Nov. 19, 1957 F. E. GROSS 2,813,667

INFLATABLE COAT HANGER

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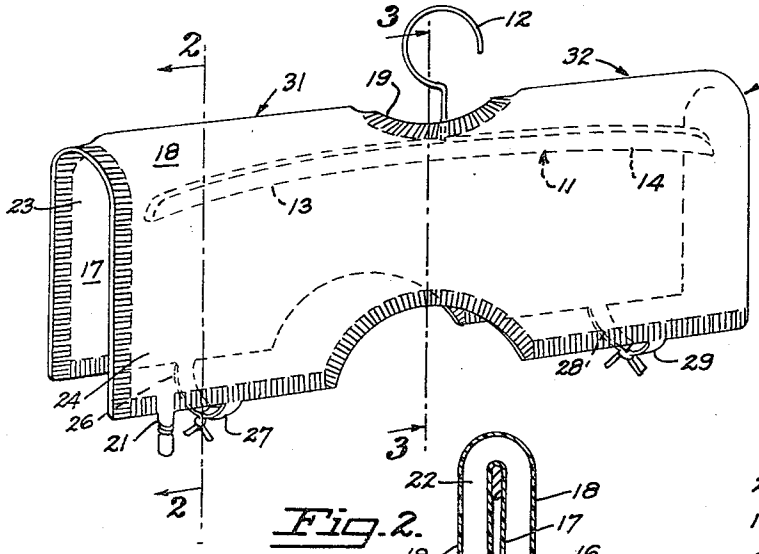


Fig. 1.

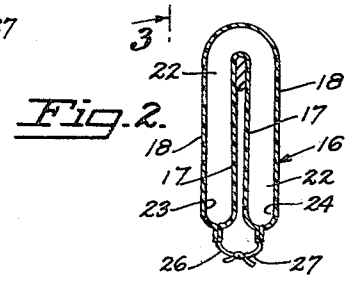


Fig. 2.

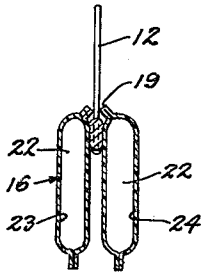


Fig. 3.

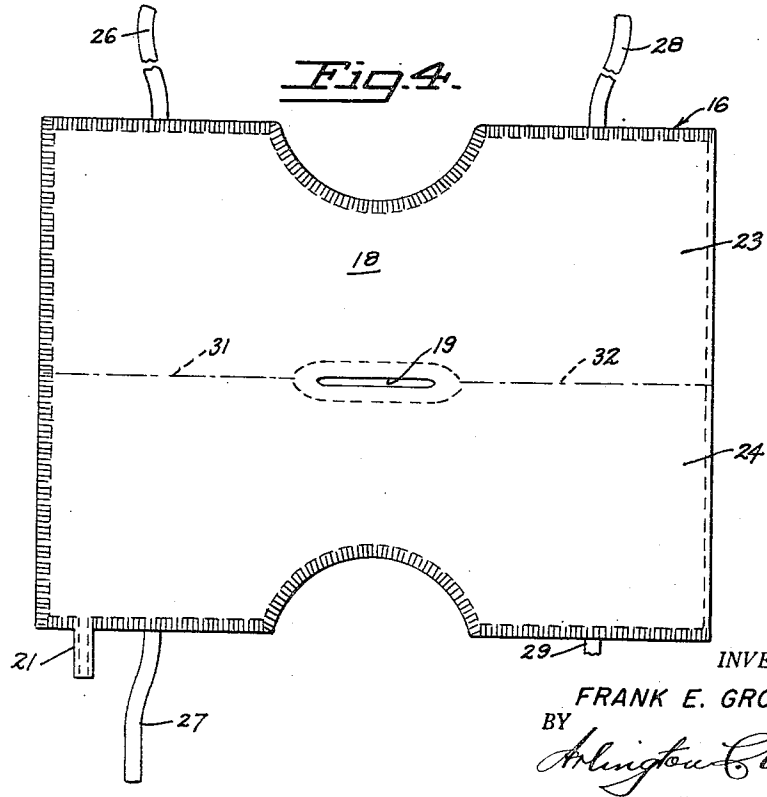


Fig. 4.

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INFLATABLE COAT HANGER

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1 Claim. (Cl. 223—92)

The invention, in general, relates to the garment hanger art and more particularly relates to an improved hanger means which affords suspension of such wearing apparel as coats, jackets, top-coats and the like in a manner that maintains the shoulder portions of such garments on the hanger in a smooth, unwrinkled condition as well as prevents distortion thereof.

The conventional coat hanger, which is embodied in a pair of oppositely extending arms and a hook attached at the midpoint of the opposed arms for suspending the hanger from a rod or other support, unavoidably distorts garments hung thereon by virtue of the fact that the ends of the opposed arms bear against the upper portions of the sleeves of a suspended garment, or against portions of the shoulders thereof. Moreover, garments suspended on prior type hangers usually become wrinkled and in disarray because of their contact with other garments hung on juxtaposed hangers suspended serially from a rod; such distortions and wrinkling of garments occurring frequently by reason also of the hanging upon and the taking down of the garments from the hanger. The present invention is directed to the provision of means in a coat hanger which obviates inherent disadvantages of prior hangers and which is readily employed by the unskilled with equal facility as the skilled person.

A primary object of the present invention is to provide an inflatable coat hanger which is readily assembled in an inflated state to afford the maintenance of garments hung thereon in undistorted, smooth and unwrinkled condition.

A further object of my invention is to provide an inflatable garment hanger of the aforementioned character which is additionally characterized by its ability to be maintained in an inflated state for appreciable periods of time and which is easily re-inflated when required.

A still further object of the invention is to provide an inflatable garment hanger of the aforementioned character which is capable of being inexpensively manufactured from pliable non-porous plastic or like material.

Other objects of the invention, together with some of the advantageous features thereof, will appear from the following description of a preferred embodiment of the invention which is illustrated in the accompanying drawings. It is to be understood that I am not to be limited to the precise embodiment of the invention as shown, nor to the precise arrangement of the various elements thereof, as my invention, as defined in the appended claims, can be embodied in a plurality and variety of forms.

Referring to the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a side perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 2 is a sectional view of the preferred embodiment of the invention, taken on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is another sectional view thereof, taken on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a development view of one-half of the inflatable element of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

In its preferred form, the inflatable coat hanger of my present invention preferably comprises a strip, a hook secured to said strip at its approximate midpoint to divide the strip into a pair of opposed arms, and an inflatable member overlying said strip on both sides thereof; inflation of said member affording shoulder portions extending in opposite directions from said hook and upon which the shoulder portions of a garment may be draped, whereby the garment can be hung by suspending the hook upon a rod or the like.

As particularly illustrated in Figs. 1 and 4, my improved inflatable coat hanger comprises a length of wood or strip 11 of like material to which a hook 12 is secured at approximately its midpoint to divide strip 11 into a pair of opposed arms 13 and 14. Thus far described, my improved hanger is a conventional coat hanger which per se is not my invention. Surrounding the strip 11 is an inflatable member which is generally designated by the reference numeral 16 and which preferably is fabricated of plastic sheets or other desired non-porous material; such member 16 consisting of two sheets 17 and 18 of identical dimensions which conveniently are secured together, preferably by means of cement or other suitable adhesive, along their meeting longitudinal and lateral edges. Each of the sheets 17 and 18 is formed with an elongated slot at its approximate center, the slots registering with one another when the two sheets are thus cemented together to define a single opening 19 for the passage of the hook 12, as clearly illustrated in Fig. 1.

In accordance with my invention, a relatively short tube 21 is fitted to and placed in communication with the space 22 defined by the secured and mated sheets 17 and 18, such tube 21 serving as means for pumping or blowing air into space 22 and thereby to inflate member 16. Upon inflation, member 16 is placed in overlying and surrounding relation with respect to the strip 11 of the hanger element with the hook 12 extending or projecting through opening 19 of member 16. After the member 16 is sufficiently inflated, a string or rubber band, not shown, can be knotted or twisted about the tube 21 to prevent the escape of air from space 22. If the air escapes after a time interval, the spring or band can be removed from the tube 21 and air again pumped or blown into space 22 and the tube 21 again restricted to cut off escape of the air. Upon assembling the inflated member 16 around the hanger strip 11, the member 16 is folded into two sections 23 and 24 and one of such inflated sections will lie at one side of the strip 11 with the other inflated section lying on the opposite side of strip 11, as illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3 of the annexed drawings.

In order to maintain the inflated sections 23 and 24 of member 16 in substantially vertical positions on opposite sides of hanger strip 11, I provide tie strings 26, 27, 28 and 29 on the sheets 17 and 18 of member 16 in opposite pairs adjacent to the lateral extremities thereof; such tie strings being conveniently secured to the said sheets by cement or other adhesive. After assembling the inflated sections 23 and 24 about hanger strip 11, the strings 26–29 inclusive are tied in opposed pairs and the sections 23 and 24 will be maintained in substantially vertical positions which is desirable for proper hanging of a garment.

Upon doubling or folding over the inflated member 16 to define opposed inflated sections 23 and 24, there are provided two shoulder portions 31 and 32, see Fig. 1, on the inflated member upon which the shoulder portions of a hung garment, such as a coat or the like, will rest; such shoulder portions of the inflatable member 16 being delineated in Fig. 4 by the dot and dash lines on opposite sides of elongated opening 19. The inflated sections 23 and 24 of inflatable member 16 afford permanently smooth surfaces for the garment to rest upon, with rounded contours preventing distortion of the garment at

the sleeves or junctures of the sleeves with the garment shoulders. Moreover, because of the extended, depending portions of inflated sections **23** and **24** on opposite sides of the hanger element, the front and back of the garment will hang naturally without likelihood of wrinkling. While I have shown arcuate cut-out portions **33** and **34** in the sheets **17** and **18** of inflatable member **16**, at opposite sides thereof, such cutouts are not essential but merely decorative and such sheets **17** and **18** can be cut along straight lines throughout, if desired.

It is to be understood that the appended claim is to be accorded a range of equivalents commensurate in scope with the advance made over the prior art.

I claim:

In combination, a strip, a hook secured to said strip at its longitudinal center to divide said strip into a pair of opposed arms; said hook serving to suspend said strip from a rod, and an inflatable member surrounding said strip and depending from opposite sides thereof; said inflatable member consisting of a pair of non-porous sheets of identical dimensions; each of said sheets having an opening at its center, means securing said sheets together along their marginal edges thus defining a chamber and aligning said openings with one another for passing said hook, and means communicating with said chamber for inflating said member by means of a fluid introduced therein; said member being folded to lie on opposite sides of the opposed arms of said strip.

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