Sept. 2, 1941. J. C. BERTOLAMI 2,254,929

GARMENT

Filed Aug. 22, 1939

Fig. 1.

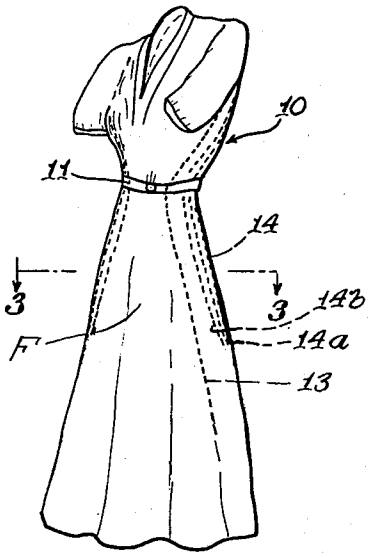


Fig. 2.

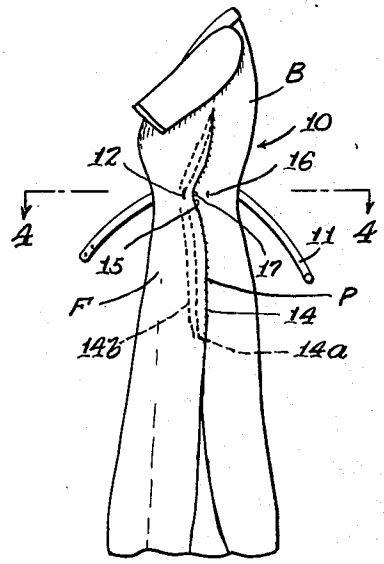


Fig. 3.

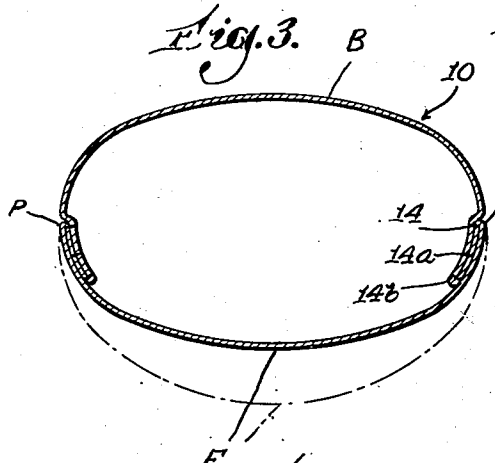


Fig. 5.

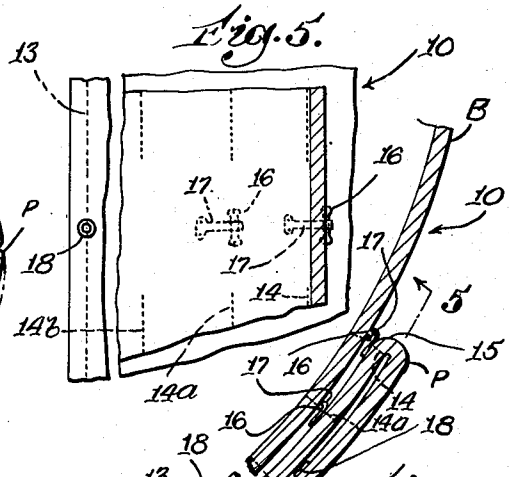


Fig. 6.

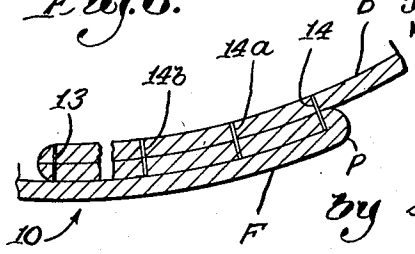


Fig. 4.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,254,929

GARMENT

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Application August 22, 1939, Serial No. 291,337

1 Claim. (Cl. 2—76)

This invention relates to garments particularly to garments of the maternity type.

Maternity dresses with a series of pleats or overlays held by easily removable stitching to provide for enlargement of the garment when desired, are sometimes difficult for the wearer to put on over the shoulders, as the portion at the waist line is sometimes not large enough to pass the shoulders easily. Accordingly it has been my object to provide means to enable the wearer to readily enlarge the garment at and about its waist line when putting it on and to enable her to easily restore the garment to its wearable condition after it has been put on. Another object is to make said means so simple and their operation so obvious that they can be used with little or no special instruction.

The foregoing and other objects which will appear as the nature of the invention is better understood, may be accomplished by a construction, combination and arrangement of parts such as is disclosed by the drawing and specification. The nature of the invention is such as to render it susceptible to various changes and modifications, and, therefore, I am not to be limited to said disclosures; but am entitled to all such changes therefrom as fall within the scope of my claim.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a dress embodying my invention, and Figure 2 is a side elevational view of the same with the belt loose and the hook and eye unfastened at the waist opening.

Figure 3 is a sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 1, illustrating the removable stitching on each side of the garment.

Figure 4 is an enlarged sectional view, broken away, on the line 4—4 of Figure 2, but showing the hook and eye at the waist opening fastened together. The thickness of the cloth is exaggerated considerably.

Figure 5 is a sectional view, broken away, taken on the line 5—5 of Figure 4.

Figure 6 is an enlarged, sectional fragmentary view similar to Figure 3, but broken away, showing the overlay portion at one side of a dress as originally made.

As illustrated I show a maternity dress 10 provided with a belt 11 and a loop 12 for said belt. Said garment usually consists of a back portion B and a front portion F which are permanently stitched together at each side of said dress, resulting in the seam 13 at each side which is intended to be permanent. A portion of said front F of said dress is folded over at the inside at each end to form a pleat or over lay P, which ordinarily will measure 2 or 3 inches so that the dress at both ends may be expanded 8 or 12 inches altogether, or more or less, as desired. Adjacent the point where said front F is turned to form said pleat P the inner portion of said pleated or overlayed material is stitched as at 14 to a portion of said back B, the said stitching preferably extending from a point just under the arm where it joins the shoulder to the thigh portion of the dress as shown in Figure 1 and 2 of the drawing. It is an easily removable type of stitch such as a hand or basting stitch.

If said pleats or overlays P on each side were held only by the removable stitching 14, then the removal thereof would enlarge the dress to its maximum size, but as most women desire to make gradual enlargements of their dress, as during maternity, to accomplish this, I make a second row of readily removable stitching 14a on each side of the dress, spaced from said stitching 14, and still another row 14b spaced from said second row, thereby stitching the inner portions of said pleats P to the back portion B of said dress three times,and, if desirable, more than three rows of readily removable stitching on each side of said dress may be used. When the need develops for enlargement of said dress the stitching 14 on each side is removed, and that portion of said pleat P between the rows of stitches 14 and 14a is thereby freed to enlarge the dress. Later on the stitching 14a may be removed to thereby further enlarge the dress, and after that stitching 14b may be removed to thereby enlarge the dress to its maximum size, the front and back portions F and B being held by permanent stitching 13. This removal of the stitches 14, 14a and 14b may be done by a person totally unfamiliar with sewing by merely following simple directions, so that a person who could not even make a basting stitch could enlarge my dress.

After dress 10 has served its purpose as a maternity garment, it may readily be made into a regular dress by merely forming said pleats P again and stitching the inner portions thereof to the back portion B of said dress, or in other words, reestablishing the removable stitching. Said pleats P may extend beyond the stitching 14 to form kick pleats if desired.

As will be especially noted in Figure 3 of the drawing, the front portion of my garment is greater in width than the back portion. This is due to the fact that the pleats P are formed in said front portion. However, the threads forming the removable stitching are preferably pulled tightly and hold the inner portion of said pleat P in contact with said back portion, so that the pleat part of said front portion contacts and overlaps said back portion. On the left side of the garment there is an interruption in said removable stitching 14, 14a and 14b which leaves an opening 15 at the waist portion of the garment, where there is no said removable stitch-

ing. This space 15 could be on either side or could be on both sides of the dress, but I find it preferable to have it on the left side only. In putting the dress on over the head and shoulders some persons are of such size at the shoulders that the waist portion of the dress cannot pass over the shoulders unless said waist portion can be stretched or enlarged, and for that reason some persons have worn too large a dress so that the fit was unbecoming because they could not put a dress that fitted correctly over their shoulders.

At said waist portion opening 15 I provide detachable fastening means to hold said pleat or overlay P in place when the dress is being worn, so that said pleat P can be held in the same position as it would be if said removable stitching 14 or 14a or 14b were present in said opening 15. This detachable fastening means may consist of a well known eye member 16 and a hook member 17, said eye member being sewed to the said back portion B of said dress opposite a portion of said pleat P where the cloth of said front portion F is turned in to thereby form said pleat, as illustrated in Figure 4 of the drawing. Said hook member 17 is sewed to said pleat P at said turned-in portion thereof or about the point where said pleat P begins, so that said hook will be opposite said eye member 16 and readily insertible therein, the two fastening together at a point that is substantially in line with said removable stitching 14 as shown in Figure 5 of the drawing or a little to the outside of the line of said stitching 14, so that portions of said garment at said opening 15 will be in substantially the same position as though said stitching 14 had been continued. When said removable stitching 14 is removed, and the pleat P permits the dress to enlarge to the point of said removable stitching 14a where said pleat P and said back portion B are held together, the threads holding said hook 17 and eye member 16 are cut, and the same hook may be sewed to the pleat P at the point where the cloth is turned over or where said pleat now begins, and the same eye member to the portion of said back B opposite said hook, as previously explained, or another said hook 17 and eye member 16 may be sewed in place at said pleat P and back portion B substantially in line with said stitching 14a when the dress is made, as illustrated in Figure 5 of the drawing, in which event it will be necessary only to cut the threads holding the first hook and eye, which will not be needed any longer.

As a further, desirable improvement to prevent any drooping or hanging of said overlay or pleat P lower than the remainder of the dress on the side of the garment where said opening 15 is, I provide other detachable fastener means preferably consisting of a snap fastener head 18 and a socket 19 therefor. The said socket 19 is fastened to said front F at the inner surface of the outside piece of cloth or material that forms said pleat P substantially opposite said permanent seam 13, while said fastener head 18 is fastened to the inner or between surface of the turned-over or inside piece of cloth that forms said pleat P, said head and socket being opposite each other so said head may enter said socket and be removably held therein in the usual way. These snap fastener means 18 and 19 when together keep said pleat P from sagging below the remainder of the dress, and they are unsnapped before putting the dress over the shoulders and likewise said hook 17 is separated from said eye member 16. When said removable stitching 14 is removed a socket member 19 may be sewed to said front F at a point nearer the turn-in or beginning of said pleat P than the first-mentioned socket member that is opposite said seam 13. This second-mentioned socket member may be provided with the dress when originally made, being placed at a point spaced from said first-mentioned socket member 19 a distance equal to twice the distance between said removable stitchings 14 and 14a so that it will come opposite said fastener head 18 which remains opposite said seam 13.

The interruption of the removable stitching that provides said opening 15 provides a further advantage in a dress for women who are proportionately larger above the waist than they are below it, and likewise for women who are unusually large below the waist as compared to their size above the waist, inasmuch as said removable stitching may be removed either above or below said waist opening 15 without taking out the remainder of the same line of stitching. It will thus be seen that the upper part of the dress may be enlarged when needed without changing the size of the lower part if it does not need enlargement, and vice versa.

What I claim is:

A maternity dress having overlapping folds forming a pleat extending longitudinally of the garment, readily separable rows of longitudinal stitches above and below the waist line for securing the intermediate one of the folds to the body of the garment, the longitudinal stitches terminating above and below the waist line to provide free folds at said waist line, horizontally disposed cooperating separable fastening elements at the waist line in alignment with the stitches and between the garment and the inner face of the intermediate fold to fasten the intermediate free fold portion of the pleat to the garment, removable cooperating fastener elements on the outer surface of the intermediate fold in line with the stitches, one of said fastener elements being located adjacent the inner end of the outer face of the intermediate fold, a cooperating fastener element on the inner surface of the outer fold to cooperate with the fastener elements on the outer face of the intermediate fold, the fastening element on the outer fold being spaced from the fastener element with which it is designed to cooperate a distance substantially equalling twice the distance between those separable fasteners provided between the intermediate fold and the garment, whereby on severing a row of stitches and separating the fastening elements between the intermediate fold and the garment to reduce the width of the pleat and increase the transverse dimension of the garment, the fastening element on the inner surface of the outer fold will be in a position to engage the cooperating fastening element on the outer face of the free end of the intermediate fold, whereby on extension of the dimension of the garment at the waist line, the intermediate fold and outer fold will be held by the separable fastener elements between the intermediate and outer folds against sagging and held in united relation with the surface of the garment.

JOAN C. BERTOLAMI.