April 24, 1956 J. MELTZER 2,742,715

ARTICLE OF FOOTWEAR PROVIDED WITH REMOVABLE COUNTER

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Fig. 1.

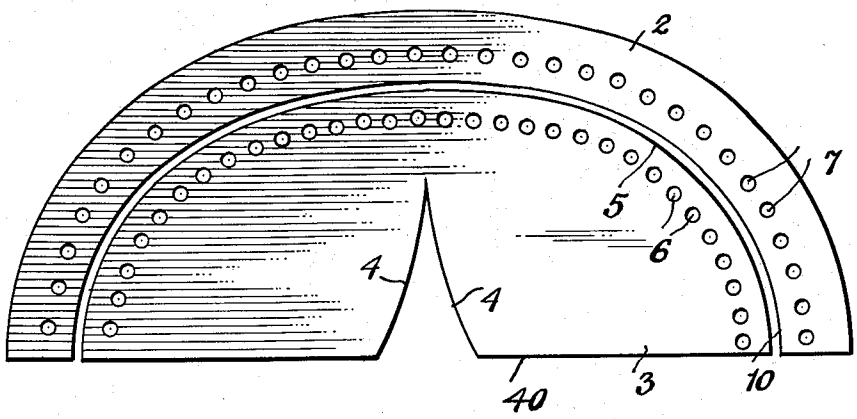


Fig. 2.

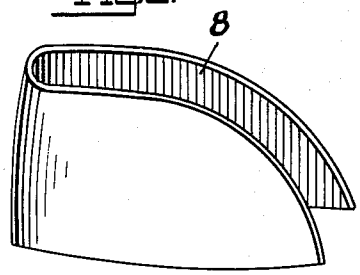


Fig. 3.

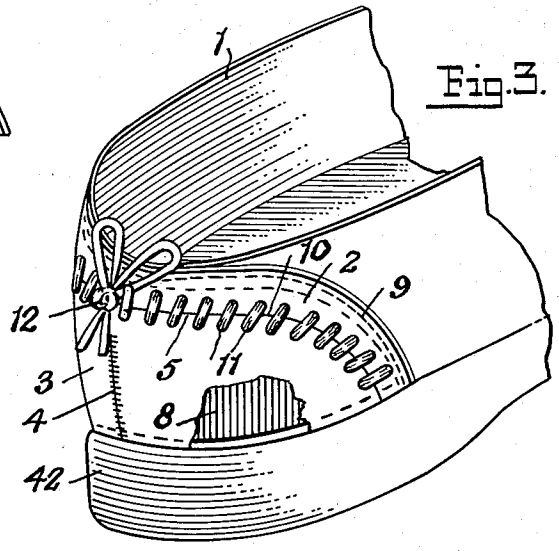
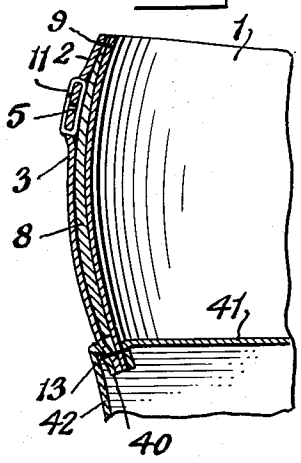


Fig. 4.



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Fig. 5.

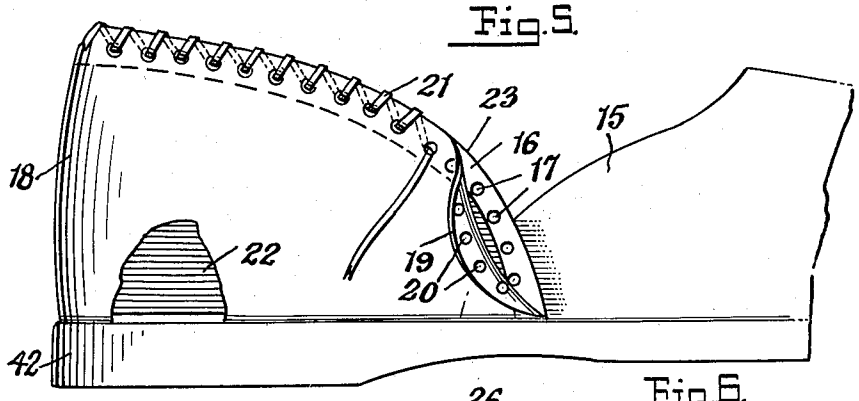


Fig. 6.

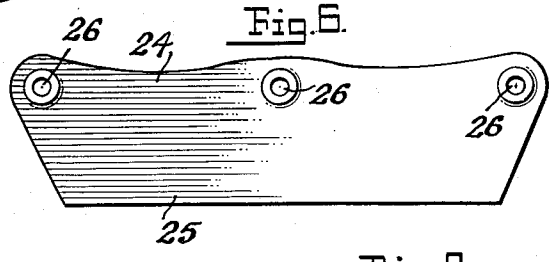


Fig. 7.

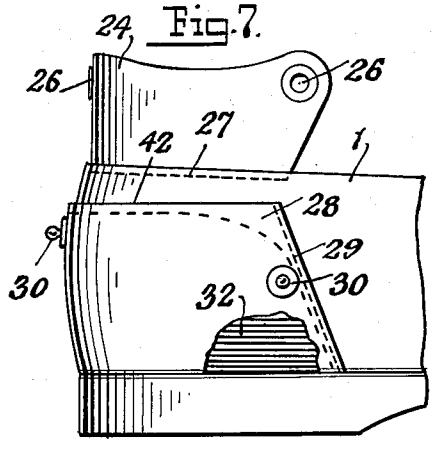


Fig. 8.

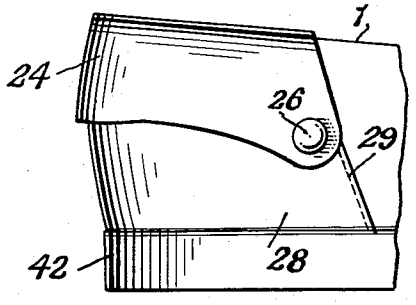
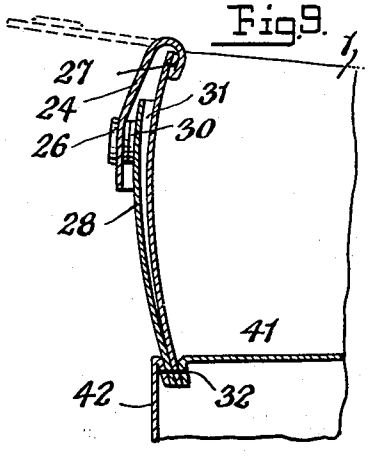


Fig. 9.



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ARTICLE OF FOOTWEAR PROVIDED WITH REMOVABLE COUNTER

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Application February 16, 1955, Serial No. 488,511

5 Claims. (Cl. 36—2.5)

My present invention relates generally to articles of footwear, and has particular reference to a shoe whose upper has a rear end area adapted to support a special pocket of redily openable character.

The invention is in certain respects applicable not only to shoes and slippers of the so-called "slip-lasted" variety, but also to other types of footwear such as "soft-sole" slippers and moccasins, even to shoes of more conventional character.

It is one of the objects of the invention to provide a shoe or slipper in which there is a readily removable counter, i. e., one which can be inserted into association with the shoe upper, or removed therefrom, at the will of the user of the shoes.

One of the advantages of my invention stems from the fact that it is common practice for shoes or slippers to be selected so as to match or harmonize with other articles of clothing, hence many persons have a relatively large number of pairs of shoes for wear with different costumes. This creates a problem when the owner of the shoes travels, and therefore it is desirable to provide—and my invention successfully affords—a convenient means whereby a number of pairs of shoes can be stored or packed in a minimum of space. Ordinarily, shoes provided with stiff counters cannot be collapsed to pack the shoes conveniently and compactly, and therefore such shoes require considerable storage space. By my invention, a convenient and thoroughly practical shoe construction is provided, in which removability of the stiff counter is easily and quickly capable of accomplishment whenever desired, to permit the shoes to be flatly packed and stored.

It is a more particular object of the invention to provide a shoe in which a removable counter of substantial size may be inserted and replaced through a top opening or entrance to a pocket provided at the rear end area of the shoe upper. It is a feature of the invention to provide such a pocket with an entrance opening at least as long as the counter to be inserted into the pocket, so that the counter may be introduced by direct downward movement into the pocket, or removed by a simple upward pull.

It is another object of the invention to provide a counter-receiving pocket of the type described, provided with means by which the pocket can be readily closed and opened. A feature of the invention resides in forming the parts in such a way that if desired the closing of the pocket can be caused to conceal the existence of the pocket, or to add decorative touches to the shoe and thereby enhance its appearance, or both.

It is still another object of the invention to provide a shoe with an open-top pocket at the rear, that can be used either for the reception of a removable counter, or for containing money or other small articles, the pocket being effectively hidden or concealed, hence usable as a secret hiding place.

My improved shoe construction involves the provision of an upper having a rear end area formed of inner and outer plies secured together at their lower edges and defining an upwardly open pocket between them, there being a separable fastening means for securing the top and side edges of the outer ply to the inner ply. Where the article of footwear is of the "slip-lasted" type, the lower edges of the inner and outer plies are preferably stitched or otherwise permanently secured to the margin of a sock lining, and to a platform cover, if the shoe is to have a platform sole structure.

Several ways of achieving these several objects and advantages, and such other objects and advantages as may hereinafter appear or be pointed out, are illustratively exemplified in the accompanying drawings in which—

Fig. 1 is a face view of an illustrative pocket-forming strip, and of the adjacent surrounding piece, in accordance with one embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a counter;

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the rear of a shoe constructed in accordance with the invention;

Fig. 4 is a vertical sectional view through the rear of the shoe;

Fig. 5 is a side elevational view, with parts fragmentarily shown, of another embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 6 is a view of the inner face of a closure flap as used in a further embodiment of the invention shown in Figs 7, 8 and 9;

Fig. 7 is a side elevation, with parts shown fragmentarily, of the rear portion of a shoe in which the top of the pocket is closed by a foldable flap, the flap being shown in its raised or open position;

Fig. 8 is a view similar to Fig. 7, but showing the pocket-closing flap in its lowered or closed position, and

Fig. 9 is a vertical sectional view through the structure of Fig. 8.

Referring to the embodiment of the invention shown in Figs. 1 to 4, I have indicated at 1 the rear part of the upper of a shoe of the slip-lasted type. The upper is formed from a blank or blanks previously cut to the required shape and stitched together in known fashion. For simplicity in illustration the upper 1 has been shown as being composed of a single ply of flexible leather or other suitable sheet material. At 3 is shown a counter-covering element adapted to form a pocket for the reception of a relatively stiff, appropriately shaped counter, such as that shown at 8 in Fig. 2. The lower edge 40 of the pocket member 3 is secured to the rear of the upper 1 by the line of stitching 13, which also attaches the sock lining 41 as well as the platform wrapper or covering 42, to the upper. To permit the pocket-forming strip or member 3 to smoothly conform to the rounded rear end area of the upper, the part 3 may be gored and then stitched as shown at 4.

Secured closely around the upper or curved edge 5 of the pocket-forming member 3 is a curved reinforcement 2 which is attached to the upper 1 by the line of stitching indicated at 9, thereby providing on said reinforcement an inner free edge 10 coextensive with and situated closely adjacent to the edge 5. As will be seen in Fig. 1, the pocket-forming member 3 is provided adjacent to its upper edge 5 with a plurality of spaced holes 6. Similarly, the strip 2 is provided with holes 7 located adjacent to its free edge 10. As will be observed in Fig. 3, the space between the opposed edges 5 and 10 is actually non-existent or so minute as to be imperceptible, and it is to be understood that Fig. 1 is exaggerated in this respect, for the sake of more clearly depicting the relationship of the parts.

In Fig. 3 the shoe is shown in readiness for wear, wherein it will be noted that a lace, tape, ribbon or similar flexible element 11 has been laced or threaded through the holes 6 and 7, so that the counter 8 which has been inserted in the pocket behind the member 3, is held in

place and snugly confined within the pocket. The lacing **11** may consist of two separate lace sections, each starting at the sole and extending toward the center and tied together in a bow **12** or other knot, or otherwise connected together. As an alternative, a single lace may extend for the length of the pocket opening. Also some other means might be provided for closing the mouth of the pocket, the objective sought being a snug and secure confinement of the counter **8** in the pocket, coupled with an ability to effect an easy removal of the counter from the pocket when desired.

It will be noted that the opening to the pocket extends for the length of the curved upper edge **5** of the pocket-forming member **3**, and hence this opening is as long as the greatest length of the counter. Therefore, the insertion of the counter into the space behind the member **3** is simple and easy since the counter is slid directly downwardly from the top of the shoe into the pocket; the upper edge is readily worked beneath the overhanging lip of the reinforcement piece **2**; and the laces are then threaded through the holes **6** and **7** and tied together.

While I have shown, in Figs. 1 to 4, a counter-receiving pocket whose upper edge is located below the top edge of the shoe upper **1**, a slightly different arrangement is shown in the embodiment of the invention disclosed in Fig. 5. The part **18**, which cooperates with the rear end area **16** of the shoe upper for forming the counter-receiving pocket, has its upper edge extending evenly and co-extensively with the upper edge **23** of the shoe upper **16**. Provided in the marginal edge portion of the upper **16** is a row of holes **17**, and a similar row of holes **20** is provided along the marginal edge of the part **18**. The holes **17** are in registry with those shown at **20**, and lacing **21** is extended through the aligned holes to thereby close the top of the pocket provided between the two plies **16** and **18**. The counter **22** may be readily fitted into the pocket and removed, or replaced, when the lacing **21** is wholly or partly removed.

In the embodiment shown in Figs. 6 to 9, a pocket-forming member **28** is attached to the rear end area of the shoe upper along its lower edge, by the stitching **32** (Fig. 9), and at its opposite side ends by the stitching **29**. This leaves the upper edge **42** of the member **28** unattached so that the counter **32** can be inserted behind it into the space between it and the shoe upper. The pocket **31** thus provided between the member **28** and the shoe upper **1** is of such length that the counter may be easily inserted by downward movement. The upper edge **42** of the member **28** is preferably located a short distance below the top edge of the shoe upper, as seen in Fig. 7.

A closure means is provided for the pocket **30**, and in this case I have shown how it may consist of a foldable closure flap **24** whose lower edge portion **25** is attached to the upper edge portion of the shoe upper by a line of stitching **27**. Carried by the flap **24** is a plurality of snap fastener elements **26**, or equivalent separable fastening means, adapted for detachable engagement with the complementary fastener elements, shown at **30**, attached to the pocket-forming member **3**. Under normal conditions, the flap **24** is folded downwardly, as shown in Fig. 8, so that the fastener elements on the flap engage with those on the pocket-forming member **28**. When the flap **24** is downturned in the manner described it covers and conceals the upper end of the member **28** and hence conceals the entrance to the pocket **31**. Thus, while the pocket **31** is primarily intended for the reception of a counter **32**, it might also be used as a secret pocket for money or other small articles, since the presence of a pocket in the heel portion of the shoe is not indicated by the general appearance of the shoe.

The flap **24** is shown as being relatively short, but it may be of greater length and may, if desired, extend to the lower portion of the upper **1** or adjacent to its junction with the sole. Also, the shape of this flap may be materially changed as it may be made in many ornamental forms departing from the spirit of the invention. Obviously, since the downturned flap extends over the opening or mouth of the pocket **31**, no closing means for the pocket, other than the flap **24**, need be used. However, if desired, lacing may be provided for the closing of the pocket, or the flap might be laced down rather than held down by the snap fasteners as herein suggested.

The constructions I have shown and described may be modified in various ways, depending upon the style and purpose of the article of footwear in connection with which the rear pocket is provided. For example, the provision of lacing as a means for connecting the inner and outer plies of the pocket is not essential, and any appropriate equivalent fastening means may be resorted to. Lacing has a desirable ornamental effect, however, and is of advantage in this respect. Obviously, if desired, other parts of the shoe upper may be provided with similar lacing to enhance the ornamental effect and to shift the focus of attention from the rear of the shoe and thereby contribute to further concealment of the existence of an openable pocket. In a similar way, a flap arrangement as shown in Figs. 7–9 may be constructed as part of an ornamental downturned collar or its equivalent that extends over the top edge of the upper in regions of the shoe other than the rear region. Collars and cuffs of this kind are commonly employed for decorative purposes, and the present invention lends itself readily to an enhancement of ornamentation, as will be readily understood.

Other changes within the scope of the invention will readily suggest themselves. For example, the two pieces **2** and **3** shown in Figs. 1–4 may be joined or integral in the opposite end regions of the narrow space between the adjacent edges **5** and **10**. Also, this space or slit may have any desired shape, commensurate with the size and shape of the counter to be employed.

In general, it will be understood that the details herein described and illustrated are intended to explain the general nature and purpose of the invention, and that those skilled in the art will be readily enabled to make variations in these details without necessarily departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as expressed in the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. In a shoe, an upper having a rear end area, a pocket-forming member attached at its lower edge to said rear end area and having its upper edge free of attachment thereto whereby there is provided between said member and the outer face of the upper a pocket for the reception of a removable counter, the length of the unattached upper edge of said member being sufficient to enable the counter to be inserted between said member and the upper by insertion downwardly from the top of the shoe, a reinforcing strip surrounding the free edge of the pocket-forming member, said strip being attached to the rear end area of the upper and presenting a free edge adjacent to the free edge of the pocket-forming member, said adjacent free edges being connected together by removable fastening means.

2. In a shoe, the combination of parts provided for in claim 1, wherein the two free edges are perforated, and the removable fastening means consists of lacing extended through said perforations.

3. In a shoe, an upper having a rear end area, a pocket-forming member having a lower edge stitched to said rear end area and having a free, curved upper edge unattached to the upper, a counter positioned between the back of the pocket-forming member and the outer face of the upper, a curved reinforcement stitched to the upper in said rear end area and having a free edge in close proximity to and co-extensive with the unattached curved edge of the pocket-forming member, being each provided with

a row of holes, and lacing extending between said rows of holes and confining the counter behind the pocket-forming member, said lacing being at least partly removable to permit removal of the counter.

4. In a shoe, an upper having a rear end area formed of plies secured together along the bottom to define a pocket having an openable upper end, a stiffening counter of a size and shape adapted to be removably accommodated within said pocket, said rear end area being stiffened solely by said counter and composed of relatively soft foldable material so that it may be collapsed when said pocket is empty, and readily manipulable fastening means carried by the plies of the pocket to keep them

separably closed, whereby the counter may be retained in position within said pocket when the shoe is worn and may be withdrawn from the pocket when said rear end area is to be collapsed.

5. In a shoe, the combination of parts defined in claim 4, wherein the fastening means is lacing which connects the free edges of the pocket-forming plies.

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