United States Patent

Entwistle

[15] **3,698,608**

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[54] SHOULDER SADDLE ASSEMBLY

[72] Inventor: **Clive E. Entwistle,** 44 East 67th Street, New York, N.Y. 10021

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **224/6,** 54/44

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A47d 13/02**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 224/6, 5 R, 5 P, 5 BC; 297/4, 297/254, 255; 119/96; 54/44

[56] **References Cited**

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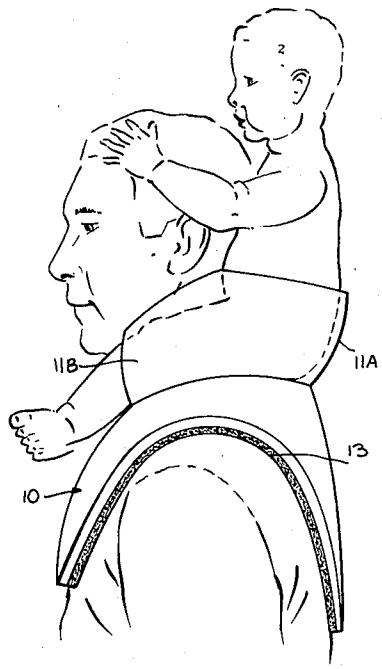
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Primary Examiner—Gerald M. Forlenza
Assistant Examiner—Jerold M. Forsberg
Attorney—Michael Ebert

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A shoulder saddle assembly which may be worn by an adult to support and carry a child or injured adult with minimal effort and without the need for the bearer to hold the feet of the passenger or for the passenger to grip the head of the bearer. The assembly is constituted by a yoke member fitting over the head of the bearer and adapted to rest on the shoulders of the bearer, the yoke including a breast plate and a back plate to afford an effective distribution of the load. Removably secured to the yoke member is a cowl-shaped saddle piece, having a curved rear wall to receive the posterior of the passenger and rolled-in side walls to accommodate the passenger's thighs.

6 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures



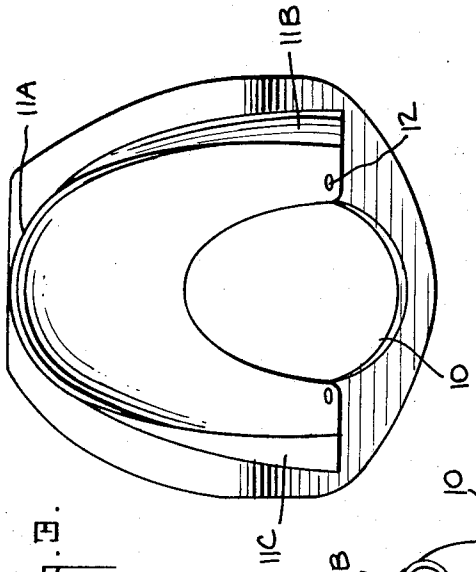


Fig. 3.

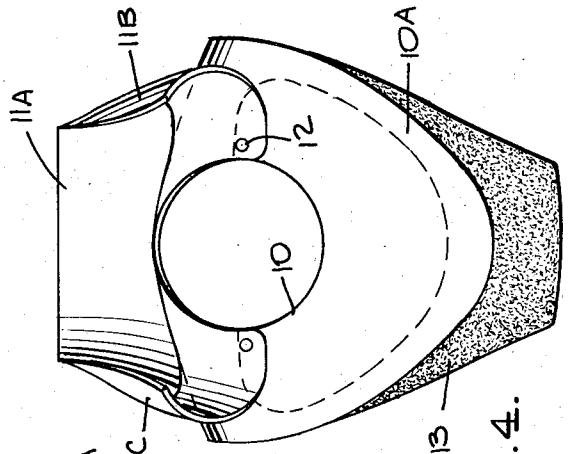


Fig. 4.

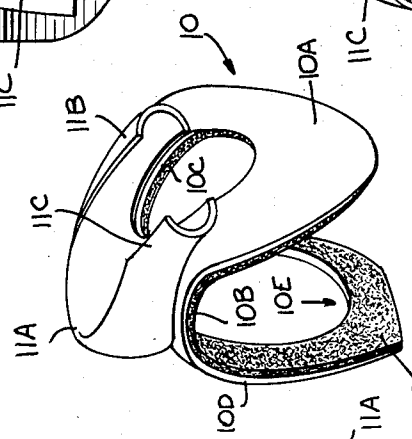


Fig. 2.

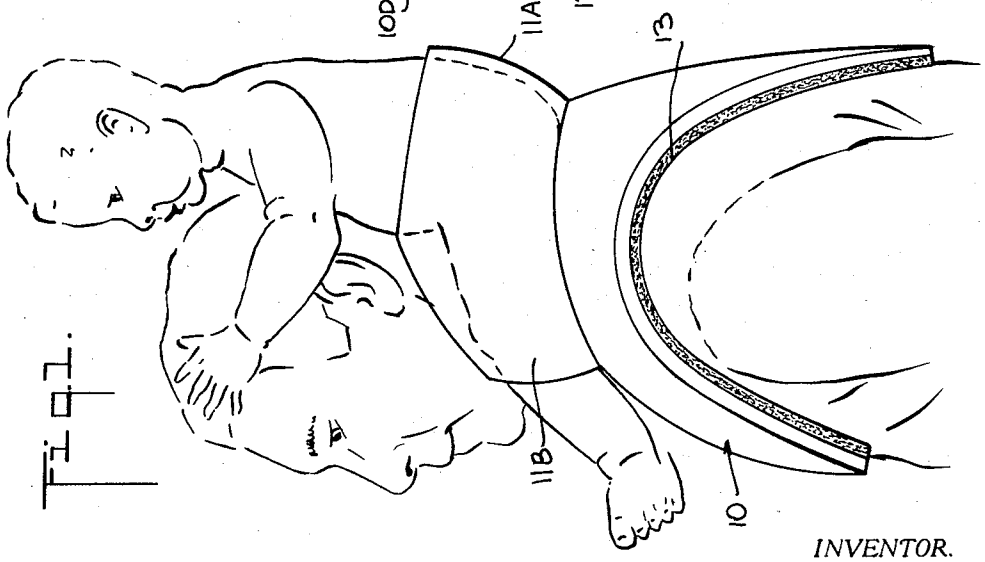


Fig. 1.

INVENTOR.
CLIVE E. ENTWISTLE
BY
ATTORNEY

SHOULDER SADDLE ASSEMBLY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to a shoulder saddle assembly making it possible for an adult to support and carry a child or injured adult comfortably, securely and with minimal effort.

Even in the most primitive societies lacking all but the most elementary tools, means have been devised to facilitate the carriage of infants by adults, for the need for such means is as old as human history. Thus Indian children in North America are supported on cradle or papoose boards strapped to the back of the mother. Other cultures provide baskets or slings for this purpose. In modern society, various types of babyholders or harnesses have been developed which are worn in the fashion of knapsacks, whereby a child may be borne on the back or front of a parent.

The difficulty with both primitive and modern baby carriers is that the load is invariably placed on the back or front of the bearer so that the child usually faces the bearer. But even if the child borne on the back faces in the direction of movement, his vision is blocked by the bearer's head or back. In any event, the child has a poor vantage point and is deprived of many of the simple pleasures of travel. Furthermore, the suspension harness generally tends to constrict the thorax of the child, hampering easy respiration and restricting body movement.

When a child wishes to be in a position to view a spectacle or parade or to otherwise improve his view, the common practice is to seat the child on the shoulders of an adult, the child's thighs straddling the neck of the bearer. A shoulder-borne child has his head above that of the bearer and he faces the same direction so that his vision is unimpaired. But when the child is so seated, one must be careful to hold onto the legs of the child so that he is not dislodged from his precarious seat. Consequently, the bearer no longer has the use of his hands and is unable to open doors, hold onto railings or to carry various items.

Moreover, when a child is borne on the shoulders of an adult, even though his legs are held, the elevated child has a sense of insecurity and tends therefore to grab the head of the bearer. In doing this, the child may place his hands over the eyes of the bearer and this may block the bearer's view or knock off his glasses.

Thus while an adult may on occasion lift a child to his shoulders, this is an experience fraught with certain dangers and a source of some discomfort to both the bearer and the child.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In view of the foregoing, it is the main object of this invention to provide a shoulder saddle assembly to facilitate the safe carriage of a child without the need to hold onto the child, thereby freeing the hands of the wearer.

More specifically, it is an object of this invention to provide a two-piece shoulder saddle assembly constituted by a yoke member resting on the shoulders of the bearer and having a breast plate and a back plate, and a saddle piece removably attached to the yoke member and shaped to accommodate the child.

Also an object of the invention is to provide a low-cost shoulder saddle assembly which securely and comfortably seats a child on the shoulders of a bearer, and which makes it possible to support and carry a child with minimal effort.

A significant advantage of the invention is that the elevated child is given a fine vantage point, but not at the expense of his security, so that the child feels no need to hold the head of the bearer and is free to lean back or to the side without the fear of falling off his perch.

Briefly stated, these objects are accomplished in a shoulder saddle assembly including a yoke member provided with a neck opening and a breast plate joined by shoulder pieces to a back plate, whereby the yoke member rests stably on the shoulders of the wearer. Secured to the yoke member is a cowl-shaped saddle having a curved rear wall to accommodate the posterior of the passenger, and rolled-in side walls to receive the thighs, whereby the legs of the child overlie the breast plate. Harness pieces may be provided to secure the child's legs by the ankles to the yoke.

OUTLINE OF THE DRAWINGS

For a better understanding of the invention as well as other objects and further features thereof, reference is made to the following detailed description to be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIG. **1** is a side elevational view of a shoulder saddle assembly in accordance with the invention, as worn by an adult to support a child passenger;

FIG. **2** is a perspective view of the unoccupied saddle assembly;

FIG. **3** is a plan view of the assembly, and

FIG. **4** is a front view of the assembly.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawing, a saddle assembly in accordance with the invention is constituted by a yoke member, generally designated by numeral **10** and a saddle removably connected thereto by coin screws **12**, a bayonet catch or other suitable means.

Because of the two-piece assembly, one may provide a range of sizes for the saddle and the yoke and thereby match the assembly to both the bearer and the passenger. Thus when the child to be carried is quite small and his bearer a broad-shouldered adult, the assembly may be tailored to this combination as distinguished from one in which the child is somewhat larger and the bearer narrow-shouldered. It is also possible to provide a one-piece assembly in which the saddle and yoke are integral with each other.

Yoke **10** is molded, vacuum-formed or otherwise fabricated in one piece of rigid, light-weight liquid-impermeable material, such as plain or reinforced vinyl, reinforced fiber glass, or aluminum. The yoke is shaped to define a breast plate **10A** joined by shoulder pieces **10B** and **10C** to a back plate **10D**, the yoke having an opening **10E** therein to accommodate the neck of the wearer.

The underside of the yoke, particularly under the shoulder pieces **10B** and **10C** where the load is greatest, is preferably lined with padding such as a layer of resilient foam material **13**. One may reinforce the structure of the yoke by turning in the edges thereof, thereby to define a peripheral rib or bead.

Saddle is cowl-shaped and is constituted by a curved rear wall **11A** to accommodate the posterior of the child, and rolled-in side walls **11B** and **11C** which are shaped to accommodate the thighs of the seated child. Thus the child, merely by spreading apart his thighs to press them against the side walls **11B** and **11C**, is able thereby to anchor himself firmly in the saddle. He can then even lean backwards or sideways without the need to hold the head of the bearer. In this way, the danger of fingers in the eyes of the bearer or dislodging the bearer's glasses is avoided.

While there has been shown and described a preferred embodiment of the shoulder saddle assembly, it will be appreciated that many changes and modifications may be made therein without, however, departing from the essential spirit of the invention. Thus the saddle assembly may be equipped with a water-proof hood of transparent plastic material to afford a shower cover for both the child and bearer. Or the saddle may be worn in a car while driving, with the addition of a small cylindrical cushion in the roll behind the neck to afford protection against whiplash or other types of neck injuries. This protection is superior to that furnished by the usual head rest fixed to a seat, for the shoulder saddle always moves with the body, whereas the head rest is effective only if the head is in a position to be engaged by the head rest when subjected to a shock force.

In practice, breast plate **10A** may be formed with a central slot extending from the neck opening to the lower edge thereof, so that instead of placing the saddle over the head, in order to rest it on the shoulders, it may be donned through the slot.

Also, detachable strips of plastic or other material may be used to connect the front and rear pieces of the saddle, the strips going under the arms and being adjustable by the wearer.

In this way, the saddle can be secured firmly to the wearer and cannot be dislodged from the shoulder. One may also provide ankle straps on the breast plate to engage the ankles of the child borne on the saddle.

A carrier pouch may be connected to the back to the saddle for accommodating small packages. In this way, one can carry packages as well as the child, and yet have the hands free to open gates, etc. The foam lining for the saddle is preferably of perforated or open-celled construction to communicate with holes in the yoke piece to provide outlets for skin perspiration and thereby afford a cooling action.

I claim:

1. A shoulder saddle assembly for carrying a passenger and comprising:

A. a yoke member having a neck opening and a breast plate joined by a pair of shoulder pieces to a back plate, whereby said member rests stably on the shoulders of the wearer,

B. a cowl-shaped saddle secured to the yoke member, said saddle having a curved rear wall to accommodate the posterior of the passenger, and side walls to engage the thighs of the passenger whose legs overlie the breast plate.

2. A saddle assembly as set forth in claim **1**, wherein said saddle is secured to the yoke member by removable screws to permit a combination of saddle and yoke sizes, matched to the passenger and bearer.

3. A saddle assembly as set forth in claim **1** wherein said yoke member is formed of light-weight, liquid-impermeable material.

4. A saddle assembly as set forth in claim **1** wherein said side walls are rolled-in to follow the shape of the thighs.

5. A saddle assembly as set forth in claim **1** wherein the edges of the saddle are turned in to produce a reinforcing bead.

6. A saddle assembly as set forth in claim **1** further including harness pieces to further secure the ankles or legs of the passenger to the yoke.

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