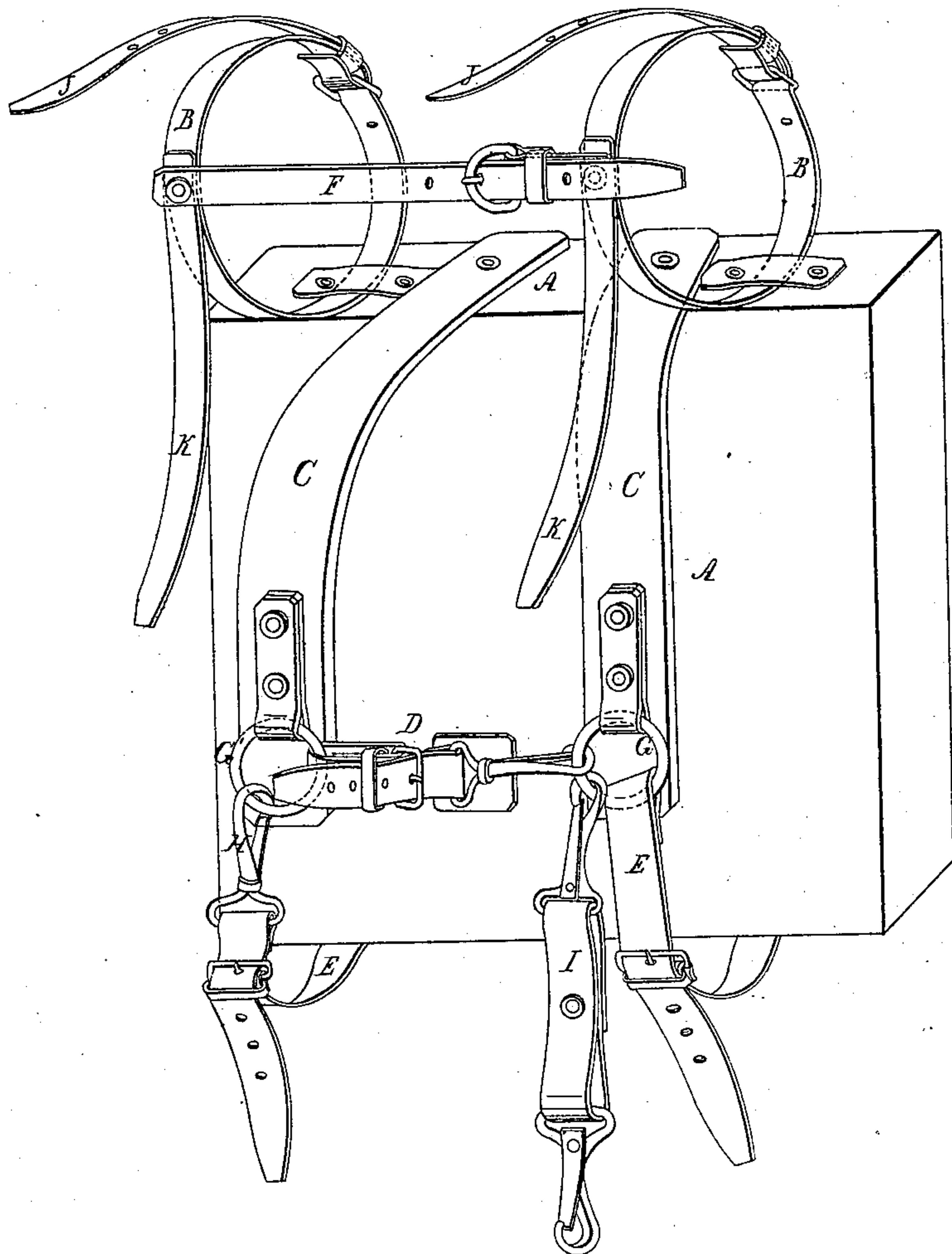


*O. E. Woods*

*Accouterments*

*N<sup>o</sup> 12,895.*

*Patented May 24, 1864.*



*Witnesses.*

*Henry Adams*  
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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

OLIVER EVANS WOODS, OF PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

## KNAPSACK.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 42,895, dated May 24, 1864.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, OLIVER EVANS WOODS, of Philadelphia, in the county of Philadelphia and State of Pennsylvania, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Military Knapsacks; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, which will enable any person skilled in the art to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawing, forming a part of this specification, and representing a perspective view of my invention.

Similar letters of reference indicate like parts.

A represents a knapsack of the usual construction; B B, the usual blanket-straps upon the upper part of the knapsack; C C, the ordinary shoulder-straps; D, the breast-strap; E E', the sling-straps, one of which, E', I term the "breast sling-hook strap." All of the above parts, with the customary buckles, except as hereinafter specified, are made and attached in the usual manner, and require no special description.

In carrying out my improvements I connect the two blanket-straps B B by a horizontal strap and buckle, F, in the manner shown. This strap I term the "gun-holder."

When on the march the soldier slips the barrel of his musket underneath the gun-holder F, it will not only prevent the gun from slipping off the knapsack, but the soldier can carry the knapsack high up on his back, suspended from the barrel of the musket, in the manner that bundles on sticks are carried. When the soldier wishes to relieve his hands of the weight and care of his musket, he slips the barrel of the gun under the gun-holder F, and allows the hammer of the musket-lock to rest on the breast-strap. Thus arranged the weight of the knapsack behind is counterbalanced by the weight of the gun in front, and by this counterbalancing both loads are more easily carried, being saddled by the shoulder-straps C C upon the man's shoulders. This arrangement also reduces the pressure of the sling-straps E E', permits the soldier to loosen them, and prevents them from cutting his arms.

K K are what I term "brace-straps." They are short straps attached, as shown, to the blanket-straps B B. When the soldier rests his musket upon the breast-strap, secured by

the gun-holder, as I have described, his hands being at liberty, he may then unbuckle the sling-straps E E', and by seizing the brace-straps K K all slippage of the knapsack and musket will be avoided, while his hands, arms, and upper part of the body will by the change of position bring a new set of muscles into play and give rest to those that are fatigued. The muscles of the shoulder may be also relieved and his back ventilated by seizing the brace-straps K K and lifting his hands above his head. The brace-straps K K also will serve, when held by the soldier, to prevent the jolting and pounding of the knapsack when moving on the double-quick march.

G G are rings attached to the ends of the shoulder-straps C C, and employed in lieu of the ordinary pins or buttons. The object of these rings is to permit the attachment of the musket to the shoulder-straps, and also to permit the fastening and unfastening of the breast sling-hook strap E' at the breast of the soldier, instead of at the bottom of the knapsack, which is the usual mode.

The breast sling-hook strap E', it will be observed, is provided with a hook, H, to engage the ring G', by which hook the soldier may instantly bind or loosen the knapsack by simply bringing one hand to his breast without the trouble and difficulty of reaching under the knapsack, which the common mode of fastening requires.

I is a device which I term a "gun-link." It consists of two hooks, connected by a strap. One of the hooks is a snap-hook; the other hook is without a spring. The soldier having fastened the snap-hook to the rings or straps of his musket—say, for instance, the metallic loop on the back of the musket next the guard—can then, by the remaining hook on the gun-link, suspend the musket to either of the rings G G' on the shoulder-straps C C'. When thus secured, the muzzle of the musket will point to the ground, in the manner technically termed "secure arms." The musket can be readily shifted from ring G to ring G', either at the word of command or the will of the soldier. When thus secured, the musket serves to counterbalance the weight of the knapsack, enabling the soldier to carry both with greater ease. The gun-link can in other modes secure the musket to the strapping or



person of the soldier, leaving his hands free for any purpose that may contribute to his comfort or convenience.

In the foregoing description I have alluded to the weight of the musket counterbalancing the weight of the knapsack. I will now, however, state that even if the knapsack is empty the gun-link will operate to relieve the hands of the soldier of the care of his musket, provided the sling-straps of the knapsack are fastened. In like manner the gun-holder will operate efficiently for the same purpose when the knapsack is empty, provided that on the top of the knapsack there be fastened any equipment or device sufficient to give the barrel of the musket the vertical or nearly vertical position necessary to throw the weight of the musket forward, and also to enable the hammer of the musket-lock to rest on the breast-strap.

I do not claim, broadly, the counterbalancing of the accouterments of soldiers; but,

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

1. The gun-holder F, in combination with

the blanket-straps B B and the knapsack A, operating substantially in the manner and for the purpose herein shown and described.

2. The brace-straps K K, applied to and operating with the straps B B and the knapsack, substantially as herein shown and described.

3. The construction of the sling-strap E' so that it will couple and uncouple at the breast, substantially in the manner and for the purpose herein shown and described.

4. The gun link I, constructed and operating substantially as herein shown and described.

5. The employment of the rings G G', in combination with the shoulder-straps, as and for the purpose herein shown and described.

6. The use of the hook H, in connection with the strap E' and ring G', as set forth.

7. The method herein described of counterbalancing the knapsack and the musket.

OLIVER EVANS WOODS.

Witnesses:

EDMUND WILCOX,

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