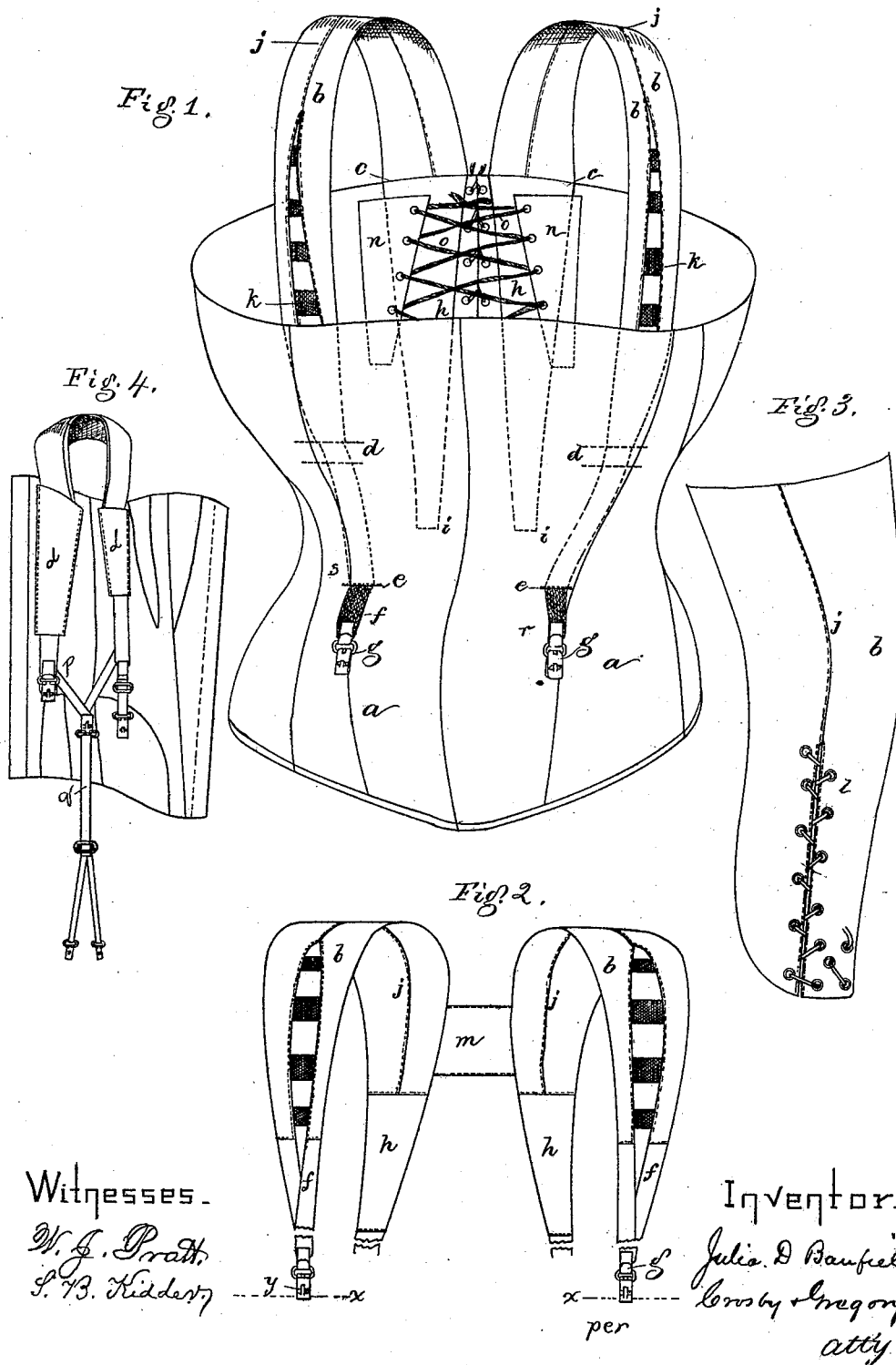


JULIA D. BANFIELD.

CORSETS.

No. 180,313.

Patented July 25, 1876.



Witnesses.

W. J. Prath
L. B. Kidder

Inventor.

Julia D. Banfield
Crosby & Gregory
attys.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JULIA D. BANFIELD, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

IMPROVEMENT IN CORSETS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **180,313**, dated July 25, 1876; application filed January 3, 1876.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JULIA D. BANFIELD, of Boston, in the county of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts, have invented an Improved Corset, of which the following is a specification:

This invention relates to corsets, and has particular reference to means for supporting skirts, and for making the corset serve the purposes of a shoulder-brace.

The invention consists in the combination, with a corset, of a shoulder-strap connected only with the back of the corset, and having its free ends at back and front and near the waist provided with suitable means to engage and hold the skirt-bindings, in order that the skirts or other garments to be supported may be attached thereto, the weight of the skirts or other garments being sustained from the shoulder by the shoulder-strap.

In other corsets, it is common to support skirts by means of clasps and other devices attached directly to the corset, and a corset so adapted to sustain the weight of the skirts or other clothing—oftentimes a very considerable weight—must be confined closer to the body than would otherwise be necessary, and too close for health. Other corsets provided with skirt-supporters have had shoulder-straps attached, so as to throw the weight of the skirts on the shoulders rather than on the hips; but such straps have been connected directly with the upper front portion of the corsets, and the straps tend to draw the top of the corset in toward the person, and destroy the proper contour of the bust; and if the shoulder-strap, so attached to the corset at front, is not of proper length, it will not support the weight of the skirts, but such weight will come upon the hips outside the corset. In another corset a roll of hoop-skirt wire, forming sort of a projection about the lower part of the corset, has been connected, by bands, with shoulder-straps and skirts, have been pinned about the waist and corset above this roll, and have been allowed to settle down on the roll; but the skirts are in no way connected with the roll positively, but on the contrary merely rest on the roll, and the weight of the skirts pressing down on the roll move it down and cause it to press the body.

With a corset of this last kind the skirts must be pinned closely about the body, or they would slip down over the roll, to which they are attached, and the corset and skirts, if numerous, cannot be worn loosely; but with my arrangement the skirts need not be held tightly about the body, and they cannot descend if not tight, owing to their being connected positively with, and held by, the shoulder-strap.

My improved corset-strap is adapted to fit any shoulder, more or less full, and the weight of the skirts is always kept entirely on the shoulder-straps in all adjustments of the corset, and the corset may be worn as loose or as tight as desired.

Figure 1 is a front view of a corset provided with my improvement; Fig. 2, a view of the shoulder-straps removed and used as a supporter alone; and Fig. 3 is a view of a modified form of strap. Fig. 4 is a view of a modified form and of stocking-supporters.

In the drawing, *a* is a corset of any well-known construction or material, either sewed or woven, and provided with proper busks, and *b b* are the shoulder-straps connected with the corset *a* at the back at *c*. The end of the shoulder-strap, attached at *c*, passes over the shoulder down toward and at or near the waist, passing, preferably, through a pocket or loop, or guide *d*, at the inner side of the corset, (see dotted lines, Fig. 1,) and then diagonally out through the slit *e*, at the front of the corset, the lower or extreme end of the shoulder-strap being preferably provided with an elastic band or web, *f*, to receive attaching-plates *r* and hooked fastenings *g*, such as described in another application heretofore filed by me in the United States Patent Office. These hooked fastenings are adapted to be opened to receive the skirt-bands, (see dotted lines, Fig. 2,) and to be closed upon and hooked by a lever, *y*, or equivalent, to confine the skirts, and the part holding and confining the skirts may be readily removed from, or attached to, the strap end without separating the skirts. The end of the shoulder-strap, from its point of connection *c* with the corset, extends down, as at *h*, (see also dotted lines,) and the extreme end passes preferably through a slit, *i*, at the back of the corset, (see dotted

lines, Fig. 1,) the ends at the back of the corset also receiving proper fastenings to confine the skirts.

It is stated that fastenings will, preferably, be used at the ends of the shoulder-straps; but it is evident that the ends of the straps might be attached positively to the skirts in other ways—as by pins, or rings, or hooks—or the ends of the straps might be provided with button-holes to receive buttons on the skirts, or be adapted to extend through button-holes or slits in the skirt-bindings. The straps are made each, preferably, of four pieces of cloth, cut with relation to warp and weft, and placed together, so that the straps may have no tendency to stretch or draw out of shape. The pieces for the shoulder-straps are cut, substantially as shown in Fig. 3, the edges united to form the seam *j* being concave and convex, so as to give to the strap such shape as to cause it to fit closely to the rounded or curved portion of the shoulder. The front portion of the strap is separated, Fig. 1, and provided with elastic webbing *k*, or with an elastic cord, *l*, (see Fig. 3,) to permit the shoulder to move freely without drawing on the corset, and it also permits the wearer to lift her arm freely, and, by reason of the elastic, the strap is enabled to adapt itself to prominent shoulders, or those of irregular shape.

I consider this shoulder-strap made to yield on the shoulder in the direction of its width, rather than the direction of its length, as heretofore, as a feature tending to ease and comfort of the person wearing the strap, but these elastic portions *k l* of the shoulder-strap may be omitted and not affect the properties of the strap as a skirt-supporter operating independently of the corset.

So, also, the shoulder-straps may be entirely removed from attachment with the corset, as in Fig. 2, being, however, preferably connected at back by a band, *m*, and the front and back ends of these straps, provided with fastenings *g* or other suitable clasp-fastenings, may be used to support stockings or other garments for children or for grown persons, and with or without a corset. The forward portion of the shoulder-strap passes, preferably, through a loop or pocket, *d*, as described, placed near the side seam of, and at a short distance from, the full-gored or bust portion of the corset, or between the side of the bust-portion and the shoulder of the wearer, and the strap extends through the corset at the lower termination of and near the base of the bust-form. The end of the strap passes diagonally across the corset from the loop or pocket *d* to the slit *e*, through which it passes to the outer side of the corset, and the weight of the skirts on this strap running in this direction tends to press upon the outer and lower sides of, and to add to the beauty of the outline of, the bust. As shown, the strap is not directly attached to the upper front portion of the corset. Such upper portion is permitted to round out to the degree permitted by the gores, and the upper

portion of the corset is not drawn back on the bust.

The shoulder-strap shown in Fig. 3 is short and has not the skirt-supporting ends, but such a strap may be advantageously used on a corset, being sewed to the back of the corset and connected by a piece of elastic with the corset below the top at the front side and well toward the under side of the arm. The end of the shoulder-strap might be passed through a loop or pocket on the outside of the corset near the under side of the arm, but the strap is not to be positively attached to the corset at front.

For persons having prominent shoulder-blades, as with round-shouldered persons, their shoulder-blades being thrown out to a greater or less degree from the body, I have added to the back of and inside the corset stays *n*, provided with eyelets adapted to receive a cord, *o*, whereby the shoulder-blades may be drawn or kept in or down. This independent cord-lacing can be made to act with more or less force without affecting the usual lacing at the back of the corset.

In Fig. 4 I have shown a modified construction of parts. The guides or pockets *d*, instead of being placed on the inside of the corset, are placed on the outside, and the ends of the straps at front and back are led out at the front of the corset through slits, in this instance not formed in the corset-body, but by the opening between the piece of cloth forming the guide and the corset. I show an elastic strap, *p*, connected with the ends of the shoulder-straps, and a second strap, *q*, connected therewith, is provided with two straps and hooked fastenings to attach to and serve as stocking-supporters.

I have described that the shoulder-strap is not connected with the front of the corset, but in some instances the elastic front end of the strap may be attached by one of my hooked attaching-plates *r* to the corset, substantially at the point *s*, and skirts held between the hooked fastening may be suspended on the hook of the attaching-plate, and in this way I can support the skirts from the shoulder, this connection between the strap and corset being readily adjustable, so as to make the strap of the proper length, and it will be obvious that the connection of the strap with the corset, or the point at which the corset is subjected to the drawing action of the shoulder-strap, is below, or substantially at the base of, and at the outside of the bust, and therefore does not draw the upper edge of the corset on to the bust.

The shoulder-strap is not positively connected with the front of the corset, and may be easily drawn away from the corset, and both the corset and strap may be moved without affecting the other.

I claim—

1. A corset, in combination with shoulder-straps connected with the back of the corset, and provided at their free ends in front of the

corset with suitable devices to connect with and hold the skirts, substantially as described.

2. The combination, with a corset provided with loop or pocket between the outside of the bust or gore piece and the side of the corset, adapted to extend under the arm, of a shoulder-strap, extended over to the front of the corset and through the loop or pocket, to sustain garments, and operate in connection with the bust portion and bust, substantially as set forth.

3. A shoulder-strap connected at the back, and extended over to the front of the corset at or near the waist, and provided with elastic end pieces, in combination with skirt engaging and holding devices to support skirts or garments, substantially as described.

4. A corset and shoulder-straps connected with the back of, and adapted to extend over to the front of, the corset, and skirt engaging and holding devices attached at the free ends of such straps, in combination with straps attached to the back of the corset and provided with skirt engaging and holding devices to support the skirts at the front and back of the waist by such straps, substantially as described.

5. The shoulder-straps, composed of strips *b*, shaped and united by a seam, as at *j*, and separated and provided with elastic portions adapted to yield in the direction of the width of the strap, to adapt the strap to the shoulder, substantially as described.

6. A shoulder-strap provided with elastic portions to yield in the direction of the width of the strap, in combination with elastic por-

tions to yield in the direction of the length of the strap, and with garment-supporting attachments, to operate substantially as set forth.

7. Shoulder-straps adapted to extend over the shoulders and to terminate at or near the waist at back and front, and provided with skirt engaging and holding devices, in combination with stocking-supporters, sustained through the shoulder-straps, substantially as set forth.

8. A corset, provided with slits *e* at the lower portion of the gored pieces, and at their outer sides, and shoulder-straps, connected with the back of the corset, adapted to extend through such slits to the outside of the corset, in combination with hooked fastenings adapted to grasp and hold skirt-bindings, to sustain skirts entirely from the shoulder, substantially as described.

9. A corset and shoulder-straps, provided at their free ends with skirt engaging and holding devices, and connected only with the back of the corset, and extended to or near the waist at back and front, in combination with stocking-supporters and stocking-engaging attachments supported by the free ends of the shoulder-straps, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

JULIA D. BANFIELD.

Witnesses:

G. W. GREGORY,
S. B. KIDDER.