May 23, 1944. F. A. RAY 2,349,376

SAFETY LATCH FOR PISTOL HOLSTERS

Filed March 13, 1942

Fig. 1.

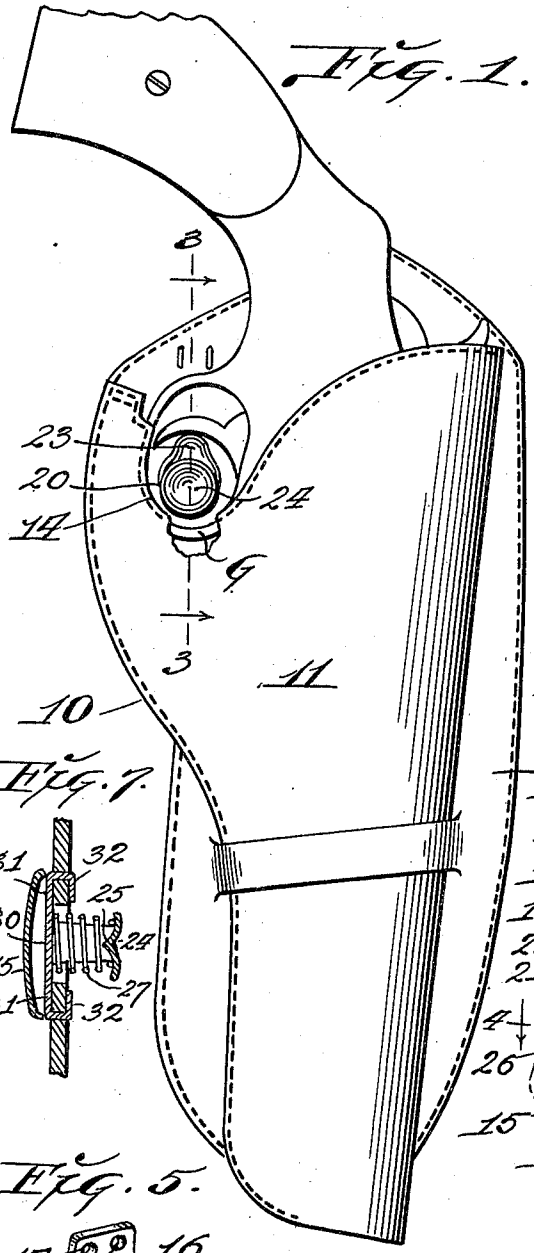


Fig. 2.

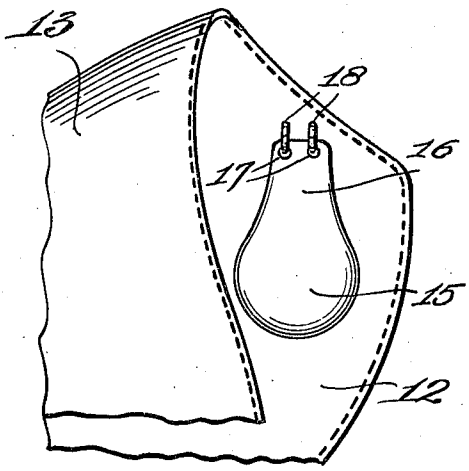


Fig. 3.

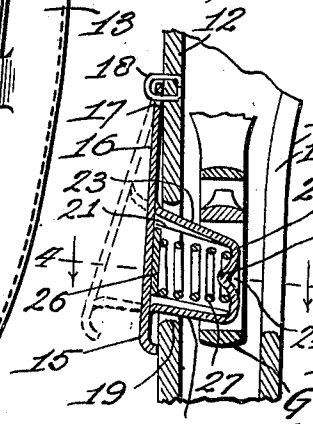


Fig. 4

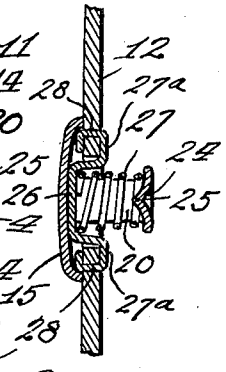


Fig. 7.

Fig. 5.

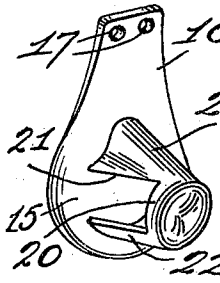


Fig. 6.

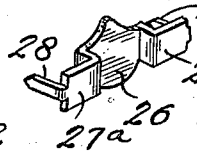
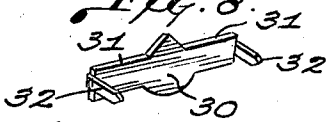


Fig. 8.



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SAFETY LATCH FOR PISTOL HOLSTERS

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Application March 13, 1942, Serial No. 434,523

3 Claims. (Cl. 224—2)

My invention relates generally to pistol holsters, and more particularly to a safety latch that is mounted on the inner wall of the holster and which engages the trigger guard of the inserted pistol so as to positively maintain the pistol in the holster and prevent the accidental displacement thereof until the latch is released by pressure of the index finger of the hand used in withdrawing the pistol from the holster.

The principal objects of my invention are to provide a holster latch that may be applied to practically all conventional pistol holsters, further, to provide a latch than automatically moves into trigger guard engaging position as the pistol is inserted into the holster, and further, to provide a latch of the character referred to that is composed of relatively few parts arranged and combined so as to positively perform intended functions, and arranged and located so as to nowise interfere with the free movement, and the natural functioning of the holster.

While I have shown and hereinafter describe my improved pistol latch as being mounted on a cross draw holster, that is, a holster that is carried on the left hand side of the body of a wearer who is right handed, the latch may be applied with equal advantage to holsters that are carried on the right hand side of the wearer's body. Practically all forms of holsters now in general use are provided at their upper ends with flaps or straps which extend over the projecting portion of the pistol for maintaining the latter in the holster and such flaps or straps are generally connected to the outer wall of the holster by readily detachable fastening means such as the stud and socket of a conventional snap fastener. Where such holsters are used, it is necessary to first disconnect the snap fastener, then raise the flap or strap so as to enable the handle of the pistol to be grasped for the purpose of removing the pistol from the holster. Such movements involve a certain amount of time, and it is one of the objects of my invention to provide a holster wherein the retaining flaps, straps and snap fasteners are eliminated thus saving considerable time in releasing the pistol and withdrawing the same from the holster which quick action is important where the lives of officers of the law, soldiers, sailors and other persons authorized to carry pistols for defense purposes are in danger.

With the foregoing and other objects in view, my invention consists in certain novel features of construction hereinafter more fully described and claimed, and illustrated in the accompanying drawing in which:

Fig. 1 is a side elevational view of a pistol holster equipped with my improved safety latch.

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary elevational view looking against the outer face of the inside wall of the holster and showing the latch in position thereupon.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged vertical section taken approximately on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a horizontal section taken on the line 4—4 of Fig. 3.

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the main body portion of the latch.

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of the spring supporting member of the latch and which is rigidly secured to the inner wall of the holster.

Fig. 7 is a horizontal section similar to Fig. 4 and showing a modified form of the spring supporting base plate.

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of the modified form of the spring supporting base plate.

Referring by numerals to the accompanying drawing which illustrates a preferred embodiment of my invention, 10 designates a pistol holster of conventional construction which includes an outer wall 11, an inner wall 12 and a panel 13 which extends from the upper end of the inner wall downwardly to provide a support for said holster.

A strap or belt (not shown) passes between the upper portions of the rear wall 12 and panel 13 thus providing means for suspending the holster on the wearer's body.

The upper end of the outer wall 11 of the holster terminates a short distance below the upper portion of the rear wall 12, and a portion of the front wall near the rear edge thereof is cut away to form a downwardly extending notch 14 which exposes the greater portion of the trigger guard of the pistol when positioned in the holster.

The main body member of my improved pistol latch comprises a substantially circular plate 15 of metal and projecting upwardly from the top thereof is a short flap shank 16, the upper end of the latter being provided with a pair of apertures such as 17 or a slot. The plate just described is positioned on the outer face of the rear wall 12 of the holster in the position so that the circular lower portion 15 of said plate is disposed directly opposite the notch 14 in the front wall 11 of the holster and the plate is hinged to the rear wall 12 of the holster by means of staples 18 or the like which pass through the apertures 17 and through the rear wall 12. Thus the plate comprising the parts 15 and 16 is positioned so that it may swing rearwardly away from the rear

wall 12 of the holster with the staples 18 providing the axis of swinging movement.

Rigidly fixed on the front face of the plate 15 and projecting through an opening 19 that is formed in the rear wall 12 of the holster is a hollow stud 20 which is provided in its sides with openings 21. That portion 22 of the wall of said stud below the openings 21 inclines gradually toward its outer end and formed on that portion of the wall of said stud between the upper portions of the openings 21 is a longitudinally disposed rib 23 which gradually declines towards its outer end and which is substantially of inverted U-shape in cross section. The outer end of the stud 20 is closed by a wall which is indented to provide an external depression 24 and an inwardly projecting point 25 which latter serves to maintain in proper position the outer end of an expansive spring which is positioned within the stud 20. Positioned within the stud 20 and resting upon the central portion of the plate 15 when the latter is in closed position is a small plate 26 of metal which serves as a bearing for one end of an expansive coil spring 27; the other end of the latter bearing on the inner face of the forward end of the stud 20 around the point 25 and projects inwardly therefrom. This spring yieldingly resists the inward movement of the stud 20 and plate 15. Formed integral with the sides of the spring supporting plate 26 are the inner ends of outwardly projecting L-shaped ears 27*a* which latter project through the opening 19 in the rear wall of the holster and the main portions of said ears lie directly against the front face of said rear wall, as illustrated in Fig. 4.

Formed integral with the outer ends of these ears 27*a* are prongs 28 which pass through and then bent downwardly against the outer face of the rear wall 12 of the holster thereby securely anchoring the spring supporting plate 26 to said rear wall.

When my improved latch is properly positioned for use, the pressure exerted by spring 27 against the wall at the free end of stud 20 forces said stud to its limit of movement through the opening 19 at the rear wall of the holster so that the plate comprising the parts 15 and 16 lies against the outer face of the rear wall 12 of the holster.

Upon insertion of a pistol into the holster, the forward portion of the trigger guard G engages the upper inner end of the inclined rib 23 and as a result of such engagement and the continued downward movement of the pistol, stud 20 will be moved rearwardly through opening 19 in the rear wall of the holster, which movement is possible due to the hinging or pivoting of the upper end of the plate comprising the parts 15 and 16 and as the forward portion of the trigger guard moves below the free end of the stud, the expansive action of spring 27 moves the stud and the plate on which the same is mounted, forward to their normal positions, with the free end of the stud positioned within the finger guard in front of the trigger of the pistol (see Figs. 1 and 3). With the latch thus positioned, it is impossible for the pistol to be displaced or accidentally withdrawn from the holster even though the latter should be turned upsidedown. To release the latch and withdraw the pistol from the holster, the handle of the pistol is grasped in the hand of the wearer and simultaneously the end of the index finger engages the depressed end 24 of the stud portion of the latch and presses said stud inwardly against the yielding resistance of spring 27 and as the end of the stud clears the forward end of the trigger guard, the pistol is free to be withdrawn from the holster. It will be understood that the pistol withdrawing movement just described may after short practice be accomplished in the fraction of a second, and as the trigger guard passes above the end of the depressed latch, the end of the index finger is positioned within the finger guard immediately in front of the trigger thereby greatly expediting the firing of the pistol.

In the modified construction, illustrated in Figs. 7 and 8, the spring supporting plate comprises a central member 30 that occupies a position against the outer face of the rear wall 12 of the holster, and which plate partially covers the opening 19 in said rear wall, and extending from opposite sides of the said plate 30 onto the outer face of the rear wall 12 are arms 31.

Projecting from the ends of the arms 31 are integral prongs 32 which project inwardly through wall 12, and the ends of said prongs being bent downwardly against the inner face of said rear wall to the sides of opening 19 as illustrated in Fig. 7.

Thus, the spring supporting plate is secured to the rear wall 12 of the holster from the rear side thereof instead of from the front side thereof, which latter arrangement is required with the form of plate illustrated in Figs. 4 and 6.

While I have shown and described the latch applied to the holster with the plate comprising the parts 15 and 16 hinged or pivoted to the rear wall of the holster above the opening 19, it will be understood that said plate may be arranged so that it extends downwardly from opening 19 and hinged or pivoted at its lower end.

Where such construction is employed, the stud 20 will occupy the same position as it does where the plate is hinged or pivoted at its upper end, so that the lower wall 22 and the rib 23 on said stud gradually slopes downwardly toward the outer end of the stud.

A highly desirable feature of my invention is the fact that it may be advantageously employed on the holsters of all pistols having trigger guards, and that the release of the latch automatically positions the end of the index finger in the trigger guard directly in front of the trigger.

Thus it will be seen that I have provided a safety latch for pistol holsters that is relatively simple in construction, inexpensive of manufacture, and very effective in performing the functions for which it is intended.

It will be understood that minor changes in the size, form and construction of the various parts of my improved safety latch for pistol holsters may be made and substituted for those herein shown and described without departing from the spirit of my invention, the scope of which is set forth in the appended claims.

I claim as my invention:

1. The combination with a pistol holster having outer and inner walls, the inner wall being provided with an opening which is positioned opposite the trigger guard of a pistol inserted in said holster, of a plate hinged to the outer face at one end of the inner wall of the holster adjacent the opening therein, a hollow stud having a closed forward end and side openings extending substantially the whole length thereof and carried by said plate which stud passes through the opening in the inner wall of the holster and into the trigger guard of the inserted pistol, means within said stud for yieldingly resisting the movement of said stud outwardly through the opening in the inner wall of the holster, said

means including a support extending through the openings in said hollow stud and having its ends secured to the inner side of the holster on both sides of said stud and resilient means positioned within said stud between said support and said closed end.

2. The combination with a pistol holster having outer and inner walls, the inner wall being provided with an opening which is positioned opposite the trigger guard of a pistol inserted in said holster, of a plate hinged to the outer face at one end of the inner wall of the holster adjacent the opening therein, a hollow stud with a closed outer end carried by said plate which stud passes through the opening in the inner wall of the holster and into the trigger guard of the inserted pistol, a support within the inner end of said stud the ends of which support extend through openings in the sides of said stud and are secured to said inner wall and an expansive spring arranged between said support and the outer end of said stud.

3. The combination with a holster having front and rear walls, said rear wall provided with an opening and said front wall having a notch in alignment with said rear wall opening, said opening and notch positioned opposite the trigger guard of a pistol inserted in the holster, of a plate hinged to the outer face of the rear wall of the holster above the opening therein, a hollow stud having a closed end carried by said plate and projecting through the opening in said rear wall, the wall of said stud being provided with openings, a second plate having its ends secured to the rear wall of the holster to the sides of the opening therein with the intermediate portion of said second plate extending through the openings in said stud and an expansive spring positioned within said stud between the closed forward end thereof and the intermediate portion of said second plate.

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