

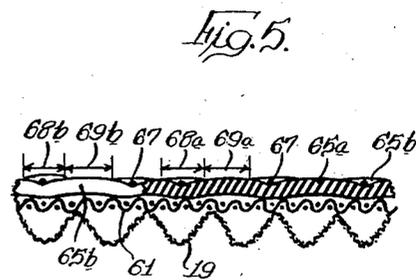
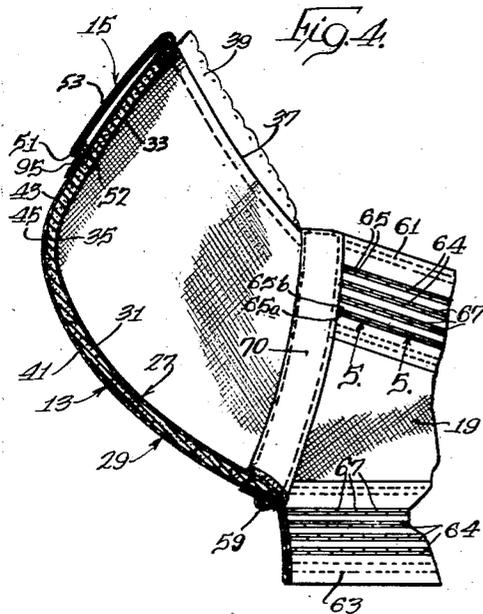
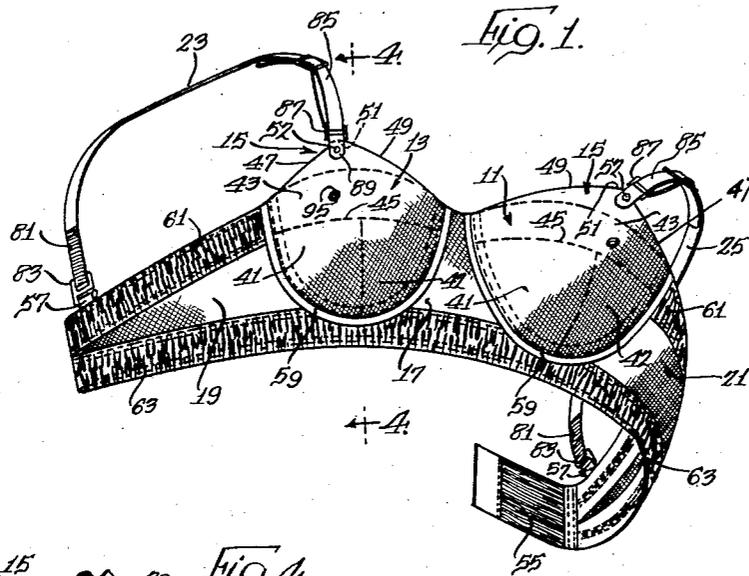
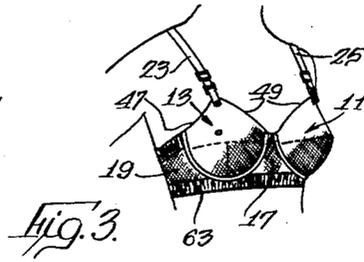
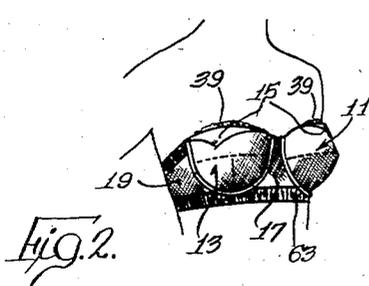
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BRASSIERE

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2,940,454

BRASSIERE

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The present invention relates generally to brassieres, and more particularly to a dual purpose brassiere which in one arrangement forms an ordinary brassiere including full breast cups and supporting shoulder straps, and in another arrangement forms a strapless brassiere having breast cups which expose the upper portions of the breasts of the wearer.

A brassiere having full breast cups and supporting shoulder straps and which is convertible to a strapless brassiere, is a very useful addition to a woman's wardrobe. A garment of this type should be perfectly comfortable and at the same time should give proper support to the breasts when worn either with the shoulder straps, or in the strapless fashion. The brassiere should maintain its position about the body of the wearer when worn as a strapless garment or when worn with the shoulder straps.

Accordingly, the principal objects of this invention are the provision of a new and improved brassiere which may be worn with the associated shoulder straps, or without the shoulder straps as a strapless brassiere; and to provide such a brassiere having excellent comfort and supporting qualities.

Further objects of this invention are to provide a brassiere including a pair of breast cups each having an upper portion adapted to be folded forwardly when worn in the strapless fashion to expose the upper portions of the breasts of the wearer; to provide a brassiere of the type described having a novel arrangement for firmly and comfortably anchoring the garment around the body of the wearer to maintain the garment in the proper position; to provide a brassiere of the type described which includes novel means for securing the upper portions of the breast cups in the strapless fashion; and to provide a brassiere of the type described which includes decorative edging which becomes exposed to view when the upper portions of the breast cups are folded forwardly.

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become known by reference to the following description and the accompanying drawings of one embodiment of the invention.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of a brassiere constructed in accordance with the present invention.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the brassiere shown in Figure 1 illustrating the brassiere in the strapless arrangement on the body of a wearer.

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the brassiere shown in Figure 1 illustrating the brassiere on the body of a wearer in the arrangement including full breast cups and supporting shoulder straps.

Figure 4 is an enlarged sectional view taken generally along line 4—4 of Figure 1 but showing the upper portion in its forwardly folded position.

Figure 5 is an enlarged sectional view taken along line 5—5 of Figure 4.

The drawings illustrate one embodiment of a brassiere

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formed in accordance with this invention. The brassiere will first be described in the arrangement including full breast cups and supporting shoulder straps, as shown in Figures 1 and 3 wherein the brassiere comprises generally a pair of spaced apart full breast cups 11 and 13, a central panel 17, body encircling panels 19 and 21, and a pair of detachable straps 23 and 25. Each of the full breast cups 11 and 13 has an uppermost portion 15 which is forwardly folded into overlying relation with the respectively adjacent outer surfaces of the breast cups when the garment is converted and worn in the strapless arrangement, as shown in Figure 2. Each of the breast cups 11 and 13 also has co-acting means for securing the folded uppermost portion 15 to the respectively adjacent outer surface of the breast cup when the garment is converted to the strapless arrangement.

The breast cups 11 and 13 are each of a size to fully envelope the breasts thereby aiding in providing excellent comfort qualities, and are of substantially like construction, except that the cups are of right and left hand cut. The breast cups 11 and 13 may be constructed in various ways to provide proper support to the breasts, and to provide an uppermost portion which is adapted to be forwardly folded to reduce the height of the breast cups. In this disclosed embodiment, each of the breast cups 11 and 13 comprises an outer overlying fabric cup 29 and an inner supporting cup 27 of lesser height than the outer cup 29.

The outer fabric cup 29 may be of any suitable fabric, such as decorative lace, and may be formed in a variety of ways. In this instance, the outer cup 29 includes a pair of lower sections 41 and 42 and an upper section 43. The lower sections are joined together along a central generally vertical seam and are joined to the upper section along a generally horizontal seam 45 which runs approximately through the nipple-engaging area of the breast cups. In this disclosed construction, the upper section 43 is of generally triangular shape and includes edges 47 and 49 which meet at a point 51 slightly outward of the vertical center of the breast cups.

Various suitable engagement means may be provided on each of the breast cups for detachable inter-engagement with co-acting means for attaching the shoulder straps 23 and 25 or with co-acting means for securing the forwardly folded uppermost portion 15 when the brassiere is in the strapless arrangement. In this embodiment, the engagement means is a button 52 located adjacent the point 51 of each of the breast cups. The button 52 is preferably of thin and flat form in order to protrude as little as possible so as to be unnoticeable under outer garments of the wearer.

The inner supporting cup 27 may be formed in numerous ways to provide support for the breasts and may be fabricated from various materials. In this embodiment, the supporting cup 27 is of a laminated material comprising an outer textile fabric element and an inner textile element. The inner textile element is preferably of so-called cotton or Shaker flannel which has a soft nap on one side and which is preferably inwardly facing of the brassiere. The textile fabric elements are laminated through the agency of a suitable moisture proof, water insoluble ply of rubber or other material which, due to its ability to withstand the effects of moisture in the form of water, will maintain the fabric members permanently in laminated condition. The laminated fabric section may embody materials other than flannel and rubber, but these specific materials are well suited for use in this construction.

In the disclosed embodiment the inner cup 27 is of similar construction to the outer cup and includes a pair of lower sections 31 and an upper section 33. As in the outer cup, the lower sections are joined together along a

central generally vertical seam and are joined to the upper section along a generally horizontal seam 35 which runs approximately through the nipple engaging area of the breast cups.

The upper section 33 of the inner cup 27, in this embodiment, has a lesser height than the upper section 43 of the outer cup 29, and has a generally accurate top edge 37 to which is attached a finishing edging or band 39 of decorative lace. The uppermost portion 15 of each of the breast cups is defined in this construction as that portion of the outer upper section 43 which extends upward of the top edge 37 of the inner upper section 33.

The height of the uppermost portion 15 should be no greater than the height of the inner upper section and is desirably of somewhat lesser height. As a consequence, when the uppermost portion 15 is forwardly folded into overlying relation with the adjacent portion of the upper outer section 43, the uppermost portion 15 is disposed entirely above the horizontal seam 45. In this fashion, the general body contour or silhouette will not be adversely affected by an edge of the uppermost portion 15 extending downwardly and outwardly beyond the upper section of the breast cup.

The breast cups may be constructed with the upper edge 37 of the inner cup suitably secured to the upper section 43 of the outer fabric cup 29 or the upper edge 37 may be left free of attachment to the upper section 43. In the disclosed construction, the upper edge 37 is secured by stitching to the upper section 43 of the fabric cup 29. This construction has the advantage of providing a definitive fold line about which the uppermost portion 15 may be forwardly folded. However, other desirable features may be obtained by leaving the inner and outer cups unstitched along their upper regions to thereby aid in the prevention of puckering due to the possibility of uneven shrinkage rates of the inner and outer cups, and to thereby allow the inner and outer cups to be spaced from one another to aid in drying of the garment after washing. It is desirable to provide a lining 53 for the outer upper section 43 including the uppermost portion 15 so as to obtain a smooth outer surface when the uppermost portion 15 is forwardly folded.

The central panel 17 is preferably of inelastic textile material and extends centrally between the breast cups 11 and 13 being secured to respective adjacent side edge portions thereof. Each of the body encircling panels 19 and 21 is also provided at its rear end portion with interconnecting means for interconnection therebetween. Such means, for example, may include a plurality of hooks secured adjacent the end of one of the body encircling panels and a plurality of co-acting eyes secured adjacent the end of the other of the body encircling panels. An elastic tab extension is preferably provided at the rear end of one of the body encircling panels to assist in contractively securing the brassiere around the body of the wearer. In this instance, the elastic tab extension 55 is secured to the body encircling panel 21. Secured to the upper rear end portion of each of the body encircling panels 19 and 21 is a means for detachably interconnecting with one end of one of the shoulder straps 23 or 25. Various means, well known in the art, may be employed and in this case the means is provided by a fabric loop 57.

Each of the body encircling panels 19 and 21 is shirred on the inside adjacent its upper edge to an elastic band 61. The lower edge portions of the body encircling panels 19 and 21 and the central panel 17 are also shirred on the inside to an elastic band 63 which in this embodiment extends continuously about the lower portion of the brassiere. The elastic bands 61 and 63, and the elastic tab extension 55 cooperate to contractively hold the brassiere in proper position on the body of the wearer.

One of the novel features of this invention is a means whereby the brassiere may be maintained in the proper

position about the body of the wearer with more comfort and with less contractive force. Secured along the inside surface of the elastic bands 61 and 63 are a plurality of bands 65 of heavy threads of rubber or other suitable rubber-like extensible material which are arranged and grouped together to form a series of hills and vales which with slight contractive force will firmly adhere to the flesh of the wearer to insure and maintain the proper position of the brassiere about the body of the wearer. In this embodiment the bands 65 are of generally rectangular cross section, although bands of other cross sections may be employed. Various arrangements of the bands 65 may be employed, however, a preferred construction is illustrated in Figures 4 and 5, which comprises a series of spaced apart pairs 64 of bands which extend longitudinally of the elastic bands 61 and 63. Each of the spaced apart pairs 64 of bands comprises individual bands 65a and 65b which are secured parallel to and adjacent each other by a series of spaced apart stitches 67. The stitches 67 tightly crimp or squeeze the bands 65 to the underlying elastic band 61 or 63, and leave generally undisturbed the rectangular cross section of the greater central portion of the individual bands 65 extending between the stitches 67. The stitching is so spaced as to place the stitches 67 and the accompanying squeezed portions 68a underlying the stitches of one of the bands 65a adjacent the central undisturbed rectangular portions 69b of the adjacent band 65b. The same relation exists between the squeezed portion 68b of the band 65b and the undisturbed central portions 69a of the band 65a. In the disclosed construction, four spaced apart pairs 64 of bands are employed. In this fashion, a series of hills and vales are formed which maintain the position of the brassiere on the body of the wearer without the discomfort accompanying a large contractive force or a wide and/or heavy elastic band.

The shoulder straps 23 and 25 should each include means at one end for detachably engaging with the upper rear end portion of one of the body encircling panels 19 or 21 and means at the other end for detachably engaging with the breast cup adjacent the engaged body encircling panel. The shoulder straps 23 and 25 should each preferably include a conventional elastic section and a conventional loop by which the length of the strap may be adjusted. In the disclosed construction, the shoulder straps 23 and 25 each include adjacent the rear end thereof a length 81 of elastic material. In this embodiment, a coupling hook 83, is provided at the rear end of each of the shoulder straps for detachable interengagement with one of the loops 57 of the body encircling panels 19 and 21.

Adjacent the forward end of each of the straps 23 and 25 are loop means well known in the art, indicated generally at 85. Connected to the loop 85 through a coupling 87 is a tab extension 89 of fabric material provided with suitable means, such as in this case, a button hole for engaging with one of the buttons 52 provided on the uppermost portion 15 of each of the breast cups 19 and 21.

When the garment is worn as a strapless brassiere, means should be provided for securing the forwardly folded uppermost portion 15 of each of the breast cups 11 and 13 to the respectively adjacent outer surface of the breast cups. Various means may be employed, however, in this embodiment, a loop 95 is secured to the upper section 43 of the outer cup 29 in a position so as to be adjacent the button 52 of the uppermost portion 15 when the uppermost portion 15 is forwardly folded. In this location, the button 52 may be interengaged with the loop 95 to secure the uppermost portion 15 in a flat overlying position. It will be noted, that as the point 51 to which the button 52 is attached is outward of the vertical center of the breast cup, so, too, the loop 95 will be positioned outward of the center of the breast cup. This outward position aids in preventing notice of the engaging means through the outer clothes of the wearer.

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Support of the breast cups is aided by providing a U-shaped wire loop 59 adjacent the peripheral side and lower edge portions of each of the breast cups 11 and 13. The wire loops 59 are encased between respective portions adjacent the breast cups of the central and body encircling panels and a U-shaped relatively heavy felt strip 70 secured to the inner side of the central and body encircling panels.

In the arrangement as shown in Figures 1 and 3, the brassiere includes full breast cups and detachable shoulder straps. The brassiere may be converted to the strapless arrangement as shown in Figure 2 by removal of the detachable shoulder straps 23 and 25, and by forwardly folding the uppermost portion 15 of each of the breast cups 11 and 13 and securing the uppermost portions 15 by means of the buttons 52 and the loops 95. When the uppermost portions are thusly forwardly folded, the fullness of the breast cups are reduced so as to more fully expose the upper portions of the wearer's breasts. The decorative edging 39 provided adjacent the top edge 37 of the inner cup 33 is also exposed to view when the uppermost portion 15 is forwardly folded and secured. When in the strapless form, proper support of the breasts is accomplished through cooperation of the U-shaped member 59 and the shirred elastic bands 61 and 63 including the novel inside anchoring formation which adheres to the body of the wearer without uncomfortable contractive force. The upper portions of the breast cups are held snugly in place over the breasts due to the elastic band 61 which runs downwardly and rearwardly thereby preventing movement of the upper portions of the breast cups outward of the body of the wearer.

A brassiere constructed in accordance with the present invention when worn with the associated shoulder straps is fully as comfortable and desirable as any ordinary brassiere. When worn as a strapless brassiere, excellent comfort and support are achieved due to the novel construction including the outward folding of the uppermost portions of the breast cups and the novel anchoring means described herein.

Various changes and modifications may be made in the disclosed construction without departing from the scope of the invention which is to be determined from the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A brassiere comprising a pair of breast cups, a body encircling panel extending from outer side edge portions of each of said breast cups, a central panel joining the adjacent edge portions of each of said breast cups and a pair of detachable shoulder straps interconnecting the breast cups with rearward portions of said body encircling panels, each of said breast cups having co-acting engaging means including a first engaging means adjacent the upper edge thereof and a second engaging means attached to the outer surface thereof at a point spaced below said first engaging means whereby an uppermost portion of said breast cup may be folded forwardly to reduce the height of said breast cup and position said first engaging means adjacent said second engaging means whereby said co-acting engaging means may be interengaged, each of said body encircling panels being shirred adjacent its upper edge to a first elastic band, each of said body encircling panels and said central panel being shirred along their lower edge portions to a second elastic band, said first and second elastic bands having stitched on the inside surfaces thereof a plurality of longitudinally extending thin bands of rubber-like material for contractively adhering to the flesh of the wearer to maintain the brassiere in proper wearing position, said detachable shoulder straps each including a third engaging means for interengagement with the first engaging means of one of said breast cups.

2. A brassiere comprising a pair of breast cups, a body encircling panel extending from the outer side edge portion of each of said breast cups, a central panel joining

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the adjacent edge portions of each of said breast cups, and a pair of detachable shoulder straps for interconnecting the breast cups with rearward upper edge portions of said body encircling panels, each of said breast cups comprising an inner supporting cup and an outer fabric cup, said outer cup having an uppermost portion extending upward of the central nipple engaging area of each breast cup a greater distance than said inner cup, said uppermost portion of each of said breast cups being forwardly foldable to reduce the height of said breast cup, each of said breast cups having a pair of co-acting engaging means including a first engaging means adjacent the upper edge of said uppermost portion of said outer cup and a second engaging means attached to the outer surface of said outer cup at a point spaced below said first engaging means whereby when said uppermost portion of said breast cup is forwardly folded said first engaging means is positioned adjacent said co-acting engaging means whereby said co-acting engaging means may be interengaged, each of said body encircling panels having an upper edge downwardly and rearwardly extending from adjacent the upper side portion of the adjacent breast cup and being shirred adjacent said upper edge to a first elastic band, and each of said body encircling panels and said central panel being shirred along their lower edge portions to a second elastic band, said first and second elastic bands having stitched on the inside surfaces thereof a plurality of longitudinally extending thin bands of rubber-like material for contractively adhering to the flesh of the wearer to maintain the brassiere in proper wearing position, each of said detachable shoulder straps including at the forward end a third engaging means for interengagement with the first engagement means of one of said breast cups.

3. A brassiere comprising a pair of breast cups, a body encircling panel extending from the outer side edge portion of each of said breast cups, a central panel joining the adjacent edge portions of each of said breast cups, a U-shaped wire member adjacent to and encircling the lower and side portions of each breast cup and having upper ends extending to a position immediately adjacent the upper edges of said body encircling panel and said central panel, and a pair of detachable shoulder straps for interconnecting the breast cups with rearward upper edge portions of said body encircling panels, each of said breast cups comprising an inner supporting cup and an outer fabric cup, said outer cup having an uppermost portion extending upward of the central nipple engaging area of each breast cup a greater distance than said inner cup, said uppermost portion of each of said breast cups being forwardly foldable to reduce the height of said breast cup, each of said breast cups having co-acting engaging means including a first engaging means adjacent the upper edge of said uppermost portion of said outer cup and a second engaging means attached to the outer surface of said outer cup at a point spaced below said first engaging means whereby when said uppermost portion of said breast cup is forwardly folded said first engaging means is positioned adjacent said coacting engaging means whereby said co-acting engaging means may be interengaged, each of said inner cups having secured adjacent its upper edge an upward extending finishing band forming a finished upper edge to the breast cup which is exhibited when said uppermost portion is forwardly folded to engage said co-acting first and second engaging means, each of said body encircling panels having an upper edge downwardly and rearwardly extending from adjacent the upper side portion of the adjacent breast cup and being shirred adjacent said upper edge to a first elastic band, each of said body encircling panels and said central panel being shirred along their lower edge portions to a continuous elastic band, said elastic bands having stitched on the inside surfaces thereof, a plurality of longitudinally extending thin bands of rubber-like material for contractively adhering to the flesh of

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the wearer to maintain the brassiere in proper wearing position, and each of said detachable shoulder straps including at the forward end a third engaging means for interengagement with said first engaging means of one of said breast cups.

4. A brassiere comprising a pair of breast cups, a body encircling panel extending from the outer side edge portion of each of said breast cups, a central panel joining the adjacent edge portions of said breast cups, each of said body encircling panels being shirred adjacent its upper edge to a first elastic band, and each of said body encircling panels and said central panel being shirred along their lower edge portions to a second elastic band, said first and second elastic bands having stitched on the inside thereof a plurality of thin bands of rubber-like material located in close relation to one another for anchoring of the brassiere by contractive engagement therebetween with the flesh of the wearer.

5. A brassiere comprising a pair of breast cups, a body encircling panel extending from outer side edge portions of each of said breast cups, a central panel joining the adjacent edge portions of each of said breast cups, and a pair of detachable shoulder straps interconnecting said breast cups with the rearward portion of said body encircling panels, said breast cups each having an upper-

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most portion which is forwardly foldable to reduce the height of said breast cups, each of said body encircling panels being shirred adjacent its upper edge to a first elastic band, each of said body encircling panels and said central panels being shirred along their lower edge portions to a second elastic band, said first and second elastic bands having stitched on the inside surface thereof, a plurality of longitudinally extending thin bands of rubber-like material for contractively adhering to the flesh of the wearer to maintain the brassiere in proper wearing position.

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