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(54) **An article of bed clothing**

(57) An article of bed clothing including: a top portion having two opposed side edges, and a head end edge and a foot end edge substantially orthogonal to the side edges; two opposed side portions extending one each from each side edge and a foot end portion extending from the foot end edge; and two opposed side skirt portions extending from the opposed side edges and a foot

end skirt portion extending from the foot end edge such that the side skirt portions and the foot end skirt portion together form a continuous skirt so formed that it may in use extend about and substantially cover at least the sides and foot end of the base of a bed.

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Description

FIELD OF INVENTION

[0001] THIS invention relates to an article of bed clothing.

[0002] The invention has particular application to an article of bed clothing providing in use a valance about a bed. The article of bed clothing according to this invention may be used for beds having either a rigid base or a resilient base, this latter form being commonly termed an ensemble. However, the invention is not limited to such use.

BACKGROUND ART

[0003] Beds typically take the form of a rigid base or a resilient base, in either case supporting a mattress. For convenience, unless the context requires otherwise, in this specification the form which uses a rigid bed base will be referred to as a bed base and the form which uses a resilient base will be termed an ensemble.

[0004] Bed making can be undesirably time consuming and labour intensive when a valance is used. Adjustments to the positioning of the valance on the bed base, so that the skirt hangs evenly at the sides and foot end of the bed, are often awkward. Also, the valance skirt is often inadvertently tucked under the mattress when the bed sheets are being tucked in. Furthermore, whenever the valance needs washing it is necessary to remove the mattress from the base of the bed and then replace it after the cleaned valance has been positioned on the base of the bed.

[0005] The present invention aims to provide an article of bed clothing which ameliorates at least one of the aforementioned problems of the prior art. The invention also aims to provide an article of bed clothing which enhances efficiency in making beds with valances. Other aims and advantages of the invention may become apparent from the following description.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

[0006] With the foregoing in view the invention in one aspect resides broadly in an article of bed clothing including:

a top portion having two opposed side edges, and a head end edge and a foot end edge substantially orthogonal to the side edges;

two opposed side portions extending one each from each side edge and a foot end portion extending from the foot end edge;

two opposed side skirt portions extending from said opposed side edges and a foot end skirt portion extending from said foot end edge such that said side

skirt portions and said foot end skirt portion together form a continuous skirt so formed that it may in use extend about and substantially cover at least the sides and foot end of the base of a bed.

[0007] In another aspect, the invention resides broadly in an article of bed clothing including:

a mattress covering portion formed to cover the top, sides and one end of the mattress, the mattress covering portion being so formed that its edges substantially align in use with the lower corner edges of the mattress; and

a skirt extending from the edges of the mattress covering portion such that it may in use extend about and substantially cover at least the sides and foot end of the base of a bed.

[0008] It is to be understood that by continuous, it is to be taken that the skirt will be so formed that it will appear in use to be a single piece extending about the base of the bed, even though the skirt as such may be made up of several separate pieces.

[0009] In one embodiment of the invention suitable for use with a bed base or ensemble of the type including vertical corner posts, the continuous skirt, which in use substantially covers at least the sides and foot end of the bed base, includes vertical splits between respective side and foot end skirt portions so as to accommodate the posts. Preferably, the splits extend the full length of the skirt such that the side and foot end skirt portions are not joined together. In another embodiment of the invention suitable for use with a mattress on a bed base of the type including an ensemble base, the skirt does not include splits.

[0010] Preferably, said bed clothing further includes a head end portion contiguous with the top portion and depending therefrom to cover an upper portion of the head end of the mattress.

[0011] In order that the invention may be more easily understood and put into practical effect, reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings which illustrate preferred embodiments of the invention and wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of an article of bed clothing in accordance with the present invention fitted on a mattress which is supported on a bed base;

Figs. 2 and 3 are views of the article of bed clothing shown in Fig. 1 taken from a foot end corner of the bed;

Fig. 4 is a view of the article of bed clothing shown in Fig. 1 showing part of a head end of the bed.

Fig. 5 is a view of the article of bed clothing shown

in Fig. 1 from a side of the bed near the head end.

Fig. 6 is a pattern development of the article of bed clothing shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 7 is view of the article of bed clothing shown in Fig. 1 taken from an underside to reveal the folding and stitching at a head end corner of the bed clothing.

Fig. 8 is a diagrammatic view of a first alternative article of bed clothing according to the invention for fitting on an ensemble.

Fig. 9 is a diagrammatic view of a second alternative article of bed clothing according to the invention for fitting on a bed base.

Fig. 10 is a diagrammatic view of a third alternative article of bed clothing according to the invention for fitting on an ensemble.

Fig. 11 is a diagrammatic view of a fourth alternative article of bed clothing according to the invention for fitting on a bed base.

[0012] The article of bed clothing 10 is shown fitted to a mattress which is supported on the horizontal frame of a bed base 12 of the type which includes vertical corner posts 13. The article of bed clothing includes a mattress cover including a top portion 14, two opposed side portions 16, a foot end portion 17 and a head end portion 18, which conformingly fits over and covers the top face, two opposing sides, foot end and an upper portion of the head end (as best shown in Fig.'s 4 and 5) of the mattress. Each of the side and end portions of the mattress cover is contiguous with and depends from the top portion. The mattress cover includes stitching 19 defining the top portion so as to assist with quick and correct placement of the mattress cover on the mattress with the top portion overlaying the mattress top face. Other position indicating means, for example, markings on the mattress cover may also be suitable.

[0013] The article of bed clothing further includes a continuous skirt 21 which substantially covers the respective sides and foot end of the bed base. The skirt includes two opposed side skirt portions 22 depending from respective opposed side portions of the mattress cover and a foot end skirt portion 23 depending from the foot end portion of the mattress cover. The continuous skirt is ruffled in appearance and includes vertical splits S between respective side and foot end skirt portions so as to accommodate the foot end bed posts. As shown in the drawings, the splits extend the full length of the skirt such that the side and foot end skirt portions are not joined together. However, alternative embodiments of the invention suitable for use with a mattress supported on a bed base of the type including an ensemble base (or other bed base without vertical posts), the skirt does not

need to include splits and the side and foot end skirt portions can be contiguous or joined (at least along an upper section of a respective side edge of proximal portions) as described hereinafter. Although not illustrated, in an alternative embodiment the skirt further includes a head end skirt portion so that the skirt also substantially covers the head end of the bed base as would be preferred where the bed head end is not positioned up against a wall.

[0014] Advantageously, the article of bed clothing can be quickly and easily fitted on a mattress clothed with a sheet(s) without having to remove and replace the mattress, tugging at the skirt or inadvertently tucking the skirt in with the sheet(s). A bed cover can be placed on the bed over the article of bed clothing. Advantageously, the article of bedding ameliorates the matching of bedding by covering the bed base, which therefore need not be matched with the bedclothes, and the sheet(s), which therefore need not be matched with the bed cover.

[0015] With reference to Fig. 6, the article of bedding can be made from a first piece of material 24, including sections 26, 27, 28, 29 and 31 for forming the top, two opposed side, foot end and head end portions of the mattress cover, and three separate rectangular shaped panels of material 32, 33 and 34 for forming the respective two opposed side and foot end skirt portions of the skirt. The panels are each connected to the first piece of material by sewing respective upper side edge portions 36 of the panels to respective lower side edge portions 37 of the respective two opposed side and foot end portions of the mattress cover to form the continuous skirt with splits between the side and foot end portions at the respective foot end corners. The width of each of the side and foot end skirt panels exceeds the width of each of the respective side W and foot end W' portions of the mattress cover to so as to accommodate the ruffling R in the skirt. Although not illustrated, if the skirt were intended to hang straight rather than be ruffled, pleated or otherwise gathered, then the excess width in the panels would not be necessary. The mattress cover is formed from the first piece of material by sewing together adjacent side edges E and E' of a side portion and foot end portion to form corners capable of fitting over the respective corners at the foot end of the mattress. If the article of bedding were used for a mattress on a bed base without posts (e.g. an ensemble base) the sewing could continue down to join together respective side edge sections of the side and foot end skirt portions of the skirt so that there are no (or at least shorter) corner splits in the skirt. The mattress cover is stitched with a false seam F along the perimeter of the top portion to define the part of the mattress cover, namely the top portion, which is intended to overlay the top face of the mattress. The head end section of the first piece of material is folded back and a tuck 38 is sewn (as shown in Fig. 7) to form a corner between the head end portion and respective two opposed side portions of the mattress cover so as to hold the head end of the mattress cover in place on the mattress during use. The mattress cover and skirt of the ar-

article of bed clothing may be made of the same or different materials and have the same or different colour(s) and/or pattern(s).

[0016] The first, second, third and fourth alternative articles of bed clothing illustrated in Figs. 8, 9, 10 and 11 respectively incorporate many of the features of the article of bed clothing illustrated and described with reference to Figs. 1 to 7. Accordingly, similar reference numerals have been used, but only where its inclusion will aid in the description of the invention. One particular difference between the embodiments shown for the ensemble when compared with the embodiments shown for the bed base is that the split found in the skirt 21 is replaced by a seam 15 extending beyond the seam joining the side edge portions E and E'. Of course, a continuous skirt may be sewn to the distal edges of the side edge portions with a gathered seam 41 as shown in Figs. 8 and 9 to provide a gathered or ruffled skirt or a pleated seam 42 as shown in Figs. 10 and 11 to provide a pleated skirt.

[0017] An article of bed clothing according to the invention may be placed on a bed in substitution for bed coverings of the type used as a bedspread, doona, quilt or the like and valance as separate items. If desired, the false seam may be omitted, and a further strip (with or without corner seams, depending on the type of bed) can be added to the bottom of the valance as a gathered, decorative and/or alternative material and/or pattern as desired. However, the article of bed clothing is aligned with the bed so that the fitted head portion retains the head end in its required disposition on the bed. The foot end is also retained so that the article of bed clothing according to the invention resists movement from its required disposition if, for example, someone sitting or lying down on the bed.

[0018] The foregoing description has been given by way of illustrative example of the invention and many modifications and variations which will be apparent to persons skilled in the art may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the following claims.

Claims

1. An article of bed clothing including:

a top portion having two opposed side edges, and a head end edge and a foot end edge substantially orthogonal to the side edges;
two opposed side portions extending one each from each side edge and a foot end portion extending from the foot end edge;
two opposed side skirt portions extending from said opposed side edges and a foot end skirt portion extending from said foot end edge such that said side skirt portions and said foot end skirt portion together form a continuous skirt so formed that it may in use extend about and sub-

stantially cover at least the sides and foot end of the base of a bed.

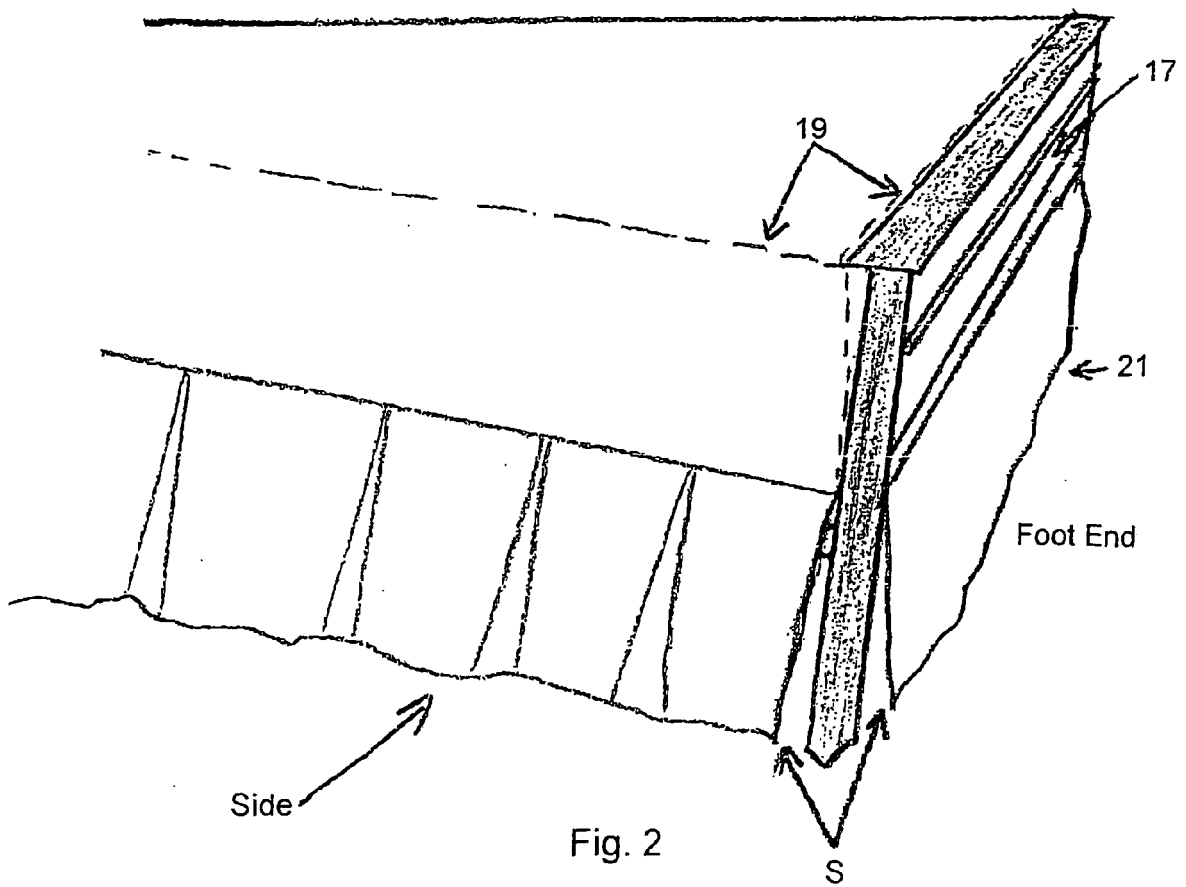
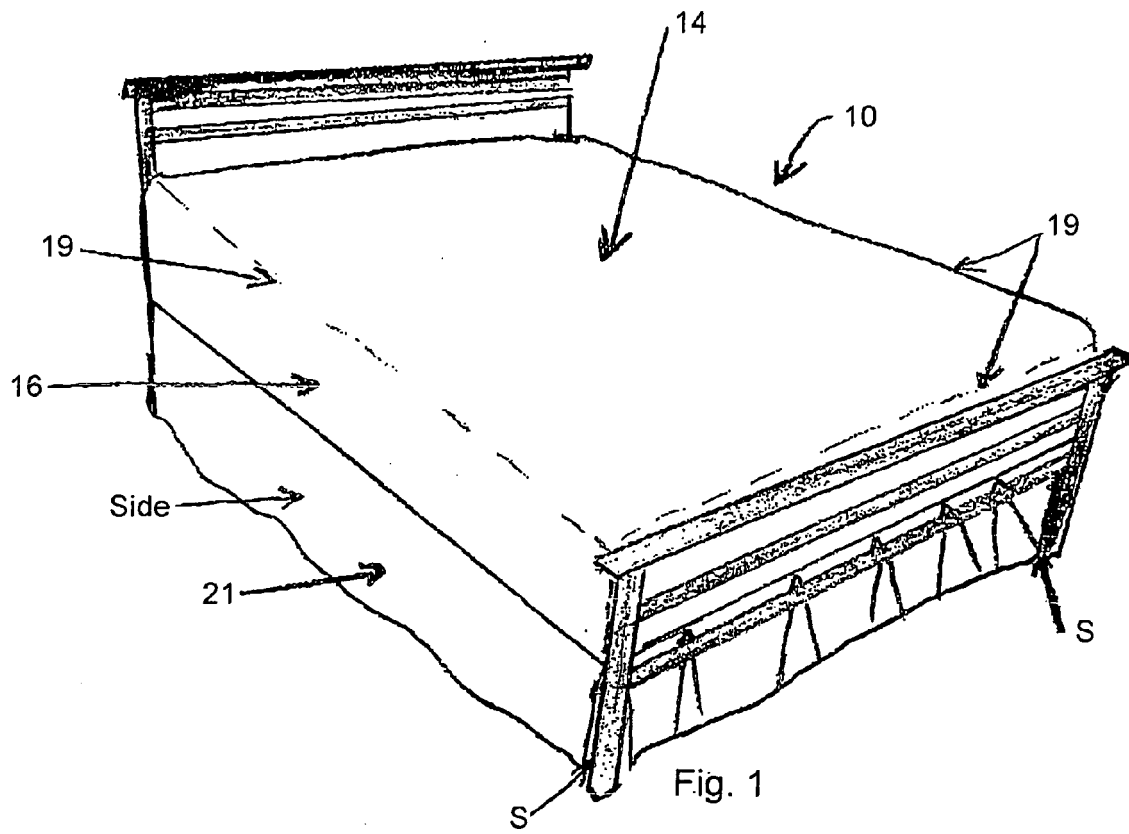
2. In another aspect, the invention resides broadly in an article of bed clothing including:

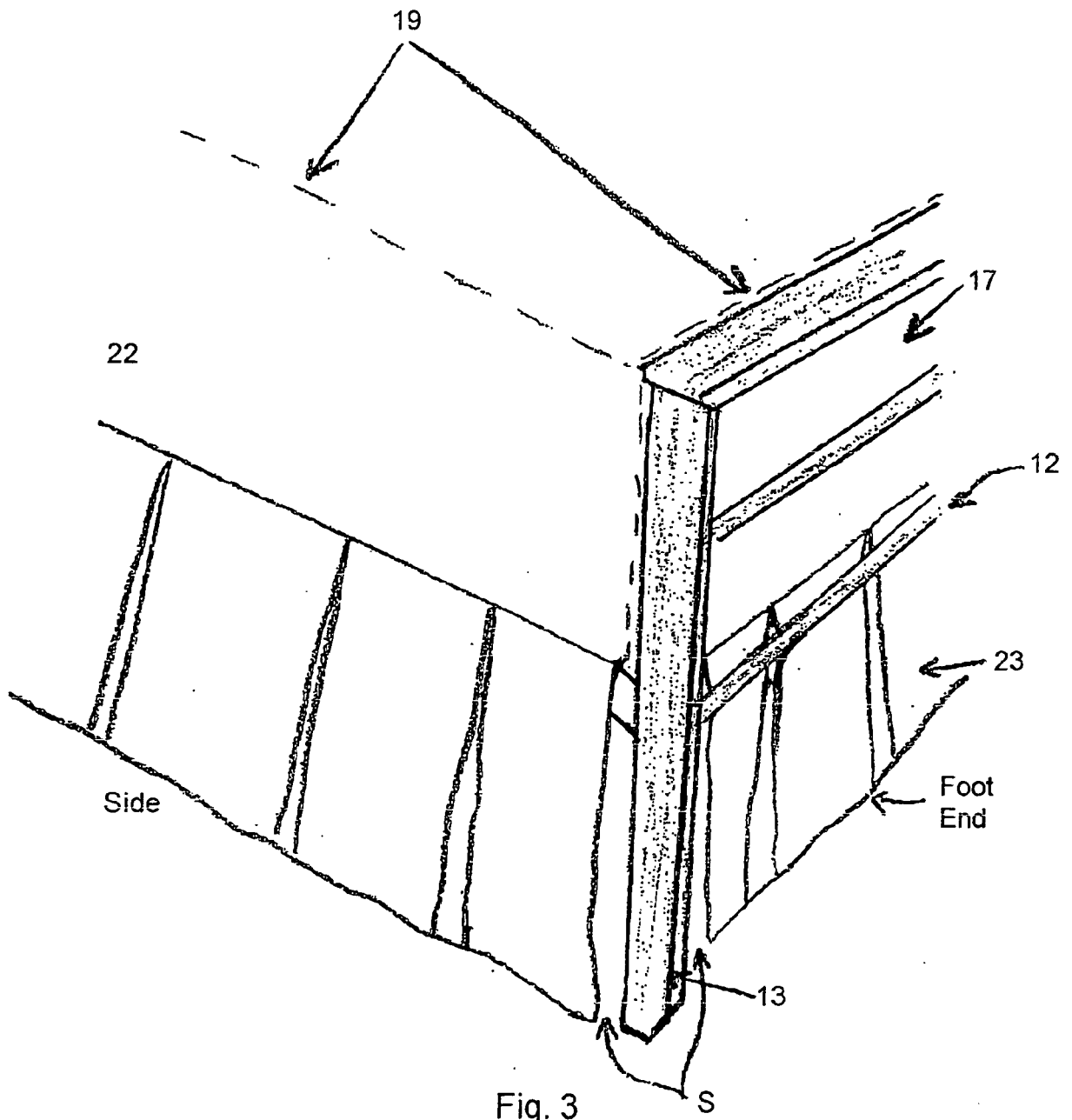
a mattress covering portion formed to cover the top, sides and one end of the mattress, the mattress covering portion being so formed that its edges substantially align in use with the lower corner edges of the mattress; and
a skirt extending from the edges of the mattress covering portion such that it may in use extend about and substantially cover at least the sides and foot end of the base of a bed.

3. An article of bed clothing according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the continuous skirt includes vertical splits between respective side and foot end skirt.

4. An article of bed clothing according to Claim 3, wherein the splits extend the full length of the skirt such that the side and foot end skirt portions are not joined together.

5. An article of bed clothing according to Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the skirt is of substantially unitary construction.





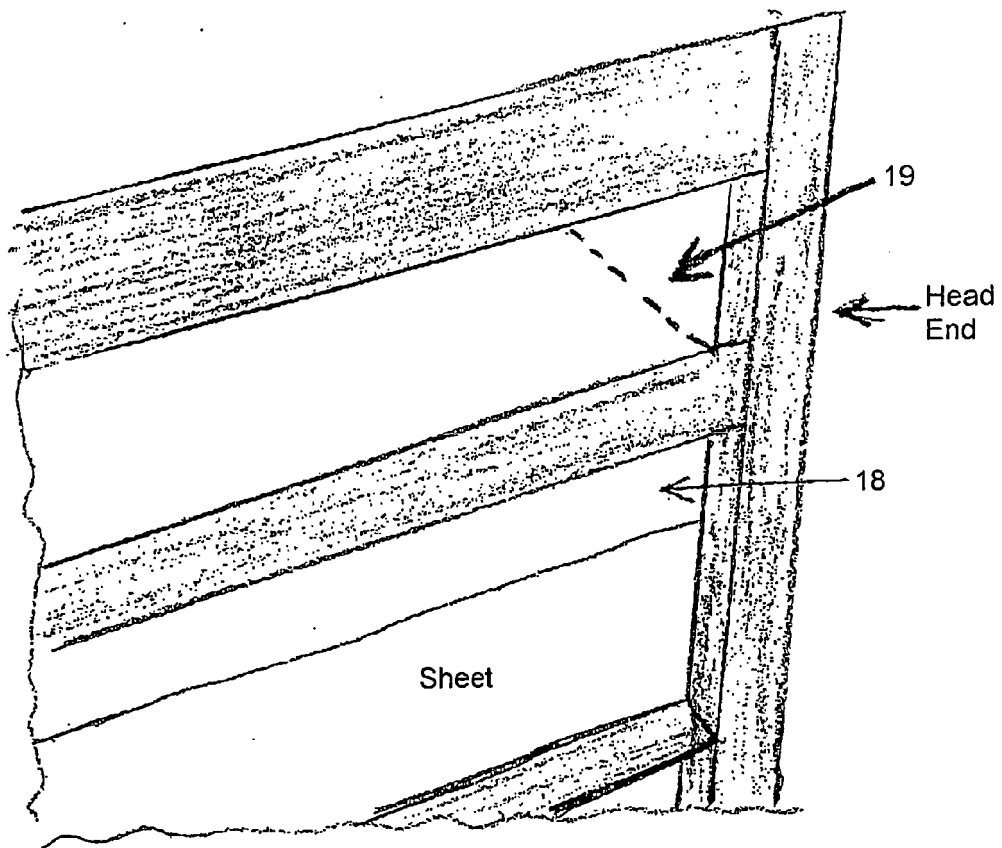


Fig. 4

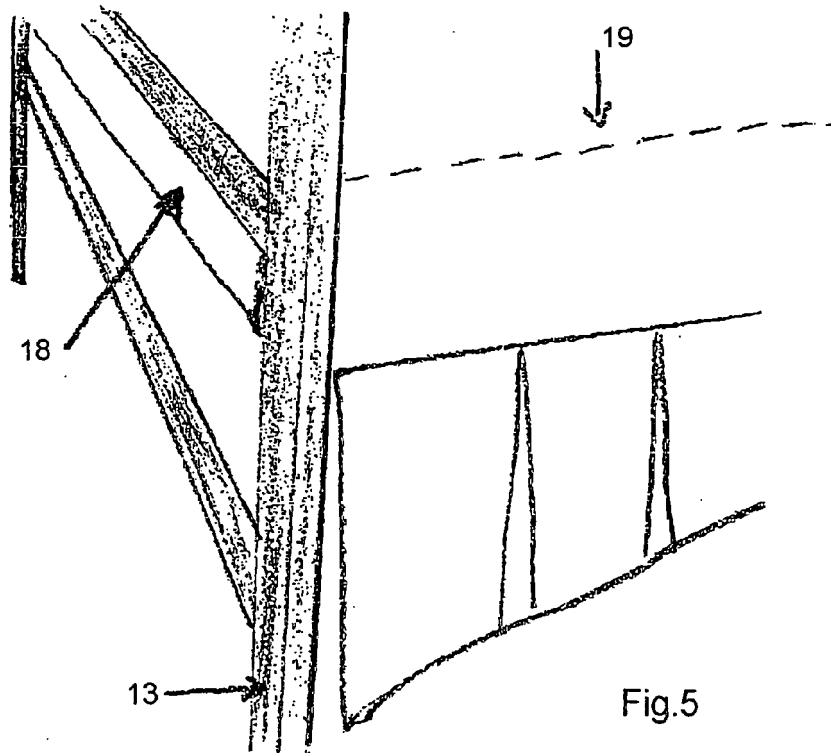


Fig.5

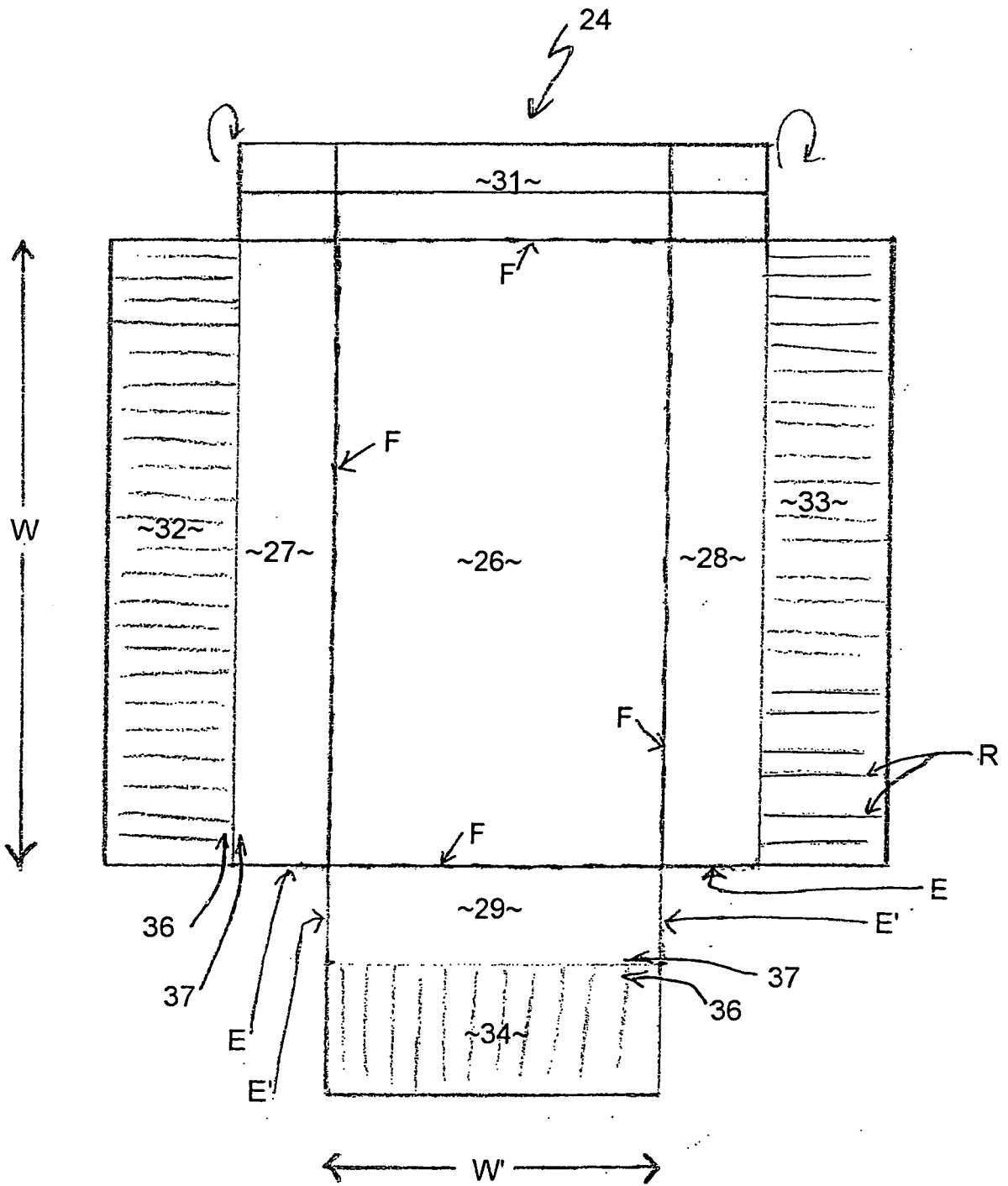


Fig. 6

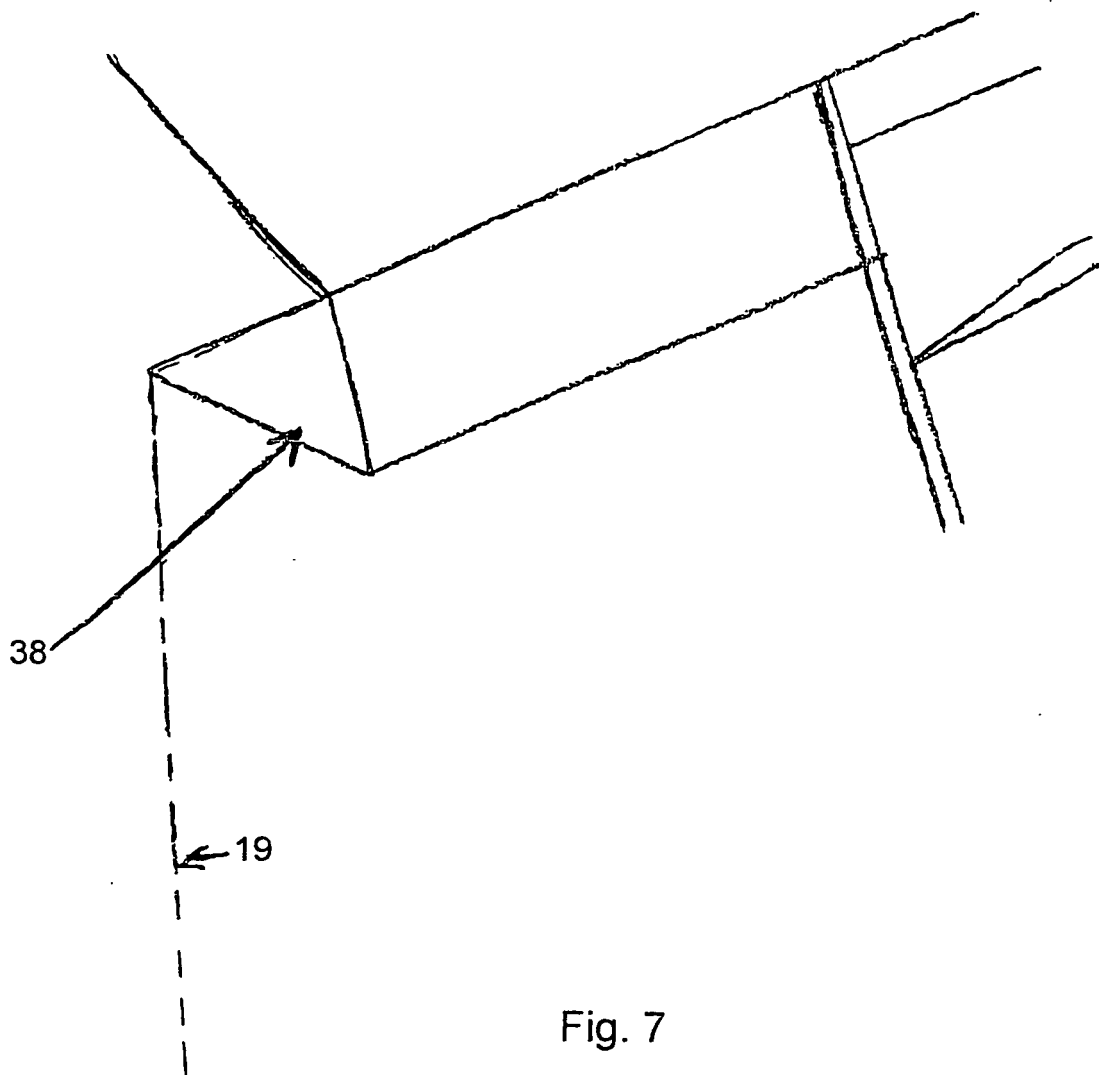
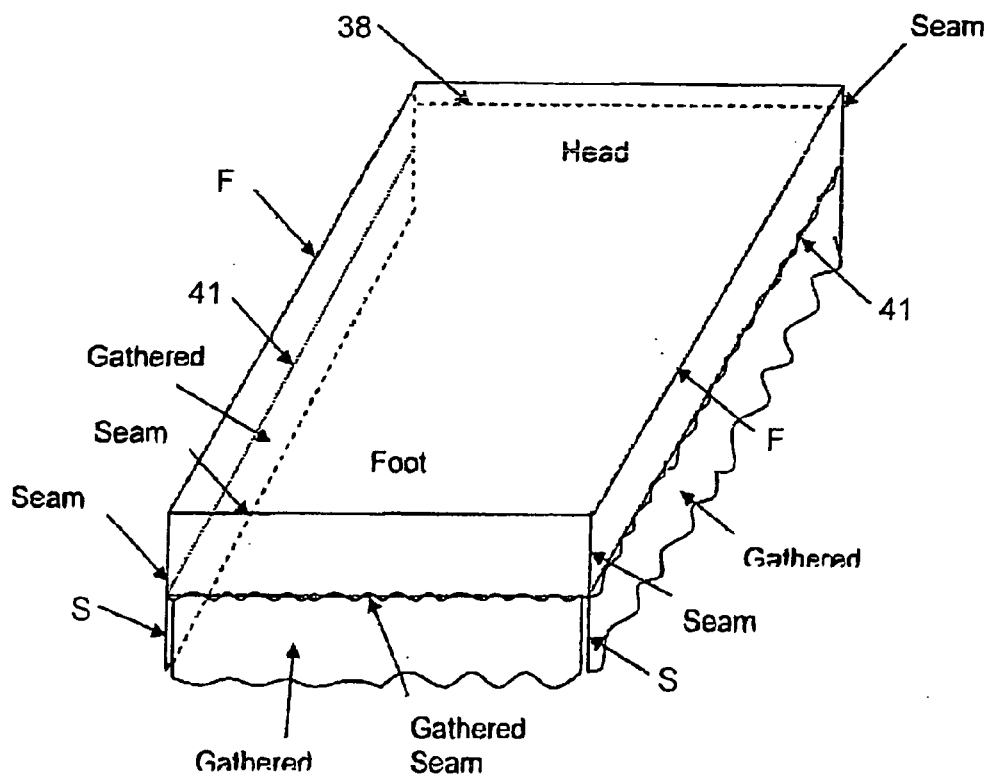
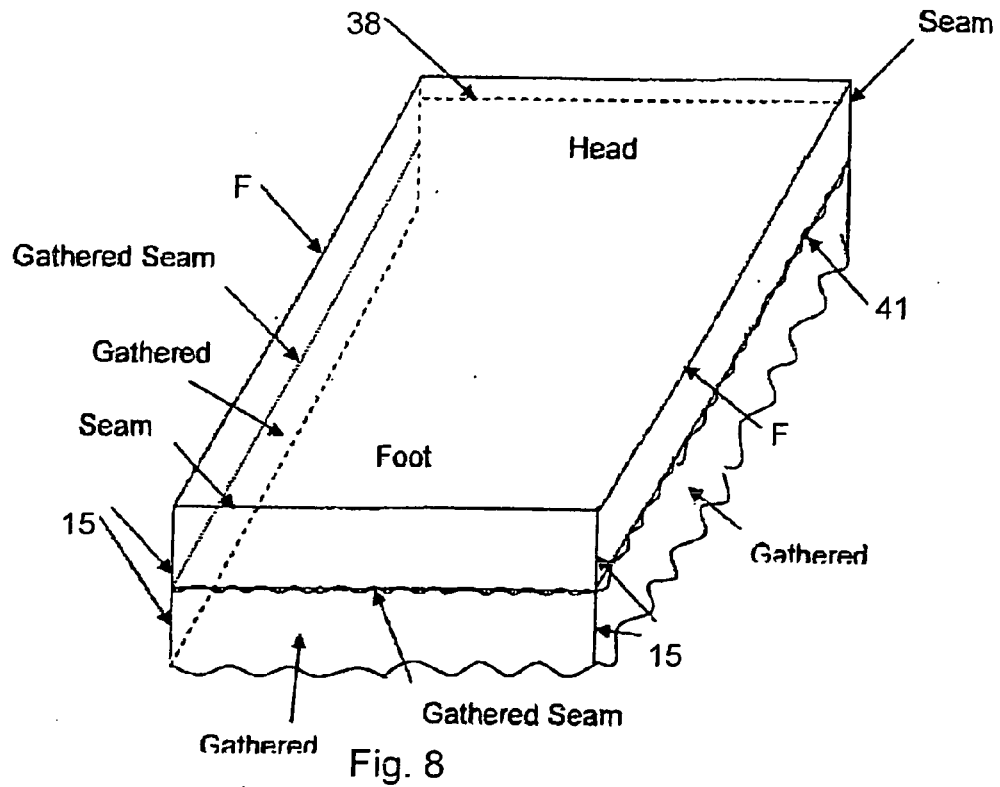
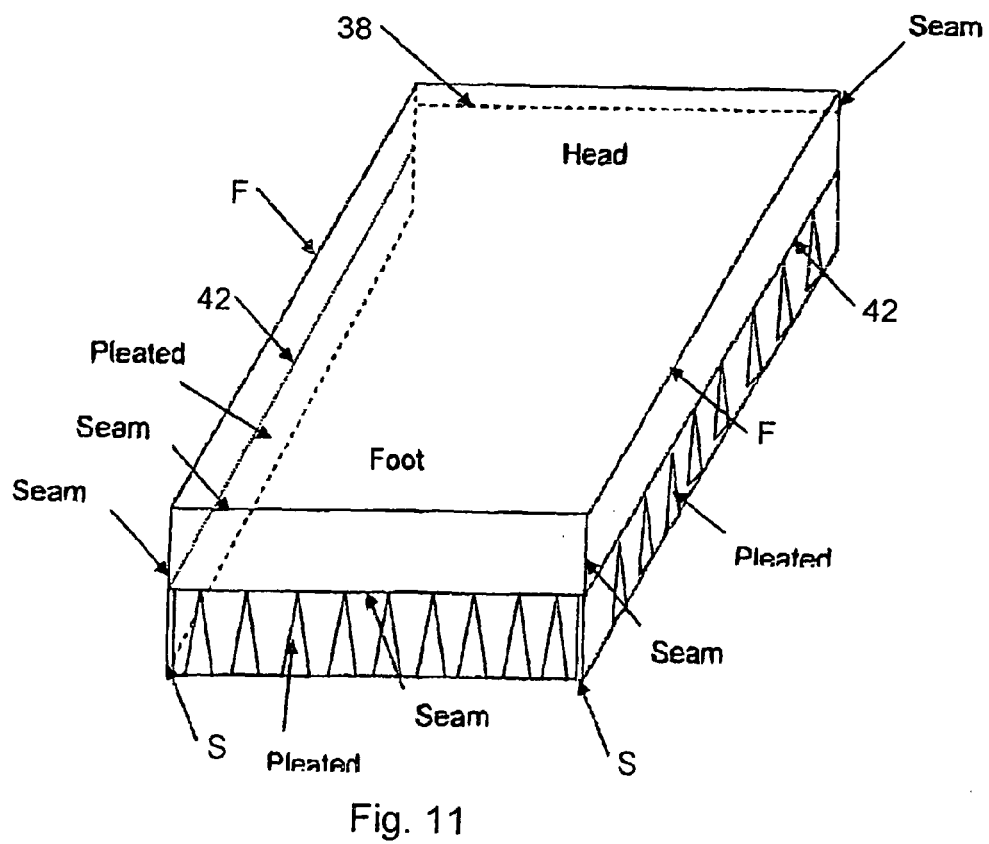
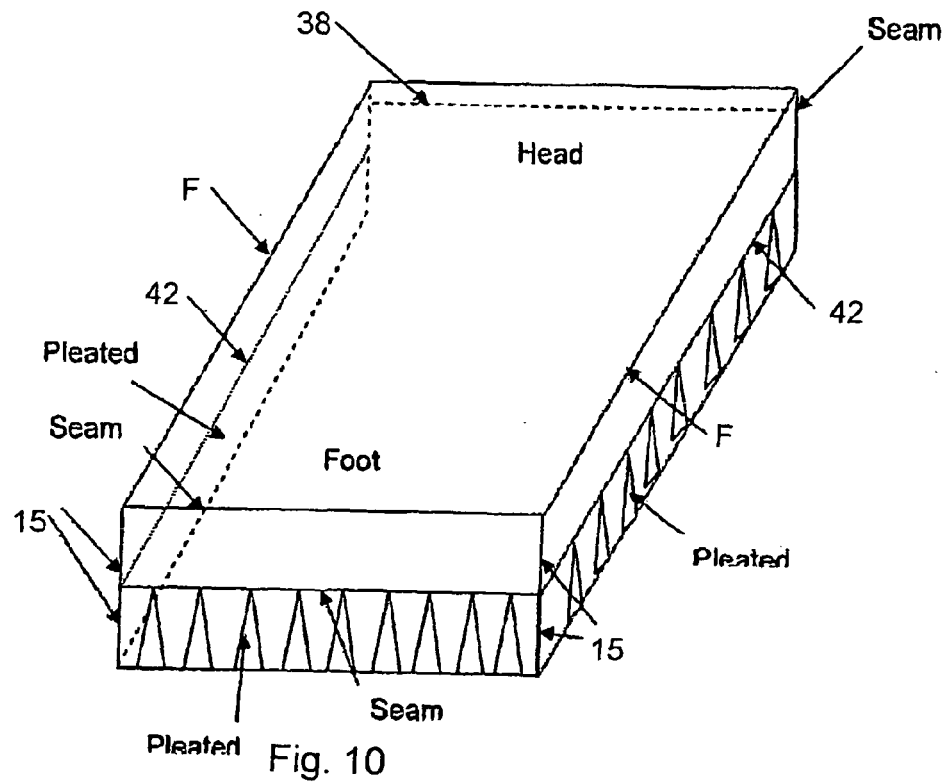


Fig. 7







European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 06 12 6423

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
X	US 2 641 001 A (KRASNOV FANNIE K) 9 June 1953 (1953-06-09) * the whole document *	1-4	INV. A47G9/02
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			A47G A47C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 8 March 2007	Examiner Reichhardt, Otto
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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08-03-2007

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US 6044503	A	04-04-2000	NONE	
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