MOUNTS FOR STUFFED TOY ANIMAL EYES AND MEANS FOR CONCEALING SAME

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This invention relates to eye mounts for stuffed toy animals having a fabric skin of soft texture with simulated fur and constitutes an improvement over the disclosure shown in my previously filed patent application Ser. No. 176,238, dated Feb. 28, 1962.

In the previously filed application there is shown a novel method for securely holding a sleeping doll eye in place within an aperture of the skin of a stuffed toy animal. The particular feature of novelty in that application resides in the coaction of the eye casing with a frictional gripping ring which secures the marginal area of the aperture to the eye casing to form a mechanical bond. However, in the construction shown, the particular component, namely a flange, part of the eye casing which reacted with the gripping ring was too visible at the front of the toy animal and did not present a natural appearance of a toy animal having fur completely surrounding the eye opening. Accordingly, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide an eye casing in coaction with a gripping ring such that the simulated fur of the animal skin fully surrounds the eye opening and no mechanical gripping component is visible. This produces a very realistic effect. Another object of the present invention is to provide a readily molded front eye shell, which in coaction with the gripping ring can achieve the desired effect. Other objects and features of the invention will be apparent from the description to follow.

Briefly, the invention contemplates a rounding or bevel shaping of the front and rear of the plastic molded front shell, which in coaction with a gripping ring effects a release of the simulated fur material around the eye shell front so that such material effectively covers the front margin of the shell and in fact leaves substantially only the eye aperture visible. In other words, the simulated fur produced is entirely natural in appearance in that the toy animal eyes seem to peer through the surrounding fur. A detailed description of the invention now follows, in conjunction with the appended drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is an exploded view in elevation of the essential elements of the invention;
FIG. 2 is a front view of the gripping ring used in FIG. 1;
FIG. 3 is a rear view of the gripping ring used in FIG. 1;
FIG. 4 is a front view of the front shell shown in FIG. 1;
FIG. 5 is an assembly view, in elevation and partially in section, of an eye mounted in the aperture of a fabric simulated fur toy animal skin;
FIG. 6 is a front view of the eye of FIG. 5;
FIG. 7 is an elevation partially in section of an eye with a modified type of locking ring;
FIG. 8 is a front view of the modified ring, and;
FIG. 9 is an elevation partially in section of an assembly using the modified ring of FIG. 7, the eye being mounted in a simulated animal skin.

Referring now to the drawing, FIGS. 1 through 6, the invention comprises a plastic front eye shell 10 of the general type commercially used in the trade having the body portion 13 which shell will be understood to house a movable weighted sleeping doll eye, pivotally carried on trunnions in an entirely conventional manner, the details of which do not form any part of the present invention, and accordingly are not shown. The shell 10 is provided with a forwardly disposed peripheral formation comprising a rear bevel 15 and a rounded front bevel 20. The radial area 23 extending inwardly from the front bevel 20 is generally flat and has extending therefrom eye socket formations 26 and 30 around an aperture 31 which are spherically shaped to house a portion of the eyeball 33 and which merge into recesses 34 at the aperture corners. Thus, the molded portions 26 and 30 form simulated upper and lower lids respectively, although a lash 40, preferably a so-called soft lash, is secured to the eyeball and moves therewith in a well known manner. A metallic rear casing 44 is provided which telescopes with frictional grip on the front shell casing portion 13 and has the usual distri-

butely opposed bulges such as 47, which fit other cor-

responding bulges such as 50 of the front shell, such bulges 50 being understood to effect guide ways within portion 13 so that the eyeball, with integral trunnions, can be slid into position, all in a herefore familiar manner. A locking ring 54 is provided having a radial flange 57, a recess 60 and a longitudinal skirt 63 termin-

inating in radially disposed gripping lips 66. The skirt 63 is provided with arcuate bulges 70 to conform to the bulges 47. As shown in FIG. 5 the eye is assembled on simulated animal fur or plush, hairy, material 74. Such material has a fabric back 77 and a fluffy mass of fibrous hair-like material extending generally outwardly from the backing 77. Such material is well known and conventional. It will be noted from FIG. 5 that the lips 66 are engaged against the casing portion 13 and it will be further understood that the gripping lips 66 of the casing portion to hold the locking ring in place thereon. The eye fits through an aperture 80 in the material 74 and the marginal area of the aperture is securely pinched and gripped between the bevel 16 and the longitudinal and radial walls of the recess 60. The material is thus compressed and mechanically secured. However, due to the fluffiness of the material and the bevel provided at 16, the simulated fur 74 which is comprised of closely spaced soft fibers or hairs expand to encompass the bevel portion 16 and 20, and bends therearound to sub-

stantially hide the bevel front of the shell around the eye, bevel 20 forming a cutaneous-like relief against which the fibers can expand or spread. The frontal view gives an effect of an animal eye deeply recessed within the face skin, as shown in FIG. 6.

Referring now to FIGS. 7 through 9, a modified form of locking ring is shown having a considerably larger recess 84 at the front portion which recess is formed by the sloping wall 87 of the locking ring, and the front bevel 20 of the eye shell. The radial forward flange 89 of the ring is substantially in the plane of the front surface of the shell. The sloping wall 87, in coaction with the rear bevel 16 pinches the fabric material therebetween to form a secure mechanical grip. However, it is a fur-like feature that strands are permitted to fluff or expand in the recess 84 at the face of the shell and thus extend outwardly to substantially conceal the frontal area 23 of the shell.

The assembly view of FIG. 9 shows the general effect and it is believed that for certain eye sizes such effect of permitting expansion of the fur surrounding the front shell is advantageous. The factors which determine a choice of the relatively shallow recess 60 of FIG. 5 or the larger recess 84 of FIG. 7, depends to a large extent not only on the eye size, but on the type of fur material used and the relative length of the fur fibers as compared with the eye size.

Having thus described my invention, I am aware that various changes may be made without departing from the spirit thereof, and therefore I do not seek to be limited.
to the precise illustrations herein given, except as set forth in the appended claims.

1. The combination of a doll eye and a fibrous hairy skin for a toy animal, said doll eye having a front shell, said skin having an aperture, said front shell being disposed in said aperture and having an enlarged portion on the face side of said skin, a locking ring on the other side of said skin and means for effecting a grip of said ring on said skin to secure said front shell thereto, said ring having a flange forming a skin expansion recess with said enlarged portion, the marginal portion of the skin around said aperture being compressed against the radially inner margin of said enlarged portion by said ring, the hairs of said skin extending from a compressed region into said recess to effect fluffing and substantial concealment of said enlarged portion by curling there-around.

2. A doll eye for a stuffed toy animal having a fur-like skin comprised of a backing material from which fibers extend, said doll eye having a front portion comprising a shell having an aperture for exposure of an eyeball and having a relatively narrow flat marginal radial area surrounding said aperture and terminating peripherally in a rearwardly sloped bevel, such bevel extending to the extreme outer periphery of said shell, and said shell having a second bevel extending from said extreme periphery and being relatively oppositely sloped with respect to said first bevel, a ring secured with respect to said shell, said ring having wall portions forming a flaring recess with respect to said second bevel said skin expanding in said recess.

3. In a device as set forth in claim 2, said wall portions of said ring extending far more so that said recess encompasses said first mentioned bevel.

4. In a device as set forth in claim 3, said ring having locking elements, said shell having a body portion, a rear casing telescoped over said body portion, said locking elements frictionally gripping said rear casing.

5. The combination of an eye and simulated fur toy animal skin, said skin having an aperture for accommodating said eye, said eye having a body portion extending rearwardly through said aperture and having a front flange contiguous with said skin, a gripping ring having a bore with a marginal portion clamping the marginal material of said skin aperture against said flange, and said gripping ring having a flange disposed to form a flaring recess with the flange of said eye effective to permit expansion of said skin within said recess, said skin having a hairy texture comprising fibers which effect curling around said eye flange and being urged toward said eye flange by the flange of said gripping ring.

6. The combination of an eye and simulated fur toy animal skin, said skin having an aperture for accommodating said eye, said eye having a body portion extending rearwardly through said aperture and having a front flange presenting a front surface extending in a radial plane and a rear surface, said flange being contiguous with said skin, a gripping ring having a bore with a marginal portion clamping the marginal material of said skin aperture against said flange, said gripping ring having a flange disposed to form a flaring recess with the flange of said eye effective to permit expansion of said skin within said recess, said skin having a hairy texture comprising fibers which effect curling around said eye flange and being urged toward said eye flange by the flange of said gripping ring, wherein the flange of said gripping ring has a portion in the radial plane of the front surface of said eye flange.

7. In a device as set forth in claim 5, said eye flange having a rearwardly sloping bevel and the flange of said gripping ring being in a radial plane intersecting said bevel.

8. In a device of the class described, an eye assembly comprising a unitary eye having a front shell with a forward flange thereon and a gripping ring to be disposed with respect to said shell to clamp a simulated skin thereto adjacent the base of said flange, said gripping ring having a formation effecting an expansion recess around said flange to permit fluffing of a fur-like skin between said flange and said formation, said formation being disposable with respect to said flange to urge simulated fur fibers forwardly over said flange.

9. In a device of the class described, an eye assembly for a toy animal comprising an eye unit having a forward flange thereon and a gripping ring to be disposed with respect to said eye unit to clamp a simulated skin thereto adjacent the base of said flange, said gripping ring having a formation effecting an expansion recess around said flange thereon and a gripping ring to be disposed with respect to said shell to clamp a simulated skin thereto adjacent the base of said flange, said gripping ring having a formation effecting an expansion recess around said flange to permit fluffing of a fur-like skin between said flange and said formation, said formation being disposable with respect to said flange to urge simulated fur fibers forwardly over said flange.

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