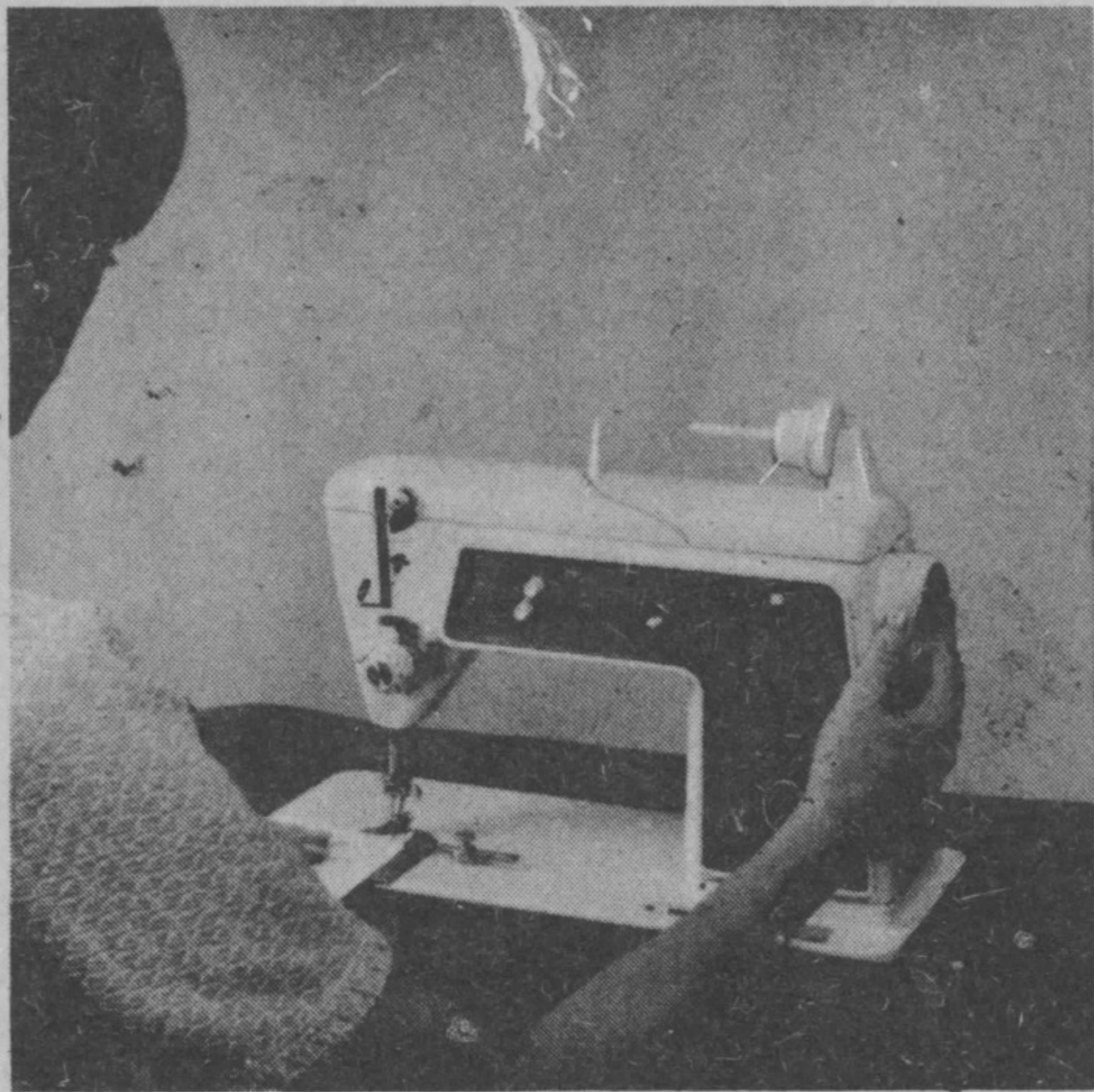
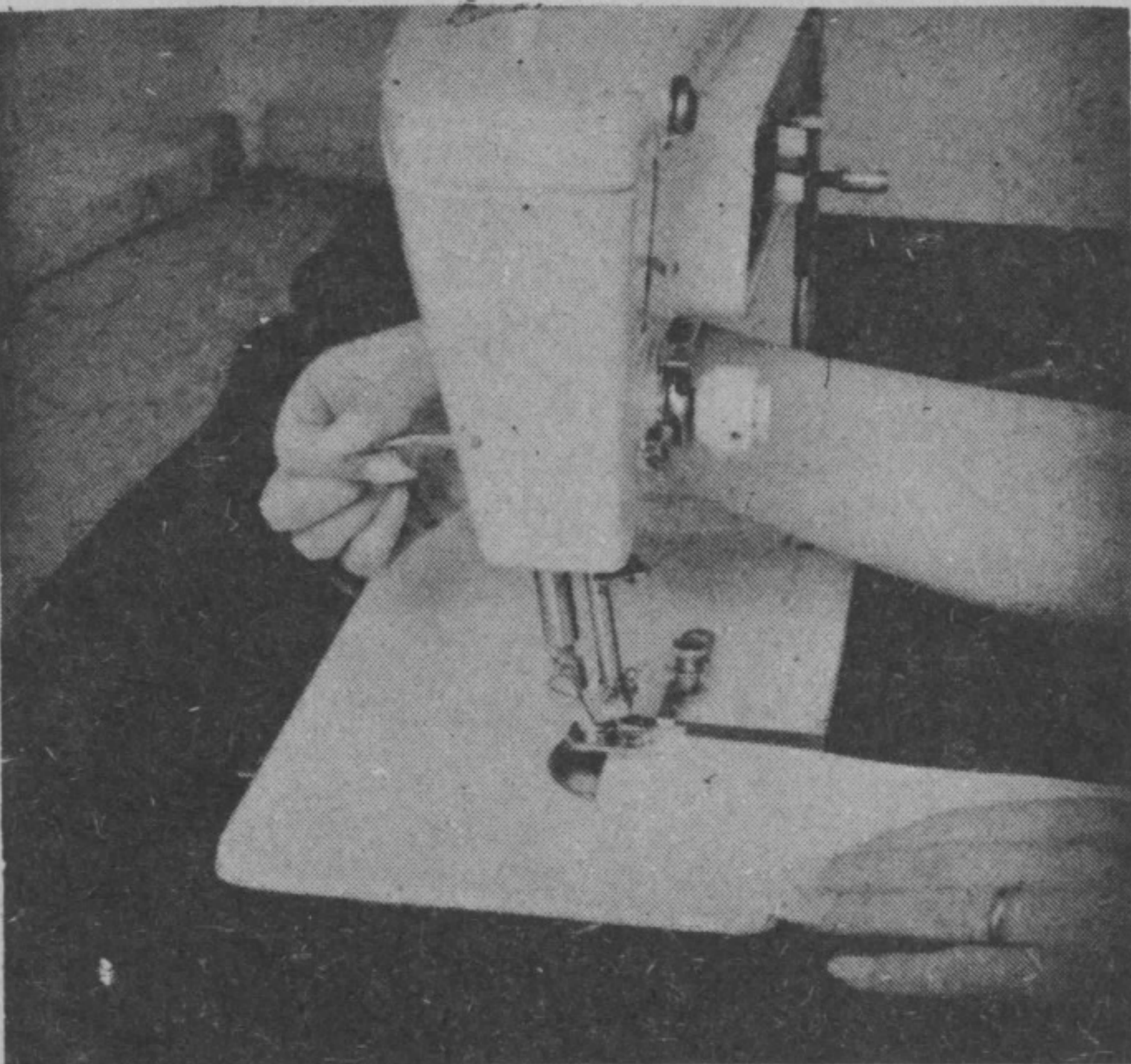


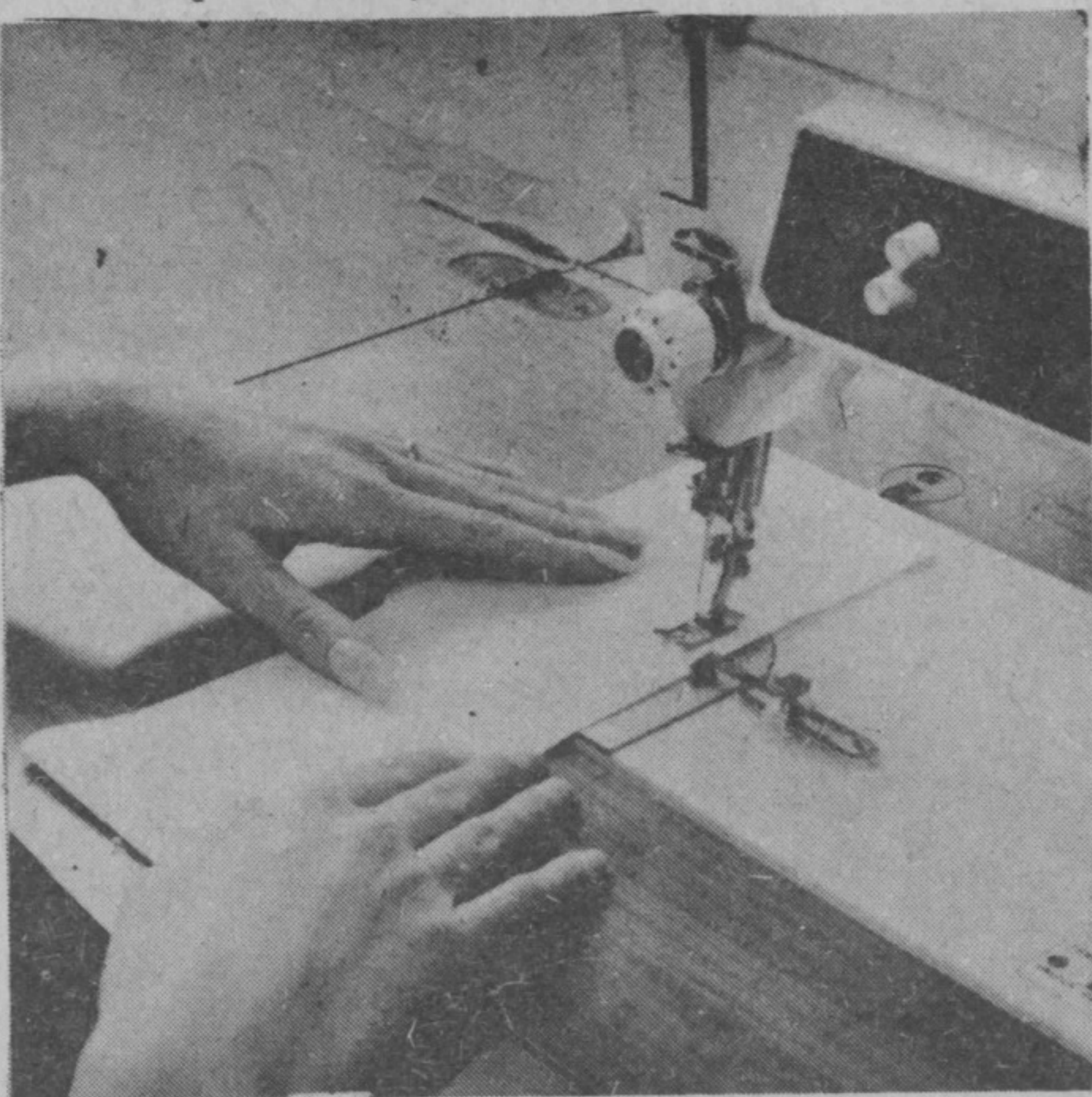
HOW TO TEACH A CHILD TO SEW



Sit properly, position fabric, turn hand wheel until needle enters fabric.



Lower presser foot.



Guide edge of fabric against seam guide. Keep your eyes on seam guide, not on needle. Stich slowly and rhythmically.

Next, you are ready to teach how to tie a knot.

Hold the thread end between your thumb and first finger. Wrap the thread once around the first finger and between the thumb and finger along side the thread end. Push your thumb forward, gently rolling the threads so they

twist together. As the circle of thread comes off the first finger, grasp the thread above the circle between your second finger and thumb. Release the first finger and pull back to make a knot.

Should your daughter experience excessive difficulty using a thimble even though it seems to fit her finger, it may be that the needle she is using is too long for her small fingers or for the kind of work she is doing. A short needle is used for single stitch work, such as whipping; a long needle is used where several stitches are run onto the needle at one time, such as for the running stitch. When a child uses a needle that is too long for her to manage, she tends to push the needle with another finger or at another position on the second finger. One of the best ways to become accustomed to a thimble is to work on rather heavy fabric with a short needle making single rather than running stitches. This makes the need for a thimble very obvious and is more meaningful than words.

The illustrations show how to hold the needle, the running stitch, even basting, uneven basting, back stitching and whip stitching.

Scissors usually are familiar to children long before they show interest in sewing, but there are a few sewing-oriented points to bring out. When handing scissors to another person, hold the blades and offer the handles. Since dull or bent scissors will not cut fabric, scissors should not be dropped. It is worthwhile to invest in scissors to be used only for sewing—not for cutting paper, cord or wire. This will teach your child to respect fine tools and prevent frustration when cutting

Position—The first step is to teach position at the machine. It may take some improvising with cushions and books to relate chair height properly to machine. The body should be centered with the needle, the elbows just below the table height and the feet resting flat on the floor. The back should be straight and the body tilted slightly forward. The hands and arms should rest lightly on the table, either guiding the fabric or in a rest position. Teach this hand position as a safety measure to follow whenever the machine is running.

Speed Control—Now teach how to control the speed of the machine. Keep the presser foot up and do not thread

the machine. Show how to press the foot or knee against the controller to make the machine run. Press lightly and the machine will run faster. Teach how to run the machine at a slow even speed.

Guiding Fabric—When your daughter can stitch with an even rhythm, she is ready to learn to guide fabric. Teach her the names of the machine parts she will use: hand wheel, presser foot lifter, presser foot, needle. Attach your seam guide—set for a $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam—to the machine. Use two lengthwise strips of cotton fabric to make a seam. Teach neatness by using pressed rather than crumpled fabric. Teach how to place the fabric under the needle, edges against seam guide. With right hand on the hand wheel and left hand holding fabric in position, turn hand wheel (usually toward you) until the needle enters the fabric. Then lower the presser foot. Guide the fabric edge with the right hand, the mass or bulk with the left hand. Keep the eyes on the fabric edge where it touches the seam guide, not on the needle. Teach your child to press the controller and to run the machine at a slow rhythmic speed, to slow down when approaching the seam end, to place her hand on the hand wheel when bringing the needle up and to remove the fabric by moving it to the back and left.

When you teach, state each point simply and clearly while you show how it is done. Then have your daughter do what you have shown her. Give her time to practice but watch to be sure she is practicing correctly. If necessary, show her again. Often some of the more subtle points are missed initially. During her practice, she will be developing coordination of the eyes, hands and knee or foot, and she will be forming good habits for handling the sewing machine.

Stitching with Thread—Once speed control and guiding fabric have been mastered, your child is ready to learn how to stitch. It is best that you thread the machine for her in the beginning. When she has learned how to stitch she will be able to start a seam without tangling threads and to end a seam so that the needle will not become unthreaded.

Cont'd next week