Dec. 14, 1943. E. THOMPSON 2,336,707

PILLOW

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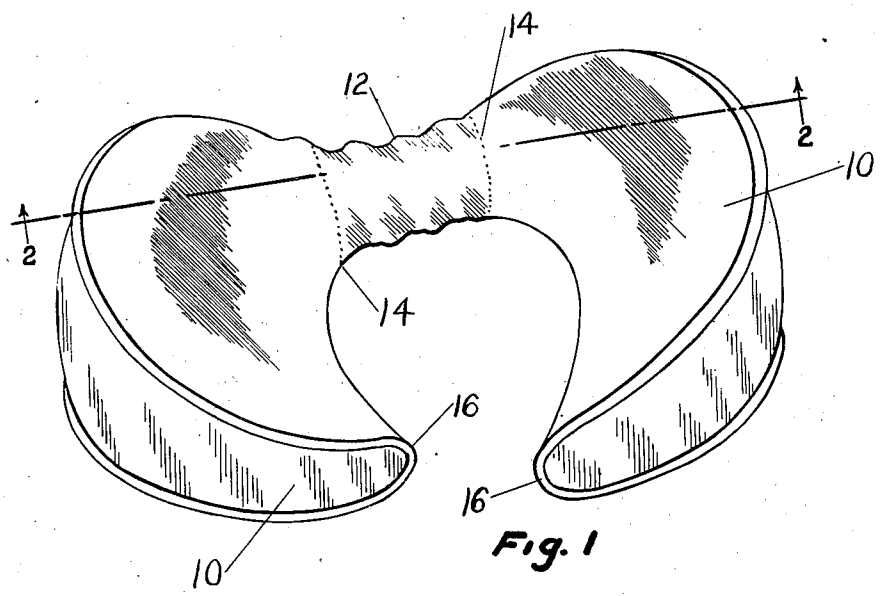


Fig. 1

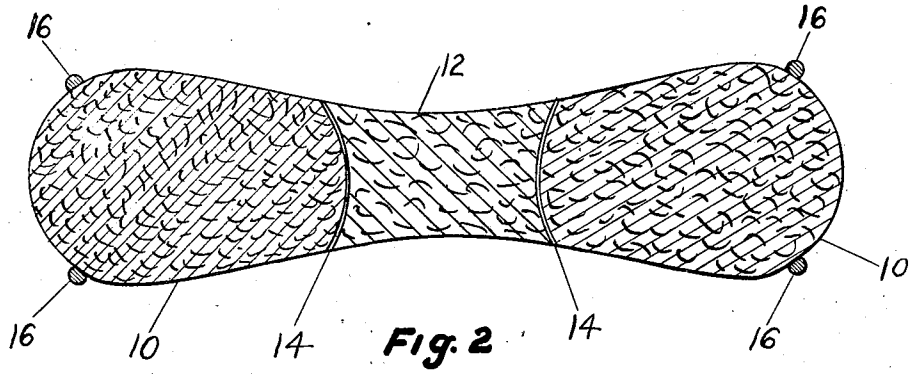


Fig. 2

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1 Claim. (Cl. 5—338)

This invention relates to improvements in pillows. More particularly, the invention relates to pillows that are used to support the wearer's head in such a manner that they relieve strain on the wearer's neck.

It is an object of the invention to provide an improved pillow that supports the wearer's head.

Many different kinds of pillows have been known and used for some time. Most of these pillows are rectangular in shape and are not designed to conform to any particular part of the human anatomy. This type of pillow is quite serviceable where the user is lying down, but it is not very helpful where the user is sitting up. This has been the experience of many invalids and sick people who must sit up all day in hospitals. It often taxes the strength of these persons too much, to sit up for any length of time without some sort of support for their heads. These persons often try to use the ordinary rectangular pillow to give them the desired amount of support for their heads. When this type of pillow is placed behind the user's head, it keeps the user from sitting in a natural position. The body of the pillow, that is behind one's head, forces one's head forward. The user's head tends to move back to the natural position and presses against the body of the pillow. This pressure against the pillow causes a distinct pressure on the back of one's head and neck, and also strains the muscles of the neck. This pressure and neck strain cooperate with the inclination of the user's head to prevent the attainment of real comfort from the use of the ordinary rectangular pillow. In some cases, persons have tried to use a corner of the pillow to reduce the size of the portion of the pillow that is behind their heads, but the pillows soon slip out of place. This also interferes with the patient's comfort and rest. For these reasons, the ordinary rectangular pillow is not very satisfactory when it is used to support the head of a person who must sit up day after day. The invention, on the other hand, provides a new form of pillow that is specially designed to support the wearer's head in a comfortable position and thereby prevent any neck strain. It is an object of the present invention to provide a new form of pillow that supports the wearer's head and prevents any neck strain.

When the ordinary rectangular pillow is used by patients that must sit up all day, it does not give lateral support to the head. The back of the user's head may rest against the pillow, but the rest of the user's head is not given any support by the pillow. Where this is the case, the user may fall asleep and begin to nod. If the patient's head happens to nod to one side, it may incline farther and farther. It may incline so far to one side that its further movement will be halted abruptly by the muscles of the user's neck. This will awaken the user and may even strain the muscles of his neck. This is quite objectionable since patients should secure proper rest and should not be subject to any sort of strain. The invention obviates this objection by providing a pillow that gives lateral support to the head of the user. It is therefore an object of the invention to provide a pillow that gives lateral support to the head of the user.

Where a person tries to sleep while traveling, his head will nod unless it is supported. Where the sleeper's head nods, the sleeper may be awakened. This prevents the attainment of proper rest. This occurs quite often when one is traveling, because the jostling that results from the movement of the conveyance fosters the nodding of the head. Travelers have tried to relieve neck strain by supporting their heads with ordinary pillows, but these pillows do not give much support to the head where the user is sitting up. In addition these pillows sometimes tend to slip out of place. This forces the user to hold the pillow or to lean against some part of the conveyance to hold the pillow in place. Because of this, the ordinary pillow is not suitable for adding to the comfort of travelers that are sitting up. The invention, on the other hand, provides a novel form of pillow that is designed to fit around the user's neck. This pillow has large side portions that support the user's head and neck. When the user falls asleep, he may sleep uninterruptedly because the pillow supports his head and avoids neck strain. It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a pillow that fits around the neck of the user and has relatively large sides that give lateral support to the user's head.

The pillow provided by the present invention has been scientifically designed to support the back of a user's neck and head without exerting an unpleasant pressure thereon. Where the ordinary pillow is placed behind the user's head and neck, it exerts an uncomfortable pressure on the user's head and neck. The ordinary pillow does this because it moves the head and neck forward out of the natural position, to which the head and neck tend to return. In tending to return to this position, the neck and head of the wearer exert a pressure on the pillow. This pressure can be quite uncomfortable. This is objectionable since

it provents the attainment of real comfort. The pillow provided by the invention however, is specially designed to provide sufficient support for the head and neck without creating an unpleasant pressure on the head and neck of the user. This is the result of the provision of a small center portion for the pillow, that engages the back of the user's neck. This central portion is designed to be compressible, under light pressure, to fit the concave portion of the user's neck. When the central portion of the pillow is compressed, it cooperates with the chair or seat to support the head. In that way any pressure between the user's head and neck and the pillow and chair is distributed so that no part of the head is subjected to an unpleasant pressure. It is therefore a pillow having a small, easily compressed portion that engages the back of the user's neck.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will appear from the drawing and accompanying description.

In the drawing and accompanying description, a preferred form of the invention is shown and described but it is to be understood that the drawing and accompanying description do not limit the invention and the invention will be defined by the appended claim.

In the drawing,

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the pillow provided by the invention, and

Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the pillow shown in Fig. 1, and shows the internal structure of the pillow.

Referring to the drawing in detail, the relatively large side portions of the pillow are denoted by the numeral 10. These relatively large side portions of the pillows may be of any suitable design or shape but they must be large enough to give lateral support to the head. These side portions limit the lateral movement of the head and keep it from inclining so far that the neck muscles are strained. The side portions are preferably designed so that their free ends tend to stay together. The tendency of the free ends of the side portions to stay together, tends to maintain the pillow in position around the user's neck. In some cases, the ends of the portions 10 of the pillow may be provided with pieces of ribbon or tape. These pieces of ribbon or tape may be tied together to positively prevent the removal of the pillow from around the neck of the user. This transforms the pillow into a collar that can be worn to give support to the wearer's head and neck. This is often done in connection with operations. After eye operations the patient must sometimes lie on his back for many hours without moving his head. It has been found that the pillow provided by the invention gives sufficient support to the head to hold it in the desired position for the specified period of time. The pillow provided by the invention will permit the patient to lie in a natural and comfortable position, but it will prevent any movement of the user's head. The fact that the ends of the portions 10 are tied together makes certain that the pillow will not move and fail to support the patient's head. The side portions 10 of the pillow are separated from each other by a small and soft portion 12. The portion 12 is preferably soft and yielding and it must be smaller than the side portion 10. This center portion 12 is separated from the side portion 10 by partitions 14. These partitions 14 may be of any suitable design and shape, but they must separate the interior of the portions 10 from the interior of the portion 12. The pillow may also be provided with a tape 16 that is used as a trim. This adds to the appearance of the pillow but it is not an essential element of the pillow. In making the pillow, the manufacturer stuffs the side portions 10 of the pillow rather tightly. The stuffing is not so tight that the side portions 10 are hard and unyielding, but it is tight enough to enable the portions 10 to give lateral support to the wearer's head and thereby prevent neck strain. The center portion 12, on the other hand, is stuffed rather loosely. The amount of stuffing in portion 12 is calculated to permit the back portion 12 to be compressed to the size of the space between the wearer's neck and the back of a chair. The proper amount of stuffing permits a compressing of the back portion of the pillow with a relatively light pressure. This gives the back of the wearer's neck the proper support while it enables the wearer's shoulders and back of his head to rest gently against the back of the chair. This provides proper rest by distributing the support of the head evenly between the shoulders, the pillow, and the back of the user's head. The user of the pillow provided by the invention can sleep in comfort. The pillow will permit him to sit in a natural position of relaxation and will give support to his head and thereby prevent neck strain.

Any material may be used in stuffing the pillow, but the invention preferably uses a high grade material that will not lose its life.

The drawing and specification show and describe a preferred form of the invention but it is obvious to those skilled in the art that various changes in the form of the invention can be made without affecting the scope of the invention.

What I claim is:

A pillow adapted for use by a person in a sitting position and adapted to rest on and be supported by the shoulders of the user, said pillow comprising a relatively small and compressible center portion connected at its ends to a plurality of relatively large and relatively incompressible side portions, said center portion and said side portions arranged in substantially U-shape forming a neck receiving aperture, said side portions having their free ends spaced apart in normally close relation, a plurality of partitions that separate the interior of said center portion from the interiors of said side portions, and said center portion, said side portions and said partitions arranged to give the exterior portion of the pillow a smooth, uninterrupted surface.

ETTA THOMPSON.