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A SINGLE INSTRUMENT FOR ACHIEVING ACCURATE ALIGNMENT  
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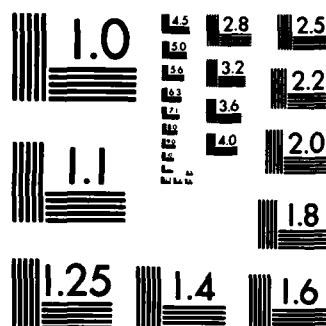
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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

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1. REPORT NUMBER		2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) A Simple Instrument for Achieving Accurate Alignment and Pre-Insertion Stability with Mandibular Bone Plates		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED	
7. AUTHOR(s) John P. Schmitz Jeffrey O. Hollinger		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER	
PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS US Army Institute of Dental Research (USAIDR) Washington, DC 20307-5300		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)	
CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS US Army Medical Research & Development Command HQDA-IS Fort Detrick, MD 21701-5012		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS 62775A 3162775A825 AA 029	
MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		12. REPORT DATE 1 Aug 85	
		13. NUMBER OF PAGES	
		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) Unclassified	
		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE None	

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)

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DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)

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**A SIMPLE INSTRUMENT FOR ACHIEVING ACCURATE  
ALIGNMENT AND PRE-INSERTION STABILITY  
WITH MANDIBULAR BONE PLATES**

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A three-dimensionally bendable defect bridging plate was first described by Schmoker et al. (1976) for the stabilization of bone grafts following partial resection of tumors of the mandible. The applications of this reconstruction plate according to ASIF principles have been described. The advantages of this plate for mandibular reconstruction are its ability to be bent in all dimensions and to be adapted to a mandible before a resection is performed. This permits an absolutely stable fixation of the mandibular fragments in their original pre-resection position. The technique of plate adaptation and drilling and tapping of the screw canals prior to resection and final placement of the plate is termed the pre-insertion phase.

Stable positioning of the reconstruction plate is essential for insuring accurate adaptation during the pre-insertion phase. Special plate-holding forceps specifically designed for this purpose insure stability of the plate and complement the accurate placement of the cortical screws used for fixation (Fig. 1).

Currently designed plate-holding forceps have several disadvantages. First, they have the ability to scratch the plate and remove the protective oxide layer from the metal. Second, contact of the forceps' reciprocal jaw on the bone opposing the plate can possibly damage the tapped threads in the screw canal (Fig. 2). Third, presently designed plate-holding forceps are not inherently stable. They provide only frictional contact on

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the plate side and one-point contact on the reciprocal side. Finally, a problem occurs when the forceps occupy a plate hole which may be needed for subsequent screw placement. A simple modification of a readily available instrument may provide advantages over currently designed plate-holding forceps.

A Dingman bone forceps can be modified by adapting a piece of surgical tubing to fit over the labial jaw of the forceps (Fig. 3). The protected arm can be applied to the plate-side to rigidly hold the plate during adaptation, alignment, and pre-insertion fixation (Fig. 4).

#### SUMMARY

→ The modified Dingman forceps provides several advantages over currently designed plate-holding forceps. The rubber tubing prevents metal-to-metal contact of the forceps on the plate and provides increased stability to the plate. The long lingual jaws of the Dingman forceps are applied to the lingual bone at a point remote from the screw canal and this prevents damage to the prepared canals. The design of the forceps' jaws provides three-point rigidity to stabilize the plate and, therefore, insures proper alignment, adaptation, and pre-insertion fixation.

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#### LEGENDS FOR FIGURES

Fig. 1 Synthes® plate-holding forceps.

Fig. 2 Synthes® plate-holding forceps with the lingual point within a tapped screw canal.

Fig. 3 Dingman bone forceps showing size of surgical tubing necessary for protection of the labial jaw.

Fig. 4 Photograph at surgery showing two modified Dingman forceps stabilizing a reconstruction plate during the pre-insertion phase.

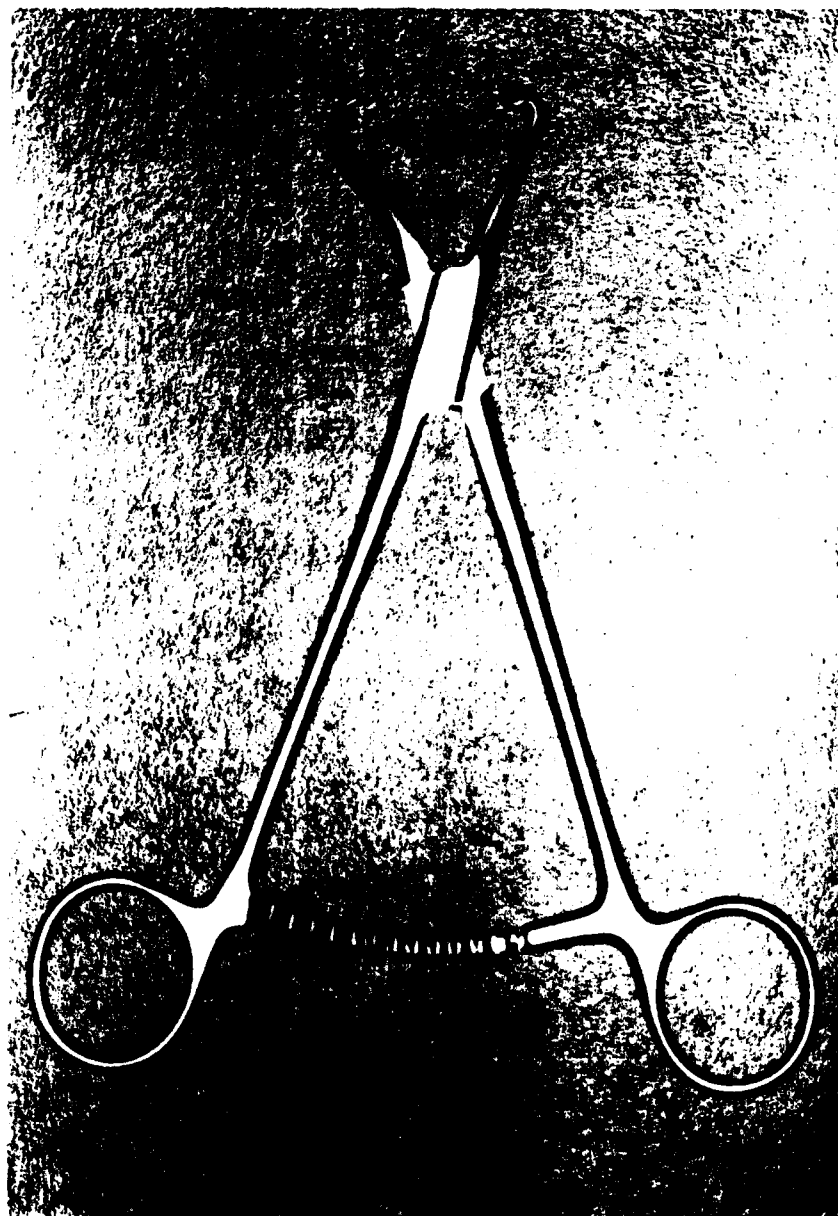


Fig. 1

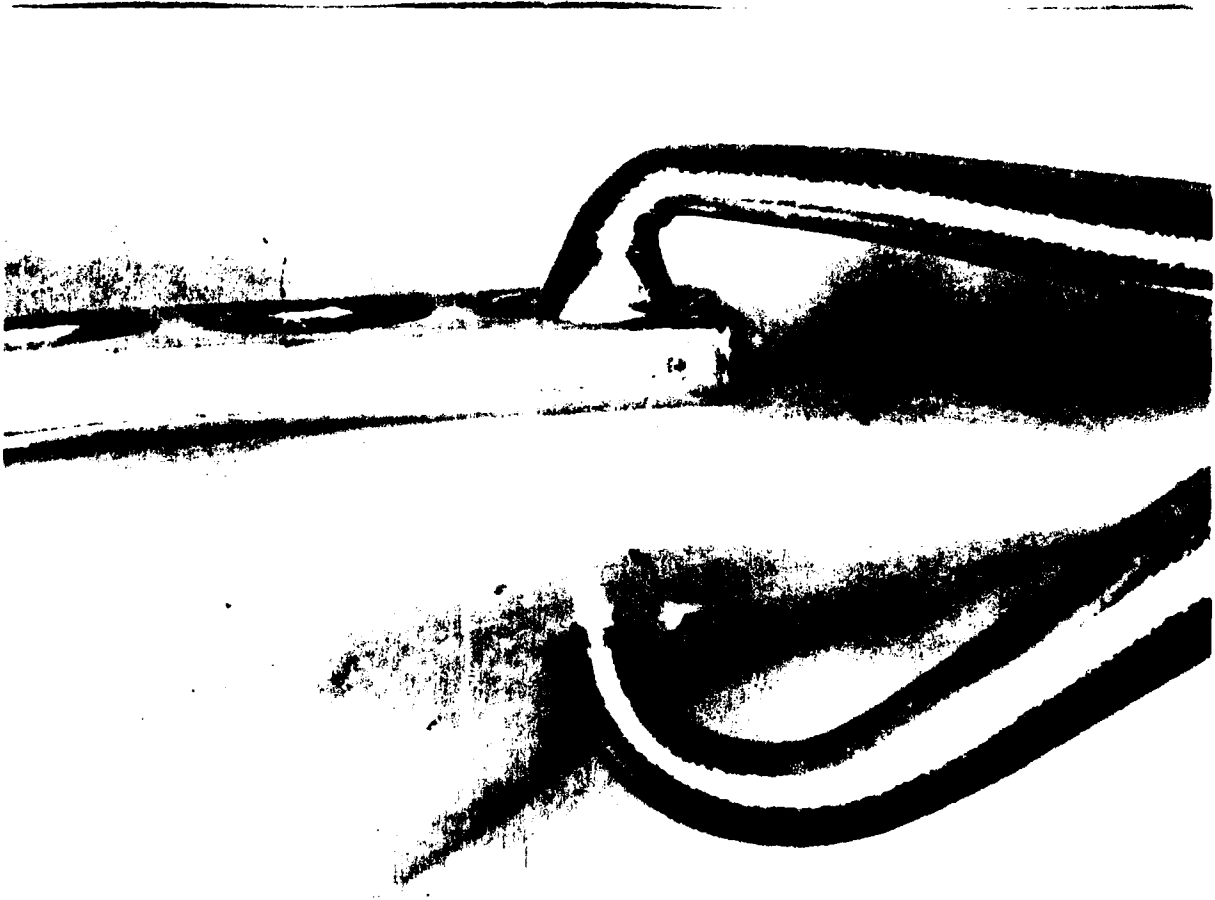


Fig 2

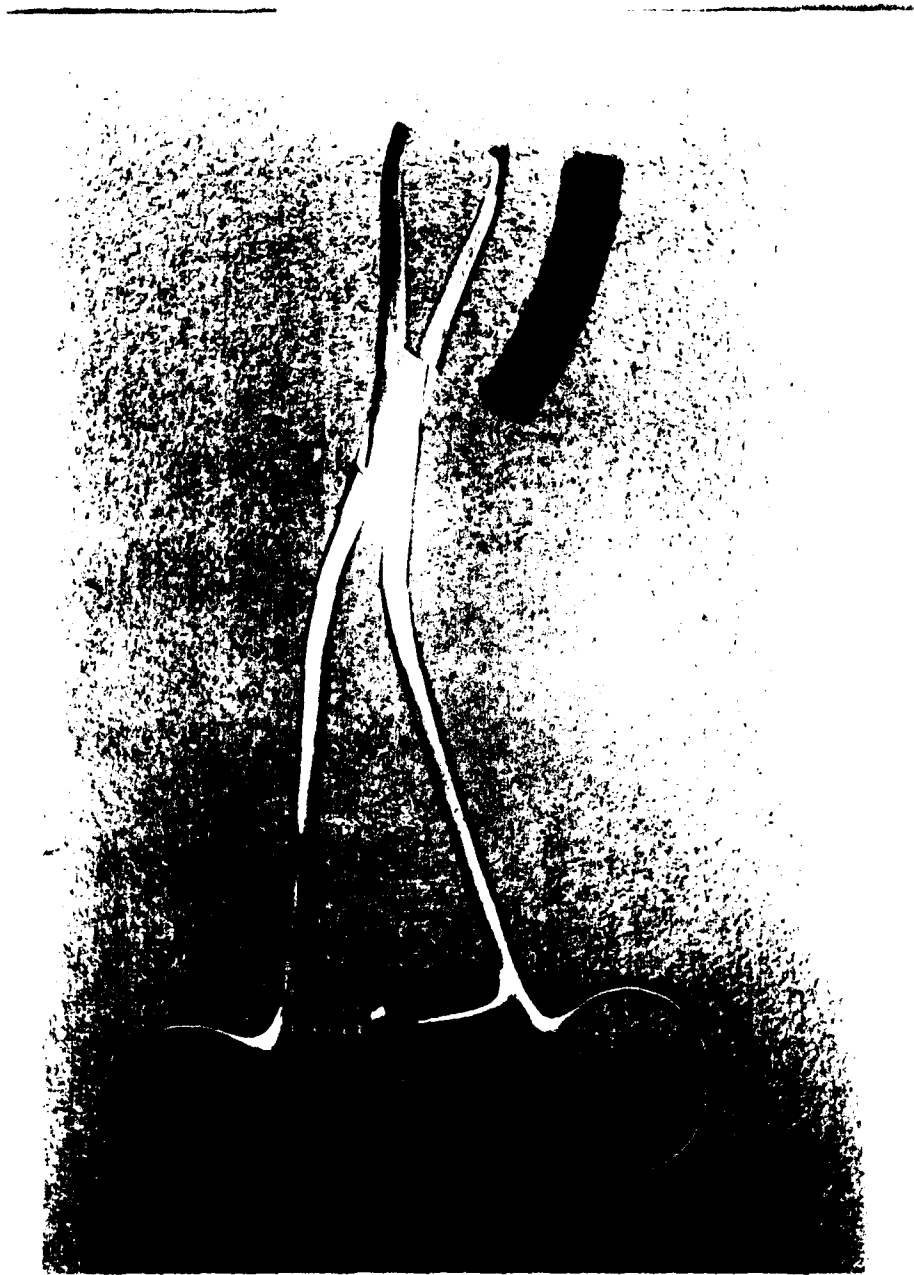


Fig 3



Fig 4

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