



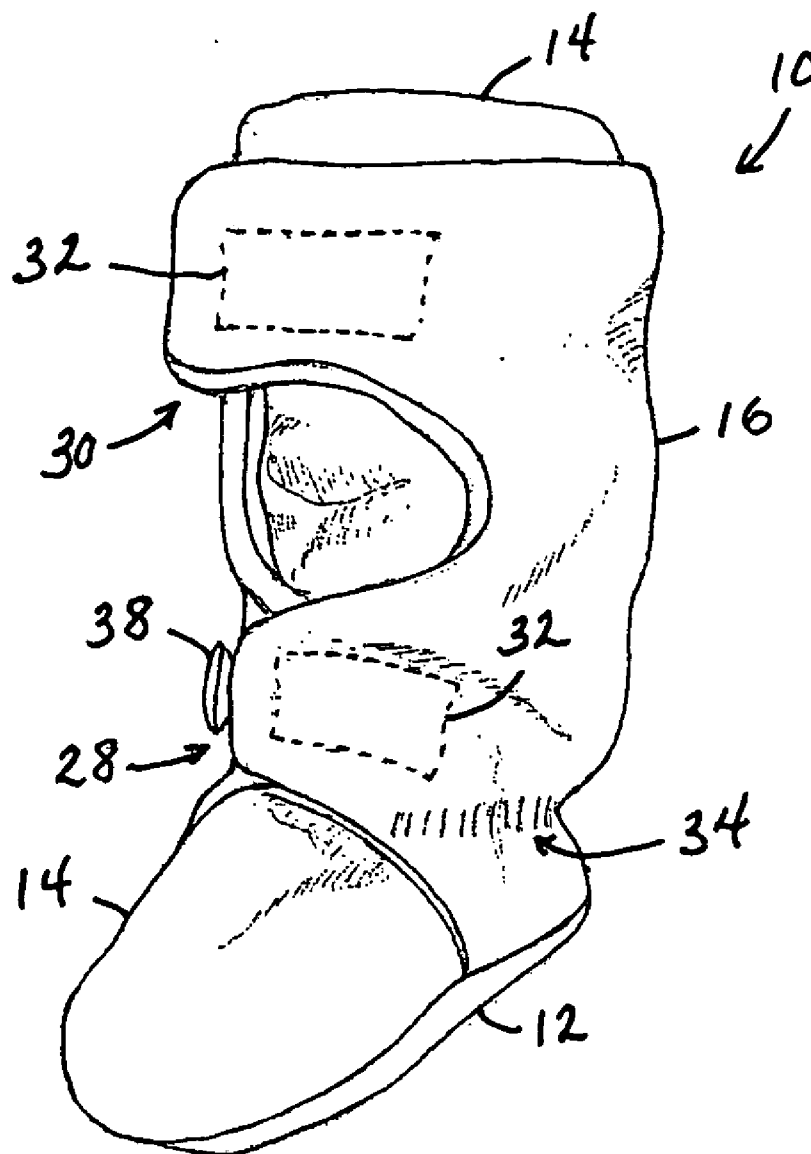
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Evans(10) **Pub. No.: US 2007/0294919 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Dec. 27, 2007**(54) **CHILD'S BOOTIE****Publication Classification**(76) Inventor: **Cynthia A. Evans**, Kittridge, CO
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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **36/50.1; 36/112**

Correspondence Address:

Kevin M. Able
2825 Hickock Rd.
Corning, NY 14830(57) **ABSTRACT**

An infant's bootie comprising a sole, an upper portion, including a tongue, attached to a toe region of the sole, and a back portion attached to a heel portion of the sole. The back portion is unattached to the upper portion except at the sole, thereby allowing the back portion to be folded down to a level of the sole for easy insertion of the infant's foot. The material of the bootie may be lined to provide comfortable protection to the infant, and to aid in retaining warmth.

(21) Appl. No.: **11/475,576**(22) Filed: **Jun. 26, 2006**

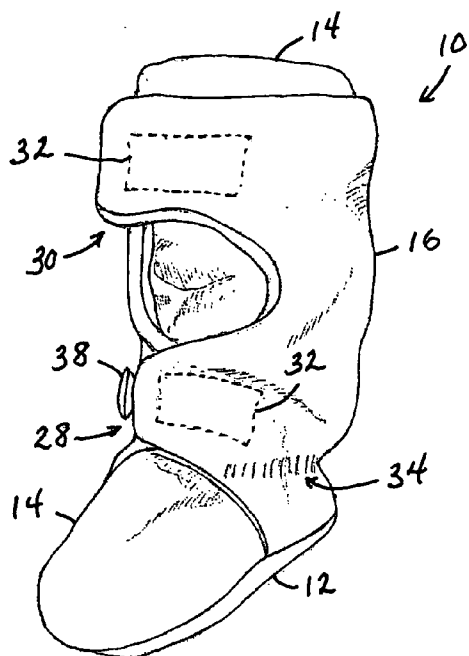


FIG. 1

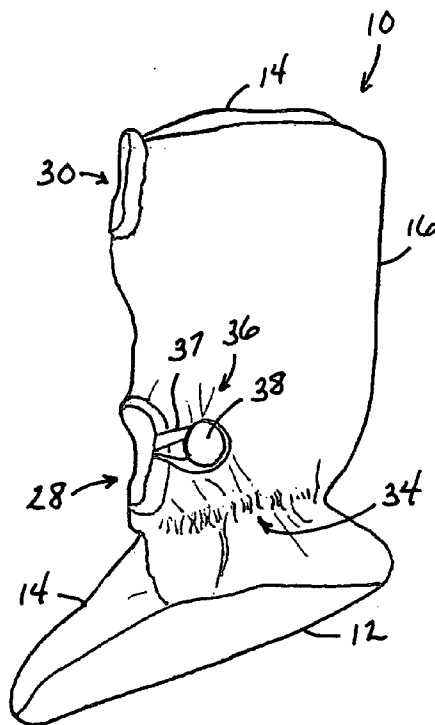


FIG. 3

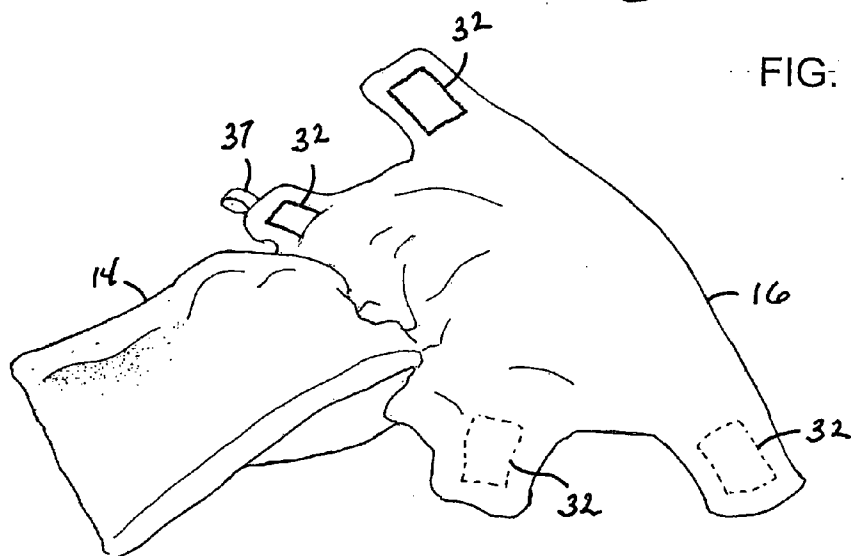


FIG. 4

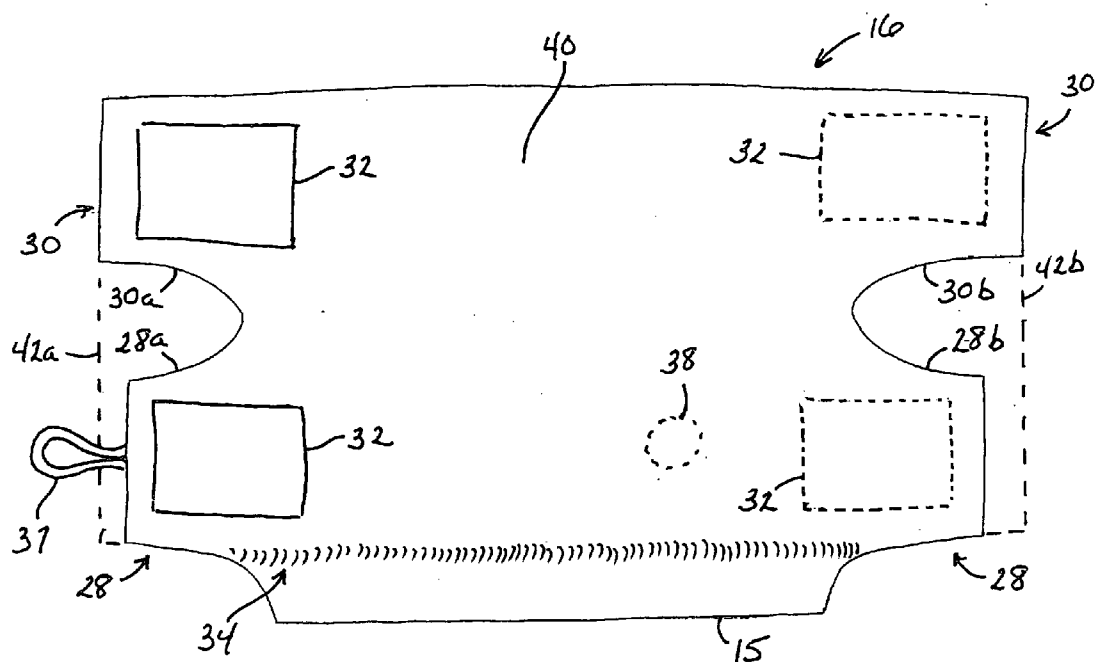


FIG. 2B

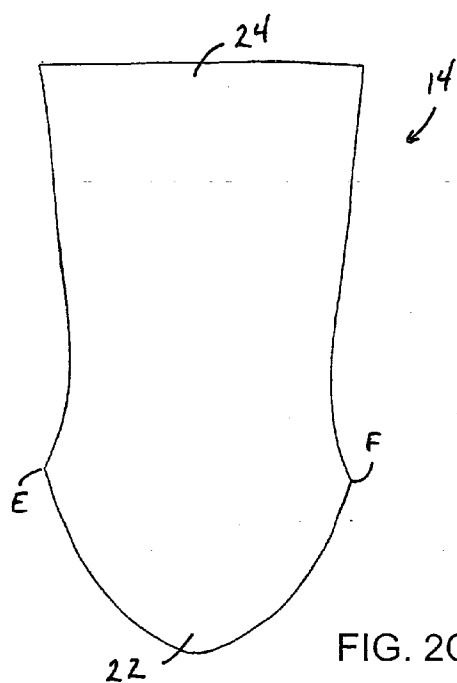


FIG. 2C

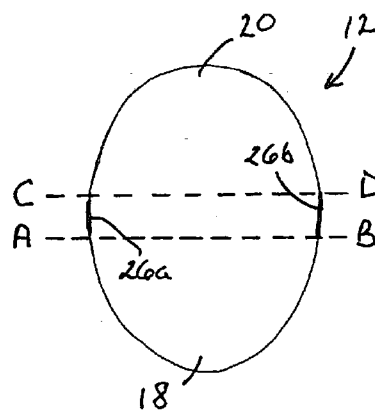


FIG. 2A

CHILD'S BOOTIE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to children's footwear, and more particularly to infant booties.

[0003] 2. Technical Background

[0004] An infant's bootie should provide physical protection to the infant's foot, keep the foot warm, and be flexible and/or soft enough to be comfortable. Moreover, the bootie must be easy to place and secure on the infant's foot. Too often, booties cover only the foot and a portion of the ankle region. On the other hand, higher booties tend to make placing the bootie on the infant's foot more difficult. What is needed is a bootie that provides warmth and protection, yet facilitates placing the bootie on the infant's foot simply, quickly and securely.

SUMMARY

[0005] In one broad aspect of the invention, a bootie is disclosed comprising a sole comprising a toe region and a heel region, a tongue portion comprising a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end being attached to the sole around a periphery of the toe region and forming a pocket between the tongue portion and the sole for receiving a wearer's foot, a back portion comprising at least one tab pair extending from the back portion, the tab pair having a first closure means for securing tabs of the at least one tab pair each to the other, the back portion attached to the sole around a periphery of the heel region and overlapping the tongue portion, and wherein the tongue portion and the back portion are attached to each other only at the periphery of the sole where the back portion and the tongue portion overlap.

[0006] In another embodiment of the invention, a bootie is presented comprising a sole having a toe region and a heel region, a tongue portion having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end being attached to the sole around a periphery of the toe region to forming a pocket for receiving a wearer's foot, a back portion attached to the sole portion around a periphery of the heel region and overlapping the tongue portion, and wherein the tongue portion and the back portion are attached to each other only at the periphery of the sole where the back portion and the upper portion overlap, thereby allowing the back portion to fold down and away from the sole.

[0007] Still another embodiment comprises a bootie having a sole comprising a toe region and a heel region, a tongue portion having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end attached to the sole around a periphery of the toe region to form a pocket between the tongue portion and the sole for receiving a wearer's foot, a back portion comprising an elastic member, a lower tab pair and an upper tab pair, each of the lower and the upper tab pairs having a first closure means for securing tabs of the tab pairs each to the other, respectively, the back portion attached to the sole around a periphery of the heel region and overlapping the tongue portion, and wherein the tongue portion and the back portion are attached to each other only at the periphery of the sole where the leg portion and the upper portion overlap.

[0008] These and other embodiment of the present invention will be understood more easily and other objects, characteristics, details and advantages thereof will become more clearly apparent in the course of the following

explanatory description, which is given, without in anyway implying a limitation, with reference to the attached Figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a bootie in accordance with an embodiment of the invention.

[0010] FIG. 2A-C are top views of constituent components—sole, back portion and tongue portion, respectively—of the bootie of FIG. 1.

[0011] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a bootie in accordance with an embodiment of the invention for the opposite foot as that illustrated in FIG. 1.

[0012] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the bootie of FIG. 1 illustrated with the back portion folded down and away from the sole.

[0013] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a shortened bootie in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0014] In the following detailed description, for purposes of explanation and not limitation, example embodiments disclosing specific details are set forth to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. However, it will be apparent to one having ordinary skill in the art, having had the benefit of the present disclosure, that the present invention may be practiced in other embodiments that depart from the specific details disclosed herein. Moreover, descriptions of well-known devices, methods and materials may be omitted so as not to obscure the description of the present invention. Finally, wherever applicable, like reference numerals refer to like elements.

[0015] For clarity, terms such as right and left in referenced to a figure, unless otherwise noted, refer to the right or left side of the figure as looking at the drawing. Similarly, unless otherwise indicated, "facing" refers to the side of the figure on the visible, facing side of the drawing (out of the paper), while "back side" refers to the side of a figure which is not visible (i.e. into the paper). Wherever possible, dashed (i.e. phantom) lines are used to denote features which are located on a non-visible portion of the figure, but are nevertheless shown to provide guidance to the reader.

[0016] Shown in FIG. 1 is bootie 10 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention comprising sole 12, tongue portion 14 and back portion 16. As best shown in FIG. 2A, sole 12 includes toe region 18 and heel region 20. Because bootie 10 is primarily designed as infant wear (e.g. non-walking child), it is not a requirement for bootie 10 to have the support and protection afforded by a stiff sole as in the case of a toddler, or older children. Accordingly, sole 12, shown separately in FIG. 2A, is supple, and may be made from the same material as tongue portion 14 and back portion 16. However, sole 12 may optionally have a non-slip or non-skid material applied, or otherwise formed on the bottom of sole 12 should bootie 10 be worn by a walking wearer (e.g. toddler).

[0017] Edge 15 of back portion 16, shown in FIG. 2B, is attached to sole 12, such as by stitching, around a periphery of heel region 20 to points approximately mid-way between the toe and heel regions of sole 12. That is, back portion 16 is attached to sole 12 around region 20 to approximately line AB (to the points where line AB crosses the periphery of sole 12). Methods of attaching back portion 16 to sole 12

other than by stitching include gluing, such as with a hot-melt glue or other adhesive suitable for joining the material of boot 10.

[0018] Tongue portion 14, best shown in FIG. 2C, comprises proximal end 22 and distal end 24. Proximal end 22 (e.g. proximal end 22 from point E to point F) is attached to sole 12 around toe region 18 to approximately line CD (to the points where line CD crosses the periphery of sole 12). Thus, tongue portion 14 and back portion 16 overlap at approximately mid-way between toe and heel regions 18, 20 (i.e. along line segments 26a, 26b) but are unattached to each other except along line segments 26a, 26b where tongue portion 14 and back portion 16 attach to sole 12.

[0019] In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 2B, back portion 16 further comprises lower and upper tab pairs 28, 30 comprising left and right lower tabs 28a, 28b and left and right upper tabs 30a, 30b, respectively, extending from the back portion. Both lower and upper tab pairs 28, 30 include a first, primary closure (attaching) means 32 for attaching the tabs each to the other and thereby securing the bootie to the wearer's lower leg and foot. That is, a method of removably attaching left lower tab 28a to right lower tab 28b is provided for. Similarly, closure means are provided to removably attach left upper tab 30a to right upper tab 30b. The method of attaching the tabs each to the other (method of closure) may include, for example, hook and eye, hook and loop, buttons, snaps, and other closure means as are conventionally known and used. As can be seen from FIG. 1, when one tab of a tab pair is attached to the opposite tab of the same tab pair, one tab overlaps the other.

[0020] In a preferred embodiment, closure means 32 comprises hook and loop material, such as that marketed as Velcro®. As evidenced in FIG. 2B, for example, hook and loop material closures are illustrated, wherein the hook material is located on one or the other of the facing or back side of the right or left tabs of back portion 16, while the loop material is located on either the back side, or facing side, respectively, of the tabs of back portion 16, opposite that of the hook material. For example, as shown in FIG. 1, the hook or the loop material is located on the inside of the tabs visible in the figure, and indicated by dashed lines. This convention is followed in FIG. 2B where the hook or loop material on the facing side is shown in solid lines, and the hook or loop material on the back side is shown in dashed lines. As will be apparent to one skilled in the art, the choice of which part (loop, hook, button, hole, etc.) of closure means 32 goes on which tab is largely arbitrary, or set by custom or convention, e.g. gender-related.

[0021] Sole 12, tongue portion 14, and back portion 16 (i.e. bootie 10) may be fabricated from any suitable material that provides flexibility and warmth. For example, bootie 10 may be made from supple leather (e.g. calf skin), denim, corduroy, faux leather, etc. Moreover, it is not necessary that each constituent component of bootie 10 be fabricated from the same material. In some cases, bootie 10 may be lined with a lining material to both protect an infant's foot from contact with the outer material, such as if the outer material is rough, and, more importantly, to keep the infant's foot and lower leg (to the extent the lower leg is covered by bootie 10) warm. For example, bootie 10 may have a fleece or fleece-like lining, although other lining materials may be used as desired. An insulating lining material, such as Thinsulate™, available from the 3M company may be included, for example.

[0022] Advantageously, the attachment of tongue portion 14 and back portion 16 to sole 12 such that tongue portion 14 and back portion 16 are connected to each other only along line segments 26a, 26b on the periphery of sole 12 makes it possible to fold back portion 16 substantially flat, i.e. down to sole 12, as illustrated in FIG. 4, without interference from tongue portion 14, and facilitates easy insertion of the wearer's foot into bootie 10. By substantially flat what is meant is that if bootie 10 is placed sole-down on a flat surface, back portion 16 can be folded down to lie substantially on the flat surface, taking into account that back portion 16 is attached to sole 12 about a curved portion of the sole (i.e. heel region 20), and therefore can not lie perfectly flat. However, the ability to fold back portion 16 almost completely flat and away from sole 12 is particularly beneficial when the wearer is a small infant and not always cooperative when being dressed.

[0023] To aid in securing bootie 10 to the wearer's foot, an optional elastic member 34 may be incorporated in back portion 16. Elastic member 34 may be elastic thread, an elastic strap, or other similar elastic member which may be used in the fabrication of clothing. Elastic member 34 is typically attached to or incorporated into back portion 16 by stretching elastic member 34 and stitching the stretched elastic member 34 into the material comprising back portion 16. When released, elastic member 34 contracts from its stretched or elongated condition, thereby forming a restricted opening about the wearer's ankle. Elastic member 34 is incorporated (e.g. stitched) into back portion 16 such that elastic member 34 substantially encircles the wearer's ankle when the boot is in a secured or closed condition. That is, when the upper and lower tab pairs are attached to one another, respectively. This is preferably facilitated by incorporating elastic member 34 at a level on back portion 16 that is just below lower tabs 28a, 28b. By substantially encircles what is meant is that when bootie 10 is placed on the wearer's foot and the tabs of the upper and lower tab pairs are attached one to the other, only a small gap exists in the elastic member over the upper area of the wearer's foot.

[0024] As described briefly above, tongue portion 14 extends from proximal end 22, attached to sole 12 to form a pocket for the wearer's foot, to distal end 24. When bootie 10 is closed about the wearer's foot, tongue 14 forms a soft shield between the overlap of the fastened areas of back portion 16 (e.g. lower and upper tab pairs 28, 30), and helps to encase the wearer's lower leg within the bootie. Preferably, both the tongue and the back portions extend upward to about equal heights from the wearer's foot.

[0025] In some embodiments, another optional, supplemental closure means 36 of securing bootie 10 to the wearer's foot may be utilized. As shown in FIG. 4, closure means 36 may comprise a loop 37 attached to one or more of the tabs which is ultimately configured on the outside of the closed bootie, and a corresponding anchor, e.g. button or hook 38, located on body region 40 of back portion 16 to which loop 37 may be secured or anchored. An example of this supplemental or secondary closure means is shown in FIG. 3. Of course, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that loop 37 and button or hook 38 may be used in conjunction with one or the other of tab pairs 28, 30, or with both tab pairs. That is, in accordance with the present embodiment, two sets of loops and buttons (or hooks) may be employed. It should also be apparent that the location of

anchor **38** and loop **37** may be switched if desired, with loop **37** attached to body **40** and anchor **38** attached to a tab.

[0026] In some embodiments, upper and lower tab pairs of back portion **16** may be eliminated or more appropriately stated, upper and lower tab pairs **28, 30** may be merged such that the edges **42a, 42b** of back portion **16** extend generally straight. Closure of bootie **10** of this present embodiment may be accomplished similar to the previous embodiment. For example, Velcro strips may be incorporated into each edge **42a, 42b** of back portion **16**. Alternatively, discrete fasteners, such as the aforementioned loop and button approach, for example, may be employed up the front of the bootie, or zippers or laces may be employed.

[0027] In other embodiments, back portion **16** may be shortened as illustrated in FIG. **5**, thereby eliminating upper tabs **30a, 30b**. In this shortened version, lower tab pair **28a, 28b** may or may not include supplemental closure means **36**.

[0028] It should be emphasized that the above-described embodiments of the present invention, particularly any “preferred” embodiments, are merely possible examples of implementations, merely set forth for a clear understanding of the principles of the invention. Many variations and modifications may be made to the above-described embodiments of the invention without departing substantially from the spirit and principles of the invention. All such modifications and variations are intended to be included herein within the scope of this disclosure and the present invention and protected by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A bootie comprising:

a sole comprising a toe region and a heel region;

a tongue portion comprising a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end attached to the sole around a periphery of the toe region, forming a pocket between the tongue portion and the sole for receiving a wearer's foot;

a back portion comprising at least one tab pair, the at least one tab pair having a first closure means for securing tabs of the at least one tab pair each to the other, the back portion attached to the sole around a periphery of the heel region and overlapping the tongue portion; and wherein the tongue portion and the back portion are attached to each other only at the periphery of the sole where the back portion and the tongue portion overlap.

2. The bootie according to claim **1** further comprising a second closure means for attaching a tab of the at least one tab pair to a body of the back portion.

3. The bootie according to claim **2** wherein the second closure means comprises a loop, and an anchor member selected from the group consisting of a button or a hook.

4. The bootie according to claim **2** further comprising an elastic member incorporated into the back portion.

5. The bootie according to claim **1** wherein the bootie is lined with a lining material.

6. The bootie according to claim **1** further comprising a plurality of tab pairs.

7. A bootie comprising:

a sole having a toe region and a heel region;

a tongue portion having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end being attached to the sole around a periphery of the toe region to forming a pocket for receiving a wearer's foot;

a back portion attached to the sole portion around a periphery of the heel region and overlapping the tongue portion; and

wherein the tongue portion and the back portion are attached to each other only at the periphery of the sole where the back portion and the upper portion overlap, thereby allowing the back portion to fold down and away from the sole.

8. The bootie according to claim **7** further comprising at least one tab pair extending from the back portion.

9. The bootie according to claim **8** further comprising a first closure means for attaching tabs of the at least one tab pair each to the other.

10. The bootie according to claim **9** further comprising a second closure means for securing a tab of the tab pair to a body of the back portion.

11. The bootie according to claim **8** further comprising an elastic member for securing the back portion about an ankle of the wearer.

12. The bootie according to claim **8** wherein the sole comprises a non-skid material covering at least a portion of a bottom surface of the sole.

13. The bootie according to claim **8** wherein the bootie is lined with a lining material.

14. The bootie according to claim **7** wherein the bootie comprises a plurality of tab pairs.

15. A bootie comprising:

a sole comprising a toe region and a heel region;

a tongue portion having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end attached to the sole around a periphery of the toe region to form a pocket between the tongue portion and the sole for receiving a wearer's foot;

a back portion comprising an elastic member, a lower tab pair and an upper tab pair, each of the lower and the upper tab pairs having a first closure means for securing tabs of the tab pairs each to the other, respectively, the back portion attached to the sole around a periphery of the heel region and overlapping the tongue portion; and wherein the tongue portion and the back portion are attached to each other only at the periphery of the sole where the leg portion and the upper portion overlap.

16. The bootie according to claim **15** further comprising a second closure means for attaching at least one tab of the tab pairs to a body of the back portion.

17. The bootie according to claim **15** further comprising a lining material for lining an inside surface of the bootie.

18. The bootie according to claim **15** further comprising an elastic member incorporated into the back portion.

* * * * *