Nov. 19, 1940. H. R. OUANT 2,221,926

SELECTIVE CHARACTER BEARING DEVICE

Filed Aug. 17, 1939

Fig. 1.

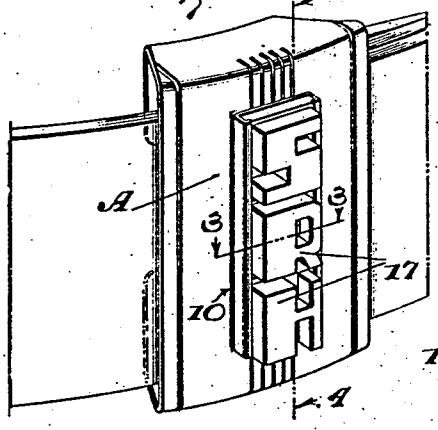


Fig. 4.

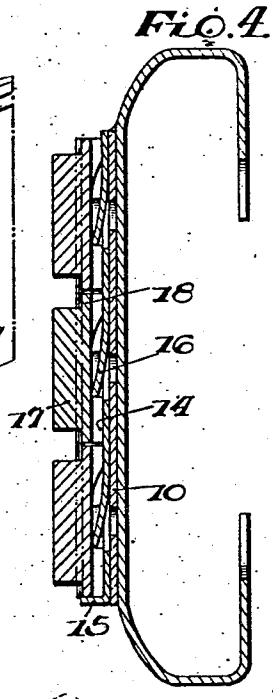


Fig. 5.

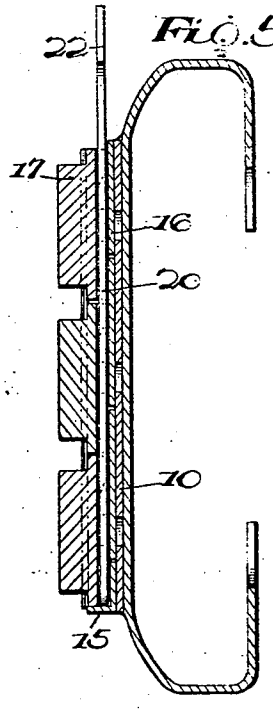
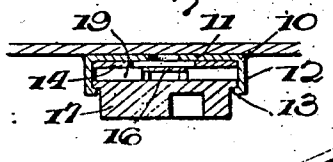


Fig. 3.



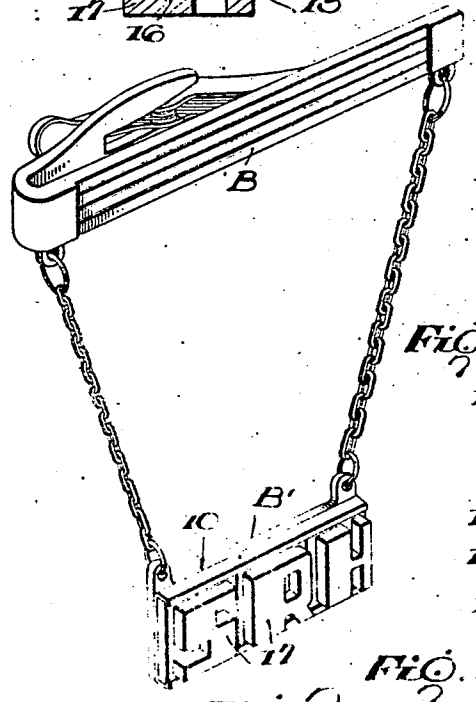


Fig. 2.

Fig. 10.

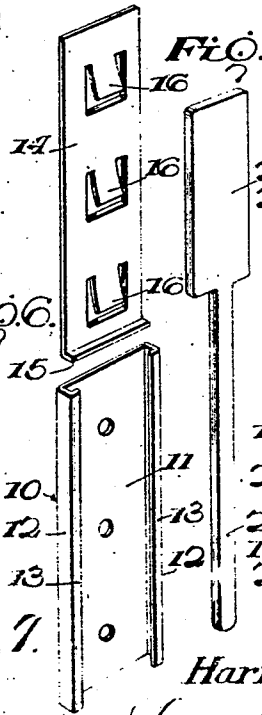


Fig. 8.

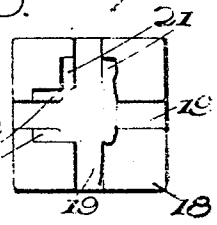


Fig. 6.

Fig. 9.

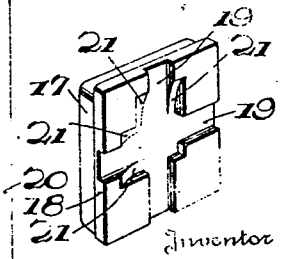


Fig. 7.

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Patented Nov. 19, 1940

2,221,926

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,221,926

SELECTIVE CHARACTER BEARING DEVICE

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Application August 17, 1939, Serial No. 290,708

9 Claims. (Cl. 40—140)

The present invention relates generally to character bearing devices for use in connection with many articles of merchandise and among others, jewelry, for the selective association and holding of initial letters, insignia, numerals, all of which among others are comprehended under the term character.

It is well known that many articles are now sold with provision for the holding of letters, numerals and insignia selected from a collection thereof, and applied according to the particular purchaser at the time of purchase. Various devices have been proposed whereby at the time of sale the selected characters may be readily inserted in a character holder forming a part of the article sold, so that the character will thereafter be held against accidental displacement and loss.

For various reasons, including the possibility of change of name or insignia and carelessness of salesmen, it has been found highly desirable to provide for change of the character after selection thereof and placement within the holder, and in proposing improvements in character bearing devices of this general nature, it is one of the primary objects of the invention to permit of ready, easy removal of the characters in a manner permitting reinsertion and relocking of the same or different characters precisely as the original characters were inserted and locked.

Further and more specifically it is an object of the present invention to provide a construction in which the characters may be normally locked in selected position and subsequently released and removed without mutilation of any portion of the characters themselves or the holders thereof and without in any way defacing, marring or endangering their free and effective reassemblage in the same manner and by the same means as originally employed for their secure support.

A still further object is the provision of means by which the correct positioning or orienting of a character in a character bearing holder is insured by the fact of the locking of such character in the holder.

Another object is the provision of a construction in which the characters are individually locked in a series within a holder, together with means whereby the several characters may be simultaneously released for removal and the various parts at the same time preserved for the subsequent individual locking of the same or different characters.

A still further object is the provision of a construction affording the above advantages, which is equally useful in connection with horizontally and vertically alined characters as well as those alined diagonally between the vertical and horizontal, and is also equally effective without regard to the number of characters employed.

With these and other objects in view, and with the understanding that the invention is capable of various specific changes in form, size, use and ornamental features, it is to be understood a concrete example thereof will be now described in full in connection with the showing in the accompanying drawing illustrating the same and forming a part of this specification.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a portion of a belt and its buckle showing the characters applied in vertically alined relation on the latter.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of a chain tie clasp showing the characters alined horizontally on the pendant chain-supported panel or plate.

Figure 3 is a detail horizontal sectional view taken substantially on line 3—3 of Figure 1.

Figures 4 and 5 are similar vertical sectional views taken on line 4—4 of Figure 1, the former showing the characters as normally locked and the latter showing the releasing member inserted preparatory to removal of the characters.

Figure 6 is a detail perspective view of the spring locking plate.

Figure 7 is a similar view of the holder.

Figure 8 is a rear elevation of one of the characters, removed.

Figure 9 is a detail perspective view thereof, and

Figure 10 is a detail perspective view of the releasing member or bar.

Referring now to these figures, it is to be understood the invention is intended to be the same irrespective of the particular article with which it is employed, and in every instance comprises a channel-shaped holder which, if used with a belt buckle A, as shown in Figures 1, 3, 4 and 5, is rigidly fixed by hard solder or in any other suitable manner to the face of the buckle. Where it is used, as in Figure 2, on the chain-supported panel or plate B' of a chain tie clasp B, it may be similarly fixed and in either use, as well as with key chains and other articles, the holder may be fixedly mounted either vertically or horizontally.

The channel-shaped holder 10 is seen most plainly in Figure 7 and preferably has a flat base

11 with outstanding flanges 12 along its sides and these flanges terminate in inturned opposing angular edges 13 which are spaced from the base 11 and form therewith inwardly opening guide channels. Preferably this holder is open at both ends as plainly seen in Figure 7, and is of a length substantially equal to the combined widths of the characters it is to receive and hold.

Within the holder 10, and preferably secured flatwise against the base 11 thereof to form substantially an integral part, as by means of spot welding or similarly rigid connecting means, is a locking plate 14 (see Figure 6) which has an upset flange 15 at one end closing the respective end of the channel of the holder, and thus leaving but one end of the holder open for the reception of the characters. The use of this locking plate is preferred rather than the formation of the locking tongues directly in the bottom of the channel piece, inasmuch as the closing of one end of the channel, which would otherwise be complicated, is thus rendered easy. At equi-distantly spaced points corresponding to the positions of the several characters, the locking plate, which is preferably formed of spring metal, has integral upwardly extending spring locking fingers 16, all of which are similarly inclined toward the end flange 15 and thus toward the closed end of the holder. All of these locking fingers 16 are readily and similarly yieldable into flatwise positions in the plane of the body of the locking plate for a reason which will presently appear.

The characters, whether letters, numerals, or insignia of various natures as for instance colleges, military and secret organizations, and shown at present as letters 17, are each formed to outstand from rectangular base pieces 18 of a width in both directions and a thickness, to slide into the channel of the holder.

Each of the characters 17 is formed of a height and width less than the distance between the inturned edges 13 of the holder which overlie the projecting edges of the base pieces 18 and thus confine the characters whether the latter are shifted horizontally or vertically within the holder.

Each of the base pieces 18 of the several characters has its rear or lower face provided with centrally disposed and crossing slots or grooves 19 which are of similar widths somewhat less than the widths of the spring locking fingers 16. Thus, in any position in the channel or holder, the grooves will present adjacent to their crossing points, shoulders or edges which, when engaged by the free ends of the locking fingers, will lock the characters in the holder. The crossing grooves 19, at right angles to one another, thus adapt the characters to be similarly locked in the manner described whether shifted vertically into a vertically disposed holder as seen in Figure 1, or horizontally into a horizontally disposed holder as in Figure 2.

Moreover, it is obvious that as disposed and locked in either direction, certain of the grooves 19 of the several locked characters aline with one another to form a continuous slot centrally of the holder and immediately opposite the several actively engaged spring locking fingers 16, as plainly seen in Figure 4.

Thus by inserting in the slot, so formed, a releasing member or bar 20 shown in Figure 10 for the full extent of the slot beneath the several character base pieces 18 in the manner seen in Figure 5, it is plain that said member 20, formed to interfit the grooves 19 will depress the several locking fingers out of engagement with the walls or edges of the grooves so that the characters will be simultaneously released and may be withdrawn from the open end of the holder by a sliding movement in a reverse direction with relation to their movement into the holder. Obviously this holds true irrespective of the number of characters employed, and in a manner which, upon subsequent removal of the releasing member 20, leaves the parts as originally formed, ready for the subsequent insertion of the same or different characters in the same locked relation.

Thus mistakes in the relative arrangement of the characters, or in the characters themselves, which so frequently happen in their hasty assemblage at busy times, may be easily and quickly rectified, without necessitating the bending of more or less fragile metal and without the danger of distorted parts, in an arrangement where, with the several characters in assembled and locked positions, their fastenings are entirely concealed.

It also frequently happens that a character is shifted into the holder when turned to a position at right angles to that it is intended to assume, and in such instances in order to avoid the slight delay attending the use of the releasing member 20, it is proposed that the edges or walls of the grooves 19 of the base pieces 18 may, as best seen in Figure 9, be cut away along inclines at two sides as at 21 so that when thus wrongly inserted the characters will not lock and may be instantly removed for reinsertion in proper positions. Thus in any instance where, upon insertion of a character, it does not lock against withdrawal, the one assembling the characters will be at once apprised of the fact that the character is improperly oriented.

The grooves 19 of the several characters may, of course, be either rectangular or semi-cylindrical with or without the cutaway and inclined portions above mentioned; and in any event, the releasing member 20 will be shaped to interfit the same, and is preferably provided at one end with a portion 22 of any suitable form, serving as a handle to promote easy and effective manipulation thereof in the manner previously described.

What is claimed is:

1. A channel-shaped character holder having a flat base, a plurality of equi-distantly and longitudinally spaced, similar, spring fingers supported on and projecting upwardly from the base along the central portion of the same, a series of substantially rectangular character members slidable longitudinally in one direction into the holder and having intersecting cross grooves extending substantially at right angles to each other in the bases thereof facing the holder base and presenting locking edges adjacent their junctures for engagement by the spring fingers to lock the character members within the holder in either of two selected positions of orientation.

2. A character bearing device comprising a holder having a channel and means closing said channel at one end and also having similarly upwardly projecting spring fingers spaced apart along the central portion of its channel and inclined toward its closed end, and character members slidable into the channel of the holder at its opposite end and having grooves in the bases thereof coextensive with the length of the members in the direction in which they are inserted into the holder and shoulders formed with-

in the grooves engageable by said spring fingers to lock the members in the holder.

3. A character bearing device comprising a holder having a channel and means closing said channel at one end and also having similarly upwardly projecting spring fingers spaced apart along the central portion of its channel and inclined toward its closed end, character members slidable into the channel of the holder at its opposite end and having grooves in the bases thereof, shoulders disposed within said grooves and engageable by said spring fingers, said grooves being arranged in crossing relation on each character member and of less width than the spring fingers in the end regions thereof, and certain of said grooves being alined with the series of fingers and with one another to form a continuous slot beneath the character members, and a releasing member slidably movable into and throughout said slot for forcing the spring fingers out of the grooves.

4. A channel-shaped character holder having a flat base, a plurality of equi-distantly and longitudinally spaced, similar, spring fingers supported on and projecting upwardly from the base along the central portion of the same, character members slidable into said channel and having grooves which receive the said locking means, locking abutments formed in said grooves and designed for engagement with the locking means, said grooves forming a continuous slot in alignment with the locking means, and a releasing member slidable into said slot throughout its length and operable to depress the spring locking means out of the first-named grooves of the character members.

5. A channel-shaped character holder having a flat base, a plurality of equi-distantly and longitudinally spaced, similar, spring fingers supported on and projecting upwardly from the base along the central portion of the same, character members having base pieces slidable in said channel and each provided with grooves crossing one another at their centers and of less width than said fingers, the sides of certain of said grooves being formed with recesses for receiving the fingers whereby to lock the character members within the channel and the other grooves forming a continuous slot below the said members and above the several locking fingers, and a releasing member slidably interfitting said slot and shiftable therein beneath the character members for simultaneously forcing the said locking fingers out of engagement with the first-named grooves of the character members.

6. In combination, a holder, spring locking fingers supported on and inclined upwardly and outwardly from a portion of the holder and in a line therealong, and character members having grooves in portions thereof, shoulders disposed within the grooves designed for locking engagement by said locking fingers when the members are inserted in the holder in one position of orientation to prevent removal of the members from the holder in one direction, and slideways disposed in the grooves and inclined upwardly from the bottoms of the grooves in said direction to permit removal of the members in said direction when the latter are inserted into the holder in a reversed position of orientation.

7. A channel-shaped character holder having a flat base, a spring finger supported on and projecting outwardly from the base in the central region of the same, and character members slidable in the channel and each having centrally crossing grooves extending at right angles to each other, a shoulder disposed within each groove to receive the spring fingers thereagainst when the character members are oriented crosswise or lengthwise of the holder.

8. A channel-shaped character holder having a flat base, a spring finger supported on and projecting outwardly from the base in the central region of the same, a character member slidable longitudinally into the holder and having grooves formed in the base thereof facing the channel of the holder and extending at right angles to each other, a shoulder formed in each groove and extending transversely thereof adjacent the juncture of the grooves and presenting locking edges for engagement by said spring finger to lock the character member within the holder when the latter is inserted therein so as to be oriented crosswise or lengthwise.

9. A character bearing device comprising a holder having a channel and also having an upwardly extending spring finger supported on and projecting upwardly from the channel of the holder, a character member slidable into the channel of the holder and having grooves in the base thereof presenting shoulders engageable by said spring finger, said grooves being arranged in crossing relation and being of less width than the width of the spring finger, and certain of said grooves being aligned opposite the finger to form a continuous slot beneath the character member, and a releasing member slidably movable into and through said slot for forcing the spring finger out of the grooves to permit removal of the character member from the holder.

HARRY R. QUANT.