

"RETAINING DEVICE"

The present invention relates to an article provided with releasable fastening means, the fastening means comprising a retaining device making use of a permanent magnet and, more particularly, a magnetic retaining device improved to produce a large retaining power which withstands a comparatively heavy load even with a permanent magnet which has only a small magnetic flux density and, hence, a comparatively small magnetic attracting force.

10 Hitherto, various retaining devices making use of permanent magnets have been proposed and become known. In these known retaining devices, however, the retaining power which bears the load is derived solely from the magnetic attracting power produced by the permanent magnet. Therefore, in order to attain a large retaining power, it is necessary to employ a permanent magnet having a large magnetic attracting force. For these reasons, the conventional retaining devices incorporating permanent magnets could find only limited use and the price thereof is inevitably raised due to the use of an expensive permanent magnet having large magnetic attracting force.

According to the present invention there is provided an article provided with releasable fastening means, the fastening means comprising a retaining device having a base plate attached to the article, a swingable plate
5 pivotably mounted on the base plate, and at least one permanent magnet fixed to one of the plates at a distance from the pivot axis between the plates to releasably hold the swingable plate in fixed relationship to the base plate, the article including or
10 comprising means retainable by the retaining device, when the swingable plate is in said fixed relationship to the base plate, against movement in a direction transverse to the force of magnetic attraction between the permanent magnet and the other of the plates.

15 The invention will now be more particularly described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 1 is a schematic front elevational view of a retaining device embodying the present invention;

20 Fig. 2 is a schematic sectional plan view of the retaining device shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a schematic front elevational view of another embodiment of the retaining device of the invention;

Fig. 4 is a schematic sectional plan view of the retaining device shown in Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 is a schematic front elevational view of still another embodiment of the retaining device of the
5 invention;

Fig. 6 is a schematic plan view of the retaining device shown in Fig. 5;

Fig. 7 is a schematic sectional plan view of a further embodiment of the invention;

10 Fig. 8 is a schematic front elevational view of a still further embodiment of the retaining device of the invention;

Fig. 9 is a schematic front elevational view of a different embodiment of the retaining device of the
15 invention;

Fig. 10 is a schematic front elevational view of a different embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 11 is a schematic sectional plan view of a different embodiment of the retaining device of the
20 invention;

Fig. 12 is a schematic front elevational view of a different embodiment of the retaining device of the invention;

Fig. 13 is a schematic front elevational view of a
25 different embodiment of the retaining device of the

invention;

Fig. 14 is a schematic front elevational view of a different embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 15 is a schematic sectional front elevational view of a different embodiment of the retaining device of the invention;

Figs. 16 to 19 are schematic sectional front elevational views of various forms of permanent magnet incorporated in the retaining device of the invention;

Figs. 20 and 21 are schematic plan views of other forms of the permanent magnet incorporated in the retaining device of the invention; and

Figs. 22 and 23 are schematic sectional front elevational views of other forms of the permanent magnet incorporated in the retaining device of the invention.

Referring first to Fig. 1, a retaining device shown therein is generally designated by a reference numeral 1 and has a base plate 21 made of a non-magnetic material and bent at its one end to form an upright tab 23. The retaining device 1 further has a columnar permanent magnet 22 fixed to the upper surface of the base plate 21 at the other end of the latter. A pair of bearing brackets 24, 24 are provided on the front and rear ends of the upright tab 23 of the base plate 21. A shaft 25 is rotatably held by

these bearing brackets 24,24. A swingable plate 26 made of iron is secured at its one end to the shaft 25 so that it is swingably supported by the bearing brackets 24,24. The other end of the swingable plate 26 is held in contact with the permanent magnet by the magnetic attracting force of the latter, but can be separated from the permanent magnet 22 by being swung upwardly by manual force as indicated by an arrow in Fig. 1.

The retaining device 1 of this embodiment can be used, for example, as a fastener for fastening the lid of a bag. For such purpose, the base plate 21 is fixed to the body of the bag 27 by means of, for example, rivets 28,28. After swinging the swingable plate 26 to move the other end of the swingable plate away from the permanent magnet 22, a hook ring 29 secured to a lid fastening strap 27a of the bag 27 is fitted around the permanent magnet 22. Then, the swingable plate 26 is swung down in the direction opposite to the arrow, thereby to bring the other end of the swingable plate into close contact with the permanent magnet. In this case, the permanent magnet 22 serves as a retaining member and the load applied by the member to be retained, i.e. the lid of the bag in this case, acts in the horizontal direction as viewed in Fig. 1. Hence, almost no force acts against the contacting force between the permanent magnet 22 and the swingable plate 26. Thus, the

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retaining device of this embodiment can withstand a considerably large load even when the permanent magnet used in the device has a comparatively small magnetic attracting force. The hook ring 29 to which the strap is secured can
5 be inserted into the retaining device 1 and fitted around the permanent magnet 22 from any desired direction.

Figs. 3 and 4 show another embodiment of the retaining device . The retaining device 2 of this embodiment has a base plate 31 made of a
10 ferromagnetic material and bent at both ends to provide upright tabs 33 and 37. A swingable plate 36 made of iron is swingably mounted at its one end on a pair of bearing brackets 34,34 provided on the upright tab 33, through a shaft 35 which is rotatably carried by the
15 bearing brackets 34,34. A columnar permanent magnet 32 is fixed to the upper surface of the base plate 31 at a portion of the latter near the upright tab 37. A hook ring 38 is retained by the upright tab 37 which serves as the retaining member. In this embodiment, a closed magnetic path
20 is formed through the permanent magnet 32, base plate 31 and the swingable plate 36 as indicated by arrows in Fig. 3. In this embodiment, it is necessary to use a permanent magnet having no yoke as shown, for example, in Fig. 16.

25 Figs. 5 and 6 show still another embodiment. The

retaining device 3 of this embodiment has a base plate 41 made of iron and provided at both sides of one end thereof with bearing brackets 44,44. A fixing member 48 is attached to the same end of the base plate 41 as the bearing brackets 44,44. A swingable plate 46 is swingably mounted at its one end on the bearing brackets 44,44 through a shaft 45. As will be clearly seen from Fig. 6, a pair of permanent magnets 42,42 are attached to opposite side portions of the other end of the base plate 41. A retaining pin 43 serving as a retaining member is provided on a central portion of the upper surface of the base member 41.

The retaining device 3 can be used, for example, as the buckle of a belt. In such a case, the belt is secured at its one end to the fixing member 48 while the other end of the same is inserted into the retaining device with one of the belt holes fitted to the retaining pin 43. In this retaining device 3, since the retaining pin 43 is disposed between the secured end of the swingable plate 46 and the permanent magnets 42, the swingable plate 46 is never lifted against the magnetic attracting force of the magnet 42, even though an external force is applied to swing the swingable plate 46 upwardly as indicated by an arrow in Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 shows a further embodiment of the invention. The retaining device 4 of this embodiment has a series of

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retaining pins 53,53a,53b,53c arranged in a row at a constant pitch along the length of a base plate 51 made of a non-magnetic material. The constructions and functions of permanent magnets 52,52, bearing brackets 54,54 and the
5 fixing member 55 are materially identical to the constructions and functions of corresponding members in the retaining device 3 of the preceding embodiment. In this case, a hook ring 56 connected to the belt 57 is adapted to engage selected one of the retaining pins 53,53a,53b,53c so that
10 the effective length of the belt 57 can be adjusted. Since the hook ring 56 has an elongated hole as will be seen from Fig. 7, the hook ring 56 is not obstructed by other retaining pins.

Fig. 8 shows a still further embodiment of the
15 invention. The retaining device 5 of this embodiment has a base plate 61 made of a non-magnetic material and provided with bearing brackets 64,64 only one of which is shown. A swingable plate 66 is swingably mounted at its one end on the bearing brackets 64,64 through a shaft 65. A pair of
20 permanent magnets 62 are secured to opposite side portions of the upper surface of the base plate 61 adjacent to the end having the bearing brackets 64,64. A retaining pin 63 is secured to the other end portion of the base plate 61.

Fig. 9 shows a different embodiment of the invention
25 having a base plate 71 made of a non-magnetic material and

provided at opposite sides of a central portion thereof with a pair of bearing brackets 74,74. A swingable member 76 is swingably supported at opposite sides of the central portion thereof by the bearing brackets 74,74 through a shaft 75.

5 A permanent magnet 72 and a retaining pin 73 are disposed on the upper surface of the base plate 71 at one end of the base plate 71. In this embodiment, by pressing the end of the swingable plate 76 opposite to the permanent magnet 72 as indicated by an arrow, the end of

10 the swingable plate 76 closely contacting the magnet 72 can easily be separated and moved away from the magnet 72.

Figs. 10 and 11 show a different embodiment. The retaining device 7 of this embodiment has a base plate 81 made of a non-magnetic material cranked at its one end to form

15 a step 83. A swingable plate 86 is swingably secured to the base plate 81 through the bearing brackets 84,84 and the shaft 85. One end of the swingable plate 86 is bent in a hook-like form to provide a retaining hook 88. A permanent magnet 82 is fixed to the other end of the base

20 plate 81. The step 83 is provided with a notch having edges 87,87. When the swingable plate 86 is held in close contact with the permanent magnet 82, the retaining hook 88 passes through the gap between both side edges 87,87 of the notch and the upper end 88a of the retaining hook 88

25 abuts the horizontal lower surface 83a of the step 83.

However, as the swingable plate 86 is swung in the direction of the arrow in Fig. 10, the upper end 88a is moved downwardly away from the horizontal lower surface 83a.

5 Fig. 12 shows a different embodiment of the invention. The retaining device 8 of this embodiment has a base plate 91 made of a non-magnetic material and bent at its one end to form an upright tab 93 while the other end of the same carries a permanent magnet 92 secured thereto. A swingable
10 plate 99 is composed of a bent plate 96 and a magnetic plate 97 which are pivotally connected to each other through a pin 98. The bent plate 96 is bent at a right angle at its one end to form a bent end 96a and is swingably supported at its mid portion by a pair of bearing
15 brackets 94,94 (only one of them is shown) provided on the base plate 91, through a shaft 95. In this embodiment, the end edge 96a of the bent plate 96 and the end edge 93a of the upright tab 93 of the base plate abut each other when the magnetic plate 97 is held in contact with the
20 permanent magnet 92 by the magnetic attracting force produced by the latter. However, as the swingable plate 99 is pressed downwardly in the region of the joint between the bent plate 96 and the magnetic plate 97 as indicated by an arrow, the end edge 93a is moved upwardly apart from the
25 end edge 96a. As the swingable plate 99 is relieved from

the pressing force, the magnetic plate 97 is magnetically attracted by the permanent magnet 92 into close contact with the permanent magnet 92. Consequently, the retaining device as a whole resumes the initial position as shown by
5 chain line to keep the end edges 93a and 96a in contact with each other.

Fig. 13 shows a different embodiment of the invention. The retaining device 9 of this embodiment has a base plate 101 made of a non-magnetic material, permanent magnet 102,
10 bearing brackets 104, 104 (only one of them is shown), shaft 105, swingable plate 106, and a fixing member 107. A pressing member 103 having an undulating lower surface consisting of alternating grooves and ridges e.g. a serrated lower surface is rockably connected to the lower surface of the swingable plate 106 through an arm
15 lever 103a. In this embodiment, the object to be retained, e.g. a belt 108, is clamped between the lower surface of the pressing member 103 and the upper surface of the base plate 101.

Fig. 14 shows a different embodiment of the invention.
20 The retaining device of this embodiment has a base plate 111 made of a non-magnetic material and having a substantially U-shaped cross-section constituted by an upper plate 111a and a lower plate 111b which are connected to each other at their one ends. A permanent magnet magnet 112 is
25 interposed between the upper and lower plates 111a and

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111b. A swingable plate 113 having a wave-like sectional shape is swingably attached at its one end through a shaft 114 to the end of the upper plate 111a where the latter is connected to the lower plate 111b. According to this
5 arrangement, the central downwardly projecting portion of the swingable plate 113 is held in close contact with the upper plate 112 by the magnetic attracting force produced by the permanent magnet 112. The hollow space formed between the upper plate 111a and the portion of the swingable plate 113
10 adjacent to the shaft 114 constitutes a retaining portion 115.

Fig. 15 shows a different embodiment of the invention. The retaining device 11 of this embodiment has a base plate 121 made of a non-magnetic material and having a recess 123
15 formed in the mid portion of the lower surface thereof. A permanent magnet 122 is fitted in the recess 123. A swingable plate 125 is swingably attached at its one end to the base plate 121 through bearing brackets 124, 124 (only one of them is shown) and a shaft 126.

20 In the embodiments described hereinbefore, the permanent magnets are fixed to the base plates. This arrangement, however, is not exclusive and the same advantages can be obtained even if the permanent magnets are fixed to the swingable plates. It is also possible to
25 directly fix the base plate 41, 51 or 101 to the belt, hand

bag or the like object by means of screws or rivets, instead of using the fixing members such as those designated at numerals 48, 55 and 107 in Figs. 6, 7 and 13.

The permanent magnets used in the described embodiments can have various forms as shown in Figs. 16 through 23. More specifically, Fig. 16 shows a permanent magnet 133 having no yoke, while Figs. 17 to 23 show permanent magnets 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144 and 146 having yokes 135, 137, 139, 141, 143 and 147, 148, respectively. When no yoke is used, the base plate has to be made of a ferromagnetic material. On the contrary, when a yoke is used, the base plate should be made of a non-magnetic material.

The yoke, when used, can have various forms such as an inversed T-shape (see Fig. 17), an L-shape (see Fig. 18), a U-shape (see Fig. 19), a bowl-like shape (see Figs. 20 and 21) and a plate-like shape (see Fig. 22). The yoke may be integrated with the permanent magnet as shown in Figs. 17 to 22, or may be constructed in two separate pieces one of which is integrated with the permanent magnet while the other is secured to the object to be secured, as shown in Fig. 23.

As has been described, according to the invention, there is provided a retaining device having a permanent magnet fixed to a base plate or a swingable plate, and a retaining member which retains an object in cooperation

with the magnet when the base plate or the swingable plate is held in close contact with the permanent magnet due to the magnetic attracting force produced by the permanent magnet. Therefore, the load imposed by the object to be retained is born by the retaining member regardless of the magnetic attracting force of the magnet. Consequently, the retaining device of the invention can produce a strong retaining power to bear a heavy load, even with a permanent magnet which has a comparatively small magnetic flux density, i.e. a comparatively small magnetic attracting power.

The retaining device of the invention, therefore, can be used satisfactorily even for uses requiring a large retaining force which could never be produced by the conventional retaining device relying solely upon the magnetic retaining force, such as buckles of belts, buckles of shoulder straps of bags, fasteners for lids of bags, and so forth. Thus, the invention offers a great advantage to widen the use of the retaining device incorporating a permanent magnet, without any restriction due to the production cost and size. Furthermore, the invention permits a reduction in the size of the retaining device without being accompanied by any reduction in the retaining power. Therefore, the retaining device of the invention can be used for comparatively small objects such as



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Claims:-

1. An article provided with releasable fastening means, the fastening means comprising a retaining device having a base plate attached to the article, a swingable plate pivotably mounted on the base plate, and at least one permanent magnet fixed to one of the plates at a distance from the pivot axis between the plates to releasably hold the swingable plate in fixed relationship to the base plate, the article including or comprising means retainable by the retaining device, when the swingable plate is in said fixed relationship to the base plate, against movement in a direction transverse to the force of magnetic attraction between the permanent magnet and the other of the plates.
2. An article according to claim 1, wherein the swingable plate is pivotably connected at one end to one end of the base plate.
3. An article according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein said permanent magnet is fixed to one of said plates substantially midway between opposite sides thereof and wherein one of the plates is bent at an end remote from the pivot axis towards the other plate for retaining said means retainable by the retaining device.

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4. An article according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein two permanent magnets are provided and wherein retaining pin is provided for retaining said means retainable by the retaining device.

5 5. An article according to claim 4, wherein a plurality of said retaining pins are arranged in a row.

6. An article according to claim 2, wherein said base plate is bent at its one end to form a step, and wherein said swingable plate is bent at its one end to form a retaining hook, the end edges of said step and said retaining hook being adapted to abut each other when the other end of said other plate is held in close contact with said permanent magnet, for retaining said means retainable by the retaining device.

15 7. An article according to claim 1, wherein said swingable plate is in two parts which are pivotally connected to each other, one of which has fixed thereto or co-operates with the permanent magnet and the other of which abuts the base plate when the device is in a retaining position.

20 8. An article according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein a pressing member having a multiplicity of alternating grooves and ridges is rockably attached to the lower surface of said swingable plate through an arm lever, so that said means retainable by the retaining device can be clamped between said swingable plate and said base plate.



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9. An article according to claim 1 or claim 2,
wherein said base plate is composed of an upper plate
and a lower plate which are connected at their one ends,
while said swingable plate has a wave-like sectional
5 shape, said permanent magnet being disposed between said
upper and lower plates.

10. An article according to claim 1, wherein said
permanent magnet is mounted in a recess formed in the
lower surface of said base plate midway between opposite
10 sides of said base plate.

11. An article according to any one of the preceding
claims, wherein said means retainable by the retaining
device is a strap or flap of the article.

12. An article according to anyone of the preceding
15 claims, in the form of a handbag.

13. An article according to anyone of claims 4, 5,
or 6, in the form of a belt or a strap, said retaining
device being in the form of a buckle.

14. An article provided with releasable fastening
20 means, the fastening means comprising a retaining device
substantially as hereinbefore described with reference
to the accompanying drawings.

