

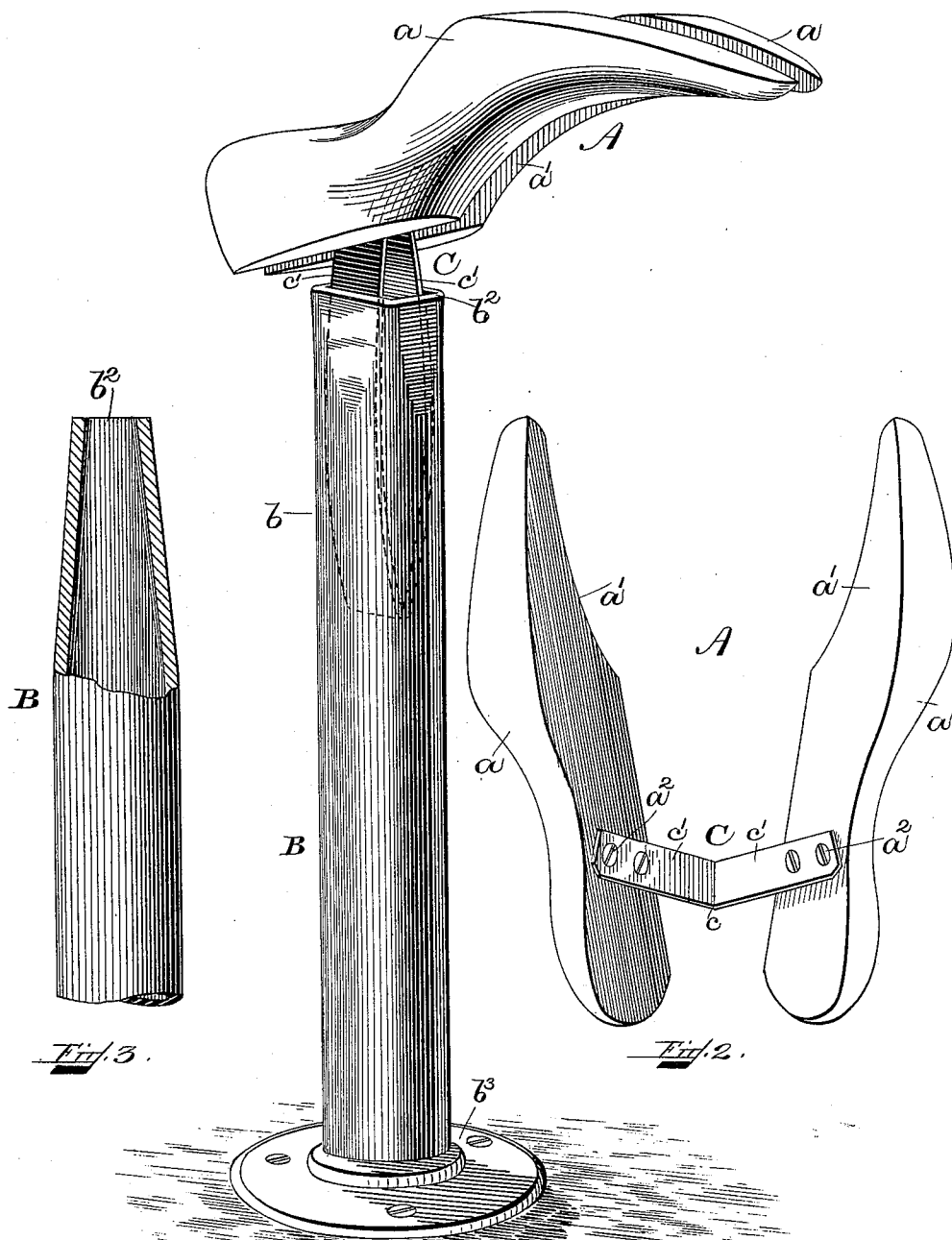
(No Model.)

J. W. THOMPSON.

SELF ADJUSTING FOLLOWER FOR BOOTS OR SHOES.

No. 585,010.

Patented June 22, 1897.



Witnesses:

A. O. Hylle.
A. O. Orme

Fig. 1.

Inventor:

Joseph W. Thompson,
By his attorneys,
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOSEPH W. THOMPSON, OF MEDWAY, MASSACHUSETTS, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO JOSEPH M. HERMAN, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

SELF-ADJUSTING FOLLOWER FOR BOOTS OR SHOES.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 585,010, dated June 22, 1897.

Application filed October 28, 1896. Serial No. 610,385. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOSEPH W. THOMPSON, a citizen of the United States, residing at Medway, in the county of Norfolk and State of Massachusetts, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Self-Adjusting Followers for Boots or Shoes; 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 followers for boots or shoes; and its object is to provide a device of this character which can be easily and quickly inserted and removed from a boot or shoe and which at the same time will be self-adjusting to various widths of shoes and to wide or narrow toes.

To this end the present invention consists of a self-adjusting follower comprising side former or spreader sections and an expansible coupling or spring-stem connecting said sections, acting normally to move said sections laterally away from each other.

It further consists of a self-adjusting follower comprising the former or spreader sections and an expansible spring stem or shank connecting said sections, in combination with a suitable tool or device for compressing said spring stem or shank when removing or replacing a shoe thereon, and it further consists of the devices and combination of devices which will be hereinafter described and claimed.

The invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 represents in perspective the follower and the tool or device in assembled position. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the follower, and Fig. 3 is a sectional view of the upper end of the releasing tool or device.

In the manufacture of boots and shoes it is common to form the same upon a former or last, which remains in the shoe until a certain point in its manufacture has been reached, after which the shoe is removed from the last and replaced by a follower, which remains in the shoe during the finishing operations.

It is necessary that the follower be capable of being readily and quickly placed in and

removed from the shoe and that it be capable of adjusting itself to various widths of shoes, to secure which results I have devised the form and arrangement which is shown in the drawings and which illustrates a preferred form of my invention.

In the drawings, A represents the follower, and B the releasing tool or device.

The follower A comprises a plurality of former or spreader sections *a*, which are preferably shaped as shown, each being substantially a half of a last divided longitudinally by a vertical cut extending from the toe to the heel, but somewhat narrower than a half-section of a given size of last, in order that when brought close together the follower may be readily inserted or removed from a boot or shoe. These former or spreader sections *a* are designed to be connected together by an expanding coupler or spring stem or shank C, which can be compressed for the purpose of bringing the sections *a* in close contact while inserting the follower into and removing it from a shoe, and this expanding coupler is preferably of such a construction that it may be acted upon by a suitable tool or device to compress the same to bring the former or spreader sections *a* together and also to act as a stem or shank to support the former or spreader sections *a* while removing and replacing a shoe thereon.

The expanding coupler in the form of my invention illustrated in the drawings consists of a metal spring C, which is bent at *c*, forming the divergent spring-arms *c'*, which are secured to the inner faces *a'* of the former or spreader sections *a* by any suitable means, such as the screws *a''*, the arrangement being such that the expanding coupler acts to normally cause the former or spreader sections *a* to move away from each other and when out of the shoe assume the position shown in Fig. 2.

By the construction above described the former or spreader sections *a* can be brought close together against the tension of the expanding coupler C and inserted into and removed from a shoe, and when in a shoe the expanding coupler C will force the former or spreader sections *a* laterally away from each other, causing them to fill out and give form

to the shoe, at the same time enabling the follower A to adjust itself to varying widths of shoes.

While the device as hereinbefore described is capable of being manipulated by hand, I prefer to employ in connection therewith a suitable tool or device B for compressing the expanding coupler or stem while removing the follower from or replacing it in a shoe.

The tool or device which I have found to be well adapted for the purpose is shown at B and comprises the hollow stem or stand *b*, the bore of which is flattened in section, as shown at *b*², and is adapted to receive and compress the expanding coupler or stem C.

The tool B may have any suitable handle or grip upon the end of its stem or stand *b*, but I prefer to provide it with a base *b*³, which may be secured to a bench or rack, and thus form a standard or support for the follower A, upon which the follower and shoe may be supported in convenient reach of the operator.

In order that the follower A when placed upon the tool or releasing device B may be supported at such an angle as to assist in the removal and replacing of a shoe thereon, the expanding coupler or stem C, which forms the supporting-stem of the follower, is connected thereto at an angle, so that when placed in the bore *b*² it will cause the toe of the follower to point upwardly.

The tool or device B is conveniently formed of a metal tube which is substantially circular in cross-section, being flattened near its upper end, forming the substantially rectangular bore *b*².

In operation the flattened end of the tool or device B is either forced onto the expansible coupler or stem C or the expansible coupler or stem forced into the bore *b*², thus compressing said coupler and bringing the former or spreader sections *a* nearer together. While in this position, the follower A is inserted in a shoe and the expansible coupler or stem C removed from the bore *b*², when it will immediately expand and force the former or spreader sections *a* laterally away from each other, thus expanding and shaping the shoe-

upper. When it is desired to remove the follower from the shoe, the expanding coupler or stem C may be either compressed by hand or forced into the bore *b*² of the tool or device B and compressed, after which the shoe may be lifted off, leaving the follower A in position on the tool or device B ready to be inserted in another shoe.

Having fully described my invention and its mode of operation, I claim as novel and desire to protect by Letters Patent of the United States—

1. A self-adjustable follower for boots or shoes, comprising the former or spreader sections and an elastic expansible coupler or stem connecting said sections and projected therefrom, substantially as described.

2. The combination with a follower, comprising the former or spreader sections, and an elastic expansible coupler or stem connecting said sections, of a releasing tool or device adapted to receive and compress said coupler or stem to move the follower-sections toward each other, substantially as described.

3. The combination with a follower comprising the former or spreader sections, and an expansible coupler or stem connecting said sections, of a releasing tool or device mounted upon a supporting base or standard, adapted to receive and compress said coupler or stem, to move the follower-sections toward each other, substantially as described.

4. The combination with a follower, comprising the former or spreader sections, and an expansible coupler or stem connecting said sections, and secured obliquely thereto, of a releasing tool or device, mounted upon a supporting base or standard, adapted to receive and compress said coupler or stem to move the follower-sections toward each other, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

JOSEPH W. THOMPSON.

Witnesses:

T. HART ANDERSON,
A. E. WHYTE.