

March 7, 1944.

O. M. BAILEY

2,343,631

SHOULDERLESS GOWN

Filed April 28, 1941

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

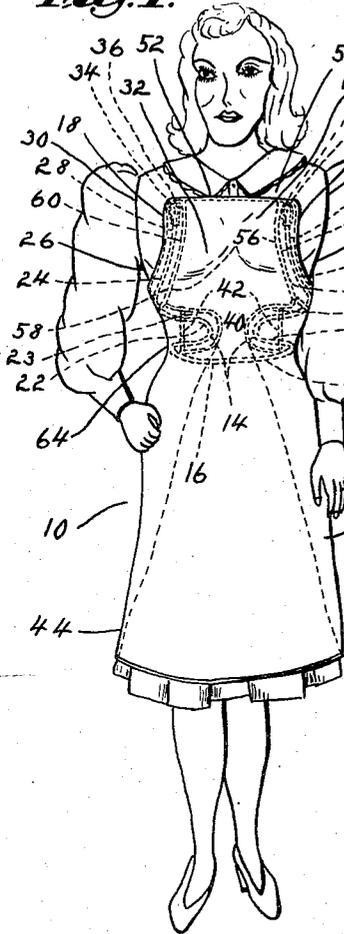


Fig. 2a.

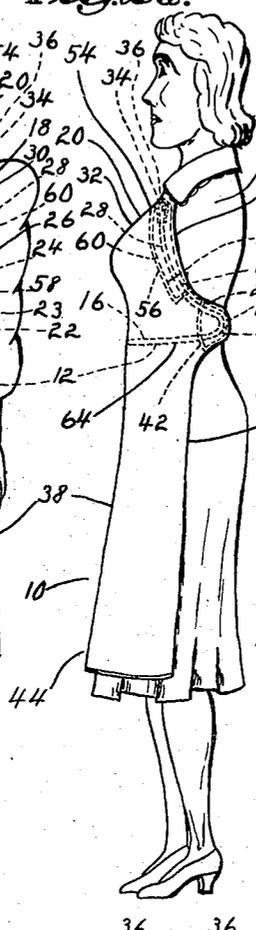


Fig. 2.

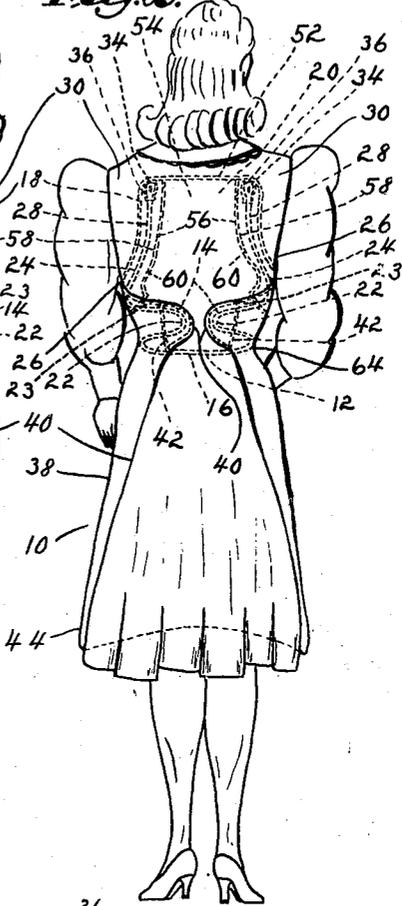


Fig. 5.

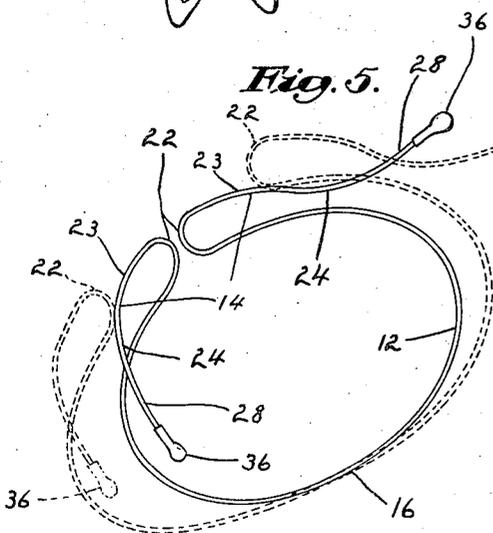
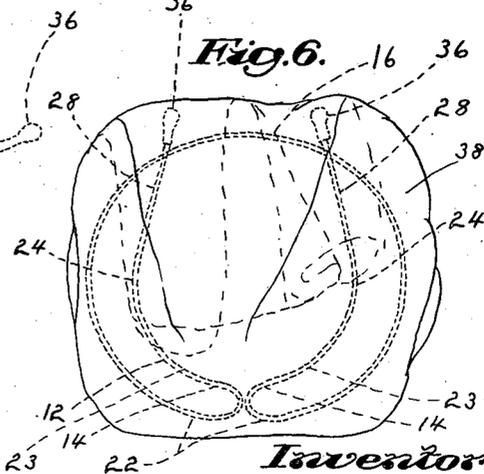


Fig. 6.



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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 3.

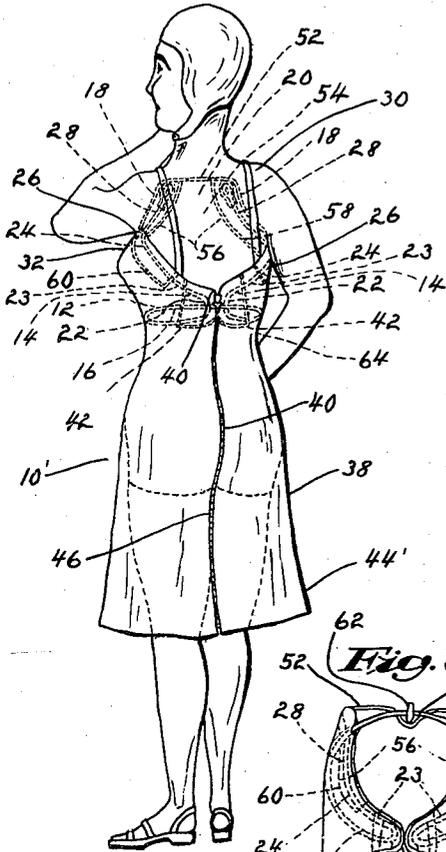
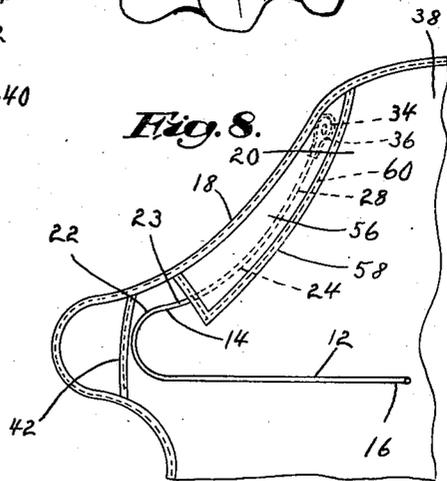
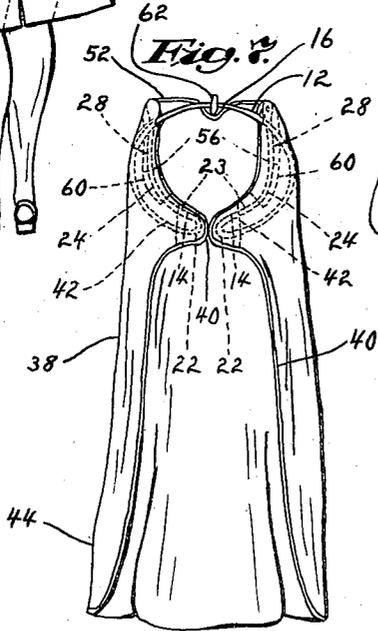
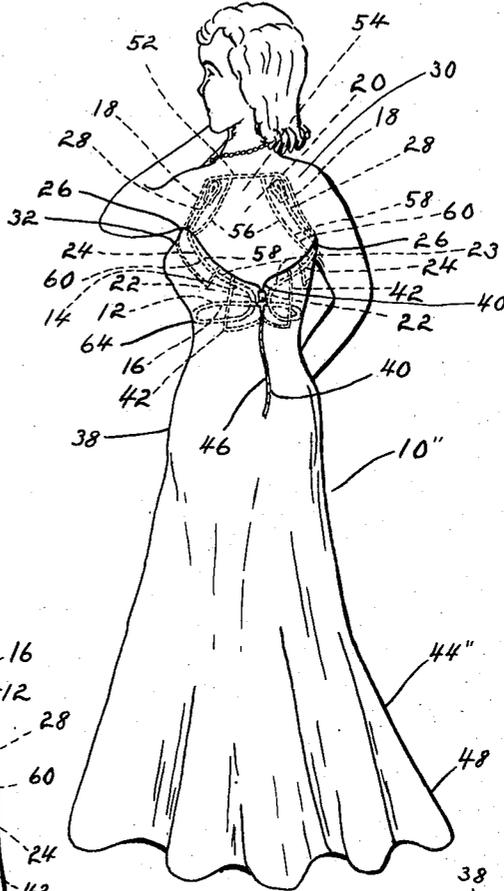


Fig. 4.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,343,631

SHOULDERLESS GOWN

Otis M. Bailey, Bristol, R. I.

Application April 28, 1941, Serial No. 390,763

3 Claims. (Cl. 2—52)

My invention relates to improvements in shoulderless gowns and comprises improvements in the gown itself to make it self-supporting on the wearer's body.

While my invention is particularly adapted for use as an apron, it is also adapted for use for any type of an athletic gown, such as a bathing suit, ball gown, rain coat, or otherwise.

A further object of my invention is to provide a gown having concealed spring clip means therein adapted to clip each side of the wearer's torso at an angle to clamp the gown thereto, the front ends of the clips bearing on the wearer's chest above the bosom and the rear ends of the clips abutting the kidney portion of the back, the device thus functioning as a pair of bicycle clips to positively clamp the attached gown to the wearer's torso between her chest and back to support the gown with the overhang of the gown resting on the downwardly inclined upper portion of the wearer's bosom. As far as I am aware I am the first to support a shoulderless gown on the wearer's bosom and as the gown hugs the wearer's bosom tightly, it tends to display the neat graceful curves of the wearer.

A further object of my invention as my improved gown is merely lightly hung on the wearer's bosom, is to give greater freedom of action to all parts of the body, thus providing a device which is peculiarly adapted for athletics, such as bathing suits, ball gowns, etc. As my device clamps against the kidney portion of the back and the upper portion of the bosom, it tends to support the body at these points and instinctively makes the wearer stand straighter as the wearer is also conscious that her graceful curves are being displayed to her best advantage.

As stated, my device is peculiarly adapted for use as an apron for a servant or housewife which can be readily slipped on for her household duties and equally readily slipped off temporarily for any specific purpose, such as answering a door bell.

A further feature of my invention when my device is used as an apron, is to provide a bib portion which will substantially cover the wearer's dress substantially up to her neck.

A further feature of my invention when used as an athletic garment, is to provide a device which is shoulderless and substantially backless to provide an optimum amount of exposure of the body for sun tan, or other purposes.

A further feature of my invention resides in the fact that it can be employed as a quickly put on cover or coat after swimming so as not to get the inside of an automobile wet and permitting the bather to drive to the beach, presenting a fully clothed appearance.

A further object of my invention is to provide

a device which may be readily hung up when desired and which also may be packed around a flattened frame to take up a small compass when traveling and providing a simple device not much larger than a handbag which may be carried by the user under her arm.

A further object of my invention is to provide a shoulderless gown in which the supporting means is at all times completely concealed and hidden from view by the gown itself.

These and such other objects of my invention as may hereinafter appear will be best understood from a description of the accompanying drawings, which illustrate embodiments thereof.

In the drawings, Fig. 1 is a front elevation of a housewife wearing an embodiment of my improved shoulderless gown of the apron type.

Fig. 2 is a rear elevation of the housewife shown in Fig. 1 illustrating the rear view of the apron.

Fig. 2^a is a side elevation of the housewife shown in Figs. 1 and 2 wearing the apron and illustrating how the apron is clamped between the chest and the back to drape and support the apron on the wearer's bosom, with her left arm removed.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a bathing lady wearing a different embodiment of my invention as a covering after swimming.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of a dancing girl wearing an embodiment of my invention of the ball gown type.

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the spring frame I preferably employ showing it in distended position for attachment around the waist in dotted lines.

Fig. 6 is a plan view of the embodiment of my invention shown in Figs. 1 and 2 with the spring frame collapsed and retained in a flat position and the apron folded around it for carrying in the wearer's hand or for packing purposes.

Fig. 7 is a rear elevation of the apron shown in Figs. 1 and 2 illustrating the position it may assume to permit it to be hung on a hook.

Fig. 8 is a front elevation of the rear portion of the garment showing the pockets formed at the rear end of the gown and along the side edges thereof for receiving the spring frame.

In the drawings, wherein like characters of reference indicate like parts throughout, 10 generally indicates a shoulderless gown constructed in accordance with my invention.

I have shown three embodiments of shoulderless gowns, the embodiment of my invention shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 2^a and 5 to 8 being adapted for use as an apron. I have shown in Fig. 3 an embodiment of shoulderless gown 10' adapted for use as a light rain coat covering for swimmers to be readily attached over a bathing suit. I have shown in Fig. 4 an embodiment 10'' adapted for

use as a ball gown. In principle and functioning, it will be apparent that all three embodiments shown comprise the same essential fundamental parts of my invention, the different embodiments for different uses being provided by additions to or changes in the cut of the skirt portion of the gown, the bib portion remaining substantially the same in all embodiments.

While I employ the words "skirt portion" in the claims as the portion hanging down from the waist, it is obvious that instead of a complete cover for the nether portion, it may be split, if desired, into trousers as in a bathing suit, and I, therefore, employ the word "skirt" to apply to any type of covering for the nether portion of the wearer below the waist.

In all embodiments of my invention the shoulderless gown, 10, 10' or 10'' is hung on a prehensile spring frame. The word "prehensile" is thought apt, as it signifies "adapted for seizing, grasping, or laying hold of anything," in this instance the wearer's body.

In describing the parts of my invention therefore, I will use the same reference characters throughout the figures, priming them, or double priming them for the different embodiments only for the parts which differ.

The essential feature of the spring frame 12 is that it comprises at each end thereof spring clip supporting means 14, clamping each side of the wearer's torso between the kidney portion of the wearer's back and the wearer's chest and strap means such as the integral wire portion 16 connected to the lower end of each spring clip supporting means 14 extending around the wearer's waist. Said clip spring portions 14 are attached to the side edges 18 of the bib portion 20, thereby concealing the central waist encircling portion 16 of the wire which is preferably tempered so that it will retain a set position, the clamping ends or the spring clips 14 being not tempered so that they may be folded for packing purposes, as shown in Fig. 6, or bent to the exact configuration of the individual wearer's body for a more perfect fit. The central tempered portion 16 is set to substantially embrace the wearer's waist. The end portions, comprising the spring clips 14 are each first looped outwardly at the rear of the wearer as at 22 to provide the prongs 22, facing each other and to provide back portions 23 each adapted to overlie a kidney portion of the wearer's back. Each end is then extended as a side portion 24 to extend beneath an armpit 26 of the wearer and each end finally terminates as a front portion 28, preferably in a looped end on the wearer's chest, in the preferred embodiment shown, substantially adjacent a shoulder blade joint 30 of the wearer above the wearer's bosom 32, clamping a side of the wearer's torso between the front and back portions 23 and 28. As stated, each end is preferably looped as at 34 and a protective covering 36, preferably of rubber or other suitable material, is preferably provided for the looped end 34 to prevent the sharp end from sticking into the wearer's body. While the prehensile spring frame 12 is preferably made of wire, as shown, it is obvious that the spring clips 14 may be made of separate pieces and any suitable strap means may be provided for joining the lower ends 23 of the clips together, extending around the wearer's waist instead of the integral waist encircling wire portion 16.

In all embodiments shown, the gown fabric 38 is split centrally from the waist down as at 40

at the rear thereof for a distance downwards. Each split portion is provided with the pockets 42 on the front unexposed surface thereof at the waist containing the looped ends 22 of the waist encircling spring 12. The difference in the different types of shoulderless gowns which may be made comprises variations in the skirt portion 44 of the gown fabric. In all embodiments the skirt portion 44, 44' or 44'' at least partially encircling the wearer's nether portion. In the apron shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 2^a the skirt portion merely covers the front of the wearer's dress, as is usual with aprons. In the rain coat embodiment 10' shown in Fig. 3 the skirt portion 44' extends in tubular formation substantially to the knees and a Zipper, or other separable fastener device 46 may be provided for joining the split edges thereof together. In the embodiment of my invention shown in Fig. 4, the skirt portion 44'' is tubular with a flaring lower end 48, which may drag on the floor, as is usual for ball gowns. The ball gown may also be provided with a separable fastener 46 for joining the split portions thereof together, the split portion 40, in this instance, only continuing to the wearer's hips. If it be desired to incorporate my invention in a bathing suit, the tubular skirt portion 44' is made in the double tubular formation of a pair of trousers.

Said gown fabric in all embodiments has a bib portion 20 extending upwards from the front of the skirt portion 44 having side edges 18 projecting forwardly and upwardly from the rear split portion 40 thereof underneath each armpit 26 of the wearer, in my preferred embodiment, over the wearer's bosom to substantially adjacent each shoulder blade joint and a top edge 52 extending across the wearer's chest above the bosom 32. A pocket 56 is provided along each side edge, in the preferred embodiment by means of hemming a separate band 58 to the inner surface of the bib portion adjacent each side edge thereof by the stitching 60. Each pocket 56 contains a forwardly and upwardly projecting spring end 28, the back portion and loop 22 thereof being contained in the pocket 42, and the side portion 24 and front portion 28 being contained in the pocket 56. The spring ends 14 are preferably of greater length than the diameter of the waist encircling band 16, so that, as shown in Fig. 6, when it is desired to carry or pack the garment, the front ends 28 of the spring ends 14 may be inserted underneath the waist encircling band 16 to form a flat frame on which the gown fabric may be folded to provide a neat package, if it be desired to carry the gown, and a small compass if it be desired to pack the gown. If it be desired to hang it up on a hook, such as the hook 62, as shown in Fig. 7, the rear portion of the waist encircling portion 16 of the spring is tilted downwardly, tilting the front portion upwardly to rise above the bib portion so that it may be readily hung on the hook.

To attach the apron 10, it is merely necessary to spread apart, or resiliently space the looped ends 22 of the spring 12 to permit the passage of the waist between said ends, as shown in dotted lines in Fig. 5, it being obvious that after the ends are passed by the waist, the tempered spring may be released and the waist encircling portion will resiliently spring to its set position embracing and hugging the wearer's waist 64. If the front portions 28 of the spring clip are extended to adjacent the shoulder blade joints above the wearer's bosom and the bib portion 20 of the gown fabric similarly extended, it is obvious that

the gown will be draped and supported on the wearer's bosom, the waist encircling portion 16 merely fitting the waist loosely. To remove the apron from the wearer, the wearer merely reaches behind her back to grasp the looped ends 22 of the prehensile spring 12, separates them and brings them forward to quickly remove the apron from the wearer.

It is thus obvious that I have provided an apron which may be readily put on and taken off by the housewife very quickly. Any suitable type of fabric may be employed depending upon its use. If desired, sheet rubber or Cellophane may be employed, or any suitable type of sheet resin, or woven knitted fabric. The rain coat shown in Fig. 3 is preferably made out of rubber, or other water-proof material. The apron shown in Fig. 1 may be made out of sheet latex and thus will never have to be cleaned. The ball gown may be made of silk or any suitable fabric. The embodiments shown in Figs. 3 and 4 may be put on and taken off in similar fashion with the split portions thereof secured together by the zipper or other suitable type of separable fastener employed. They may, if desired, be put on over the head, or as a step-in. The bib portion 20 may be made of any desired height, but the device will not be draped over or supported by the wearer's bosom unless the bib portion extends above the bosom.

It is apparent that with the construction shown, the same frame may be used repeatedly for different types of gowns, or for replacements of the gown.

It is apparent that I have provided a novel type of shoulderless gown, which may be made in various types of garments with the advantages explained above.

It is understood that my invention is not limited to the specific embodiments shown and that various deviations may be made therefrom without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. A shoulderless gown comprising a prehensile spring frame comprising a piece of wire having a tempered central portion set to substantially embrace a wearer's waist and end portions at the rear thereof each first looped outwardly and then projecting forwardly and upwardly first as a back portion over a kidney portion of the wearer's back, then as a side portion beneath an armpit of the wearer and finally as a front portion extending upwardly substantially exterior of the breast of the wearer and terminating on the wearer's chest and a gown fabric split centrally at the rear thereof from the waist for a distance upwards, each split portion having a pocket at the waist containing a looped end of the waist encircling spring, said gown fabric having a skirt portion at least partially encircling the wearer's nether portion and having a bib portion extending upwards from the front of said skirt portion having side edges projecting forwardly and upwardly from the rear split portion thereof underneath each armpit of the wearer and over the wearer's bosom and a top edge extending across the wearer's chest and a band hemmed to each side edge of said bib portion forming a pocket containing a forwardly and upwardly projecting spring end whereby after the waist encircling portion of said spring is resiliently spaced for attachment around the

wearer's waist and released to its set position embracing said waist, said gown is draped and supported on the wearer and for packing purposes the ends of said spring frame may be bent downwardly through the waist encircling portion to spring outwardly underneath it to form a flat frame around which the gown may be folded to take up a small compass.

2. A shoulderless gown comprising a prehensile spring frame comprising a piece of wire having a tempered central portion set to substantially embrace a wearer's waist and end portions at the rear thereof each first looped outwardly and then projecting forwardly and upwardly first as a back portion over a kidney portion of the wearer's back and then as a side portion beneath an armpit of the wearer and finally as a front portion extending upwardly substantially exterior of the breast of the wearer and terminating on the wearer's chest substantially adjacent a shoulder blade joint above the wearer's bosom, clamping a side of the wearer's torso between said front and back portions and a gown fabric split centrally at the rear thereof from the waist for a distance downwards, each split portion having a pocket at the waist containing a looped end of the waist encircling spring, said gown fabric having a skirt portion at least partially encircling the wearer's nether portion and having a bib portion extending upwards from the front of said skirt portion having side edges projecting forwardly and upwardly from the rear split portion thereof underneath each armpit of the wearer and over the wearer's bosom to adjacent each shoulder blade joint and a top edge extending across the wearer's chest above the bosom and a band hemmed to each side edge of said bib portion forming a pocket containing a forwardly and upwardly projecting spring end whereby for packing purposes the ends of said spring frame may be bent downwardly through the waist encircling portion to spring outwardly underneath it to form a flat frame around which the gown may be folded to take up a small compass.

3. A prehensile spring frame for a shoulderless gown comprising a piece of wire having a tempered central portion set to substantially embrace a wearer's waist and end portions at the rear thereof each first looped outwardly and then projecting forwardly and upwardly for a greater distance than the diameter of said waist encircling portion first as a back portion over a kidney portion of the wearer's back, then as a side portion beneath an armpit of the wearer and finally as a front portion extending upwardly substantially exterior of the breast of the wearer and terminating in a looped end on the wearer's chest substantially adjacent a shoulder blade joint above the wearer's bosom, clamping a side of the wearer's torso between said front and back portions, and a protective covering for each looped end whereby after the waist encircling portion of said spring is resiliently spaced for attachment around the wearer's waist and released to its set position embracing said waist, a gown supported thereon is draped and supported on the wearer's bosom and for packing purposes the ends of said spring frame may be bent downwardly through the waist encircling portion to spring outwardly underneath it to form a flat frame around which the gown may be folded to take up a small compass.

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