

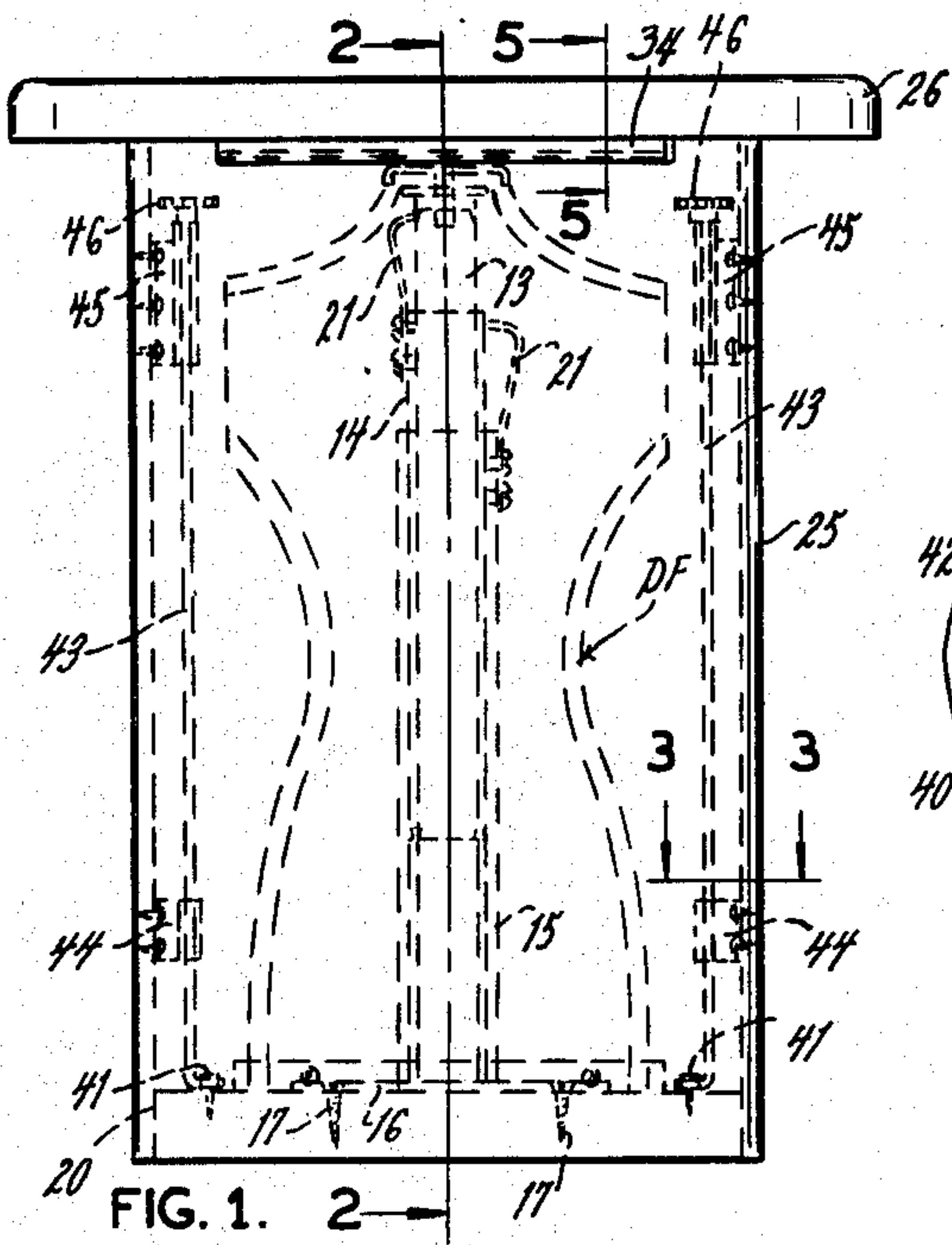
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**G. M. SMITH**

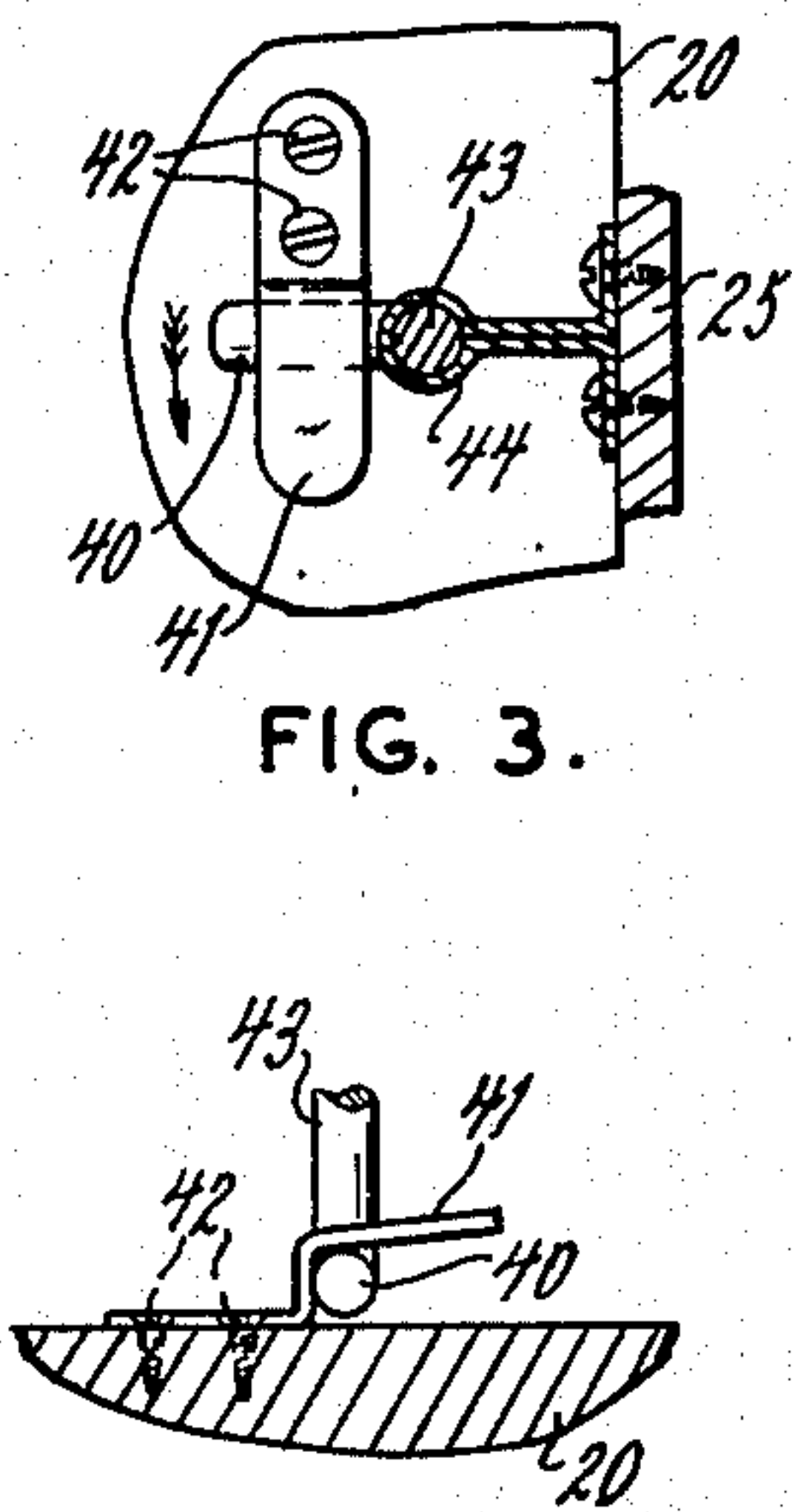
**2,628,747**

ENCLOSED RETRACTABLE DRESS FORM

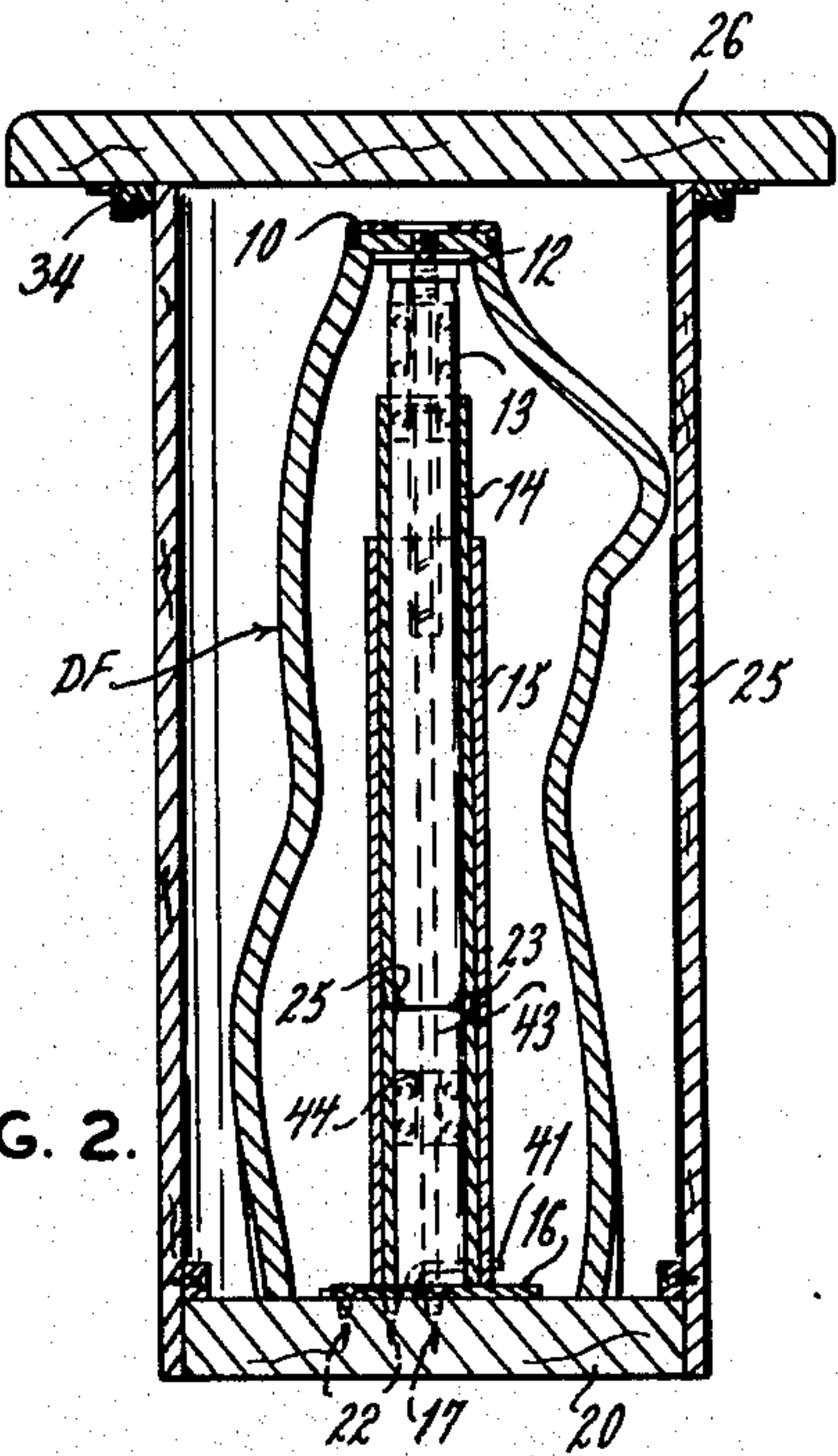
Filed Oct. 27, 1949



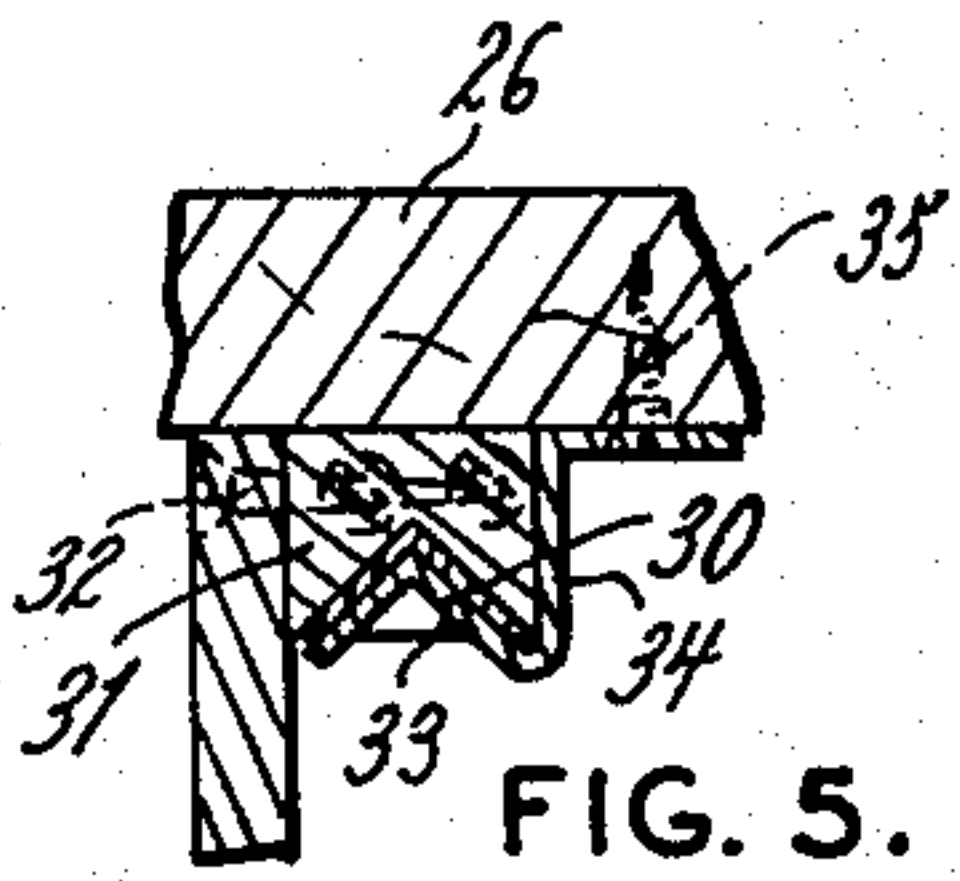
**FIG. 3.**



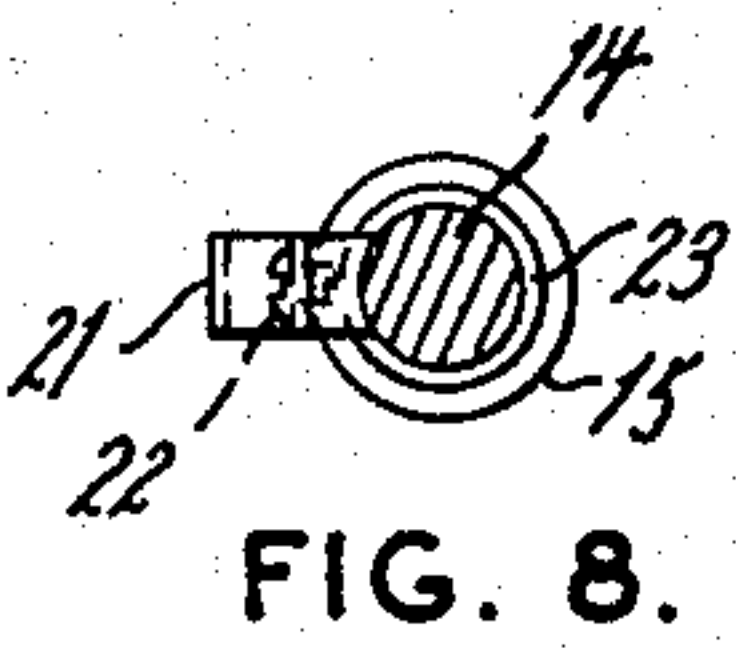
**FIG. 4.**



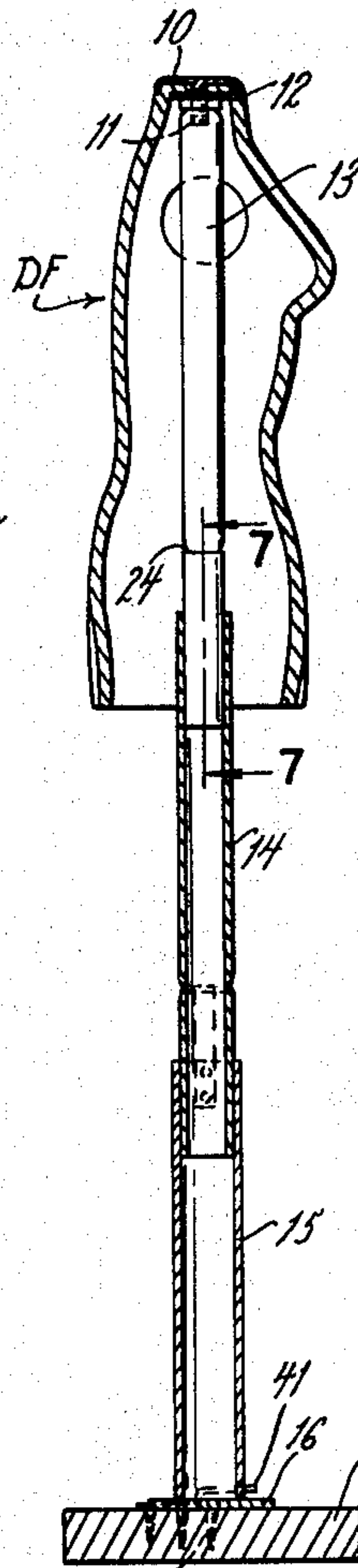
**FIG. 2.**



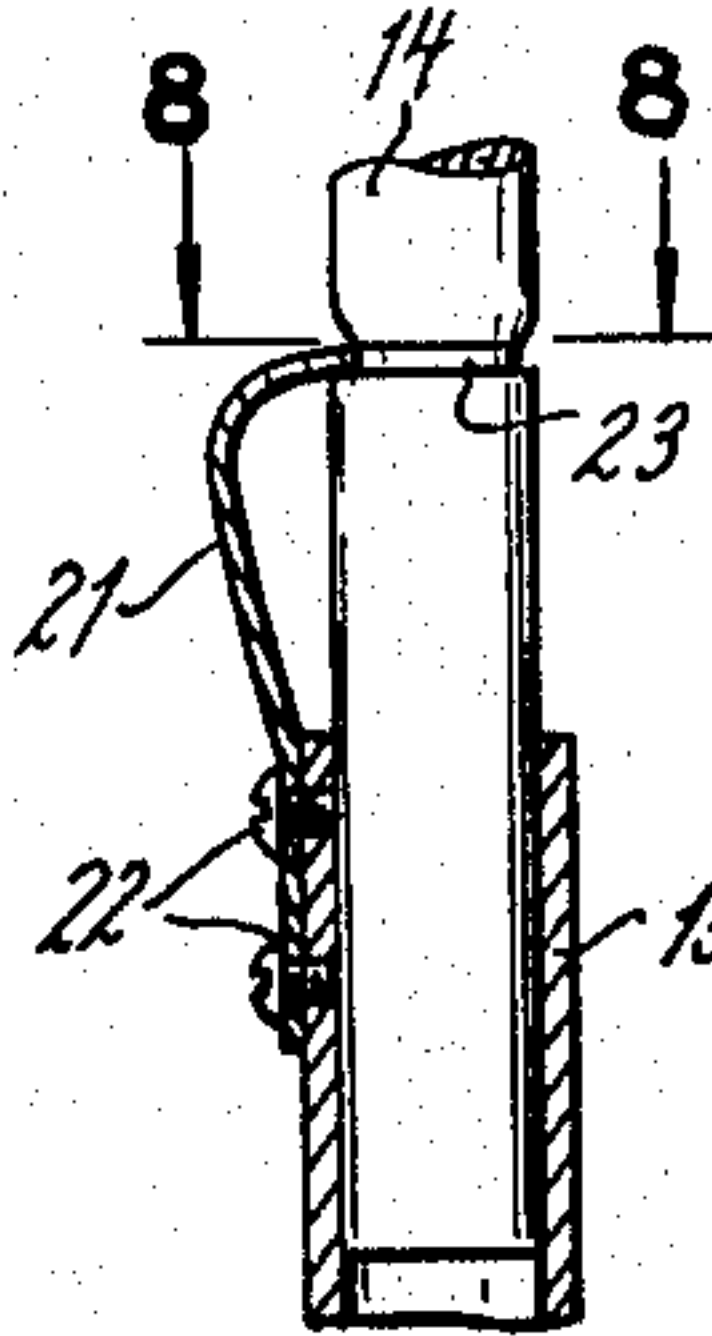
**FIG. 5.**



**FIG. 8.**



**FIG. 6.**



**FIG. 7.**

INVENTOR  
GRIFFITH M. SMITH  
BY *Terry Cohen*  
ATTORNEY



## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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## ENCLOSED RETRACTABLE DRESS FORM

Griffith M. Smith, Richmond Heights, Mo.

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5 Claims. (Cl. 223—68)

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This invention relates to improvements in enclosed, retractable dress forms, and more particularly to a combination dress form and enclosure therefor such that the form may be stored within a cabinet or table of utilitarian value per se, between periods of usage of the form.

The extent of usage of dress forms, particularly by domestic seamstresses, has been heretofore considerably restricted by reason of the space requirements for storage, even of dress forms of retractable type, between periods of usage.

Within the knowledge of this applicant, there has never appeared as available to the trade, or otherwise, any dress form and cabinet structure, in which the major elements are coordinately designed to provide a useful form as well as an attractive and useful article of furniture. The present invention is accordingly directed, as to major objective, to the attainment of this purpose, with a view of enhancing the facilities for storage of utilitarian articles of this general order.

The present invention may be summarized in reference to its currently preferred embodiments, as consisting of a supporting base, an extensible or retractable column on the base, which column serves to carry the dress form proper, together with an open-end vertical casing or housing structure which selectively may form the walls of a cabinet or a pedestal for a table as well as a storing receptacle for the form between periods of usage. A table top is provided as a cabinet cover which may be opened for access to the interior, and the cabinet, base and form are so related that the wall structure may be lifted away from the base and form, with a minimal manual effort incident to conversion of the form between its condition for storage and that of its usage.

Additional objectives of the invention will be implied from the aforesaid summary; still further objects include the provision of novel detachable connections between the supporting base and the form-enclosing structure.

Still further objects and advantages in preferred embodiments include a unitary or one piece enclosing element of a length sufficient to surround the form when the latter is retracted or collapsed, and certain novel fittings by which a cover or table top may be opened for access to the interior of the enclosure, and if desired may be removed therefrom.

The foregoing and numerous other objects and advantages will more clearly appear from the following detailed description of a preferred and

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advanced embodiment, particularly when considered in connection with the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a vertical sectional elevational view of a dress form and enclosure assembly embodying present improvements;

Fig. 2 is a vertical sectional view taken in a plane at a right angle to that of Fig. 1, and located by line 2—2 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary horizontal sectional view partly in elevation, and particularly located by line 3—3 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary sectional view, partly in elevation, showing portions of the latch mechanism for detachably connecting the base to the wall structure;

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary sectional view of certain of the detachable connections between the cover or table top and the wall structure of the cabinet as viewed along line 5—5 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 6 is a vertical sectional elevation of the dress form and supporting column therefor and a part of the base, with the form erected to a position for its use;

Fig. 7 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional elevation as viewed along line 7—7 of Fig. 6, and

Fig. 8 is a fragmentary transverse sectional view in a horizontal plane, located by line 8—8 of Fig. 7.

Referring now by characters of reference to the drawing, the dress form generally indicated at DF is or may be per se, of a somewhat conventional construction, but is preferably of a one-piece molded type conforming in its proportions and dimensions to the requirements of the user, although the form may be of expansible sectional construction or other desired type.

By reference to Fig. 6 it will appear that the neck region of the form includes a top metal closure plate 10, centrally of which depends a screw element 11 engaging a plate 12 somewhat internally of the form. The member 11 may extend into a tapped top-open axial recess in an upper section 13 of a telescoping column with which cooperates an intermediate section 14 and a lower section 15. Certain of these sections, all of which are proportioned in diameter for smooth telescopic interfitting connection, will be of tubular form and the lowermost section 15 provided with a base flange 16 secured as by screws 17 to a base element 20 which will be hereinafter described as to its relation to the cabinet and enclosing structure.

The telescoping column comprised of sections 13, 14 and 15 will, now obviously, be susceptible



of selective erection to bring the form to a suitable height for usage, or a retracted position in which the elements will appear about as shown by Figs. 1 and 2, later to be described.

By reason of the differing heights of individuals to which the particular form DF is adapted, it is desirable to provide for a height adjustment of the form in its erected or raised position. While this may be accomplished by a variety of means, there has been found particularly suitable an arrangement best shown by Fig. 7, from which it is seen that the upper end of the section 15 carries an inverted C shaped spring arm 21, a base portion of which is secured to the section as by screws 22. The adjacent section, for example section 14, is provided with a plurality of vertically spaced circumferential grooves 23. The spring loading of arm 21 is such that the outermost, substantially horizontal end of the arm, will extend into a selected one of the grooves 23 and thus serve to support the form at the optimum height for work thereon. It is sometimes desirable also to provide a similar groove such as 24 in the uppermost section, which when engaged by the end of spring arm 21, will coact therewith in keeping the parts of the column and the form in fully retracted position, as for transportation and like purposes.

Referring now to Figs. 1 and 2, and more particularly to the cabinet or table structure constituting an enclosure for the form and column between periods of usage, it is a preference that the base 20 be formed so as rather closely, yet with appreciable working clearance, to interfit the lower end of a cabinet wall member 25. The member 25 is in the form of an open-end chambered element, and may be as is preferred, of one-piece construction and hence tubular in character. The base 20 thus, with the parts as shown by Figs. 1 and 2, constitutes an inter-fitting bottom closure for the tubiform wall element 25.

A planar cover 26 is by preference so proportioned as to overhang appreciably the sides of the tubular member 25, thus adding appreciably to the useful table surface provided by the planar table top or cover.

In the present construction it is virtually essential that the cover 26, considered as a closure for the cabinet, be so attached thereto as it may be opened for access to the cabinet interior. While this may be done as by hinges or similar conventional hardware, it is greatly preferred to provide along opposite sides of the upper wall portion of member 25, a pair of track members 30, each in the form of a metal channel suitably supported as by blocks 31 and screws 32 exteriorly along the upper marginal portions of the tubular structure 25. At least one end of each of the track elements 30 is left open. Coacting with the opposite tracks are a similarly located and correspondingly spaced pair of track-following members, including conforming track-following portions 33 each of which is constituted of an angulate reentrant portion of a fitting 34 secured as by screws 35 in suitable locations beneath the table top or cover 26. The parts 33 and 34, or at least the latter, are preferably formed of a resilient metal stock so that the follower portions 33 bear with a slight pressure against and into the adjacent tracks 30. By reason of the open ends of the tracks 30, it will now appear that the table top or cover 26 may be removed, for example, by horizontal movement to the right (Fig. 1) and if desired such movement

may be carried to the extent of complete removability of the table top from the tubular shell 25.

To the end of minimizing the lifting effort incident to erection of the form to a position of usage, it has been found desirable to provide for detachable securement of the tubiform enclosure to the base 20. A suitable provision for such purpose includes for example, a pair of swingable latch arms such as 40 (Figs. 3 and 4). These are movable for example, through a range of 90 degrees or so in a horizontal plane, into and out of latching engagement, each with a keeper shown at 41 which is extended above the base at a slight slope as shown by Fig. 4, each keeper being secured to the base as by screws 42. Actuation of each of the latch arms 40 is conveniently effected as by extension means shown as consisting of a vertical rod 43, each of such rods being rotatably supported in a plurality of bearing hangers such as 44 near the lower portion of the inside of the tubular housing member 25, and another indicated at 45, somewhat below the upper part of this structure. At the upper end of each of the extension actuating rods 43, is a handle 46 shown as a handwheel, and accessible to the user just below the upper portion of the tubular housing element 25 when open at the top.

It will now have appeared that the latch mechanism at each side of the base 20 may be operated from unlatching to latching positions whenever the cover or top 26 is open, merely by actuating the handwheels 46 in a direction and to an extent to bring the arms 40 fully beneath the associated keeper 41, for the purpose of securely attaching the base 20 in bottom-closing relation to the tubiform structure 25. An opposite movement of each of the handwheels 46 will serve to bring the latch arms 40 each entirely outwardly of its keeper 41, following which the member 25 may be readily lifted away from the base and form.

Without any implication of restriction as to materials, it is noted that the tubiform shell, casing or housing 25 may be formed as a unit say of plywood, and for example, of an oblong horizontal section so as to minimize the sectional area thereof and yet provide adequate clearance between the inside wall of member 25 and the form. The use of plywood is of advantage because of its light weight and high degree of rigidity, as well as its acceptability of a variety of finishes in full harmony with other furniture.

The manner of usage and the operations incident to utilization of the present improvements, are thought now to have become fully apparent from the earlier description of the parts, but it may be noted for completeness that, assuming the dress form and cabinet to be related as shown by Figs. 1 and 2, and that it be desired to bring the form to operative condition, the table top 26 is shifted and if desired removed, so as to provide full manual access to the interior of the member 25. Following this, the handwheels 46 are actuated to release the latch arms 40 from the keepers 41, and the tubiform cabinet wall element 25 lifted away from the base 20 and the form. Suitable casters or other rolling or sliding floor engaging elements (not shown) may be provided beneath the base 20, which thus may easily be brought to a work position, and the form DF now raised to bring the section 13 partly out of section 14, and the latter in turn, at least partly out of section 15, height adjustment of the column being effect-



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ed by selection of the appropriate groove 23 to be engaged by spring arm 21. The form, now being in a position of usage, may be rotated readily about its own axis without shifting the base 20, this being possible by reason of the 360 degree extent of the grooves 23, inasmuch as the spring arm 21 will not in any great degree retard the movement of the form and parts of the column about their vertical axis. Assuming now that it be desired to retract or collapse the form and to enclose same, the order of events will be merely the reverse of that heretofore recited incident to erection.

In the present disclosure the cabinet wall element 25 and the table top or cover 26 are shown about as they would be proportioned to constitute a useful end table, night stand or similar small article of furniture. It will now be obvious, however, that particularly where space is greatly at a premium, it may be desirable to constitute of these elements a pedestal type or single-leg table. In such case the tubular shell element 25 would constitute a single central support for the table and by considerably augmenting the overhung area of the top 26 a table of dining or dinette proportions may be artistically evolved, without detracting in any way from the essential utilitarian features of the combination. Similarly, the base 20 may be extended below or outwardly of the structure 25 when so desired.

Experience has shown that it is more desirable in certain cases wherein the garment includes a skirt portion, to utilize the form with the tubular shell 25 in place on the base, the cover or top of course being removed, and the form proper being lifted to the desired extent to cause the lower skirt portion to lie just outside the shell 25. The latter, due to its continuous curved wall, thus serves conveniently as a backing for the skirt, greatly facilitating such operations as pinning measurements, marking and even temporary stitching, as on a skirt hem, for example. The member 25 being formed of a relatively rigid imperforate material such as plywood, thus serves admirably as a support for the fabric incident to the noted operations.

Although the invention has been described by detailed reference to a single preferred embodiment, the detail of description should be understood in an instructive rather than in any restrictive sense, numerous variants being possible within the scope of the claims hereunto appended.

I claim as my invention:

1. In a dress form assembly of enclosed type, a dress form of vertically extensible retractible type, a base centrally of which the dress form is supported, an open end element surrounding the dress form and of a height at least equal thereto when the form is in retracted position, a top closure for the open end element, the base serving as a bottom closure therefor, latch means by which the open end element is detachably secured to the base, and means connected to the latch means, and accessible near an upper portion of the open end element for actuating the latch means, the open end element further being of a height such that the element may extend upwardly into a skirt portion of a garment on the form, when the latter is in an extended position.

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2. The combination and arrangement of elements as recited by claim 1, but further characterized in that the latch means and means for actuating same, are disposed entirely within the open end element, and still further characterized in that the top closure for the open end element may be opened for access to the interior of such element.

3. In an enclosable and retractible dress form assembly, a base, a dress form supported by the base, a vertical tubiform enclosure of a height fully to surround the dress form when the latter is a retracted position, and of a height such that the enclosure may be utilized at least partly within the skirt portion of a garment on the form when the latter is in a position of use, means for raising the form above the enclosure and for retracting it within the enclosure, a detachable connection between the base and the tubiform enclosure, and a cover movably attached to the top of the tubiform enclosure.

4. In a combined dress form and cabinet therefor, a planar base element, a column of variable length telescoping type supported on and attached centrally of the base, a dress form carried by said column, the telescoping column coacting with the form to permit location of the form at various predetermined heights above the base, and movement of the form between a position of usage and a retracted position, a tubiform enclosure disposed vertically above the base and of a height at least equal to that of the form when in retracted position, and a removable cover for the upper end of said enclosure and detachably secured thereto, the tubiform enclosure being of a height and cross-sectional shape such that it is adapted to serve as a vertical backing element for a skirt portion of a garment on the form when the column is extended to locate the form in a position of usage.

5. A dress form and cabinet comprised of a base, a dress form including an extensible column attached to the base, a tubular vertical shell above the base, the base interfitted the lower end of the shell, and a table top constituting a closure for the upper end of the shell, and a connection between the table top and shell, enabling the top to be opened for access to the interior of the shell, the shell being of a height at least equal to that of the form when in retracted position, and being of a height and cross-section such that it may serve as a vertical backing element for a skirt portion of a garment on the form when the latter is extended upwardly of the cabinet.

GRIFFITH M. SMITH.

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