Jan. 17, 1950 R. E. MacLAUGHLIN 2,494,770

FOOTWEAR AND NOVEL CLOSURE THEREFOR

Filed April 26, 1949

Fig. 1

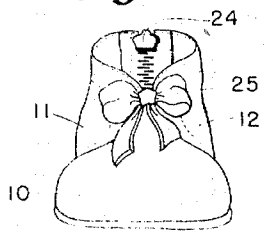
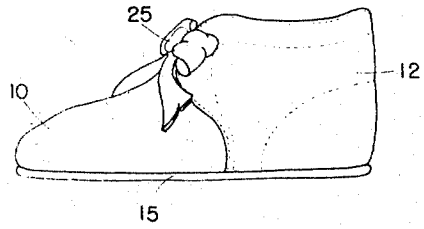


Fig. 2



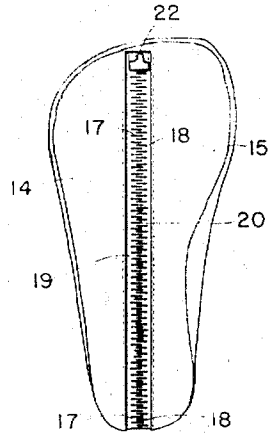


Fig. 3

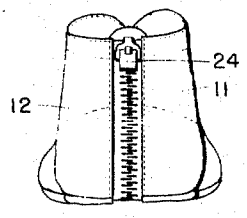


Fig. 4

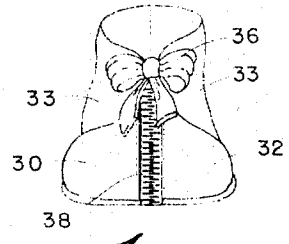


Fig. 5

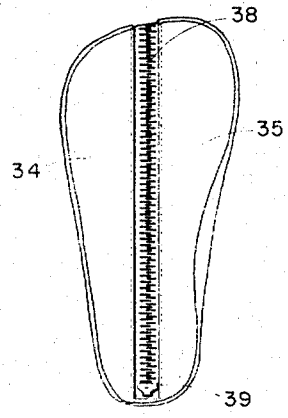


Fig. 6

Robert E. MacLaughlin
Inventor
by Lewis & Hodges
Attorneys

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FOOTWEAR AND NOVEL CLOSURE THEREFOR

Robert E. MacLaughlin, Rochester, N. H.

Application April 26, 1949, Serial No. 89,728

5 Claims. (Cl. 36—2.5)

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My present invention relates to footwear, and more particularly to boots, shoes, slippers, and other foot coverings of the class that are primarily suited for special uses and unadapted for heavy walking purposes. Shoes of this general type would include footwear for use by undertakers or by those with injured legs and feet, for bathing use, for infants and the like.

For illustrative purposes I have shown my invention as applied to baby bootees, but as will be readily apparent, the same could be adapted for any type of foot covering.

Heretofore, the manufacture of infant's footwear has generally been confined to two distinct types, namely, the knitted stocking-like type and the miniature shoe-like type, both of which have been used extensively but neither of which has proved entirely satisfactory. Obviously, the knitted type has the advantage of being easy to put on, but conversely it has the disadvantage of being easily kicked off; while the miniature shoe type cannot be easily dislodged once it has been secured on the wearer's foot; but this type is difficult to fit, particularly on babies who instinctively have the prehensile tendency to curl up their toes.

A prime object of my invention, therefore, pertains to obviating the difficulties above briefly outlined by the provision of a novel shoe and closure which combines the desirable features of both types and includes the advantages of quick, easy fitting and permanent attachment.

Another chief object of my invention applies to a shoe of the class indicated that may be formed from a flat piece of leather, suede, cloth, or the like material, or that may, if desired, embody a vamp, quarters, and my novel form of a split or two-part sole; and which shoe is constructed with either a closed forepart or heel portion and having both parts of the split sole portion and the alternate unclosed part connected, preferably, by a slide fastener.

Thus, the provision of such slide fastener throughout the length of the sole and extending either up the vamp or the heel will enable the fitter to very readily apply the partially open shoe to the wearer's foot and to quickly transform the same into a closed shoe which can neither be kicked off nor lost from the foot.

A further important object of my invention resides in the novel construction of my shoe whereby eyelets, buttons, lacings, and the like closing means may be completely eliminated, if desired, thus simplifying the expense and construction of the shoe.

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A still further object of my invention is the provision of a shoe wherein the completed shoe is neat and attractive in appearance, serviceable, and comfortable when worn, of simple construction, and inexpensive to produce, and can be quickly attached and detached.

My novel construction of a two-part or longitudinally split sole is of especial importance and is believed to be a distinct inventive concept in this art, and I wish to claim the same broadly.

The process of making footwear, particularly for special uses, babies' shoes, invalid's foot coverings, bathing slippers, and the like, is greatly simplified by this novel construction of the sole in two longitudinal parts, to which the closure devices, preferably a slide fastener, are secured. Also, if leather is used for the sole, smaller pieces of leather can be utilized, if desired, thus effecting great economy of manufacture.

Further objects, features, and details of construction will be hereinafter more fully pointed out in the accompanying description and more clearly defined in the appended claims.

Referring now to the drawings wherein I have shown preferred embodiments of my invention:

Fig. 1 is a front view of my shoe having the zipper extending the length of the sole and up the back portion;

Fig. 2 is a side view of the same;

Fig. 3 is a plan view of the sole of the same;

Fig. 4 is a rear view of the same;

Fig. 5 is a front view of a modification showing the slide fastener extending the length of the sole and up the vamp portion, and

Fig. 6 is a plan view of the sole part of the shoe shown in Fig. 5.

In the drawings, referring specifically to Figs. 1 thru 4, I have illustrated an infant's shoe embodying my invention wherein the sliding closure is attached to both the sole and the heel or counter portions. Herein my novel shoe comprises a closed vamp portion 10 having stitched thereto a pair of quarters 11 and 12 and which, in turn, are stitched, respectively, to longitudinal sole elements 14 and 15.

Connecting said quarters 11 and 12 and sole elements 14 and 15 is a standard slide fastener construction, preferably of non-injurious plastic material, consisting of interlocking members 17 and 18 secured to the outer edges of the usual tapes 19 and 20, respectively, the inner edges of which tapes are sewed or otherwise attached to the adjacent edges of said quarters 11 and 12 and said sole elements 14 and 15 throughout their respective lengths. Said fastener is suitably

closed just short of the vamp stitching, as shown generally at 22, and fastened and unfastened by the standard type of slide 24.

For dress purposes I have shown a bow 25 fixed at the juncture of the vamp 10 and quarters 11 and 12, but I may employ any kind of decorative or reinforcing means at or adjacent to such top portion of my shoe.

It will be apparent in fitting or applying to a foot a shoe made according to this novel design that it is a readily quick operation to insert the toe portion of the wearer's foot into the closed vamp 10, and then by means of the slide 24 "zip" the slide fastener the length of the soles 14 and 15 and the back of the quarters 11 and 12, to completely secure the foot in a snugly fitting shoe.

Referring to Figs. 5 and 6, wherein I have illustrated a modified form of my novel shoe, the fastener construction extends the length of the two sole elements, and bisects the vamp, thereby providing a solid closed back of counter. Herein I form my novel shoe with matching vamp portions 30—32 stitched above to a solid combination quarter and counter 33, and below to the longitudinal soles 34 and 35, the after part of said soles 34 and 35, in turn, being suitably stitched to the bottom edge of each side of said counter 33. A bow or other dress member 36 is, preferably, attached to the slide (not shown) at the top of the shoe when the shoe is in closed relation, and is adapted to travel with the slide of a slide fastener, herein designated generally at 38, extending between the vamps 30—32 and the sole elements 34 and 35 to a stop 39 adjacent and short of the heel stitching, as illustrated in Fig. 6.

This particular modification, of course, enables the shoe to be fitted on the wearer's heel and then readily fastened into completed form by the simple manipulation of the bow from the end of the sole strips to the top of the two vamps.

From the foregoing, it will be observed that I have devised a novel special shoe construction which is particularly characterized by a novel split sole arrangement preferably connectable by a suitable closure means, such as a slide fastener, whereby such shoe may be readily fitted to the foot of an injured person, a baby, or others, in partially open form and then quickly transformed into an attractive, snugly fitting, completely closed article of footwear.

If desired, the fastener may be first applied to the sole and then the upper fitted and stitched; or the shoe may be first completed and then the sole and heel or vamp cut and the fastener attached, if such sequence is desirable as it may be in some types, styles, or designs.

I claim:

1. An improved article of footwear of the kind described, comprising upper materials and two sole elements extending longitudinally and with abutting marginal portions detachably united.

2. An improved article of footwear of the kind described, comprising a longitudinally split sole element, and upper materials secured to the outer marginal portions of each sole element, and closure means adapted to detachably unite the adjacent margins of the sole elements.

3. An improved article of footwear of the kind described, comprising a longitudinally split sole and upper materials, having an opening therethru in cooperative alignment with the split sole, and means to detachably unite the said sole and upper.

4. An improved article of footwear of the kind described, comprising a longitudinally split sole and upper materials, having an opening therethru in cooperative alignment with the split sole, and means to detachably unite the said sole and upper by a single closure element.

5. An improved article of footwear of the kind described, comprising a longitudinally split sole and upper materials, having an opening therethru in cooperative alignment with the split sole, and means to detachably unite the said sole and upper by a slide fastener extending throughout the length of the sole and upper opening.

ROBERT E. MacLAUGHLIN.

No references cited.