Feb. 11, 1969 U. E. SCHUBACH ET AL 3,426,559

DEVICE FOR RESTRAINING PRISONERS AND THE LIKE

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Fig. 1

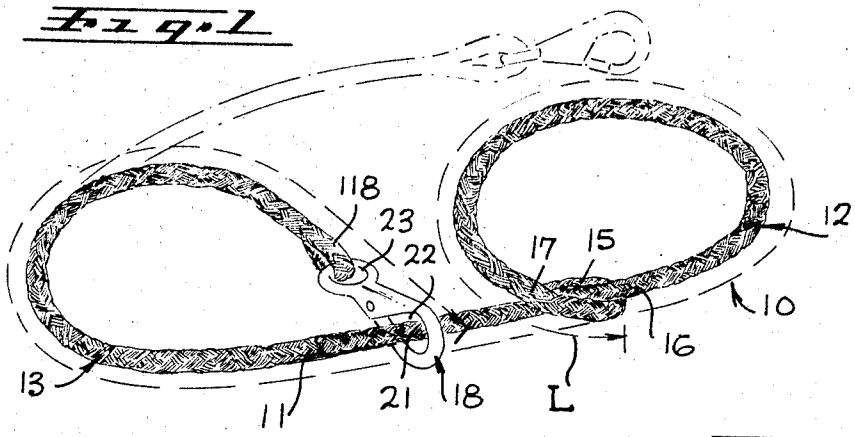


Fig. 2

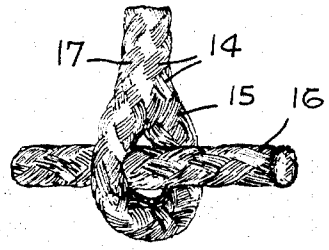


Fig. 3

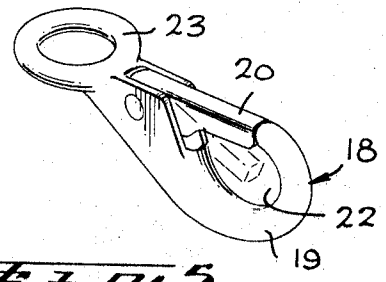


Fig. 5

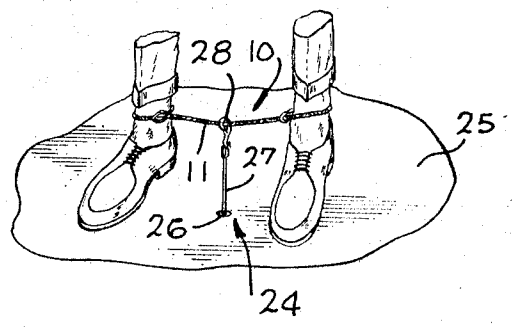


Fig. 4

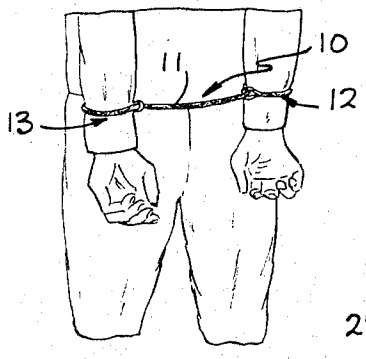
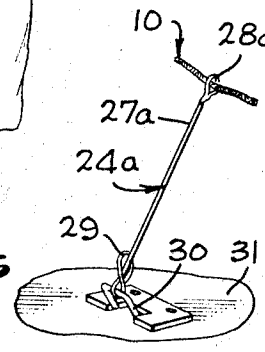


Fig. 6



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DEVICE FOR RESTRAINING PRISONERS AND THE LIKE

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A prisoner restraining device including an elongated flexible cord for connecting the wrists or ankles of a prisoner, froming two loops at its opposite ends to receive the ankles or wrists, with the cord having a small terminal loop at one of its extremities received about an intermediate portion of the cord to form a first of the loops, and with the cord carrying a snap hook at its opposite end detachably connectable to an intermediate portion of the cord to form the second loop, and further with the flexible member and its terminal eye and snap hook having a combined overall length of between about 27 inches and 33 inches.

This invention relates to an improved device for use by police and other law enforcement officers in restraining or restricting the movements of a prisoner.

In attempting to control a person who resists arrest, a law enforcement officer frequently encounters great difficulty in restricting the movements of the prisoner, and particularly in applying conventional handcuffs to the arms or legs of the prisoner. In order to apply such handcuffs to the prisoner, it is necessary to force his arms or legs together while the handcuffs are snapped onto them, and while he may be resisting strenuously and perhaps striking and/or kicking the arresting officer. Consequently, the arrest of one person may require two or more officers, and may even then be very difficult. Further, the application of metal handcuffs to the ankles of a prisoner may cut or otherwise injure the prisoner or the officer; and the efforts of the officer to avoid such injury may have the effect of allowing the prisoner to escape.

A major object of the present invention is to provide a device which can be applied relatively easily to the arms or legs of a prisoner, and which will function to secure the two arms or two legs together very effectively, but without danger of cutting or otherwise injuring the prisoner. After the prisoner has been subdued and placed under control in this manner, conventional handcuffs should be applied to the wrists to secure them together more permanently, though normally the present restraining device itself will function as a permanent ankle restraint.

A device embodying the invention includes an elongated flexible member adapted to extend between and connect together the wrists or ankles of a prisoner, and forming two loops at its opposite ends adapted to extend about and hold the two wrists or ankles respectively. To form these two loops, the elongated flexible member carries or forms at its extremities two small terminal connector eyes, each of which extends about an intermediate portion of the flexible member, and is slidable therealong, to retain that end of the member in the desired loop configuration, and to enable adjustment of the size of the loop, and tightening of the loop about a wrist or

ankle, upon such sliding movement. At least one of these eyes (preferably only one), takes the form of a releasable fastener, desirably a snap hook, which is detachable from its position of sliding reception about the intermediate portion of the flexible member, to facilitate application of the device to a prisoner. The other eye is for best results of a nonreleasable or non-opening type, desirably being formed as a small terminal loop portion of the flexible member itself.

The flexible member and the fastener and other eye forming means at its extremities have an overall combined length which is sufficiently short to restrain the two interconnected ankles or wrists against unwanted relative motion, and yet which is sufficiently great to facilitate application of the device to a prisoner's wrists or ankles more easily than a conventional pair of handcuffs. For this purpose, the mentioned overall length of the elongated member and the elements carried at its extremities should be between about 20 inches and 36 inches, more preferably between about 27 inches and 33 inches, and for best results approximately 30 inches. Also, the flexible member is desirably formed as a cord which is essentially non-stretchable and is relatively incapable of cutting or otherwise injuring the prisoner. For best results, the cord is formed of a flexible resinous plastic material, desirably a woven material, and optimally woven nylon or polyethylene.

An additional feature of the invention relates to the manner in which a device of the above discussed general type may be employed in conjunction with a coacting structure for holding the connected feet of a prisoner near the floor of a motor vehicle in transit, to prevent the prisoner from kicking and otherwise moving around in an uncontrolled manner. For this purpose, I provide an element which is connected to the floor of the vehicle, or to a structure near the floor, such as the seat springs or other underseat structure, and which is detachably connectable to an intermediate portion of a cuff structure which extends between and connects together the ankles of a prisoner. Thus, the resulting overall combination holds the prisoner's legs together and down in a completely controlled manner.

The above and other features and objects of the invention will be better understood from the following detailed description of the typical embodiment illustrated in the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a view showing a prisoner restraining device constructed in accordance with the invention;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view showing the slip connection formed at one extremity of the flexible cord of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary perspective view of the snap hook carried at the other extremity of the cord;

FIG. 4 shows the manner of use of the device as an arm restraint on a prisoner;

FIG. 5 shows the device as used for restraining movement of the legs of a prisoner; and

FIG. 6 shows another arrangement for restraining movement of the legs of a prisoner.

With reference first to FIG. 1, I have illustrated at **10** a prisoner restraining device formed in accordance with the invention and including an elongated flexible cord **11** shaped to form two adjustable size slip loops **12** and **13** at its opposite ends. Cord **11** is desirably formed of a substantially nonstretchable freely flexible and nonmetallic material, such as an appropriate resinous plastic substance, which for best results is of the woven type illustrated in FIG. 2. More particularly, this cord **11** may be formed of a large number of individual elongated strands **14** forming a woven pattern, and with this woven material being essentially tubular, as seen at the right end

of FIG. 2. The best material for forming cord **11** is woven nylon or polyethylene.

At one of its extremities, cord **11** is doubled back to form a small terminal eye or loop **15**, which slidably receives an intermediate porition **16** of cord **11**, in a manner forming the previously mentioned larger loop **12** for receiving one of the wrists or ankles of a prisoner. Desirably, the eye **15** is of an internal size only slightly greater than the external size of the received portion **16** of cord **11**, but is freely slidable therealong to vary the size of larger loop **12**. Eye **15** may be formed by connecting the end of cord **11** to itself in a manner forming a thickened portion **17** of the cord adjacent the eye or small loop **15**.

At its other end, cord **11** carries a snap hook **18**, having a main rigid hook portion **19** and a relatively movable closure element **20** which is spring urged to the full line position of FIG. 3, and is adapted to be pressed inwardly to the broken line position of that figure to enable movement of a portion **21** of the cord **11** into and out of the hook. In the full line closed position of FIG. 3, the hook serves as a second eye forming a passageway **22** which is slightly larger than the external size of the received portion **21** of the cord, to enable sliding movement of the hook along the cord. The hook or fastener **18** has an attaching ring **23**, to which the second extremity of cord **11** is permanently attached by forming at that extremity an eye **118** similar to the previously discussed eye **15**. Preferably, the small terminal loop or eye **15** formed at the first mentioned extremity of cord **11** is of a size too small to enable passage of snap hook **18** through this eye, so that eye **15** cannot be slipped completely off of cord **11**, with the result that the arm or leg receiving loop **12** at the right end of FIG. 1 is permanently retained in its loop configuration, and cannot be opened.

In using the restraining device **10** of FIG. 1, assume first of all that it is desired to temporarily cuff together the arms of a prisoner, to facilitate the subsequent application to the prisoner of conventional handcuffs. In applying the device of FIG. 1, the hook **18** will initially be unattached to intermediate portion **21** of cord **11**, so that loop **13** is open, and the hook carrying end of the cord may for example be in the broken line condition of FIG. 1. The loop **12** formed at the opposite end of the cord is opened to a sufficiently large condition to enable it to be slipped easily onto one of the wrists of the prisoner, even though he may be violently resisting arrest. After that loop **12** has been placed about one of the wrists, the arresting officer may tighten loop **12** about that first wrist by merely pulling on the end of cord **11** which carries hook **18**. Next, the officer wraps the second end of the cord, carrying the hook, about the second wrist of the prisoner, and snaps hook **18** onto portion **21** of the cord. After the hook has been applied in this manner, the officer may pull on the cord at a point between the two loops **12** and **13**, to simultaneously tighten both of the loops, and to thereafter easily control movements of the prisoner through this central portion of the cord. The prisoner is thus subdued, and can easily be controlled by the device **10** for application of conventional cuffs, either with the arms in front of the prisoner or behind him, and even though the prisoner may be very strong and muscular and capable of effectively resisting control in any other more conventional manner.

The device **10** may also be utilized in similar manner to connect together and restrain the movements of the legs of a prisoner, as indicated in FIG. 5, in which the two ends of the cord are received about the ankles of the prisoner.

In order to satisfactorily serve the discussed function of restraining the movements of a prisoner's arms or legs, it is desirable that the cord **11**, including its terminal eye portion **15** and carried hook **18**, have an overall length L between about 20 inches and 36 inches, preferably between 27 inches and 33 inches, and optimally 30 inches. This length dimension is the length which the device **10** would have if opened out longitudinally, with extremity or loop **15** and hook **18** detached from the portions of the cord which extend therethrough. As will be apparent, if the device is of too great a length, it will not effectively restrain the relative movements of the two connected arms or legs of a prisoner; while if it is too short, it cannot be satisfactorily applied to a prisoner who is resisting arrest.

In conjunction with the device **10**, I preferably utilize in the squad car or other motor vehicle employed by the arresting officer, a hold down device **24**, which is detachably connectable to device **10** to hold the legs of the prisoner near the floor of the vehicle. In FIG. 5, I have illustrated at **25** the floor of a squad car, which may contain an opening **26** through which a flexible elongated preferably metal cable **27** or the like extends downwardly. This cable is suitably connected at the underside of the floor **25** to that floor or to another stationary structure, and carries at its upper end a snap hook **28** similar to the previously discussed hook **18**, and adapted to receive and be detachably connected to the central portion of cord **11** of device **10**, to hold that cord and the connected legs of a prisoner near the floor of the vehicle. Thus, the prisoner is prevented from raising his legs, kicking, and otherwise causing difficulty in the vehicle.

FIG. 6 shows a second hold down device **24***a*, consisting of a flexible metal cable **27***a* (or if preferred a woven plastic cord) having a hook **28***a* and having an eye or loop **29** at its lower end which can be slipped through any appropriate structure or bracket **30** on or near the floor **31** of the vehicle (for example bracket **30** may be a seatbelt bracket), with hook **28***a* then being passed through eye **29** to fasten hold down unit **24***a* to the bracket or structure **30**. Similarly cable **27***a* may be attached to a seat spring or other underseat structure. Hook **28***a* may then be utilized to detachably connect the cable to the device **10** or the like, as in FIG. 5. It is also contemplated that a second snap hook may be provided on cable **27***a*, at its lower end, to further facilitate direct attachment of that lower end to an anchoring structure. In either of the FIG. 5 or FIG. 6 arrangements, it is desirable that cable **27** or **27***a* and its hook **28** or **28***a* (or hooks if two are provided) be of limited effective length, to appropriately restrain the movements of the legs of the prisoner, and for best results be not over about 25 inches in length, desirably being no greater than about 12 inches.

We claim:

1. A prisoner restraining device comprising an elongated flexible member adapted to extend between and connect together the wrists or ankles of a prisoner, said member having at one end thereof a first end portion forming a loop of a size to extend about and hold one of said wrists or ankles, there being a small terminal eye at the extremity of said first end portion extending about an intermediate portion of the flexible member and slidable therealong to adjust the size of said loop and tighten it on the prisoner, said member having at its opposite end a second end portion adapted to form a second loop about and confine a second wrist or ankle of the prisoner, and a snap hook carried at the extremity of said second end portion of said flexible member and adapted to be detachably snapped about an intermediate portion of the member, and to be slidable therealong to tighten said second loop about said second ankle or wrist, said flexible member and said terminal eye and said snap hook carried at opposite ends thereof having a combined overall length of between about 27 inches and 33 inches, whereby said opposite end loops are maintained close enough to effectively restrain excessive relative movements of the prisoner's arms or legs, and yet are far enough apart to enable easy application of the device to a struggling prisoner.

2. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 1, in which said flexible member is formed of an essentially non-stretchable non-metallic cord.

3. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 1, in which said flexible member is formed of essentially non-stretchable woven resinous plastic cord.

4. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 1, in which said flexible member is formed of flexible essentially non-stretchable cord, said terminal eye at the extremity of said first end portion of the flexible member being non-openable and formed by and integral with the material of said cord, said snap hook having a spring pressed closure member for closing the hook to retain it slidably on the cord.

5. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 4, in which said cord is formed of woven nylon or polyethylene.

6. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 1, including a flexible elongated hold-down unit connected to a floor or near a floor and carrying a connector detachably connectable to said first mentioned flexible member at a location between said loops to hold it and the legs of a prisoner near the floor.

7. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 1, in which said flexible member is formed of flexible essentially non-stretchable cord, said terminal eye at the extremity of said first end portion of the flexible member being non-openable and formed by and integral with the material of said cord, said snap hook having a spring pressed closure member for closing the hook to retain it slidably on the cord, there being a flexible elongated hold-down unit connected to a floor or near a floor and carrying a snap hook detachably connectable to said cord at a location between said loops to hold it and the legs of a prisoner near the floor.

8. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 1, in which said terminal loop is only slightly larger in size than the portion of said flexible member received therein.

9. A prisoner restraining device as recited in claim 1, in which said terminal loop is too small to enable easy passage of said snap hook therethrough.

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