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Howell

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[54] **PLEATABLE FABRIC**

[76] Inventor: **Marie W. Howell,** 298 Elizabeth St., New York, N.Y. 10012

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **161/70,** 112/427, 161/37, 161/50, 161/132

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A47h 37/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 161/70, 36, 37, 41, 161/132, 50, 72, 89, 90, 91, 74, 53, 57, 58, 73, 86, 741; 160/231, 84, DIG. 7; 112/427

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Primary Examiner—Harold Ansher
Assistant Examiner—S. Silverman
Attorney—Eugene E. Geoffrey, Jr.

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A fabric for curtains, draperies and the like which includes a plurality of narrow fabric panels of relatively stiff and wrinkle-free texture interstitched in parallel by flexible threads so that the strips will readily pleat along the lines of the flexible threads.

3 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures

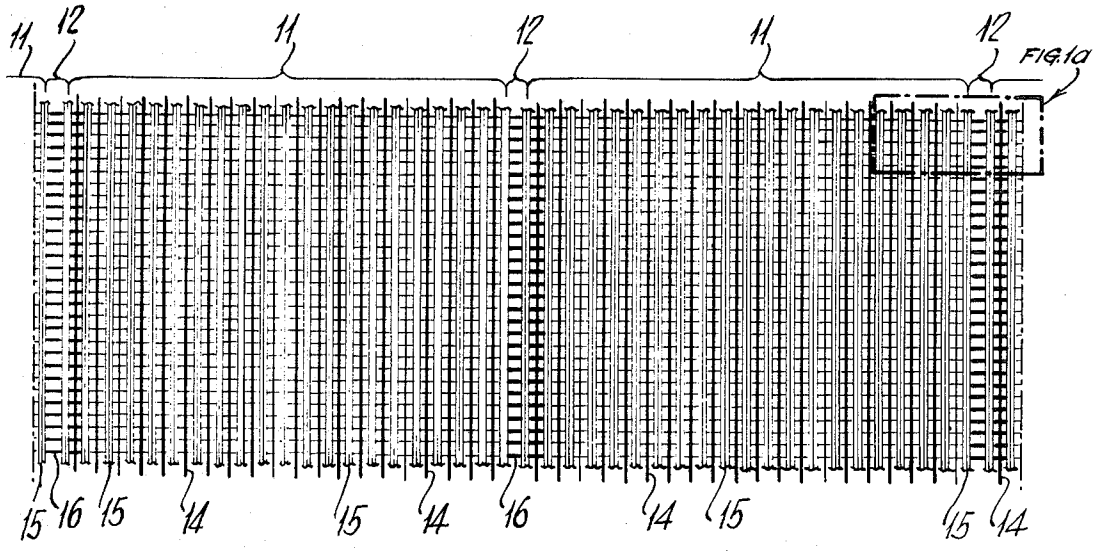


Fig. 1.

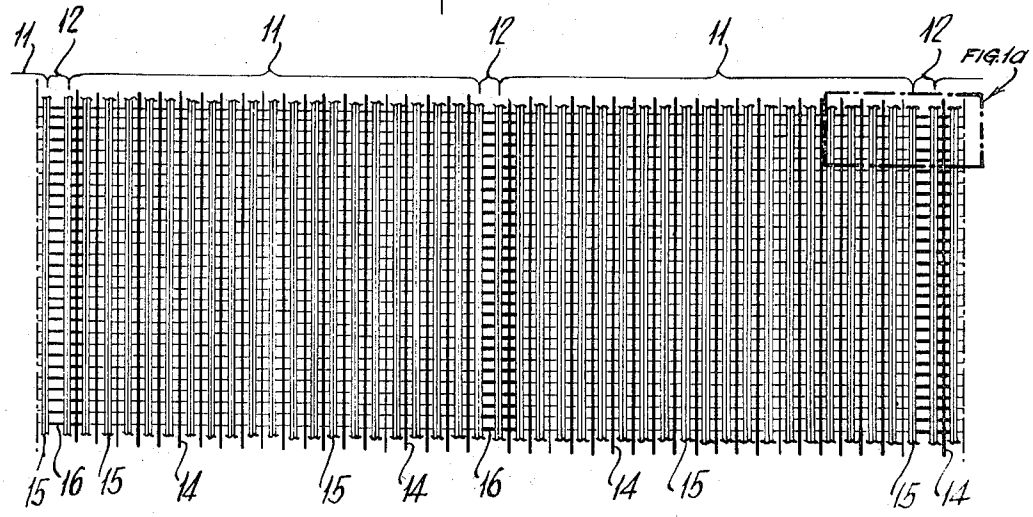


Fig. 1a.

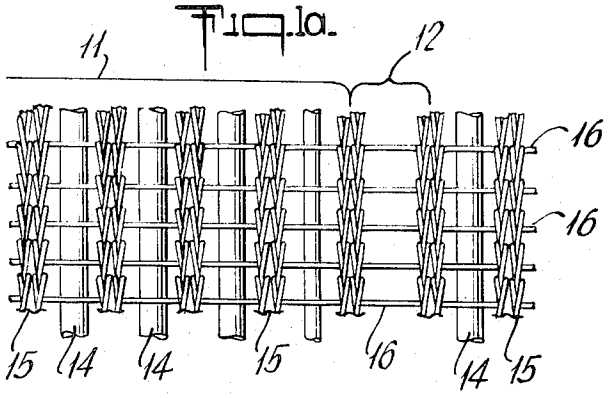
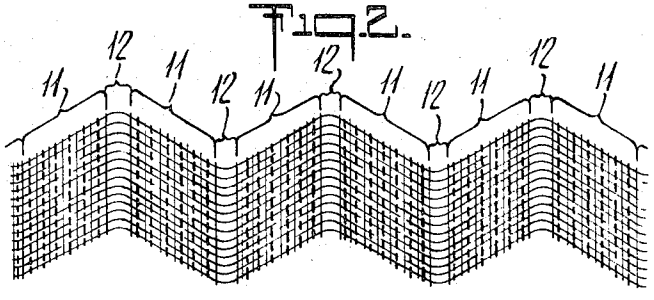


Fig. 2.



INVENTOR
MARIE W. HOWELL
BY
ATTORNEY

PLEATABLE FABRIC

This invention relates to fabrics and, more specifically, to a novel and improved fabric useful among other things for draperies and the like.

Many curtain or drapery fabrics have relatively heavy, stiff and uniform textures whether they are of woven or knitted construction. When used as a drape the width of the fabric is materially greater than the width of the area it is to cover and is pleated along the upper edge. The drape is supported by a suitable rod and the material must be pleated lengthwise and held in the pleated position until the folds take a natural set. Under normal conditions, a week or more is required to insure permanency of the pleats. While it is possible to provide drapery fabrics with permanent pleats, they not only lack the appearance of a natural set, but it is also difficult and expensive to align accurately the permanent pleats with the grain of the fabric.

One object of the present invention resides in the provision of a novel and improved curtain or drapery fabric embodying means integrated with the fabric that will cause it to assume a natural linear pleat along the grain line without the need for forming and securing each pleat in place until it takes a natural set.

This and other objects of the invention are achieved by forming the fabric in a plurality of strips interconnected in parallel relationship by a plurality of relatively flexible and durable threads so that the fabric when folded will pleat along the lines formed by the threads joining the adjacent strips and wherein the connection threads are relatively short in length and form part of the fabric design.

The foregoing and other objects and features of the invention will become more apparent from the following description and accompanying drawings:

IN THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a plan view of a fabric according to the invention;

FIG. **1A** is a magnified view of a portion of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **2** is a perspective view of a fragmentary portion of the pleated fabric.

Referring to the drawings, the fabric according to the invention includes a plurality of relatively stiff strips or panels **11** joined or interconnected by sections **12** of

flexible threads **16** interwoven with the panels to form the completed fabric.

The fabric may be formed on any conventional knitting or weaving apparatus. The fabric may embody any desired design and may include relatively thick yarns **14** interlaced at regular or random intervals between the construction yarns **15** which form the panels **11** and may be in the form of monofilament threads. The flexible threads **16** joining edges of panels **11** are interstitched with adjoining panels. The width of the sections **12** provide a suitable space between adjoining panels so that the panels **11** will readily fold and unfold in opening and closing the drapes. Preferably, the threads are disposed generally in a direction transverse to the folding edge for maximum flexibility. For obvious reasons the threads should be durable so that they can withstand repeated folding and unfolding of the fabric.

The fabric strips may be of a uniform width as shown in FIG. **2** or of nonuniform width to attain the desired ornamental effects, and the threads **16** may preferably be spaced farther apart than the corresponding weft threads of the panels.

Various other modifications and changes may be made to the fabric of the present invention described above without departing from the spirit and scope thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A fabric for curtains, draperies and the like comprising a plurality of fabric panels of relatively stiff texture, and relatively flexible, durable threads connecting adjoining panels in parallel relationship to provide natural fold lines to facilitate pleating of the fabric, said panels including columns of knitted or woven yarns and said flexible threads being interstitched with adjoining panels.

2. The fabric according to claim **1**, wherein the threads connecting the adjoining panels are disposed transversely of the length of the panels.

3. The fabric material according to claim **2** wherein said panels are woven and the number of transverse threads per unit length connecting the adjoining panels are less than the number of corresponding threads forming said panels.

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