

R. B. DUNCAN.
Bustle Attachment for Skirts.

No. 81,262.

Patented Aug. 18, 1868.

Fig: 1.

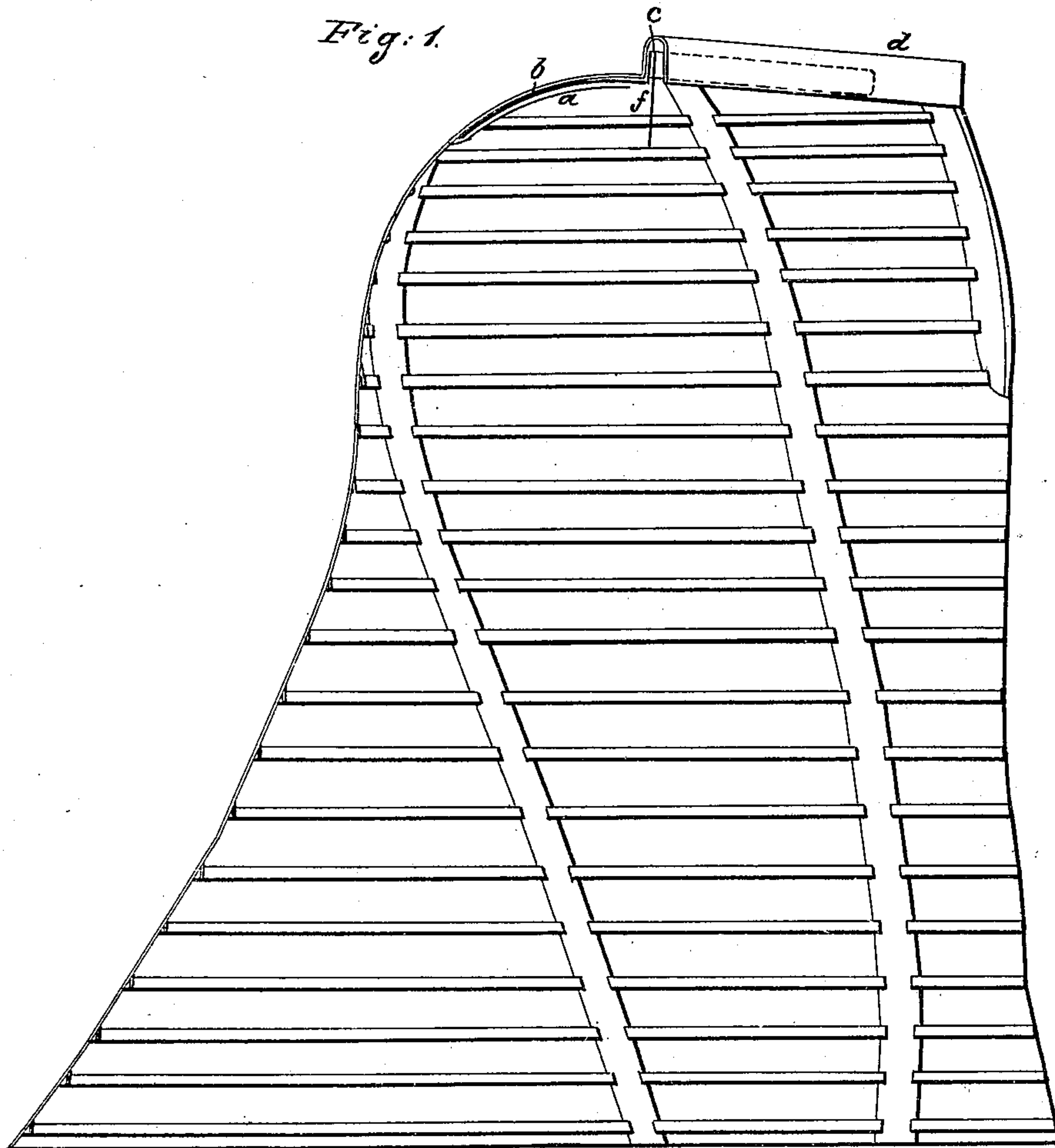
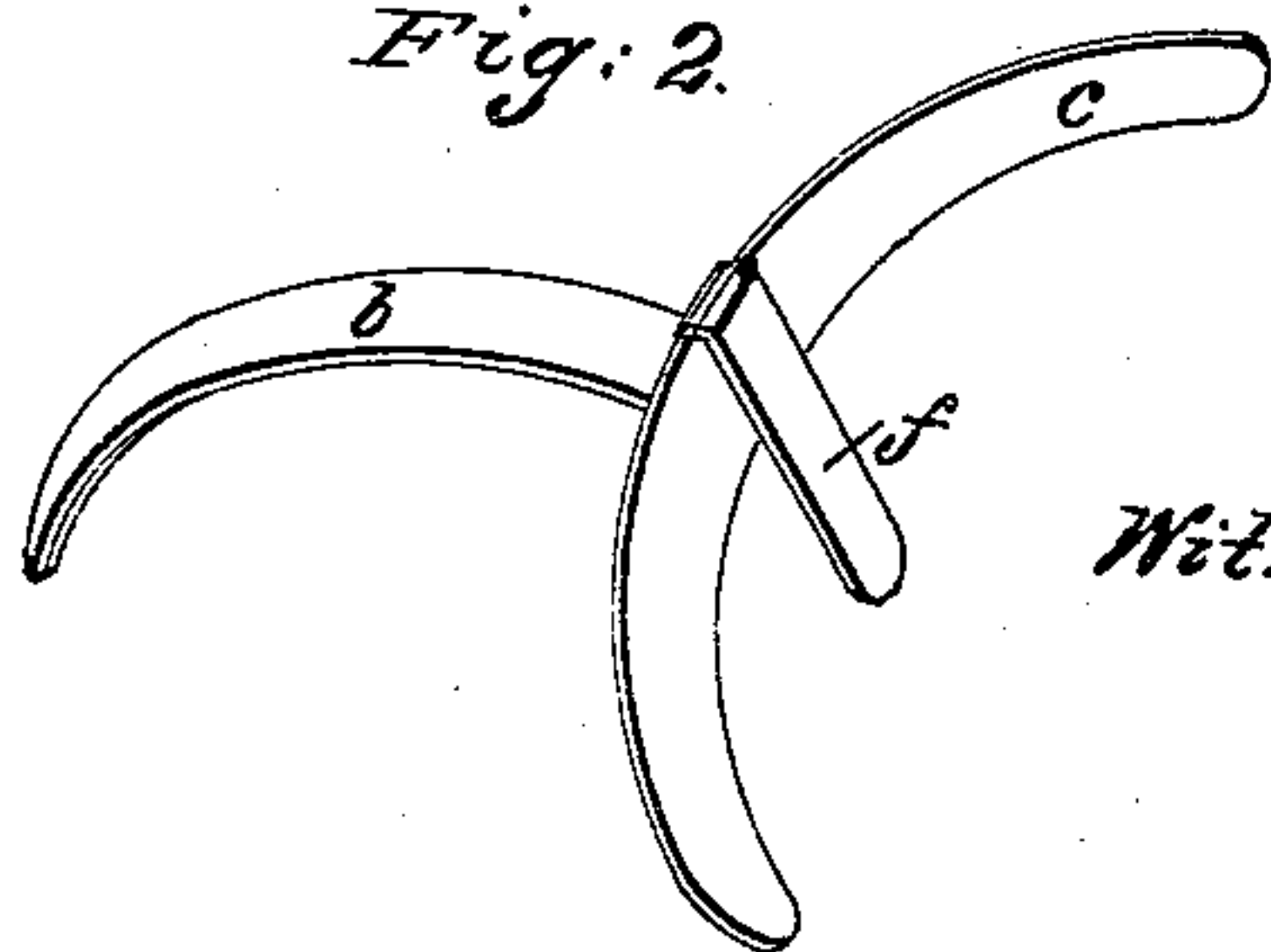


Fig: 2.



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United States Patent Office.

ROBERT BLELOCH DUNCAN, OF WEST ROXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS.

Letters Patent No. 81,262, dated August 18, 1868.

IMPROVEMENT IN BUSTLE-ATTACHMENT FOR SKIRTS.

The Schedule referred to in these Letters Patent and making part of the same.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Be it known that I, ROBERT BLELOCH DUNCAN, of West Roxbury, in the county of Norfolk, and in the State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and useful Hoop-Skirt-Bustle Supporter; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, making part of this application.

Previous to my invention, one of the greatest difficulties, if not the most serious objection, encountered in the use or wearing of ladies' hoop-skirts, has arisen from the tendency of the skirt to bulge in front over the body, and fall or flatten on the back, and about the feet, behind.

Various changes in the form and manufacture of the skirt, particularly in the "bustle" portion thereof, have been suggested and practised, with a view to remedying this radical defect in hoop-skirts, but no change, to my knowledge, has completely, or even to any great extent, overcome the objection.

The cause of this great defect in all hoop-skirts appears to have been the want of some suitable means of keeping the bustle portion of the skirt supported or distended in a proper position, relative to the body of the wearer, and preventing it from being depressed or flattened down by the weight of the skirt and over-garments.

It is well known to those who wear hoop-skirts, and to the manufacturer, that this tendency of a hoop-skirt to flatten down behind and bulge out in front is a great inconvenience and objection, and that to overcome this objection, and provide a means for effecting a retention of the skirt in any desired position and shape, relative to the body of the wearer, is, and has long been, a great desideratum.

To overcome this great difficulty and inconvenience in the use of hoop-skirts, and provide an effective and economical and desirable means of retaining the hoop-skirt in the desired position and shape around the body of the wearer, and thereby effect a great advancement in this branch of the manufacture, and render a great public benefit, is the object of my invention, which consists in the use of a suitably-shaped and constructed bustle-frame or supporter, which may be either attached to the skirt or applied separately, and which will, when worn, serve effectually to sustain or support the bustle portion of the hoop-skirt in the desired shape and distended position, as will be presently more fully described.

To enable those skilled in the manufacture of, and those who use, hoop-skirts to fully understand my invention, I will proceed to explain it more particularly, referring by letters to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a vertical section of a hoop-skirt with my invention applied thereto.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the bustle-frame or supporter detached or separated from the skirt.

The hoop-skirt, seen at fig. 1, is made of any desired style or shape, and in the known method of manufacture, except that it is provided at *a* with a pocket or envelope, either formed in the back tape or sewed on the under side thereof, into which the tail-piece or spring *b* of the supporter is slipped. This spring or tail-piece *b* is secured at its root to the waistband or spring *C*, which is either inserted into the material of the waistband *d* of the skirt, or into pockets formed in band *d*, and this spring or band *C* is provided with a brace or support, *f*, which projects downward, as shown, and which serves as a sort of bracket, resting against the body of the wearer, to support the tail-piece *b* in the desired position.

The frame or supporter *b c f*, I have shown as made in three parts, riveted together, but its construction may, of course, be varied, and it may be made, if deemed expedient, with more than one tail-piece or spring, *b*, adapted to pockets in the tapes, or to simply hold the wires of the skirt, resting on them.

The operation and effect of the skirt, made or provided, as seen at fig. 1, with the bustle-frame or supporter *b c f*, will be readily comprehended. When the skirt is placed on the body of the wearer, and the waistband *d*, with its confined metallic band *c*, secured around the waist, the hoops of the skirt will be held off from the person, as shown, and the bustle portion kept distended, as desired.

The bustle-frame being so formed, that while its brace portion *f* and band *c* fit to the person, the tail-piece *b* projects out behind, so as to hold up the bustle portion of the skirt, it will be seen that all the objection heretofore experienced is effectually overcome.

In lieu of making the bustle-frame of spring-steel, or other suitable material, and applying to the skirt, as shown and described, it may be covered with a suitable jacket, and be manufactured and sold separately from the skirt, and be adapted to fasten around the waist of the person, so as to support the hoop-skirt when placed over it.

The brace *f* may be extended upwards also from the band *c*, if deemed expedient. The weight of the hoop-skirt and the over-garments being sustained by the bustle-frame, and the latter being secured and braced upon the body of the person, much greater comfort will be afforded the wearer than can be experienced under the known methods of wearing skirts and bustles.

As I have already remarked, the bustle-frame or "supporter" may be formed differently, and may be differently constructed from that shown, and may be adapted either to sell and use together with the skirt, or it may be adapted to be applied to the person before putting on the skirt, the gist of my invention resting in, and all its advantages arising from, the idea of affording a sufficiently rigid skeleton or frame, which can be effectually and comfortably maintained on the body, and which will hold the hoop-skirt in a properly-distended position and shape, as has been described.

I do not, therefore, wish to be understood as limiting my claim of invention to any particularity of construction in the frame or supporter *b c f*, or to the peculiar adaptation of the skirt and frame, to fasten them together, as shown and described; but having described my invention fully,

What I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

A bustle-frame or hoop-skirt supporter, constructed and adapted to be used as and for the purposes set forth.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of June, 1868.

ROBERT BLELOCH DUNCAN. [L. s.]

Witnesses:

THOMAS WESTON, Jr.,

H. G. PARKER.