulder, and a fastening element positively securing each end of said stop member to the material of said belt.

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arranged to engage with at least one of the panels of said compartment so as to maintain said stop-member closely adjacent the outer end thereof.

7. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot and having a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, and a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a thin flat element extending across the compartment and terminating adjacent the longitudinal edges of said compartment and beyond the peripheral stitching thereof whereby said stitching prevents inward movement of said stop-member relative to said compartment.

8. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, said stop-shoulder having a larger front-to-rear dimension than the remainder of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a thin flat transversely-extending element disposed generally in juxtaposition to said shank and constructed and arranged to embrace at least the peripheral edges of said shank thereby to limit said shank to in-and-out movement relative to said slot, said stop-member having an abutment portion disposed generally in alignment with the stop-shoulder thereby to act as a stop for the outward movement of said stop-shoulder, and fastening means constructed and arranged to retain said stop-member closely adjacent the outer end of said compartment.

9. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a con-

nector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, said stop-shoulder having a larger front-to-rear dimension than the remainder of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, 10 said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within 15 said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a thin flat transversely-disposed loop encircling said shank and providing an abutment portion for the stop-shoulder and fastening means for maintaining said loop closely adjacent the outer end of said compartment.

25 10. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, said stop-shoulder having a larger front-to-rear dimension than the remainder of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said 30 compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within 35 said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-extending plate disposed in juxtaposition to said shank and having a pair of integrally-formed ears overlying the lateral edges of said shank and limiting said shank to sliding in-and-out movement relative to said stop-member and 40 said slot, said stop-member having an abutment portion disposed in alignment with the stop-shoulder and means constructed and arranged to fasten said stop-member adjacent the outer end of said compartment.

55 11. A resilient and expansible garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, said stop-shoulder having a larger front-to-rear dimension than the remainder of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said 60 compartment, said spring being constructed and 65

arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-extending plate disposed in juxtaposition to said shank and having a pair of integrally-formed ears overlying the lateral edges of said shank and limiting said shank to sliding in-and-out movement relative to said stop member and said slot, said stop-member having an abutment portion disposed in alignment with the stop-shoulder, and a pair of rivets passing through said stop-member adjacent the ends thereof and permanently connecting it to one of the panels of said compartment.

12. A resilient and expandable garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, said stop-shoulder having a larger front-to-rear dimension than the remainder of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-extending plate disposed in juxtaposition to said shank and having a pair of integrally-formed ears overlying the lateral edges of said shank and limiting said shank to sliding in-and-out movement relative to said stop member and said slot, said stop-member having an abutment portion disposed in alignment with the stop-shoulder, and a bent locking-nose formed at the outer edge of said stop-member and constructed and arranged to protrude through said slot in inter-

engaging relationship with the edge of one of said panels of the belt compartment so as to prevent inward movement of said stop-member.

13. A resilient and expandable garment supporter or the like comprising a flexible belt having a generally enclosed longitudinal compartment including a pair of juxtaposed panels at one end of said belt, said compartment having a slot formed in the outer end thereof, a connector member having a thin flat shank extending through said slot, a stop-shoulder formed at the inner end of said shank, said stop-shoulder having a larger front-to-rear dimension than the remainder of said shank, a buckle pivotally mounted at the outer end of said connector member, a helical spring connected at one end to the inner end of said shank and secured at the other end adjacent the inner end of said compartment, said spring being constructed and arranged normally to retain said shank in generally retracted position within said compartment but to yield under a pull applied to said buckle, a stop-member of metal or the like fastened within said compartment generally adjacent the outer end thereof and constructed and arranged to cooperate with said stop-shoulder so as to limit the outward movement of said shank, said stop-member comprising a transversely-extending plate disposed in juxtaposition to said shank and having a pair of integrally-formed ears overlying the lateral edges of said shank and limiting said shank to sliding in-and-out movement relative to said stop member and said slot, said stop-member having an abutment portion disposed in alignment with the stop-shoulder, and a plurality of locking teeth integrally struck out of said stop member adjacent the ends thereof and constructed and arranged to engage with at least one of the panels of said compartment so as to maintain said stop-member closely adjacent the outer end.

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