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(54) **CARRYING AID DEVICE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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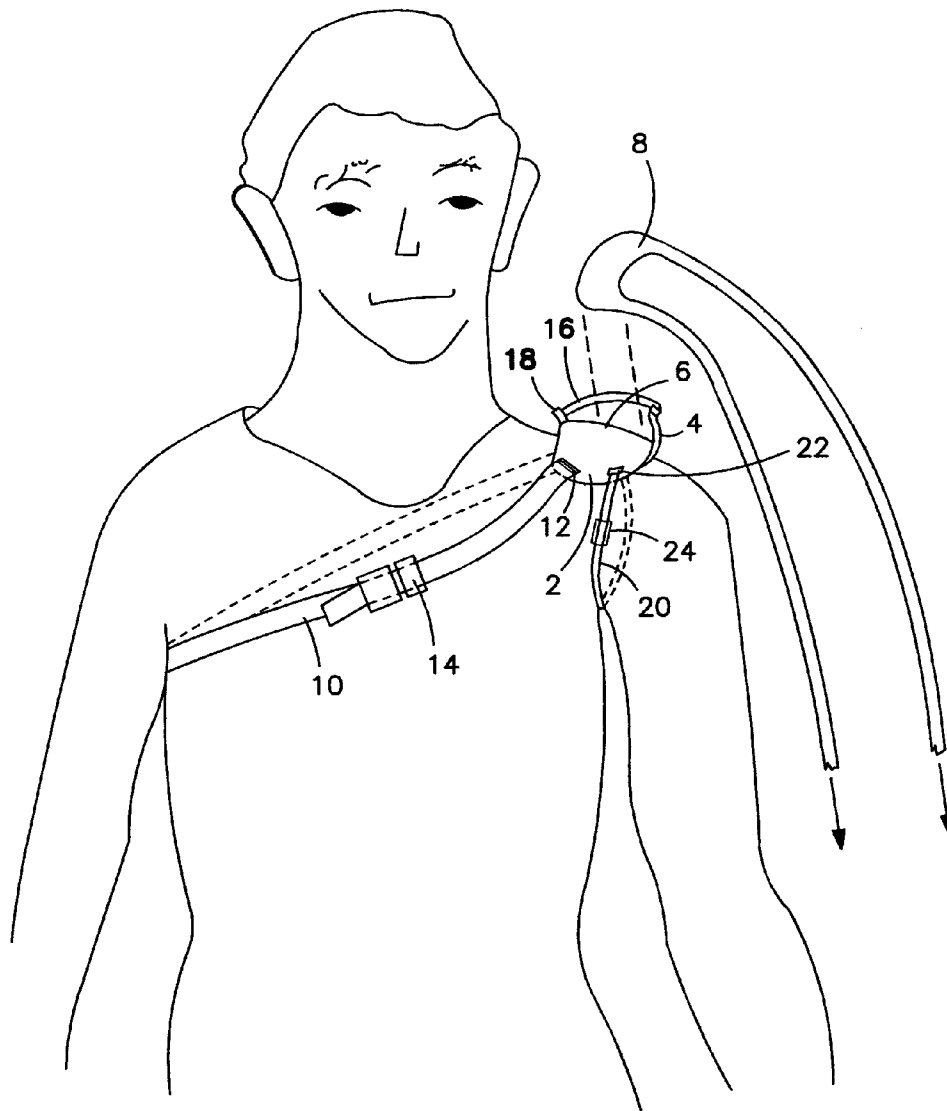
A device for carrying luggage and bags has a rigid or semi-rigid anchor element worn over a shoulder of a person, and strapped to the body of the person to maintain the anchor in the desired position. The anchor is formed in a configuration which receives and removably retains a carrying strap of the luggage or bag to prevent the luggage or bag from slipping from the person's shoulder. In further embodiments, attachment elements are provided on the strap worn by the person carrying the bag or luggage for removably connecting the strap to the carrying strap of the bag or luggage for preventing the carrying strap from slipping from the person's shoulder.

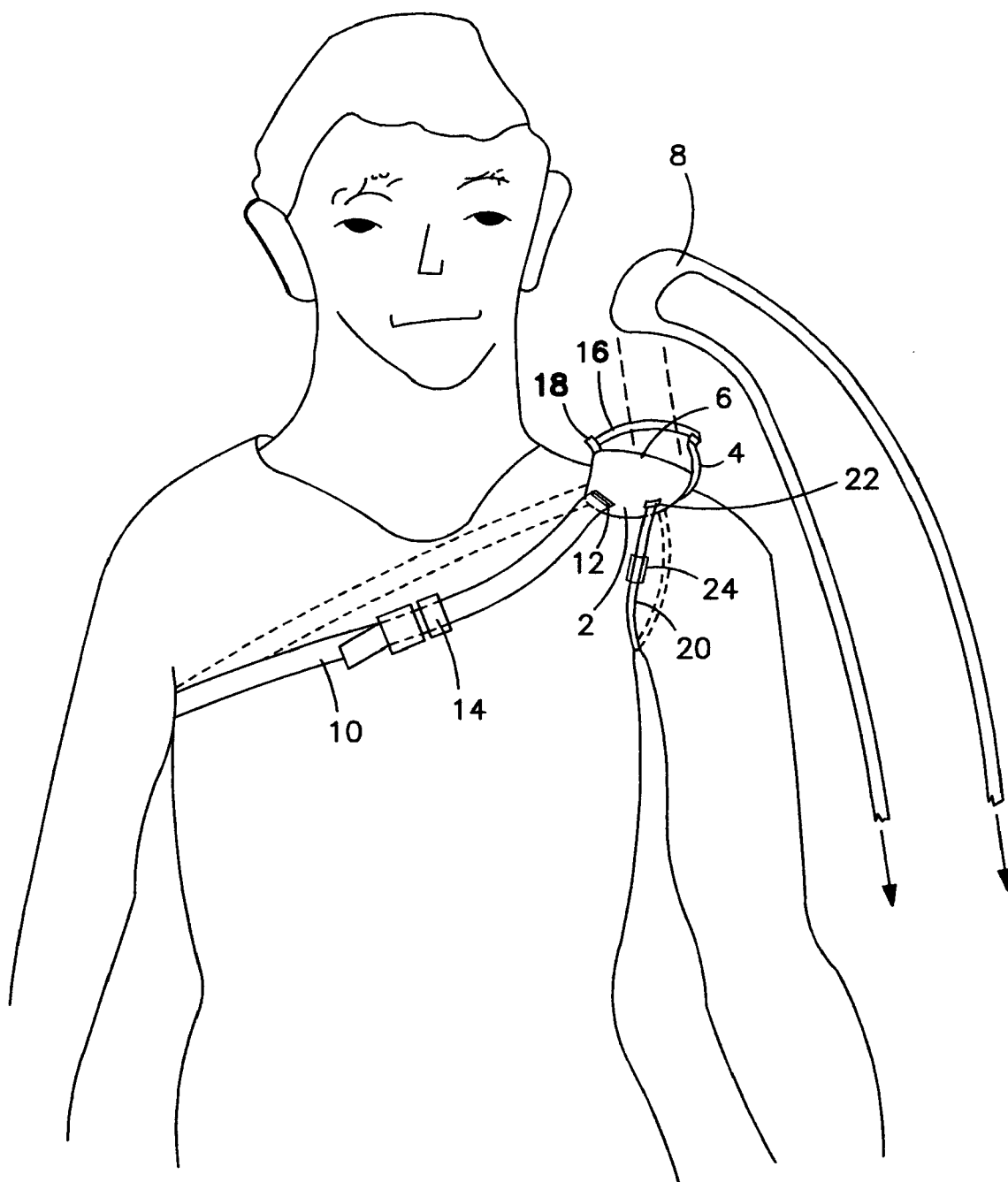
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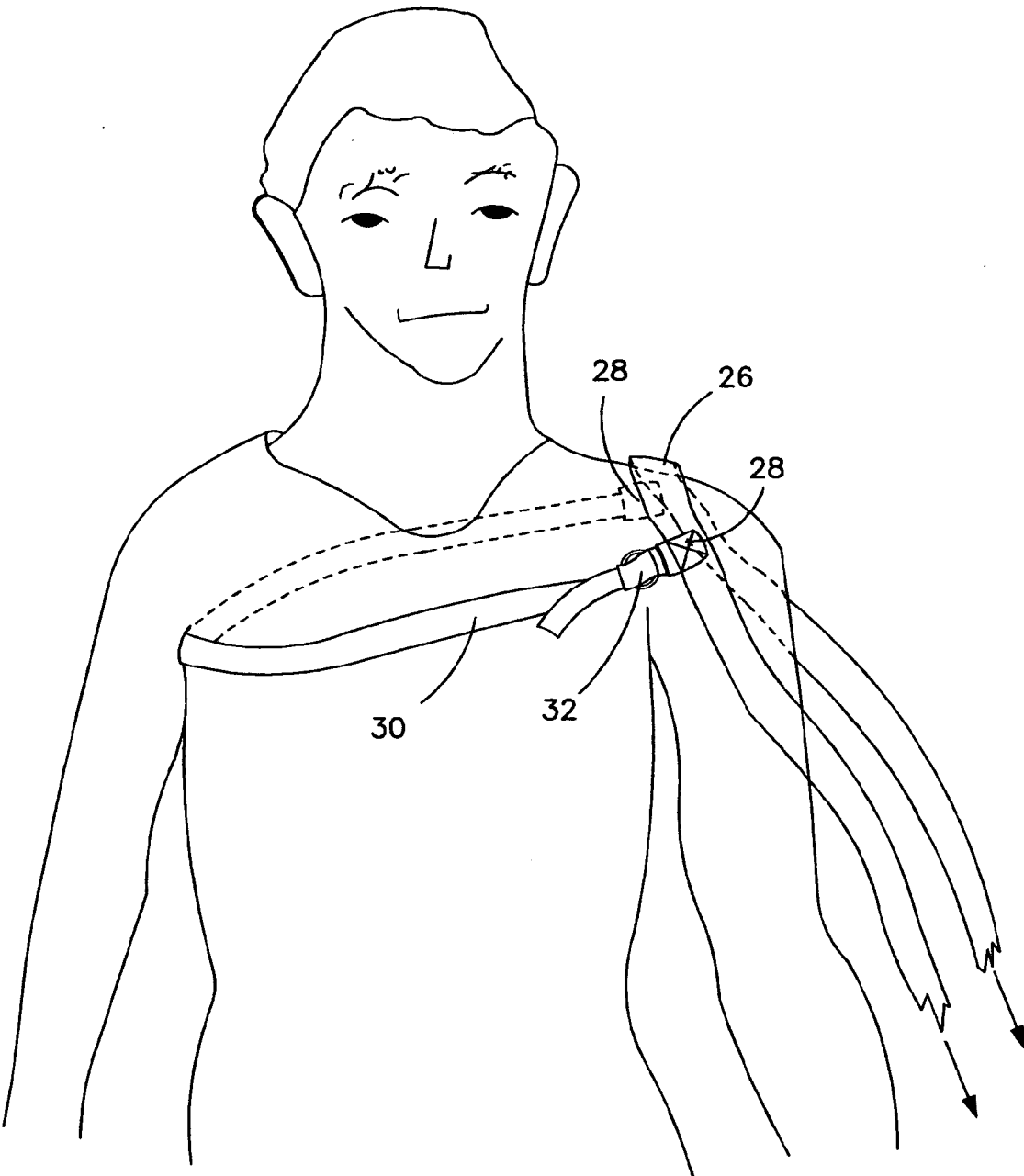
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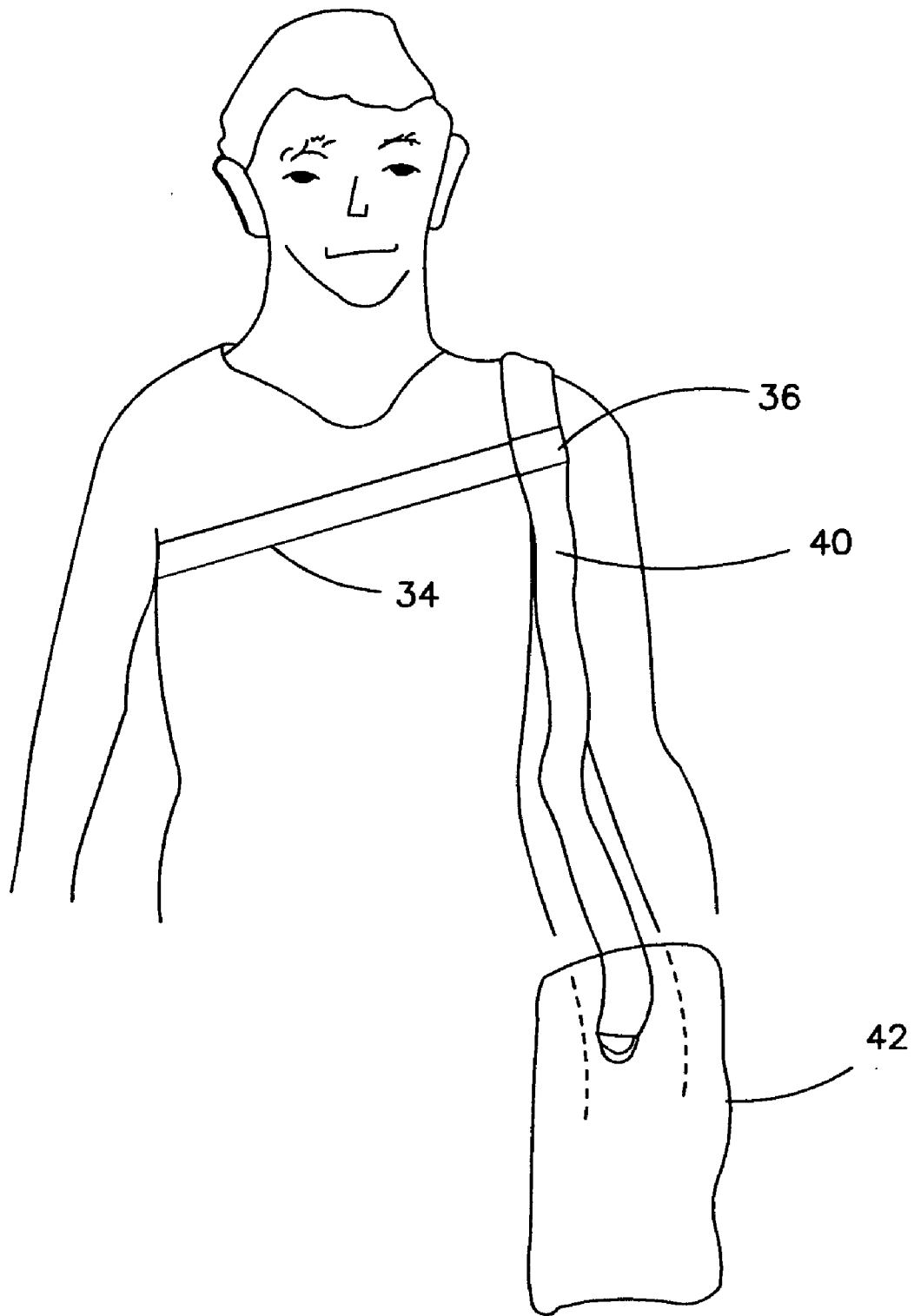




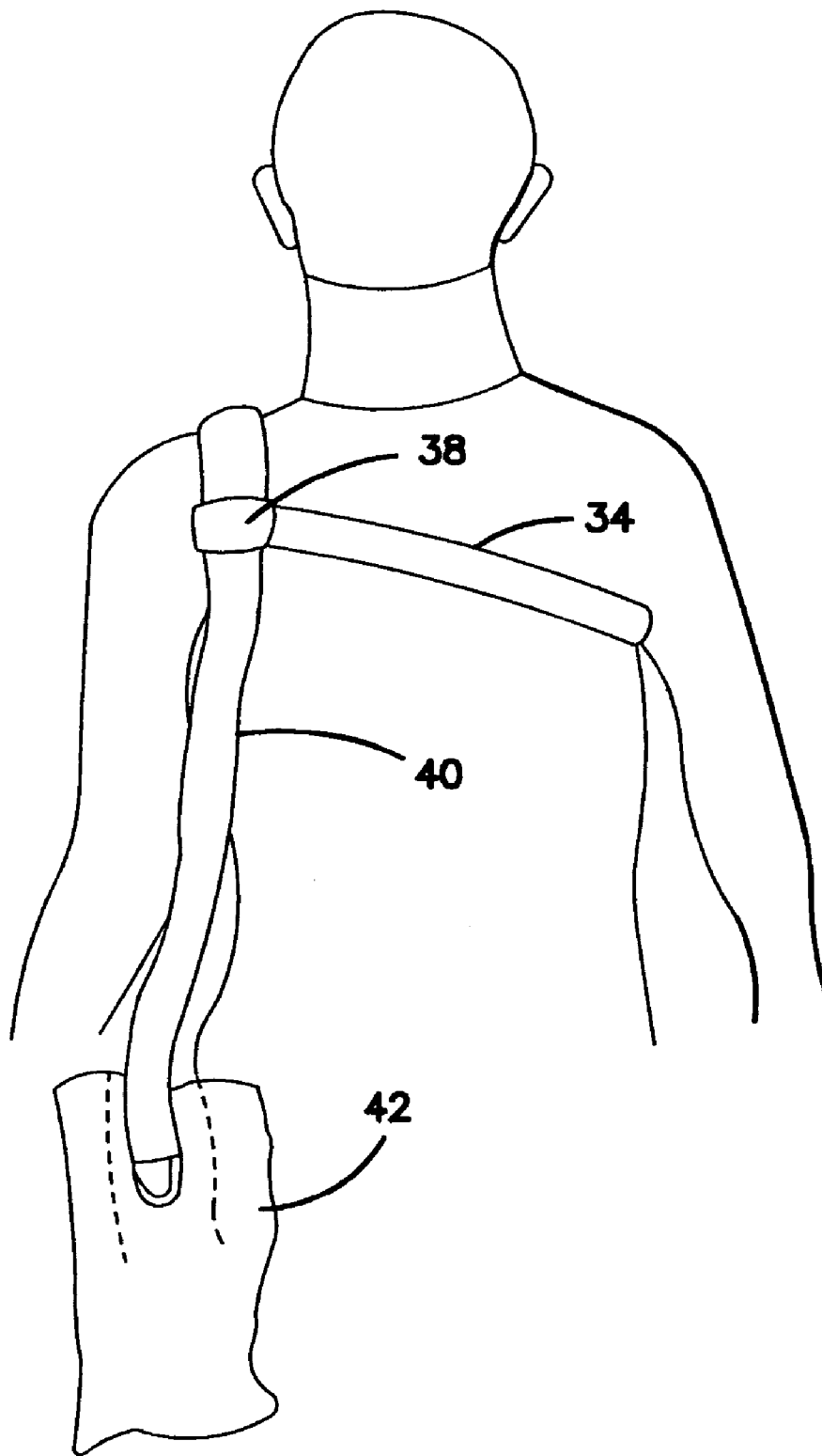
**FIG. 1**



**FIG. 2**



**FIG. 3**



**FIG. 4**

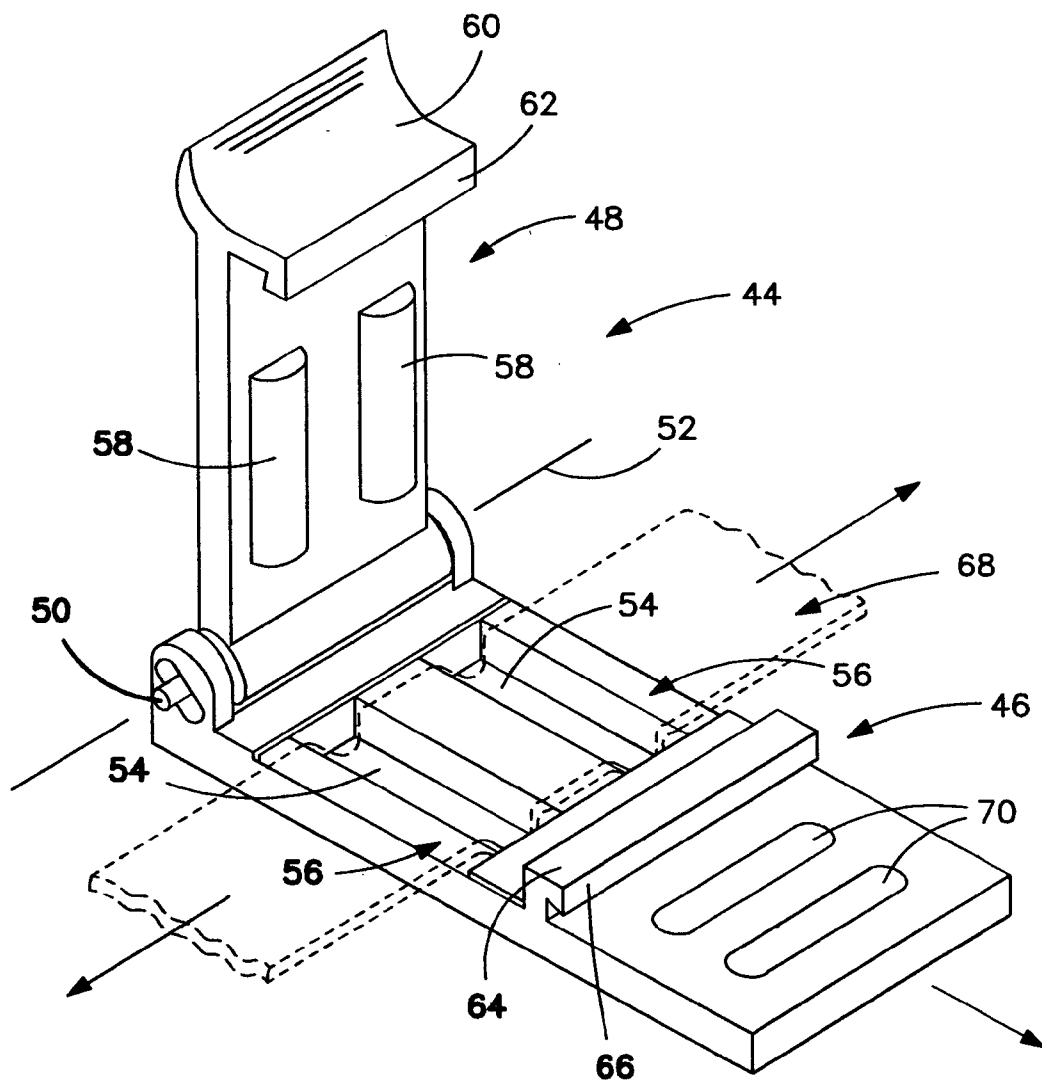


FIG. 5

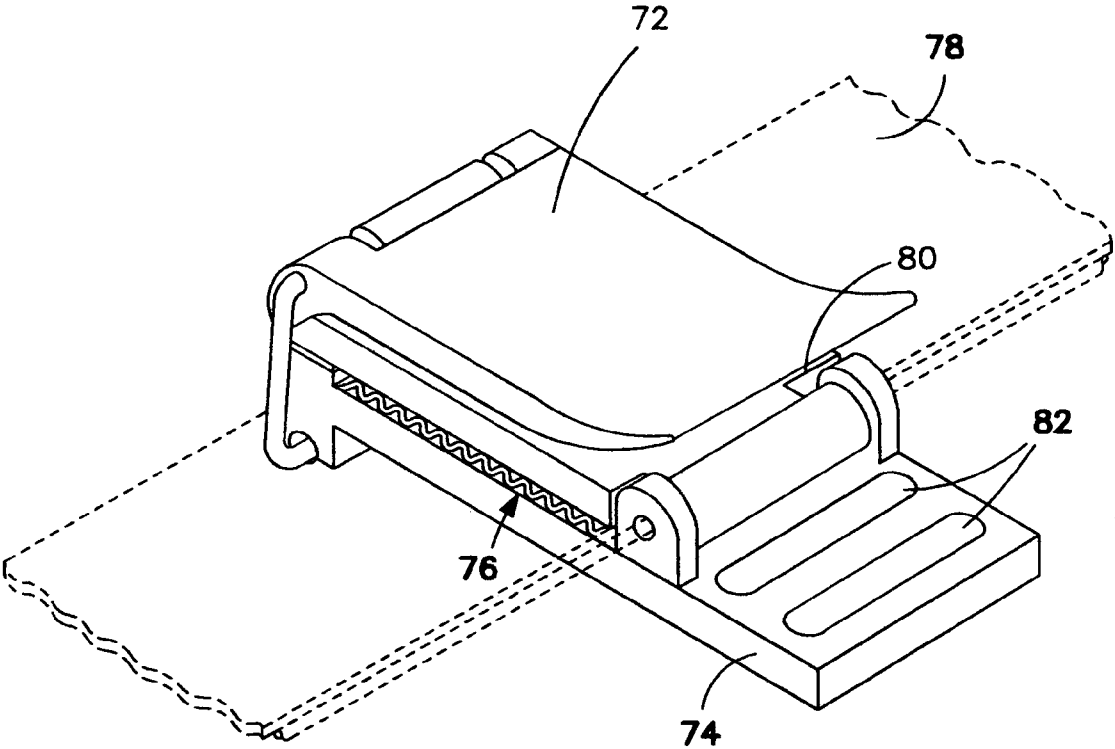
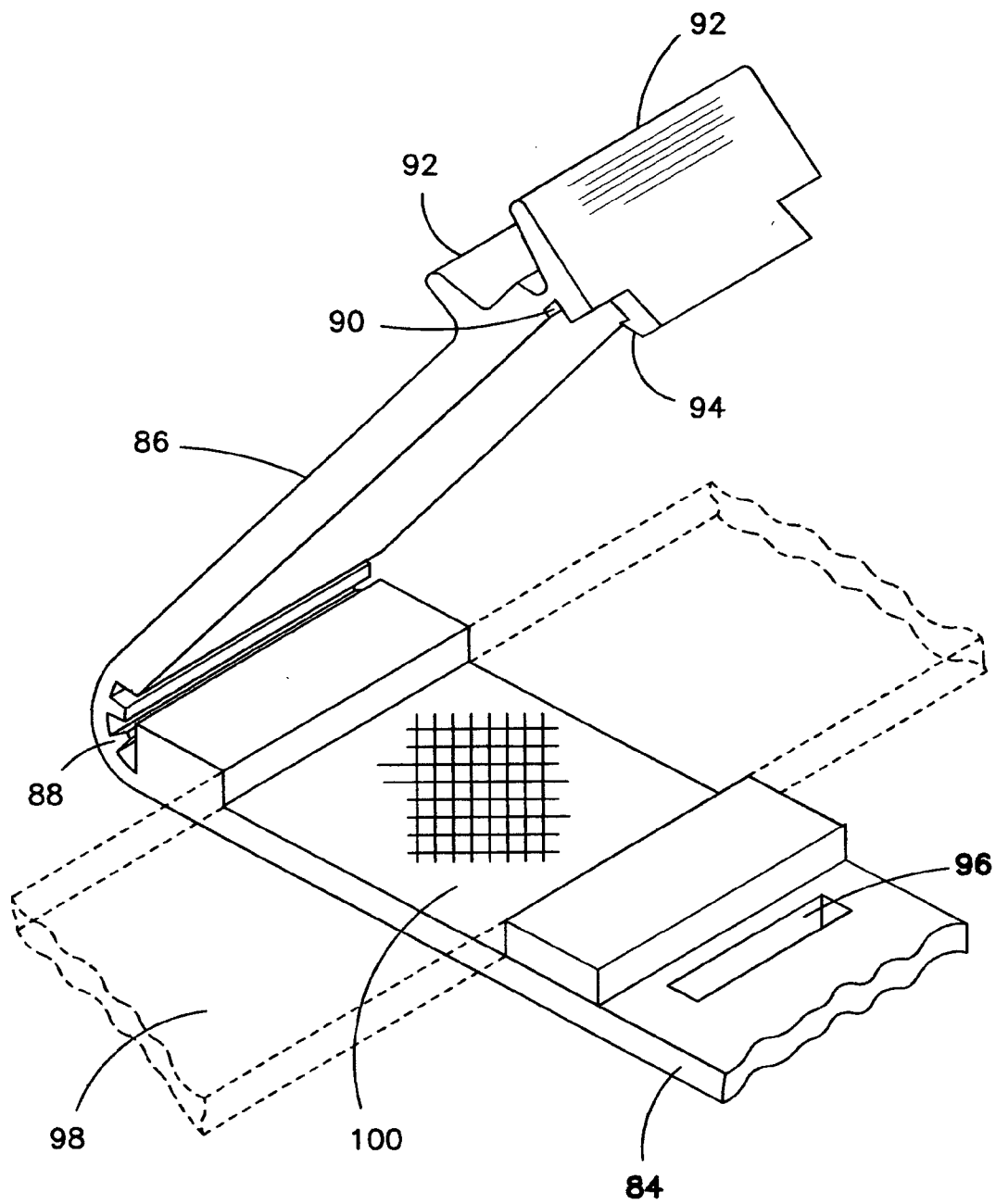
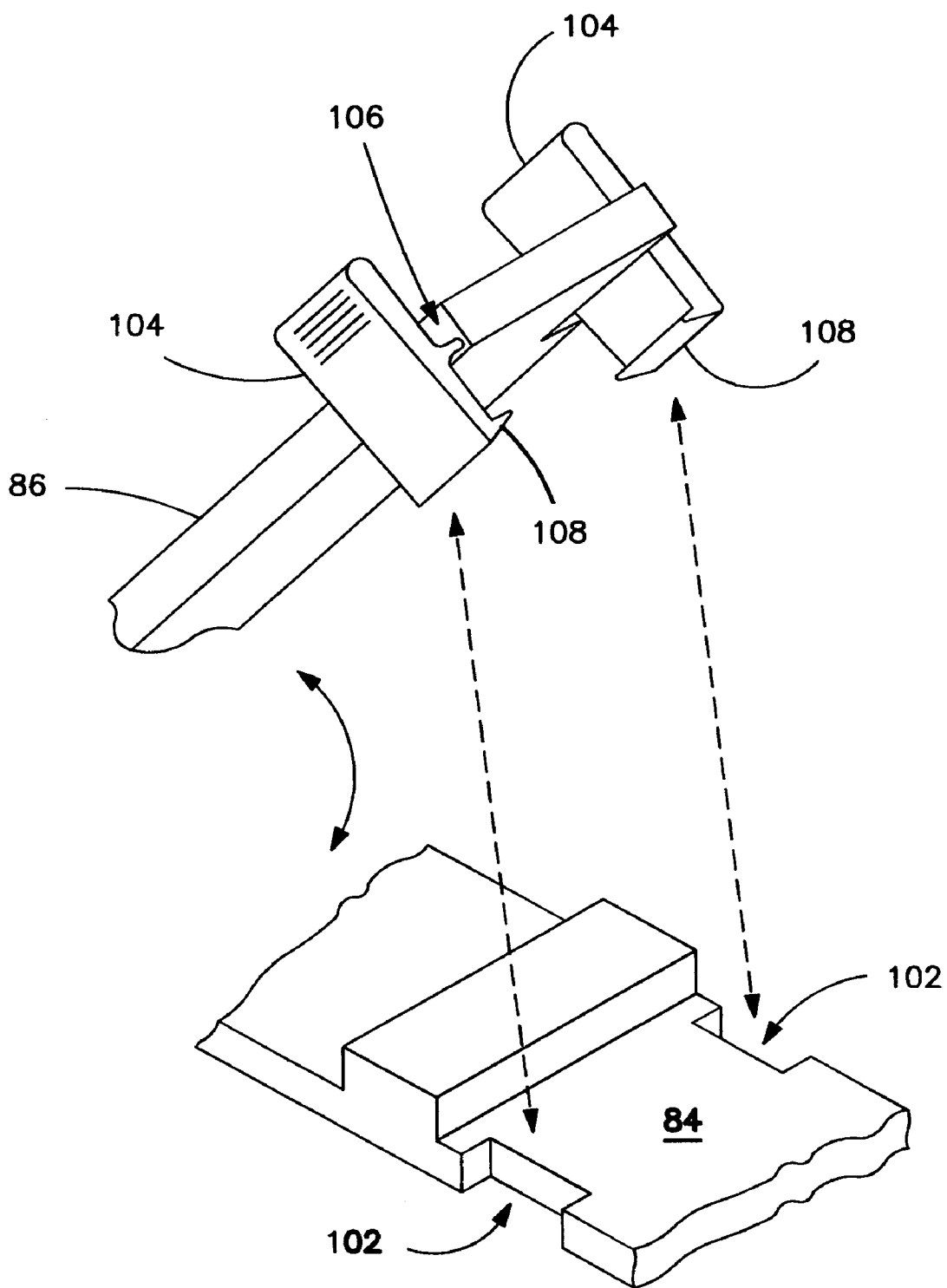


FIG. 6

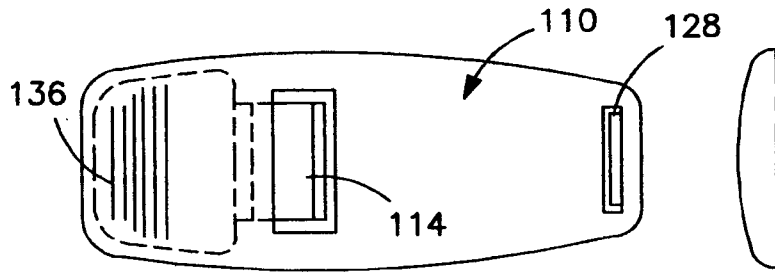


**FIG. 7**

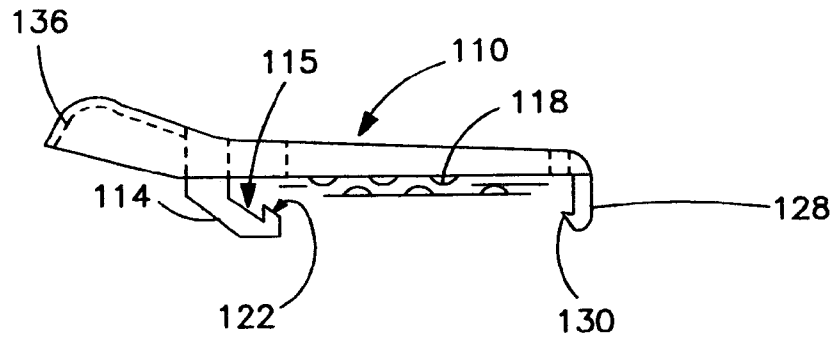




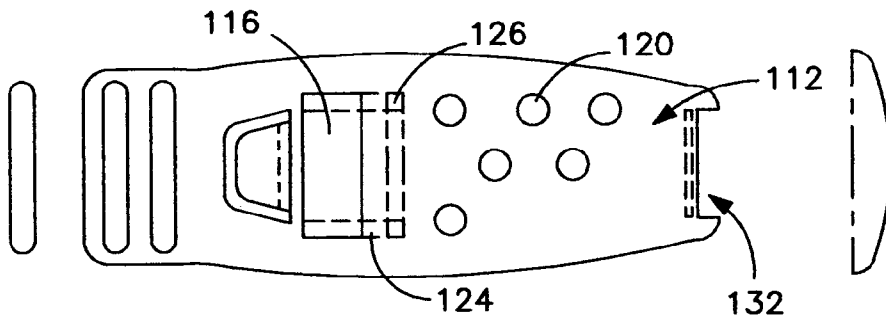
**FIG. 8**



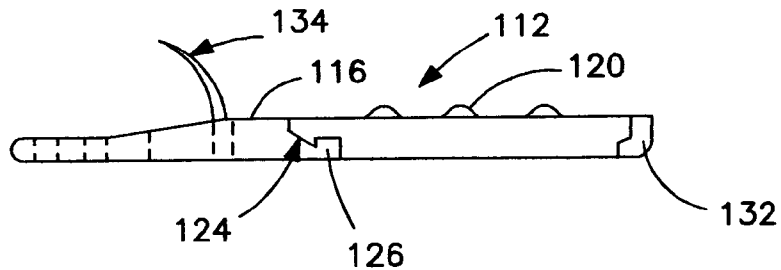
**FIG. 9a**



**FIG. 9b**



**FIG. 10a**



**FIG. 10b**

**CARRYING AID DEVICE**

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

[0001] The present invention is directed to a carrying aid device, and in particular, improvements to devices for carrying bags and luggage having a carrying strap. Luggage and bags, and in particular carry-on and travelling bags, are usually carried by placing the carrying strap over one shoulder of the person carrying the bag. If the contents of the bag are relatively heavy, this will cause the person carrying the bag to lean in a direction opposite the direction of the bag. The heavier the contents of the bag, the greater the list will be. Ultimately, over time, there is a tendency to lose control of the bag as the strap slips from the carrier's shoulder. Additionally, the constant shifting of the shoulder strap and the need to readjust it results in discomfort to the person carrying the bag, particularly when the bag is carried over a relatively long time period or distance.

[0002] It is an object of the present invention to provide a device for preventing the carrying strap of luggage or bags from slipping from on the shoulder of the carrier.

[0003] Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following discussion in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[0004] In a first embodiment of the invention, a strap worn around the body of a person includes elements, such as clamps, for removably connecting the strap to the carrying strap of a bag or luggage carried by the person for maintaining the bag or luggage in a fixed position relative to the person. The strap worn around the carrier's body includes adjustment elements for adjusting the length of the strap extending around the carrier's body to retain the strap and the bag or luggage in a comfortable relatively fixed position on the carrier's body. The strap can be disconnected from the bag or luggage when not in use, and stored within the bag or luggage.

[0005] In a second embodiment of the invention, a base or anchor formed from a rigid or semi rigid material is strapped into position on the shoulder of a person carrying the bag or luggage. The anchor includes a portion configured to receive therein a carrying strap for the luggage or bag so as to retain the carrying strap in a fixed position on the person's shoulder.

[0006] In a third embodiment of the invention, the shoulder strap of luggage or bags is originally manufactured with connecting elements for receiving the free ends of a second strap extending around the body of the carrier. The second strap is adjusted to fit the body of the carrier so as to retain carrying the strap of the luggage or carrying bag in a fixed position on the shoulder of the carrier. The second strap can be disconnected from the carrying strap of the luggage or bag when not needed, and placed within the bag itself for storage purposes.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

[0007] FIG. 1 of the drawings illustrates a first embodiment of the luggage carrying aid in accordance with the present invention worn by a carrier; and

[0008] FIG. 2 illustrates a second embodiment of the luggage carrying aid in accordance with the present invention worn by a carrier;

[0009] FIGS. 3-4 generally illustrate a third embodiment of the luggage carrying aid in accordance with the present invention worn by a carrier;

[0010] FIGS. 5-8 illustrate clamps employed as coupling elements, for the luggage carrying aid generally illustrated by FIGS. 3-4 of the drawings;

[0011] FIGS. 9a and 9b illustrate a top plan view and a side elevational view of the top piece of a two-piece molded clamp employed as a coupling element in accordance with the present invention; and

[0012] FIGS. 10a and 10b illustrate a top plan view and a side elevational view of a bottom piece adapted to mate with the top piece illustrated by FIGS. 9a and 9b of the two-piece molded clamp in accordance with the present invention.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE BEST MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION**

[0013] FIGS. 1-10b illustrate the preferred embodiments of luggage carrying aids in accordance with the present invention.

[0014] The luggage carrying aid illustrated by FIG. 1 includes a base or anchor portion, generally designated by reference numeral 2, which is preferably formed from a rigid or semi-rigid material such as a thermo-plastic, as for example, PVC. The base 2 is configured to define a barrier generally designated by reference numeral 4. Preferably, the barrier is a channel or groove extending through the approximate center of the base 2 so as to define opposed sidewalls designated by reference numeral 6. The channel 4 and opposed sidewalls 6 form a guide for receiving and retaining a portion of the carrying strap, generally designated by reference numeral 8, of luggage or a carrying bag.

[0015] A strap extending around the body of the wearer is generally designated by reference numeral 10. The strap 10 passes through at least one slot defined in the base 2, designated by reference numeral 12, so as to mount the base 2 on the shoulder of the carrier. A buckle 14 is provided to adjust the length of the strap 10 to maintain the base 2 fixed in position on the shoulder of the carrier. In this embodiment of the invention, although the strap 10 extends through slots 12 in the base 2, it is also within the scope of the present invention to fixedly mount the free ends of the strap 10 to opposed sides of the base 2 for retaining the base 2 on the shoulder of the carrier.

[0016] The channel 4 defined in the base 2 is open ended. It is, however, within the scope of the invention to provide a flap or top designated by reference numeral 16, and a fastener designated by reference numeral 18, for selectively closing the top of the channel 4 to prevent the luggage carrying strap from disengaging from the channel 4 in the base 2 through the opened top of the base.

[0017] A second strap designated by reference numeral 20 passes through at least one opening designated by reference numeral 22 in the base 2. In the alternative, as discussed with respect to strap 10, strap 20 can also be fixedly attached by its two free ends to the base 2. A buckle 24 permits the length

of strap 20 to be selectively adjusted. The strap 20, which extends around the shoulder of the carrier, supplements the force applied by strap 10 which extends around the chest and back of the carrier, to maintain the base 2 in a fixed position on the shoulder of the carrier to prevent shifting of the base relative to the carrier's shoulder.

[0018] The secondary strap 20, as well as the closure element defined by flap 16 and the attachment element 18, are optional features which are not essential to the embodiment of the invention illustrated by FIG. 1 of the drawings. Preferably, strap 20 is formed from an elastic band.

[0019] Although FIG. 1 illustrates that strap 10 extends between the right side of the carrier's chest and the carrier's right arm, it is, of course, possible to wear strap 10 around the outer right arm of the carrier. However, preferably, the strap 10 will be worn between the body and the arm of the carrier, as shown in FIG. 1, to prevent slipping or displacement of the strap relative to the carrier's body.

[0020] When the carrying device illustrated by FIG. 1 is not in use, it can be removed from the carrier, and placed in the carrying bag itself for storage purposes.

[0021] FIG. 2 of the drawings illustrates a second embodiment of a luggage carrying aid in accordance with the present invention. In this embodiment, the carrying strap for the luggage or carrying bag is generally designated by reference numeral 26. The carrying strap for the luggage is originally manufactured with attachment elements 28 adapted to be selectively and removably connected to opposed free ends of a strap 30 extending around the chest and back of the carrier. A buckle 32 is provided to adjust the length of the strap 30 extending around the carrier. The strap 30, when adjusted to fit around the body of the carrier, retains the luggage strap 26 in a fixed position on the shoulder of the carrier, thereby preventing displacement of the carrying strap 26 relative to the carrier's shoulder. When not in use, strap 30 can be disconnected from the attachment elements 28 on the luggage carrying strap 26, and the strap 30 can be stored within the luggage itself.

[0022] It is also within the scope of the present invention to fixedly mount the ends of strap 30 to the luggage carrying strap 26. However, this would require that the strap 30 be attached to the luggage carrying strap 26 even when the strap 30 is not in use. Therefore, it is preferable that the strap 30 be disconnectable from the luggage carrying strap 26 so that the strap 30 can, at the selection of the carrier, be removed from the strap 26 and stored in the luggage when not in use.

[0023] FIGS. 3-4 of the drawing generally illustrate a third embodiment of a luggage carrying aid in accordance with the present invention. The embodiment illustrated by FIGS. 3-4 of the drawing is similar to that illustrated by FIG. 2, except that the present embodiment does not require any coupling elements to be provided on luggage or bags by the original equipment manufacturer. On the contrary, the coupling elements are provided exclusively on the strap worn around the body of the carrier.

[0024] A strap, generally designated by reference numeral 34, is worn around the body of a carrier, preferably extending around the carrier's chest and back. A front coupling element, designated by reference numeral 36, is provided on a first free end of the strap 34, while a rear coupling element, designated by reference numeral 38, is provided on a second

free end of the strap 34. As will be discussed in greater detail below, both the front and rear coupling elements 36 and 38 attached to the free ends of the strap 34 are preferably clamps for removably coupling the free ends of the strap 34 to a carrying strap 40 of a bag or luggage 42 carried over the shoulder of the person carrying the bag or luggage. As illustrated by FIGS. 3 and 4, the front coupling element 36 removably engages the carrying strap 40 at a position on the front of the carrier, while the rear coupling element 38 removably engages the carrying strap 40 at a position on the back of the carrier. Although not illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4 of the drawing, conventional adjustment means, such as the buckle 32 illustrated in FIG. 2, are provided for adjusting the length of the strap 34 extending around the body of the carrier.

[0025] When the strap 34 is mounted around the chest and back of the carrier, and when the front and rear coupling elements 36 and 38 engage front and rear positions on the carrying strap 40 for the luggage or bag 42, the carrying strap 40 is retained in a fixed position on the shoulder of the carrier, and is prevented from moving, shifting or displacing relative to the carrier's shoulder by the strap 34 which retains the carrying strap 40 in the desired fixed position on the carrier's shoulder.

[0026] Preferably, the retaining strap 34 is formed from a substantially non-elastic material to prevent the strap from stretching. When the retaining strap 34 is not in use, it can be disengaged from the luggage carrying strap 40, and stored within the luggage 42.

[0027] Although the embodiment of the invention illustrated by FIGS. 3-4 discloses that the coupling elements 36 and 38 are mounted to free ends of the retaining strap 34, it is also within the scope of the present invention to form the retaining strap 34 from a closed loop with the coupling elements 34 and 36 being mounted to either fixed positions along the closed loop, or being movably mounted relative to the closed loop. An adjustment element, such as the buckle 14 illustrated by FIG. 1, can be provided to adjust the distance which the closed loop extends around the body of the carrier.

[0028] The embodiment of the luggage carrying aid in accordance with FIGS. 3-4 of the drawing, advantageously eliminates the need to provide coupling elements for the retaining strap on the carrying strap of the luggage. On the contrary, the coupling means is provided in its entirety on the carrying aid, which can be used in connection with any conventional luggage or bag having a carrying strap without requiring any adaptation to the carrying strap.

[0029] FIGS. 5-8 illustrate different embodiments of coupling elements for removably coupling the retaining strap 34 to the carrying strap 40, as illustrated by and discussed with respect to FIGS. 3-4 of the drawing. Preferably, the coupling elements for removably connecting the retaining strap to the luggage carrying strap are clamps. These coupling elements, as discussed above, are either fixedly mounted on the retaining strap 34, or are movably mounted relative to the retaining strap 34.

[0030] FIGS. 5-8 illustrate different exemplary clamps which can be employed in the present invention. Referring first to FIG. 5, a clamp generally designated by reference numeral 44 includes a base generally designated by refer-

ence numeral 46 and a locking element or lever generally designated by reference numeral 48 pivotably mounted relative to the base along a pivot element generally designated by reference numeral 50 extending along a pivot axis designated by reference numeral 52. The base 46 defines two longitudinally extending openings 54 in a recessed portion or channel 56 in the base 46. The pivotable element 48 defines two longitudinally extending protuberances 58 which complement and are adapted to be received within the longitudinal openings 54 in the base 46 when element 48 is pivoted in a clockwise direction as shown in FIG. 5 into a closed position relative to the base 46. A latch 60 having a downwardly extending lip portion 62 is defined at the free end of the pivotable element 48. A retaining element 64, having a forwardly extending lip portion 66, is defined on the base 46. When element 48 is pivoted into a closed position relative to the base 46, the lip 62 of the latch 60 engages the lip 66 of the retaining element 64 on the base to releasably lock element 48 into a closed position relative to the base so that the protuberances 58 on element 48 are received within the openings 54 in the base. The base 46 and the pivotable element 48 are preferably formed from a rigid material, such as a ABS, PVC or nylon plastic, to readily lock and unlock the pivot element 48 in its closed position relative to the base 46.

[0031] In operation, a portion of the carrying strap 68 of a bag or luggage is placed within the channel 56 of the base 46 when the clamp 44 is in its opened position as illustrated by FIG. 5. The strap 68 is oriented along a plane which is substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal plane of the base 46. Element 48 is then pivoted into its closed position to removably lock the clamp relative to the strap 68. The strap 68 is firmly retained within the closed clamp by the action of the protuberances 58 forcing the portion of the strap 68 in the channel 56 into the longitudinal openings 54 defined in the base. The opposing force exerted by the portion of the strap 68 received in the channel 56 against the pivotable element 48 tends to firmly lock the lip 62 of the latch 60 into the lip 66 of the retaining element 64 on the base to securely retain the strap 66 in a fixed position relative to the clamp 44 when the clamp is in its closed position. Horizontally extending openings 70, which are oriented along a plane substantially transverse to the longitudinal plane of the clamp 44, are defined proximate to the free end of the base 46. The openings 70 are provided to receive the retaining strap 34 worn around the body of the user as illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4 for mounting the clamp 44 to the retaining strap 34.

[0032] FIG. 6 illustrates another embodiment of a clamp which can be employed in conjunction with the present invention. The clamp illustrated by FIG. 6 is shown in its closed position in which a pivotable locking element or latch 72 is flush against the top surface of a base 74. The adjacent surfaces of elements 72 and 74, which engage when the clamp is in the closed position shown in FIG. 6, define an internal diamond pattern, generally designated by reference numeral 76, for the purpose of removably retaining therein a portion 78 of the carrying strap of a bag or luggage. The base includes a release lever, generally designated by reference numeral 80, for removably locking the pivotable closure element 72 in its closed position relative to the base 74. Openings 82, extending transverse to the longitudinal plane of the clamp, are defined proximate to the remote end of the base 74 for receiving the retaining strap 34 (FIGS. 3

and 4) worn around the body of the user for mounting the clamp to the retaining strap 34.

[0033] FIG. 7 illustrates a further exemplary embodiment of a clamp which can be employed for use in connection with the present invention. A closure element 86 is pivotable relative to a base 84 along a pivot axis defined by a flexible hinge generally designated by reference numeral 88. The clamp illustrated by FIG. 7 is a one-piece molded clamp. A flexible hinge generally designated by reference numeral 90, is disposed between two tabs 92 defined on the free end of the pivotable element 86. A latch 94 extends from the bottom of the forwardmost tab 92, and is adapted to be received within a horizontally extending opening 96 defined in the base 84. When the closure element 86 is pivoted into its closed position relative to the base 84, the latch 94, which extends through the opening 96 in the base, engages the underside of the base to releasably lock the closure element 86 in its closed position relative to the base 84. A portion 98 of the carrying strap of a bag or luggage is received within a channel 100 defined in the base 84 so as to retain the strap 98 fixed relative to the base 84 when the clamp is in its closed position. The opposing force of the strap 98 against the closure element 86 in the locked position of the clamp tends to cause the latch 94 to firmly engage the undersurface of the base 84 to securely and releasably retain the clamp in its closed position. When it is desired to open the clamp, the two tabs 92 on the closure element 86 are flexed relative to each other along the flexible hinge 90 so as to disengage the latch 94 from the undersurface of the base 84 to permit the latch 94 to be pivoted through the opening 96 in the base 84 into the opened position of the clamp as shown by FIG. 7.

[0034] FIG. 8 illustrates a one-piece molded clamp, as illustrated in FIG. 7, in which the releasable locking mechanism has been modified. In the FIG. 8 embodiment of the invention, opposed recesses designated by reference numeral 102 are defined on opposite sides of the base 84. Locking tabs 104 extend from opposed sides of the pivotable closure element 86, and a flexible hinge 106 is disposed between the tabs 104. Each tab 104 includes a lower extending lip 108, which engages the undersurface of the base 84 when the closure element 86 is pivoted into its closed position in which the lower portion of the tabs 104 are received, respectively, in the side recesses 102 of the base 84. When it is desired to release the closure element 86 from the base 84, the top portions of the tabs 104 are flexed together, which causes the lips 108 to disengage from the undersurface of the base 84, thereby permitting the closure element 86 to be pivoted in a counterclockwise direction away from the base 84. The embodiment of the clamp illustrated by FIG. 8 modifies the embodiment of the clamp illustrated by FIG. 7 to provide releasable locking means for the clamp which are oriented laterally, and not longitudinally, relative to the base 84.

[0035] As noted, the clamps illustrated by FIGS. 7 and 8 of the drawing are one-piece molded clamps. Each of the clamps illustrated by FIGS. 5-8 of the drawings are formed from a flexible material, as for example polypropylene plastic, to permit flexing of the clamp locking mechanism for releasably locking the clamp in its closed position and for releasably unlocking the clamp for movement into its opened position.

[0036] FIGS. 9a, 9b, 10a and 10b illustrate a two-piece molded web clamp for use in connection with the carrying

aid of the present invention. FIGS. 9a and 9b illustrate a top piece of the two-piece clamp, while FIGS. 10a and 10b illustrate the bottom piece of the two-piece molded clamp to be mated with the top piece. FIG. 9a is a top plan view of the top piece, generally designated by reference numeral 110, while FIG. 9b is a side elevational view of the top piece 110. FIG. 10a is a top plan view of the bottom piece, generally designated by reference numeral 112, while FIG. 10b is a side elevational view of the bottom piece 112.

[0037] As best shown by FIG. 9b, top piece 110 includes a slide element generally designated by reference numeral 114, extending downwardly therefrom, while bottom piece 112 defines a pivot slot generally designated by reference numeral 116 defined therein. When the top piece 110 is mated to the bottom piece 112, the slide element 114 is received within the pivot slot 116. A series of protuberances 118 extend downwardly from the lower surface at the top piece 110, while a plurality of matching, but alternatively spaced protuberances 120 extend upwardly from the top surface of the bottom piece 112. The protuberances 118 and 120 extending from the lower and upper surfaces of the top and bottom clamp portions 110 and 112, respectively, are provided to retain the web of a luggage strap received within the clamp when the clamp is closed.

[0038] As best illustrated by FIGS. 9b and 10b, the free end of the slide 114 extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the top piece 110 terminates in a hook portion designated by reference numeral 122. The pivot slot 116 in the lower piece 112 defines a ramp portion designated by reference numeral 124 and a chamber portion designated by reference numeral 126. When the top piece 110 is mated with the lower piece 112, the slide element 114 is received within the pivot slot 116 and guided down the ramp portion 124 until the hook 122 at the remote end of the slide 114 is received within the chamber portion 126 and retained therein by engagement between the hook 122 and the forward portion of the ramp 124. The angular orientation of the inner surface of the intermediate portion of the slide 114 corresponds to the angular orientation of the ramp portion 124 so that the inner surface 115 of the intermediate portion of the slide 114 rests flush against the outer surface of the ramp portion 124 when the top piece 110 and the bottom piece 112 of the clamp are assembled. The downwardly extending vertically oriented portion of the slide 114, in addition to joining the slide portion 114 to the bottom surface of the top piece 110, also acts as a stop for preventing lateral movement of the webbing of a portion of a luggage strap received within the clamp when the clamp is in its closed position.

[0039] The forward end of the top piece 110 of the clamp defines a downwardly extending element designated by reference numeral 128. The free end of element 128 defines a hook generally designated by reference numeral 130. The forward end of the bottom piece 112 defines a latch generally designated by reference numeral 132. The latch 132 is aligned with the hook 130 of the top piece 110 so that the hook releasably engages the latch to retain the clamp in a closed position when the top piece 110 is pivoted relative to the bottom piece 112. A light duty spring, generally designated by reference numeral 134, extends from the upper surface of the bottom piece 112 to exert a resilient force on the top piece 110 urging it to pivot in a clockwise direction relative to the bottom piece 112 to guide the clamp into its

closed position. However, the clamp is primarily maintained in its closed position as a result of the engagement between the hook 130 engaging the latch 132, supplemented by the opposing force of the portion of the web of a luggage strap retained within the clamp when the clamp is in its closed position. The force exerted by the web, which is enhanced by the complementary protuberances 118 and 120 on the top and bottom pieces of the clamp, also serve to fixedly retain the web within the clamp by frictional engagement when the clamp is in its closed position. A release end of the top piece 110, generally designated by reference numeral 136, is provided to enable slight lateral movement of the top piece 110 relative to the bottom piece 112, overcoming the resilient force of the spring 134, to disengage the hook 130 of the top piece 110 from the latch 132 of the bottom piece 112 to open the assembled clamp. As previously noted, the top and bottom pieces 110 and 112 are designed so that a limited degree of lateral or sliding movement is permitted between the top piece 110 relative to the bottom piece 112 to permit the user to selectively engage and disengage the hook 130 of the top piece 110 and the latch 132 of the bottom piece 112. The top piece 110 is movable relative to the bottom 112 by applying a force, in the desired direction to the release end 136 of the top piece 110. The hook 130 and the latch 132 can be manually engaged by the user to assure a firm gripping engagement when the clamp is in its closed position, and manually disengaged by the user after the top piece has been moved forward relative to the bottom piece.

[0040] The carrying aid devices and the clamps employed by the carrying aid devices in accordance with the inventions described herein have been directed to fixedly retaining the position of luggage or baggage relative to the body of the person carrying the luggage or baggage. However, the carrying aids and clamps also have uses and applications other than for retaining luggage or baggage on the body of the carrier. For example, the carrying aids in accordance with the present invention can be used to fixedly secure the position of any article mounted to any object by belts, straps and webbing. This is accomplished in the same manner as previously described herein with regard to luggage and baggage—namely, the carrying aid is removably mounted to the same object that the article to be retained is mounted to, and engages the strap, belt or webbing of the article to releasably retain the article in a fixed position relative to the object to which it is mounted for preventing displacement of the article relative to the object.

[0041] The clamps disclosed herein are preferably formed from plastics. However, the type of plastic used will vary depending on the characteristic (e.g., flexibility or rigidity) needed for the specific clamp or component thereof.

[0042] Other applications of and modifications to the carrying aids within the scope of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the carrying aids of the preferred embodiments of the invention discussed herein are intended to be illustrative only and not restrictive of the scope of the invention, that scope being defined by the following claims and all equivalents thereto.

1. A device for carrying an article having a carrying strap adapted to be held by a carrier, said device comprising:

- a base adapted to be seated on a shoulder of a carrier, at least a portion of said base being configured to receive and retain therein at least a portion of a carrying strap, and

a securing element cooperating with said base for retaining said base in a fixed position relative to the body of the carrier.

2. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said base is formed from a rigid material.

3. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said base is formed from a semi-rigid material.

4. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said portion of said base configured to receive and retain said carrying strap defines a groove.

5. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said portion of said base configured to receive and retain said carrying strap defines a channel.

6. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said portion of said base configured to receive and retain said carrying strap defines an opened top to permit removal of said carrying strap from said base through said opened top.

7. The device as claimed in claim 6, further including a closure element cooperating with said base for selectively closing said opened top of said base.

8. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said securing element is a strap adapted to extend around the body of the carrier.

9. The device as claimed in claim 8, wherein said base includes means for receiving said strap for retaining said base in said fixed position relative to the body of the carrier.

10. The device as claimed in claim 8, wherein said base is removably mounted to said strap.

11. The device as claimed in claim 8, wherein said strap is fixedly mounted to said base.

12. The device as claimed in claim 8, further including means for adjusting the length of said strap extending around the body of the carrier.

13. The device as claimed in claim 8, wherein said strap is adapted to extend around the chest and back of the carrier, said device further including a second strap engaging said base, said second strap adapted to extend around the shoulder and the armpit of the carrier.

14. The device as claimed in claim 13, further including means for adjusting the length of said second strap extending around the shoulder and armpit of the carrier.

15. A device for carrying an article having a carrying strap adapted to be held by a carrier, said device comprising:

a retaining element cooperating with said carrying strap of said article for retaining said carrying strap of said article at a fixed position relative to the body of the carrier.

16. The device as claimed in claim 15, further including at least one coupling element carried by said retaining element for removably coupling said retaining element to the carrying strap of said article.

17. The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein at least two said coupling elements are carried by said retaining element, one of said coupling elements adapted to removably engage a portion of said carrying strap extending along the front of the carrier, the other of said coupling elements adapted to removably engage a portion of said carrying strap extending along the back of the carrier.

18. The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said at least one coupling element is a clamp.

19. The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said retaining element is a strap, and said at least one coupling element is attached to a free end of said strap.

20. The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said retaining element is a strap configured in a closed loop, and said at least one coupling element is carried by said closed loop.

21. The device as claimed in claim 15, wherein said retaining element is a strap adapted to extend around at least a portion of the body of the carrier, said strap including at least one engagement element for engaging a corresponding engagement element on the carrying strap of said article.

22. The device as claimed in claim 21, further including means for removably locking said engagement element of said strap to said corresponding engagement element of said carrying strap of said article.

23. A method for carrying an article having a carrying strap, said method comprising the steps of:

mounting a base having a portion thereof configured to receive and retain the carrying strap therein on the shoulder of a carrier, and

fixing the position of the base relative to the shoulder of the carrier.

24. The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the step of fixing the position of the base relative to the shoulder of the carrier includes the step of coupling said base to a strap extending around the body of the carrier for retaining the base in a fixed position on the shoulder of the carrier.

25. The method as claimed in claim 24, further including the step of selectively adjusting the length of said strap extending around the body of the carrier.

26. A method for carrying an article having a carrying strap, said method comprising the steps of:

mounting a strap carrying a coupling element around at least a portion of the body of a carrier, and

removably coupling said strap to the carrying strap of said article by said coupling element.

27. The method as claimed in claim 26, further including the step of:

mounting said coupling element to one free end of said strap.

28. The method as claimed in claim 26, further including the step of:

fixedly mounting a coupling element to each of two free ends of the strap, respectively, and

removably coupling one of the coupling elements to a first position on the carrying strap extending along the front of the carrier when the carrying strap is supported on a shoulder of the carrier, and removably coupling the other coupling element to a second position on the carrying strap extending along the back of the carrier when the carrying strap is supported on a shoulder of the carrier.

29. The method as claimed in claim 26, further including the step of:

fixedly mounting said at least one coupling element to said strap.

**30.** The method as claimed in claim 26, further including the step of movably mounting said at least one coupling element to said strap.

**31.** A device for carrying an article having a retaining element for mounting said article to a mounting element for retaining said article mounted to said mounting element, said device comprising:

a securing element cooperating with said retaining element of said article for maintaining said article at a fixed position relative to said mounting element.

**32.** A method for carrying an article having a retaining element for mounting said article to an object, said method comprising the steps of:

mounting said retaining element of said article to said object, and

coupling a securing element to said retaining element for retaining said article at a fixed position relative to said object.

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