

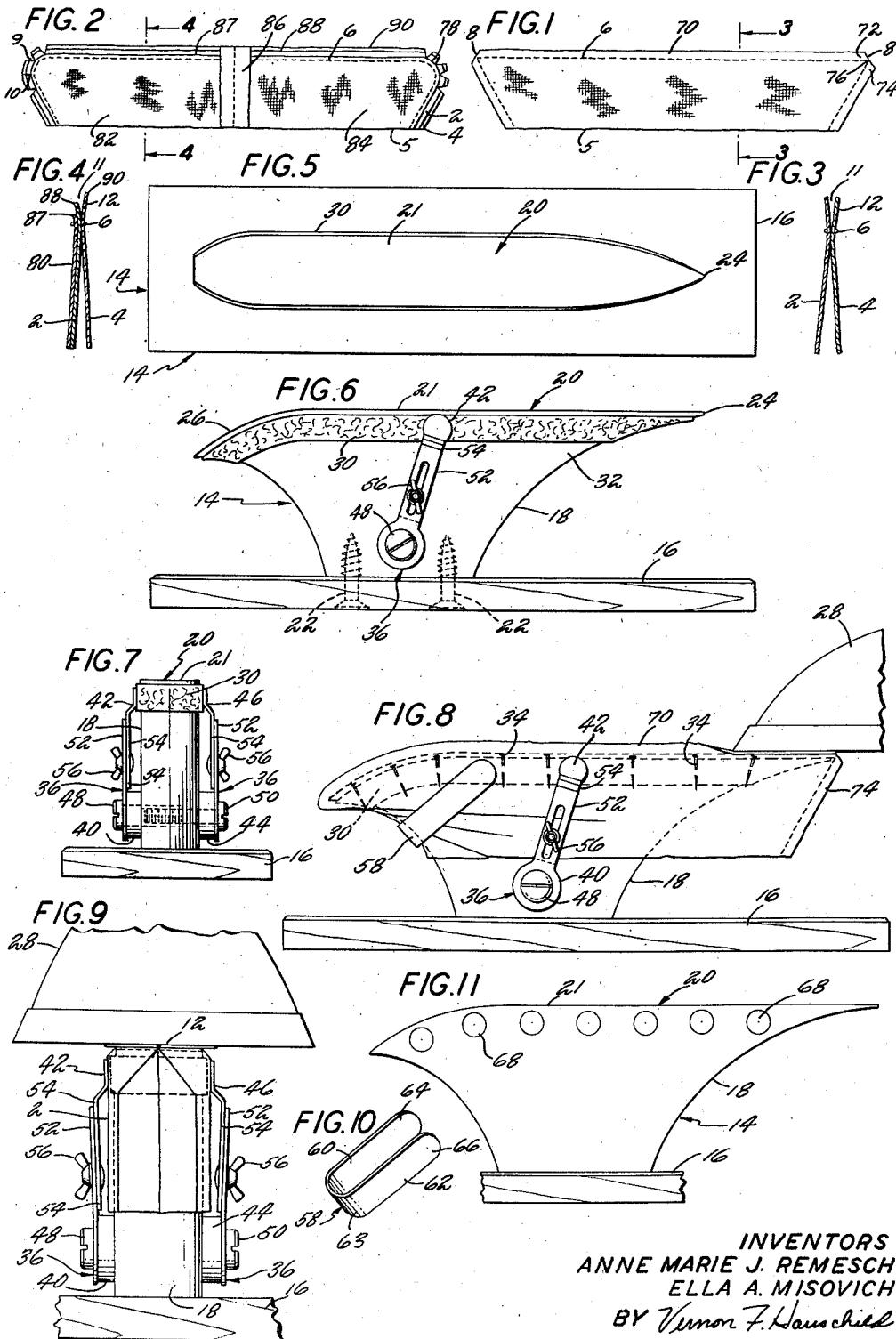
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IRONING AID

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IRONING AID

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The present invention relates to a method and means for fabricating intricately shaped garments having seams which are inaccessible for pressing by conventional means and more particularly to an ironing or pressing aid which provides a method and means for fabricating smooth and flat seams in these garments.

In the past, the problem of fabricating smooth and flat seams in such garments and garment parts as collars, belts, pockets, lapels and buttonholes has been one of considerable concern to housewives and other non-professional seamstresses, as well as to tailors. A garment which does not have flat and smooth seams has what is commonly called a "home made" look and lacks the desirable professional or custom tailored appearance.

The key to proper appearance in garments is pressing the seam edges open while the garment is in the inverted or inside out position during garment fabrication. The seamstress or tailor in the past has attempted to press the seams of the intricately shaped garment open before turning the garment part right side out but the odd shape of and inaccessible location of the garment seams made pressing a difficult task, if not an impossible one. When the sewer was unable to press these seams open or when the seam pressing attempts did not produce the desired flatness of seam, it was necessary to turn the garment part right side out and carefully find the peripheral seam location and pin the layers of cloth of the garment together at several places along the periphery of the garment part. The purpose of pinning was to hold the garment layers in proper position so that the garment seam was lying evenly and in position to be ironed or pressed flat. Because the pins would interfere with the ironing process, the garment part then had to be basted or stitched to hold the garment layers in proper position for seam pressing and the holding pins removed. In short, each section of seam had to be carefully located, the garment part had to be pinned in proper position, then stitched in this position, then the pins had to be removed to permit pressing, then, after the seam was pressed flat, the stitches had to be removed.

Failure to press the seam open would result in uneven seams and unsightly bulges and ridges in the final garment.

It is a primary object of the present invention to provide a means and method for pressing the inaccessible seams of oddly shaped garment parts open during the fabrication of the garment so that the garment seams will lie flat and present a professionally tailored appearance when completed.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a means for pressing the inaccessible seams of oddly shaped garments open which is simple in structure and easily fabricated as well as sufficiently simple to operate.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a method of fabricating intricately shaped garments including pressing open the normally inaccessible seams thereof which is sufficiently simple that housewives and

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inexperienced seamstresses can perform the function with ease. The method will also be of definite interest to tailors and professional sewers.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a means for pressing the seams of any intricately shaped garment part open, regardless of the seam shape.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide a means for pressing the seams of oddly shaped garments open and also providing means for holding the garment securely in place during the pressing operation.

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing.

Referring to the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a side elevation of a semi-finished, inverted, intricately shaped garment, in particular, a pointed collar.

Fig. 2 is a side elevation of a semi-finished, inverted, intricately shaped garment, in particular, a round or curved collar.

Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken along line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a sectional view taken along line 4—4 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 5 is a plan view of the ironing aid which is the subject matter of this patent application, showing one form of garment securing means.

Fig. 6 is a side elevation of the ironing aid, showing garment securing means.

Fig. 7 is an end elevation of the ironing aid with the garment securing means shown in Fig. 6.

Fig. 8 is a side elevation of the ironing aid with a semi-finished, inverted, intricately shaped garment positioned thereon by several garment securing means and showing the garment seam being pressed or ironed open by a flatiron.

Fig. 9 is an end elevation, partly fragmentary, of the ironing aid with a semi-finished, inverted garment positioned thereon by garment securing means and showing the garment seam being pressed open by a flatiron.

Fig. 10 is a perspective view of one of the garment securing means shown in Fig. 8 and consists of a two fingered U-shaped clamp.

Fig. 11 is a side elevation of the ironing aid, partly fragmentary, showing garment securing means in the form of a plurality of magnets embedded into the aid.

To fully understand the present invention, let us consider the steps necessary and the problems involved in fabricating an intricately shaped garment with inaccessible seams and with a series of seams which sometimes form an arc of over 270° in the garment end. Such garments or garment parts include, among others, pointed, square and round collars, belts, lapels, buttonholes, all scalloped edges, cuffs, facings, necklines and pockets. To simplify the explanation, the fabricating of collars will be explained but it should be borne in mind that the fabrication and seam ironing methods discussed below is equally applicable to the fabrication of the class of garment into which the above mentioned garments or garment parts fall.

In fabricating a collar, both an under collar 2 and upper collar 4 are cut to approximate finished collar shape but the collar parts are cut sufficiently oversized to permit a one-half to five-eighths inch seam allowance. The rough cut under and upper collars, 2 and 4, are placed juxtapositioned face-to-face, that is with the pattern, outer or right side of the collar parts together, and with the corresponding edges of each collar part substantially aligned. With the collar parts in this position, the parts are stitched together along all sides excluding the neck or shoulder side 5, that is, excluding the side which will attach to the other part of a garment such as a shirt

or a blouse. The garment, at this stage of fabrication, is a semi-finished, inverted garment of intricate shape. Figure 1 shows a pointed collar in this stage of fabrication while Figure 2 shows a round or curved collar so formed. Peripheral stitches 6 join upper collar 4 to under collar 2. Excess fabric outboard of the stitches and in the vicinity of the corner of a pointed collar is then cut away or removed, as shown in Fig. 1 at 8, so that the finished collar will not be unnecessarily bulky. If, instead of coming to a point, the garment has curved or round corners or edges, it is advisable to remove a plurality of V-shaped notches or cuts 9 from the garment or merely to make a plurality of slits or cuts 10 instead of the V-shaped notches on the curved seam edges to prevent the above mentioned bulkiness in the finished garment.

At this point in the fabrication of the collar, while it is still a semi-finished, inverted garment, it is essential to the final well-tailored appearance and "custom made" finish of the finished garment that the peripheral seam 11 of the inverted garment be pressed open. That is, the fabric edges 12 which project beyond the seam stitches 6 of the seam 11 must be pressed back to lie flat against the adjacent fabric, as best shown in Fig. 9. This operation is very difficult to perform on intricately shaped garments by the use of conventional ironing or pressing means and methods, for it is impossible to provide the necessary uniform support to the garment to permit proper pressing of the seam.

The ironing aid 14, which is the subject matter of this patent application, provides the necessary support to permit seam pressing. The ironing aid 14 is provided with a substantial base 16 of sufficient length and width to give the aid desired stability and permits it to be set upon any flat object, such as an ironing board or table. The length and width of the base is preferably greater than that of any other portion or part of the aid. The base further provides stable and independent support to the ironing aid so that the housewife or seamstress will not have to manually support the aid in any way when using it. For most uses, a base which is about 12 inches long, about four inches wide and about one-half inch thick, is sufficient. The aid projects substantially vertically from this base, through a shank section 18 to a garment support portion or ironing platform 20. The shank and ironing platform can be integral with the base or mechanically attached thereto by screws 22 or other well known means. The garment support portion or ironing platform 20 of the aid projects substantially horizontally along the longitudinal axis of the base and is relatively narrow in width. The width of the garment support portion of the aid is preferably less than an inch. This width is chosen to be less than the combined seam allowance of the upper and under collars so that the seam edges of the semi-finished, inverted garment will not be pressed into or mark or make ridges in the adjacent collar fabric when the peripheral seam is pressed open. The garment support portion or ironing platform 20 of the ironing aid 14 provides a substantially horizontal, narrow, centrally located platform or portion 21 throughout most of the aid length but its two ends are of different shape to accommodate or fit any shaped garment seam. One such end presents a horizontal support in the same plane as the major, central, horizontal portion of the ironing platform of the aid 21 and culminates in a centrally located point 24 so that garments with pointed edges can be received by the ironing aid point 24 for the purpose of pressing open the edges of the peripheral seam of pointed edged garments such as pointed collars. The other end of the aid departs tangentially and downwardly from the major, central, horizontal portion or surface 21 of the ironing platform 20 of the aid in a multi-radii curve of the french curve type 26 to accommodate or fit a seam of any curvature and a seam of varying curvature. The curved end projection 26 smoothly diminishes in width as it departs from the central portion of the ironing platform 21 and is narrowest

at its end. The end width dimension is preferably approximately three-sixteenths of an inch.

It is highly advantageous to have garment securing means associated with the ironing aid so that the garment peripheral seam 11 may be centered upon the ironing platform 20 of the aid and securely held in this position during the ironing or pressing operation. With the garment securely held in proper position on this firm and stable self-supported ironing aid 14, the housewife, seamstress or tailor has both hands free to perform the seam pressing or ironing operation. One hand will be free to operate the flatiron 28 while the other hand may be used to smoothly feed the folded back peripheral seam edges 12 under the flatiron tip so that they will be smoothly pressed open.

One such garment securing means is a double strip of porous or foraminous material 30, such as felt or foam rubber, with one strip secured to each side or cheek 32 of the ironing aid about one-fourth to one-half inch below the ironing surface. These strips 30 must be located a sufficient distance below the support or pressing surface 20 that common pins 34 or other securing means can be used to fasten the garment to the strips with the heads of the common pins or the highest point of the other securing means being located below the garment support platform 20 so as not to interfere with the ironing operation.

A second garment securing means which may be used in conjunction with or independently of the porous strips 30 is a pivotable opposed spring fingered clamp 36 which is an integral part of the ironing aid. A cylindrical member 40 of this pivotable clamp projects through or into or bears against the shank 18 of the aid slightly above the base 16 of the aid. This cylindrical member 40 carries a spring type finger 42 and may be made hollow to receive a second cylindrical member 44 which carries a spring type finger 46 which is biased in the direction toward the aid cheek 32 opposite to the direction of the first finger 42 bias so that when the cylindrical members 40 and 44 are joined by any well known means, such as a nut 48 and bolt 50 passing through the cylindrical portions 40 and 44, these spring fingers, 42 and 46, will be caused to press against the opposite cheeks 32 of the aid, either on the porous material 30 or elsewhere, to secure a garment in place upon the aid. To give greater flexibility to the length of the spring fingers, each finger may consist of two slotted pieces 52 and 54 held together by wing nuts 56 or in another well known manner. The cylindrical parts 40 and 44 of this spring fingered garment securing means 36 are received slightly loosely in or against the lower shank of the aid so that the unit 36 can be pivoted to cause the spring finger ends 42 and 46 to bear against any desired positions along the ironing platform of the aid. By varying the tightness of the cylindrical parts 48 and 50 of the securing means, the pressure exerted by the finger ends 42 and 46 can be varied. When the sewer wished to change the position of the finger ends 42 and 46, the fingers can be manually lifted away from the aid cheeks 32, rotated to the desired new position, and upon release will spring back against the aid cheeks.

In conjunction with or independently of other garment securing means, spring type clamps or clips 58, which are not an integral part of the aid, may be used to secure properly positioned garments to the ironing aid. Referring to Fig. 10, we see that these clamps or clips 58 are U-shaped and consist of two spring fingers 60 and 62 projecting from a finger joining end 63. The clamp is of such size and the fingers so spring biased that the finger tips 64 and 66 of the clamp will bear against the garment positioned over the ironing aid to secure it in place for pressing or ironing.

As shown in Fig. 11, another garment securing means consists of one or more magnets 68 placed in the aid shank section 18 somewhat below the ironing platform 20. These magnets may be of any desired shape and the

pole distance is selected such that the magnets project through the aid shank 18 to become flush with both cheeks 32 thereof or project therebeyond, preferably slightly. After the garment is placed over the aid, a second magnet or plurality of magnets are placed against the garment on both sides of the aid so as to be outboard of the embedded magnets. The magnetic attraction will serve to secure the garment or fabric in place. It may be desirable to embed a magnet near each end of the aid in a position just below the ironing platform and to employ two external magnets of such length that each will project between the two magnets embedded in the aid so that the magnetic poles are in contact. This will give support to the garment for the full length of the ironing platform. For other applications, it may be more desirable to place a plurality of magnets along the ironing platform length and in position in the aid shank 18 just below said ironing platform 20 and use an equal number of magnets on each aid cheek 32 just outboard of each embedded magnet 68 to secure the garment in place.

The ironing aid, which is the subject matter of this application can be made of virtually any material and can be a single or multi-piece unit.

With the ironing aid construction in mind, we can now continue with our description of the garment fabricating and seam pressing method. With the semi-finished inverted garment fabricated, it is essential to final garment appearance that the seam edges 12 of the garment now be pressed open. Because of the intricate shape of this garment, ordinary ironing means such as the conventional ironing board and the buck type ironing press would not provide the centralized support required at the garment seam 11 to permit the successful pressing open of the peripheral seams. It is necessary that the support means be of such size and shape that it can be fitted into the semi-finished, inverted garment or that such a garment can be fitted over the aid to render positive support to the fabric in the immediate vicinity of the seam or seam line 11. The semi-finished collar described above can be fitted over the ironing aid which is the subject matter of the present invention and the semi-finished collar can be so positioned on the aid that the necessary immediate support for ironing can be attained at any portion of the seam. This is shown in Fig. 8.

Again referring to Fig. 8 and to Fig. 9 we see that if the sewer wished to press open a relatively long seam 70, the sewer will place the inverted garment on the aid and centrally locate the long seam 70 to be pressed open, see Fig. 9, on the elongated central flat portion 21 of the ironing platform 20 and after securing the garment so positioned to the aid by any of the methods described above, the sewer can then use an ordinary flatiron 28 to press this long seam 70 open. Because the garment is securely held to the aid and because the aid is self-supported, the sewer has both hands available for the pressing operation. It is sometimes desirable to use either a steam iron or to dampen the fabric to attain better ironing results. With the elongated seam 70 pressed open the sewer may next desire to press open the seam of a garment portion which is pointed, such as is shown at 72 or 74. To accomplish this, the inverted garment would be positioned on the aid such that the pointed end or portion of the aid 24 would fit into the pointed portion of the inverted garment and thereby render immediate support to the garment seam to the very end of the garment point 76. After securing the garment in position, this portion of the seam may be pressed open. With pointed garment seam 72 pressed open, the seamstress may remove the semi-finished, inverted garment from the ironing aid and replace the garment on the aid with pointed seam 74 supported by ironing aid pointed end 24 and press open seam 74. If there is a curved garment seam portion, such as at 78, the inverted garment is again placed on the ironing aid and positioned so that the curved seam 78 mates

with a portion of the curved end or portion 26 of the aid whereupon the garment may be secured to the aid and the seam pressed open. It may be necessary to move the curved portion of the seam along the curved end of the aid and secure the garment to the aid several times so that the complete curve seam can be pressed open.

It is not uncommon to find a garment, such as a collar half used on women's blouses, having both a pointed and a round portion. This garment may be placed inverted on the aid and, after securing the garment, the full seam, including the pointed, straight and curved portions may be pressed in one aid setting. If a garment having a pointed and a curved seam portion has a relatively long straight seam portion therebetween, it may be advisable to press open the major central portion of the straight seam by conventional means and then place the inverted garment on the ironing aid 14 such that the already pressed straight seam central portion is bunched to permit the simultaneous positioning, securing and pressing open of the pointed and curved seam portions of the garment. In this situation, as would be expected the portion of the garment seam ending in a point would be positioned and secured to the pointed end of the aid while the curved portion of the garment seam would simultaneously be positioned on and secured to the curved end of the aid 14.

This process of selecting the seam shape or seam portion shape which corresponds to the aid shape and placing this selected portion of the seam on the selected portion of the aid and then securing the garment to the aid before pressing the seam open can be repeated as many times as is desired or necessary to press open the entire peripheral garment seam.

When the entire seam is pressed open, the garment is then ready to be turned right side out for final pressing. In turning pointed garments right side out, it is sometimes difficult to completely unfold the inverted fabric point 76 to a right side out fabric point. In the past, seamstresses have used knitting needle points and other pointed objects to perform this turning operation but this required the use of additional instruments which were not always available. The pointed end 24 of applicants' ironing aid may be used to perform this process immediately after the aid has been used in the seam pressing process. With the garment turned right side out, because the seam pressing process described above has been a part of the garment fabrication method, the sewer will be able to easily find the peripheral seam and iron the garment such that the peripheral seam will lie flat and unwrinkled and present no unsightly bulges. This smooth and flat peripheral seam gives the garment the desired well-tailored appearance.

Frequently, in collar fabrication, and usually in the fabrication of heavy collars, such as suit and coat collars, it is desirable to employ methods to cause the finished collar to lie flat on the wearer's neck and shoulders. Some of these methods are shown in Figs. 2 and 4. These methods consist of cutting the upper collar out of the collar material on the straight of the fabric while the under collar is sometimes cut from the collar material on the bias. A second layer of material 80, which is cut in the same fashion as the under collar is used as a stiffener to lend body to the collar. This second layer of material 80 is called the interfacing and is basted to the under collar 2.

It is also common practice in fabricating heavy collars to cut the under collar and the interfacing into left and right collar halves 82 and 84, respectively, which are joined in a seam 86 located at the center of the collar and running the full collar height. This is known as the center back seam 86 and can be stitched along a line which will cause the under collar to form a slightly smaller diameter arc than is formed by the upper collar so that the collar will lie more smoothly on the wearer's neck and shoulders.

After the seams of this semi-finished inverted heavy collar have been pressed open, a smoother peripheral collar

seam will be formed in the finished garment if the seam edges are graded, that is, cut to varying lengths. As best shown in Fig. 4, this seam edge grading is accomplished by cutting the interfacing edge back to within about one-eighth inch of the seam line at 87, and cutting the under collar 2 edge back one-half the distance to the seam line at 88 while leaving the upper collar seam edge full height at 90.

While only one embodiment of the invention has been shown and described herein and while the fabrication and ironing methods have been confined largely to a description of collar fabrication, it will be evident that various changes in the construction and arrangement of the parts may be resorted to and the methods may be applied to any garment having seams without departing from the scope of the invention.

We claim:

1. An ironing aid for pressing open the seams of a semi-finished, inverted garment during its fabrication comprising a substantially horizontal narrow ironing platform having a pointed end to receive a pointed portion of a garment seam and having a curved end to receive a curved portion of a garment seam, and porous material attached to said aid throughout full aid length into which pins can be inserted together with second garment securing means comprising a cylindrical section loosely passing thru and extending from both sides of said aid and having opposed spring fingers extending from said cylindrical section one on each side of said aid such that said second securing means forms pivotable opposed spring fingers which fingers bear against opposite sides of said aid and may be pivoted in unison to any selected aid position to perform a garment securing function.

2. An ironing aid for pressing open the seams of intricately shaped, semi-finished, inverted garments, comprising a base, a relatively narrow ironing platform having a substantially horizontal portion and a first end which is centrally pointed and located in the plane of said platform to receive a pointed portion of a garment seam together with a second end which curves downwardly from said horizontal portion of said platform tangentially in a multi-radii curve to receive a curved portion of a garment seam, a shank section connecting said base and said platform, and porous material attached to said aid into which pins can be inserted together with second garment securing means comprising a cylindrical section loosely passing thru and extending from both sides of said shank section and having corresponding first slotted arms projecting from said cylindrical section one on each side of said shank section and further having second slotted arms having tips at the end away from said first arms extending in sliding relation from said first arms and further having means to attach said second arms in position to said first arms such that said tips bear against opposite sides of said aid and further such that said second securing means forms pivotally opposed expandable spring fingers which fingers bear against opposite sides of said aid and may be pivoted in unison to any selected aid position to perform a garment secured function.

3. An ironing aid especially adapted to receive intricately shaped, inverted garments for seam pressing operations during fabrication comprising a base which is longer and wider than any other portion of the aid, an ironing platform comprising a horizontal elongated central portion lying in a single plane and of less than one inch width and having a first and a second end projection at opposite ends thereof, said first end projection lying in the plane of and extending from said central portion and tapering to a centrally located end point, said second end projection forming a multi-radii downwardly ex-

tending curve projecting from and blending tangentially with said central portion, a shank section of substantially uniform width connecting said base and said ironing platform, and garment securing means comprising a strip of foraminous material attached to each of the opposite sides of said shank section and extending the full length of said ironing platform, said strips of foraminous material having an antibase edge which is generally parallel to and spaced a sufficient distance from said ironing platform and being of sufficient thickness to receive common pin shanks to secure an inverted garment to said aid throughout the full length of said ironing platform and on both sides thereof and with the pins located below said ironing platform so as not to interfere with the ironing operation.

4. An ironing aid especially adapted to receive intricately shaped, inverted garments for seam pressing operations during fabrication comprising a supporting base, an ironing platform comprising a horizontal elongated central ironing surface portion lying in a single plane and of less than one inch width and having a first and a second end projection at opposite ends thereof, said first end projection lying in the plane of and extending from said central portion and tapering to an end point, said second end projection being curved downwardly toward the base member, a shank section connecting said base and said ironing platform, and garment securing means comprising a strip of foraminous material attached to each of the opposite sides of said shank section and extending the full length of said ironing platform, said strips of foraminous material having a top edge which is generally parallel to and spaced downwardly from said ironing surface of the platform and being of sufficient thickness to receive common pin shanks to secure an inverted garment to said aid throughout the full length of said ironing platform and on both sides thereof and so as to locate the heads of the pins below said ironing surface of the platform so as not to interfere with the ironing operation.

5. An ironing aid for pressing open the seams of a semi-finished, inverted garment during its fabrication comprising a substantially horizontal narrow ironing platform having a pointed end to receive a pointed portion of a garment seam and having a curved end to receive a curved portion of a garment seam, and garment securing means comprising a cylindrical section loosely passing thru and extending from both sides of said aid and having opposed spring fingers extending from said cylindrical section one on each side of said aid such that said securing means forms pivotable opposed spring fingers which fingers bear against opposite sides of said aid and may be pivoted in unison to any selected aid position to perform a garment securing function.

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