March 5, 1957 M. F. McQUEARY 2,783,536

KNIFE AND SHEATH WITH LATCH MEANS

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Fig. 1.

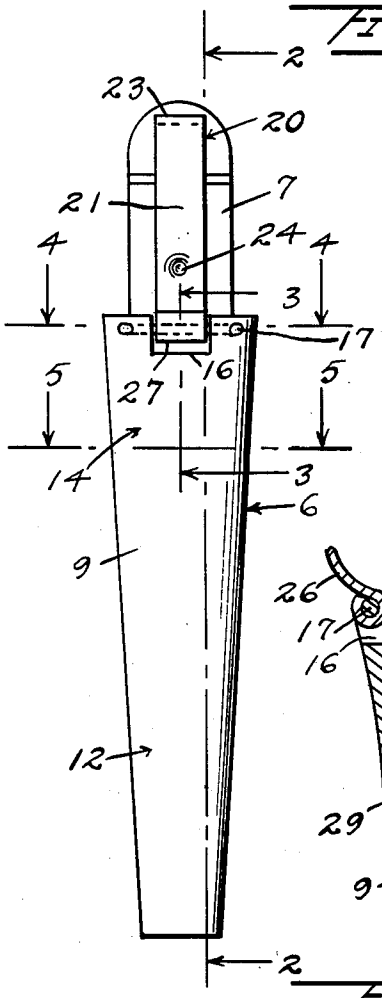
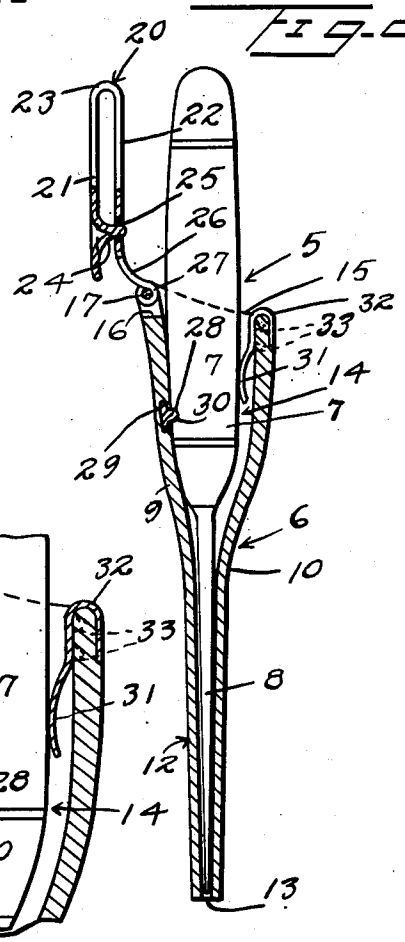


Fig. 2.



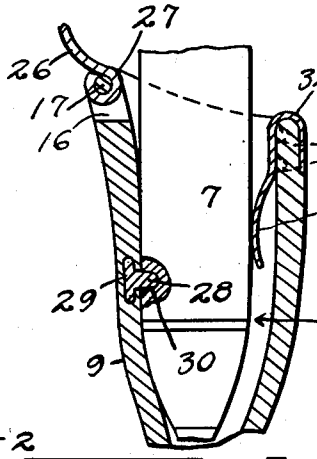


Fig. 3.

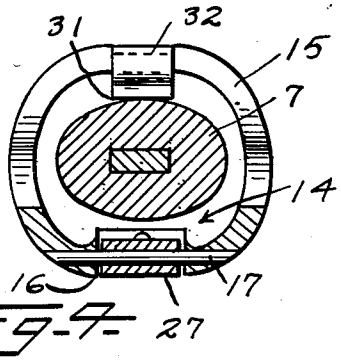
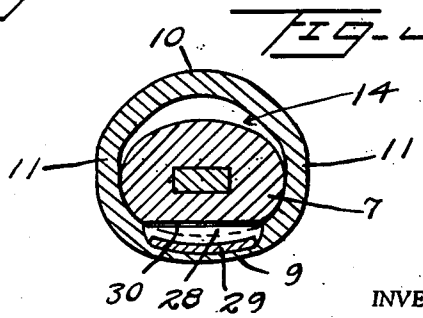


Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.



INVENTOR

M. F. McQueary

BY John N. Randolph

ATTORNEY

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KNIFE AND SHEATH WITH LATCH MEANS

Milton F. McQueary, Delta, Utah, assignor of one-half to James M. Boast, Vernal, Utah

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2 Claims. (Cl. 30—151)

This invention relates to a novel means for latching a knife in a sheath or scabbard to effectively prevent accidental removal of the knife from the sheath or scabbard and which is so constructed that the knife can be readily removed by merely grasping the knife handle without a separate operation involving the releasing of a latch.

Another object of the invention is to provide a latch means which is so constructed that the knife can be readily returned to a position within the sheath or scabbard and will be automatically latched against accidental removal.

More particularly, it is an aim of the present invention to provide a novel latch for retaining a knife in a sheath or scabbard and wherein the knife is automatically unlatched by the handle thereof being displaced slightly away from the body of the wearer, preparatory to withdrawing the knife from the sheath.

Still a further object of the invention is to provide a novel latch means for retaining a knife in a sheath and which will enable the knife to be removed from the sheath as quickly as knives which are not latched in their sheaths, and which may be as quickly and easily returned to a latched position in the sheath.

Various other objects and advantages of the invention will hereinafter become more fully apparent from the following description of the drawing, illustrating a presently preferred embodiment thereof, and wherein:

Figure 1 is a rear elevational view of the knife and sheath;

Figure 2 is a longitudinal sectional view taken substantially along a plane as indicated by the line 2—2 of Figure 1 and showing the knife in edge elevation;

Figure 3 is an enlarged fragmentary longitudinal sectional view, taken substantially along a plane as indicated by the line 3—3 of Figure 1, and showing the knife in elevation;

Figure 4 is an enlarged detailed cross sectional view, taken substantially along a plane as indicated by the line 4—4 of Figure 1, and

Figure 5 is an enlarged cross sectional view, taken substantially along a plane as indicated by the line 5—5 of Figure 1.

Referring more specifically to the drawing, 5 designates generally a knife and 6 designates generally a sheath or scabbard for the knife 5. The knife 5 is of the type used by sportsmen such as hunters and fishermen and includes a handle 7 and a blade 8. The blade 8 is fixed to and extends from an end of the handle 7.

The sheath 6 is preferably formed of a substantially rigid material, preferably being molded from plastic, but may be formed of wood or other suitable material. The sheath or scabbard 6 includes an inner or rear wall 9 and an outer or front wall 10. The walls 9 and 10 are integrally joined by rounded longitudinal edge portions 11 of the sheath 6, as best seen in Figure 5. The walls 9 and 10 have lower portions disposed relatively close together to form a bottom portion of the sheath, designated generally 12, which is sized to relatively snugly receive the blade 8. The lower end 13 of the sheath 6 is open, as seen in Figure 2, to permit the drainage of moisture and the escape of dirt or other foreign matter from the lower sheath portion 12.

The upper portions of the walls 9 and 10 are spaced apart a greater distance than the lower portions of said walls to define an upper sheath portion 14 which is relatively large to accommodate the lower part of the handle 7, the upper part of which projects upwardly from the open upper end 15 of the sheath, when the knife 5 is in a fully applied position as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

The upper end of the rear wall 9 extends somewhat above the level of the upper end of the front wall 10 and is provided with an upwardly opening notch 16. A pin 17 extends lengthwise through the notch 16 and has its ends anchored in the wall 9 beyond the ends of said notch 16.

A belt loop 20 for supporting the sheath 6 and knife 5 is preferably formed of a strip of spring steel bent back upon itself to provide an inner wall 21 and an outer wall 22 of said loop 20. The bend 23 of the loop 20 constitutes the top portion thereof. The rear wall 21 of the belt loop 20, near its lower free end, has a projection 24 extending from the inner side thereof toward the outer wall 22, the terminal part of which extends through and fits loosely in an opening 25 of said wall 22. Said front wall 22 of the belt loop has an extension 26 at its lower end which is flared away from the rear wall 21. Said extension 26 has a rolled end forming a barrel portion 27 which fits turnably on the pin 17 and within the notch 16 for swingably attaching the scabbard 6 to said belt loop 20. It will be readily apparent that the front wall 22 of the belt loop 20 may be displaced away from the rear wall 21 so that the belt loop can be engaged downwardly over a waist engaging garment belt, not shown. The wall 22 can then be released to permit the belt loop 20 to resume a closed position as illustrated in Figure 2 with the projection 24 engaging in the opening 25, for closing the bottom of the belt loop to prevent accidental disengagement thereof from the waist belt to which it is applied.

The rear wall 9 has a rib 28 projecting from the inner side thereof which extends transversely of the scabbard 6 and is disposed in the upper scabbard portion 14 and substantially below the open top 15 thereof. The rib 28 is preferably formed of steel and may be provided with a widened base portion 29 which is molded in the rear wall 9. However, if desired, the rib 28 may be formed integral with the rear wall 9. One side of the handle 7 is provided with a transversely extending groove 30 which is disposed to snugly receive the rib 28 when the knife 5 is in a fully applied position in the sheath 6, as illustrated in the drawing.

A leaf spring 31 is disposed on the inner side of the front wall 10 within the upper portion 14 of the sheath 6 and longitudinally thereof. The leaf spring 31 has an integral extension at its upper end bent outwardly and back upon itself to form a hook 32, the legs of which bear against the inner and outer sides of the front wall 10 and the bend of which engages over the upper edge of said front wall. The outer leg of the hook 32 is preferably embedded in the outer side of the front wall 10 so as to be disposed flush therewith. Either or both of the legs of the hook 32 may be provided with prongs 33 which are struck therefrom and which are embedded in said front wall 10. The leaf spring 31 is bowed longitudinally in a direction away from the front wall 10 to bear against a portion of the handle 7 for yieldably biasing said handle toward the rear wall 9 to retain the groove 30 of the handle in engagement with the rib 28,

which in combination with said groove **30** forms the latch means to retain the knife **5** in the sheath **6**.

It will be readily apparent that a slight pressure of the thumb against the inner side of the upper portion of the handle **7** will be sufficient to displace the handle away from the belt engaging loop **20** and the rear wall **9** and against the pressure of the spring **31** to move the groove **30** out of engagement with the rib **28**, so that the knife **5** can then be withdrawn in a conventional manner from the sheath **6**. It will also be apparent that this operation can be accomplished nearly as rapidly as the knife could be removed from the sheath if no latch means were provided. In returning the knife **5** to the sheath **6**, the handle **7** may be pressed laterally outward to compress the spring **31** until the knife **5** assumes its fully applied position as illustrated in the drawing. When the handle **7** is then released, the spring **31** will displace the handle toward the rear wall **9** so that the groove **30** thereof will receive and engage the rib **28** to thus latch the knife in the sheath. If desired, the knife **5** can be merely inserted into the sheath **6** and the lower portion of the handle **7** by initially engaging the rib **28** will cause the handle to be cammed away from the rear wall **9** for compressing the spring **31** until the groove **30** assumes a position to receive the rib **28**, at which time the spring **31** will displace the handle **7** into its latched position of Figures 2 and 3.

Various modifications and changes are contemplated and may obviously be resorted to, without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention as hereinafter defined by the appended claims.

I claim as my invention:

1. A device of the character described comprising a knife including a blade and a handle, a sheath for receiving said blade and a portion of the handle, said sheath having an inner or rear wall and a front wall, a rib projecting from the inner side of said rear wall and disposed transversely thereof, said handle having a transversely extending groove in one side thereof disposed to receive said rib when the knife is in a fully applied position in the sheath, and spring means supported by said sheath and bearing against the knife handle for urging the knife handle toward the rear wall to cause the groove thereof to engage said rib for latching the knife in the sheath.

2. A device as in claim 1, said spring means comprising a leaf spring disposed on the inner side of the front wall of the sheath and spaced therefrom, said leaf spring being longitudinally bowed away from said front wall.

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