Dec. 13, 1949 V. S. BROWN 2,491,297

FOOTWEAR

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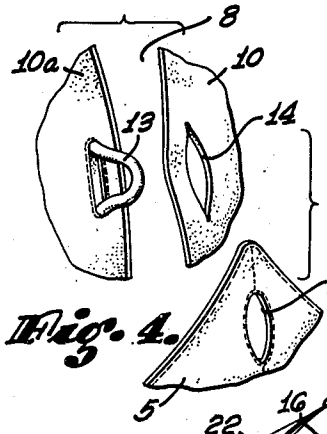


Fig. 4.

Fig. 1.

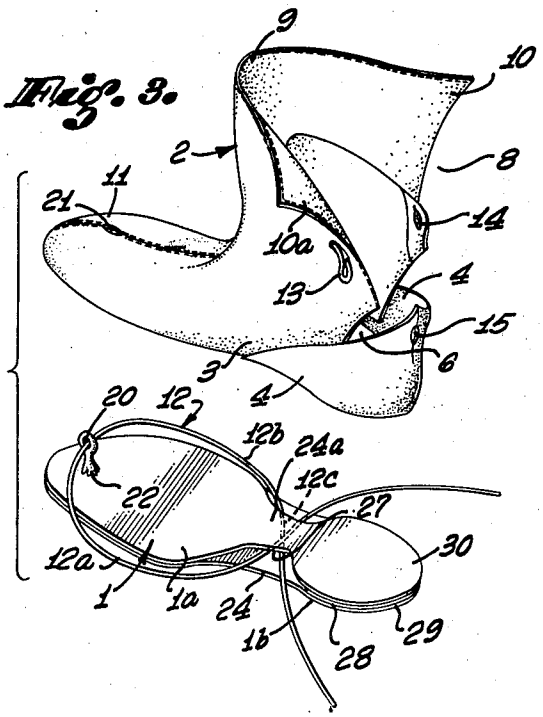


Fig. 3.

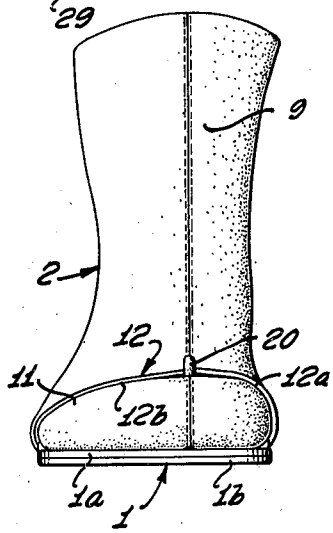


Fig. 2.

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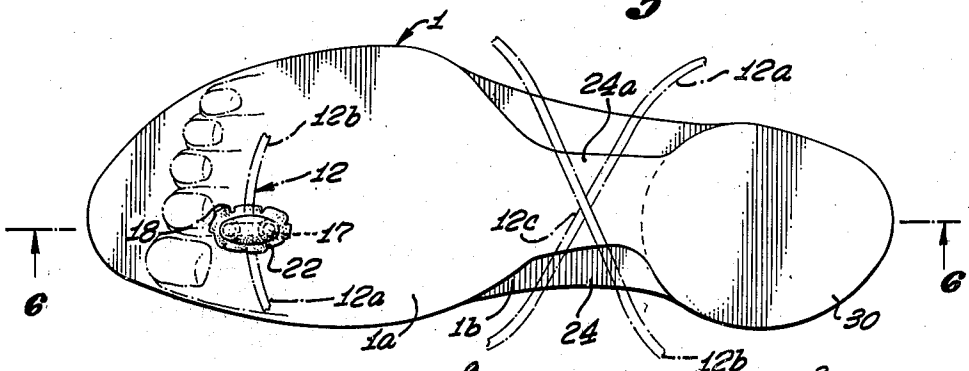
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Dec. 13, 1949 V. S. BROWN 2,491,297

FOOTWEAR

Filed Jan. 27, 1948 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 5.



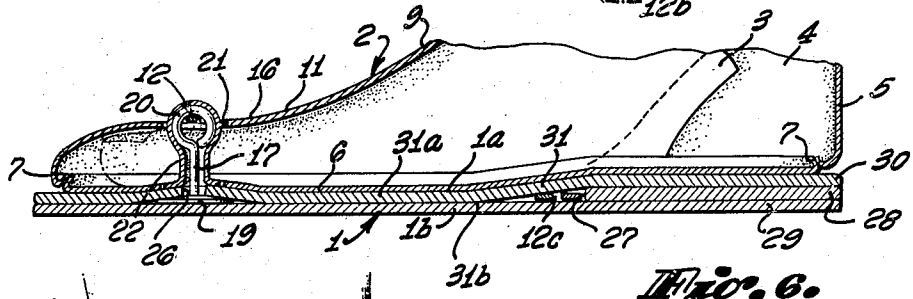


Fig. 6.

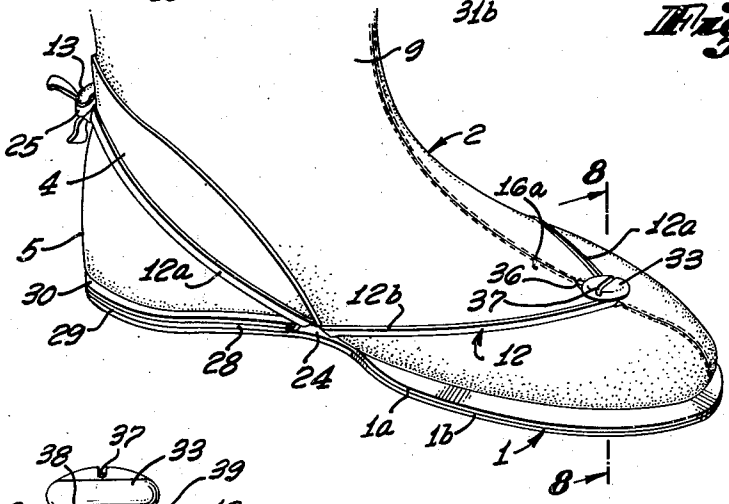


Fig. 7.

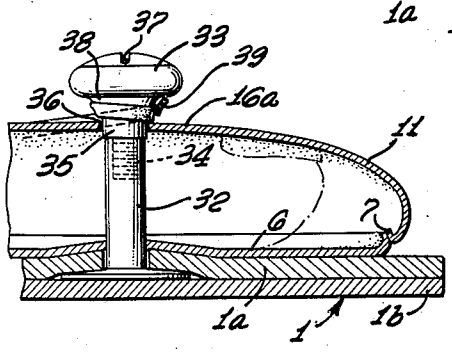


Fig. 8.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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FOOTWEAR

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17 Claims. (Cl. 36—2.5)

1

This invention relates to footwear, and especially to a type of footwear that is particularly useful when worn by a person participating in outdoor sports.

One of the objects of the invention is to provide footwear of this character, which will present an upper that does not necessarily include a lacing such as ordinarily used at the front of an upper for securing it tightly about the wearer's ankle; in other words, to provide a construction which will give considerable freedom of movement of the ankle though at the same time protecting the ankle at the sides and front.

Another object of the invention is to provide footwear of this type, including a sole and an upper, having improved means for securing the upper and the sole together, which can, when desired, be readily released to permit the upper to be worn indoors without the regular sole.

Another object of the invention is to provide means associated with the sole and the upper, which will co-operate with the wearer's foot to prevent lateral shifting of the forward portion of the sole with respect to the wearer's foot.

Another object of the invention is to provide footwear of this general type, which is so constructed as to facilitate the quick and easy attachment of the footwear to one's foot, and to this end, in the preferred embodiment of the invention, the upper of the footwear is formed so that it is open at the side toward the heel to facilitate the introduction of the wearer's foot into the upper; and at the same time to provide means associated with the counter of the footwear to secure the upper to the counter.

Another object of the invention is to provide footwear such as described, having features of construction associated with the upper and the sole, which will enable a simple thong to be readily secured to the upper in such a way as to hold the sole securely to it, while at the same time avoiding any interference with the free movements of the wearer's foot and ankle.

In the preferred embodiment, the invention includes an upper which has a flexible sole-piece incorporated therewith; and one of the objects of the invention is to provide a relatively rigid sole having features of construction which facilitate its being quickly and removably attached to the upper through the agency of a thong, or thongs.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention a fastener is employed, that projects up from the relatively rigid sole, and located in a position to enable it to lie between the large toe and its adjacent toe of the wearer; and one of the objects of the invention is to provide an improved construction for this fastener, which will insure the security of its mounting on the relatively rigid or stiff sole of the footwear, and at the same time provide means for protecting the wearer's foot from direct contact with the side of the fastener.

2

Further objects of the invention will appear hereinafter.

The invention consists in the novel parts and combinations of parts to be described hereinafter, all of which contribute to produce efficient footwear.

A preferred embodiment of the invention is described in the following specification, while the broad scope of the invention is pointed out in the appended claims.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a perspective of an example of footwear embodying my invention.

Fig. 2 is a front elevation of the footwear illustrated in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a perspective further illustrating the footwear, and showing the upper in a position just above the sole to which it can be attached. The lower division of this perspective illustrates the preferred construction for the sole, and indicates a thong applied to the sole.

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary view, and is a perspective illustrating closely associated parts of the counter of the footwear, and the rear flaps or extensions that form the rear ends of the upper. This view particularly illustrates the means that I may employ to facilitate securing these two flaps together, and also to the counter.

Fig. 5 is a top plan of the sole of the footwear, and particularly illustrating the position in which the toe fastener for the thong is located with relation to the toes of the foot of the wearer. This view also indicates in dotted lines, the manner in which the thong is passed through the fastener, and how its strands cross each other at the shank of the sole.

Fig. 6 is a vertical section through the sole and the lower portion of the upper, taken about on the line 6—6 of Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is also a perspective showing the lower portion of the footwear, and illustrating a modified embodiment of the fastener means that is employed at the toe portion of the footwear.

Fig. 8 is a vertical section taken about on the line 8—8 of Fig. 7, and with the rear portion of the footwear broken away. This view further

illustrates details of the fastener illustrated in Fig. 7.

Referring particularly to Figs. 1 to 6, inclusive, in practicing the invention I provide a sole 1 which preferably includes an insole 1a and an outsole 1b, and I provide an upper 2 which is of flexible material such as thin leather. The sole 1, however, is relatively thick and has some rigidity as compared with the upper 2.

The heel portion 3 of the upper as illustrated in Fig. 3, fits against the inner faces of the sides 4 of a counter 5. This counter 5 is also preferably of more or less flexible material such as used in the upper 2. The overlapping edges of the portions 3 and 4 may be secured together in any desired manner, for example, by stitching or by means of cement.

The upper is provided with a sole-piece 6, which is also preferably of flexible material, and secured around its edge to the lower edge of the upper and to the lower edge of the counter by means of a stitched seam 7 (see Fig. 6).

The upper 2 extends a considerable distance above the sole so as to operate as a protection for the forward side and lateral sides of the ankle and limb of the person wearing this article. At the rear side as indicated at 8, the upper 2 is open, to enable the wearer's foot to be introduced into the upper from the rear side. The necessity for this is occasioned by the fact that the curved forward wall 9 of the upper where a lacing is usually provided in shoes, is formed into a continuous closed wall. By reason of the opening at the point 8, the upper rear portion of the upper forms two flaps 10. When this footwear is being put on one's foot, the flaps 10 are swung away from each other as indicated in Fig. 3, so as to permit the toe of the foot to be inserted into the toe portion 11 of the upper. The foot is pushed forwardly far enough to enable the heel of the foot to be pushed down into the counter 5.

In accordance with my invention, I provide detachable means associated with the lower portions of the flaps 10, and with the counter, which will enable these three parts to be detachably secured together, and this detachable connection preferably is completed through the agency of means including thongs, or a thong 12. The manner of securing this thong to the upper and the sole, to enable it to complete the connection at the rear of the counter 5, and also to secure the sole 1 to the upper, will be described more fully in detail at another point in this specification. However, this connection formed at the counter, preferably includes an eye 13 formed on, or attached to, one of the flaps 10, indicated specifically by the numeral 10a. The opposite flap 10 has an opening or eyelet 14, and in making a connection the flap 10a is folded inside of the flap 10, and the eye 13 is threaded through the eyelet 14, after which it is pushed outwardly through an eyelet 15 that is formed near the upper edge of the counter and in its medial plane. These details are illustrated clearly in Fig. 4 as well as in Fig. 3.

While such a fastener can be merely attached if desired, to the upper side of the upper wall 16 of the toe portion 11, I prefer to provide a fastener 17 the lower end of which is secured to the sole, and this fastener is located in such a position on the sole that it is adapted to fit into the space 18 between the large toe and the toe adjacent to it when the wearer puts on the footwear. This is illustrated in Figs. 5 and 6, in which the fastener 17 consists of a stem preferably of stout

wire, the lower end of which is rigid with a disc-form base 19 anchored to the sole 1. The upper end of the stem of the fastener 17 is bent around to form an eye 20 which projects up through an opening or slot 21 that is cut or punched in the wall 16 of the upper 11. The plane of the eye 20 is preferably vertical in a front and rear plane to fit into the slot 21 which extends parallel with the axis of the sole.

In order to protect the foot from direct contact with the metallic stem of the fastener 17, I prefer to encase the stem and the eye 20 in a flexible sheath 22 of thin leather or similar material. This sheath, however, is fitted so that it does not close the eye 20 when it projects through the slot 21. Hence it does not interfere with threading a thong 12 through the eye 20 in the manner illustrated in Fig. 1. As illustrated there the thong 12 is applied so that a loop or bight 23 of the thong pulls against the rear side of the eye 20, the thong being disposed in two strands 12a and 12b that extend rearwardly and downwardly at the forward portion of the footwear. These strands extend to a point under the instep of the foot and at the shank 24 of the sole, at which point each strand passes over to the opposite side of the shoe as illustrated in Fig. 5. In view of this crossing of the strands, the strand 12b as shown in Fig. 1, will emerge from the sole 1 at the left side of the footwear, and the strand 12a will pass away from the shank 24 of the sole on the right side of the shoe. These strands are then passed up along the outer side of the counter 5, and one or both of them are passed through the eye 13, and formed into a tie 25 at that point. Of course before making this tie, the strands 12a and 12b should be pulled taut.

While the sole 1 can be made if desired, of a single piece of relatively thick, rigid leather or similar suitable sole material, I prefer to construct the sole with the insole 1a and outsole 1b as illustrated in Fig. 6, in which case the base 19 of the fastener 17 is preferably mounted between the two sole pieces as illustrated in Fig. 6, after which the insole and outsole can be cemented together. In order to enable this to be accomplished, it is of course necessary to provide the insole 1a with a slot 26, which is sufficiently large to permit the eye 20 to be passed up through it from below.

While the rear portion of the sole can be provided with a regular heel projecting downwardly so as to present a shoulder at its forward face, against which the crossing extensions 12c of the strands may rest when securing the upper in place on the sole, I prefer in practice to provide a conduit 27 between the insole 1a and the outsole 1b, through which the crossed portions of the strands extend. In order to form such a conduit, and also to give more of a heel effect than would otherwise occur, I prefer to provide one or more lifts such as the lift 28 between the heel portion 29 of the outsole and the heel portion 30 of the insole. Just forward of the forward edge of the lift 28, the material of the insole 1a will dispose itself in an inclined extension 31, which will merge at its forward portion into the "flat" 31a of the insole 1a, and the cementing of the "flat" 31a of the insole to the outsole 1b will extend back to a point such as the point 31b which will lie just forward of the conduit 27.

When this footwear is not being worn, the forward portion of the thong 12 is left in place, together with the crossed portions 12c, and the rear ends of the strands 12a and 12b are left lying loose so that whenever desired, the wearer's

foot can be thrust into the upper to apply the footwear in the manner already described, and secured in place by passing the ends of the strands 12b through the eye 13, and forming the tie 25. However, if it is desired to use this footwear as a moccasin, or house slipper, this can be accomplished by detaching and removing the thong and the sole from the upper. This of course leaves the upper and the counter 5 in place, but without any tie connecting the flaps of the upper to the counter. But of course, if desired, the eye 13 can be used with the eyelets 14 and 15, together with a small cord or tie to connect these parts together to establish a more effective connection between the flaps 10 of the upper and the counter 5.

Instead of employing the stem 17 with the eye 20 as illustrated in Fig. 6, I may construct this toe fastener in substantially the way illustrated in Fig. 8. In this view this fastener is illustrated as including a stem 32, which carries at its upper end a detachable head 33. This head 33 is of considerably larger diameter than the stem or post 32, and has a threaded shank 34 that is screwed down into a threaded socket in the upper end of the post 32. The head 33 has an integral neck 35 of substantially the same diameter as the post 32, so that the lower end of the neck 35 operates as a shoulder to seat on the upper end of the post when the head 33 is screwed home on the post. The wall 16a of the toe portion of the upper, of course has an opening 36 of sufficient diameter to permit the neck 35 to fit into it. If desired, the upper side of the head 33 may be provided with a screwdriver slot 37 to assist in putting the head in place. By reason of the relatively large diameter or width of the head 33, its under side forms a shoulder 38, which enables a thong to be disposed in a loop 39 around the neck 35 under this shoulder. This is illustrated in Fig. 8.

In order to insure that the strands 12a and 12b of the thong will fit or hug closely to the side of the upper in the vicinity of the shank 24, I prefer to form the insole 1a with a shank 24a, which is of considerably less width than the shank of the outsole.

Many other embodiments of the invention may be resorted to without departing from the spirit of the invention.

I claim as my invention:

1. In footwear, the combination of a shoe having an upper for enveloping the wearer's ankle, and a counter for receiving the wearer's heel, a flexible sole-piece connected to the upper and the counter, a sole of relatively stiff material under the sole-piece and having an outline substantially coextensive with the outline of said sole-piece; and means including a forward thong extending across the fore part of said upper adjacent the forward end thereof and passing under the said sole to secure the same to the shoe; said thong also including a rear part extending from a point adjacent the instep of the shoe to the rear side of the said counter for further securing the rear part of said sole to the shoe.

2. Footwear according to claim 1 in which the said upper is open above the counter to facilitate introducing the wearer's foot into the same.

3. Footwear according to claim 1 in which the said upper is open above the counter to facilitate introducing the wearer's foot, and including manually controlled means for securing the rear portion of the upper to the said counter.

4. Footwear according to claim 1 in which the

said upper is open adjacent the counter so as to form two flaps between which the wearer's foot may be introduced into the upper, and means associated with said flaps and the counter cooperating with the rear thong for closing the upper at the heel.

5. Footwear according to claim 1, in which the said upper is open adjacent the counter, so that it presents two flaps between which the wearer's foot may be introduced into the upper, and means associated with said flaps and the counter, including an eye carried by one of said parts and eyelets formed in the other parts through which the eye passes, so that the said eye projects rearwardly at the rear of the counter for attachment to the rear portion of the thong.

6. Footwear according to claim 1, including a part projecting up from the forepart of the upper adapted to have the forward portion of the thong attached thereto.

7. Footwear according to claim 1, including a stem mounted at its lower end on the sole and located in a position to enable the same to project up between two of the wearer's toes.

8. Footwear according to claim 1, including a stem mounted at its lower end in the sole and located in a position to enable the same to project up between two of the wearer's toes, and a protective sheath of flexible material enveloping the said stem, said stem having an eye projecting up through the wall of said upper adjacent the toe for attachment to a thong.

9. In footwear, the combination of a shoe having an upper for enveloping the wearer's ankle, and a counter for receiving the wearer's heel, a flexible solepiece connected to the upper and the counter, a sole of relatively stiff material under the sole-piece, and having an outline substantially coextensive with the outline of said sole-piece; and means including a forward thong extending across the fore part of said upper adjacent the forward end thereof and passing under the said sole to secure the same to the shoe; said thong also including a rear part extending from a point adjacent the instep of the shoe to the rear side of the said counter for further securing the rear part of said sole to the shoe; said thong means comprising a single piece with its middle portion secured to the upper adjacent one end thereof, so that the thong is disposed in two strands crossing each other under the shank of the heel, and with the ends of said strands secured to the upper toward the other end thereof.

10. Footwear according to claim 9, in which the sole includes an insole and an outsole between which the strands of the thong are disposed at the shank of the sole.

11. Footwear according to claim 9, in which the sole includes an insole and an outsole with a heel lift disposed between the same; and in which the clossed strands lie between the insole and the outsole forward of said heel lift.

12. Footwear of the kind described, having a sole and an upper disposed above the sole, said upper having an opening in the upper wall thereof adjacent the toe of the footwear; and fastener means secured at its lower end to the sole and projecting upwardly at its upper end through said opening, and having means above the opening to enable the same to co-operate with a thong for securing the upper to the sole.

13. Footwear of the kind described, having an insole and an outsole, and an upper disclosed above the insole, said upper having an opening in the upper wall thereof adjacent the toe portion

of the upper; and fastener means including a disc-form base located between the insole and the outsole with a stem extending up through the insole and having an eye at its upper end projecting upwardly through said opening, said eye capable of co-operating with a thong for securing the upper to the sole.

14. Footwear of the kind described, having a sole and an upper disposed above the sole, said upper having an opening in the upper wall thereof adjacent the toe of the footwear; and fastener means secured at its lower end to the sole and projecting upwardly at its upper end through said opening, said fastener means including a shank and a removable head secured thereto above the said upper wall, said head being of larger width than the shank to facilitate attaching a thong to the shank for securing the upper to the sole.

15. In footwear of the kind described, a sole member, a fastener extending upwardly from said sole on the toe portion thereof, and having an eye at the upper end thereof, said fastener being located in a position to enable it to extend up between the wearer's large toe and its adjacent toe with the eye above the toes; and a thong extending through the eye.

16. In footwear of the kind described, a sole member, a fastener extending upwardly from said sole on the toe portion thereof, and having an eye at the upper end thereof, said fastener being located in a position to enable it to extend up between the wearer's large toe and its adjacent toe, said sole including an insole and an outsole capable of co-operating with the upper resting

thereon; in combination with a thong secured to the fastening means and disposed in two strands crossing the shank of the sole between the insole and the outsole, for securing the upper to the sole; the shank of the insole being of considerably less width than the shank of the outsole so as to enable the strands of the thong to hug closely to the upper when the thong is being secured to the upper.

17. In footwear, the combination of a shoe having an upper for enveloping the wearer's ankle, including a flexible sole-piece and a counter secured to the upper, and receiving the wearer's heel, a sole of relatively stiff material under the sole-piece, fastening means projecting up from the upper at the toe portion thereof, fastening means associated with the said counter, and a thong disposed in a loop at one of said fastening means and disposed in two strands extending away from the forward fastening means and crossed under the shank of the flexible sole-piece, and with the end portions of the strands secured to the other fastening means.

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