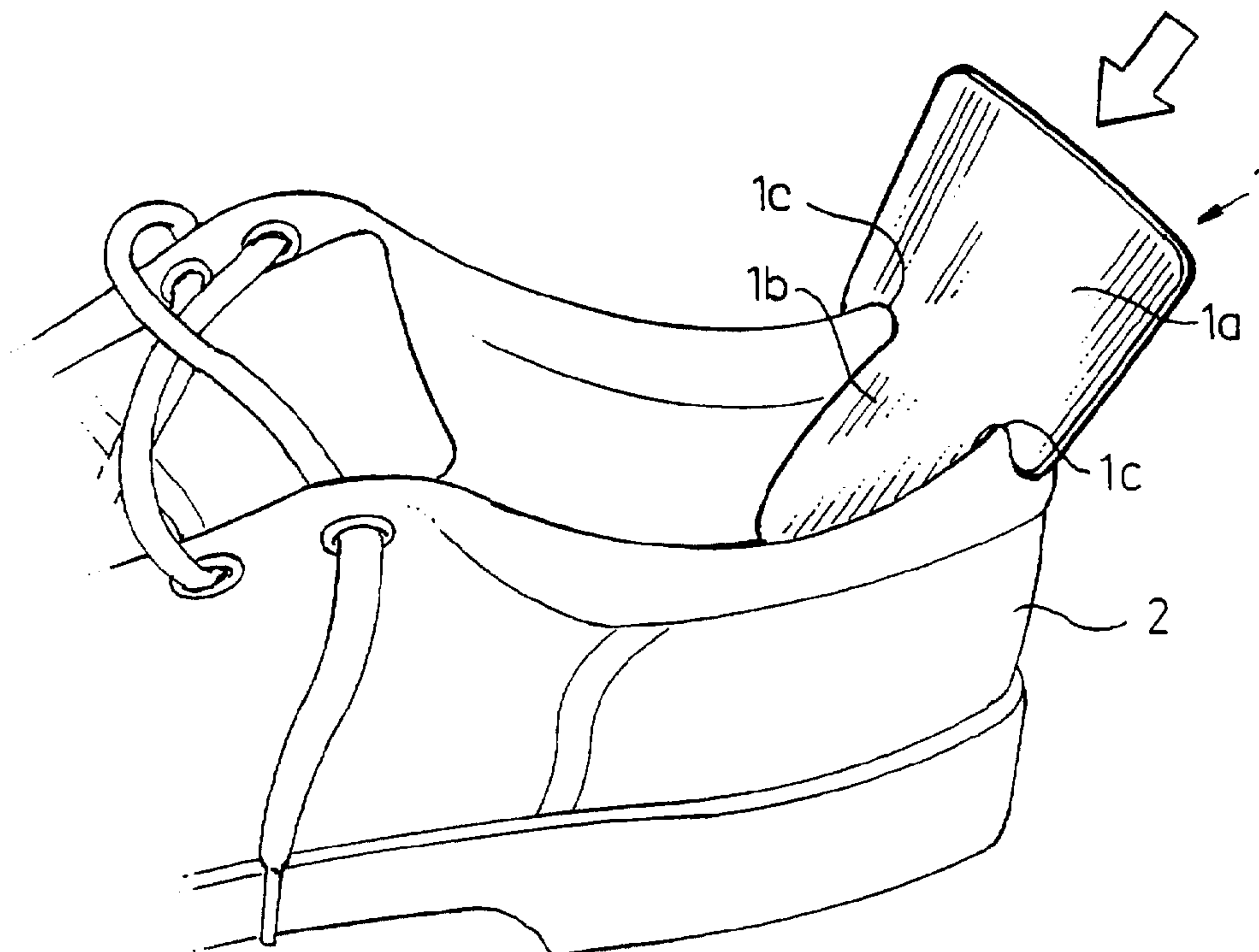




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(54) Titre : CHAUSSE-PIEDS
(54) Title: A SHOE HORN



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A shoe horn comprising a flexible, thin material, e.g. plastic or metal, so that when in use it can change its shape to essentially correspond to the rear interior portion of a shoe where the user's heel is inserted. Its size does not substantially exceed the standard size of a bank card or credit card, so that it can be kept in e.g. a wallet. The shoe horn may comprise two or more portions which are of different shape and define shoulders or hook-shaped portions preventing the shoe horn when used from sliding down into the shoe.

Abstract

A shoehorn comprising a flexible, thin material, e.g. plastic or metal, so that when in use it can change its shape to essentially correspond to the rear interior portion
5 of a shoe where the user's heel is inserted. Its size does not substantially exceed the standard size of a bank card or credit card, so that it can be kept in e.g. a wallet. The shoehorn may comprise two or more portions which are of different shape and define shoulders or hook-shaped portions
10 preventing the shoehorn when used from sliding down into the shoe.

A SHOEHORN

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a shoehorn of a flexible thin material, e.g. plastic or metal, which in use changes
5 its shape so as to roughly correspond to the rear interior portion of a shoe where the user's heel is inserted.

Background

Shoehorns of the conventional type, meaning consisting of a hard material and with a C-shaped profile, are impractical to
10 carry with one.

US A 2 171 310 (Morgan) discloses a flexible, flat shoehorn capable to adapt its shape. It consists of a leather holding surrounding a wire or spring package which can be extracted when the shoehorn is to be used. Also this shoehorn is
15 comparatively clumsy and thick and cannot readily be kept in e.g. a wallet.

The same applies to the shoehorn described in DE A 341 089 (Harper).

US Design Patents 355 522 and 360 743 (both granted to
20 Simpson) have handle portions projecting from a flat surface which makes it difficult to keep them.

Swiss Patent Specification 183 654 (Urban-Klump) discloses a shoehorn of a thin flexible material to get adaption to a heel to be inserted into a shoe. The shoehorn has an upper,
25 roughly oval handle portion and the length of the lower portion of the shoehorn is such that, when the shoehorn is used, the handle portion will be located a considerable distance above the counter of a shoe in which the shoehorn is

to be used. The length of the shoehorn is such that it cannot be kept in e.g. a wallet.

SE A 9202512 (Furendal) discloses a shoehorn for disabled persons, the basic idea of that invention being that the shoehorn can, by means of "clips" be mounted on the shoe before the person makes an effort to don the shoe. After use the shoehorn can conveniently be removed by means of a string or strap attached thereto. A clips of the type concerned exhibits elements projecting from the plane of the shoehorn which complicates the insertion of the foot into the shoe and also makes it inconvenient to keep the shoehorn in e.g. a wallet.

US A 865 462 (Weeks) describes a shoehorn of the type defined in the preamble of claim 1 of the present patent. This shoehorn has the disadvantage that it cannot assume a defined position in relation to the shoe when the foot is inserted which makes it necessary, as a rule, to take hold of the shoehorn when the foot is to be inserted into the shoe which complicates the operation.

20 Summary of the Invention

The present invention provides a shoehorn which in a more reliable way than the prior art implements cooperates with the shoe during the donning operation which is thereby facilitated. Also it is not bulky so that it can conveniently be carried with one.

In an exemplary embodiment there is provided a shoehorn consisting of a flexible, thin material, wherein all portions of said shoehorn, when the shoehorn is not in use, are situated within the plane defined by its two parallel lateral surfaces, and wherein the area of the shoehorn is up to the

standard size of a credit card, so that it can be kept in a wallet, which is characterized in that it comprises at least two portions of different shapes, one of said portions having hook-shaped portions formed thereon, wherein said portions,
5 when the shoehorn in use is bent and changes its shape to one approximately corresponding to the user's heel, are exposed to engage the counter of the shoe and prevents the shoehorn from sliding down into the shoe.

The shoulders or the hook-shaped sections between the
10 portions of the shoehorn contribute to keep it fixed in position on the shoe in connection with the insertion operation which makes it possible to carry out great portion thereof without holding the shoehorn, whereby the insertion operation is facilitated and, if desired, can be carried out
15 in a standing position.

At least the one side of the shoehorn can have a surface layer or be treated so as to reduce the friction, thereby facilitating the insertion of the foot.

Thanks to its shape described above the shoehorn can
20 conveniently be provided with printed symbols, e.g. an advertising message.

Certain exemplary embodiments can provide a shoehorn comprising: a flexible, thin material, wherein all portions of said shoehorn, when said shoehorn is not in use, are
25 situated within a plane defined by its two parallel lateral surfaces; and wherein the area of said shoehorn is up to the standard size of a credit card, so that it can be kept in a wallet; characterized in that: it comprises at least two portions of different shapes, one of said portions having
30 hook-shaped portions formed thereon; wherein said portions,

when said shoehorn is in use and thereby is bent and changes its shape to one approximately corresponding to the user's heel, are exposed to engage the counter of the shoe and prevent the shoehorn from sliding down into the shoe.

- 5 Some embodiments of the invention are illustrated in the drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figs. 1-3 are plan views illustrated shoehorns according to the invention but shaped in four different ways.

- 10 Fig. 4 is a front view of a shoehorn according to any of the preceding figures and shows that it consists of a thin material.

- Fig. 5 is a perspective view showing a portion of a shoe provided with an inserted shoehorn according to the
15 invention.

Fig. 6 is a rear view of a shoe with an inserted shoehorn.

Description of Preferred Embodiments

- Figs. 1-3 exemplify differently shaped shoehorns 1 made of a thin flexible material, e.g. plastic or metal. These
20 shoehorns will when used change their form so that it does roughly correspond to that of the rear portion of a shoe where the user's heel is to be inserted.

- As appears from the illustrated exemplifying embodiments the general shape of the shoehorn can vary within wide limits.
25 However, it is common to them all that they do not have any portions or parts projecting from the plane of the two parallel lateral surfaces and also that their size does not substantially exceed the size of a bank card or credit card.

This makes it possible conveniently to keep the shoehorn in e.g. a wallet.

As appears from Figs. 1-3, the shoehorn comprises two or more portions which are of different width and/or shape 1a, 1b.

5 At the boundary between those portions there are shoulders or hook-shaped parts 1c which prevent the shoehorn from sliding down into the shoe when in use. The length of the portion 1b should suitably correspond to or be somewhat lesser than the length of a counter of a shoe at which the shoehorn is to be
10 used. There is a possibility to - starting from a "normal size" of the shoehorn - by means of a pair of scissors to give portion 1b its desired length and shape.

At least one side of the shoehorn can be coated or treated for the purpose of reducing the friction so that the
15 insertion of the foot is facilitated.

Further, the one or both sides can exhibit printed symbols (not shown), e.g. an advertising message.

It appears from Figs. 5 and 6 that the shoehorn 1 - which when not in use is completely flat - when in use and in
20 contact with one foot pressing against the counter of the shoe will flex and adapt itself to the contour of the foot. The foot will slide down into the shoe along the shoehorn without being stopped by the counter.

When the foot is down in the shoe it is easy to withdraw the
25 shoehorn by grasping the large easy to grab surface located above the counter. If desired the shoehorn could be provided with a hole 1d for a string (not shown) which facilitates its removal by a person finding it difficult to bend down.

Claims

1. A shoehorn comprising:

a flexible, thin material, wherein all portions of said shoehorn, when said shoehorn is not in use, are situated within a plane defined by its two parallel lateral surfaces; and

wherein the area of said shoehorn is up to the standard size of a credit card, so that it can be kept in a wallet; characterized in that:

it comprises at least two portions of different shapes, one of said portions having hook-shaped portions formed thereon;

wherein said portions, when said shoehorn is in use and thereby is bent and changes its shape to one approximately corresponding to the user's heel, are exposed to engage the counter of the shoe and prevent the shoehorn from sliding down into the shoe.

2. The shoehorn according to claim 1, wherein said shoehorn consists of plastic.

3. The shoehorn according to claim 1, wherein said shoehorn consists of metal.

4. The shoehorn according to any one of claims 1-3, wherein said at least two portions have different widths.

Fig. 1

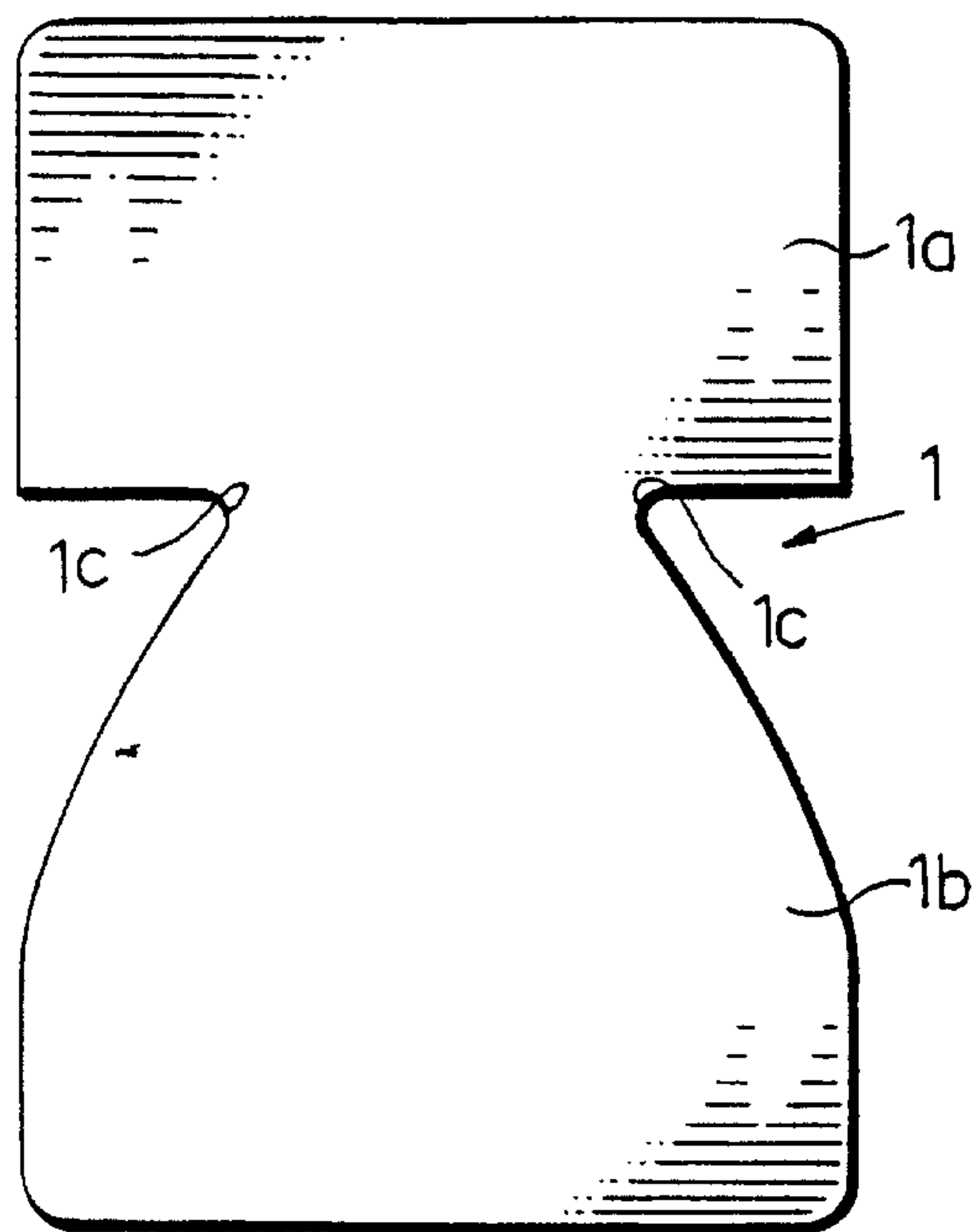


Fig. 2

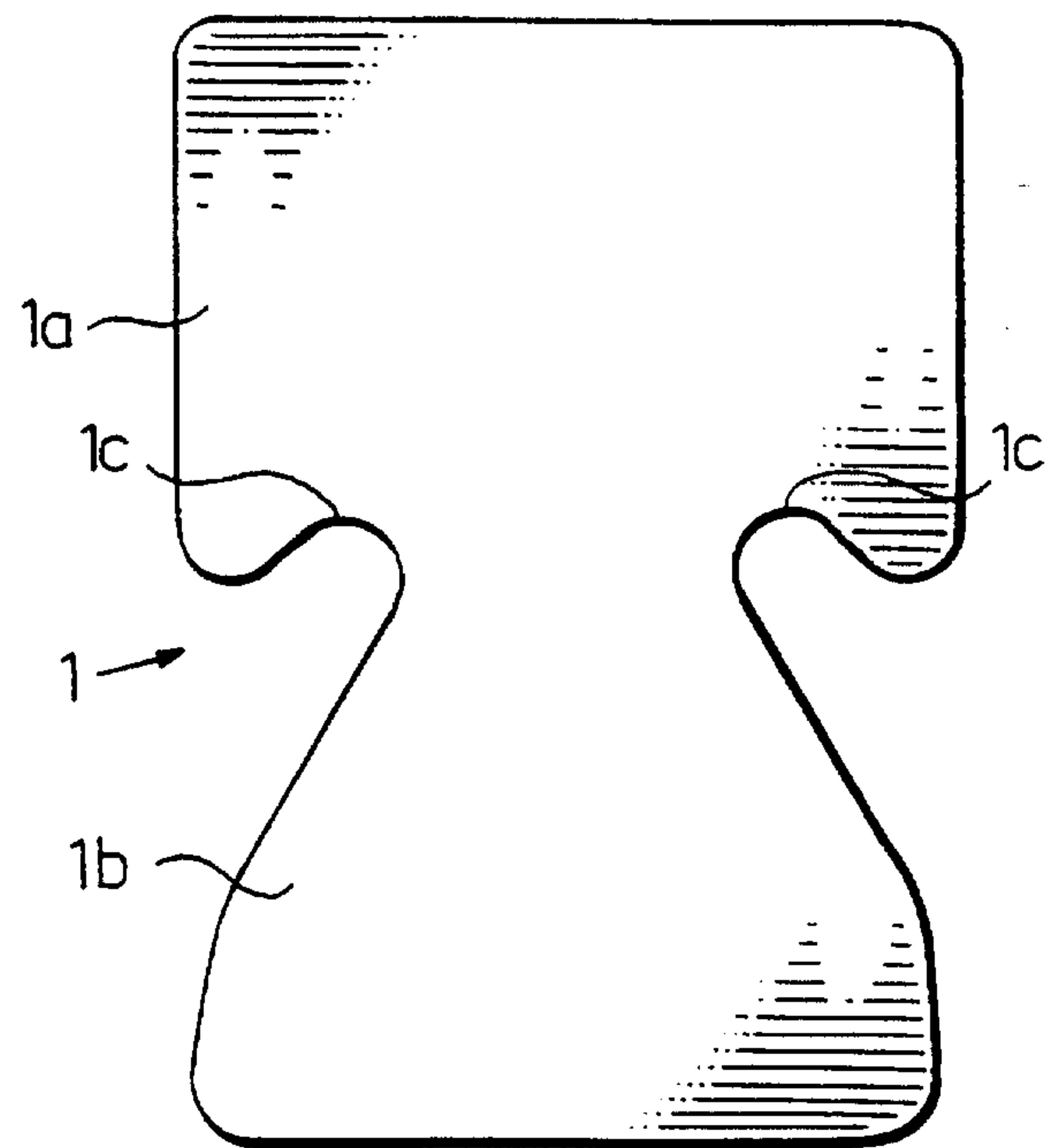


Fig. 3

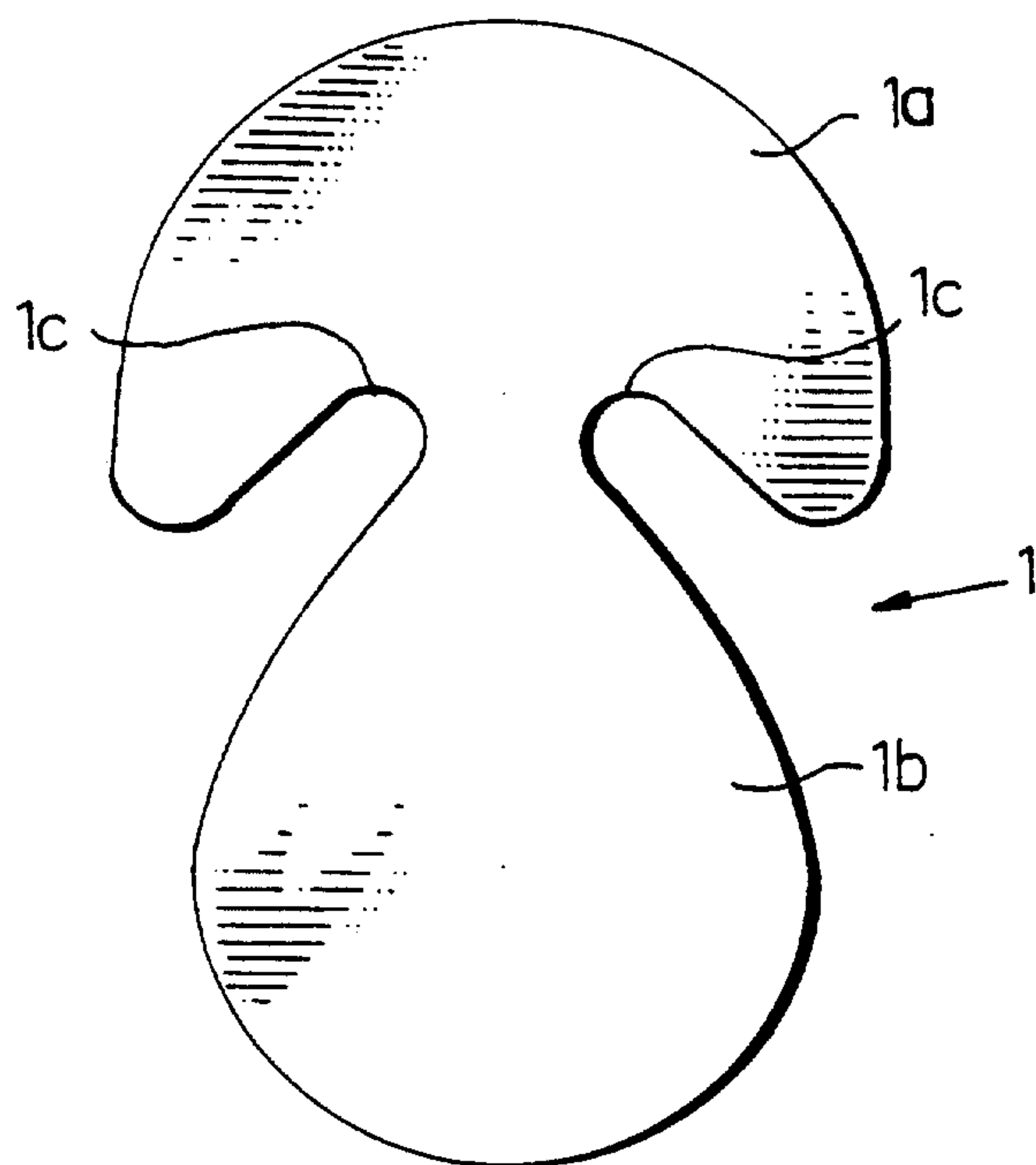


Fig. 4

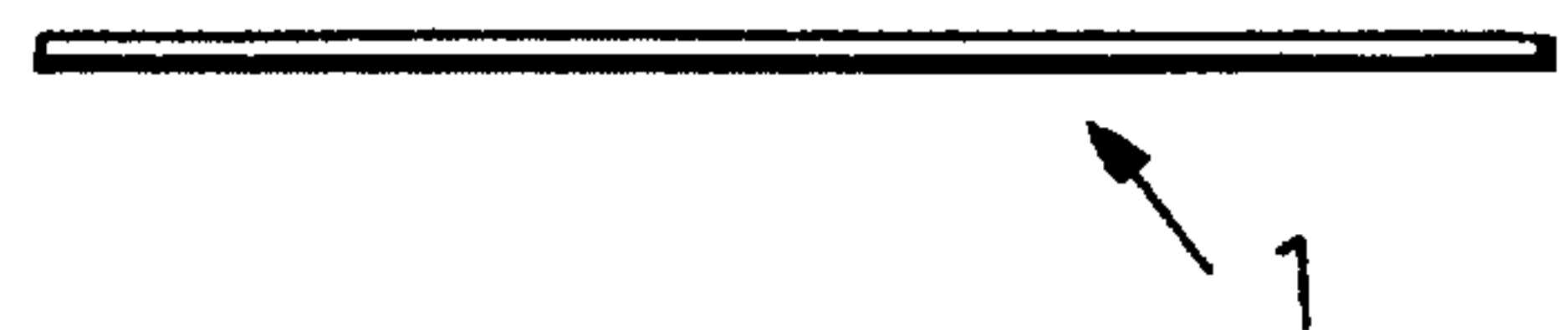


Fig.5

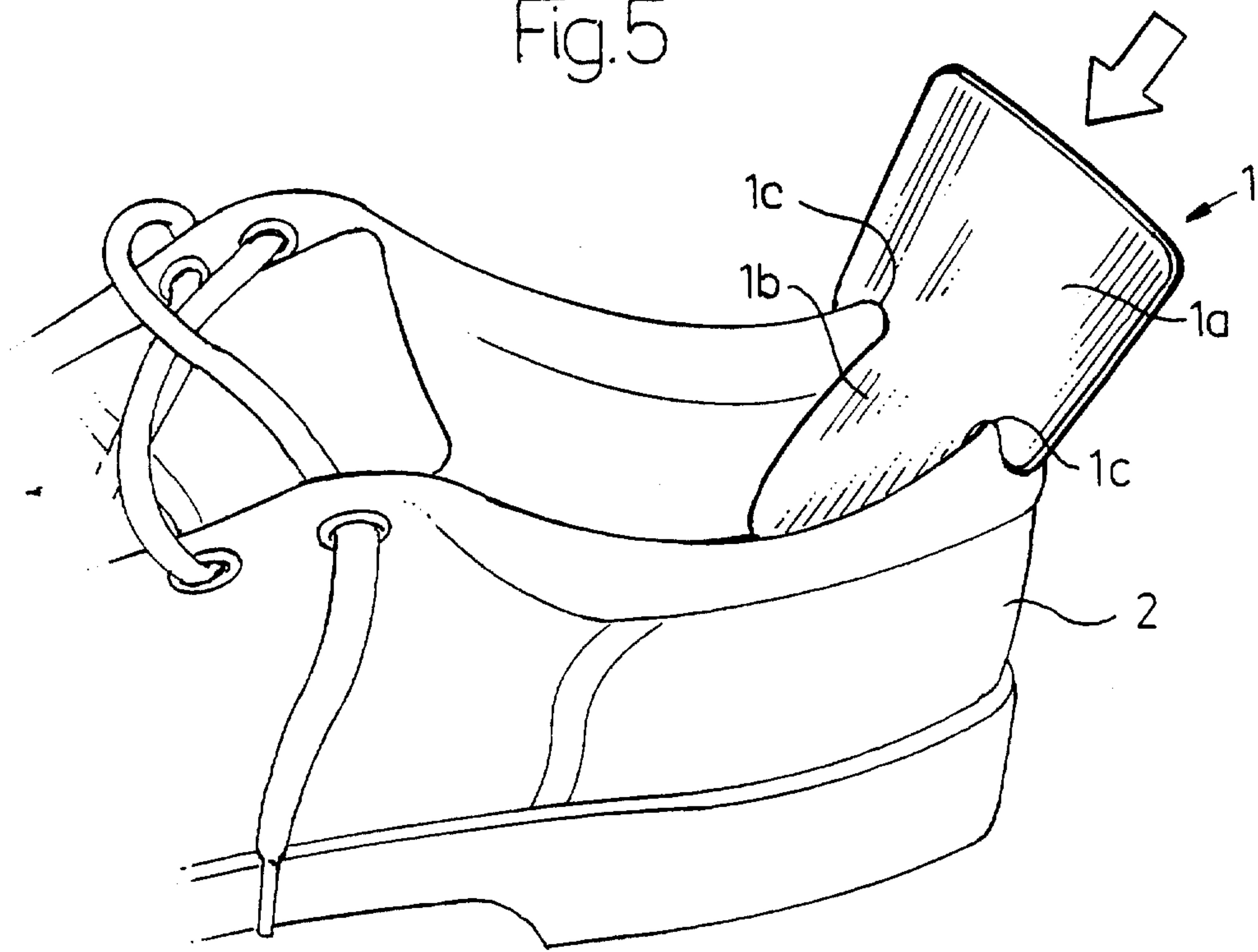


Fig.6

