May 11, 1954

R. C. LOCKHART

2,677,827

HAT

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Fig. 1

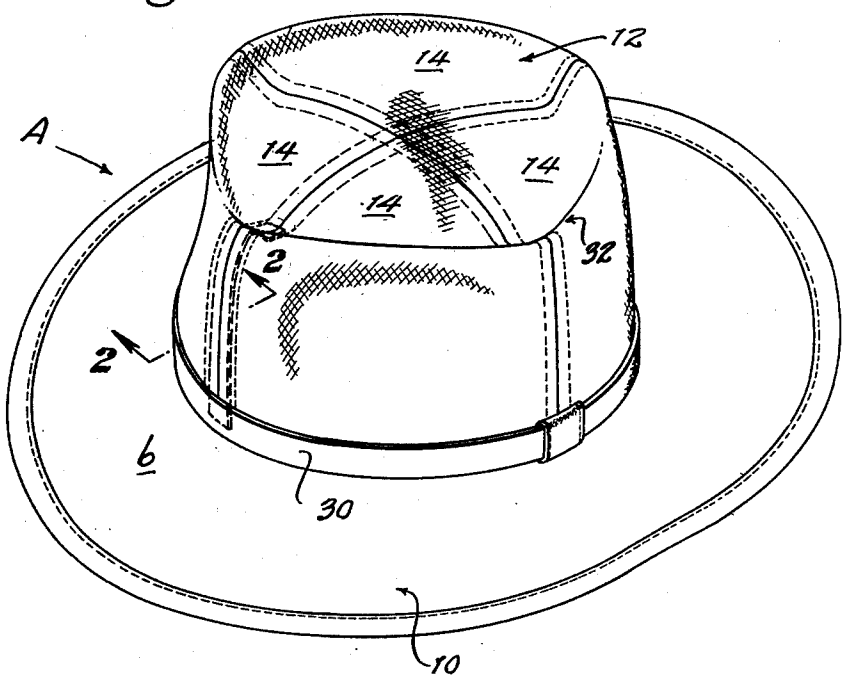


Fig. 2

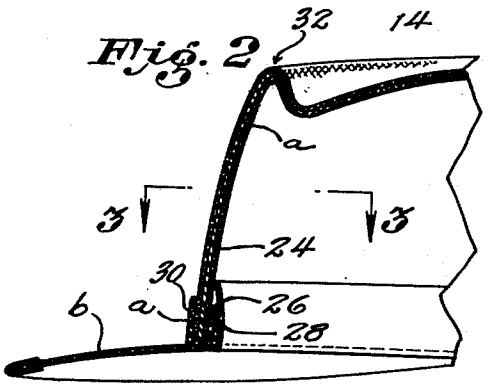


Fig. 3

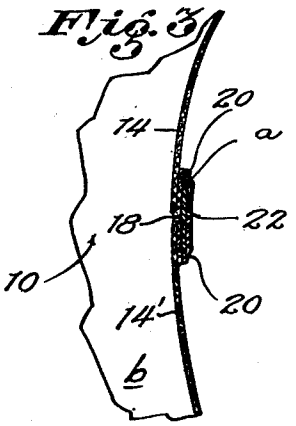
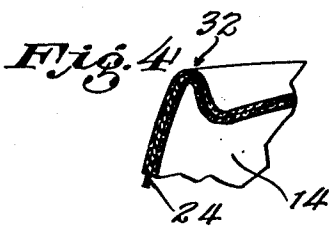


Fig. 4



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,677,827

HAT

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Application December 20, 1948, Serial No. 66,305

2 Claims. (Cl. 2—175)

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My invention relates particularly to the manufacture and construction of soft cloth hats, by which term I intend hats made of fabric, that are designed to be light in weight and particularly comfortable to wear, and which, with my invention incorporated therein, will not lose their shape when in use or when stacked for sales display on counters or shelves, or when packed for shipping purposes.

Hats of the kind with which this invention is concerned are carefully made, being commonly constructed with a brim fitted with a crown or upstanding portion of several pieces carefully cut to pattern and sewn together, the assembled hat being then blocked under heat and pressure to the required shape.

It has been found that because of the softness of the material used in the manufacture of hats of this type it is difficult to pack and handle the hats so that they retain their original smartness, with the result that when placed on display, either on shelves or counters, the crowns, particularly at the front of the hat, are apt to be distorted, and thereby have a somewhat rumpled, crushed, or used look, which detracts from their smartness and gives to the customer a very unsightly appearance; and it is the particular object of my invention to provide a novel construction and method of making such hats that will result in the shape of the hat being retained in blocked condition, and which has not heretofore been possible with fabric hats.

Another object of my invention is to provide a novel and improved soft hat by utilizing a modification of the usual method of the forming of such hats, which is simple, inexpensive, and involves no substantial variation of the present practice of manufacture thereof, so that the skill of the operators accustomed to the present practice may be availed of.

A further object of my invention is to provide a novel hat of the kind described which, although providing a hat having improved characteristics, is relatively inexpensive to produce, and which will retain its "blocked" shape during shipping, display and use.

A still further object of my invention is to produce a novel and improved hat of the kind made from relatively soft cloth or similar flexible and pliable material, and which will hold its shape and may be reblocked to another shape with equally satisfactory results.

The invention includes the finished structure, as well as the method of constructing the same, and the parts and combination of parts hereinafter described and claimed.

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Other objects, advantages and features of invention may appear from the accompanying drawing, the subjoined detail description, and the appended claims.

The accompanying drawing illustrates the invention in a form I at present deem preferable.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a hat constructed in accordance with my invention, and incorporating my new and novel features therewith.

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary sectional view on a plane indicated by line 2—2, Fig. 1, and looking in the direction of the arrows.

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary sectional view on line 3—3, Fig. 2.

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary view of the top section of the front of the crown of the hat, illustrating my novel combination of a plastic strip associated therewith.

In the drawing the numeral 10 indicates the brim of a hat A and 12 indicates generally the crown of the hat, which is preferably formed by four sections 14 thereof being sewn together and to the brim 10 of the hat, as indicated in Figs. 2 and 3.

In Fig. 3, one crown section 14 is shown sewn to an adjacent section 14' by stitching at the seam 18 which runs along a line spaced inwardly of the edges of the sections, these edges being laid back against the inside of the sections and sewn thereto by stitching 20.

I have discovered that the shape of the front of the hat crown may be retained by reinforcing the front seam with a plastic strip 24 of a suitable thermoplastic type material which may be softened at relatively low temperatures, such as those used in blocking the hats, which is about 150° F.

The plastic strip of material is laid between the seam 18 and a tape member 22 that is secured to the inside of the crown by the stitching 20 and which tape member 22 extends along the seam 18 to both retain the strip 24 in position and also reinforce the seam throughout its length from the front to the rear of the crown, thereby aiding in reinforcing the seam 18 of the crown, and the crown and tape member 22 secured thereto form a chamber *a* into which the plastic strip 24 is inserted, and when blocked therein, as hereinafter described, is usually sufficient to reinforce the seam at the front of the hat to prevent distortion or crushing thereof. The plastic strip 24 is extended to the base of the chamber *a* adjacent the connection of the inner edge 26 of the brim *b*, which is sewn to the inside of the crown. The structure of the

hat around the base of the crown also includes a sweatband **28** sewn around its lower edge to the edge of the head opening of the brim, and usually also includes an ornamental band **30** around the outside and at the bottom of the crown, so that the junction of the crown and brim is provided with a substantial foundation.

The strip **24** of plastic material is of a length sufficient to extend upwardly from the lower edge of chamber *a* adjacent the brim *b*, a sufficient distance beyond the line of the usual forward upper edge bend of the crown **12**, as indicated at **32** to securely hold the desired curvature at this point as shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 4, while the full height of the crown is maintained by the height of the strip **24**, that is positioned in chamber *a* and extends upwardly therein from the brim *b* to the front edge bend **32** of crown **12** and at which bend or point **32** the strip **24** is bent by heat and pressure during blocking of the crown, to conform to the "block" of the hat crown, and extends rearwardly therefrom a short distance to maintain the forward edge **32** of the crown in the desired and "blocked contour."

Blocking the hats under suitable temperatures, preferably about 150° F., and applying considerable pressure to the hat during blocking operation, will soften the strip **24** and accurately bend the plastic strip **24** to the required shape of the blocking form without causing the strip to fuse to the material of the crown, and when the plastic is cooled it will hold its shape indefinitely in its deformed contour corresponding to the "block" of the hat crown; but when again heated to the softening point, as when reblocking the hat, the plastic will lose its formed shape and may be molded or bent under heat and pressure to any other shape, and thereafter will hold such deformed or "blocked" shape after the same is cool.

It will be noted that the methd of stiffening the front of the hat involves only a slight deviation from the usual procedure by the operator merely inserting a plastic strip **24** of the desired length and above described character, in the chamber *a*, during stitching of the tape member **22** to the crown over the seam **18**, while nevertheless producing a much improved hat. Operators can therefore turn out approximately the same quantity of the improved hat as of the kind previously handled, but with my novel invention incorporated therein the front edge of the hat crown will be stiffened, and crushing or distortion thereof prevented during shipping or stacking of such soft cloth hats on counters or shelves.

The invention includes the method of inserting a plastic strip in a channel formed in the rear of the front seam **18** of the hat crown **12** before blocking the hat, and which strip extends beyond and rearwardly of the usual forward upper edge bend **32** of the hat crown, and then subjecting the hat structure and strip **24** to temperature and pressure for blocking purposes, and which temperature will soften strip **24** and the pressure applied to "block" the hat will deform strip **24** to conform to the type of "blocking" that the structure is subjected to, and such strip **24** when cooled after such blocking operation will retain its deformed or blocked shape to stiffen the forward upper edge of the hat crown.

I claim:

1. A method of forming blocked hats having a brim and a crown with a forward upper edge bend, and which method comprises sewing together pieces of material forming the crown of the hat to afford a front seam; then placing a relatively long and narrow strip of thermo softening material to extend upwardly over said seam inside the crown from the brim to a point over and beyond the line where the forward upper edge bend of the hat crown is to be formed after blocking; then blocking the crown of the hat under heat and pressure to thereby also soften the strip of thermo softening material and mold said strip into the required shape conforming to that of the blocked crown, and without destroying its strip-like characteristics; and then allowing the strip to cool, whereby the blocked shape of the strip will be maintained as formed.

2. A blocked hat having a brim and a crown formed of relatively pliable pieces of material stitched together and including a front seam, the crown being secured to the brim and when blocked providing an upper edge bend around the crown; a strip of thermo softening material positioned within the crown over said front seam and extending from the brim to a point over and beyond the said upper edge bend of the crown when blocked, and which strip is shaped under heat and pressure to the configuration required of said blocked upper edge bend and adjacent area of the crown, said strip after being shaped retaining its strip-like characteristics; and means securing said strip within the hat crown adjacent said front seam.

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