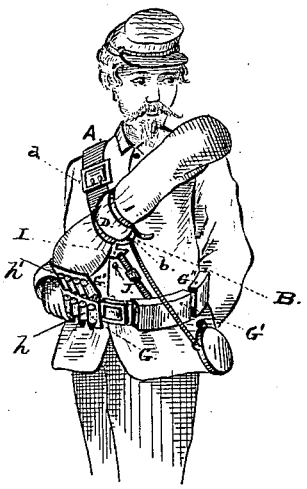
J. E. BLOOM.

Military Accouterments.

No. 216,017. Patented June 3, 1879.

Fig. 1



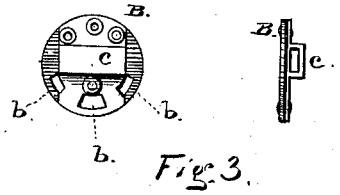


Fig. 3.

Fig. 2.

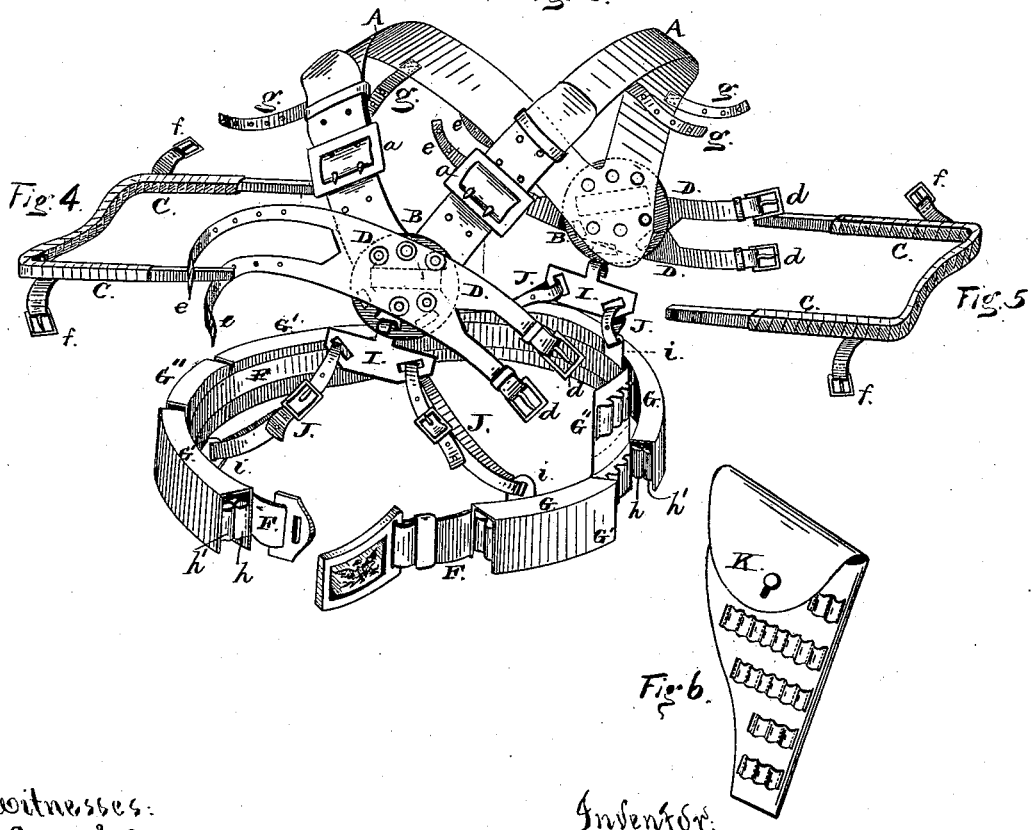


Fig. 4.

Fig. 5

Fig. 6.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JACOB E. BLOOM, OF CINCINNATI, OHIO.

IMPROVEMENT IN MILITARY ACCOUTERMENTS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **216,017**, dated June 3, 1879; application filed November 23, 1878.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JACOB E. BLOOM, of the city of Cincinnati, county of Hamilton, State of Ohio, have invented a new and useful Accouterment-Harness for Army Use and other purposes where heavy weights are to be borne and carried; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the construction, action, and manner of using the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings.

The object of my invention is to provide a harness or system of supporting and suspensory bands or straps and plates or stirrups for carrying heavy loads upon the body, by which the weight thereof shall be directly transferred to and supported by the shoulders, shoulder-blades, and upper parts of the chest, and shall be divided between and thrown upon both shoulders and other parts of the frame equally without producing any horizontal or forward pressure of the weight upon the chest and vital parts within, whereby a soldier, hunter, or other person can carry a heavier weight of accouterments, ammunition, &c., than heretofore, and with more ease and comfort to himself.

My invention consists in the combination, with a saddle composed of two straps, passing over the shoulder and joined at their ends to plates or stirrups, of a blanket-strap secured to each stirrup for securing the blankets and articles rolled therein to the harness, and for distributing the weight thereof equally upon both shoulders and upon both sides of the body, the blanket-roll being thus suspended from a central point front and rear upon a line passing through its center of gravity, thus causing such a disposition of these articles as not to disturb the equilibrium of the body.

It further consists in the novel construction of elastic metallic braces or bows, to be used and combined with the saddle and its suspensory plates when the man has a very protuberant chest, or when the load to be carried upon or across the shoulders is very heavy, for the purpose of resisting any horizontal or inward pressure at front and back upon the respiratory organs or the vital parts.

It further consists in the construction of an improved ammunition-belt, to be used in connection with the aforesaid supportant saddle, whereby double, or even treble, the quantity of fixed ammunition can be carried by the soldier or hunter, all of which will be more fully described hereinafter.

In the drawings referred to, Figure 1 is a view of the harness in position upon a soldier, showing the mode of carrying the blanket-roll, ammunition-belt, and other accouterments. Fig. 2 is a detail view of the harness and ammunition-belt. Fig. 3 is a detail view of one of the suspensory plates or stirrups, showing the slots for the suspensory hooks and clips and the socket to receive the ends of the spring braces or bows. Figs. 4 and 5 are detail views of the metallic spring braces or bows, showing their position with respect to the other parts of the harness; Fig. 6, a view of pistol-holster employed in connection with my ammunition-belt.

The saddle is composed of two bands or straps, A A, provided with buckles *a a*, and arranged to pass over the shoulders and meet together at points in front and at the back opposite to each other, where they are riveted or otherwise secured to the suspensory plates or stirrups B B. These plates thus have a position at the front and back on a center line of the body when the saddle is adjusted, and they are provided also with holes or slots *b b*, for the hooks and clips of the suspension-straps of the belt and other accouterments. These plates B B also have a socket, *c*, to receive the ends of the braces or bows C, when the same are used; but the stirrups or breast-plates are also made flat, without these sockets, when the braces are not required. From these points B B, therefore, all the various parts of the accouterments or the load are suspended and carried, and by means of the straps A A the weight is taken equally by the shoulders and adjacent parts of the frame. The buckles *a a* upon the saddle A may be either in front or in rear, or at both sides, in order the better to make the saddle adjustable to men of different sizes, or upon the same man when worn with and without the overcoat.

Upon each plate B is secured a blanket-strap, D, with double buckles and ends *d d e e*, spreading in such a position that they shall

properly clasp and hold the blanket when it is rolled and worn, in the well-known form of a "blanket-roll," diagonally across the body from one shoulder. These two straps D D embrace the roll at the front and back, clasping the center of gravity of the front and rear halves of the roll, and they serve to support the weight of the roll and its contents equally before and behind, and also to keep the weight from resting or being upon that shoulder over which the roll passes, allowing a free circulation of the air between the roll and the body. These straps D can also be secured to the plates B, each by a single swivel-bolt, so that they can be turned about upon these points as a center, and the blanket or roll clasped by them can be shifted from one shoulder to the other, or worn across either the right or the left shoulder, as desired. The entire saddle is reversible, thus throwing the blanket-roll across the right shoulder, where before it was across the left.

When the load to be borne or carried is of such extra weight that it would tend to draw the straps A out of their inclined position, and throw their sides or inner edges against the neck of the wearer, or cause the plates B to be greatly pressed inwardly against the front and back of the person, the metallic bows or braces C C are brought into service to counteract this injurious action of the load.

These braces C are constructed of elastic steel or metallic bars bent in the required shape, so as to fit the body of the wearer, and allow the arms to drop or be carried at the side without discomfort. They are covered with leather or any suitable material down to near the breast-plates, and for proper supporting connection with the straps A A of the saddle they are provided with buckles *f f*. When used, these braces extend around the chest and behind the back just under the arms, and their ends are brought together from each side and inserted within the sockets *c* of the plates B, one end passing and overlapping the like end of the opposite brace. To hold the inner edges of the saddle-straps A away from the neck, and also to keep the braces horizontal, the buckles *f f* are united with the short connection-straps *g g*, firmly connected with the straps A A, one at the front and the other at the back. This arrangement keeps the braces in proper horizontal position, and allows them to hold out the plates B away from the body against the weight of the load, and prevents a horizontal inward pressure of those parts of the harness against the chest and back. The arms of the braces are intended to be made of sufficient elasticity to react against pressure of the load upon the stirrup-plates B, and yet to always retain their shape. These bows or braces are not used where the blanket-roll alone and light military equipment, or a light load, is to be borne.

In place of the two metallic bows or braces, a single brace may be used, passing from the stirrups or breast-plates in front to the one in rear and over the shoulder not covered by the blanket-roll.

In place of either the one or the two bows or braces above described, where the blanket-roll is carried by a man having a very protuberant chest, the saddle-pieces A may be lined and braced from front to rear with narrow flat whalebone-like steel ribs, fitted to the shape of the shoulders, &c., designed to resist the inward pressure.

In connection with this saddle, &c., is combined an improved ammunition-belt for army and hunting purposes, by which a greater quantity of cartridges can be carried about the person in such position that they are always at hand ready for use. It consists of a waist-belt, F, to which is secured around the entire circumference a consecutive series of double cases, G G G′, each composed of a fixed case and a movable case or flap that serves as a cover.

Upon the inner sides of the parts are arranged the thimbles *h h′*, of a size to receive and hold the cartridges. These thimbles are arranged so that the cartridges held by the thimbles in one part or half of the case occupy the space between the cartridges of the other part or half when the flap is closed, and the two parts of the case are caused to fit more closely and compactly together.

The weight of this belt is supported from the plates B B of the harness, both at front and back, by means of the hook-plates I I, that are secured to the belt by the adjustable straps J J, extending from the loops *i i*, and passing through the slots in the plates I. The hooks or clips provided in these plates engage with the center slot of the stirrup-plate B when the harness and belt are adjusted on the body, and serve as a ready means for connecting and disconnecting the two parts. The weight of the belt and its contents is thus taken up by the saddle and distributed equally upon both shoulders, while the simple manner of connecting it at two points only—one in front and the other at the back—allows the belt to be quickly adjusted, and also to be shifted and turned around to bring the rear cartridges into service when the contents of the front cases are exhausted. By disengaging the hooks I I at the front and back, one movement will shift the belt around the waist without detaching any other buckles or fastenings, and the empty cases are thrown behind and the filled ones brought to the front.

Ready access to the cartridge-cases is had by raising the flaps or outer halves. When thus raised the heads of the cartridges in the two rows are adjacent to each other.

A larger quantity of cartridges can be carried, if desired, by having an additional row of thimbles secured upon the outside of the outer flap.

This improvement of constructing the ammunition-belt with double cases, and of suspending it entirely from the upper part of the frame without pressing or bearing upon any

of the respiratory organs and other vital parts, renders it of great value and utility for the soldier, hunter, and scout, especially in frontier service, where operations are frequently carried on at long distances from the base of supplies; and the rapidity with which the belt can be disengaged and turned about the body is also a point of great advantage.

The arrangement of the smaller cases G″ at the sides of the belt is designed to allow different articles—as a pistol-holster, for instance—to be strapped or secured to the belt at these points. By leaving out the cartridges from the flaps of the smaller case G″, the strap or loop of the holster can be passed around the belt at this part and tightly buckled in place; or the pistol or the bayonet scabbard can be secured to a strap riveted or sewed to the outer flap or cover of the smaller case G″.

In cases where it may be of advantage to carry an extra supply of pistol-cartridges immediately about the person and in readiness for use, I construct or provide the holster K with a row or number of rows of thimbles upon the outer side to receive the ammunition, and this, when buckled in place to the belt with the cartridges outside, is always in readiness. Other articles of a soldier's or hunter's accouterment can be attached to and suspended from the stirrup-plates B of the harness by straps or hooks running through the slots in the edges thereof, or by hooks or clips engaging therewith. Canteens, haversacks, rifles, side-arms, &c., are thus readily carried and supported by that part of the body best adapted to receive and bear the weight.

The method of adjusting the saddle with blanket-roll is essentially as follows: The blanket-roll having first been made by laying the blanket flat, placing clothing, &c., neatly in symmetrical layers along one of the long edges, then rolling same as tightly as possible from the long edge, then tying or strapping one or more points at or near the center, then strapping the ends and connecting them together to within about six inches by one of the above-described blanket-straps, it is now placed upon the saddle, previously laid upon the ground in position to receive it, and the blanket-roll is readily strapped in place by the blanket-straps of the saddle-stirrups. The blanket-roll, with saddle, is now raised. The saddle is passed over the head and adjusted upon the shoulders, the right arm being passed through the roll when the latter is carried across the left shoulder, and vice versa. The cartridge-belt having been buckled about the waist, the hooks to support the same are now adjusted to the stirrup-pieces. When the braces are used they are also now adjusted.

To remove the harness, first unclasp the hooks supporting the waist-belt; then raise the saddle with blanket-roll over the head.

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

1. In combination with the saddle consisting of the adjustable straps A A and the stirrup-plates B B, as described, the blanket-straps D D, secured to the said plates at the front and rear, substantially as herein described, and for the purposes set forth.

2. In combination with the saddle consisting of the straps A A and the stirrup-plates B B, as described, the suspension-plates I I, with hooks or clips adapted to engage with holes or slots provided in the rim of the stirrup-plates, and with connecting and suspending straps J J, for supporting the waist-belt or other weights at the lower part of the body, substantially as herein described, for the purposes set forth.

3. The double-case ammunition waist-belt having the continuous row of cartridge-cases, as described, the outer parts or halves, G′, of which serve as flaps, covers, and protections for the inner parts, G, when combined with the suspensory straps J J, constructed and arranged to operate substantially as described.

4. The ammunition-belt constructed as herein described, with double cartridge-cases extending continuously around from front to back, and with the said cases made in the separated sections, and with shorter sections at the sides of the waist, as described, constructed and arranged to operate for the purposes set forth.

5. In combination with the saddle consisting of the straps A A and stirrup-plates B B, as described, the bows or braces C C, constructed and applied substantially as described, to engage with the said plates B B at front and back, for the purposes set forth.

6. In combination with the straps A A of the saddle and the bows or braces C C, arranged to act as described, the straps *f f* and buckles *g g*, secured to these said parts, for the purposes set forth.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 6th day of November, 1878.

JACOB E. BLOOM. [L. S.]

Witnesses:

C. W. M. SMITH,

EDWARD E. OSBORNE.