Aug. 13, 1968 J. H. BATISTA 3,396,883

FLEXIBLE SHOEHORN

Filed Jan. 9, 1967

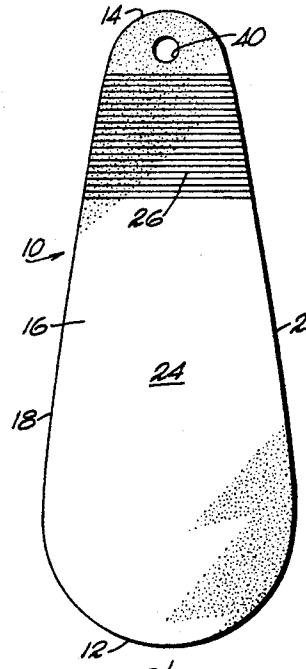

Fig. 1

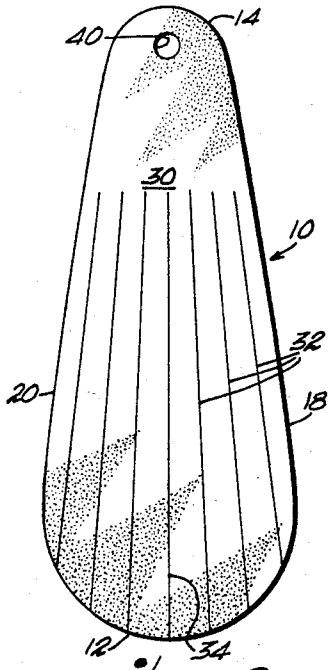

Fig. 2

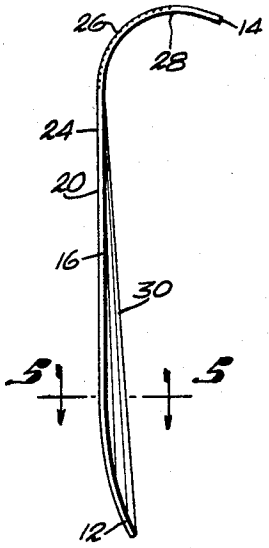

Fig. 4

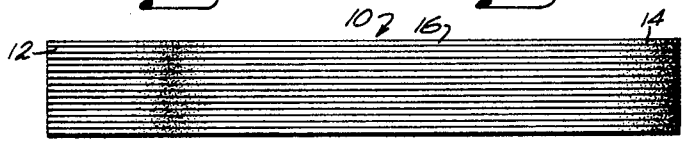

Fig. 3

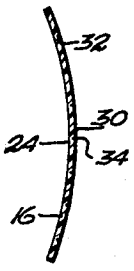

Fig. 5

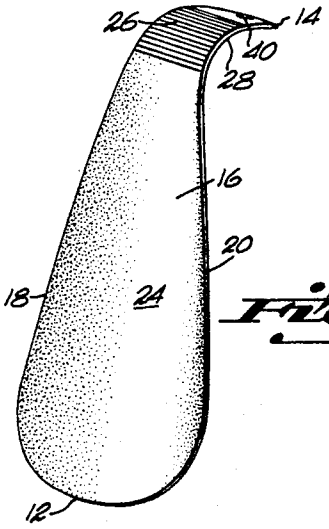

Fig. 6

INVENTOR.
JOSE HERNANDEZ BATISTA

BY John Cyril Malloy

ATTORNEY.

United States Patent Office 3,396,883 Patented Aug. 13, 1968

3,396,883

FLEXIBLE SHOEHORN

Jose Hernandez Batista, 1822 SW. 99th Place, Miami, Fla. 33165

Filed Jan. 9, 1967, Ser. No. 607,991
3 Claims. (Cl. 223—118)

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A shoehorn comprised of a tough, flexible and pliable material, and formed in a symmetrical flat sheet having a plurality of closely adjacent transverse score lines in one surface, adjacent one end thereof, and generally longitudinally extending score lines in the opposite surface of the horn to that of the surface in which the transverse score lines are provided; the combination of the tranverse and longitudinally extending score lines facilitating the desired permanent contouring thereof.

The present invention pertains to shoehorns and is more particularly directed to a shoehorn comprised of a tough, flexible and pliable material formed in a symmetrical flat sheet.

One of the principal objects of the instant invention is to provide a flat shoehorn of this type that will readily conform, in use, to the contour of the heel of the user, to facilitate inserting the foot into a shoe.

Another object of the invention is to provide a shoehorn of this type which can be readily, permanently contoured at its finger grip end to provide a firm gripping area for the thumb and forefinger of the user.

Yet another object of the instant invention is to provide a plurality of closely adjacent transverse score lines in one surface of the finger grip end thereof, to enable the user to impart a permanent contour in the form of an appropriate smooth transverse curve upon the application of appropriate forces to said end.

A still further object of this invention is to provide a flat shoehorn of the aforementioned type in which a permanent, longitudinally extending arcuate contour can be readily formed in the large end of the shoehorn which is adapted to extend into the heel socket of the shoe when in use.

Another object of the instant invention is the provision of generally longitudinally extending score lines in the large end of the shoehorn, said score lines being in the opposite surface of the horn to that of the surface in which the transverse score lines are provided, and facilitates the longitudinally extending arcuate contouring thereof with normal use of the horn, without the application of other forces thereto.

A still further object of this invention is to provide a shoehorn which is initially in the form of a flat sheet to facilitate storing, packaging and shipping thereof and to perform these operations at a much lower cost than has been heretofore possible with existing types of shoehorns.

Yet another object of the instant invention is to provide a shoehorn which is extremely inexpensive to produce, and which may be produced in various colors as well as being readily susceptible to the application of any desired advertising matter or the like thereon.

For a better understanding of the instant invention, together with further objects and advantages, reference is made to the following description of the accompanying drawings, in which there is illustrated a preferred embodiment in accordance with the invention.

FIGURE 1 is a plan view illustrating one flat surface of the shoehorn of the instant invention.

FIGURE 2 is a plan view of the opposite flat surface of the shoe horn.

FIGURE 3 is a side elevation of a stack of shoehorns of the present invention.

FIGURE 4 is a side elevational view of one shoehorn which has been fully contoured.

FIGURE 5 is a section taken on the plane of line 5—5 of FIGURE 4.

FIGURE 6 is a perspective view of a contoured shoehorn as seen in FIGURE 4.

In the drawings, in which like reference numerals are employed to designate like parts throughout the various views, **10** generally designates a shoehorn in accordance with the instant invention, which is composed of a flat, symmetrical sheet of tough, flexible and pliable material, having a rounded first end **12** and a rounded end **14**, with the rounded ends being connected by an intermediate portion **16** having opposite side edges **18** and **20** tracing fair curves tangent to the rounded ends **12** and **14**. One flat surface of the shoehorn **24** is provided with a plurality of closely spaced score lines **26**, extending completely across the horn, adjacent the second rounded end thereof to render said end yieldable to forces applied to the distal end of the second end to bend the end in a smooth transverse curve **28**, and to impart a permanent contour thereto, out of the plane of the surface having the transverse score lines. A secure gripping or handle portion is therefore provided for the thumb and forefinger of the user.

The surface **30** of the shoehorn, opposite to the surface in which the transverse score lines are provided, is provided with a plurality of generally longitudinally extending score lines **32**, FIGURE 2, which are equally spaced approximately one-quarter inch apart in a transverse direction, and providing an equal number of score lines on each side of a line of symmetry **34**.

As previously stated the shoehorn is composed of a flat, symmetrical sheet of tough, flexible and pliable material such as certain types of plastic, cardboard, various other suitable compositions or the like.

The second rounded end **14** may be grasped between the thumb and forefinger, and the intermediate portion **16** grasped in the other hand and upon the application of appropriate forces a smooth transverse curve **28** is formed to provide a permanent convenient gripping portion. The first rounded end may then be inserted into the heel socket of a shoe in the conventional manner, and when the foot is slipped into the shoe the first rounded end **12** and intermediate portion **16** will conform to the heel of the user and be contoured between the heel and back wall of the heel socket of the shoe.

In the preferred embodiment the first rounded end **12** has a considerably greater radius of curvature than the finger grip or second rounded end **14**, to provide a gradually decreasing transverse dimension from the first rounded end to the second rounded end to form a neck portion. A hole **40** may be provided in the second rounded end as illustrated in FIGURES 1 and 2.

The overall length of the shoehorn is such that when the first rounded end **12** touches the floor of the heel socket of the shoe and is inclined thereto at an angle of about 45 degrees, the second or transversely curved end **14** will be at all times out of the socket when the horn is in use. The thickness of the sheet comprising the shoehorn depends to a degree on the type of material from which it is composed but generally would range from approximately $\frac{1}{32}$ to $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch.

As seen in FIGURE 3, a plurality of shoehorns of the instant invention are shown in a stack to illustrate the tremendous advantages for storing, packaging and ship-

ping purposes over the conventional rigidly formed shoehorns now in use.

In addition to the apparent economy incurred by facilitating the storing, packaging and shipping operations, the shoe horns of the instant invention are less costly to produce, easier to carry in the pocket of a shoe salesman, more protective to both socks and shoes of the user, can be produced in any color and are readily succeptible to the application of any desired advertising or the like thereon.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of a preferred form of the invention. Since numerous modifications and changes will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction or configuration shown and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and substitutions of equivalents may be made therein without departing from the true scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A one-piece shoehorn for use in guiding the heel of a user into a heel socket of a shoe;

said shoe horn being of tough, flexible and pliable material of uniform thickness throughout and initially comprising:

a flat, contourable, elongated symmetrical sheet having opposite smooth surfaces, said sheet being in the order of approximately $\frac{1}{32}$ of an inch to $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch thick and of a shape as seen in plan having a rounded first end and a rounded second end, said ends having an intermediate portion and opposite side edges tracing a fair curve tangent to said ends,

said intermediate portion at said second end having a plurality of closely adjacent transverse score lines in one of said smooth surfaces extending completely across the horn to render said second end yieldable to

forces applied to the distal end of the second end to bend and contour said second end in a smooth transverse curve and impart a permanent contour thereabout as the distal end is bent out of the plane of the surface having said transverse score marks and toward the other smooth surface of the horn,

said intermediate portion and said first end including a plurality of generally longitudinally extending score lines in the surface of the sheet opposite the surface in which said transverse score lines are provided, an equal number of said longitudinally extending score lines are on each side of a line of symmetry of said sheet, and said score lines are in the order of one-quarter inch apart in a transverse direction whereby when the shoehorn is used, the first end and intermediate portion will conform to the heel of the wearer and be substantially permanently contoured thereby.

2. A one-piece shoehorn as set forth in claim **1** wherein said second end has a radius smaller than said first end.

3. A device as set forth in claim **1** wherein said second end includes a central hole disposed between the end of said sheet and said transverse score lines.

References Cited

UNITED STATES PATENTS

481,253	8/1892	Cady	223—118
685,548	10/1901	Williams	223—118
865,462	9/1907	Weeks	223—118
1,913,709	6/1933	Gutmann	223—118
2,366,097	12/1944	Gesell	223—118

JORDAN FRANKLIN, *Primary Examiner.*

G. H. KRIZMANICH, *Assistant Examiner.*