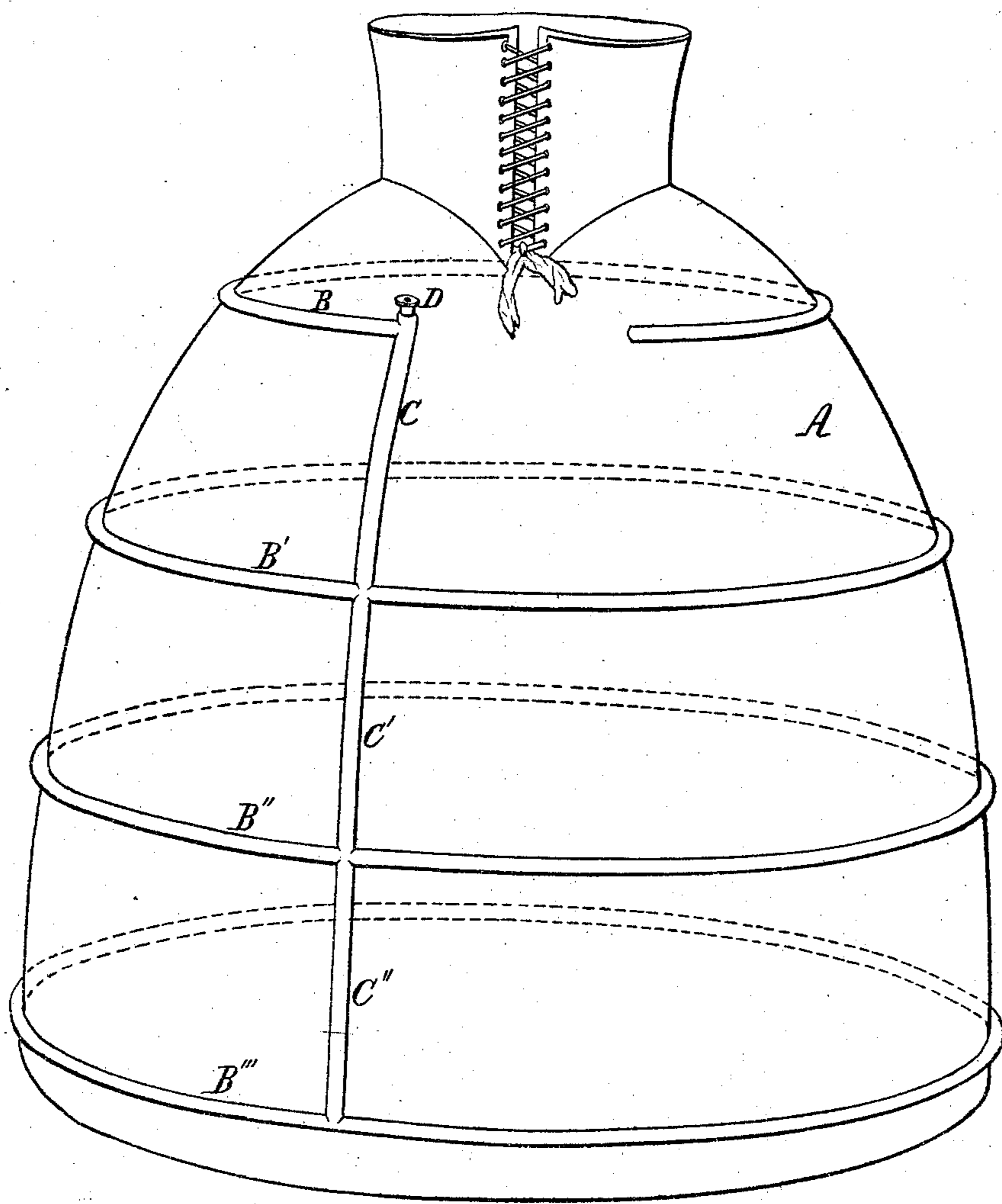


*H. C. Tranhagen.*

*Hoop Skirt*

*Nº 17241.*

*Patented May 5. 1857.*



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HELEN C. TRAPHAGEN, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

## LADY'S SKIRT.

Specification of Letters Patent No. 17,241, dated May 5, 1857.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, HELEN C. TRAPHAGEN, of the city, county, and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Skirts or Petticoats for Ladies' Wear; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description of the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings and to the letters of reference marked thereon.

The nature of my invention consists in attaching to the body of a skirt or petticoat a series of air-tight tubes to be inflated with air for the purpose of expanding the surface of the skirt to give a "set" to the dress similar to that effected by the use of hoops, cords and other devices now in use.

The accompanying drawing presents a perspective view of the skirt with its attached air tubes.

A is the body of the skirt, made of linen, muslin or any of the other materials usually employed for the purpose, and of such size and shape as may suit the requirements of the wearer. B, B' B'' B''' a series of air-tight tubes, formed of rubber cloth, oiled silk or other suitable material that is impervious to air. Each of the three lower tubes is made equal in length to the circumference of the portion of the skirt to which it is attached for the purpose of giving to the skirt its full measure of expansion and spread, while the upper one is cut off for a portion of its length to permit the upper part of the skirt to be opened and spread apart the more readily to be placed upon the body of the wearer. The tubes may be attached to and held in place upon the body of the skirt by gumming them to the cloth or inclosing them in a piece of cloth sewed to the body of the skirt or by any other means that may be preferred.

C, C', C'', are a series of vertical tubes—made of the same material as the other tubes—to connect the tubes B, B' B'' B''' together, and which opens into them, so

that the whole of the tubes may be inflated and expanded at one operation. D a stop-valve, closing air-tight, through which the tubes are inflated by air blown from the mouth—when they are properly filled the valve is closed and the air is retained and confined in them until released by the opening of the valve.

I do not confine myself to the use of any particular number of horizontal tubes, nor to the use of the vertical connecting tubes, as the horizontal tubes may be used independent of each other, and be filled and expanded separately by placing a stop valve on each one of them.

The purpose of expansion effected by my improvement is now attained by the use of cords, hoops, canes, steel springs and other appliances, some of which are objectionable on account of their rigidity and others on account of their weight being oppressive to the wearer, which objections are evidently overcome by my improvement, as it is not only much lighter in weight than those in which the articles named are used, but is also perfectly elastic in its conformation and can be compressed together with slight effort by its wearer in case of mud, and will return to its original position on the removal of the pressure, and does not discompose or disarrange the dress of the wearer when sitting down with it, and can be folded and packed up in a small space when not in use by permitting the air to escape from the tubes by opening the stop valve.

What I claim as my invention and desire to secure by Letters Patent is—

The attachment of a series of air-tight tubes to the body of a skirt or petticoat, to expand and set out the skirt when the said tubes are filled with air, as and for the purposes herein set forth.

H. C. TRAPHAGEN.

Witnesses:

J. W. GREEN,  
FRANCIS S. LOW.