May 14, 1946. R. MALING 2,400,243

FOOTWEAR

Filed Dec. 8, 1944

Fig. 1.

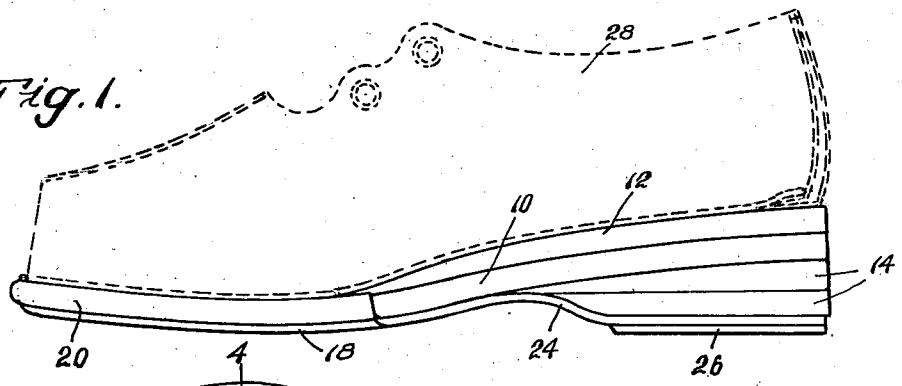


Fig. 2.

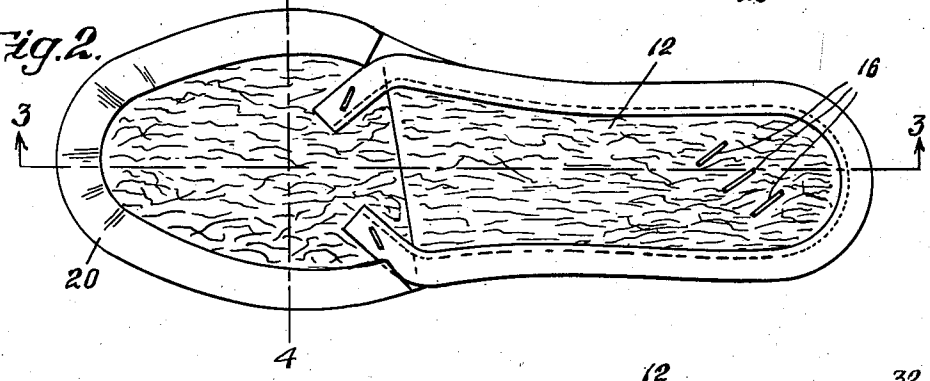
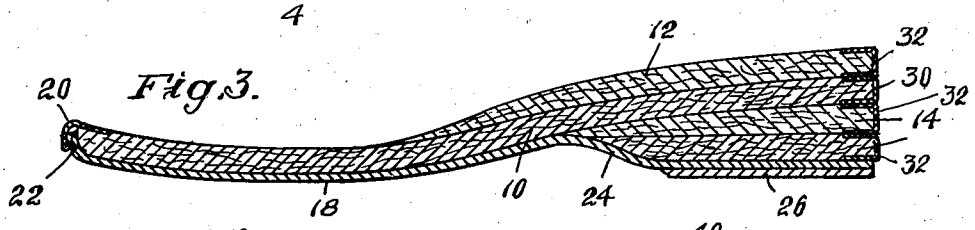


Fig. 3.



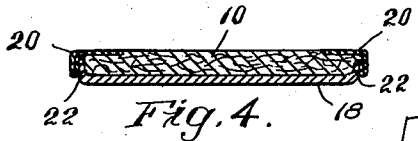


Fig. 4.

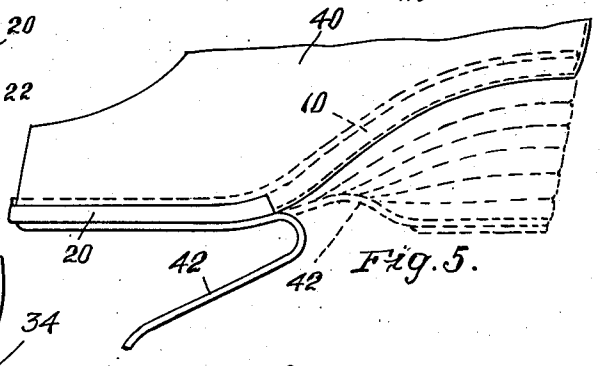


Fig. 5.

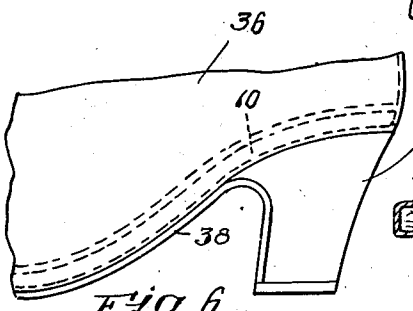


Fig. 6.

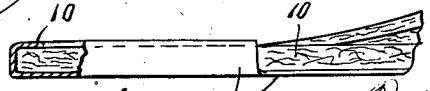


Fig. 7.

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Patented May 14, 1946 2,400,243

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,400,243

FOOTWEAR

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Application December 8, 1944, Serial No. 567,155

6 Claims. (Cl. 36—30)

This invention relates to improvements in footwear and more particularly to improvements at the base parts of shoes and slippers.

According to the invention, the ease and comfort of so-called soft-sole lounging slippers is provided in footwear having a more general utility, by embodying a soft-sole forepart in a shoe or slipper which can have the shank and heel characteristics of conventional relatively stiff-soled footwear.

Soft-sole lounging slippers are well known for their comfortable feel on a wearer's feet. However, it is equally well known that the lack of adequate arch and heel support in such slippers renders them inadequate and definitely unsuitable for extended periods of walking or standing. The very nature of the soft-sole constructions has discouraged heretofore all attempts to provide desired arch and heel supporting elements, capable of lending needed support when the weight of the wearer is placed on his feet for any considerable length of time.

It is an object of the present invention to combine in a shoe or slipper structure the desirable attributes of a soft-sole forepart and the foot-supporting advantages of a shank and heel structure capable of providing effective support for extensive walking and standing.

Another object is to provide a shoe or slipper base unit having a soft-sole forepart and a relatively stiff and stable rear part, with which base unit any of a numerous variety of uppers effectively may be combined.

A further object is to provide a shoe or slipper base unit having a soft-sole forepart and a relatively stiff and stable rear part embodying any of a wide variety of heel and shank structures and designs.

Still another object is to provide a shoe or slipper base structure having a soft-sole forepart to which a prelasted forepart of an upper may be secured as by cement and having a relatively stiff and stable rear part upon an element of which the rear portion of the upper may be lasted subsequent to said securement of the pre-lasted forepart of the upper.

Yet another object is to provide a shoe or slipper having a soft-sole forepart and having a relatively stiff and stable rear part which may include a pre-molded resiliently stiff counter.

It is, moreover, my purpose and object generally to improve upon prior shoe and slipper structures and methods of making them.

The mentioned objects and results are attained by employing a full length platform element which may be a matted fibre member having substantial thickness, or which may be a relatively thin flexible member of leather or of any of the materials used for insoles. An outsole of so-called soft-sole leather has a fabric or other binding strip sttiched to the soft-sole around its forepart, and the binding strip is turned over the edge of the forepart of the platform element and secured as by cement to the margin of its upper surface.

In one form of the invention, the marginal edges of the rearwardly extending portions of the platform element are suitably bound with a strip of fabric or other material, and any of various types of heel may be secured to the platform, preferably a wedge type heel which may be laminated or not as desired, so that support will be provided at the shank region. The rearwardly extending portions of the soft-sole, without any edge binding, is secured in facing relation to the under surfaces of the heel, under which a heel pad of leather or the like may be secured for taking the wear at the heel region. The rear portions of upper, in this form, may be pre-lasted like the forepart, preferably having a conventional preformed counter therein, and the rear portions of the upper may be secured to the platform element by cement or otherwise.

In a modified form, the forepart is constructed as previously described, but the rear parts of the upper are lasted over upon the platform after the pre-lasted forepart has been assembled, the heel structure in this form being applied under the lasted upper, and the rearward extending portion of the soft-sole forepart facing the shank and heel surface as in the first mentioned construction.

In the accompanying drawing:

Figure 1 is a side elevation of a footwear base structure embodying features of my invention, an upper being shown in dotted outline associated therewith;

Figure 2 is a top plan view of the base structure of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view on line 3—3 of Figure 2;

Figure 4 is a cross-sectional view on line 4—4 of Figure 2;

Figure 5 is a view in side elevation of a modified structure showing the rear portion of an upper lasted over the edges of the platform element of a base unit whose heel lift elements are shown in dotted outline, and the rearward extending part of the soft-sole element being bent forwardly out of the way, for the lasting of the rear part of upper;

Figure 6 is a fragmentary side elevation of another modification showing how a Cuban or other unitary heel may be embodied in a structure embodying features of the invention; and

Figure 7 is an elevation, partly in section, of still another modified form of base structure.

Referring to the drawing, a full length platform element **10** may be variously combined with heel lift elements or unitary heels as suggested in the various views. In the structure represented in Figs. 1–3, a heel lift element **12** is arranged above the platform element **10** and extends to contribute shank curvature, and two smaller heel lift elements **14** are assembled together under the platform element, all of the lift elements being suitably secured to the platform as by cement with or without mechanical fastenings such as the metal staples **16**.

According to the invention, a suitable leather split **18**, or other flexible sole element, has a binding strip **20** of fabric or other suitable material stitched as at **22** all around its edges at the forepart, the edges of the split **18** and the strip **20** being superimposed on each other for the stitching so that the split **18** may be arranged under the forepart of the platform element **10** and the binding strip **20** be turned over the edges of the platform element, as a binding for its forepart edges, as represented in Figs. 3 and 4. Also, as shown, the line of stitching **22** is pulled a little up on the edge of the platform element **10** so that the binding strip **20** is elevated above the tread plane of the forepart.

The soft-sole element **18** has an integral rearwardly extending part **24** which is secured as by cement in facing relation to the under surfaces of the platform and heel unit, with or without a heel pad **26** on its under side at the rear of the shoe.

The base unit thus assembled, is ready to have mounted thereon any desired type or style of upper **28** which may be cemented or otherwise secured in place.

The drawing represents the platform element **10** and the heel lift elements **12**, **14** as matted fibre elements having substantial thickness. However, it should be understood that the platform element may be of any desired material and may be thinner than herein shown. For example, a suitably flexible plastic or composition material may be used or relatively thin insole leather can serve, it being desirable in every case to draw the stitch line **22** sufficiently above the tread plane so that no appreciable wear will come on the binding strip **20** at the forepart.

When matted fibre elements are employed, I prefer to bind their exposed edges as at **30**, **32** with fabric or other flexible material, the binding **30** on the platform element preferably extending only far enough forward to provide in effect a continuation of the forepart binding **20**.

Obviously the shank and heel regions may be variously formed. For example, the platform element **10** may extend rearward to provide a flat base with the heel lift elements all mounted above it, or all of the heel lift elements may be below the platform element. Also it should be understood that a solid wedge shaped heel may be employed either above or below the platform element, or a Cuban or other unitary style of heel may be mounted under the platform, with suitable shank stiffening means incorporated in the platform element or between it and the usual sock lining. Fig. 6 shows such a Cuban heel **34** in a construction having the rear part of upper **36** lasted over the platform element **10**. The same or a similar type of heel may be embodied in a structure having the rear part of upper **36** lasted over the sock lining, and having the platform element exposed between the upper and the heel. The rearward extension **38** of the soft-sole element may face the breast of the heel as in Fig. 6 or may face the shank region and terminate at the heel.

In the modification of Fig. 5, the rear part of upper **40** similarly is lasted over the platform element **10**, the rearward extending part **42** of the soft-sole element being shown bent forward out of the way of the lasting operation, and the heel, of any desired style, being indicated by dotted lines, as also the ultimate position of the extension **42**.

Although the soft-sole structures of Figs. 1–6 employ a leather split to whose forepart margin a binding strip is stitched, for covering the edge of a platform, a unitary sheet **44**, as in Fig. 7, may be used and constitute the tread element and also the edge binding for the platform. If desired an outer tread element, such as a leather split might underlie the sheet **44**.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that I have provided a shoe or slipper structure whose forepart has the characteristics of a soft-sole article but whose rear part provides effective support at the arch and heel regions, with or without a pre-formed stiff counter as may be desired.

I claim as my invention:

1. A base unit for footwear comprising a full length platform element, a flexible tread element covering the under surface of said platform element at its forepart, a flexible binding strip stitched to said tread element around the edges of only the forepart thereof and turned over the edges of the forepart of the platform with the line of stitching drawn up out of the tread plane of said tread element, a heel lift element secured to the platform element at the rear of the unit, said tread element having an integral rearwardly extending portion facing the under surfaces of said unit at the shank and heel regions of the unit and free of any binding strip, whereby the edges of the platform and the heel lift elements are exposed at the rear portions of the unit.

2. A base unit for footwear comprising a full length platform element, having a heel lift structure associated therewith at its rear part, and having a flexible tread element, a binding strip extending around only the forepart of the unit, said tread element being stitched around its edge at the forepart to the edge of the binding strip, and the latter being turned over the edges of the forepart of the platform element and secured to the upper margin thereof all around the forepart of the unit, said tread element having an integral portion extending rearward and free of any binding strip facing and secured to the under surfaces of said platform and heel structure at the shank and heel regions of the unit, leaving the edges of the platform and heel elements exposed at the rear portions of the unit.

3. A base unit for footwear comprising a soft-sole forepart including a sole element and a tread element, and a relatively stiff and stable arch and heel supporting rear part, said tread element extending in facing relation to the under side of the sole element of the forepart and having means thereon covering the edges of said sole element

only around its forepart, and there being an integral rearward extension of said tread element facing only the under surfaces of said unit at the shank and heel regions thereof and leaving the edges of said arch and heel supporting rear part exposed.

4. A sole structure comprising a platform and heel unit comprising a full length platform element and a heel lift element secured thereto at a rearward location thereon and a flexible tread element facing the forepart of said platform element, a binding strip extending only around the forepart of the article and stitched around its edges to the binding strip, said binding strip being turned over the edges of the forepart of the platform element, and said tread element having a rearward integral extension facing only the under surface of said unit and leaving rear edge portions thereof exposed.

5. A sole structure comprising a platform and heel unit of which the platform extends from end to end of the article and a heel lift element is secured thereto at its rear part and extends into the shank region of the article to contribute shank curvature, a flexible tread element surfacing the full area of the forepart and having means secured around its forepart covering the edges of said platform only at its forepart, said tread element having an integral extension rearward for facing the shank and heel regions of said unit and leaving the rear edge portions of the unit exposed.

6. A soft-sole shoe structure comprising a platform with flexible tread soft-sole forepart, and a heel lift foot-supporting rear part, at least one heel lift element extending into the shank region and contributing shank curvature, and an integral extension of said flexible tread of the forepart constituting a bottom facing strip for an under surface of said rear part, said flexible tread of the forepart having a stitched binding strip securing it to the platform only around its forepart with the line of stitching elevated above the tread plane of the forepart, and said integral extension of the tread being free of any binding strip at the rear parts of the structure.

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