

No. 751,215.

PATENTED FEB. 2, 1904.

K. L. STENHOUSE.
FORM PAD.

APPLICATION FILED APR. 2, 1900.

NO MODEL.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1.

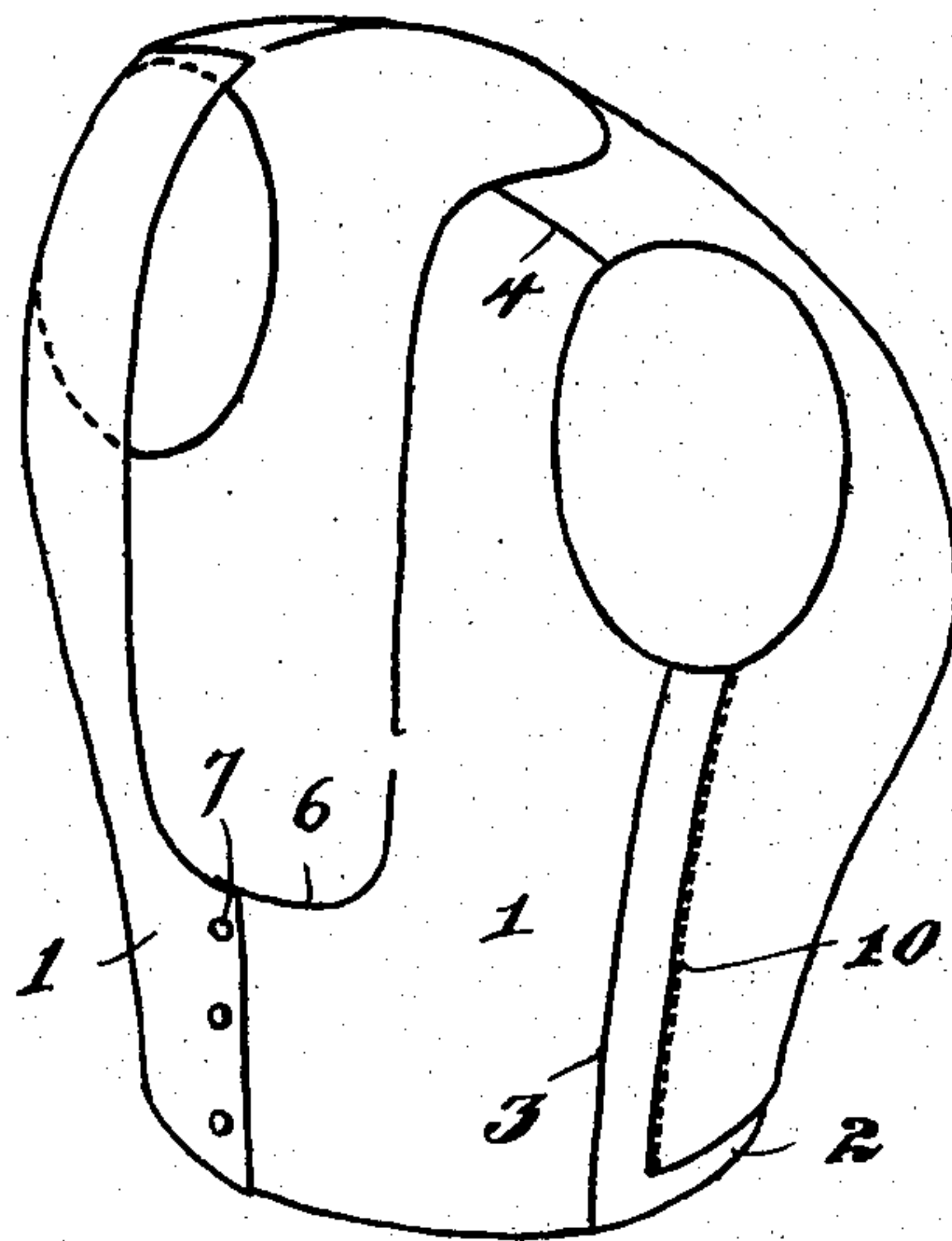
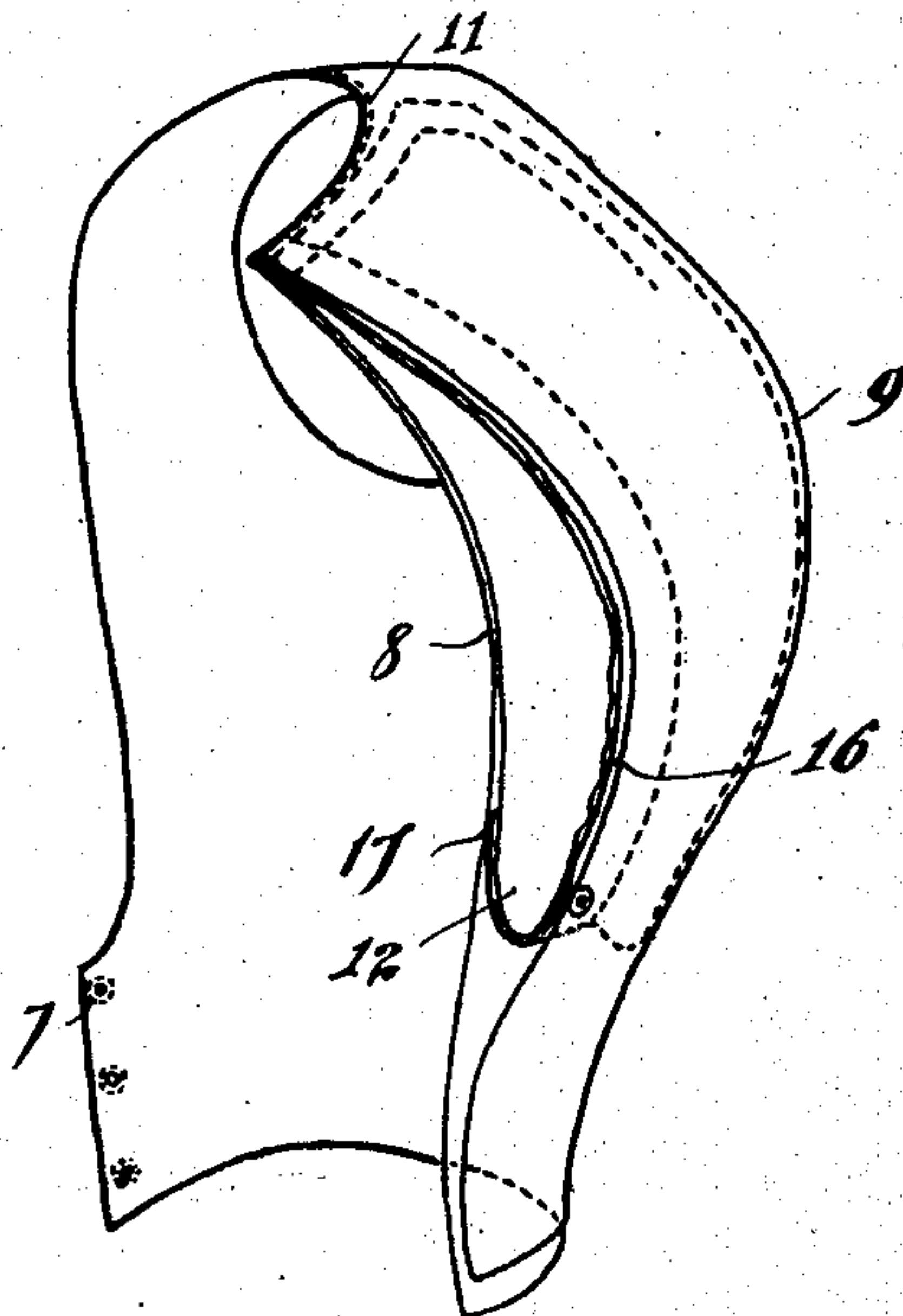


Fig. 2.



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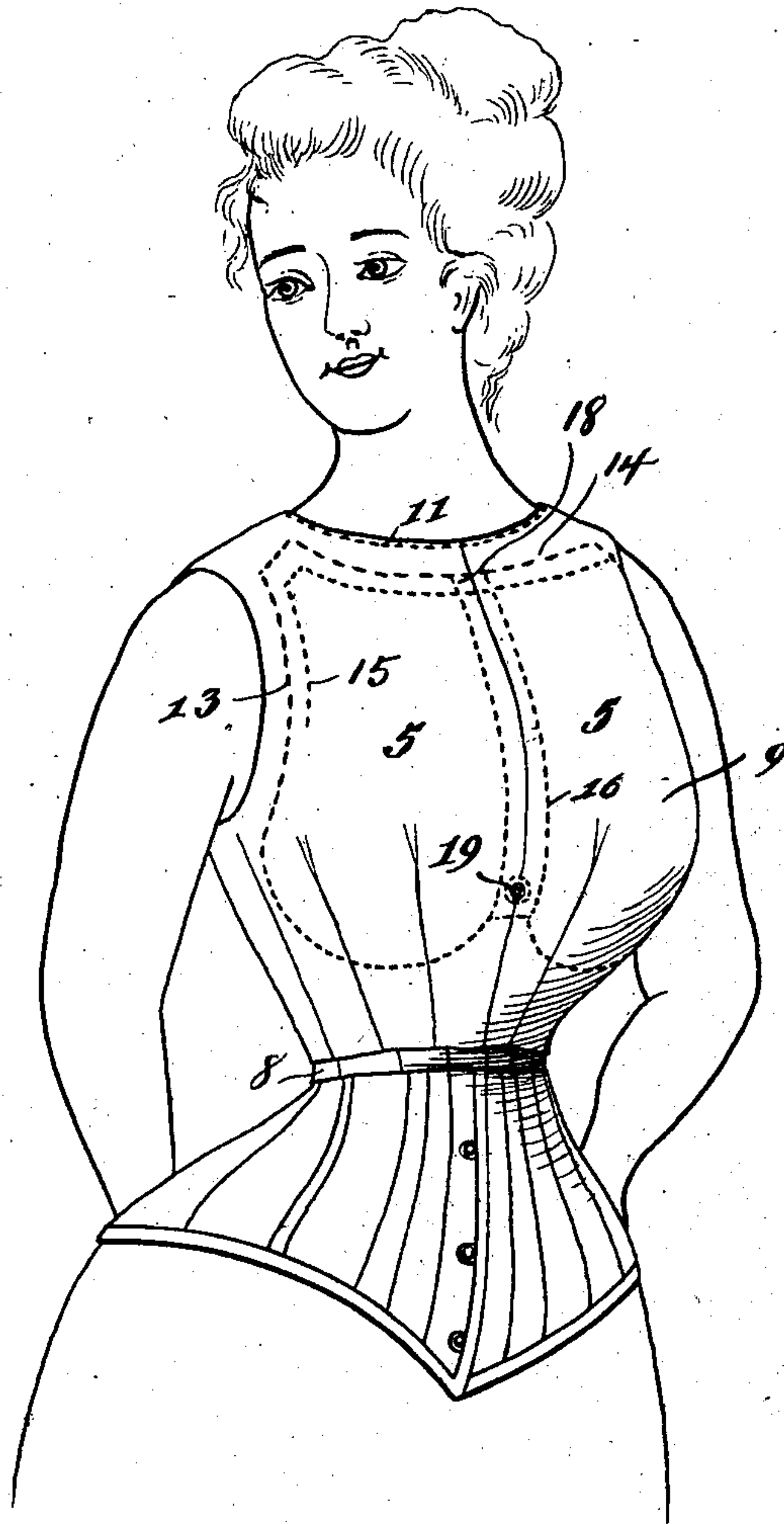
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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 3.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

KATHERINE L. STENHOUSE, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

FORM-PAD.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 751,215, dated February 2, 1904.

Application filed April 2, 1900. Serial No. 11,133. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, KATHERINE L. STENHOUSE, of Chicago, Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Pneumatic Form-Pads, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to an improved garment provided with bust-pads for filling out or modifying the bust portion of the human figure, and refers more specifically to improvements in a garment of waist-like construction provided with pneumatic pads of the character referred to.

The object of the invention is to provide an article of apparel in the form of a waist-like garment, such as a corset-cover, and having a bust portion which constitutes a receptacle within which is arranged one or more inflatable pads or bags adapted to hold said bust portion distended in definite form.

Further objects of my invention are to provide a garment of the character referred to which is light and comfortable to the wearer and in which the bust portion is constructed to take a definite form when distended, but which is nevertheless yielding and practically devoid of stiffening, such as stays and analogous rigid parts; to provide a garment which will very readily shape itself to a modified outward form, so as to fit accurately an outer garment worn over it; to so construct and arrange the several parts of the garment that it will be conveniently, positively, and accurately secured and retained in position upon the wearer, and in general to provide an improved device of the character referred to.

The invention consists in the matters hereinafter described, and more particularly pointed out in the appended claims, and will be readily understood from the following description, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of one preferred embodiment of my invention, constituting a waist which may be worn as a corset-cover. Fig. 2 is a central vertical view of the same. Fig. 3 shows the garment in position upon the human figure, the padded portions being indicated in dotted lines.

Referring to said drawings, the waist, as

best shown in Fig. 1, is constructed in the usual way, so far as the general form of the several parts thereof is concerned, these parts comprising in the present instance back pieces 1 1, united with the front 2 by means of under-arm and shoulder seams 3 4, respectively, in the usual manner. The front 2 of the waist is in the present instance composed of two parts 5 5, seamed together up and down the center, as best indicated in Fig. 3, while the back is conveniently made to open along the median line and is separably united by means of buttons, as indicated at 7. The waist is shown as made short in the present instance—*i. e.*, as made to terminate at the waist-line of the wearer—although, if preferred, it may obviously be extended below the waist-line. In this connection it may be noted that in the broader sense it is immaterial how the waist be constructed or how it be made to open to adapt it to the wearer, so long as the construction is such as it is made to fit closely around the waist; that its bust portion be held up and prevented from displacement downwardly or laterally; that its bust portion be suitably constructed to afford a receptacle or receptacles for the inflatable portion or portions, and that it be flexible and unstiffened substantially throughout, as distinguished from a corset-like structure.

In the present instance the waist-body, and particularly the waist portion thereof, serves to retain the lower part of the garment accurately in position, the shoulder-straps extending over the shoulders serve to hold the bust portion securely against downward displacement, and the fit of the garment around the arms at the armholes obviously holds the bust portion from lateral displacement.

To provide receptacles for the inflatable bags or form-pads, the front of the waist, or at least a portion thereof, is made double or of two plies, the outer part 9 being made of any suitable thin, soft, and flexible fabric—such as silk, silesia, and the like—while the inner portion or lining 8 may be constructed of any suitable fabric and is made to fit the figure of the wearer as accurately as practicable. The upper or bust portion of the outer part 9 is made larger than the lining part and

is shaped by means of suitable gores and otherwise to form when distended the shape of the bust desired.

The two thicknesses of the front of the waist are so united as to provide an intervening pocket. The construction may be such that two pockets are provided, one on each side of the median line of the bust, said parts being in the present instance united to form the pocket by being seamed together along the under-arm seams, as indicated at 10, along the shoulder-seams, as indicated at 4, and around the neck at 11, but are desirably left free from each other at their lower margins along the waist-line to afford access to the pocket.

12 designates as a whole an inflatable airtight bag or pad, which is made of thin sheet rubber of a soft and tough character, so as to resist puncturing by a pointed instrument—such, for example, as a pin or needle—unless considerable pressure be applied to force the instrument through the rubber, such rubber now being in common use in various arts. The bag is shown in the present instance as made by folding a sheet of rubber upon itself and cutting out the double sheet into approximately the form of the front of the bust portion of the waist, as outlined in dotted lines in Fig. 3, the fold being arranged to form the lower edge of the pad or bag and the remaining three sides or edges, (designated 13 and 14, respectively,) being cemented together for some distance inwardly around the entire circumference of the cut edges—as, for example, from the edges inwardly upon the dotted lines 15. (Shown in said Fig. 3.) It will of course be understood that said rubber bag may be otherwise constructed—as, for example, it may be made seamless; but it is to be noted in this connection that in order to secure the best results the bag as a whole must be made as large or larger than the space it is designed to fill, so that when fully distended and its further expansion prevented by the cover it will not be stretched in any part to any considerable extent. This is a feature of importance for the reason that when thus constructed and when inflated sufficiently for all practical purposes it has been found in practice that the bag will not leak to any seriously detrimental extent if it be punctured by a pin or needle, but will, on the contrary, close up tight enough to prevent the escape of the air when the puncturing instrument is withdrawn.

In order to assist in imparting a proper form to the outer bust portion 9, a strap 16 of relatively non-elastic fabric is secured at one of its ends to the inside of the lining at a point upon the median line thereof and a short distance above the lower edge of the pad, as indicated at 17, Fig. 2, to extend thence down around the lower edge of the pad and up in front of the latter and secured to the front adjacent to the upper edge of the inflatable bag, as indicated in dotted lines at 18,

Fig. 3, the length of this confining-strap being such as to form a crease and partially separate the opposite sides of the bag when the latter is inflated, and thus prevent the outer part of the waist from being bulged out unduly along its median line. The said strap likewise affords a convenient means of securing the inflatable bag accurately in position, but it will of course be understood that any other suitable means may be employed for holding it in place.

In order to enable the bag to be inflated at will, a valve 19 is provided, conveniently arranged to communicate with the lower part of the front of the pad and extending out through the confining-strap 16 and outer covering, this valve being of any suitable construction.

From the foregoing description it will be obvious that a garment constructed in accordance with my invention will assume the exact shape desired when the bust portion thereof is inflated when unconfined by outer garments—as, for example, when worn under a light or loose-fitting shirt-waist—and yet will adapt itself perfectly to outer garments, which may fit so closely as to compress it more or less, without the least discomfort to the wearer. It will be seen also that the construction is such that it will be accurately held in exact position and is not liable to accidental displacement. In this construction it is to be noted that while the garment embodying my invention is distinctly a soft flexible waist as distinguished from a corset-like construction, yet it would be no departure from the invention to make the outer bust-forming portions thereof of semistiffened material to impart a more accurate and definite form thereto so long as the waist remains substantially unstayed as a whole.

While I have herein described a practical and preferred embodiment of my invention, yet it will be obvious that the details thereof may be modified without departing from the spirit of the invention. I do not, therefore, wish to be limited to the details of construction shown and described, except to the extent that the same are made the subject of specific claims.

I am aware that pneumatic form-pads *per se* are not novel and that numerous methods of constructing and applying such pads to the human figure have been described. I am also aware of the common practice of applying pads of various kinds to the lobes of corsets and to various portions of the body; but none of these devices with which I am familiar are satisfactory, for the reason that at best they are but separate and independently-applied parts of a complete garment, and none of them provide means for securely holding the pad in the desired position. No bust-form pad which is placed loosely upon the body of the wearer will retain its place reliably, and

experience shows that such pad cannot be retained in position by strings, bands, or other fastenings which do not give practically the same support and security as a form-fitting waist will give. I am also aware that it has heretofore been proposed to provide a stiffened corset with inflatable pneumatic bust-pads built in integrally and permanently with the corset structure. Such a garment obviously does not embody my invention, which has for its object to provide a garment which may be worn alone upon the natural form without in the least interfering with the most perfect freedom of movement of every part and muscle of the body and at the same time without offering any suggestion of its presence, or, on the other hand, it may with equal appropriateness be worn over the corset, and in either case the garment will be retained with certainty in exact position.

My invention provides a garment or article of apparel embodying as an integral part thereof a form-pad, which is necessarily and by virtue of its being an integral part held securely and definitely in position. It is essential that a pad of this kind should not only be supported so as to prevent its working down and up, but it must also be supported laterally in order to maintain the desired position. Support in all these particulars is afforded by the provision of a form-fitting waist adapted to contain the form-pads, and which waist can be put on with the same ease as a corset. In its broader features the particular construction of the waist is not essential. For example, a corset itself might be readily adapted to contain by the omission of stays and change in the construction of the lobes these form-pads, and in case a garment having stays is employed the shoulder-straps

or other means for holding up the pad may be omitted.

I claim as my invention—

1. The combination with a waist formed of substantially unstiffened textile fabric and comprising an inner form-fitting front, an outer contour forming bust portion made of relatively inelastic textile fabric, a waist-fitting lower portion and shoulder-supports, of a bust-pad consisting of an inflatable bag of thin rubber, seated within the bust portion of said waist and a controlled inlet for use in inflating said bag, substantially as described.

2. The combination to form a garment, of a relatively thin, unstiffened, waist-like form-pad cover comprising an inner side or lining member adapted to rest against and conform to the front side of the body, and an outer side covering member fitting closely around the waist and extending upwardly therefrom, supported from the shoulders, and provided with a bust portion having a definite form adapted to confine and give form to a contained air-bag, and an independently-constructed and removable inflatable air-bag fitting within said cover, between it and the lining member and consisting of thin, elastic sheet-rubber made of a size substantially conforming to the internal dimensions of the cavity of the cover within which it is seated and arranged loosely within the latter, or with its surface substantially unattached to the cover, whereby it is free to expand and contract independently of the cover, within the limits of the dimensions of the latter, substantially as described.

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