Sept. 20, 1955 L. D. RICHARDS 2,718,128

SAFETY RETAINING MEANS FOR EARRINGS

Filed Sept. 23, 1952

FIG. 1

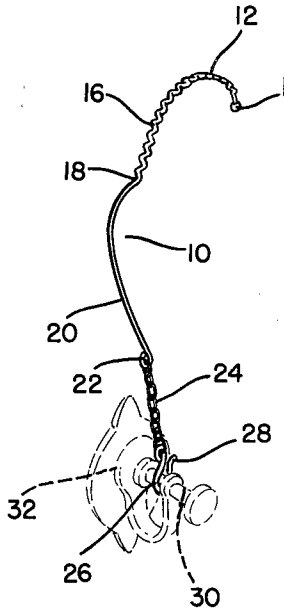


FIG. 2

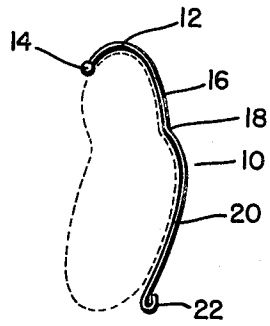


FIG. 3

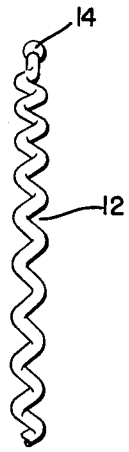
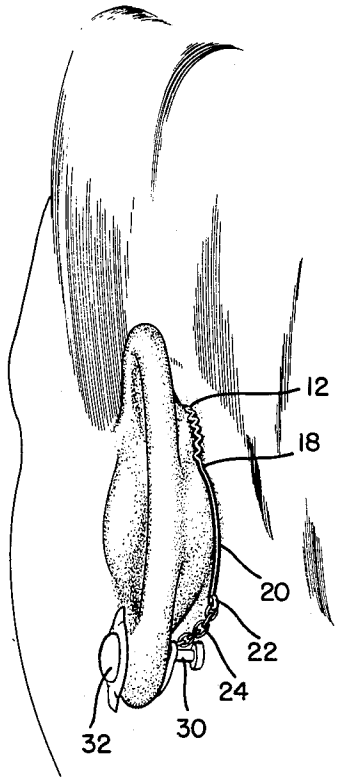


FIG. 4



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SAFETY RETAINING MEANS FOR EARRINGS

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1 Claim. (Cl. 63—14)

This present device consists of a resilient wire which is conformed to fit the contour of the flesh which joins the outer ear to the scalp. The same is corrugated in part in order to insure the definite positioning of the wire hook member. Connected to the lower end of the resilient wire arrangement is a tension member, normally jewelry type chain, which terminates in a resilient hook which is adapted to engage a portion of the earring when the same is in place on the lobe of the ear.

Earrings as an article of jewelry are probably subject to greater loss than other jewelry items. This is due to the fact that the average earring is clamped to the lobe of the ear, either by a screw or by spring tensioning means. Both of these arrangements place considerable pressure on the ear which is objectionable and the wearer normally endeavors to have that pressure reduced to the minimum that will give security against loss but too often in the endeavor to gain some relief from the pressure the adjustment is made too close to the margin and one of the earrings is lost. To a lesser degree the earrings of the type where the ear is pierced are quite often lost due to the fact that in order to keep the earring as light as possible so as not to stretch the opening in the ear lobe the parts are made very light, and being light, cannot be depended upon to always give a secure fastening. The present device is intended to provide means which is independently hooked on to the ear between the outer ear and the scalp and to be connected to the earring by a flexible tension member. It is recognized that many attempts have been made to provide a device of this order and they may be generally classified as in two categories: one, in which a U-shaped wire is draped over the ear somewhat after the order of the temple piece of a spectacle and then connection is made by a flexible member to the earring. Too often however, due to the fact that there is no tension on the device to hold the same in place, the U-shaped member slides out of position and thereby fails in its primary object. Other attempts have been made to provide a device of this order in which spring tensioning means are provided between the earring and the hook-on member. Such devices as observed however are open to the objection that the ear is moved by the average person a good deal. The three main auricular muscles do move the ear of the person unconsciously as they endeavor to listen intently. It therefore develops that any means tying the hook support to the earring under tension is objectionable to most people.

In this present invention an endeavor has been made to avoid the annoyances and lack of security caused by presently known devices and to provide a safety retaining means or guard in which the hook member itself is provided with special means to insure that it will be retained in its desired position and that a looped flexible means will connect this definitely-positioned hook member with the earring in such a manner that the normal movement of the ear is not at all interfered with even though the fullest security is provided.

The principal object of this present invention therefore

is to provide means which is inconspicuous in use, which does not have any tendency to annoy the wearer, and which will provide a definite security means to prevent loss of the earring.

A further object of this invention is to provide means whereby the guard member may be quickly and easily attached or detached from the earring so that the same may be conveniently put in place or removed.

A further object of this invention is to provide an earring securing means which is simply made and which because if its small size can be easily hidden from normal view.

Further objects, advantages and capabilities will be apparent from the description and disclosure in the drawings, or may be comprehended or are inherent in the device.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing an earring retaining means made after the teachings of this invention. In this view a screw clamp type of earring is indicated in dashed lines;

Figure 2 is a side elevation of the hooked member forming part of this invention with the tissue connecting the outer ear and the scalp being indicated in dotted lines;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary top plan view of the upper hooked portion of the guard device;

Figure 4 is a perspective view showing the safety retaining means in place on a wearer's ear.

Referring more particularly to the disclosure in the drawings, the numeral **10** indicates the ear-engaging member which is normally formed of a wire which is tarnish-proof and most usually is gold filled or plated so that it will match the metal of the earring with which it is used. The ear-engaging member consists of a hooked-shaped portion **12** which hooks over that portion of the ear which joins the outer ear proper to the scalp. The actual weight of the device is normally placed on the auricular muscles, which muscles are anchored both to the outer ear and to the scalp and provide the means for moving the outer ear. These muscles however are best adapted to accept any long-continued weight application. They are the muscles that normally accept the weight of the temple pieces of ordinary spectacles. The extreme end of hook member **12** is preferably provided with a ball **14** which is usually secured to the same as by soldering or the like. The downwardly extending branch of the hook member as **16** has considerably less curvature than the upper portion so as to enable it to fit the ordinary form of human ear. This portion, however, terminates at **18** as the mastoid portion **20** begins at that point and extends downwardly to about the lower portion of the ear attachment to the scalp. The form of this portion is probably best illustrated in Figure 2. It is to be noted that a definite indentation is provided at **18** and then a rather pronounced curve which then is flattened out into the portion **20** as it extends downwardly. This particular form is best adapted to the snug fitting of the average human ear and slight variations required to fit the mastoid process can be hand-molded into the same by bending the wire forming the attaching means. It is believed that Figure 4 shows the manner in which this device fits between the outer ear and the scalp.

Secured to preferably a bent-up loop **22** formed in the end of the securing means is a tension member. This may be cord, plastic filament, or the like, but normally jewelry chain as indicated at **24** is the most desirable. A chain of this order is light and blends well with the jewelry characteristics of the earring and is very flexible. Secured to the extreme lower end of chain **24** is a resilient hooking member **26**. This member is provided with an eye to engage chain **24** and then is bent around

U-shaped and closed on itself. The wire-forming hook is then bent outwardly at **28** so that the hook can be easily engaged around some small portion of the earring, preferably this is the retaining screw as **30** of the earring.

In order that this device may be worn for long periods with the maximum comfort and security, it has been found desirable to corrugate the hook portion, as will probably be best noted in Figures 1 and 3. The corrugations should be made normal to the plane of the hook-like member. This will cause the plane of the corrugation to lie flat against the flesh so there will be no fine line of pressure, but rather the pressure will be distributed over a relatively wide path. This adds greatly to the comfort of the wearer of the device and also prevents the hooked member from slipping out of place. It is to be understood, it is believed, that any tendency for the corrugated portion to move on the skin will mean that in each of the corrugations there will be a tendency to make a small roll of the skin and this has been found to quite securely position the device and prevent its slipping out of its intended position. It will be apparent, it is believed, that a device of this order might be used with any form of earring, whether it is the screw-secured form indicated in the drawings at **32**, the spring urged clamp-on type, or whether it is to protect the form of earring which pierces the ear but which may, because of the light structure, not provide a very secure engagement.

It is believed that it will be clearly apparent from the above description and the disclosure in the drawings that the invention comprehends a novel construction of a safety retaining means for earrings.

Having thus disclosed the invention, I claim:

Safety retaining means for earrings, comprising: a wire formed with an upper and a lower curved portion meeting at a bend, the upper curved portion being hook shaped and having a contour conforming to the line of joinder of the outer ear and scalp from a point a short distance forward of the uppermost point of this line of joinder to the mastoid process of the temporal bones, the lower curved portion downwardly extending from said bend and conforming throughout its major portion to said line of joinder from the mastoid process of the temporal bones downward, said upper curved portion being more sharply curved than said lower curved portion, a length of chain depending from the lower end of said lower curved portion and means on the lower end of said chain adapted to engage the earring, said upper curved portion being bent into a multiplicity of small corrugations, said upper and lower curved portions lying substantially in the same plane and said corrugations being directed substantially normally to said plane, the upper end of said upper curved portion terminating in a balled end.

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