

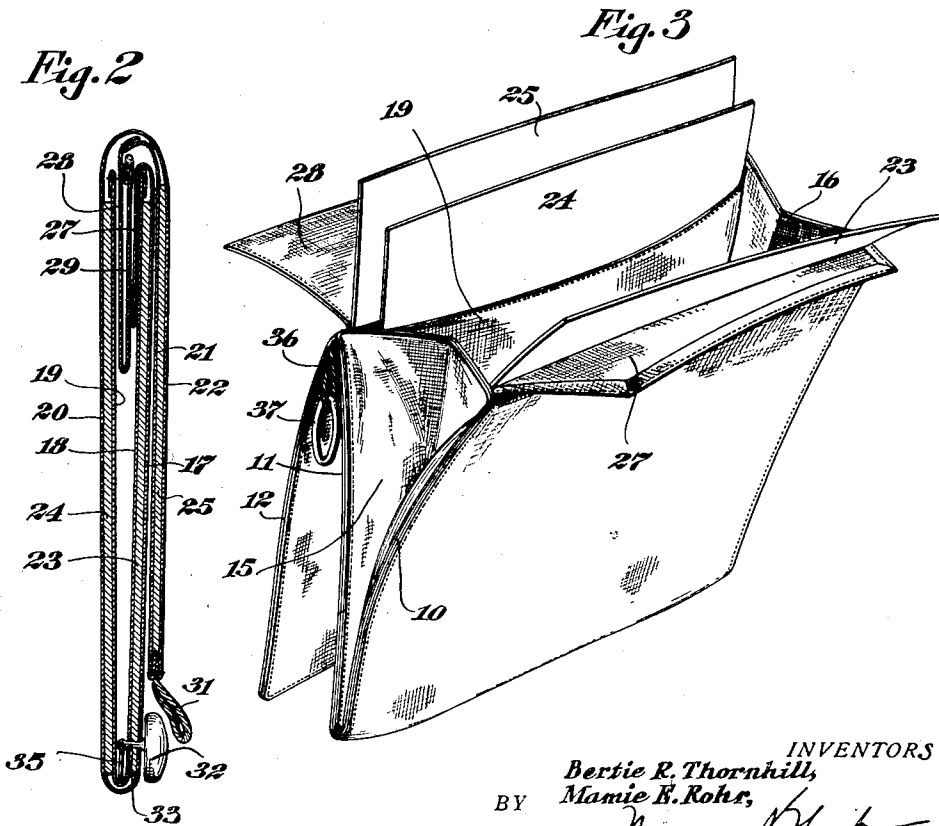
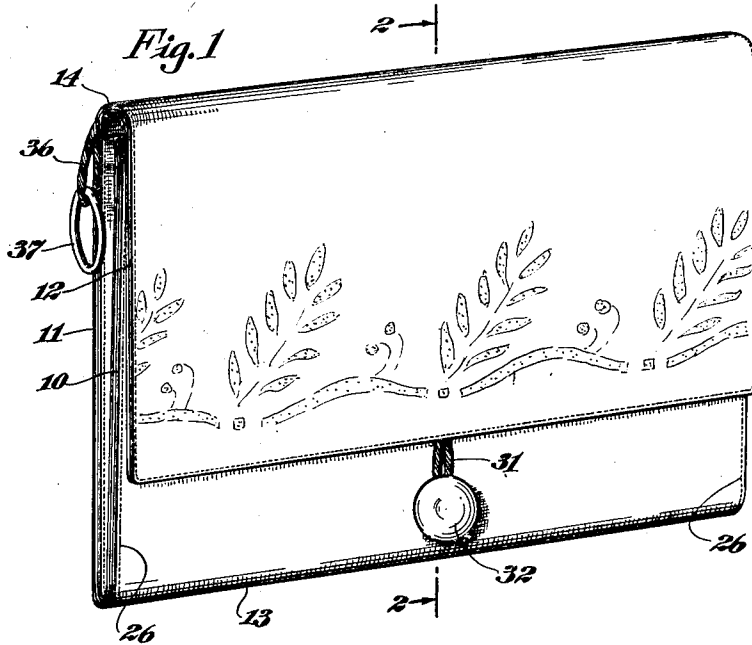
Oct. 30, 1934.

B. R. THORNHILL ET AL  
LAUNDERABLE HAND BAG

1,978,970

Filed June 30, 1933

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



INVENTORS  
*Bertie R. Thornhill,*  
*Mamie E. Rohr,*  
BY *William H. Hunt*  
ATTORNEY

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 4

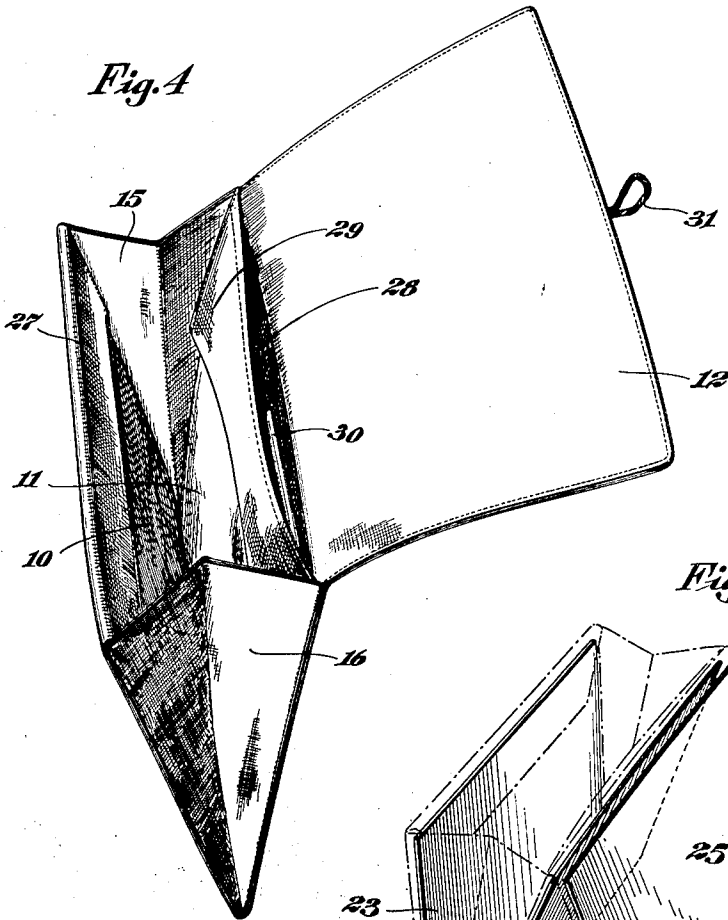


Fig. 5

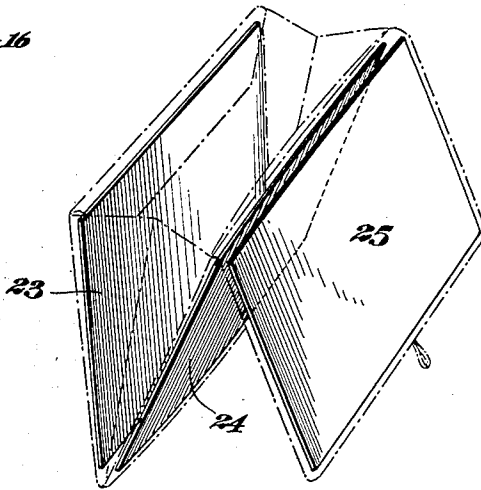


Fig. 6

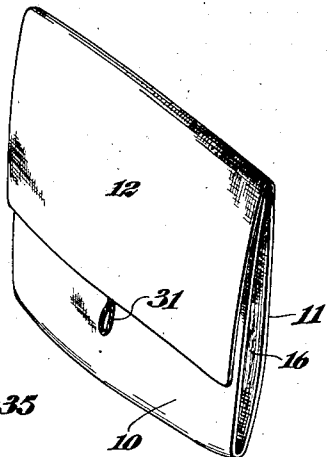


Fig. 7

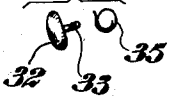
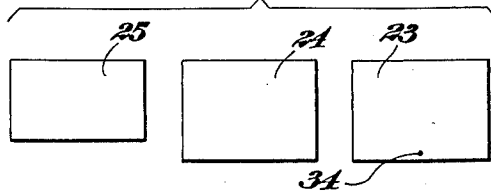


Fig. 8



INVENTORS  
Bertie R. Thornhill,  
Mamie E. Rohr,  
BY *William Phue*  
ATTORNEY

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

1,978,970

## LAUNDERABLE HAND BAG

Bertie R. Thornhill and Mamie E. Rehr, Lynchburg, Va., assignors to The Virginia Art Goods Studios, Inc., Lynchburg, Va., a corporation of Virginia

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2 Claims. (Cl. 150—28)

Our present invention relates generally to receptacles, and has particular reference to ladies' handbags.

It is a general object of our invention to provide a bag which is launderable. More particularly, our invention provides for a bag which is composed almost entirely of relatively limp, launderable fabric or the like.

A more specific object of our invention is to provide a bag which embodies the requisite amount of rigidity and strength, when in use, and which presents an outward appearance which is not only attractive, but which is substantially the same in appearance as the conventional type of bag that is usually composed of leather or similar non-launderable material. Since a relatively limp fabric does not, of itself, embody the strength and form-retaining qualities that are necessarily present in a handbag, it is a further and more specific object of our invention to provide a construction which permits predetermined, separate, reinforcement elements to be removably associated with the material of the bag, when the latter is to be used.

Stated in general terms, it is a feature of our invention to provide a handbag composed of relatively limp, launderable fabric, in which the structural walls are made up of two plies of material, thereby providing pockets which are adapted to accommodate removable, form-retaining reinforcements. By the term "structural wall" we intend to refer to those walls which are essential to the provision of a complete handbag. Thus, in its simplest form, a handbag must necessarily include front and rear walls which are joined together in a manner which provides a receptacle for the articles to be carried in the bag. Usually, a closure wall is also essential, so that the receptacle may be closed when the bag is in use. Other walls and partitions may, and usually do, enter into the construction of the conventional type of handbag, and some bags are, in fact, quite elaborate in the arrangement of partitions, auxiliary pockets, compartments, and the like. It is not our intention to construct any but the essential or so-called "structural walls" of the bag in the manner hereinbefore mentioned, but it will be understood that where any walls or partitions are not reinforced, in the manner contemplated by our invention, they are themselves composed of relatively limp, launderable material.

In a preferred embodiment, herein illustrated and hereinafter to be described, we have shown a simple type of bag comprising front and rear walls forming the body of the bag, and a closure

wall hinged to the rear wall and adapted to overlie the front wall when the bag is closed. In this type of bag, our invention provides for constructing at least the front and rear walls, and preferably the closure wall, of two plies of the material of the bag, whereby a separate, form-retaining reinforcement element or stiffener may be removably accommodated between the plies of each wall.

It is a further feature of our invention to construct a bag of the foregoing character in a manner which effectively conceals the reinforcement elements, and, in fact, renders their very presence unnoticeable to the casual observer. In this way, the bag, when used, appears to be a bag of more or less conventional character, and is not readily recognized as a bag of unique and launderable characteristics.

The main object of our invention is, of course, to permit the bag to be laundered in its entirety, by simply withdrawing the reinforcement elements, thereby permitting the user no excuse for carrying a bag which is not clean and attractive in appearance.

Our invention also permits of the manufacture of handbags of materials not hitherto believed to be suitable for such use, and thereby permits a manufacturer to produce a large variety of handbags of uniquely novel and attractive character and ornamentation.

We achieve the foregoing objects, and such other objects as may hereinafter appear or be pointed out, in the manner illustratively exemplified in the accompanying drawings, wherein—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a bag constructed in accordance with the present invention, and shown in closed condition;

Figure 2 is a cross-sectional view taken substantially along the line 2—2 of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a perspective view showing the bag opened and the removable reinforcement elements partially withdrawn therefrom;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of the bag in opened condition, as the same appears to the user and to the casual observer;

Figure 5 is a phantom view of the bag, in opened condition, showing the disposition of the reinforcement inserts;

Figure 6 is a view of the bag, with the reinforcements removed, showing the condition in which it is ready to be laundered;

Figure 7 is a detailed exploded view of a fastening element which is preferably employed; and

Figure 8 is a view of the three insert elements of the embodiment illustrated.

We have chosen for illustration a bag composed of a front wall 10, a rear wall 11, and a closure wall 12, the front and rear walls being united along the bottom edge 13, and the closure wall being hinged, as at 14, to the rear wall 11. By the term "hinged" we refer to any convenient or conventional manner of associating this wall with the rear wall in a pivotal or hingeable relationship, and we do not mean to imply that there is any mechanical hinge of any character present in the construction.

The front and rear walls 10 and 11 are united along their sides by end walls 15 and 16 which are preferably of the telescopable type, permitting the bag to be opened, as shown in Figures 3 and 4, to make the interior accessible. The walls 10 and 11 thus form the body of the bag, while the closure wall 12 permits the bag to be closed, when it is used, as indicated in Figure 1.

In the embodiment herein illustrated, the front and rear walls, and the closure wall, are constructed in accordance with our present invention, viz, by composing each of these walls of two superposed plies of relatively limp, launderable fabric. More particularly, as will be seen upon viewing Figure 2, the front wall 10 is composed of the front and rear plies 17 and 18; the rear wall 11 is composed of the inner and outer plies 19 and 20, respectively, and the closure wall is composed of the inner and outer plies 21 and 22, respectively. In the pocket thus provided between the plies of each wall, we provide for the accommodation of a relatively rigid, form-retaining insert or reinforcement which conforms substantially to the bag shape desired and which, in the illustrated bag, is in each case a substantially rectangular blank of reinforcement material. In Figure 3, for example, we have shown three blanks 23, 24, and 25, each substantially rectangular, and each being composed, for example, of relatively rigid cardboard or the like, preferably encased in fabric, but not necessarily so. These reinforcements are adapted to be accommodated, respectively, within the front and rear and closure walls hereinbefore referred to.

The features of construction which make the bag attractive in use, concealing not only the inserts but their very presence in the bag construction, and permitting the bag to be manufactured in a feasible and practical manner, will be more clearly pointed out on reference to Figure 2.

The front ply 17 of the front wall is preferably an integral part of the outer ply 20 of the rear wall, and the outer ply 22 of the closure wall is preferably a further integral part of this same element. It will be observed, upon viewing Figure 2, that a single elongated piece of the fabric extends all the way from the outer edge of the closure wall to the upper edge of the front wall. Similarly, the inner ply 18 of the front wall, and the inner ply 19 of the rear wall, are integral parts of a single strip or element of the launderable material.

The front and rear plies 17 and 18 of the front wall are joined along the sides, as, for example, by the stitching 26 indicated in Figure 1, thereby forming a pocket which is open at the top and which is adapted to accommodate the removable reinforcement insert 23. In accordance with our invention, the upper edge of the outer ply 17 of the front wall is provided with an extension 27 which forms a closure flap for this pocket. When the bag is used, as indicated in Figure 4, this closure flap conceals the two-ply nature of the front wall

and is disposed inside of the bag in a relatively inconspicuous manner.

Similarly, the inner and outer plies 19 and 20 of the rear wall are stitched along the sides, thereby providing an opening at the top; and the inner and outer plies 21 and 22 of the closure wall are stitched along the sides, thereby providing a pocket which opens adjacent to the hinge of the bag. The rear wall and the closure wall are thus adapted to accommodate the removable inserts 24 and 25, respectively.

In accordance with our invention, the inner ply 21 of the closure wall is provided with an extension 28 which is disposed in the body of the bag, and which serves as a closure flap for the opening at the upper end of the rear wall. It serves at the same time as a means for concealing the opening in the closure wall, but is not strictly a closure flap for this opening.

As an indication of the manner in which the structural elements may be conformed to the usual characteristics of a bag of this type, we have illustratively shown the closure flap 28 doubled back upon itself, as at 29, to provide an upwardly opening compartment adjacent to the hinge of the bag and adapted to accommodate a mirror 30 or similar articles. The provision of this compartment serves to enhance the attractive character of the bag, and the concealment of the true structural nature of the several walls. The side edges of the pieces 28 and 29 are, of course, stitched together to complete the formation of the compartment referred to.

It is also preferable, in a bag of this type, to provide a means whereby the closure wall may be held in closed relation; and we have illustratively shown a loop 31 carried by the free edge of the closure wall, and a button or fastening element 32 carried by the front wall 10. These parts are shown in interlocked relationship in Figure 1.

As a further novel feature of our invention, we provide the fastener 32 with a shank 33 which is adapted to extend rearwardly through a pre-formed opening 34 in the reinforcement 23; and on the interior of the bag, the rear end of the shank 33 is adapted to be removably engaged by a coiled loop 35 of wire or the like to prevent accidental removal of the button or fastener 32. When the fastener 32 is in position, it serves not only as a complementary element for the loop 31, but also as a means for helping to keep the insert 23 in proper location.

If desired, the bag may also be provided with an ornamental handle or loop 36, preferably attached to the closure wall near the hinge line, and shown in the illustrated form, with an ornamental ring 37 secured thereto.

The loops 31 and 36, and the ring 37, are preferably of launderable material; or at least of non-metallic character which will not interfere with the laundering of the entire bag.

When the bag is used, it presents the appearance of Figures 1 and 4, and it will be observed that there is a complete concealment of the true washable nature of the bag. Each of the structural walls embodies the requisite body and strength; and the bag is not only attractive, but is form-retaining in character, and useful in the same manner as ordinary conventional bags.

In the course of time, bags of this type become readily soiled, and by means of the present invention the user is enabled to remedy this by subjecting the entire bag to a laundering process. To accomplish this, it is merely necessary to withdraw the reinforcement inserts, and this

procedure is illustrated in Figure 3. The closure flap 27 is thrown rearwardly, thereby permitting the insert 23 to be withdrawn from between the plies 17 and 18 of the front wall. Prior to this, the fastener 32 will have been removed by loosening the ring 35 and withdrawing the two elements illustrated in Figure 7. The closure flap 28 is also thrown back, as shown in Figure 3, and this permits the withdrawal not only of the reinforcement 24 from between the plies 19 and 20 of the rear wall, but also the reinforcement 25 from between the plies 21 and 22 of the closure wall.

With these elements removed, the bag resumes the relatively limp character which is imparted thereto by the fabric of which it is made, and in this condition it is readily launderable, both inside and outside. Where additional pockets, compartment walls, or the like are provided for (and such provision is not beyond the contemplated scope of our invention), these walls will be similarly composed of launderable fabric, and the laundering process is, therefore, not impeded by the presence of such additional walls or partitions.

After the bag has been laundered, it is a relatively simple matter to perform the steps in reverse order for the purpose of reinserting the reinforcements and again imparting to the bag its contemplated shape and relative rigidity.

By permitting a bag of this type to be made of launderable fabric, a variety of ornamental effects not hitherto achievable are possible. The fabric may be of any desired type or ornamentation, of any desired color, and the entire bag may be caused to harmonize with style changes or even with the fabrics which are used for the dresses or garments worn by the user.

While we have illustrated the reinforcement elements as solid blanks of rigid material, it will be understood that this arrangement is not essential, and that the reinforcement may, if desired, be of a reticulated character, or even in the nature of a mere framework.

Similarly, although we have considered the closure wall of the present bag as an essential or "structural" wall, nevertheless it is conceivable that a bag may be satisfactorily provided without reinforcing this wall, and such a

bag is intended to be within the scope of our present invention.

Furthermore, although we have shown a particular manner of connecting the plies of fabric one with another, and a preferred arrangement of closure flaps and the like, nevertheless it will be understood that these details are not essential in carrying out the broader objects of our invention.

While we have herein disclosed three separate reinforcements, it will be obvious that the invention is not restricted, from certain aspects, to the provision of separate inserts of this character. For example, certain of the inserts may form integral or unit parts of a common reinforcement member. Also, while the bag is shown as substantially rectangular, the invention is equally applicable to bags having different contours or shapes.

It will be obvious that changes in the details herein described and illustrated for the purpose of explaining the nature of our invention, may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as expressed in the appended claims. It is, therefore, intended that these details be interpreted as illustrative, and not in a limiting sense.

Having thus described our invention, and illustrated its use, what we claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is—

1. A handbag comprising a bag portion of a relatively limp launderable fabric having two sides and each side being composed of front and rear connected walls between which a pocket is provided having an opening therein, a removable insert of relatively rigid form retaining character for each pocket which is inserted through the opening and into the pocket to be removed when the bag portion is laundered and thereafter replaced to impart the required rigidity to the handbag, and a closure for the bag portion.

2. A handbag according to claim 1, in which the closure has a pocket with an opening therein through which an insert may be placed into the closure and removed therefrom.

BERTIE R. THORNHILL.  
MAMIE E. ROHR

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