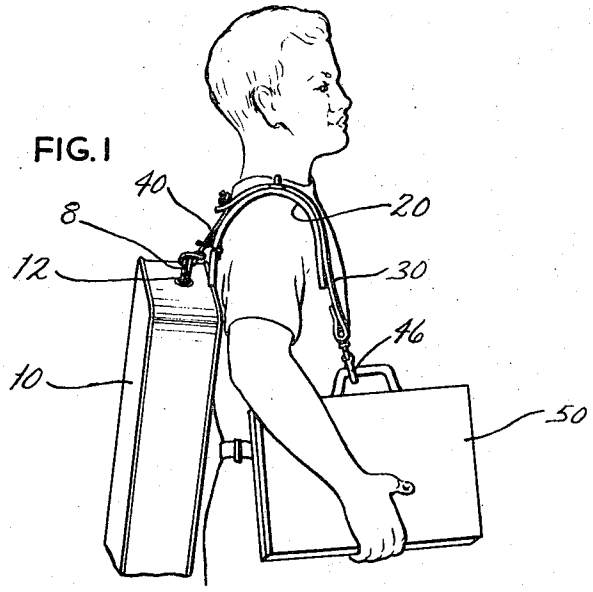
Feb. 16, 1971 J. A. HEBEL 3,564,590

GARMENT CARRIER

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FIG. 1



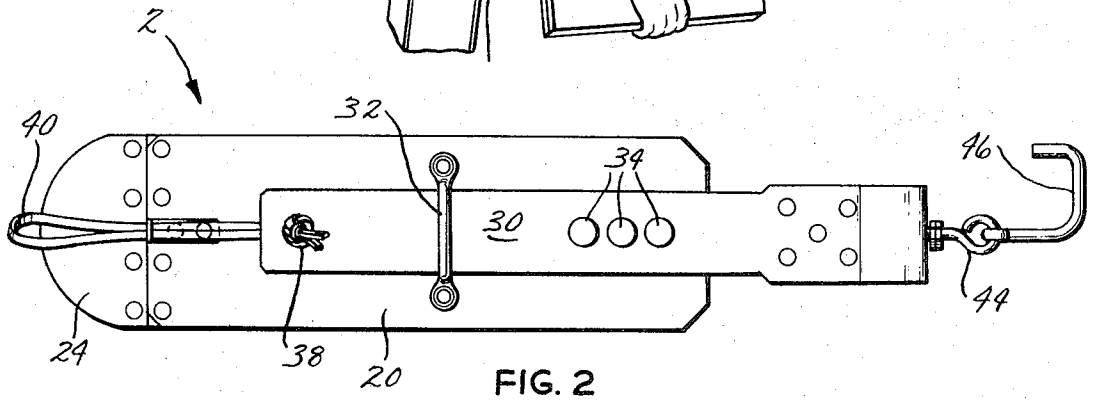


FIG. 2

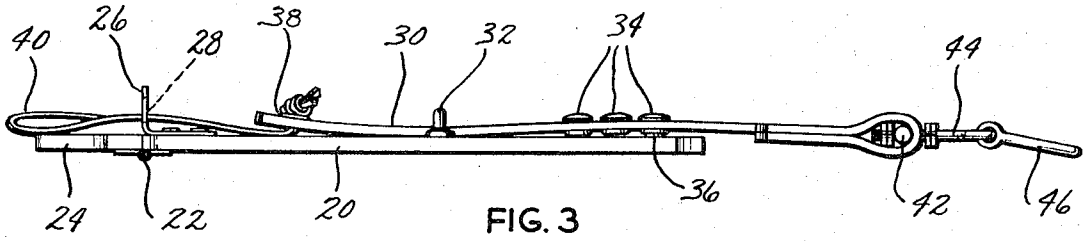


FIG. 3

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GARMENT CARRIER

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FIG. 4

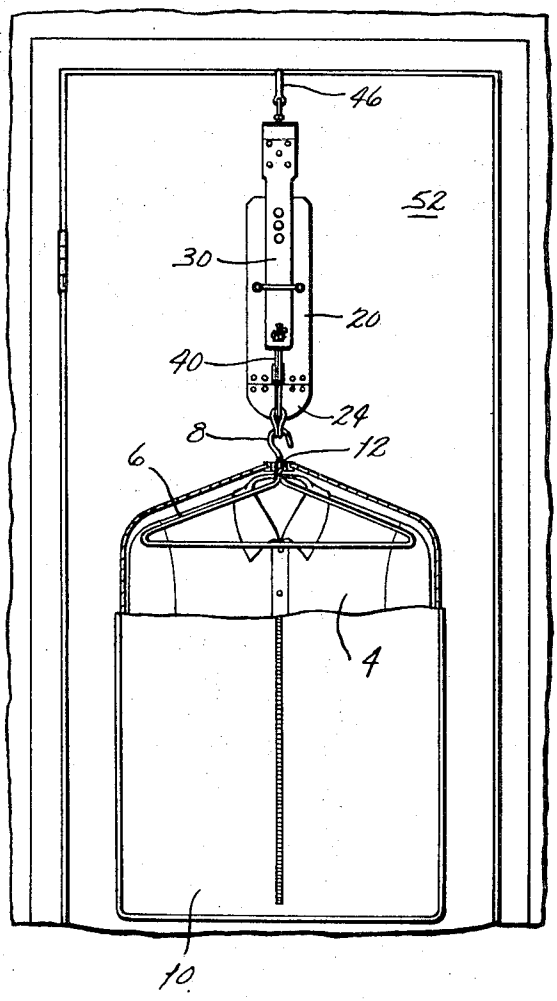


FIG. 6

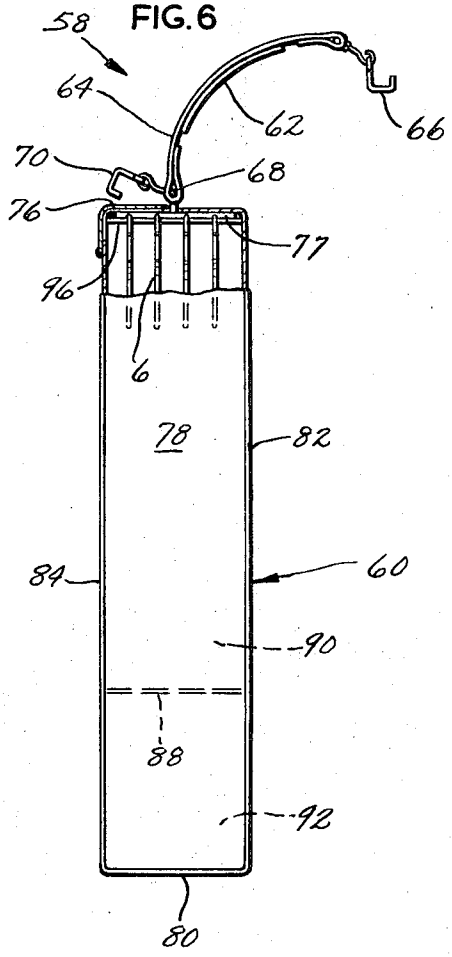
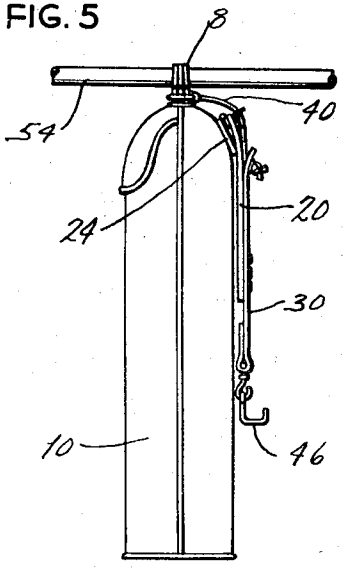


FIG. 5



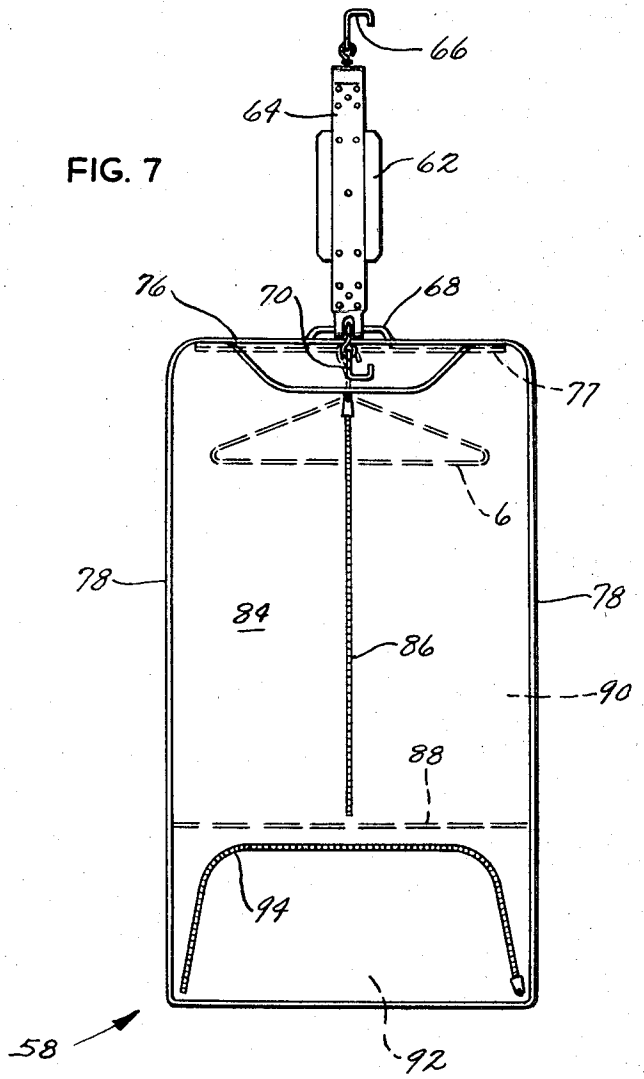
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GARMENT CARRIER

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FIG. 7



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GARMENT CARRIER

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U.S. Cl. 224—5 12 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A garment carrier for hanger-held clothing includes a carrier strap adapted to fit over the user's shoulder. At its rear end the strap is connected in a garment bag, while at its forward end the strap is provided with a hook which can be easily gripped or engaged with the handle of a small valise to counteract the weight of the clothing. A shoulder pad is interposed between the user's shoulder and the strap to distribute the weight of the clothing across the user's shoulder.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates in general to garment carriers and more particularly to a garment carrier for clothing suspended from hangers.

Clothing carried in so-called garment bags can sustain long trips without becoming wrinkled inasmuch as the clothing is suspended in the bag from hangers or, in other words, is maintained in an extend or unfolded condition. Conventional suitcases, on the other hand, only accept most articles of clothing in a folded condition, which creates more wrinkles. By reason of the fact that clothing bags accept garments in an extended or unfolded condition, they are considerably longer than conventional suitcases and this makes them more difficult to carry. Indeed, the only practical way for the user to carry a garment bag is to double his arm back and grasp the hanger hooks at his shoulder, allowing the bag to depend therefrom across his back. This is an awkward position for the arm and becomes tiring and extremely uncomfortable after short periods of time.

Moreover, many travelers who utilize garment bags also carry small suitcases or briefcases so that both of their hands are occupied. Thus, it is difficult for these people to manipulate tickets, deal with money, and perform other manual functions in airports, hotels, and similar facilities which are often frequented by travelers.

Furthermore, travelers are often detained for extended periods in places where no coat hanger rods are available for holding their garment bags. In such situations travelers often throw their garment bags over the backs of chairs merely to rid themselves of the bags. This tends to wrinkle the clothing and much worse often dislodges the clothing from the hangers so that when the bag is again carried the dislodge clothing falls to the bottom of it.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

One of the principal objects of the present invention is to provide a carrier for conveniently and effortlessly carrying clothing suspended from hangers. Another object is to provide a carrier which will counter-balance hanger-held clothing and a small valise across the user's shoulder, leaving his hands free for other operations. A further object is to provide a carrier of the type stated which can also be used to suspend the hanger-held clothing from the tops of doors, ledges, rods, and other elevated protuberances. Yet another object is to provide a carrier which does not obstruct the hanger hooks so that the hangers and clothing can be supported from conventional clothes racks. A further object is to provide a garment bag having two compartments, one of which will accommodate clothing suspended from hangers. These and other objects and advantages will become apparent hereinafter.

The present invention is embodied in a carrier including a strap which extends across the user's shoulder and is provided at its rear end with means for connecting it with clothing hangers. At its forward end the strap is provided with means for enabling the user to conveniently grip the strap and counteract the weight of the clothing on the hangers. The invention, in addition, includes a novel garment bag having upper and lower compartments. The invention also consists in the parts and in the arrangements and combinations of parts hereinafter described and claimed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the accompanying drawings which form part of the specification and wherein like numerals and letters refer to like parts wherever they occur:

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view showing the garment carrier being used to suspend garments and a small valise across the shoulder of a traveler,

FIG. 2 is a plan view of the garment carrier,

FIG. 3 is a side elevational view of the garment carrier,

FIG. 4 shows the carrier being used to suspend the garments from the top edge of a door,

FIG. 5 shows the garment carrier positioned to the side of the garments while the garments are suspended from a conventional clothes rod,

FIG. 6 is a side elevational view, partially broken away and in section, of a modified garment carrier, and

FIG. 7 is a front view of the modified garment carrier.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring now to the drawings, **2** designates a carrier for carrying clothing **4** suspended from clothes hangers **6** having hooks **8**. Normally, the clothing **4** is encased in a flexible garment bag **10** having small openings **12** at its upper end through which the hooks **8** project. It should be understood, however, that the carrier **2** is also suitable for use with merely the clothing **4** suspended from the hangers **6** or with garment bags having completely encased clothes hangers and only a single external hanger at the top of the bag.

The carrier **2** includes a shoulder pad **20** which is relatively wide and is configured to fit over the user's shoulder in a general direction extending from his collarbone to his shoulder blade. The pad **20** may be made from any suitable flexible material of a durable nature such as leather. At its rear end, that is, the end which is located adjacent the user's shoulder blades, the shoulder pad **20** is provided with a hinge **22** (FIGS. 2 and 3) to which a semi-circular end flap **24** is fastened. When the hinge **22** is open, the flap **24** forms a continuation of, and indeed is a part of, the pad **20**. However, when the hinge **22** is closed, the flap **24** is doubled under the pad **20** (FIG. 5). Immediately forwardly of the tab **24**, the shoulder pad **20** is centrally fitted with an outwardly projecting guide tab **26** having an aperture **28** extending through it.

The pad **20** cushions and spreads out the downwardly directed force presented by a narrower carrier strap **30** which overlies a considerable portion of the pad **20**. Like the pad **20**, the strap **30** is also formed from a flexible material which, in addition to being durable, should have sufficient strength to support a load of clothing **4**. Leather is also suited for this purpose. The carrier strap **30** is retained in place on the pad **20** by a metal guide or confining loop **32** and snap fasteners **34**. The guide loop **32** is positioned centrally on the pad **20**. It extends over and

along the sides of the strap **30** so as to prevent the strap **30** from moving away from or shifting laterally on the pad **20**. Its ends are secured against the upper surface of the pad **20** by rivets. The snap fasteners **34**, on the other hand, are located on the strap **30** at the forward end of the pad **20** to prevent the strap **30** from shifting longitudinally on the pad **20**. Several longitudinally spaced snap fasteners **34** are provided, and these engage a fastener button **36** on the forward end of the pad **20** so that the position of the strap **30** on the pad **20** can be altered to suit the user.

The rear end of the strap **30** is disposed between the guide loop **32** and the outwardly projecting tab **26** and is, furthermore, provided with a grommet **38** through which a looped binding **40** is passed. The binding **40** extends along the pad **20** as a continuation of the strap **30** and passes through the aperture **28** in the tab **26**. The looped end of the binding **40** terminates close to the end of the semicircular flap **24**, while the opposite end is knotted with a loop knot to prevent the binding **40** from slipping through the grommet **38**. The binding **40** should likewise be formed from a strong flexible material such as leather.

The forward end of the carrier strap **30** loops around a metal pintle **42** and is riveted to itself so that the pintle **42** is contained within the looped end. The pintle **42** is provided with a transversely extending bore through which the shank of an eye bolt **44** passes, the shank being secured to the pintle **42** in any conventional manner. The shank of the eye bolt **44** also extends through the looped forward end of the strap **30**. The eye of the bolt **44** is on the other end of the shank and it retains a hook **46** which is configured to receive the handle of a small valise such as a suitcase or briefcase **50** (FIG. 1). The hook **46** is further configured to fit over the top of a conventional door **52** (FIG. 4) when inverted.

In use, the looped end of the binding **40** is looped or knotted around the hooks **8** projecting from the garment bag **10** in the manner illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 4 so that the hangers **6**, the clothing **4**, and the garment bag **10** are all suspended from the binding **40** (FIGS. 1 and 4). Then, with the flap **24** extended, the user places the pad **20** across his shoulder and positions it such that its forward margin is presented below his collarbone, while the flap **24** overlies the shoulder blade of the shoulder supporting it (FIG. 1). In this position, the forward portion of the carrier strap depends downwardly across the user's chest. To counterbalance the weight of the clothing **4** in the garment bag **10**, the user merely grasps the hook **46** at the forward end of the carrier strap **30** and tugs downwardly. The garment bag **10** will, of course, depend from the binding **40** along the user's back where it is well above the floor, thereby preventing the bag **10** and the clothing **4** in it from becoming soiled. Moreover, when the strap **30** is positioned correctly with respect to the pad **20**, the flap **24** will be positioned between the hanger hooks **8** and the user's back, thereby preventing the sharp edges of those hooks from irritating the user or damaging the clothing he wears. If the hook **46** at the forward end of the strap **30** is not positioned conveniently for gripping, it may be adjusted relative to the pad **20** by detaching the snap fastener **34** in engagement with fastener button **36** and then shifting the pad strap **30** relative to the pad **20** until another fastener **34** aligns with the button **36**. That fastener **34** is then snapped into the button **36** so that the carrier strap **30** is again attached to the pad **20**, only in a different position.

Thus, the weight of the clothing **4** in the garment bag **10** is carried primarily by the user's shoulder, and the user need not twist his arm into an awkward and uncomfortable position to hold that clothing. Moreover, the garment bag **10** and the clothing **4** in it are carried well above the ground and are not likely to become soiled.

Should the user also have a small hand-carried valise **50**, such as a suitcase or a briefcase, the handle of that valise **50** is merely passed over and into engagement with the hook **46** at the forward end of the strap **30** (FIG. 1)

so that the garment bag **10** is presented at the user's back while the valise **50** is presented across the front of his body and perhaps slightly to the side of it, depending on the position the valise **50** assumes when it swings free. The valise **50** counteracts the weight of the user's garment bag **10** so that both the bag **10** and the valise **50** are carried by the user's shoulder. Whereas, without the carrier **2**, both of the user's hands would be occupied carrying the bag **10** and the valise **50**, with the carrier **2** used in the manner previously described, both of the user's hands are free to perform other operations such as handling money or airline tickets.

If the user is detained or required to be in a place having no conventional rod from which the hangers **6** in the bag **10** can be hung, the user can merely place the hook **46** over the top of a door **52** (FIG. 4) and allow the hangers **6**, clothing **4**, and garment bag **10** to depend from the binding **40** along the face of the door **52**. The shoulder pad **20** is normally placed against the door **52** so that the hooks **8** and the guide loop **32** do not scratch the door **52**. The hook **46** may also engage other elevated rods, ledges, protuberances, and the like.

However, where a clothes rod **54** (FIG. 5) is available, the flap **24** is merely folded under the pad **20** at the hinge **22**, and the entire carrier **2** is allowed to depend from its binding **40**, which is looped around the hooks **8** of the hangers **6**, along the back side of the garment bag **10**. Thus, access to the interior of the bag **10** is not obstructed. Furthermore, by reason of the fact that the flap **24** folds under the pad **20**, the effective length of the pad **20** is shortened and it therefore does not interfere with the hooks **6** or the clothes rod **54** over which they are passed as it depends along the side of the bag **10**.

Referring now to FIGS. 6 and 7, it is possible to provide a modified garment carrier **58** including a garment bag **60**, a shoulder pad **62** and a carrier strap **64**. The shoulder pad **62** is very similar to the pad **20** and is connected to the strap **64** by means of rivets. The forward end of the strap **64** is provided with a swivelly mounted hook **66** which is very similar to the hook **46**. At its rear end the carrier strap **64** is looped through a metal connector bar **68** which is fastened at both of its ends to the top of the garment bag **60** (FIG. 7) and is bowed outward therefrom intermediate its ends. The connector bar **68**, furthermore, extends longitudinally along the top of the bag **60**. Beyond the outwardly bowed portion of the connector bar **68**, the strap **64** folds back upon and is riveted to itself so that the bag **62** and the carrier strap **64** are permanently although pivotally connected to one another. Intermediate its side margins, the strap **64** is cut away at the connector bar **68**, and a hook **70** is swingably attached to the exposed portion of the connector bar **68**. The hook **70** is disposed on that portion of the carrier strap **64** which is presented upwardly or away from the shoulder pad **62** so that it does not become lodged between the strap **64** and the user's back when the bag **60** is carried by means of the strap **64**.

The garment bag **60** is preferably formed from a water repellant fabric and around its periphery it includes a top wall **76**, side walls **78**, and a bottom wall **80**. The top wall **76** is reinforced with a rigid frame **77** (FIG. 6) to which the ends of the connector bar **68** are riveted. The rear margins of the top wall **80**, side walls **78** and bottom wall **80** are sewed to a back wall **82** which is uninterrupted and is presented to the same side of the carrier strap **64** as is the shoulder pad **62** so that it rests against the user's back when the bag **60** is carried.

The front of the garment bag **68** is closed by a front wall **84** which is also sewed to the top wall **76**, side walls **78**, and bottom wall **80**, and the front wall **84** is bisected by a zipper **86** which extends downwardly to a partition **88** within the bag **68**. The partition **88** divides the bag **68** into upper and lower compartments **90** and **92**. Access to the upper compartment **90** is, of course,

gained through the zipper **86**, while access to the lower compartment is obtained through a zipper **94** in that portion of the front wall **84** located beneath the partition and having the shape of an inverted U.

Finally, within the upper compartment **90** a transversely extending bar **96** (FIG. 6) is connected to the reinforcing frame **77**, and that bar **96** bows downwardly from its ends for reception of the hooks **8** on the hangers **6**. The compartment **90** is long enough to accommodate the clothing **4** hung on the hangers **6**.

The carrier **58** is used much in the same manner as the carrier **2**, in which case the back wall **82** of the bag **60** will be against the user's back when the shoulder pad **62** is over his shoulder. However, the garment bag **60** is not readily detached from the carrier strap **64**.

Furthermore, in the case of the carrier **58**, the hooks **8** of the hangers **6** holding the clothing **4** are hooked over the bar **96** within the upper compartment **90** instead of being passed through the bag **60**.

When it is desired to hang the garment bag **60** from a conventional clothes rod, the carrier strap **64** is merely folded backwardly along the connector bar **68** until it depends across the back wall **82** of the bag **60**. Then the hook **70** is passed over the clothes rod so that the bag **60** is suspended from the hook **70** instead of the strap **64**.

The lower compartment **92** is ideally suited for storing soiled clothing.

For those users who do not normally travel with briefcases **50** or small valises, the hook **46** on the carrier **2** and the hook **66** on the carrier **58** may be replaced with an elongated handle similar in configuration to a bicycle handle bar grip. That handle would extend in the same direction as the carrier strap **30** or **64** when allowed to depend freely.

This invention is intended to cover all changes and modifications of the example of the invention herein chosen for purposes of the disclosure which do not constitute departures from the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A carrier for clothing suspended from hangers: said carrier comprising a shoulder pad adapted to extend over the user's shoulder, a carrier strap extending generally over the pad, a flexible binding attached to the strap and extending rearwardly therefrom, the binding being substantially narrower than the strap and easily flexed in every direction so that it can be knotted around the hangers, gripping means connected to the end of the strap, and confining means for preventing substantial transverse shifting of the strap relative to the pad, the strap being longitudinally shiftable relative to the pad to at least one position wherein the portions of the hangers engaged by the binding overlie the pad so that those hanger portions will not damage the clothing worn by the user, the gripping means being located along the front of the body for convenient gripping when the binding means positions the engaged portions of the hangers over the pad.

2. A carrier according to claim **1** wherein the gripping means comprises a hook configured to receive the handle of a valise so that the valise can be suspended from the front end of the strap to counteract the weight of the clothing, whereby the user's hands are free to perform other functions.

3. A carrier according to claim **2** wherein the hook is also configured to fit over a door whereby the carrier, hangers, and clothing may be suspended from the top edge of a door.

4. A carrier according to claim **2** wherein the hook comprises three substantially straight segments connected by two substantially 90° bends, the spacing between the bends being sufficient to enable the hook to fit over the top of a door.

5. A carrier according to claim **1** wherein the flexible binding doubles back upon itself so as to form a loop beyond the rear end of the strap.

6. A carrier according to claim **5** wherein the flexible binding is attached to the rear end of the strap.

7. A carrier according to claim **1** and further characterized by securing means for restricting longitudinal movement of the strap relative to the pad after the strap has been shifted to a selected position.

8. A carrier according to claim **1** wherein the confining means further restricts longitudinal movement of the strap relative to the pad.

9. A carrier according to claim **1** wherein the pad includes a flap which folds away from the binding so that the pad will not interfere with the hangers when the strap depends from the hangers to the side of the clothing.

10. A carrier for clothing suspended from hangers having hooks formed thereon; said carrier comprising a shoulder pad adapted to extend over the user's shoulder, a carrier strap extending generally over the pad and normally restricted against movement thereon, the strap being narrower than the pad and having its front end normally positioned beyond the pad and its rear end position over the pad forwardly from the rear margin thereof, a flexible binding attached to the rear end of and extending rearwardly beyond the strap, the binding being substantially narrower than the strap and easily flexible in every direction so that it can be knotted to the hanger hooks whereby the clothing will be suspended from the binding and will extend downwardly across the user's back, the binding positioning the hooks substantially over the rear end of the pad when knotted to the hooks so that the hooks will not damage the clothing worn by the user beneath the pad, guide means fixed relative to the pad for confining a portion of the binding against lateral movement relative to the pad and strap, the guide means being located beyond the rear end of the strap and having an aperture through which the binding extends, and gripping means at the front end of the strap and positioned in front of the user's body so that it can be conveniently grasped to exert a downwardly directed force for counteracting the force created by the weight of the clothing.

11. A carrier according to claim **10** wherein the gripping means is a hook configured to engage the handle of a valise so that the valise can be suspended from the front end of the strap to counteract the weight of the clothing.

12. A carrier according to claim **10** wherein the flexible binding doubles back upon itself so as to form a loop which can be knotted to the hanger hooks; and wherein the double length of binding extends through the aperture in the guide means.

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ROBERT G. SHERIDAN, Primary Examiner

U.S. Cl. X.R.

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