May 19, 1942. P. M. HINTZ 2,283,367

TABLECLOTH STRETCHER

Filed June 17, 1939

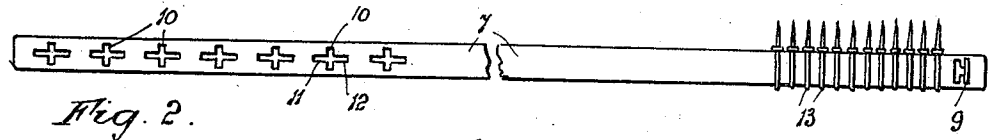


Fig. 2.

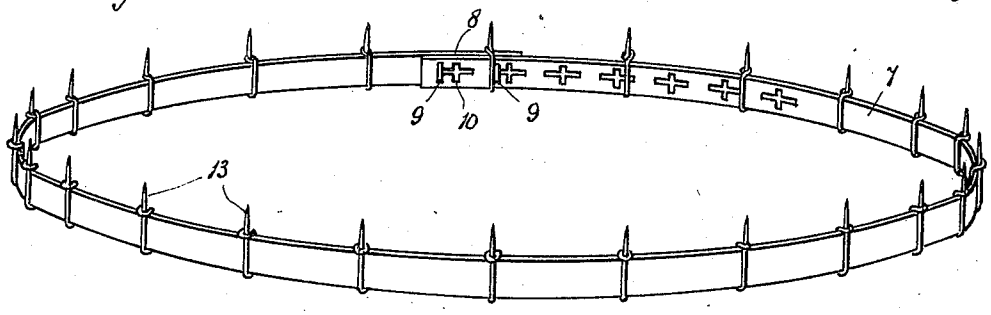


Fig. 1.

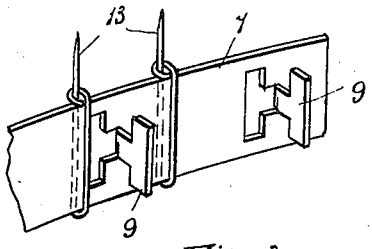


Fig. 3.

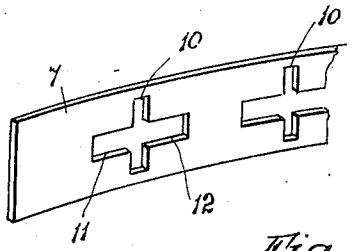


Fig. 4.

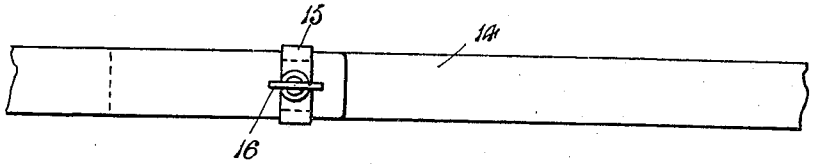


Fig. 5.

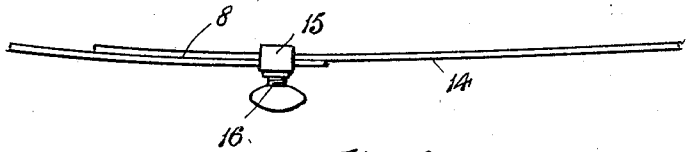


Fig. 6.

Peter M. Hintz.
INVENTOR.

BY Stanley Lightfoot.
ATTORNEY.

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TABLECLOTH STRETCHER

Peter M. Hintz, Detroit, Mich.

Application June 17, 1939, Serial No. 279,632

2 Claims. (Cl. 45—24)

This invention relates to stretchers for circular, elliptical or similarly shaped lace or fabric pieces such as table cloths, more especially of large size as of several feet in diameter.

The stretching of such pieces after washing and during drying, in order to preserve their size and shape, has heretofore presented some difficulties to the laundress, and makeshift methods such as pinning the pieces to large circular areas of cardboard or to rugs have been resorted to, but such methods call for quite a little skill, are slow of accomplishment and are often quite unreliable.

The present invention has for its object to provide a very simple and efficient device, for the purposes in mind, capable of assembly and use by an unskilled operator and readily adjustable to the shape and size of the piece to be dried. It also provides a device which, from the very simplicity of its construction, lends itself to packing, storing, shipping and marketing in a form characteristically compact in quantities. This is an important feature of the device.

Still further objects or advantages subsidiary to the aforesaid objects or resulting from the construction or operation of the invention as it may be carried into effect will become apparent as the said invention is hereinafter further disclosed.

In carrying the said invention into effect, I may provide a length, say ten feet, of flexible metal or other suitable tape, capable of being flexed to the form of a circular or elliptical frame-like form with the ends of the tape overlapping, means for securing the said ends of the tape in adjustable overlapped relation according to the frame diameter desired, and pins or equivalent means adjustably movable along the tape into any desired spaced relation to receive the margins of the piece of material to be stretched. All of which is more particularly described and ascertained hereinafter, by way of example, having reference to the accompanying drawing, where:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the improved stretcher set up for use;

Figure 2 is a broken elevation of the device in its flat or extended condition as stored and marketed;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary detail perspective view of one end portion of the tape;

Figure 4 is a similar view of the other end portion of the tape;

Figure 5 is a detail elevation of the overlapping ends of the tape embodying a modified type of fastening means; and

Figure 6 is a plan of the arrangement shown in Figure 5.

Similar characters of reference indicate similar parts in the several figures of the drawing.

Referring first to Figures 1 to 4, inclusive. 7 is an extended strip of flexible tape of a springy nature, and spring steel suitably rust-proofed is very satisfactory for the purposes. For a laundry piece of three feet in diameter, a tape of ten feet in length, one to one and a half inches in width, and about 16 gauge steel may be suitable in most cases. However, such dimensions may be greatly varied according to the weight of fabric to be stretched, the type of usage to which the device is to be subjected, and other considerations as will be readily appreciated.

The tape is flexible as nearly as possible entirely in one plane, on account of its flat cross section, and is adapted when flexed fully to overlap at its end portions, as at 8, the degree of overlapping being controlled according to the size of ring or frame to be formed.

One of the end portions of the said tape is provided with studs or buttons 9, which may very conveniently be pressed out from the material of the tape as clearly shown in Figure 3. The opposite end portion of the said tape is provided with suitable slots 10 therein with which the said studs may be engaged when the said end portions are overlapped, and the said portions thereby so secured in such overlapping relation.

By selecting which of the slots is engaged by the studs, adjustment of the amount of overlapping is attained. While only one stud is necessary for the purpose, I prefer to provide more than one in order to secure greater rigidity in the overlapping joint, especially as to the maintenance of alignment of the ends of the tape and prevention of angular movement about the locking means such as would tend to throw the frame into distortion from its desired flat plane.

The said slots 10 may be provided with oppositely extending branches 11 and 12 adapted to be passed under the heads of the studs in either direction of the length of the tape. Thus, either the expanding effect of the spring frame may operate to effect the engagement of the studs with the branches 11 of the slots, or the compressive pull of the material or work on the said frame may effect the engagement of the studs with the branches 12. This is merely a question of the method of use, and may vary according to the nature of the material being stretched, and

its weight relative to the strength of the frame.

13 are pins or fasteners of any suitable form carried by and preferably slidably adjustable along the length of the tape to provide for attachment of the piece of material to the frame, and further description of these does not appear to be necessary as their use is well known in ordinary curtain stretchers.

In Figures 5 and 6, the slots and studs are eliminated, a plain flexible tape 14 being used, and the overlapping end portions secured by a C clamp 15 through which the said end portions adjustably pass. 16 is a set screw to secure the said end portions in position of adjustment.

Where the piece of material is other than round, for instance elliptical, the frame may be readily converted to such form by simply pressing opposite sides of the frame inwardly toward the center until the proper proportions of length to width is obtained.

Despite the large sizes in which these stretchers may be provided, they may be stored in flat extended form and easily tied up in bundles for shipping or marketing so that they occupy a minimum of space, which is a very important consideration in the commercial handling of the article. Its storage in the house or laundry is also greatly facilitated. Furthermore, the device can easily be marketed in certain maximum lengths from which they may be shortened to the requirements of the purchaser by the simple cutting off of the excess length to order at the time of sale. The invention also admits of the tape being stored in rolls, the required length being drawn from the roll to the length called for, the pins being thereafter applied to the length so cut off, and the locking means already formed in the tape at intervals or provided separately as thought necessary or desirable.

This invention may be developed within the scope of the following claims without departing from the spirit of the said invention and it is desired that the specification and drawing be read as being merely illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

What I claim is:

1. A stretcher for round lace table cloths and similar flat textile articles, comprising a single highly flexible ribbon of springy material having adjustable connection at its ends for joining the latter and presenting the ribbon of material in a hoop form, said ribbon being readily extensible into a flat length when its ends are disconnected and means carried by the ribbon of material for separably engaging the edges of a cloth or work to be stretched, said means comprising pin elements extending from an edge of said ribbon, and having loops slidably embracing said ribbon.

2. A stretcher for round lace table cloths and similar flat textile articles comprising a single springy hoop of highly flexible ribbon-like material having separable adjustable ends for connection with each other, one of the ends of the hoop being formed with a latching slot and a latching device carried by the other end and engageable with the slot for separably latching both ends together, and a large plurality of means carried by said hoop and movable relative thereto for the attachment of the extreme edges of an article to be stretched flatly over the face of said hoop at relatively frequent intervals throughout the circumference thereof.

PETER M. HINTZ.