

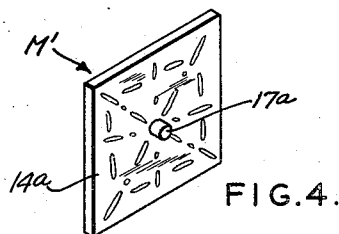
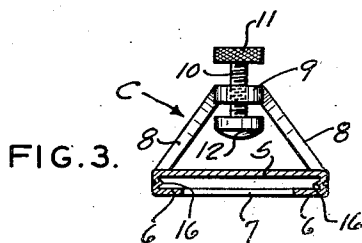
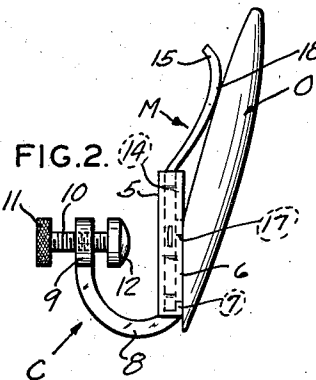
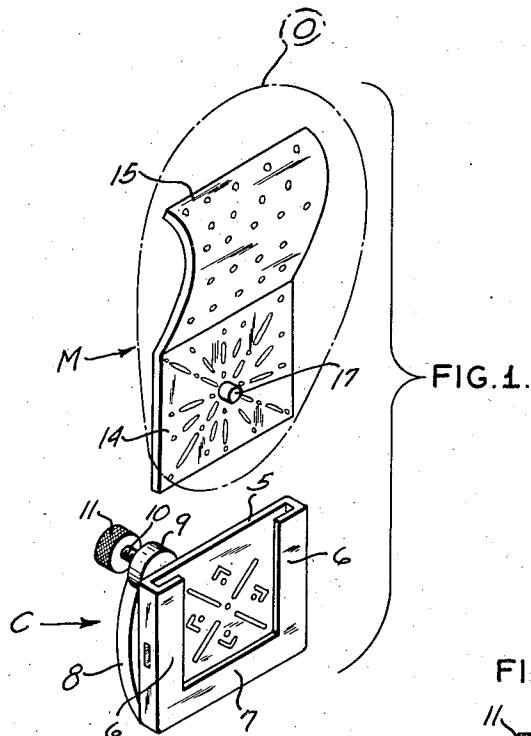
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EARRING

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EARRING

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This invention relates to the general class of jewelry, and is more specifically concerned with improvements in the construction and arrangement of earring articles of this class.

It is the general practice to construct earrings as unitary articles in which the ear lobe clamp is fixed or otherwise secured to the ornamental portion thereof. Moreover, the clamp means and earring ornament have been, of necessity, mutually interdependent parts since the clamp is adapted to engage the ear lobe and pressed it against the reverse side of the ornament. As a consequence of this prior construction, in which each earring ornament requires clamping means, it is incumbent upon the wearer to have a variety of earrings for use with variations in attire.

The present invention has as a principal object the improvement in earring construction whereby the ear lobe clamping means is arranged independently of the ornamental portion and may be utilized with removable and interchangeable earring ornaments, to the end that the improved article may have a versatility not found heretofore.

It is also an important object of this invention to provide an earring of new and useful character in which the ear lobe clamping means is an independent portion of the article and is standardized and otherwise formed to receive an ornament mounting means also of generally standardized nature, such that the mounting means and a desired ornament when assembled on the clamping means constitutes a complete article, it being possible therefore to have a wide variety of ornaments each provided with a standard mount for use with the improved clamping means.

Objectively also, this invention aims to simplify and improve the manufacture of earring articles in the novel respects that a variety of ornaments may be interchangeably associated with a standard clamp and in the respects that the ornaments and ornament mounts may be manufactured at reduced cost since individual clamps are not required to be made up and secured thereto.

Other objects and attendant advantages will be pointed out in the course of the detailed description relating to a preferred embodiment of the invention, reference being had to the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the present earring construction showing, in an exploded illustration, the important features of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a side view, in elevation, of the earring assembly;

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Fig. 3 is a top plan view, partly in section, disclosing further details of the invention, and

Fig. 4 is a modified form of ornament mounting means.

In the drawing, the improved and novel earring includes an ear lobe clamping assembly C, an ornament mount M and an ornament which may have a variety of forms, but for present purposes is indicated in phantom outline in Fig. 1 and in full line in Fig. 2 at O.

The present form and construction of clamp assembly C embodies a rectilinear frame 5 having side flanges 6 and a bottom flange 7 formed integrally therewith. These flanged portions are formed to lie in a plane in front of the plane of the frame 5 to define a guide-way for receiving the mounting means M at its upper side. The frame 5 with its flanges 6 and 7 is shown as rectangular in general outline; however, other shapes may be selected if desired, as for the purpose of making the clamp more pleasing in appearance. It is preferred, but not strictly essential that the clamp frame be formed of metal, that is either a base metal having a plated surface finish or a precious or semi-precious metal. Moreover, all or a part of the body of frame 5 may be cut out or perforated in a desired pattern, as suggested in Fig. 1.

Frame 5 carries a pair of curved arms 8 suitably joined thereto at spaced zones of the bottom surface of the flange 7 (Figs. 2 and 3). These arms 8 are smoothly curved and directed rearwardly and upwardly in a convergent manner for interconnection and securement at a bearing element 9. The arms 8 and element 9 may be separately formed and later joined to each other, or they may be integrally formed and shaped from a single piece of metal or other suitable material.

The bearing element 9 receives a threaded thumb screw 10 having knurled head 11 and a pressure pad 12, the latter being secured to the screw 10 in any suitable manner after the screw 10 has been threadedly mounted in the element 9. In use, the pad 12 is adjusted to permit the clamp assembly C to be positioned with the ear lobe between it and the rear surface of the frame 5. Normally the pair of curved arms 8 will lie snugly adjacent the lower margins of the ear lobe so as to be inconspicuous, and when this preferred position is obtained the screw may be threaded inwardly to press the ear lobe against the frame 5 without necessarily pinching or causing an uncomfortable feeling. Of course, the clamp assembly C may be adjusted by the wearer with or without first having mounted the ornament.

In Figs. 1 and 2, the mount M for the ornament is formed of a single piece of metal, plastic or other material which is suitable for the purpose in view. In a preferred form this mount M has a base portion 14 and an upper leaf portion 15 which is convexly formed or gracefully curved forwardly and then rearwardly relative to the plane of base 14, as suggested by the showing of Fig. 2. One of the principal advantages in forming the base and leaf portions 14 and 15 of mount M in this manner is to obtain a desired degree of angularity for the ornament O such that it will lie in front of and assume a natural position relative to the general formation of the ear. The mount M is intended to be a standardized part, at least with respect to the base 14 thereof so that it may be received in the standard clamp frame 5. The upper leaf portion 15 may have the curved form suggested by Figs. 1 and 2, or it may be varied to suit the type and nature of the ornament carried thereby.

Another advantage in arranging and forming the base 14 and leaf 15 in the manner shown by Figs. 1 and 2 resides in the extent to which the ornament may hide or conceal the ear, especially of a person utilizing a hearing aid. It is often recognized that a person requiring the use of a hearing aid will hesitate before accepting its benefits or will flatly reject the same, one reason being that hearing aids are not particularly pleasing in appearance. With an earring ornament mount of the present character it will be appreciated that the curved leaf portion 15 forms a concealing pocket in front of the tragus and concha portions of the ear wherein the ear portion of the hearing aid is located when in use. With certain modifications in the curvature and projection of the leaf portion 15 relative to its base, and in the character of the ornament, the mount and its ornament may be arranged to conceal the type of hearing aid which is placed behind the ear helix in the region of the mastoid process of the temporal bone. Therefore, the present earring may have other than a purely ornamental use in its broader aspects. The principal use of this nature being noted above.

When assembling mount M in the clamp frame 5, the base portion 14 is received in the guideway defined by and between the frame 5 and the spaced flanges 6 and 7. As the base 14 slides inwardly its opposite edges are frictionally engaged by holding projections 16 (Figs. 1 and 3) inwardly struck from the material of each flange 6. The engagement is preferably just sufficient to prevent unintended displacement of the mount M. Some reliance is placed upon the resiliency of flanges 6 for maintaining the requisite frictional holding force, and for taking up whatever slight amount of wear occurs in the projections 16 or the side edges of the base 14 of the mount M.

The ornament O may be conveniently secured to the mount M by means of a short spacer lug or connector 17 fixed to the base 14 and to the rear side of the ornament O. The leaf 15 also provides a point or surface 18 for securement of the ornament O. Lug 17 is not necessarily initially placed on the base 14 but may be a deposit of solder or brazing material at the time of assembly of the ornament.

Generally it is desirable to keep down or reduce the weight of the mount M, and this may be accomplished by the use of a suitably perforated or meshed material as suggested in Fig. 1. It is within the contemplation of this invention that the mount M may be formed from a metal

or plastic material having the requisite gauge and stiffness.

A desirable modification in the character of the mount M of Fig. 1 is disclosed at M¹ in Fig. 4 wherein only the base portion 14a is utilized to carry an ornament. This portion also is provided with a lug or connector 17a to which the ornament is secured. Thus a relatively small ornament may be utilized in the present clamp assembly in place of the larger type of ornament O suggested in Fig. 2. In either case the mount base portion 14 or modified base 14a are fully interchangeably mountable in the guideway of the frame 5.

It will now have appeared from the above detailed description of the invention that the present improvement in earring construction embodies the new principle of a standardized ear lobe clamp assembly formed and arranged to provide a guideway for receiving and releasably holding a mount M, in which the mount has a standardized base portion 14. It is also clearly apparent now that the mount M is adapted to carry and support an ornament and acts to fix the position or setting of the ornament at a natural angular relation with respect to the general configuration of the human ear.

While the foregoing and other features of the invention are best disclosed by the present preferred embodiment illustrated in the accompanying drawing, it is to be understood that certain variants and modifications may be suggested hereby without in any way departing from the spirit in which this disclosure is given or departing from the full intended scope of the appended claims.

We claim:

1. An earring comprising, in combination, a frame formed to define a guide-way which is open along one margin, ear lobe clamping means secured to said frame in position to clamp the ear lobe against said frame, and mounting means for an ornament formed and arranged to include a base portion which is removably positionable in said frame guide-way through the open margin thereof.

2. An earring comprising, in combination, an ear lobe clamp assembly formed to include a frame having flanged margins defining a guide-way, and a threaded clamping element operably carried by said frame in spaced, ear lobe clamping cooperation therewith; and mounting means for an ornament, said mounting means including a base portion and a leaf portion extending from the base portion, said base and leaf portions cooperating to carry an ornament.

3. In an article of jewelry of the earring class, the new and improved combination, of a frame formed with integral marginal flanges, spaced arms secured to said frame and curving rearwardly and upwardly in converging relation for interconnection rearwardly of the frame, a clamping element threadedly mounted at said interconnection of the arms for clamping adjustment of the ear lobe against the frame, and an ornament mount formed to be removably received between and retained by said frame flanges, said mount having a lug carried thereon for the mounting of an ornament in front of the frame flanges.

4. In an article of jewelry of the earring class: the combination, of a rectilinear frame having marginal flanges defining a guide-way, arm members secured to said frame at spaced zones and extending rearwardly and convergently there-

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from, bearing means secured to and interconnecting said arm members, a threaded element mounted in said bearing means for threading adjustment relative to said frame releasably to clamp the ear lobe therebetween, and earring ornament mounting means, said mounting means being formed to provide a rectilinear base portion receivable in said frame guide-way, and a leaf portion extending therefrom, the base and leaf portions mutually cooperating to support the earring ornament relative to said frame.

5. An article of jewelry of the earring class providing an ear lobe attachment and ornament mount, adapted for the removable support of any selected one of a given plurality of earring ornaments, each ornament having a mount individual thereto, said article comprising a frame formed with marginal flanges which define a frame guide-way, a pair of arms, each secured to said frame at spaced zones and extending rearwardly, a bearing element secured to and interconnecting each arm, a clamping element threadedly mounted in said bearing element and operable for clamping the ear lobe against said frame, and an ornament mount cooperably positionable in said frame guide-way, said mount providing a base portion to be engaged by said marginal flanges for removable retention in the frame guide-way.

6. An article of jewelry as defined in claim 5, and further characterized in that opposed marginal flanges are each formed with an inwardly directed projection for frictionally engaging the adjacent surface of said ornament mount base portion for retaining the latter against unintended displacement relative to and outwardly of said frame guide-way.

7. In an article of jewelry of the earring class, the new and improved combination, of a frame having side and bottom flanges formed thereon to

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define a guide-way open along the top, a threaded clamp element, means operably securing said clamp element on said frame for engaging and pressing the ear lobe against the frame, an earring ornament, and an ornament mount to which the ornament is secured, said mount being formed of a decoratively perforated or meshed material to provide a base portion receivable through the open top of said frame guide-way, and an outwardly curved and upwardly directed leaf portion, such that the ornament secured to the base and leaf portions will assume a position substantially in front of and conforming with the natural upward and outward formation of the human ear.

8. An earring clamp assembly comprising a frame having marginal flanges defining a guide-way at the front face of the frame, a pair of arms secured to said frame at spaced points thereon and directed rearwardly in converging relation, a bearing element carried by and interconnecting said arms, and an adjustable clamping element threadedly mounted in said bearing element for clamping the ear lobe against the rear face of said frame.

9. Mounting means for an earring ornament comprising a base portion, a leaf portion integral with said base portion, said portions being formed of a decoratively perforated or meshed material, and lug means on said base portion projecting from the facing surface thereof for securement of an ornament, said leaf portion being convexly curved relative to the facing surface of said base portion to provide a surface of securement for the ornament which is spaced from said means on the base portion.

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