

Dec. 10, 1968

R. E. TOMCHIN

3,415,079

PENDANT JEWELRY

Filed Aug. 16, 1966

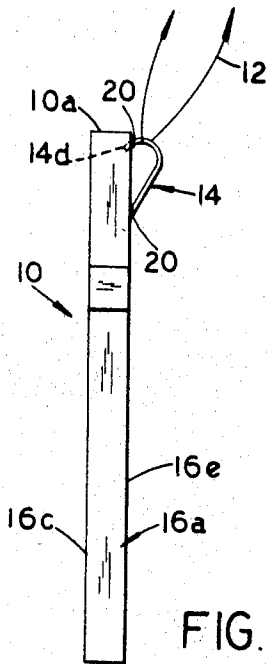


FIG. 2

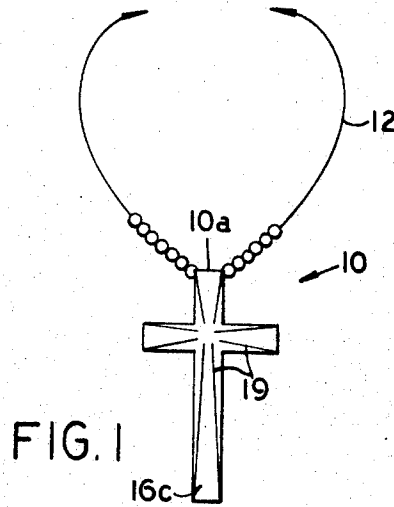


FIG. 1

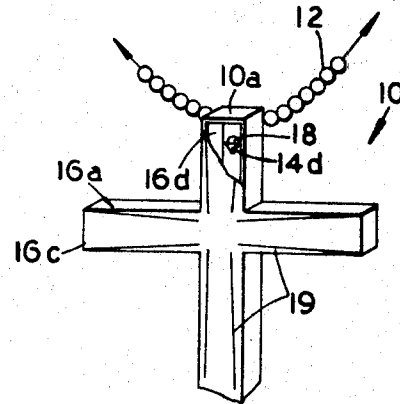


FIG. 4

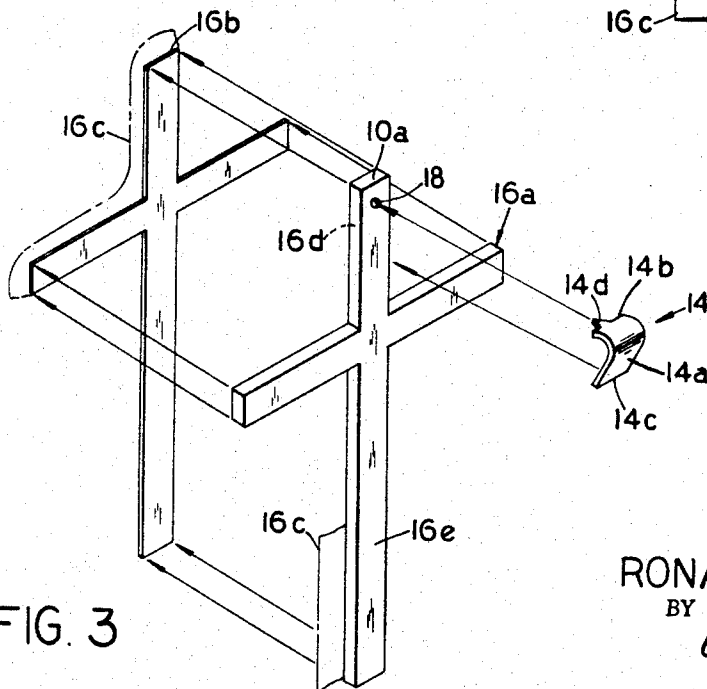


FIG. 3

INVENTOR.
RONALD E. TOMCHIN
BY
Amster & Rokstein
ATTORNEYS

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PENDANT JEWELRY

Ronald E. Tomchin, Valley Stream, N.Y., assignor to Philips Mfg. Co., Brooklyn, N.Y., a partnership of New York

Filed Aug. 16, 1966, Ser. No. 572,812

3 Claims. (Cl. 63—23)

The present invention relates generally to improvements in jewelry, and more particularly to improvements in articles of pendant jewelry including religious crosses, lockets and the like.

In the manufacture of pendant articles of jewelry it is necessary to provide a simple and convenient means for suspending the article from a chain or other neck-encircling support. The usual practice is to construct the article out of a stamped shell and top, with the shell imparting the body to the article and the top providing the requisite ornamentation as by hand engraving, etching, embossing, or the like. The shell and top are usually soldered together and, after trimming, a bail is secured to the article by a ring. Conventionally, the ring is soldered to the completed article, usually at the upper end thereof, and the bail, which initially is an open-ended ring of formed metal, is engaged through the ring, closed and soldered. The completed article thus includes the article proper (i.e. the cross, locket, etc.) with the ring and bail exposed thereabove. The exposed ring and bail detract from the appearance of the article although they are functionally required for suspending the article. Also, it is not infrequent for the suspended article to twist or flip over in a conventional construction as just described.

It is desirable to be able to suspend an article of jewelry, such as a cross, in a manner such that the suspending means are essentially hidden from view, to thereby avoid detracting the eye of the observer from the central motif of the article of jewelry. The design integrity and proportions and the aesthetics of the suspended cross are also somewhat lost by the relatively unsightly exposed bail and mounting ring. Also, in some instances the proportions of the article, i.e. a cross, are elongated due to the presence of the mounting ring and bail above the upright or long arm of the cross, with a corresponding adverse effect on the appearance of the article.

Broadly, it is an object of the present invention to provide improvements in pendant jewelry overcoming the foregoing and other shortcomings of the prior art. Specifically, it is an object to provide an article of pendant jewelry wherein the need for securing a bail above the article by a mounting ring is avoided, yet provision is made for achieving the functional requirements of a bail without detracting from the appearance of the article. A still further object is to provide an improved article of pendant jewelry wherein a bail is formed by a finding which is secured to the backside of the article in a position where it is comparatively hidden from view, yet achieves the functional requirement of providing a suspending means for the article.

An article of pendant jewelry demonstrating objects and features of the present invention includes a body having a shell and a top, the shell in turn including a rear wall having at least one aperture formed therein. There is provided a finding which, according to one preferred embodiment hereof, has opposite free ends and is shaped to cooperate with the rear wall of the body shell so as to form a bail for the article. The finding additionally includes an alignment projection at one end which is received and secured in place within the aperture while the other end thereon is appropriately secured directly to the rear wall. Thus, the finding effectively serves a bail

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through which the usual chain is threaded so that the article may be worn in a suspended position from about the neck of the wearer, and wherein further the position of the finding is such that its presence is effectively masked by the article itself thereby contributing to an improved appearance to the article.

The above brief description, as well as further objects, features and advantages of the present invention, will be more fully appreciated by reference to the following detailed description of a presently preferred, but nonetheless illustrative embodiment in accordance with the present invention, when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of an article of pendant jewelry;

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of the article illustrating the improved bail thereof according to the present inventions;

FIG. 3 is an exploded perspective view of the component parts of the article and illustrates detailed structural features of the bail; and

FIG. 4 is a partial perspective view, on an enlarged scale, of the article in which the top of the body thereof is partially broke away to better illustrate the manner in which the bail is secured to the body.

Reference is now made to the drawings wherein there is shown a typical article of pendant jewelry 10 exemplified by the religious cross illustrated herein. As is generally understood, an article of pendant jewelry such as the article 10 is adapted to be worn suspended from a chain 12 which in turn is worn about the neck of the wearer. As is further understood, the article 10 includes appropriate structure serving as a bail, herein generally designated 14, through which the chain 12 is threaded so that the article 10 can be worn suspended from the wearer's neck. An essential feature of the present invention is the location of the bail 14 in a substantially masked position rearwardly of the article 10 so as not to detract from the appearance thereof. This is in contrast to and a vast improvement over the conventional use of a ring soldered to the upper wall 10a of the article 10 to which a conventional type bail is attached in linking the supporting chain to the article.

Turning now more particularly to the structural details of a typical article of pendant jewelry 10, the same as best shown in FIG. 3, typically include a die-stamped shell 16a and a die-stamped top 16b of a corresponding shape and size to mate with the shell 16a to form the body 16 of the article 10. At an early stage in manufacture, both the shell 16a and top 16b have excess metal 16c about the periphery (shown in phantom perspective in FIG. 3) which is trimmed after these parts are appropriately joined to each other by soldering or the like. Thus, the resulting body 16 is a hollow element formed by soldering the top 16b within the front opening 16d of the shell 16a, and wherein the visible surface of the top 16b, as is shown in FIG. 4, includes decorative markings 19 produced by hand engraving, etching or a similar process to provide a decorative appearance to the article 10.

Additionally contributing to a favorable and pleasing appearance to the article 10 is the provision of the bail 14 in accordance with the present invention. More particularly, as best shown in FIGS. 3, 4, during the die-stamping of the shell 16a there is provided a positioning aperture 18 adjacent the upper end of the shell rear wall 16e. The bail 14, which in a preferred embodiment as illustrated herein, is preferably a finding having an appropriately shaped body 14a and terminating in opposite free ends 14b and 14c. On the upper free end 14b there is further provided a positioning projection 14d of an appropriate size and extent which permits projecting the

same through the positioning aperture 18. Thus, after completion of the assembly of the body 16, the proper position of the shaped finding 14a on the rear wall 16e is assured by interfitting of the cooperating projection 14d and aperture 18. Once this proper position is achieved, permanent securement of the bail 14 to the article 10 is next achieved by soldering the opposite ends of the shaped body 14a to the rear wall 16e, as at the locations 20 as shown in FIG. 2.

In the illustrated embodiment of the bail 14, the open side of the shaped body 14a thereof is functionally replaced by the section of the rear wall 16e extending between the opposite ends 14b and 14c in order to form a complete enclosure which is necessary for a bail structure. Alternatively, however, the finding 14a can be formed without an open side and as a complete enclosing structure in and of itself. In any event, all embodiments of an appropriate finding 14a include a locating projection, such as is exemplified by the projection 14d, which cooperates with the location aperture 18, and which is mounted rearwardly of the article 10 in the manner as described herein. Additionally, to take full advantage of the improved appearance which is provided the article 10 by the improved bail structure, all embodiments of the finding 14a will be understood to be of a width which is slightly less than the width of the rear wall 16e of the shell 16a so that the mounted position of this element is completely masked by the body 16, as clearly shown in FIG. 1.

A latitude of modification change and substitution is intended in the foregoing disclosure and in some instances some features of the invention will be employed without a corresponding use of other features. Accordingly, it is appropriate that the appended claims be construed broadly

and in a manner consistent with the spirit and scope of the invention herein.

What is claimed is:

1. As an article of manufacture, an article of pendant jewelry including a body having a shell and top, said shell including a rear wall having at least one aperture formed therein and a finding having opposite free ends shaped to cooperate with said rear wall to form a bail, said finding including an alignment projection at one end thereof received within said aperture and means securing said projection within said aperture and securing the other end of said finding to said rear wall.

2. An article of pendant jewelry as defined in claim 1 wherein said body of said article is of a width of a predetermined extent and said shaped body of said finding is of a corresponding width such that the presence of such finding in said supported position on the body rear wall is masked by said body.

3. An article of pendant jewelry as defined in claim 2 wherein said aperture is located adjacent the upper end of the rear wall of said body and said projection on the shaped body of said finding is secured therein and said other end of said shaped body of the finding is secured directly to said rear wall below said aperture.

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LOUIS G. MANCENE, *Primary Examiner*.

G. E. McNEILL, *Assistant Examiner*.