Jan. 3, 1967 H. M. HERBENER 3,295,531

GIRDLE WITH WIRE CONTROL MEMBER

Original Filed Dec. 29, 1959 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1.

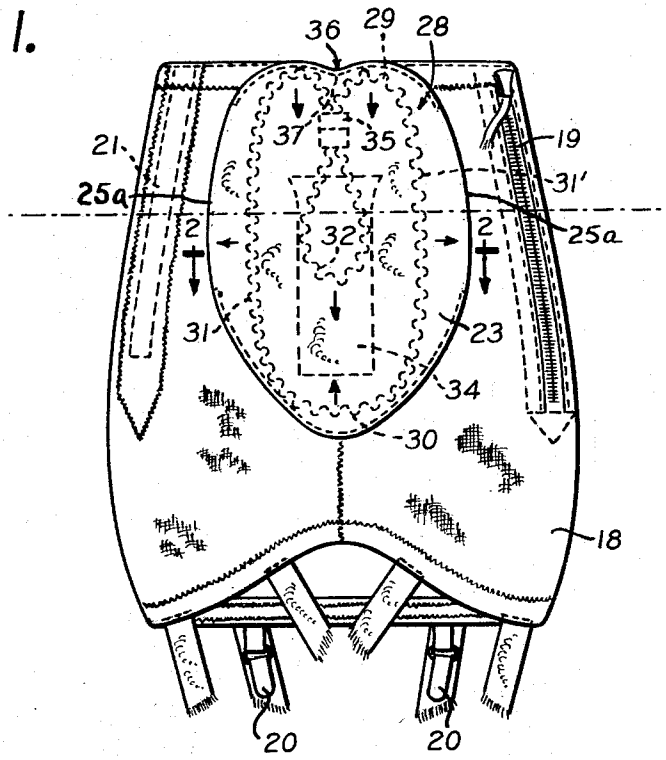
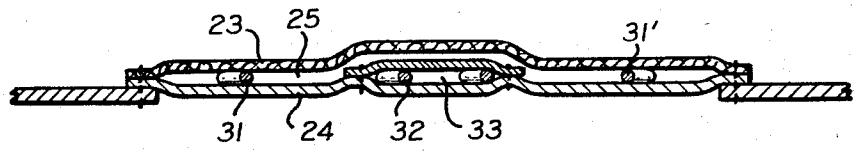


FIG. 2.



INVENTOR
HENRY M. HERBENER
BY

Byerly, Townsend, Watson & Churchill

ATTORNEYS.

GIRDLE WITH WIRE CONTROL MEMBER

Original Filed Dec. 29, 1959 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

FIG. 3.

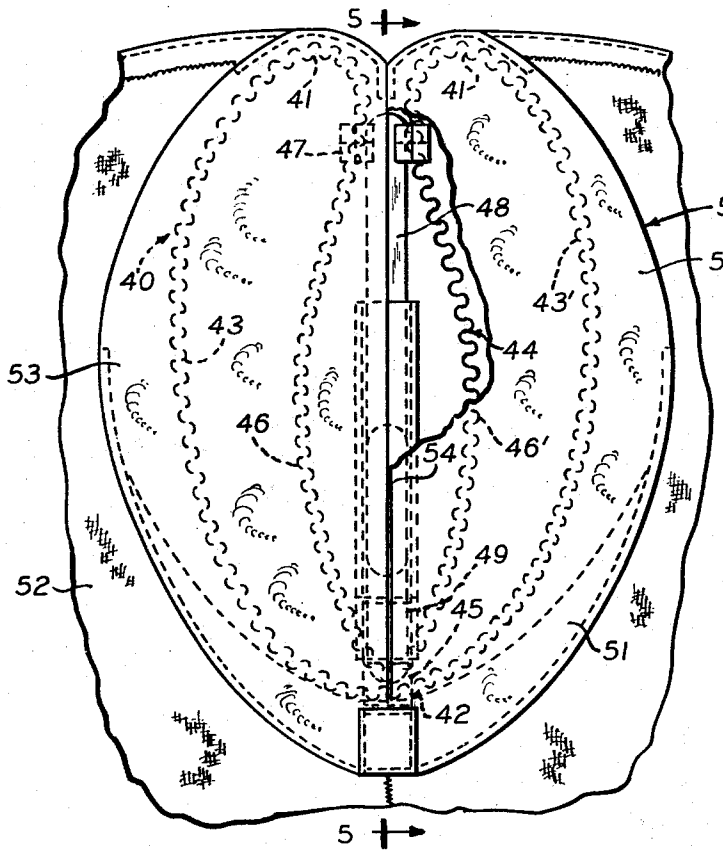


FIG. 5.

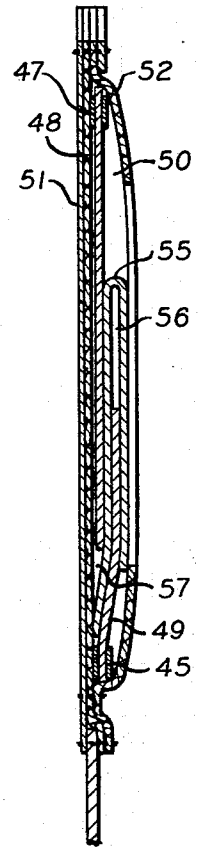
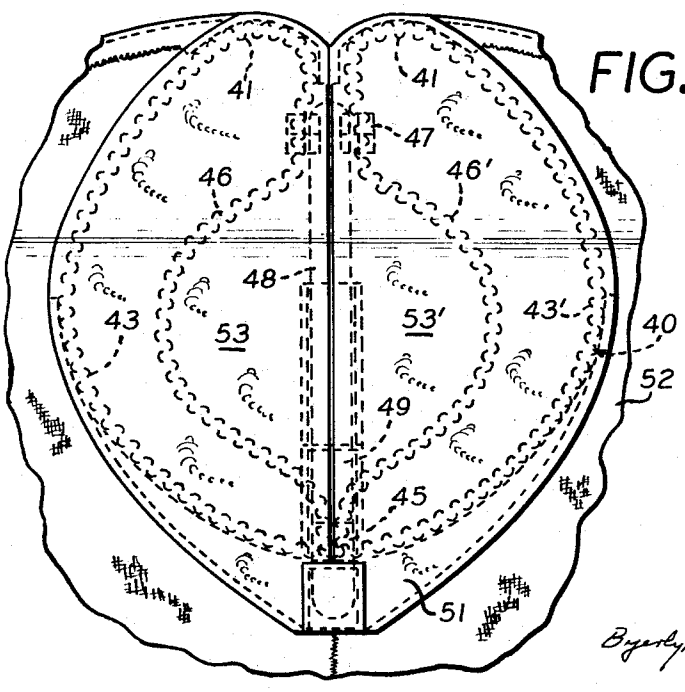


FIG. 4.



INVENTOR
HENRY M. HERBENER
BY

Byerly, Townsend, Watson & Churchill

ATTORNEYS.

United States Patent Office 3,295,531 Patented Jan. 3, 1967

3,295,531

GIRDLE WITH WIRE CONTROL MEMBER

Henry M. Herbener, 406 Remington Ave., Thomasville, Ga. 31792

Original application Dec. 29, 1959, Ser. No. 862,650, now Patent No. 3,148,681, dated Sept. 15, 1964. Divided and this application Sept. 11, 1964, Ser. No. 395,726
7 Claims. (Cl. 128—533)

This application is a division of my application, Serial No. 862,650, filed December 29, 1959, now Patent No. 3,148,681.

This invention relates to foundation garments and aims to provide superior ladies' girdles of improved construction.

Ladies' girdles are intended and designed to lend support to, and enhance the appearance of, the wearer by elastically encircling and confining the portion of her body that extends upward from a point below the hips to a point which is about even with the upper portion of the abdomen or even higher. They should fit snugly against the wearer's body so that the outline of the girdle or its ends will not make a visible line or bulge in the dress of the wearer and they should not cause discomfort to the wearer.

The avoidance of a visible line or bulge presents a particular problem at the top of a girdle because such garments have a tendency to roll downward at the front as they are worn. This rolling tendency is due to the fact that, when the wearer stands in an erect position, the distance from a horizontal plane at the top of the girdle to a like plane at the bottom of the girdle is substantially the same at both the front and the rear of the garment. However, when the wearer stoops or sits or leans forward, the distance from the bottom to the top of the girdle at its rear is increased while the distance from the bottom to the top at the front is decreased. In conventional girdles, any tendency of the front to ride upward through this action is resisted by the connection, afforded by the garters, between the bottom of the girdle and the stockings of the wearer. The result is that the top front of the girdle tends to ride downwardly on the wearer's body and to roll. A further difficulty that is encountered when the wearer of a girdle bends forward at the waist is that a crease is formed and as the fabric of the garment is then placed under additional circumferential tension, it tends to dig into such a crease causing acute discomfort to the wearer.

Various expedients have been resorted to to overcome the tendency of girdles to ride downwardly and roll at the top, and attempts have also been made to prevent the fabric of which a girdle is constructed from digging into the body of the wearer at the waist when she bends forward. Such attempts have included the provision, along the front of the girdle, of vertical stays of varying degrees of stiffness; but when such stays have been stiff enough to prevent the fabric of the garment from digging into an abdominal crease as the wearer bends forward the ends of those stays jab against the body.

I have discovered that it is possible to overcome the difficulties referred to above through the use of a single control member which, for the first time, provides a girdle that gives the desired support and improvement in the appearance of the wearer and is also comfortable. This is accomplished in accordance with my invention by incorporating in the front of the girdle a flat control member that is adapted to urge the top front of the girdle upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and, at the same time, to provide a shield that slides over the surface of the abdomen instead of jabbing into the wearer. Such a control member comprises a frame with a notched upper end, a rounded lower end and outwardly bowed legs extending over the abdomen to a point below the waistline and resiliently connecting the frame ends so that they can be moved toward each other. A stay extends downwardly from the upper end of the frame for sliding movement between the legs of the frame when its upper end is moved toward its lower end as the wearer bends forward.

It is a particular feature of my invention that the control member, which is made of wire, is contained in a pocket in the girdle in which it is self-centering and from which it may be readily removed. Thus, when the girdle is to be laundered, the wire control member may be separated therefrom if desired and it can be easily reinserted in the pocket therefor where it will resume the appropriate position to perform the functions intended for it.

A specific embodiment of my invention in the form that I now prefer is illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a front elevation of my new girdle;

FIG. 2 is a section along the lines 2—2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary rear elevation of a girdle showing a modification of the control member and a pocket therefor;

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary rear elevation illustrating a position assumed by the parts of the control member illustrated in FIG. 3 when the wearer bends at the waist; and

FIG. 5 is a section along the lines 5—5 of FIG. 3.

The girdle illustrated in FIG. 1 includes a generally tubular body-encircling portion **18** constructed of a fabric that is preferably elastic both horizontally and longitudinally. It is provided with a zipper **19** at one side and conventional garters **20** are attached to its lower edge. It may also be equipped at its sides and rear with a set of longitudinal stays such as the stay **21**. A heart-shaped panel **23**, which is preferably formed of an inelastic fabric, is attached to the body **18** at its front so that the top of the panel **23** coincides with the upper edge of the body **18**. A rear panel **24**, which is also preferably made of inelastic fabric, is stitched along its lower and side edges to the panel **23** to form a pocket **25**. A flat control member **28** is provided for insertion in pocket **25** through the slit **25***a* which provides an opening into the pocket.

The control member **28** is constructed of a resilient spring steel wire whose diameter is of the order of $^{38}/_{1000}$ in., and which is coated with a rust-proofing material such as celluloid. Such wire is bent into zigzag formation providing alternately arranged oppositely-facing loops which are generally radial. That control member **28** may be constructed of a single length of zigzag wire arranged in such form that it provides a frame having a notched upper end **29**, a rounded lower end **30** and outwardly bowed legs **31**, **31'** connecting the ends **29** and **30** with each other. A stay **32** which extends downwardly from the upper frame end **29** terminates short of the lower frame end **30** and an auxiliary pocket **33** is provided therefor. The stay **32** is also constructed of zigzag wire but it may, if desired, be of a lighter weight than the wire forming the frame. For instance, I have found that spring-steel wire whose diameter is of the order of $^{30}/_{1000}$ in., is heavy enough for stay **32**. The auxiliary pocket **33** is formed by stitching the edges, and, if desired, the bottom, of a strip of fabric **34** to the rear panel **24**. The upper ends of wire forming stay **32** are closed by means of a clamp **35** which also secures the ends of the zigzag wire from which the frame **28** is formed.

The dimensions of pocket **25** and control member **28** are such that the pocket is wider than the control member and the control member is longer than the pocket. The consequence is that, when the control member **28** is in position in its pocket **25**, the legs, **31**, **31'** are under vertical compression so that they resiliently urge the upper edge of the girdle in an upward direction. When the upper edge of the gidle is pushed downward, as by the wearer bending forward at the waist, the legs **31**, **31'** are

free to slide across, and stay 32 may slide down over, the abdomen of the wearer; and when the wearer resumes an upright position, the legs 31, 31' and stay 32 may slide back to their initial position, urging the top of the girdle upward and counteracting its tendency to roll.

The control member 28 is prevented from tipping to one side or the other during the sliding motion of the legs 31, 31' and the stay 32 across the abdomen of the wearer by virtue of the fact that the rounded lower end 30 of frame 28 bears against a rounded lower wall in the pocket 25; the legs 31, 31' merge with the upper frame end 29 through rounded corners which fit against the top of heart-shaped pocket 25; and the indentation 36 at the top of that heart-shaped pocket enters the notch 37 on the upper end 29 of frame 28.

The control member 40 illustrated in FIGS. 3–5 is designed for incorporation in a girdle intended for wear by a lady with a comparatively heavy figure. It, like the control member illustrated in FIG. 1, is flat and includes a frame that is constructed of a resilient zigzag wire. That frame has a notched upper edge 41, a rounded lower edge 42 and legs 43, 43' connecting those upper and lower edges with each other. A central loop 44 extends from the upper frame edge 41 downwardly between legs 43, 43' and has its lower ends connected with the lower frame edge 42 by means of a clamp 45. The sides 46, 46' are connected adjacent their upper ends by clamp 47.

In the control member 40 additional support and shielding for the abdomen are provided by a pair of stays 48, 49 located between the sides 46, 46' of the central loop 44. The stays 48, 49 are preferably made of thin flat strips of spring steel provided with a coating of rust-proof material such as celluloid. The stay 48 extends downwardly from the upper frame edge 41 and is securely held in position by clamp 47. The stay 49 extends upwardly from the lower frame edge 42 and is held in position by the clamp 45.

The control member 40 is contained in a generally heart-shaped pocket 50 formed between a front panel 51, formed of inelastic fabric stitched along its edges to the elastic fabric 52 forming the body of the girdle, and a rear panel which consists of two sections, 53, 53', of inelastic fabric. Each of the sections, 53, 53', is stitched, around its outer side and the upper and lower portions of its inner side, to the front panel 51, leaving a longitudinal slit 54 between the adjacent edges of sections, 53, 53', which provides an opening into the pocket 50 for the ready insertion and removal of control member 40. A tape 55 is stitched along its side edges to the front panel 51 to provide a pocket 56 for the lower end of stay 48 and a pocket 57 for the upper end of stay 49.

When the wearer of a girdle equipped with control member 40 is in an erect position, the relation of the several parts of that control member to each other is as illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 5. The upper edge 41 of the flat frame bears against the upper front edge of the girdle and the resilient legs 43, 43' urge the top of the girdle upward and counteract its tendency to roll. However, those legs 43, 43' and the sides 46, 46' of the central loop 44 are adapted to bow outwardly from each other, respectively, when the top of the girdle is depressed through bending action of the wearer as illustrated in FIG. 4. At the same time the upper stay 48 slides downwardly over the abdomen and is prevented by the lower stay 49, which is positioned between upper stay 48 and the wearer, from jabbing into the wearer's body.

It will be noted that in each of the modifications of the control member embodying my invention that I have described the resilient outwardly bowed legs not only function to urge the top front of the girdle upward, counteracting its tendency to roll, but they also cooperate with the central stay to flatten the stomach of the wearer when such wearer is in an erect position and to distribute across the abdomen of the wearer pressures to which such wearer is subjected when she bends forward at the waist. Furthermore, it will be understood that the terms that I have used in describing the specific embodiment of my invention that is illustrated in the drawings are terms of description and not of limitation, and various modifications can be made in such specific embodiment without departing from the spirit of my invention as it is defined in the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. A lady's girdle comprising a flexible body-encircling portion including a front having a top which is depressed by movement of the body and has a tendency to roll, and a flat control member adapted to urge said top upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and to shield the abdomen, comprising a frame with a notched upper end, a rounded lower end and outwardly bowed legs resiliently connecting said frame ends and adapted to move away from each other so that said ends can be moved toward each other, and having a stay extending downwardly from said notched end for sliding movement between said legs and terminating above said lower end.

2. A lady's girdle comprising a flexible body-encircling portion including a front having a top which is depressed by movement of the body and has a tendency to roll, and a flat control member adapted to urge said top upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and to shield the abdomen, comprising a frame with a notched upper end, a rounded lower end and outwardly bowed legs resiliently connecting said frame ends so that said ends can be moved toward each other, a loop extending between and attached to said frame ends and having sides adapted to bow outwardly when said frame ends are moved toward each other, and a stay attached to the upper frame end for sliding movement between the sides of said loop.

3. A lady's girdle comprising a flexible body-encircling portion including a front having a top which is depressed by movement of the body and has a tendency to roll, and a flat control member adapted to urge said top upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and to shield the abdomen, comprising a frame with a notched upper end, a rounded lower end and outwardly bowed legs resiliently connecting said frame ends so that said ends can be moved toward each other, a loop extending between and attached to said frame ends and having sides adapted to bow outwardly when said frame ends are moved toward each other, a stay fixed to the upper frame end and extending downwardly between the sides of said loop, and a second stay fixed to the lower frame end extending upwardly between the sides of said loop and adapted to prevent the lower end of said first-named stay from jabbing into the abdomen of the wearer.

4. A lady's girdle comprising a flexible body-encircling portion including a front having a top which is depressed by movement of the body and has a tendency to roll, a generally heart-shaped pocket extending downwardly from the top of said girdle at its front and provided with a slit leading to the interior of said pocket, and a flat removable control member adapted to urge said top upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and to shield the abdomen, comprising a frame with a notched upper end engaging the top of said heart-shaped pocket, a rounded lower end engaging the bottom of said heart-shaped pocket and outwardly bowed legs resiliently connecting said frame ends, the dimensions of said pocket being such that said frame is under vertical compression and said legs are permitted to bow outwardly away from each other when the frame ends are moved toward each other.

5. A lady's girdle comprising a flexible body-encircling portion including a front having a top which is depressed by movement of the body and has a tendency to roll, a generally heart-shaped front panel fixed to said body-encircling portion at its front and extending downwardly from the top thereof, a generally heart-shaped rear panel attached to said front panel along its upper and lower edges to provide a pocket with an opening therein, and a flat removable control member adapted to urge said top

upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and to shield the abdomen, comprising a frame with a notched upper end engaging the top of said heart-shaped pocket, a rounded lower end engaging the bottom of said heart-shaped pocket and outwardly bowed legs resiliently connecting said frame ends, the dimensions of said pocket being such that said frame is under vertical compression and said legs are permitted to bow outwardly away from each other when the frame ends are moved toward each other.

6. A lady's girdle comprising a flexible body-encircling portion including a front having a top which is depressed by movement of the body and has a tendency to roll, a generally heart-shaped pocket extending downwardly from the top of said girdle at its front, and a flat control member adapted to urge said top upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and to shield the abdomen, comprising a frame with a notched upper end engaging the top of said heart-shaped pocket, a rounded lower end engaging the bottom of said heart-shaped pocket and outwardly bowed legs resiliently connecting said frame ends, the dimensions of said pocket being such that said frame is under vertical compression and said legs are permitted to bow outwardly away from each other when the frame ends are moved toward each other, a stay extending downwardly from said notched end between said legs, and an auxiliary pocket located inside said first-named pocket and adapted to receive said stay for sliding movement therein.

7. A lady's girdle comprising a flexible body-encircling portion including a front having a top which is depressed by movement of the body and has a tendency to roll, a generally heart-shaped pocket extending downwardly from the top of said girdle at its front, and a flat control member adapted to urge said top upwardly and counteract its tendency to roll and to shield the abdomen, comprising a frame with a notched upper end engaging the top of said heart-shaped pocket, a rounded lower end engaging the bottom of said heart-shaped pocket and outwardly bowed legs resiliently connecting said frame ends, the dimensions of said pocket being such that said frame is under vertical compression and said legs are permitted to bow outwardly away from each other when the frame ends are moved toward each other, a stay fixed to the upper frame end and extending downwardly between said legs, a second stay fixed to the lower frame end and extending upwardly between said legs, and a strip of fabric having its edges attached to an inner face of said first-named pocket to provide an auxiliary pocket for each of said stays.

References Cited by the Examiner

UNITED STATES PATENTS

2,644,946	7/1953	Menz et al.	128—567
2,864,377	12/1958	Montreys	128—533

ADELE M. EAGER, *Primary Examiner.*