C. E. A. MERROW.

SHOE HORN.

APPLICATION FILED OCT. 3, 1910.

990,283.

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Fig. 1.

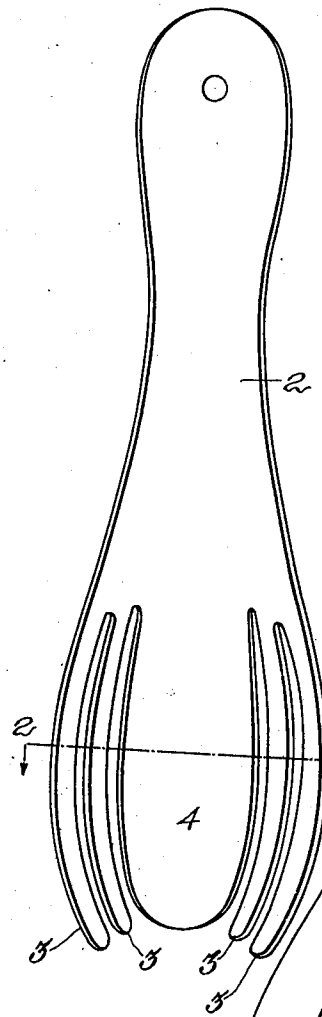


Fig. 2.

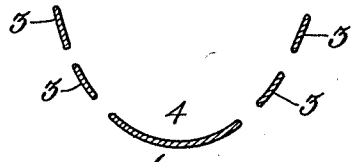


Fig. 3.

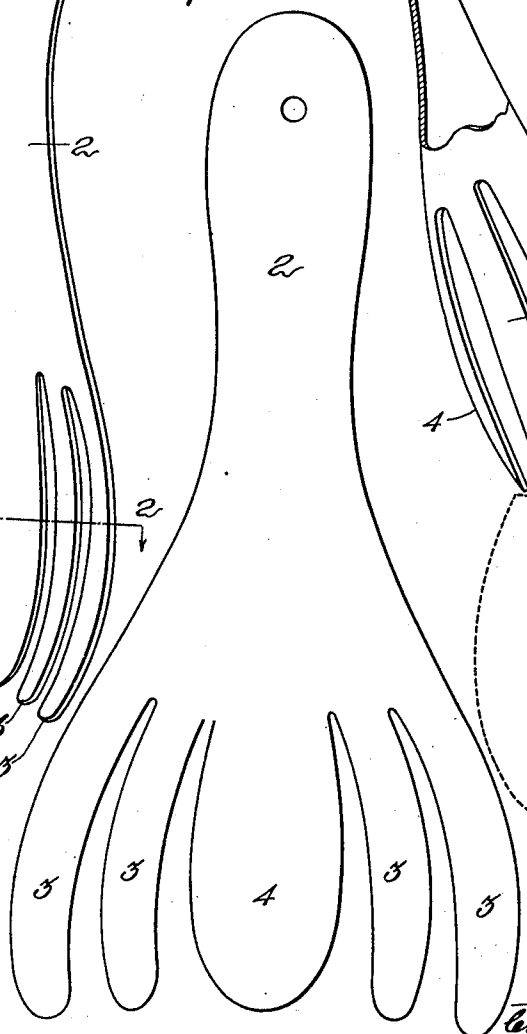
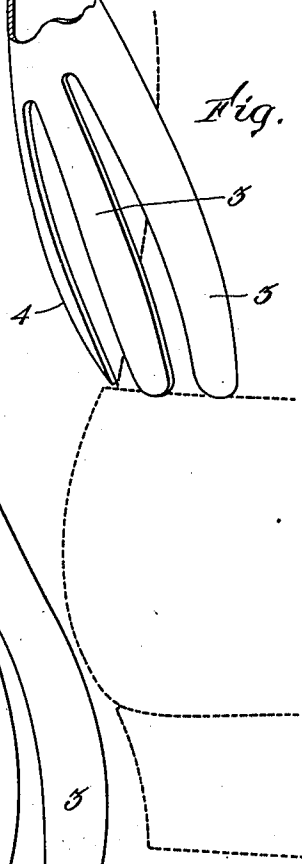


Fig. 4.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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SHOE-HORN.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES E. A. MERROW, a citizen of the United States, residing at Boston, in the county of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Shoe-Horns; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

The present invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in shoe horns, and more particularly to that type of shoe horn which is employed for facilitating the entrance of the foot into a low shoe. Shoe horns of this type as at present constructed support only the back portion of the heel of a shoe, and do not prevent the sides of the shoe from buckling and folding under when the foot is forced into the shoe. Most shoe horns are further objectionable owing to the fact that they are rigid and stiff and do not conform to the foot when in use. This not only renders the shoe horn uncomfortable when putting the shoe on, but in addition makes it difficult to withdraw the horn after the foot has slipped into place in the shoe.

One object of the present invention is to provide a shoe horn which will hold the back and sides of the upper in their proper position when putting on the shoe, and eliminate all tendency of the sides of the upper to fold under.

With this end in view one feature of the invention contemplates the provision of a shoe horn formed of a single integral blank having a body portion provided with integral fingers projecting therefrom, the fingers being flexible and resilient and adapted to work independently of one another and to engage and support the back and sides of the upper when a shoe is applied to the foot.

A further object of the invention is to provide a shoe horn which will readily conform to any shape or size of foot when in use. This end is attained by providing the shoe horn with a plurality of flexible resilient side fingers in conjunction with a flexible resilient back portion, the whole combining to form a shoe horn which shapes itself readily to any foot.

A further object of the invention is to provide a shoe horn which will operate efficiently when inserted obliquely in a shoe or withdrawn obliquely therefrom. This result is obtained by progressively lengthening the side fingers comprising the horn.

Still further features of the invention will be more fully described in the accompanying specification and defined in the appended claims.

In the drawings illustrating the preferred form of the invention Figure 1 represents a plan view of the improved shoe horn. Fig. 2 is a section upon the line 2—2, of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 shows a plan view of the shoe horn blank before being bent into its proper curvature and Fig. 4 is a diagrammatic illustration showing the manner of using the shoe horn.

The shoe horn shown in the illustrated embodiment of the invention is preferably made by cutting a blank 1 of the form shown in Fig. 3 from a sheet of suitable flexible resilient material, preferably sheet metal, and then molding or bending this blank into the shoe horn 2 shown in Figs. 1 and 2. This produces a simple and efficient shoe horn which is readily cut from a single integral blank and molded or bent into the proper shape. Although sheet steel is preferably employed as the material of which the horn is made, it is to be understood that it is within the purview of the invention to employ any other suitable flexible resilient material, for example, celluloid.

In order to prevent both the back and sides of the upper from folding under when the foot is forced into a low shoe, and in addition, to reduce the friction upon the stocking and eliminate any danger of tearing at the sides of the heel, the shoe horn is provided with a plurality of flexible fingers 3 one of which is widened to form a central back portion 4. The back portion 4 corresponds to the blade of the ordinary shoe horn, and the flexible side fingers are separated from the back portion and from each other, and are independently movable, in order to conform readily to any shape of foot. The side fingers are preferably separated from each other and from the back portion a slight distance, and when the shoe horn is originally cut from the flat blank the slots between the fingers are made wider at their outer ends in order that when the blank has been given the proper curvature to produce a finished shoe horn the slots will be substantially of uniform width throughout their length. The curvature of the shoe horn in cross section is slightly greater than

that of the normal heel and the diameter of the horn is somewhat less than that of the heel, in order that when the shoe horn engages with the foot it will be flattened out and the fingers spread apart to lie closely about the back and sides of the heel.

The body portion of the horn is bowl-shaped in cross section, and is provided with a handle projecting integrally from the upper portion, the lower portion of the horn having the plurality of flexible fingers projecting downwardly therefrom, the outer ends of the fingers and back portion converging toward one another in order to facilitate the insertion of the horn into the shoe. When the horn is inserted into a shoe it is commonly held in an oblique position, and in order that each of the fingers shall properly support the shoe upper they are formed of progressively increasing lengths, as shown clearly in Fig. 1.

Having thus described the construction and mode of operation of the invention, what is claimed is:—

1. A shoe horn formed from a single integral blank of flexible resilient material comprising a body portion and a plurality of separate independently yielding fingers projecting from the lower part of the body portion to engage the back and sides of the shoe and prevent the sides from folding under during the insertion of a foot into the shoe, substantially as described.

2. A shoe horn formed of a single integral blank of flexible resilient material comprising a body portion, a central back portion and side fingers projecting from the lower part of the body portion and separated from one another, the side fingers being of progressively increasing lengths in order to enable the horn to properly support the sides of a shoe when inserted in the shoe in an oblique position, substantially as described.

3. A shoe horn formed of a single integral blank of flexible resilient material comprising a body portion, a central back portion and side fingers projecting from the lower part of the body portion and separated from one another, the side fingers and back portion converging at their outer ends to facilitate the insertion of the shoe horn into a shoe, substantially as described.

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