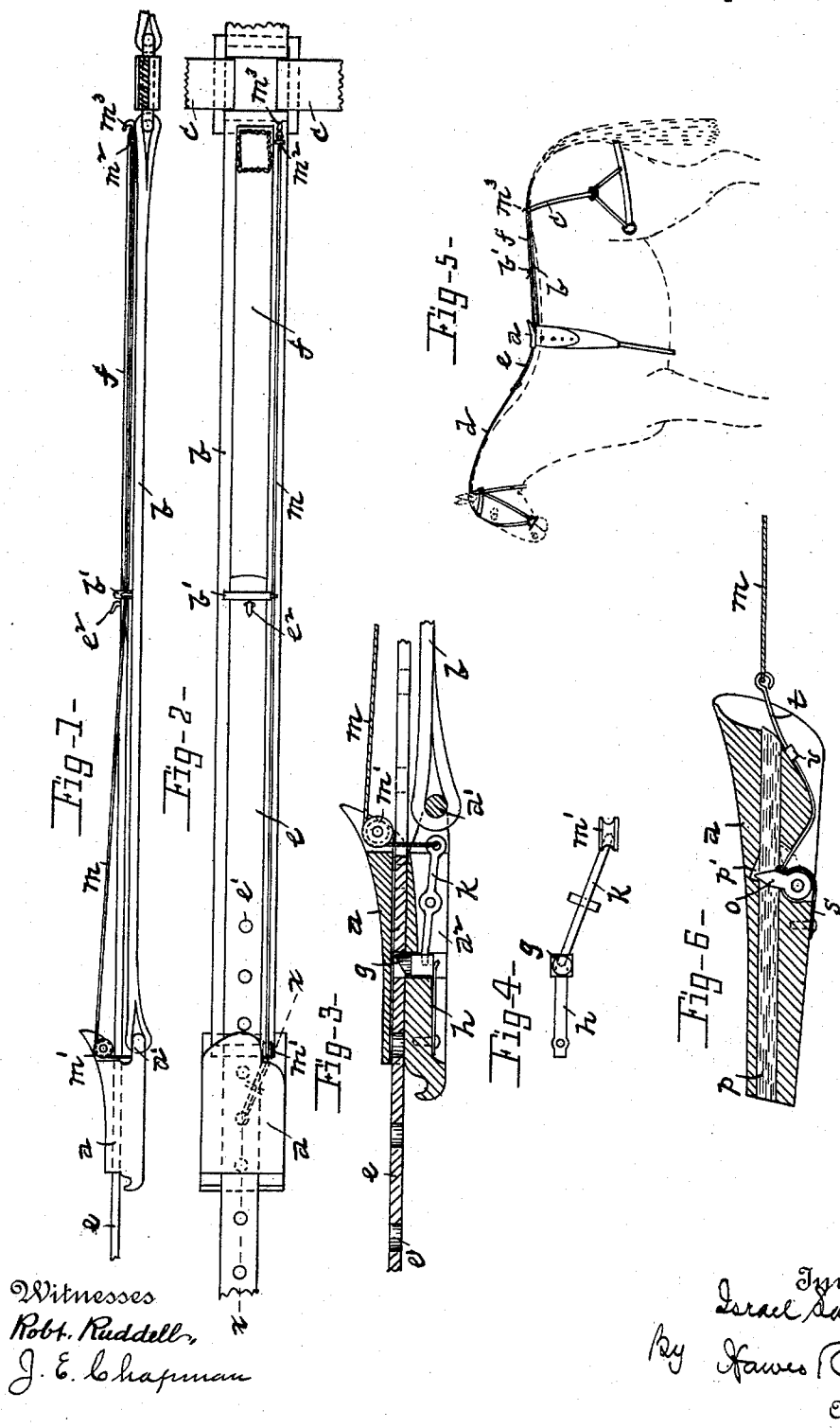


(No Model.)

I. LABELLE.  
HORSE CHECKING DEVICE.

No. 483,306.

Patented Sept. 27, 1892.



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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## HORSE-CHECKING DEVICE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 483,306, dated September 27, 1892.

Application filed April 2, 1892. Serial No. 427,478. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ISRAËL LABELLE, of Holyoke, in the county of Hampden and State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Checking and Unchecking Devices for Harness, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming part thereof.

It is the object of my invention to provide a simple and inexpensive means whereby the checkrein of a harness can be quickly operated from the vehicle to which a horse is hitched to both check and uncheck the horse, thereby rendering it unnecessary for the driver to leave his seat for such purpose.

A further object is to provide means whereby the checking action will be performed automatically as soon as the horse raises its head after being unchecked.

To these ends my invention consists in the checking and unchecking device constructed and operating as hereinafter fully described, and particularly pointed out in the claims.

Referring to the drawings, in which like letters designate like parts in the several figures, Figure 1 is a side view of the saddle and back-strap of a harness having applied thereto a checking and unchecking device embodying my invention. Fig. 2 is a plan view thereof. Fig. 3 is a vertical section taken upon line  $x x$  of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a plan view of the parts which make up the new device removed from the saddle. Fig. 5 shows the outline of a horse and so much of the complete harness as is necessary for a clear understanding of the invention. Fig. 6 shows a slightly-modified form of the device.

The letter  $a$  designates the saddle,  $b$  the back-strap, and  $c$  the hip-straps, of a harness, said back-strap being secured at its front end to said saddle by being passed through a loop  $a'$  on the latter, as usual.

The letter  $d$  designates the checkrein.

The saddle  $a$ , which will preferably be made from cast metal, is provided with a passage extending from front to rear thereof near its upper side, through which passes a strap  $e$ , provided with a series of holes  $e'$ , in such manner as to be capable of free longitudinal movement through the saddle. The front end of said strap  $e$  is connected by a buckle, snap-

hook, or other suitable device to the end of the checkrein  $d$ , while to its rear end is suitably secured an elastic extension  $f$ , preferably composed of rubber webbing. To the rear of the saddle the strap  $e$  and its extension  $f$  are superposed upon the back-strap  $b$ , passing through a loop  $b'$  on the latter, and the rear end of said extension  $f$  is secured to the back-strap by sewing or otherwise at or near the point where the latter joins the hip-straps  $c$ . I prefer to make the strap  $e$  and its extension  $f$  of such relative lengths that the point of juncture between them will normally lie substantially midway between the ends of the back-strap  $b$ , at or near which point the loop  $b'$  is located, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2. A forwardly-projecting hook  $e^2$  is secured to the strap  $e$ , which hook normally rests against the front edge of the loop  $b'$  and is free to move with the strap toward the saddle  $a$ . A detent  $g$  is suitably guided for vertical movement in a socket in the lower portion of saddle  $a$ , the lower part of said detent and its socket being made of rectangular or other angular form in cross-section to prevent rotary movement of the former. The upper end of said detent normally projects within the passage which receives the strap  $e$ , in which position it is adapted to enter one of the holes in said strap, and its said upper end is so beveled upon its front side, as shown in Fig. 3, that the strap  $e$  is always free to move rearwardly while being held securely against forward movement so long as the detent enters one of the holes therein. The detent is normally retained in its highest position by spring-pressure, and, as herein shown, such pressure is secured by a flat spring  $h$ , riveted or otherwise secured to the under side of the saddle, in front of the detent, and having its rear end bearing against the under side of the latter; but it will be obvious that other forms of springs can be utilized for the purpose. A vertically-rocking lever  $k$  is pivoted between its ends within a recess  $a^2$  in the saddle, the front end of which makes contact with the detent, as shown in Fig. 3, and at the rear end of which is located an eye, in which is secured the front end of a cord  $m$ , said cord passing thence over a grooved pulley  $m'$ , journaled upon the saddle, and from thence rearwardly through a guide-eye on the

loop  $b'$  and through a loop  $m^2$  on the back-strap  $b$  at the rear end of the latter, where it terminates in a forwardly-projecting hook  $m^3$ , said cord lying beside the strap  $e$  and its extension  $f$ , as shown in Fig. 2. The recess  $a^2$  in the saddle is disposed at the proper angle to permit the front end of said lever  $k$  to make contact with the detent in the plane of the transverse center of strap  $e$ , while its outer end projects slightly beyond the plane of the side of said strap, as represented by broken lines in Fig. 2.

To uncheck the horse, it is necessary simply to exert a slight pull upon the cord  $m$ , thereby rocking lever  $k$  and depressing the detent so that it is disengaged from strap  $e$ . The horse is then free to lower his head to drink or for any purpose, the elastic extension  $f$  of strap  $e$  permitting the latter to move forwardly until the hook  $e^2$  makes contact with the rear side of the saddle. As soon as the horse raises his head again said elastic extension  $f$  draws strap  $e$  rearwardly to its former position and the detent immediately enters the hole in said strap adjacent to it, thereby securely holding said strap against forward movement until again depressed by pulling the cord  $m$ . The checking action is thus performed automatically, and the movement to cord  $m$  to uncheck the horse can be readily accomplished by the driver of the vehicle by reaching forward and grasping the hook  $m^3$  with his hand or by providing the whip with a suitable loop to be engaged with said hook, either of which actions can be performed without leaving the vehicle and without surrender of the control of the horse by means of the reins. A very common source of accident to driving-parties is thus entirely avoided. The hook  $e^2$  affords means for positively pulling the strap  $e$  rearwardly by means of the whip or otherwise should the elastic extension  $f$  for any reason fail to properly perform its work.

In Fig. 6 I have shown a slightly-modified form of the invention, in which the detent  $o$  is pivotally supported upon the saddle below the passage  $p$ , which receives strap  $e$ , and is adapted to be moved from the position shown by full lines, in which it extends across said passage, to the position shown by broken lines, in which it clears the passage. Said detent is normally retained in the former of said positions by a curved spring  $s$ , secured at one end to the saddle and bearing at its opposite end against the rear side of the detent, and a flexible wire  $t$ , connected at one end to the detent and passing through a loop  $v$  and having at its rear end an eye to which the front end of the cord  $m$  is connected, enables the detent to be readily thrown to its opposite position to release the strap  $e$  in the same manner as the form first described. The detent  $o$  is of such length that in its normal position it extends entirely across the passage  $p$ , and its free end enters a notch or recess  $p'$  in the upper wall of said passage, thereby ma-

terially increasing its power of resisting a forward strain on strap  $e$ . Because of such greater resisting strength and because it enables me to avoid the use of the extra lever  $k$  I prefer to use the form of detent last described, although either form operates very successfully to secure the desired result.

It will be obvious that the elastic extension  $f$  of strap  $e$  can be composed of a coil-spring, if desired, and that it can be omitted altogether and reliance placed upon a positive pulling movement upon said strap to check the horse within the spirit of my invention.

The many advantages of the means herein described for checking and unchecking the horse without leaving the vehicle are obvious and need not be specifically recited herein. It should be stated, however, that the particular means devised by me for the purpose are not only simple and inexpensive in their nature, but are so arranged that they do not detract from the appearance of the harness in the least.

Having thus fully described my invention, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In a checking and unchecking device for harness, the combination, with a saddle having extending therethrough from front to rear a passage to receive a strap, of a strap adapted for longitudinal movement through said passage, said strap having at its front end means for detachably securing it to the checkrein and having its rear portion superposed and guided for longitudinal movement upon the back-strap of the harness, a spring-actuated detent movably supported upon the saddle beneath said passage and adapted in its normal position to engage said strap and securely hold it against forward movement, and a cord or similar device extending along and guided by the back-strap to the rear end of the latter and having its front end operatively connected with said detent, whereby by pulling said cord the detent will be operated to release said strap, arranged and operating substantially as set forth.

2. In a checking and unchecking device for harness, the combination, with the saddle, of a strap passing loosely therethrough, said strap being adapted at its front end to be connected to the checkrein and having its rear end connected to the back-strap of the harness near the rear end of the latter by an elastic extension of the former, adapted to automatically check the horse, a spring-actuated detent on the saddle, adapted to engage said strap and hold it against forward movement, and means, substantially as described, for retracting said detent from the rear end of the harness to cause it to release said strap, substantially as set forth.

3. The combination, with the saddle  $a$ , having a passage  $p$  extending therethrough, of the strap  $e$ , passing through said passage, said strap having its rear end secured to the back-strap  $b$ , its front end adapted to be connected

to the checkrein and being elastic at some point in its length, whereby it is adapted to automatically check the horse, a spring-actuated detent movably supported upon the saddle and adapted to engage said strap *e* and hold it from movement in a forward direction, and cord *m*, operatively connected with said detent at its front end and having its rear portion suitably guided upon said back-strap, substantially as set forth.

4. The combination, with saddle *a*, provided with passage *p*, of detent *o*, pivotally supported upon the saddle adjacent to said passage

and adapted to project into the latter in its normal position, springs *s* for retaining said detent in its normal position, and flexible metallic connection *t*, secured at its front end to said detent and having its rear end projecting beyond the rear side of the saddle and having cord *n* connected to said rear end thereof, substantially as and for the purpose described.

ISRAËL LABELLE.

Witnesses:

W. H. CHAPMAN,  
J. E. CHAPMAN.