

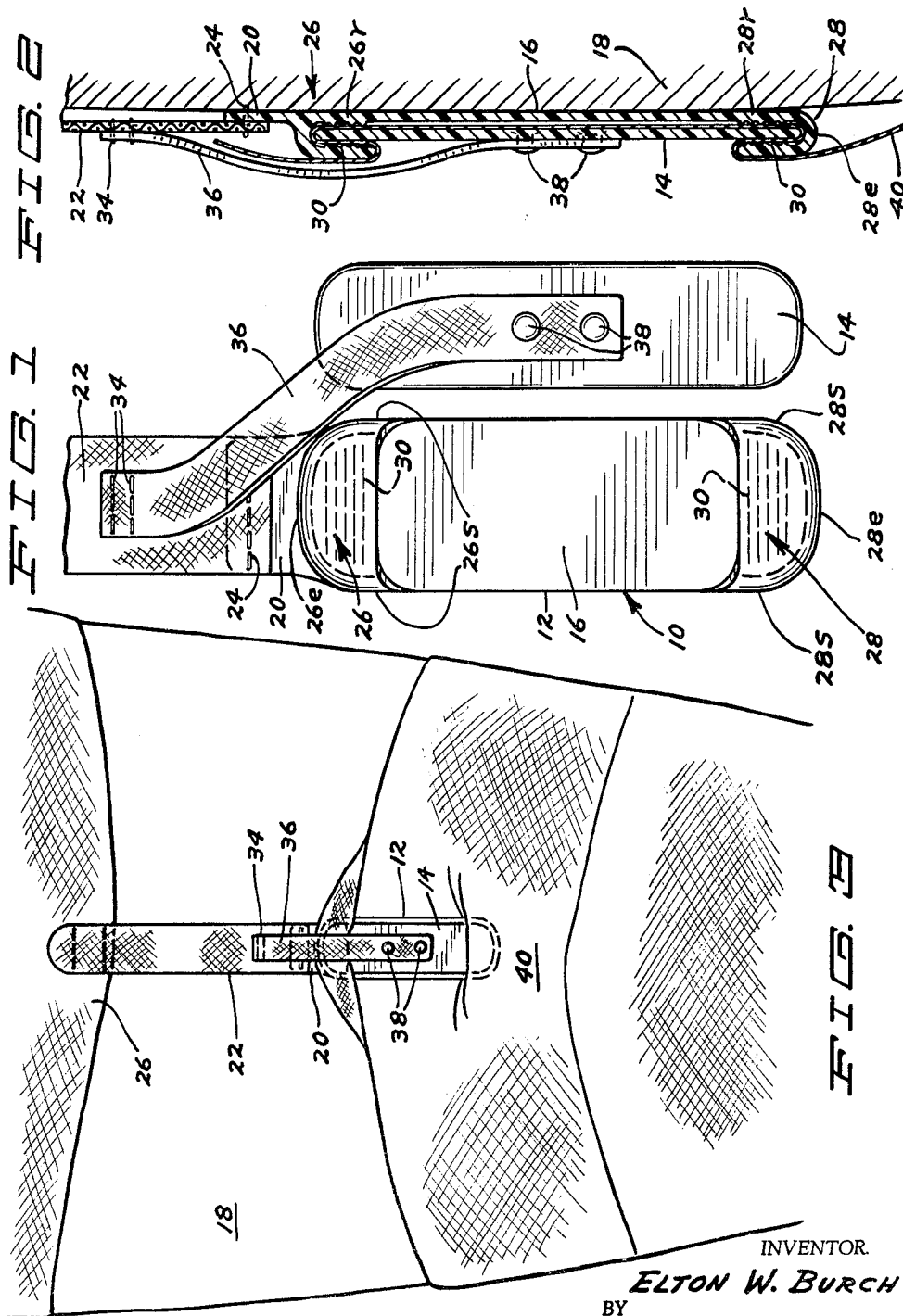
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GARMENT FASTENER

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GARMENT FASTENER

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The present invention relates to fastening devices and more particularly a fastening device for supporting garments such as stockings and the like.

A variety of different devices have been proposed for the purpose of fastening or supporting garments such as stockings. The fasteners of this type which are in common use today include a back member having a raised lug portion thereon and a front member formed from metal wire or the like. During use, the metal wire portion is slidably engaged over the lug with the top of the stocking positioned between the lug and the wire member. These fasteners, however, suffer from a number of disadvantages. First, the stocking is supported at only one point and therefore is subject to becoming torn. Second, the metal wire member or the hinge portion between the metal wire member and the body portion will sometimes pinch the user. A further disadvantage of this type of fastener is that it is relatively thick from front to back and can consequently become uncomfortable.

Other types of fasteners of the general class described have been devised including some which provide front and rear fastener members, each including a horizontally disposed flange at the upper and lower end thereof. These flanges are locked together when the fastener is placed in use. This fastener, too, has certain shortcomings. First, the fastener, when assembled, is relatively thick since the front and back members are spaced apart by the flanges. Second, members can slide laterally with respect to one another and as a result, may become accidentally separated thereby releasing the stocking. For these and other reasons not specifically enumerated, the prior art fasteners of the type described have been considered either difficult to fabricate or to some extent ineffective in operation.

In view of the deficiencies in the prior art it is one object of the present invention to provide an improved garment fastener, particularly useful for supporting stockings which is rugged in construction, reliable in operation and can be manufactured at a relatively low cost.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide an improved garment fastener for supporting stockings and the like which is very thin from front to back and is consequently more comfortable when in use.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide an improved garment fastener of the type described which presents an attractive visual appearance.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide an improved fastener of the type described which is very thin from front to back and yet will support the garment engaged thereby at two spaced apart positions so as to reduce the strain upon the garment.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide an improved garment fastener which is particularly well adapted for supporting stockings and will have no tendency to pinch the user either when a stocking is being attached to the fastener or during use.

These and other more detailed and specific objects will be disclosed in the course of the following specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, in which—

FIG. 1 is a greatly enlarged front elevational view of a preferred form of my present invention showing the fastener members as they appear when disengaged from each other.

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FIG. 2 is a vertical sectional view of the device of FIG. 1 showing the fastener members in engagement and supporting a stocking.

FIG. 3 is a front elevational view of the device of FIGS. 1 and 2, substantially life size as it appears during use.

Referring now to the drawings, which illustrate a preferred form of my invention and wherein the same numerals refer to corresponding parts, there is shown a fastener 10 including a pair of elongated fastener members 12 and 14 for convenience hereinafter referred to as rear and front fastener members, respectively. The rear fastener member 12 includes a flat and relatively thin center portion 16 which during use in supporting the stocking will lie adjacent to the leg 18 of the user as best seen in FIGS. 2 and 3. At the upper end of the rear fastener member 12 is an upwardly projecting extension 20 to which a garter strap 22 is suitably secured as by a seam 24. The strap 22 is affixed to another garment, such as a girdle 26 (FIG. 3) and is supported thereby during use in the usual manner.

At the upper and lower ends of the rear fastener member 12 are a pair of vertically spaced apart inwardly facing pockets 26 and 28. The openings of the pockets 26 and 28 thus face toward the center of the portion 16. The rear walls 26r and 28r of the pockets 26 and 28, respectively, are continuous and coextensive with the center portion 16 of the rear fastener member 12. The pockets 26 and 28 include end walls 26e and 28e, respectively, and sidewalls 26s and 28s, respectively. Positioned on the inward surfaces of the front and rear walls of each of the pockets 26 and 28 are a plurality of horizontally disposed alternate ridges and grooves 30.

While the rear fastener member 12 can be formed from a variety of materials known to the art, it is preferably formed from a relatively pliable resinous material such as a plasticized polyvinylchloride composition, a polyethylene resin or a rubber composition. Other suitable materials will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

Suitably secured to the forward surface of the strap 22 at 34 is a flexible connecting member such as a strap 36. The lower end of the strap 36 is secured as by means of rivets 38 or other suitable fasteners to the approximate center of the front fastener member 14.

The front fastener member 14 is vertically elongated as is the rear fastener member 12 and is formed from relatively thin sheet material as best seen in FIG. 2.

The upper and lower ends of the front fastener member 14 are rounded both as seen from the front in FIG. 1 and also when viewed from the side or in vertical section as seen in FIG. 2. By thus rounding the ends of the member 14 projections are eliminated which, if present, might injure the garment being supported. As can be seen in FIGS. 1 and 3, the upper and lower end of the pockets 26 and 28, respectively, are rounded in a manner similar to the ends of the member 14. The member 14 is, however, somewhat smaller in size than the fastener member 12 so that the upper and lower ends thereof will fit easily within the pockets 26 and 28, respectively as best shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. The horizontally disposed ridges and grooves 30 will function to help securely retain the garment in position on the fastener.

While the front fastener member 14 can be formed from a variety of materials, I prefer to employ a relatively stiff or semi-flexible material. Numerous suitable materials of this type, such as unplasticized polyvinylchloride resin, cellulosic plastics or polymethylmethacrylate plastics can be used. The front fastener member 14 can also be formed from sheet metal if desired.

When the fastener 10 is to be used, member 14 is separated from member 12 as shown in FIG. 1. The upward portion of a stocking or other garment is then

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placed over the forward surface of the fastener member 12. The member 14 is then grasped manually and the lower end thereof is placed into the pocket 28 with a garment such as a stocking 40 positioned between the lower portion of the member 14 and the inner surface of the pocket 28 as best seen in FIGS. 2 and 3. The upward end of the fastener member 12 is then pulled upwardly so as to stretch the center portion 16 to some extent. As this is being done, the upward end of the fastener member 14 can be bent rearwardly to some extent until the extreme upward end thereof will slide into the pocket 26. A portion of the upward end of the stocking 40 will then become positioned between the extreme upward end of the member 14 and the inner surface of the pocket 26 as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. The fastener members 12 and 14 can then be released allowing the resiliency of these members to straighten the fastener 10 so that it lies in a flat plane parallel with the surface of the leg 18.

With the fastener 10 of the present invention in position for use as shown in FIG. 3, it will have no tendency to pinch or bind the user. It is very much thinner from front to back than other fasteners of which I am aware. Moreover, it supports the stocking or other garment in two places and therefore distributes the stress placed on the stocking. When in position for use, it is very secure since the front member 14 is prevented from sliding either upwardly or downwardly by the end and front walls of the pockets 26 and 28 or from sliding laterally by the side-walls 26s and 28s. The fastener of the present invention can also be manufactured at a relatively low cost.

It is understood that suitable modifications may be made in the structure as disclosed, provided such modifications come within the spirit and scope of the appended claim. Having now therefore fully illustrated and de-

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scribed my invention, what I claim to be new and desire to protect by Letters Patent is:

A garment fastener comprising in combination a first fastener member including a flexible center portion having a front and rear surface and being relatively thin from said front surface to said rear surface; a pair of opposed spaced apart pockets supported upon said first fastener member; each of said pockets including front, rear, side and end walls and each having an opening facing toward the center of said first fastener member; a second fastener member including a center portion and a pair of end portions spaced apart from each other substantially the same distance as the spacing between said pocket portions, said end portions of said second fastener member each being thereby adapted to be placed into one of said pocket portions to securely retain a section of said garment between said first and second fastener members, flexible connecting means extending between said first and second fastener members, said fastener being adapted to be connected to a supporting strap, and the front and rear inward surfaces of each of said pockets including a plurality of parallel alternate ridges and grooves to assist in securely retaining said garment in position between said fastener members.

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