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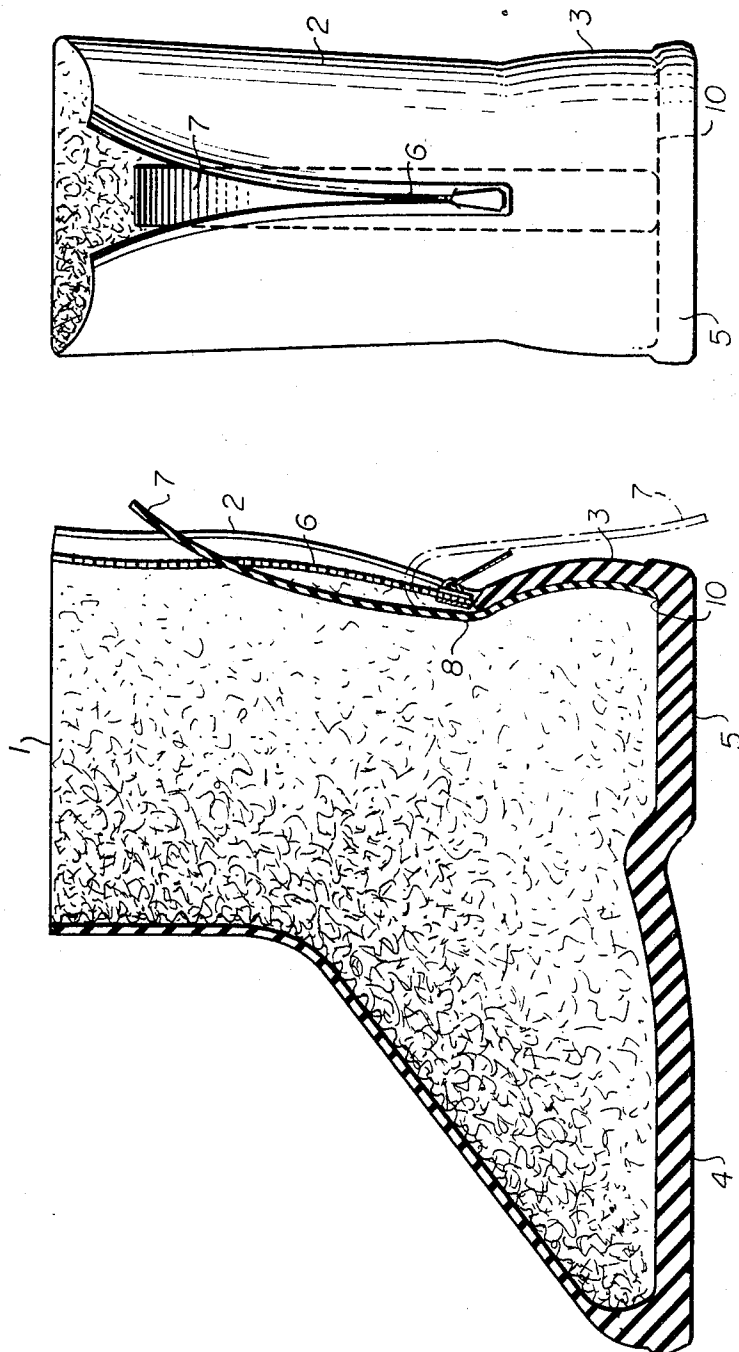


FIG. 2

FIG. 1

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OVERSHOE CONSTRUCTION

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6 Claims. (Cl. 36-7.3)

This invention relates to overshoes and more particularly to an improved overshoe which facilitates the overshoe being put on by the wearer.

Some difficulty is often encountered in putting on and removing conventional overshoes. This difficulty is, in part, due to their construction. With conventional overshoes having a separation at the front and a buckle or slide fastener device for closing the separation, the wearer grasps the top sides of the overshoe while inserting his foot. In cases where there is a snug fit between the shoe and the overshoe, the above method can be a difficult and tiring operation, especially for a child. In addition, if the overshoe is muddy, putting it on or taking it off is a messy, undesirable operation. The present invention overcomes these difficulties by providing an overshoe that is easily applied or removed, even by a child, without handling the exterior of the overshoe.

The improved overshoe is equipped with a vertical separation at the rear and a grasping member secured to the rear inner surface of the overshoe adjacent the heel. In grasping the top of a conventional overshoe, the wearer tends to apply a pulling force substantially in line with the central axis of the leg portion of the overshoe. A relatively small force is applied in a rearward direction. In contrast, by pulling upward and to the rear on the grasping member of the overshoe of this invention, the wearer may insert his shoe in a much easier fashion.

Also, conventional overshoes having a frontal separation are more difficult to place on by virtue of the location of the separation. The separation being at the front is not the most advantageous construction for an overshoe, since movement in inserting one's foot is from a rearward to a forward position. In using an overshoe having a separation at the rear, the natural movement in inserting one's shoe from a rearward to a forward position in the overshoe is facilitated.

While prior proposals have been made for overshoes with a separation in the rear, they have not been fully successful. The reason is that the rearward separation of itself does not fully obviate the problems discussed above. With this invention ease of application and removal and cleanliness are obtained through the provision of the combination of a rearward opening and the grasping member which is secured to the heel to provide easy access to the grasping member. A further advantage is obtained by providing a grasping member which extends upwardly from the heel so that it is long enough for facile grasping and still within the overshoe when closed so that it is kept clean.

Accordingly, the primary object of the present invention is to provide a novel and improved overshoe which may be easily placed on or removed from the foot while collecting a minimum amount of dirt on the hands of the user.

These and other objects are brought out in the description and claims which follow.

In the figures:

FIGURE 1 is a side elevational view in section revealing the grasping member.

FIGURE 2 is a rear elevational view of an improved overshoe with the fastening means in an open position to reveal an exposed portion of the grasping member.

As shown in FIGURE 1, the overshoe 1 of the invention has an upper leg encasing portion 2 consisting of a substantially single piece of material which wraps around

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the wearer's leg and is separated at the rear. A foot and shoe encasing portion 3 is attached at the bottom of the leg encasing portion 2 and extends lengthwise of the overshoe 1 as shown in FIGURE 1. For clarity of illustration and because it is well known, a shoe is not shown in the drawing. A sole 4 is attached to the bottom of the foot encasing portion 3 and has a heel portion 5 at the rear.

A fastening means 6, which is a slide fastener in the preferred embodiment, is located in vertical alignment along the rear of the leg encasing portion 2 and extends downwards to a point adjacent the foot encasing portion 3. The fastening means 6 is shown in open position in FIGURES 1 and 2.

A grasping member 7, comprised of flexible material in the preferred embodiment, extends vertically along the inner rear surface of the leg encasing portion 2. The grasping member 7 is secured to the inner rear surface of the foot encasing portion 3 near a juncture 10, of the encasing and heel portions 3, 5. The grasping member may have its end secured to the heel portion 5 or, alternatively, may be fixed to the heel portion. The grasping member 7 has a substantially smooth inner surface 8 against which a shoe may be slid. As shown in FIGURE 2, the grasping means is exposed while the fastening means 6 is maintained in an open position.

In operation, the fastening means 6 is maintained in an open position whereby the grasping member 7 is exposed for immediate use. The wearer takes hold of the grasping member 7 while inserting his shoe into the leg encasing portion 2 and into foot encasing portion 3. In taking hold of the grasping member 7, the user applies a pulling force in an upward and rearward direction, the application of the rearward force greatly facilitating the insertion of a shoe. In addition to being utilized as a means for applying a pulling force to the overshoe 1, the grasping member may also function in a manner similar to that of a shoehorn. Since the inner surface of the grasping member 7 is substantially smooth, it will provide a sliding surface for the rear of a shoe as well as a surface for applying forward pressure directly against the shoe.

An important feature of the grasping means 7 resides in its ability to permit the application of a rearward force near the rear of the foot encasing portion 3. As a shoe is inserted in the leg encasing portion 2 and forced forward into the foot encasing portion 3, the application of a rearward force to the grasping member 7 will at the same time cause the overshoe to move rearward, thus making the insertion of a shoe much easier. In contrast, the operation of a conventional overshoe is more difficult since one cannot apply a substantial rearward force to the heel portion if the overshoe is merely grasped by its upper leg encasing portion.

On removal of the overshoe, the rearward opening and the grasping member are also helpful. The overshoe may be removed by pulling the grasping member out through the opening in the overshoe and then pulling down and forwardly on the grasping member so that the overshoe is removed without need to touch the exterior of the overshoe.

While a preferred embodiment of the invention has been set forth in the above description, it is intended that other forms may be adopted, all coming within the spirit and the scope of the claims which follow.

What is claimed is:

1. An improved overshoe comprising:

(a) a sole including a heel portion;

(b) an encasing portion connected to the sole including said heel portion and extending upwards for encasing a shoe and lower leg, said encasing portion having a leg opening at its top and a vertical separation at the rear;

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- (c) a fastening means secured near the separation at the rear of the encasing portion for opening and closing the separation;
- (d) said heel and encasing portions meeting at a juncture; and,
- (e) a grasping member secured at its lower end to one of said portions in the interior of said overshoe near said juncture and extending upwards within said encasing portion, said grasping member adapted to be pulled in a manner whereby a shoe may be easily inserted in the encasing portion and said fastening means being outside of the grasping member when the fastening means is closed.
2. The device of claim 1 wherein the fastening means is a zipper.
3. The device of claim 2 wherein the grasping means is a flexible strap.
4. An improved overshoe comprising:
- (a) a sole including a heel portion;
- (b) a foot encasing portion connected to and extending upwards from the sole;
- (c) a leg encasing portion connected to and extending upwards from the foot encasing portion, said leg encasing portion having a vertical separation at the rear extending from a point adjacent the foot encasing portion;
- (d) a fastening means connected along the separation at the rear of the leg encasing portion whereby the

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separation may be maintained in an open or closed position; and,

- (e) a grasping member secured at its lower end to the inner rear of the foot encasing portion and extending upwards, said grasping member being exposed when the fastening means is in an open position whereby the overshoe may be pulled on over a shoe.

5. The device of claim 4 wherein the grasping member is a flexible strap of sufficient length to be grasped in two hands in a manner whereby the resultant pulling force applied to the overshoe has a rearward component and an upward component, the rearward component being an appreciable fraction of the upward component.

6. The device of claim 4 wherein the grasping member is relatively inflexible, the grasping member having a substantially smooth inner surface against which a shoe may be slid.

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