W Bourn,

Boot Jack,

No. 36,831. Patented Nov. 4, 1862.

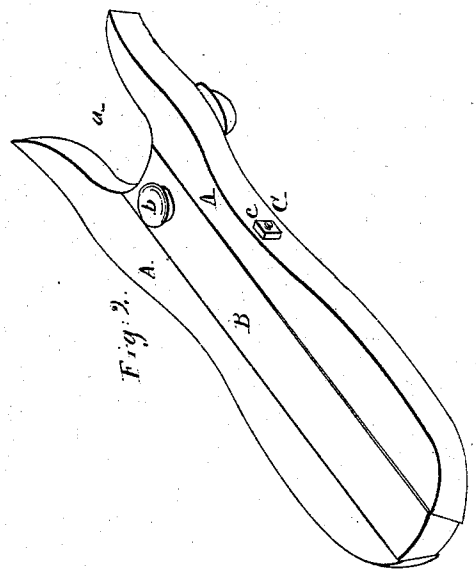

Fig. 2.

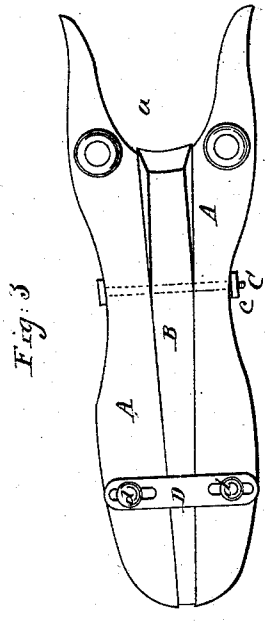

Fig. 3

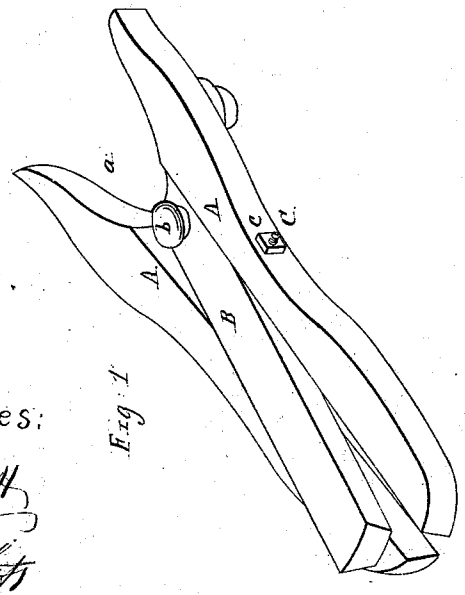

Fig. 1

Witnesses:

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILLIAM BOURN, OF GENEVA, NEW YORK.

IMPROVED BOOT-JACK.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **36,831**, dated November 4, 1862.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM BOURN, of Geneva, in the county of Ontario and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Boot-Jacks; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, making part of this specification.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of my improved boot-jack with the jaws expanded for the purpose of receiving the heel of the boot to be removed; Fig. 2, a similar view of the same with the jaws closed; Fig. 3, a plan of the under side thereof with the jaws in the position shown in Fig. 1.

Like letters designate corresponding parts in all the figures.

My invention consists in forming the boot-jack with two similar side pieces, having an intermediate wedge-space extending the whole length, in which is fitted a double-acting wedge, both opening and closing the jaws by the action of the free foot of the operator on its top, the parts being connected by a transverse bolt, thus dispensing with the use of springs, iron jaws, guide-pieces, and other similar appliances requisite in ordinary boot-jacks, and placing the simplicity, cost, and effectiveness at the minimum point.

As represented in the drawings, the two side pieces, A A, are counterparts, and present in outline the form of an ordinary boot-jack, the forward ends forming the usual jaws, as represented at *a*. These counterparts are situated at suitable distance apart for the purpose designed, and their inner proximate straight edges are made sufficiently beveling inward and downward to form a wedge-shaped space, *g*, substantially of the shape represented. Into this wedge-space is closely fitted a double-action wedge, B, of similar shape and extending the whole length of the space, its forward end next the jaws being provided with an enlargement or seat, *b*, for the ball of the free foot of the operator, projecting up above the plane surface sufficiently far to allow the necessary depression of the forward end of the wedge to expand the jaws. The parts thus arranged are secured together by a transverse horizontal bolt, C, situated at a suitable position longitudinally of the device to insure the proper action of all the parts. This bolt acts as the fulcrum or bearing of the wedge, and also of the side pieces, A A, which are fitted to it with sufficient looseness to allow the necessary lateral play of the jaws.

When the boot-jack is to be used, one foot sustaining the weight of the operator is applied to the wedge B, the ball of the foot resting on the seat *b*. By inclining the weight forward the forward end of the wedge is pressed within the corresponding end of the wedge-space, while the rear end is raised from it, as indicated in Fig. 1, thus having the effect to spread or open the jaws to the necessary extent to insert the heel of the other foot. Then, by leaning the weight back, (as is natural in drawing the boot from the foot,) the position of the wedge is reversed, the forward end being raised and the rear end depressed in the wedge-space, thus closing and holding the jaws to the confined foot, as indicated in Fig. 2. The action is thus automatic, answering perfectly the purpose for which it is intended, and as effectively as in other and more complicated devices. By this arrangement I am enabled to reduce the cost to the lowest possible degree, as there are but three principal parts, and these are made entirely of wood, and there are no appliances of springs, iron jaws, guide-bars, pivot-castings, &c., which not only increase the expense, but combined produce an instrument complicated and occupying much space, and therefore inconvenient for storage, packing, or use. My instrument occupies the smallest space possible. The parts are so regular that they are expeditiously sawed of the proper shape, and are so easily fitted that the principal cost is in the lumber used. The wedge, by extending and acting equally the whole length on the edges of the side pieces, insures the longest wear of the parts, and in this respect is much more effective than where a small wedge is used to force the jaws together, the bearing of which constantly in the same place soon wears, so that the device is worthless. If desirable, a cross-bar, D, provided with a slot in each end, through which passes a bolt, *d*, may be used to connect the rear ends of the side pieces, A A, and to allow the proper lateral expansion of the parts, as indicated in Fig. 3; but the same is not really necessary, and I do not contemplate using it.

I do not claim, broadly, expanding and contracting the jaws automatically by the weight

of the operator, dispensing with the use of springs for the purpose, as I am aware that such effect has been accomplished by an arrangement differing from mine; but I confine myself to the special device herein described.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

The combination of the side pieces, A A, double-acting wedge B, and bolt C, arranged in such a manner that the wedge forms a bearing the whole length between the said side pieces, and operates the jaws automatically by the weight of the operator, substantially as herein set forth.

In witness whereof I have hereunto signed my name in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

WILLIAM BOURN.

Witnesses:
VINSON E. TOMPKINS,
REUBEN F. SCOTT.