

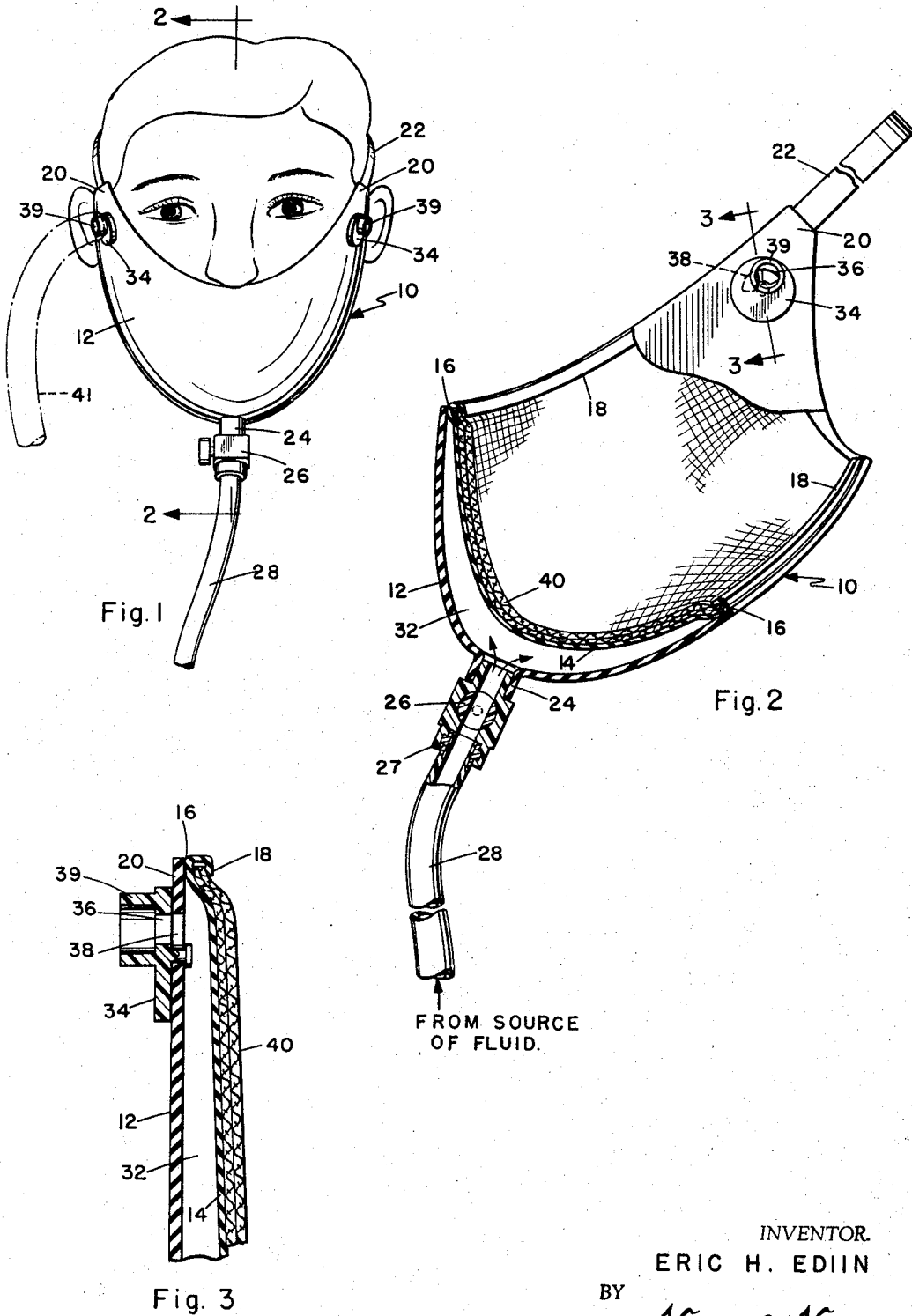
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E. H. EDIIN

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PRESSURIZED FACE MASK

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INVENTOR.
ERIC H. EDIIN
BY
Knox & Knox

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PRESSURIZED FACE MASK

Eric H. Edlin, La Mesa, Calif.

(2936 McGraw St., San Diego, Calif. 92117)

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1 Claim. (Cl. 128—254)

The present invention relates generally to an apparatus for softening the beard prior to shaving and more particularly to a pressurized mask which can be applied to at least the lower portion of the face to provide a continuing source of heat at a controlled temperature.

The primary object of this invention is to provide an improved means to apply moist heat under pressure at a controlled temperature uniformly over the bearded portion of a man's face.

It is a further object to provide an improved means for regulating the degree of heat applied to the beard.

It is a still further object of this invention to provide an improved means for regulating the amount of pressure applied during the heating period.

Finally it is an object to provide a pressurized mask of the aforementioned character which is simple and convenient to use and which will give generally efficient and durable service.

With these and other objects definitely in view of this invention consists in the novel construction, combination and arrangement of elements and portions, as will be hereinafter fully described in the specification, particularly pointed out in the claim, and illustrated in the drawing which forms a material part of this disclosure, and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a front elevational view of a mask constructed in accordance with and embodying the present invention, illustrating the mask as it is applied in actual use to the face;

FIGURE 2 is an enlarged section on the line 2—2 of FIGURE 1; and

FIGURE 3 is a further enlarged section on the line 3—3 of FIGURE 2.

The proper preparation of the beard is of the utmost importance in order to obtain a smooth and comfortable shave. This preparation consists of softening the beard, and the universally accepted beard softener is the combination of heat and moisture applied to the beard for at least two minutes. The usual method of accomplishing this is by applying hot wet towels to the beard. This is a simple procedure when the party to be shaved is reclining in a barber's chair. But when the individual is at home, and preparing to shave, the task of softening the beard is not so simple. To retain the heat the towel must be quite wet and to keep it in contact with the beard for two minutes or more becomes a difficult and tiresome task.

These objectionable features are overcome by the use of the improved face heating mask described herein, which is designed to fit over the bearded portion of the face and is kept in place by one or more adjustable elastic bands that slip over the top and back of the head. The mask consists of an outer and an inner member, the outer member of which is molded to a generally facial contour but large enough to fit loosely over the lower or bearded portion of a man's face. This outer member is made of a suitable, form retaining material described below and the inner portion of the mask, the part that conforms to the face, is made of a thin, pliable and easily deformable material that will easily adapt itself to the shape and contour of the individual face. The two portions are secured together around the periphery thereof to form a double walled air tight container. At the top of one or both sides of the mask air vents are provided to permit opening and closing as desired. At the bottom

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or chin part of the outer member there is positioned an inlet opening with a shut off valve to accommodate a flexible conduit which is connected to a source of heat such as an electrically operated fan for supplying hot air to the space between the outer and inner members of the mask.

A preferred embodiment of the invention is illustrated in the drawing in which reference numeral 10 indicates the face mask generally. This mask consists of an outer generally cup shaped member 12 and a similarly shaped inner member 14 suitably secured at 16 at their peripheral edges by any conventional adhesive or bonding method. The outer member 12 is foldable for storage and transportation but is substantially inextensible and may be constructed from suitable rubber compounds. This outer member 12 should have a degree of resiliency and memory or form retention so that when released it will assume the general shape of the bearded portion of a man's face. It should be made sufficiently large to accommodate a wide range of facial shapes. The inner member 14 is formed of thin, pliable deformable material preferably soft rubber or a synthetic plastic which will readily conform to exact facial contours. The peripheral edge 18 of the inner member 14 is curled over to form a lip, the purpose of which will be hereinafter disclosed. Members 12 and 14 are both imperforate.

The opposite sides of the mask slope upwardly from both front and back and meet at point 20 which is approximately at ear level as shown in FIGURE 1. One or more elastic adjustable straps 22 are secured at points 20 and surround the wearer's head to hold the mask in operative position.

Adjacent the bottom portion of the mask the outer member 12 is provided with a flanged opening 24 to which is secured a manually operated shut off valve 26 of any well known form. Extending from this valve and connected thereto by a detachable coupling 27, is a flexible conduit 28 which is connected at its lower end to a source of heated fluid. A hair dryer or similar blower may be used to supply hot air through conduit 28 and valve 26 to the space 32 between outer member 12 and inner member 14. A manually operated relief valve disc 34 is located in each portion 20 of the mask and this valve communicates with space 32 as shown more clearly in FIGURE 3. Valve 34 may be of any conventional form and may be manual or automatic in operation. It is here shown as a rotatable disc having a sector-shaped opening 36 therein in registry with a similar sector-shaped opening 38 in portion 20. Rotation of the valve disc 34 will vary the effective size of opening 38 or close it completely. Valve disc 34 is provided with an outwardly projecting nipple 39 for attachment of a hose thereto, as hereinafter described, for use when a fluid return is necessary.

A pad 40 of soft absorbent material shaped to the general configuration of the inner member 14 is positioned in contact with the outer surface of this member. The edge of this pad 40 is engaged under the lip 18 and may be removed for washing and/or replacement by progressively lifting the lip 18 and withdrawing the pad from engagement therewith. Preferably this pad 40 is constructed of suitable paper or the like and thus made inexpensive and disposable.

The operation of the improved face mask will be readily apparent from the foregoing description taken in connection with the drawing. Absorbent pad 40 is first dipped in hot water and then placed in position on the inner surface of member 14 with the edges interlocked with edge 18 as shown. The mask is then placed over the face and the head band 22 adjusted to hold the mask in place. If a source of hot air is employed with the mask, this source is now activated, the temperature and pressure

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of the air in the space 32 being regulated by manipulating the air relief valves 34 until the proper operating condition is reached. The hot air is then switched off, valves 26 and 34 closed to trap the heated air in the mask and conduit 28 disconnected from valve 26 at coupling 5 27. The mask is left on the face for the desired time to soften the beard.

The inner member 14, being pliable and deformable will, in use, conform to the contours of the face of the individual user. This conformability is enhanced by the application of pressure to the space 32 which will ensure that the absorbent pad 40 is evenly applied to all portions of the face. The hot air heats the inner member 14 which, in turn, conducts heat to the water soaked absorbent material thus supplying moisture and heat to 10 the beard. It should be noted that the intumed lip 18 not only serves to hold the absorbent material in place but it is also a trough catching any free water which may be squeezed out of the pad and thereby preventing dripping.

If desired, hot water from the household supply can be used instead of hot air to heat the mask. In this event, a return hose 41, indicated in broken line in FIGURE 1, is connected to the nipple 39 of one valve 34 and led to a drain, the other valve 34 being kept closed. Thus the hot water can circulate through the mask and, by regulating the opening of valve 34, pressure can be built up in the mask to press the pad 40 against the face.

The mask is not limited to the specific shape shown and, may be considerably extended to cover even the entire face if it is to be used for purposes other than beard softening.

It is understood that minor variation from the form of the invention disclosed herein may be made without departure from the spirit and scope of the invention, and that the specification and drawing are to be considered as merely illustrative rather than limiting.

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I claim:

A pressurized face mask comprising:

a substantially inextensible, flexible outer cup shaped imperforate member to conform generally to the lower portion of a man's face;

means to hold said outer member in place on the user's head;

an inner deformable cup shaped imperforate member peripherally sealed to said outer member to provide a space therebetween, said inner member being conformable to the contours of the lower portion of a man's face;

means to admit heated fluid under pressure to the space between said outer and inner members, whereby said inner member is pressed inwardly to conform to the features of the user;

inlet and manually controlled relief valve means in said outer cup shaped member positioned in widely spaced relationship to assure fluid circulation within said space;

an absorbent pad secured on the inner side of said inner deformable member.

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35 RICHARD A. GAUDET, *Primary Examiner*.
W. E. KAMM, *Assistant Examiner*.