

March 7, 1944.

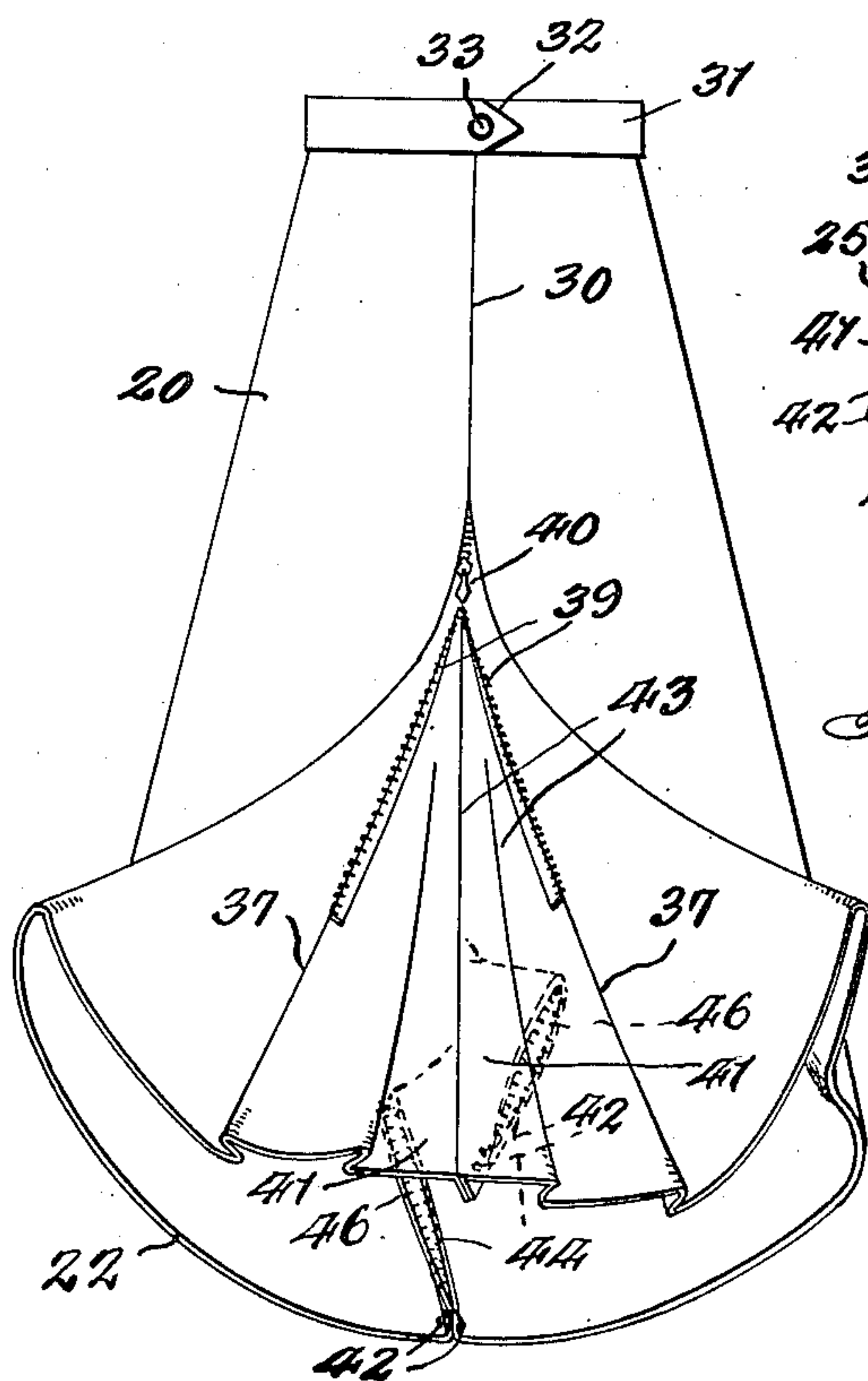
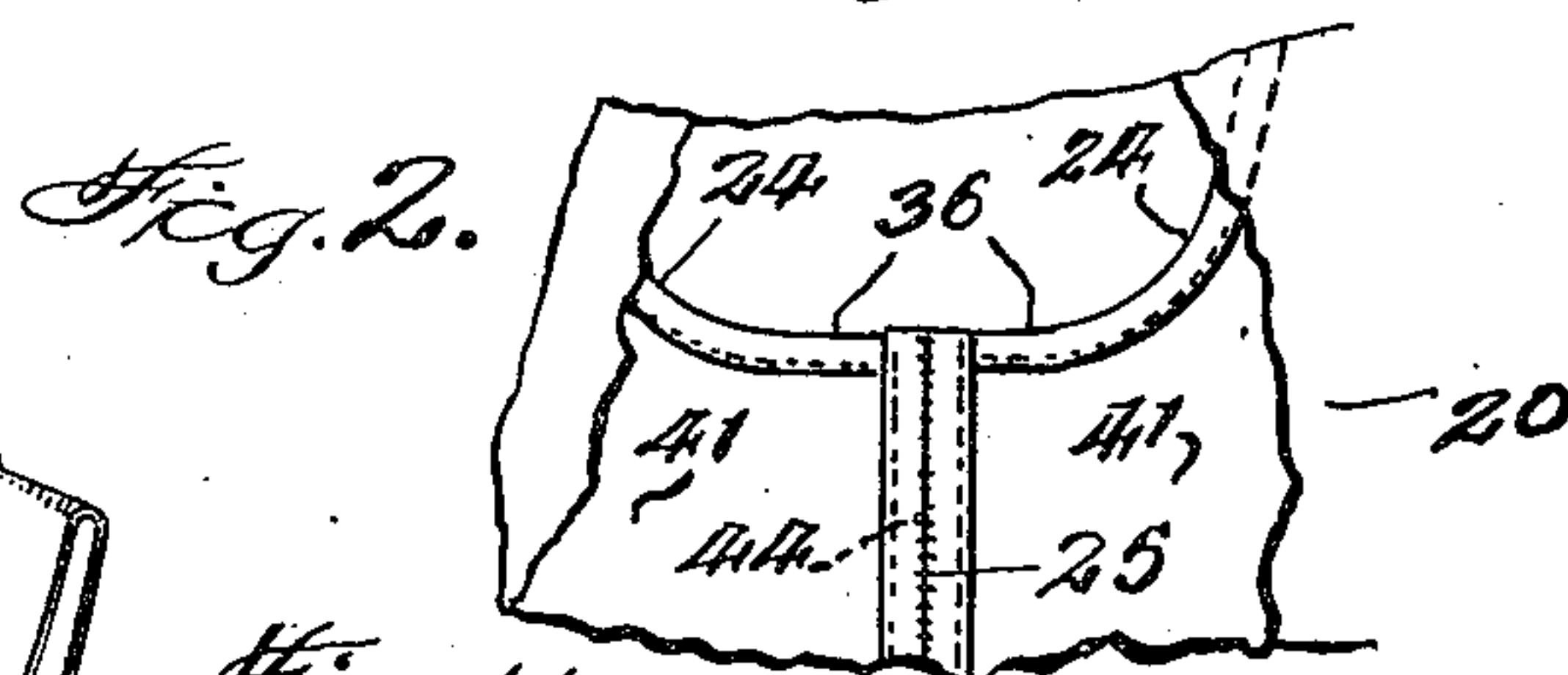
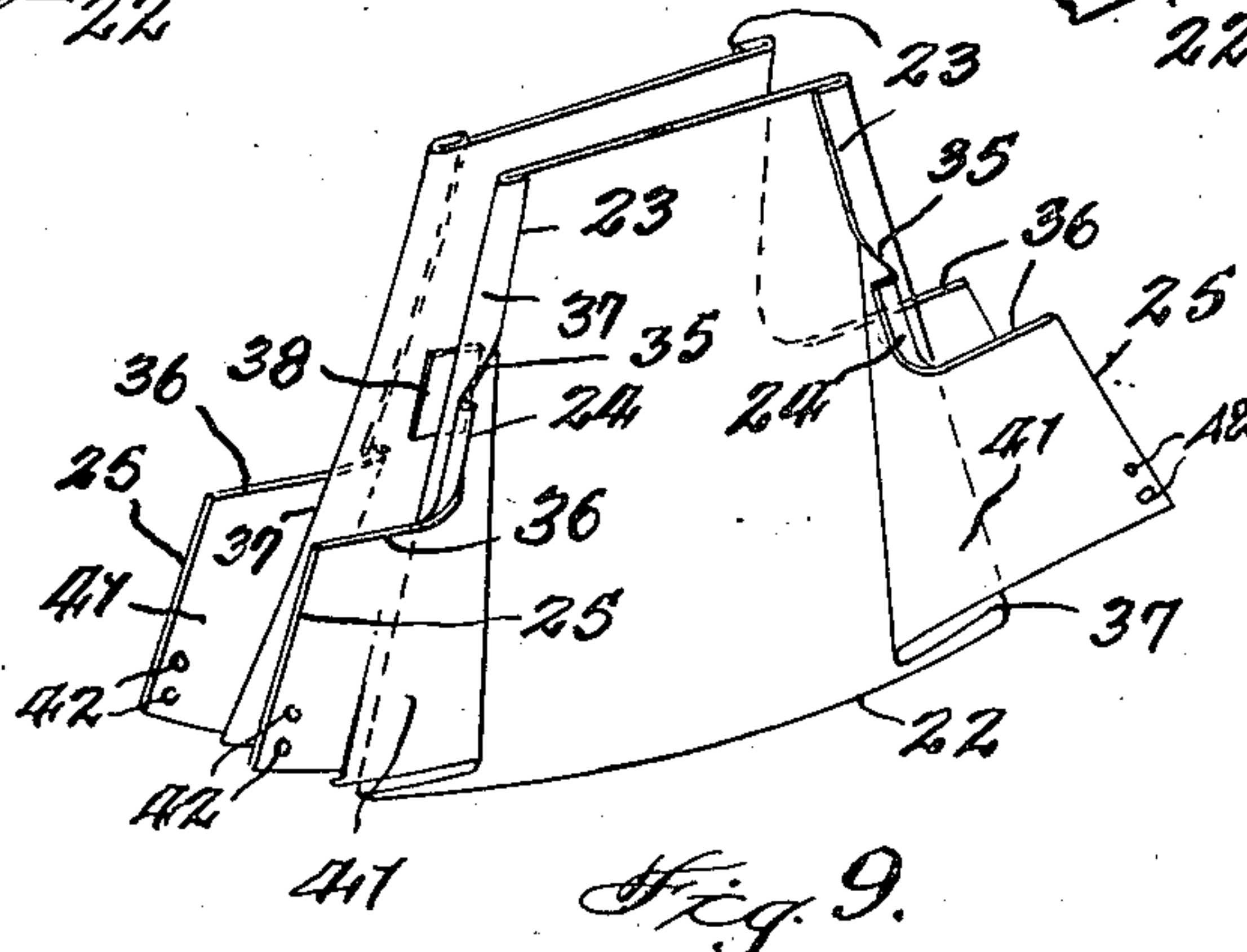
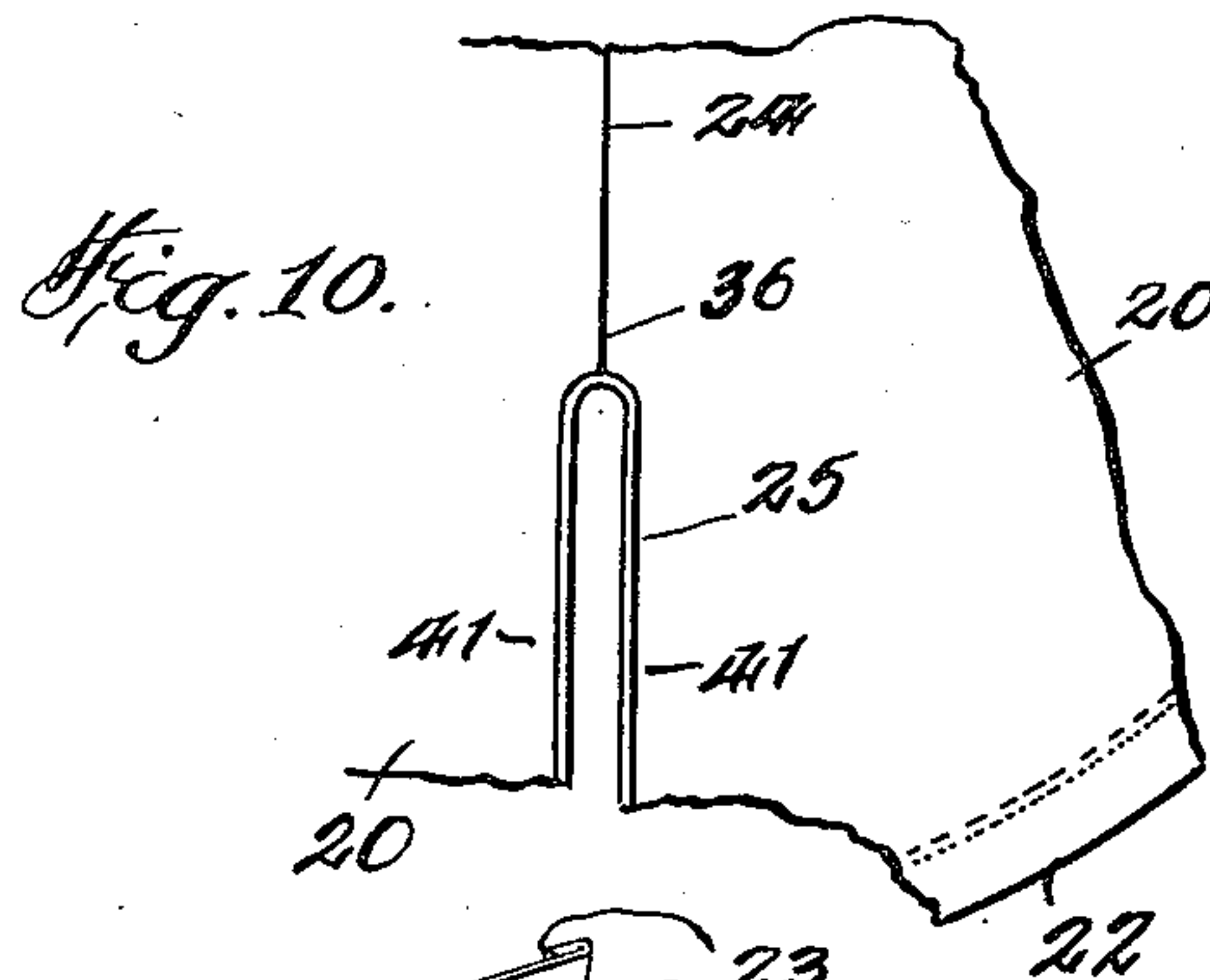
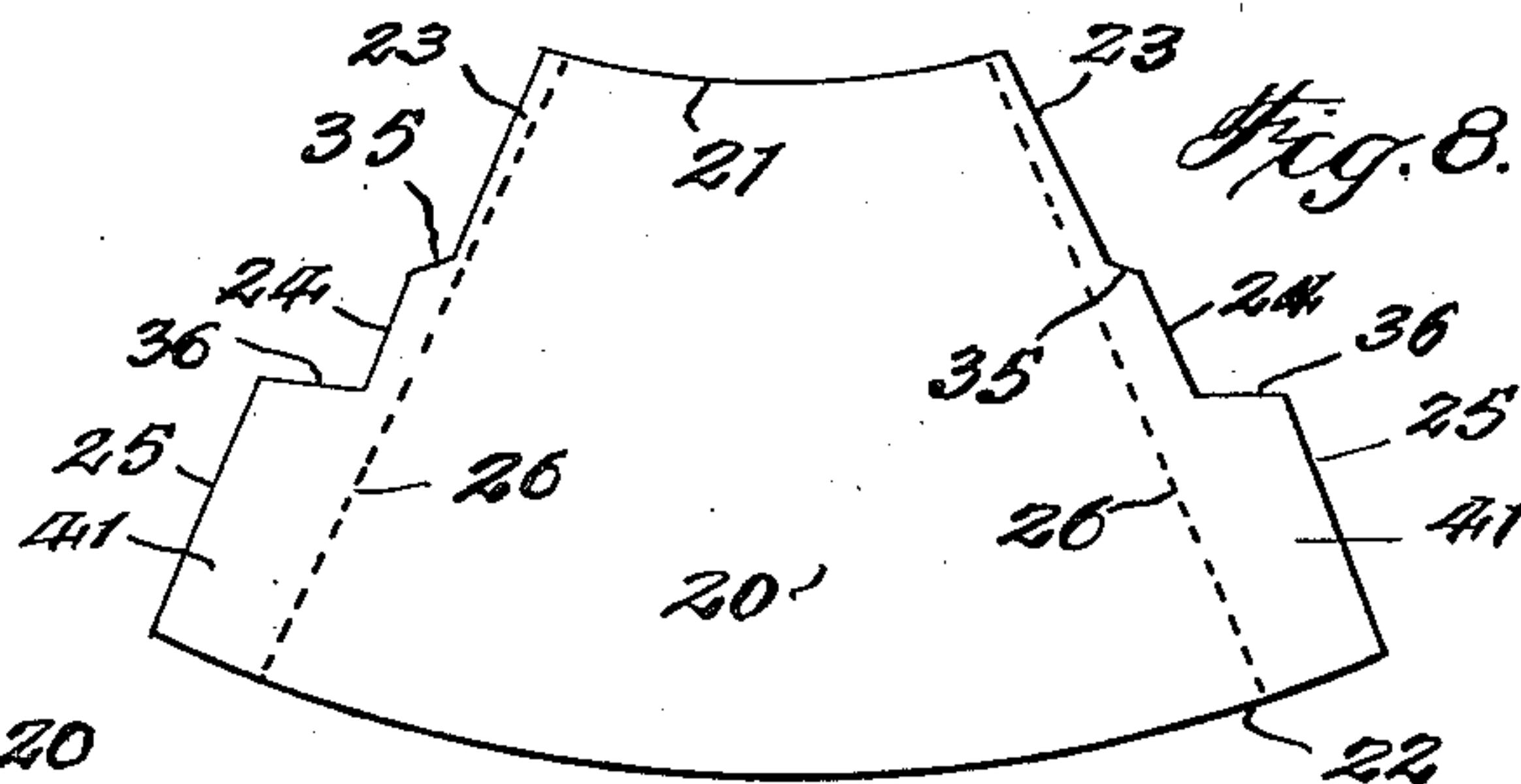
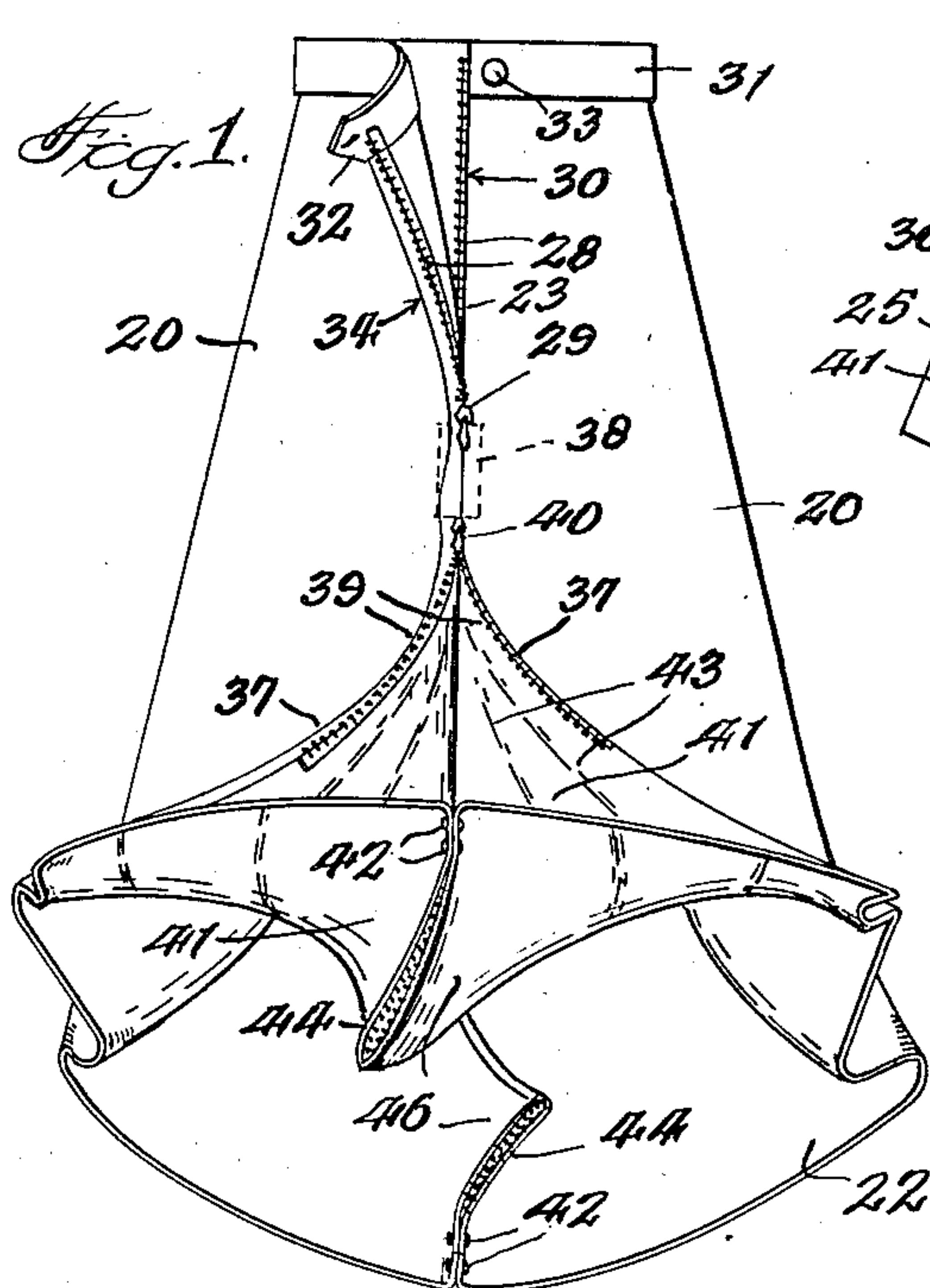
M. L. SANSOM

2,343,480

COMBINED AND CONVERTIBLE SKIRT AND BIFURCATED GARMENT

Filed Aug. 6, 1942

3 Sheets-Sheet 1



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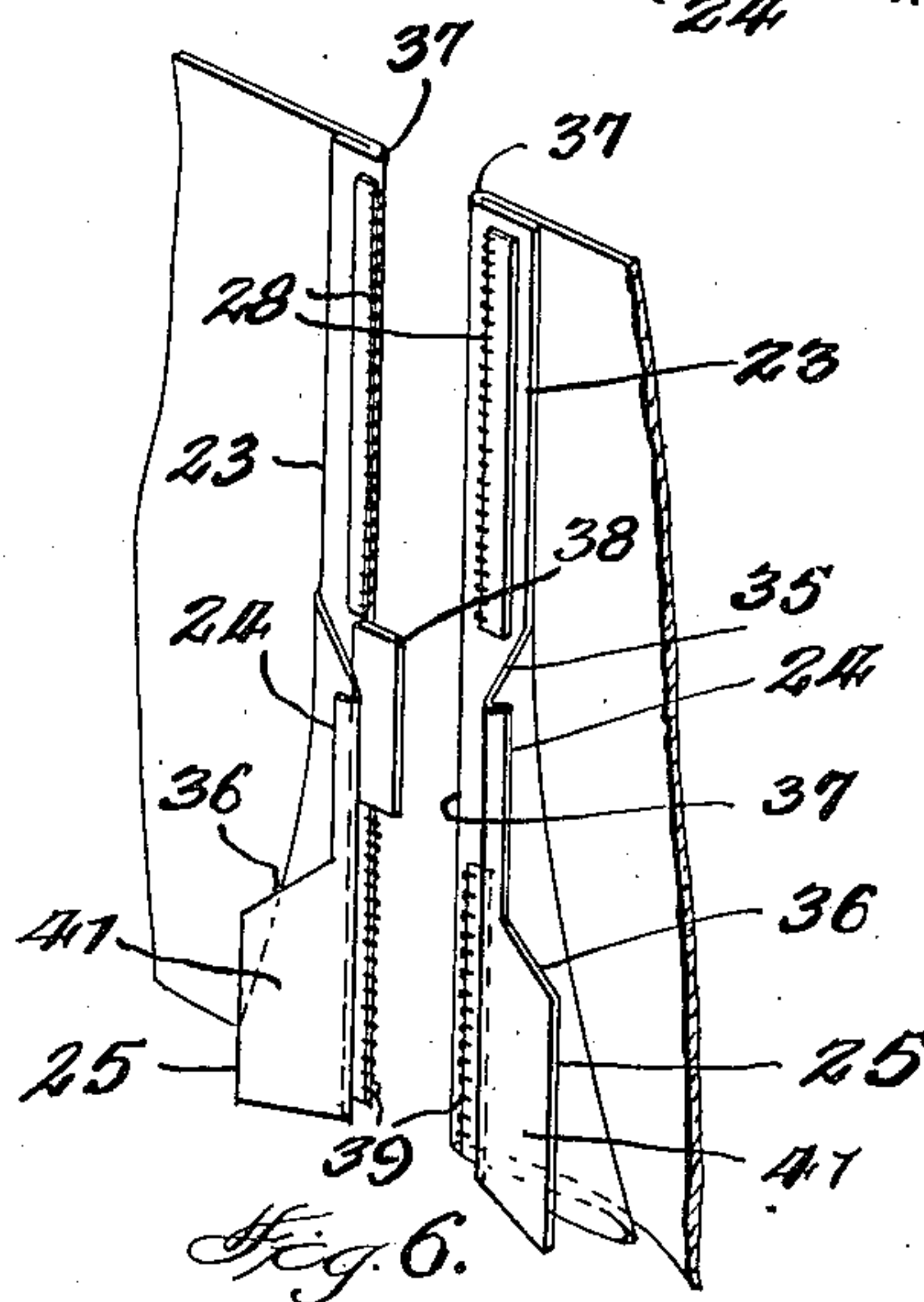
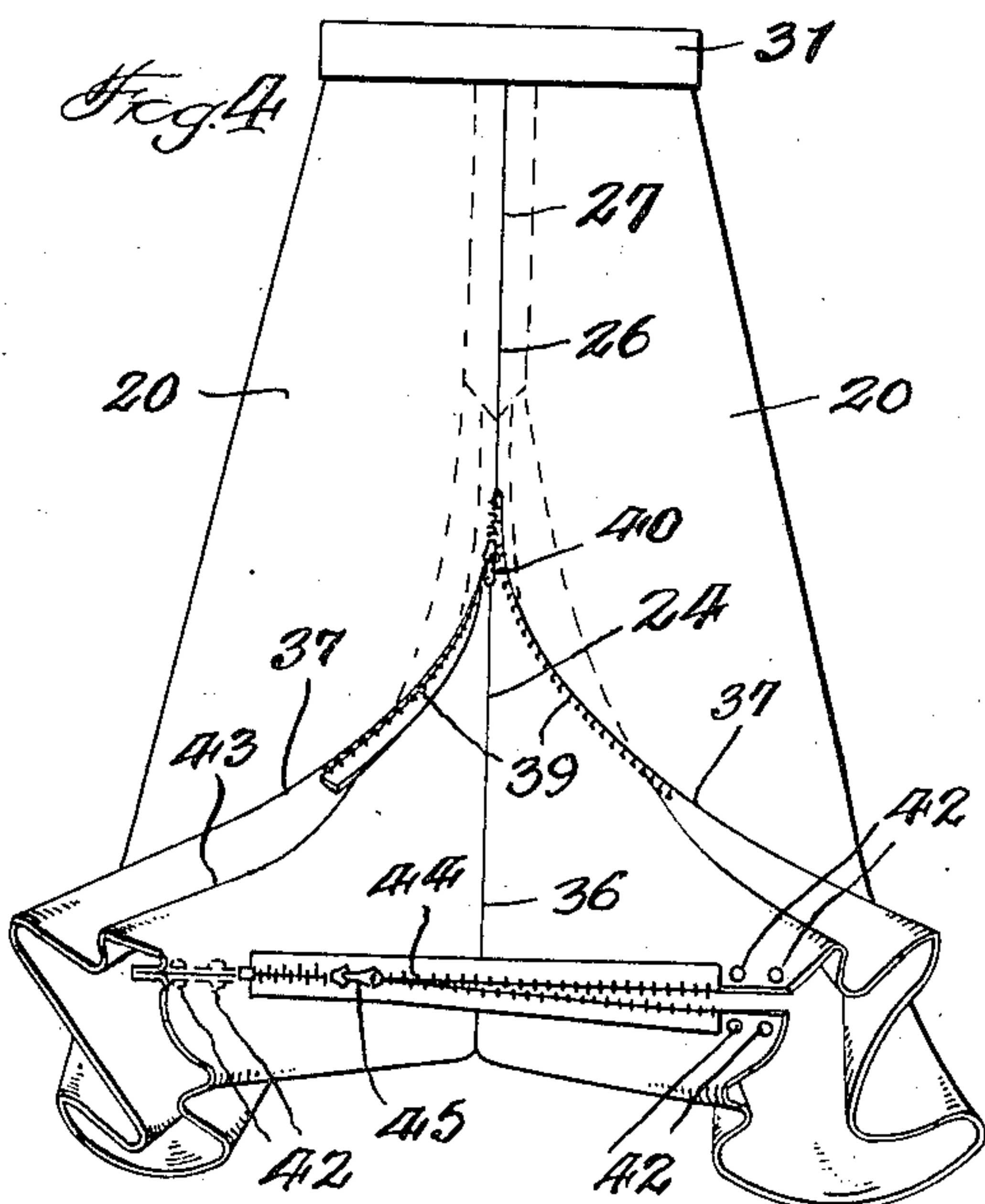
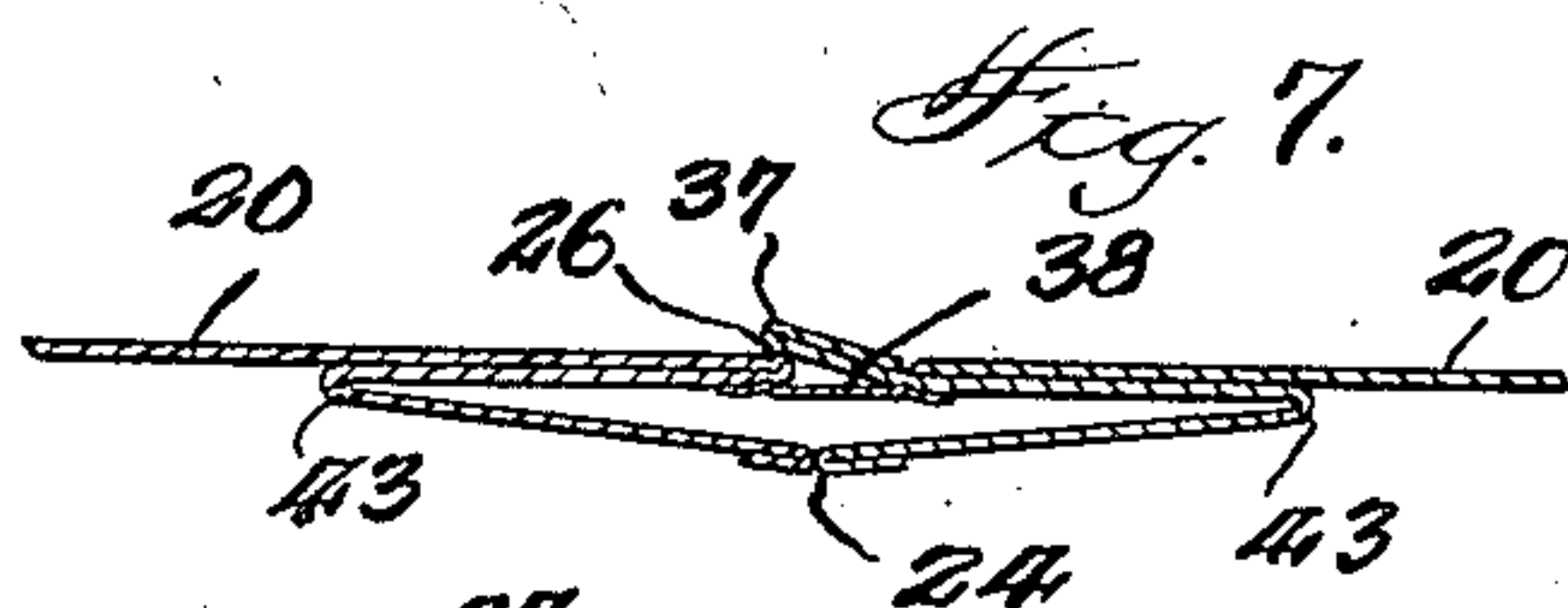
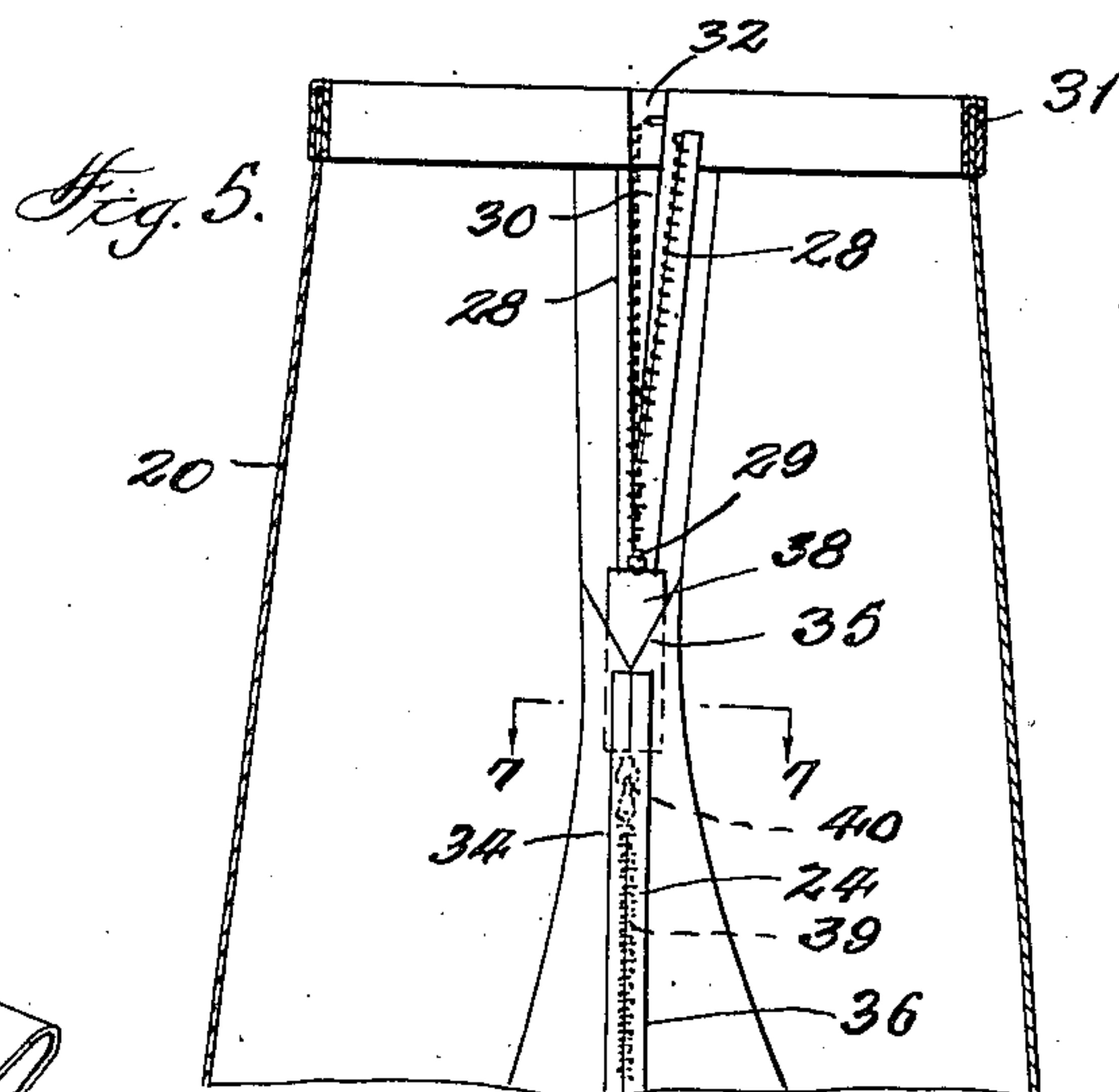
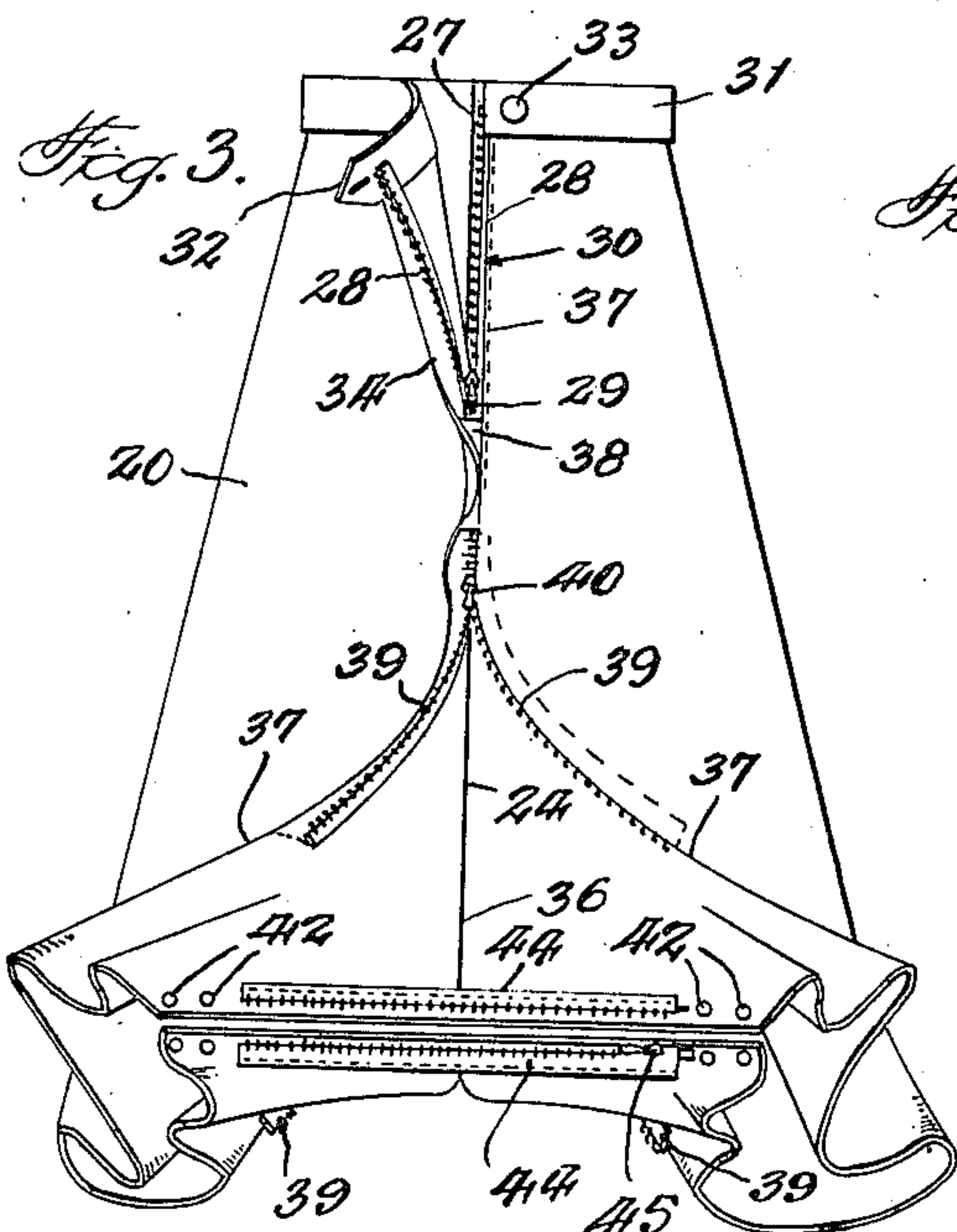
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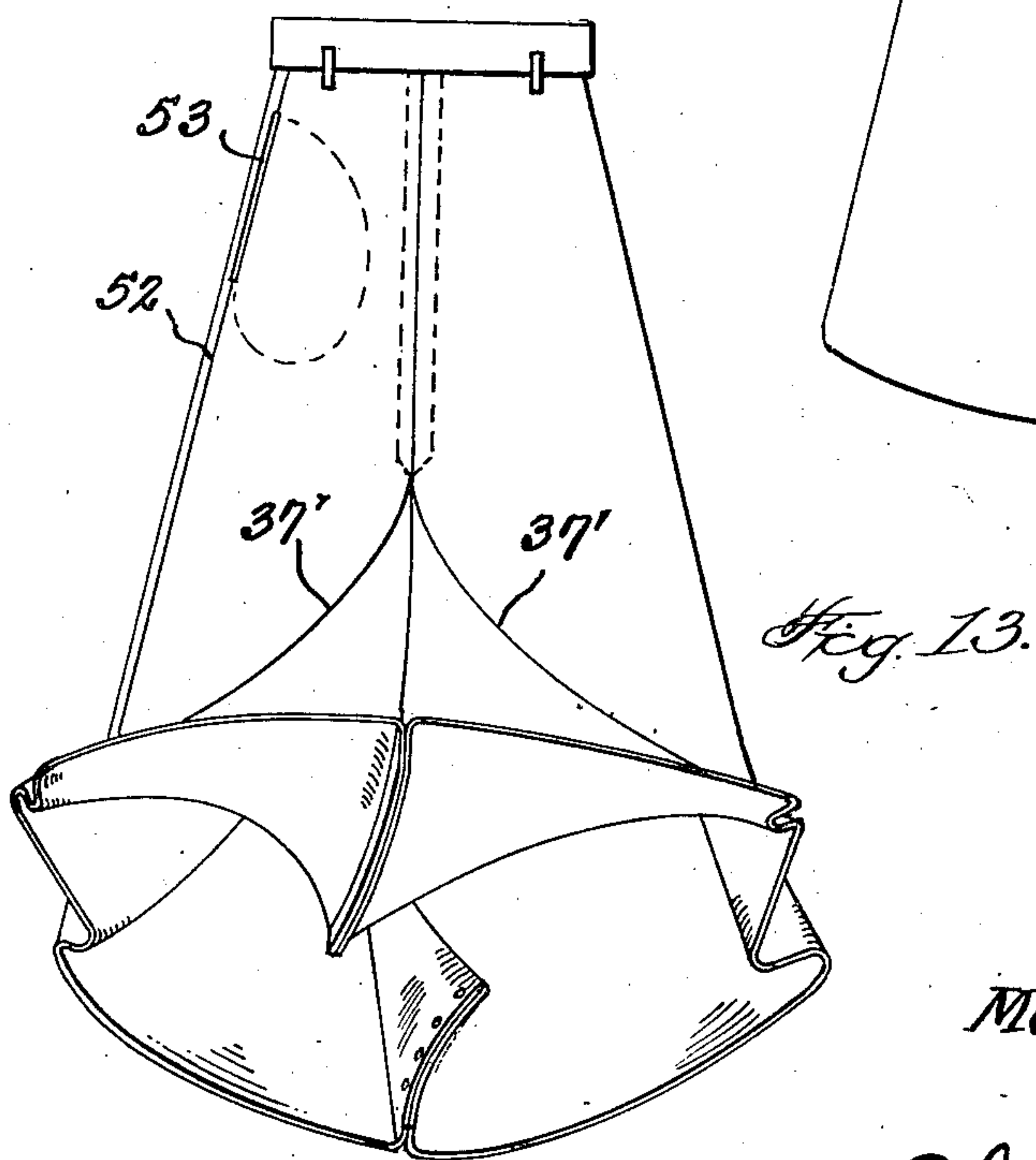
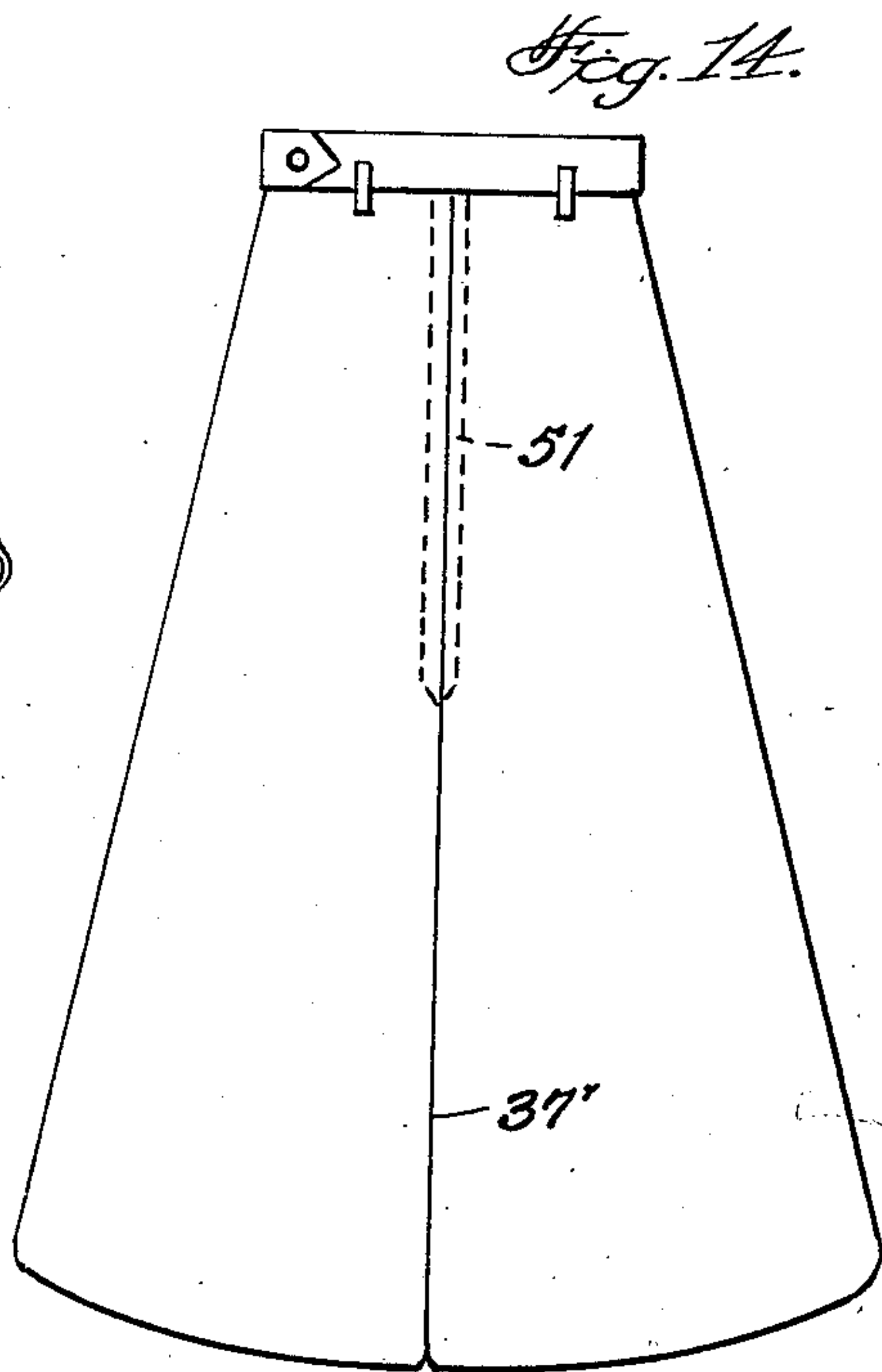
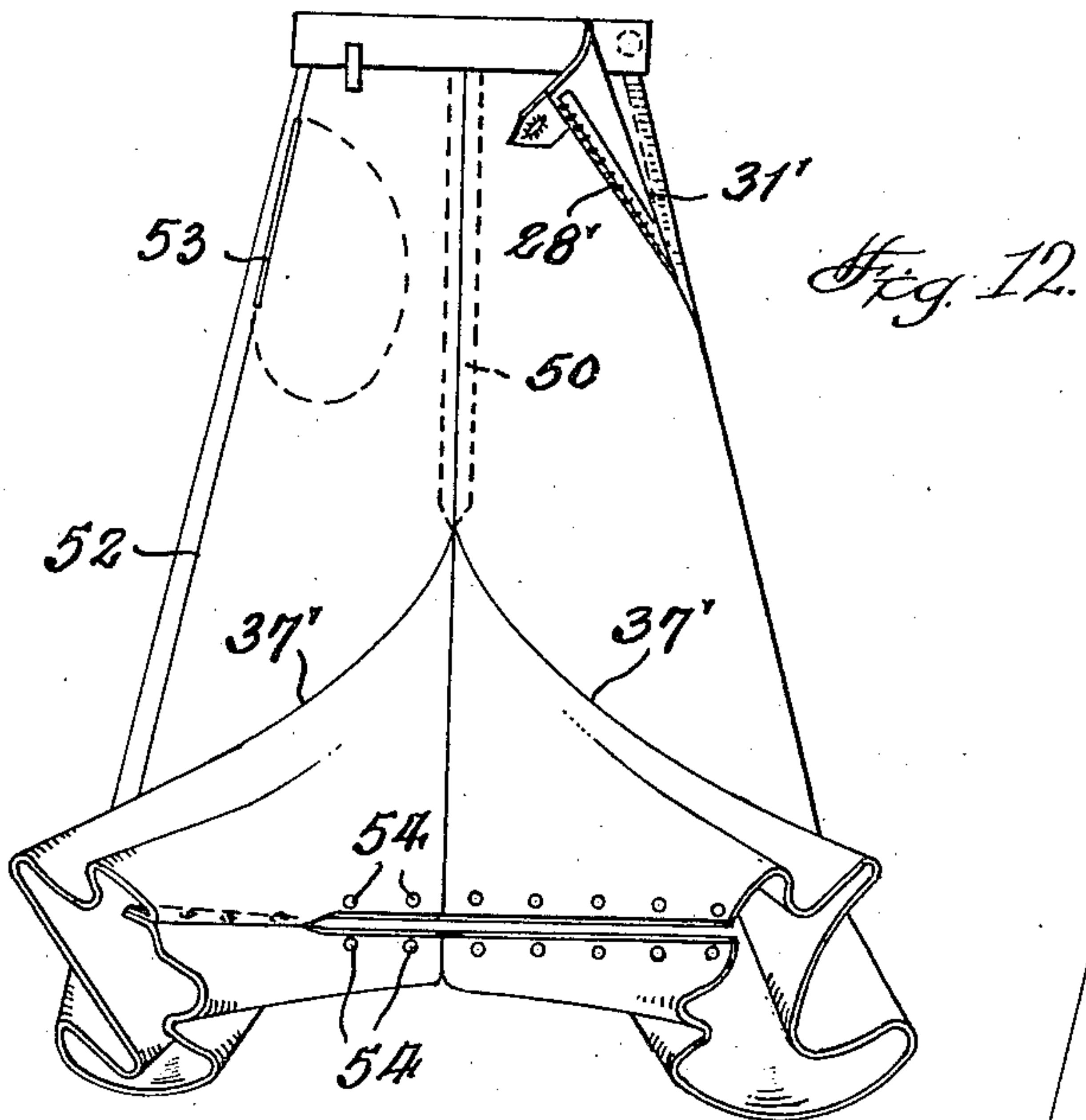
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COMBINED AND CONVERTIBLE SKIRT AND BIFURCATED GARMENT

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3 Sheets-Sheet 3



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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,343,480

COMBINED AND CONVERTIBLE SKIRT AND  
BIFURCATED GARMENT

Mary L. Sansom, New York, N. Y.

Application August 6, 1942, Serial No. 453,846

12 Claims. (Cl. 2—213)

This is a continuation in part, of my application filed July 3, 1941, Serial number 401,002.

The invention relates to combined and nether garment element apparel, and particularly to garments adapted for sports wear for women and children. It has for an object to provide a garment which may be worn not only as a skirt at one time and as a bifurcated garment at another, but in addition, may be worn as a combined skirt and bifurcated garment at other times.

A particularly important aim of the invention is to enable a wearer to make the alteration of the garment, while upon the person, practically instantaneously, by the use of simple fastenings of the modern type known as "zipper" fasteners, snap fasteners or buttons and button holes.

Another object of the invention is to present such a combination garment which may be quickly altered at will to increase its fullness when worn as a bifurcated garment, so as to promote greater freedom of action of the wearer when engaged in athletic pursuits. Likewise, it is an important object to present such a construction when the article is worn as a skirt, that it may be either of the trim, relatively straight type, or of the fuller or "belled" style. Another important aim of the invention is to present a combined and bifurcated garment in which the crotch element involved when worn as a bifurcated garment will have a novel relation to the skirt portions and other fastening elements of the garment, with certain novel results in trimness of appearance and maximum freedom of action of the wearer with minimum liability of strain or tear of parts at the front or elsewhere, due to the incorporation of such combined features in one garment.

An important object is to enable the complete garment with all its elements to be produced complete from two pattern pieces of identical form, each adapted to form one side of the skirt and bifurcated element.

Another aim of the invention is to present such a garment having the advantages above outlined and others as will hereinafter appear, which may also be readily laundered and pressed, to preserve its good appearance.

A further aim is to enable its incorporation of the combined and other novel features in one garment without detracting from the durability of the goods.

Another important aim of the invention is to present a garment in which the various features are combined in such manner that there will be

a preservation of good, smooth contours and surfaces without inequalities due to underlying thicknesses or other elements showing on the surface.

A paramount aim of the invention is to produce a garment which may be made of fine materials and worn in the most conservative circles by women of distinction and good breeding without appearing risqué, or giving any appearance of radical departure from accepted or standard forms of dress of the day.

Additional objects, advantages and features of invention reside in the construction, arrangement and combination of parts involved in the embodiment of the invention, as will more readily be understood from the following description and accompanying drawings, wherein

Figure 1 is a front view of the garment, with the top placket and lower skirt placket open, the crotch being detached and the lower edge of the skirt at the front raised to show the loose portion of the crotch seams when released.

Figure 2 is a similar view of the garment with the top placket closed, but the lower edge of the skirt dropped, and showing the manner in which pleating may be embodied in the parts within the lower placket. In this view, the pleats at the sides of the placket are turned outwardly, so as to show the fastener or "zipper" elements more prominently than will appear in the finished garment; the edge of the pleat at the upper part being formed into an overlying seam which will conceal the gimp which carries the fastener elements.

Figure 3 is a view similar to Figure 1, but showing the edges of the crotch seam brought into close relation preparatory to their connection.

Figure 4 is a rear view, showing the rear seam top placket closed, the underlying selvage edge portions being dotted, and the left end portion of the crotch seam being connected and the slide coupler drawn partly across the same.

Figure 5 is an interior elevation of the upper waist portion of the garment, with the placket open, and showing a portion of the crotch seam thereadjacent in closed position.

Figure 6 is an inner perspective view of the two pieces at the front of the skirt, as separately assembled, and before being joined, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 7 is a horizontal sectional view substantially on the line 7—7 of Figure 5, enlarged.

Figure 8 is a formal showing of the pattern or one side piece of the garment.

Figure 9 is a perspective view of the two side



pieces approximately as shaped for assembly, the front edge portions being located at the left of the view.

Figure 10 is a fragmentary front view of the garment with the transverse crotch seam completely closed and the skirt hanging in normal fashion.

Figure 11 is a view of the garment in similar condition, at right angles to Figure 10, showing the fore and aft crotch seam.

Figure 12 is a view similar to Figure 4, illustrating a modified form of the garment.

Figure 13 is a front view of the garment with the crotch detached and the lower edge of the skirt at the front raised to show the loose portion of the crotch seams when released.

Figure 14 is a back view of the garment as it will appear in either of the operative positions of the crotch portions.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, there is illustrated a garment which, while illustrated as a skirt only, may, if desired, have a waist or jacket portion attached to the upper part thereof in ways which conform to conventional practice in body garments of the union type or otherwise.

The skirt proper designated as 20 is formed of two pattern pieces, which are cut substantially in the form illustrated in Figure 8. These are formed with a top or waist edge 21, and a lower hem edge 22, and junction edges 23, 24, and 25, arranged in stepped relation at each side of the piece. Two pieces of this general form are joined to each other at each edge, on a general line indicated by the dotted line 26 in which manner a complete skirt may be formed with the portions 24 and 25 projecting inwardly therefrom. However, a part of this junction comprises a releasable fastening between the pieces, as will be subsequently explained, whereby the garment is given distinctive qualities and function as will appear. One of these junctions is at the front of the garment in the present instance, and the other at the rear. At the rear, the portions 23 are permanently secured together by a usual stitched upper seam, as at 27, while at the front the junction is made by means of zipper fastenings 28, with the usual slide fastener 29 thereof, this fastening stopping at a suitable depth to form a placket by which the skirt may be put on and taken off readily, the placket being indicated generally by the numeral 30. The upper edge of the skirt may be finished with a usual waist-band 31, with a tongue and button 32 and 33 by which the waist may be closed over the upper end of the fastening members 28—29. It will be noted that the fastener elements 28 are close to the edge portion 23 of the pattern piece, with sufficient material beyond to form a usual hem 34 at each side, so that when the placket is closed, the fastener elements are all concealed by the hem and the belt, as may be seen in Figure 2. Between the edge portions 23 and 24 of the pattern, there is a short bias edge 35, and between the portions 24 and 25 a lateral edge portion 36. The edge portion 25 is located or spaced much further beyond the portion 24 than the latter is beyond the top edge portion 23, as may be seen. After the stitching together of the edges 23 of the two pieces, or before, the edges 24 and 36 at the mutually adjacent sides of the pieces are then stitched together smoothly and preferably covered with a gimp, or braid to form a smooth edge. The side portions of the two pieces at

the opposite side of the garment are likewise connected, and in this manner it will be seen that between the dotted lines 26 or fold 37, there is a considerable material between the line 26 and the seam at 24, affording a fullness which lies within the horizontal contour of the garment when worn, at the front in one instance, and at the rear below the seam 27. Also, the seam at 36 which may be substantially continuous with the seam at 24, extends inwardly from the rear or the front, as the case may be, and when these parts at front and rear are brought together, they form a crotch extending from the rear to front, for which reason the seam at 36 will be termed a "crotch seam." The line 26 is defined by a fold or crease 37 which may extend in a substantially straight line, as shown in Figure 6, from the waist edge to the lower skirt edge, this part being stitched together at the rear to form the seam 27. At the lower part of the placket 30, the two pieces are connected by a short seam, and also reinforced by an underlaid strip of suitable material 38 which is fixed to both pieces, and extends across the seam, so as to reinforce the garment and minimize liability of ripping, as will be understood. As may be seen in Figure 4, the seam 27 extends downwardly to about the same depth as the placket and reinforcement 38, and from this height on the garment both at front and rear, complementary zipper fastener strips 39 may be attached to the garment parallel to each crease 37, and extend downwardly to within about five or six inches of the bottom hem of the skirt in a garment of the particular type shown, although this distance may be varied according to the length of skirt or the style of the garment, and the usual slide coupler 40 is coengaged with these strips so as to draw them together and interlock them in the familiar way when the slide is moved downwardly from its upper limit. When the slides 40 are moved to the lower limits of their movement and then placket 30 is closed by movement of the slide coupler 29 upwardly, the garment in both front and rear presents the appearance of a simple skirt with simple seams at front and rear. When the slides 40 are at the upper limit of their movement, the inner pleat pieces 41, which are defined between the line 26 and the edges 25 on each piece, and which are now attached together at their upper edges 36, hang as shields within the gores formed at the fasteners 39 and 40. Separable snap fasteners 42 are attached to the lower parts of the edges 25, so that these edges may be connected and present the appearance of a continuous skirt portion back of the opening or gore formed when the fasteners 39, 40 is opened, and it is my practice to form a number of pleats 43 in the material of the inner pleat 41, extending substantially radially from a point above the fasteners 40.

With the two pieces of the garment connected at 36, the two edges 25 at each side now form in effect a continuous edge, extending from the bottom of the skirt on one side of the seam at 26, to the bottom on the other side of that seam, substantially as shown in Figures 3, 4 and 10, and respective zipper fastener strips 44 are attached to these edges, one at front and one at the rear, the ends of the strips stopping just above the uppermost snap fastener 42 at the front and rear, and a slide coupler 45 is arranged to be detachably connected to these strips so that it may be started upon the two at one end and moved to the opposite end of the two to inter-



connect them so as to close the space between the two, as shown in Figures 4 and 11, forming a separable leg seam extending transversely across the garment and across the crotch at 36, as shown in Figures 3 and 11.

When the slide 45 is in disengaged relation to the fasteners 44, the adjacent portions of the goods form small loops of cloth of generally triangular form, substantially as shown at 46, in Figures 1 and 2.

It will be understood that if desired, the fasteners 39 and 40 may be opened at the front only, at times to afford the necessary freedom for walking, or may be omitted at the rear or front in the making of the garment. Also other fasteners may be utilized in place of them and also in place of the fasteners 44 and 45.

The garment is adapted to be produced from various kinds of textile materials and it is an advantage of the invention that it will present a good appearance in the simplest and inexpensive materials, as well as in more distinctive weaves or fibres and expensive materials.

It should be noted that when the garment is worn the fullnesses at 24 serve to prevent the garment from accentuating contours of the figure in objectionable ways, and also serve to make the garment more comfortable to the wearer in these parts. They also prevent the appearance of recesses, ridges or other prominences upon the surface contours of the garment due to undesirably snug fit of the garment, or underlying garment pieces. In addition, the provision of the full crotch at 36 and the free leg seam at the fastenings 44 and 45 when closed obviate peculiar distortions of the garment when made as a close-fitting smooth skirt that would be involved by many practices in convertible or combined garments of the general kind.

The garment is exceptionally valuable in affording a comfortable skirt of purely formal lines suitable for social occasions among people of good taste and strict standards of dress, while at the same time enabling its adaptation in a moment to the requirements of exceptional activity such as tennis, cliff-climbing and for sports wear generally.

In the use of a garment embodying my invention, it may be arranged in four different forms, the first of which may be considered as a full skirt in which the fastenings 39 and 40 are open, as well as the fastenings 44 and 45. In this arrangement the garment will appear as a gored skirt, seeming to have gores at front and back, although actually formed in the two pattern pieces such as shown in Figure 8 without inserts. The skirt in this arrangement will have exceptionally full lower parts, which may give a "belled" appearance extending a considerable distance above the hem of the skirt, and gives unusual freedom of movement to the limbs of the wearer for walking or running. Ordinarily, this skirt will be made in a length to extend slightly below the knees of the wearer, but may be made in longer length, if desired, and preferably is made in a length to reach slightly below the knee-cap of the wearer when standing at ease. If made of much greater length, it may be found preferable to extend the length of the skirt between the lines 26 rather than throughout the full width of the pieces illustrated in Figure 8.

In another form of the garment, the lower placket strips having the fasteners 39 and 40 may be closed, the skirt then being suitable for formal

occasions, although due to the space between the lower hem of the skirt and the lower ends of the fasteners 39, there is still a fullness left by which the skirt may assume a "belled" form, and afford freedom around the knees of the wearer. In either of these arrangements of the skirt with regard to the fasteners 39—40, the edge portions 25 at front and back of the garment may be brought into alignment with the fasteners 44 engaged properly with the coupler 45, and the latter moved into engagement with the fasteners so as to coengage them throughout their length. Thus the crotch is closed between the limbs of the wearer, as may be understood. With the fasteners 39 and 40 in open position, there is still afforded a sports skirt suitable for athletic pursuits with great freedom of movement of the wearer, and with the fasteners 39 and 40 closed, a warm garment may be embodied, suitable for winter wear, and when made of lighter materials will still afford a garment having the advantages of the closed crotch, as will be appreciated. In other words, in the latter two arrangements the garment has the function of a pair of short pants.

The parts of the garment connected by the fasteners 39 and 40 may be considered as external seams upon the skirt, and the connection effected by the fasteners 44 and 45 may be termed a transverse leg seam.

In Figures 12 to 14 a modified form of the skirt is shown, in which the pattern pieces are formed as before described, but the pattern pieces are connected at front and rear, above the crotch portion by respective dart seams 50 and 51, these seams extending downwardly to the upper termination of the fold seam 37' corresponding to the seam 37 of the first form of the garment. In addition, the pattern section 20' is formed in two pieces, longitudinally stitched together forming a seam 52 for a purpose as will appear. It will be noted that the seams 37' at front and rear are devoid of any fastening devices, such as those illustrated at 39 in the first form, so that a full pleated effect is obtained providing a greater freedom of movement, whether the garment is employed as a bifurcated one or in skirt form.

In view of the fact that the seams 50 and 51 are at front and rear of the garment, the closure placket 31' is formed upon one of the side portions of the garment, the closure being effected by separable fasteners 23' as in the first form. Preferably, the placket 31' is formed on the left side of the garment and upon the right side, a pocket 53 of conventional form is provided, built or stitched into an opening provided in the seam 52.

Instead of closing the crotch portions of the garment by zipper fasteners 44, common snap fasteners 54 are employed, being so positioned as to require inward turning of respective edges to bring the complementary fasteners into operative position for engagement, thereby fully concealing the fasteners from view.

While I have described the garment with great particularity in the best manner of construction known to me, it will nevertheless be understood that this is purely exemplary and that modifications in the construction and proportions of parts and their specific form may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention, as may be more readily understood from the following claims.

I claim:

1. A skirt having diametrically opposite pleats in its lower part closed by separable fasteners,



the pleats having folded inner extensions from the skirt at each side of each of the pleats defining gores and means to connect pleats whereby together they close the gores formed when the fasteners are separated.

2. The skirt of claim 1 in which said extensions are at front and rear and include lower parts and upper parts, the upper parts being connected to each other and means on the lower parts to separably connect the extensions at one side to those on the opposite side whereby together they form a crotch and leg parts within the skirt.

3. The skirt of claim 1 formed in two pieces each having said extensions formed integrally on opposite sides thereof, said pieces being joined together by seam on a line outwardly of said extensions, each extension including upper edge portions joined to form crotch portions, and side edges and separable means to connect the side edges at one side of the garment with those on the opposite side whereby to form a complete crotch extending a substantial distance horizontally.

4. The skirt of claim 1 in which said extensions include upper parts of minor extension, and lower parts of major extension including upper crotch edges, the extremities of the upper parts spaced from said seams, and the upper edges of the lower parts being connected together, and separable fastener means to connect the extremities of said lower parts of the extensions to the extremities of like parts at the opposite side of the garment, whereby a tubular passage is formed between each of said upper parts and said seams, and a full crotch bifurcated garment embodied below.

5. A garment of the character described having front and rear skirt portions open from their lower edges to provide gores, complementary manually operable separable fasteners along lateral margins of the gores, skirt material inwardly of said gores having diagonally extending upper edges forming flaps and stitched together to connect companion flaps whereby to form shields for the gores, manually operable separable fasteners carried by the extremities of said flaps for detachably connecting front and rear flaps with each other to form a closed crotch and leg portions.

6. A skirt having front and rear extensions with folds defining gores, extending from the lower edge of the skirt and converging upwardly, skirt material extending inwardly from adjacent each lateral margin of the gores, mutually adjacent said extensions connected together at their upper parts to form a continuous part from one said margin to the other of each gore and constituting flaps adapted to be swung inwardly and upwardly so that the material of the flaps may extend downwardly from said connection at each side of the latter, with extremities of the extensions presented toward each other, and complementary separable fasteners on each of said extremities to detachably connect the same whereby said extensions will form leg portions with a fore-and-aft crotch at said upper connected parts, said extremities and fasteners thereat constituting inner leg seams.

7. The structure of claim 6 wherein said extensions are each formed with a bottom edge intersecting the edge of said extremity to form a corner, and complementary separable fasteners on said corners at each gore.

8. A skirt having front and rear portions with folds defining gores, extending from the lower edge of the skirt and converging upwardly, skirt material extending inwardly from adjacent each lateral margin of the gores, mutually adjacent said extensions connected together at their upper parts to form a continuous part from one said margin to the other of each gore and constituting flaps adapted to be swung inwardly and upwardly so that the material of the flaps may extend downwardly from said connection at each side of the latter with extremities of the extensions presented toward each other, and complementary separable fasteners on each of said extremities to detachably connect the same whereby said extensions will form leg portions with fore-and-aft crotch at said upper connected parts, said extensions and fasteners thereat constituting inner leg seams, complementary separable fasteners along each lateral margin of the gores a distance defining the edges of major skirt seams and adapted to be detachably connected to form a straight skirt having inwardly extending flaps.

9. The structure of claim 6 in which each said extension is formed with a bottom edge intersecting the edge of said extremity to form a corner, and separable fasteners on said corners complementary to such fasteners on corner portions of mutually adjacent extensions at the same gores, said last named fasteners being also complementary to such fasteners on corners of respective said extensions at gores on the opposite side of the skirt, whereby mutually adjacent corners may be connected to complete a shield portion for the gore, and alternatively connected to like corners at opposite side of the skirt to complete leg portions.

10. The structure of claim 6 in which said complementary fasteners are also complementary to those on mutually adjacent extensions at front and rear of the skirt.

11. A skirt having diametrically opposite pleats in its lower part, and inner extensions from the skirt at each side of each of the pleats, said extensions being at front and rear and including lower parts and upper parts, the upper parts being connected to each other and snap fasteners on the lower parts of respective extensions whereby together they form a crotch and leg parts within the skirt when engaged.

12. A skirt having diametrically opposite unconnected pleats in its lower part, and inner extensions from the skirt at each side of each of the pleats, said extensions being at front and rear and including lower parts and upper parts, the upper parts being connected to each other, snap fasteners on the lower parts of respective extensions whereby together they form a crotch and leg parts within the skirt when engaged, said skirt having a closure placket upon one side and a pocket upon the other side.

MARY L. SANSOM.