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HANDLE FOR LUGGAGE, OR THE LIKE

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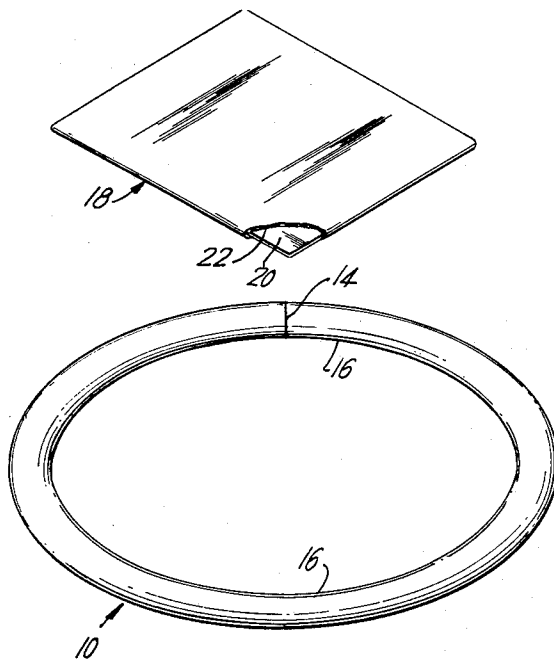


FIG. 1

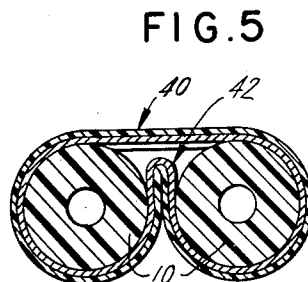


FIG. 5

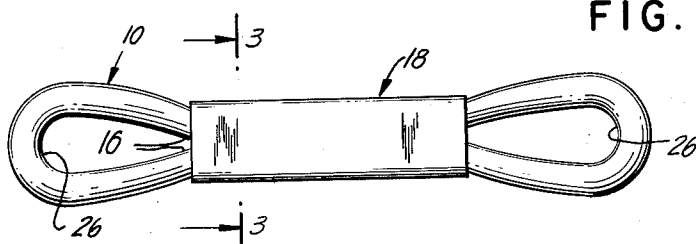


FIG. 2

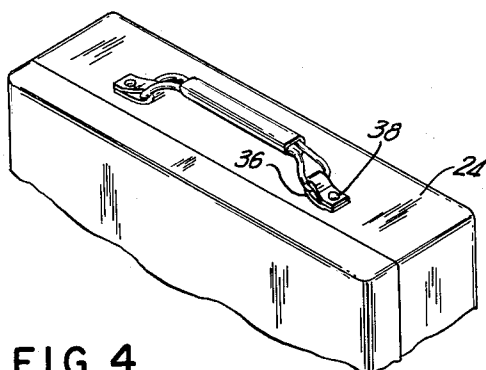


FIG. 4

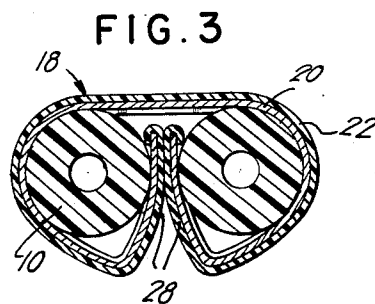


FIG. 3

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3,243,020
HANDLE FOR LUGGAGE, OR THE LIKE
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The present invention relates to a handle and, more particularly, to a handle especially adapted for use upon articles of luggage.

It is a primary object of the present invention to provide a handle, of the character described, which is of greatly simplified construction and may, therefore, be produced in a minimum of time and with a minimum of hand labor and, therefore, with relatively great economy.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a handle, of the character described, which is devoid of any sewn seams and is, therefore, without any protruding ridges that may and frequently do cause discomfort and pain to the carrying hand.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a handle, of the character described, which is strong and durable and relatively easy to install.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide a handle, of the character described, which is of pleasing and ornamental appearance.

Generally stated, the present invention relates to the type of handle that is formed of an annulus formed of a strip of relatively rigid bendable material which is compressed along a diameter thereof to bring opposed portions of the annulus into juxtaposed position and held in such position, leaving loops at each end that engage within cooperating loops or ears secured on the article of luggage. Whereas heretofore the juxtaposed portions of the handles have been held in place to form a grip, by a sleeve formed of a strip of pliable material whose longitudinal edges were sewn together in a manner to leave a protruding ridged seam, the present invention eliminates the sewing and the resulting ridge, and engages and holds the juxtaposed annulus portions or grip by means of a plate formed of dead-bend material, which is curved around the top and sides of the juxtaposed annulus portions and whose marginal edge portions are re-entrantly bent and extended between the juxtaposed annulus portions on the underside, to thereby provide a grip portion for the handle that has a continuous, relatively smooth, non-protruding and non-irritating surface.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is an exploded, isometric view of a handle embodying the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a plan view of the complete, assembled handle of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a section taken on line 2—2 of FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary, perspective view, showing the handle of FIG. 2 as attached to an article of luggage; and

FIG. 5 is a view similar to that of FIG. 3 of a modified embodiment of the invention.

Referring now in greater detail to the accompanying drawings, and with particular reference to FIGS. 1 to 3 thereof, the same show a handle comprising an annular body, generally designated as 10, formed of a rod-like, preferably bendable, rigid material. Such body may be preformed in annulus shape or may be formed from a rod-like section of stiff but bendable material whose ends may be secured or held in abutment, as illustrated at 14. A preferred material for the annular body 10 may comprise a section of thick-walled, preferably cylindrical tubing, formed of rubber or similar dense plastic material whose ends may be fused together to form an annulus.

Diametrically opposed sections 16 of the annular body

10 may be brought together into juxtaposed position and held in such position by a grip-forming member, generally designated as 18, which may comprise a substantially rectangular plate of sheet material having dead-bend characteristics, as of metal, such as sheet metal 20, which may preferably be coated with a fabric 22 or similar coating which may match in color and texture the surface of the article of luggage, or the like 24 with which it is to be used. The plate 18 may have one of its dimensions sufficiently large to accommodate the palm of a hand to form a handle grip and its other dimension sufficiently large to wrap around the juxtaposed sections 16 of the annulus 10 between the loops 26 resulting on each side of sections 16 and to have marginal edge portions 28 remaining which may be inwardly re-entrantly bent between the juxtaposed sections 16, whereby the grip-forming plate 18 holds such juxtaposed annulus sections fixedly in place and the latter is securely held in place over the annulus sections 16.

The handle of the invention may be secured in place upon the article of luggage 24 or the like in the conventional manner, namely, by engaging loops 26 at each end thereof in ears or loops 36, secured, in any desired manner, as by rivets or staples 38 to the article 24. It will be clear that the handle is secured in place with the space between the marginal portions 28 of plate 18 facing downwardly, so that when the grip section 18 is engaged by the hand, the tendency will be to push portions 28 inwardly, between annulus sections 16, so as to push sections 16 more tightly together and inhibit their separation.

In the embodiment of FIG. 5, instead of utilizing a plate, such as 18, the grip is formed instead by a section of tubing 40 which is of a diameter greater than required to accommodate the juxtaposed annulus sections 16, through which the flattened annuli may be pressed to have the end loops, such as 26, project from each end thereof. The tubing section 40 may then be indented, by a suitable tool, at a point opposite the space between annulus sections 16, so that the resulting fold 42 is extended between the annulus sections 16 to hold them tightly in juxtaposed relation and to form a handle grip. It may here be stated that the tubing 40 may be of dead-bend metal and may be coated with fabric or plastic material on the exterior, such as shown at 22, or it may be formed of a thermoplastic material that may be heated and softened to form the fold 42 and then cooled to set rigidly into shape. It may here also be stated that, in the last form of grip tubing 40, the plastic material may be inherently formed in the desired color to eliminate the need for applying an exterior decorative layer.

This completes the description of the handle of the present invention and of the method by which it is formed. It will be readily apparent that such handle is formed of easily and economically prepared parts which may be assembled in a single, rapid operation by means of a relatively simple apparatus, the nature of which will be apparent to any one skilled in the art, which does not require skill or training in its operation. It will also be apparent that the handle of the present invention eliminates all sewing operations heretofore required for the formation of handles of the prior art. It will additionally be apparent that the handle of the present invention affords maximum comfort to the hand and is of pleasing and attractive appearance.

It will be further apparent that numerous variations and modifications may be made in the handle of the present invention by anyone skilled in the art, in accordance with the principles of the invention hereinabove set forth, without the exercise of any inventive ingenuity. I desire, therefore, to be protected for any and all such variations and modifications that may be made within

the spirit of the invention and the scope of the claims hereto appended.

What I claim is:

1. A handle for an article of luggage, or the like, comprising an annular strip of material having diametrically opposed sections thereof disposed in juxtaposed relation; a plate of dead-bend material bent around said juxtaposed sections of said annulus, said plate having end portions re-entrantly bent in juxtaposed relation and disposed between said juxtaposed annulus sections.

2. A handle for an article of luggage, or the like, comprising a strip of material having its ends disposed in abutment to form an annulus, said annulus having its marginal end portions juxtaposed to a diametrically opposed section thereof, and a plate of dead-bend material bent around said juxtaposed portions of said annulus, said plate having marginal edge portions re-entrantly bent in juxtaposed relation to one another and disposed between said juxtaposed sections of said annulus.

3. The handle of claim 2, wherein said strip of material is stiffly bendable.

4. The handle of claim 2, wherein said stiffly bendable material comprises a thick-walled tubing of resiliently flexible material.

5. The handle of claim 2, wherein said sheet of dead-bend material comprises a sheet metal plate.

6. The handle of claim 5, wherein a coat of fabric is applied to the outer surface of said sheet metal plate.

7. The method for forming a handle for articles of luggage, or the like, of the character described, which comprises the steps of forming an annulus of stiffly bendable material, pressing diametrically opposed sections of said annulus in juxtaposed relation, wrapping a plate of dead-bend material around said juxtaposed sections, and bending marginal edge portions of said plate re-entrantly between said juxtaposed annulus sections.

8. The method of claim 7, including the step of coat-

ing the exterior surface of said plate with a layer of decorative fabric.

9. The method for forming a handle for an article of luggage, or the like, which comprises the steps of bending a strip of stiffly-bendable material to bring its ends into abutment with one another to form an annulus, pressing the marginal end portions of said bent strip against a diametrically opposed section of said annulus, wrapping the plate of dead-bend material around said juxtaposed sections, and bending marginal edge portions of said plate re-entrantly between said juxtaposed annulus sections.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said strip of material comprises a thick-walled tube of resiliently flexible material, and including the step of sewing said ends to one another in abutting relation.

11. A handle for an article of luggage, or the like, comprising a strip of material arranged in annulus shape, said annulus having diametrically opposed sections thereof disposed in juxtaposed relation to one another, and a flat-surfaced rigid member wrapped around said juxtaposed annulus sections, said member having portions thereof re-entrantly bent and disposed between said juxtaposed annulus sections.

12. The handle of claim 11, wherein said rigid member comprises a plate and said re-entrantly bent portions comprise marginal portions of opposed edges of said plate.

13. The handle of claim 11, wherein said rigid member comprises a tube and wherein said re-entrantly bent portions comprise an axially extending indentation formed in said tube opposite the space between said juxtaposed annulus sections.

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FRANKLIN T. GARRETT, *Primary Examiner*.