



US 20160000166A1

(19) **United States**
(12) **Patent Application Publication**
JOHNSON

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2016/0000166 A1**
(43) **Pub. Date: Jan. 7, 2016**

(54) **IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO HAIR ACCESSORIES**

Publication Classification

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A41G 5/00 (2006.01)
(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC *A41G 5/0073* (2013.01)

(21) Appl. No.: **14/768,490**
(22) PCT Filed: **Feb. 19, 2014**
(86) PCT No.: **PCT/EP2014/053237**
§ 371 (c)(1),
(2) Date: **Aug. 18, 2015**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A hair accessory which can be inserted directly into a ponytail (6) and secured therein by means of the ring or band already in place to form the ponytail to provide the user with the appearance of a thicker and longer ponytail. The accessory consists of a weft of hair and longitudinal extending gripping means (3). Once the gripping means is inserted into a ponytail, the device is reliant on the combination of the grip and the pressure from the ring ponytail to hold it in place, and the hair weft then blends in with the user's natural hair to create a thicker and longer ponytail.

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Feb. 19, 2013 (GB) 1302863.4
Sep. 16, 2013 (GB) 1316448.8

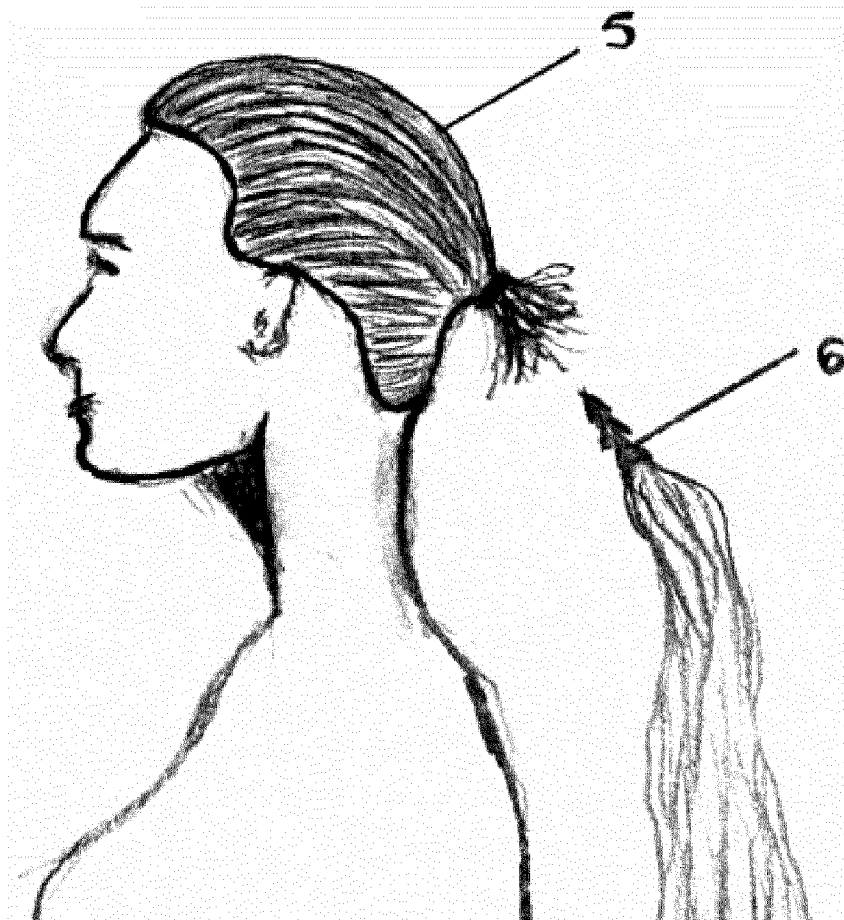


Figure 1

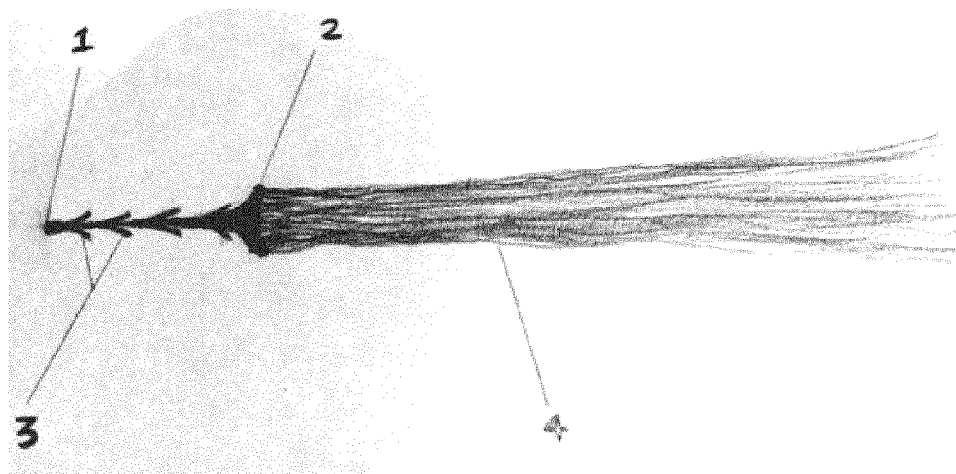


Figure 2



Figure 3

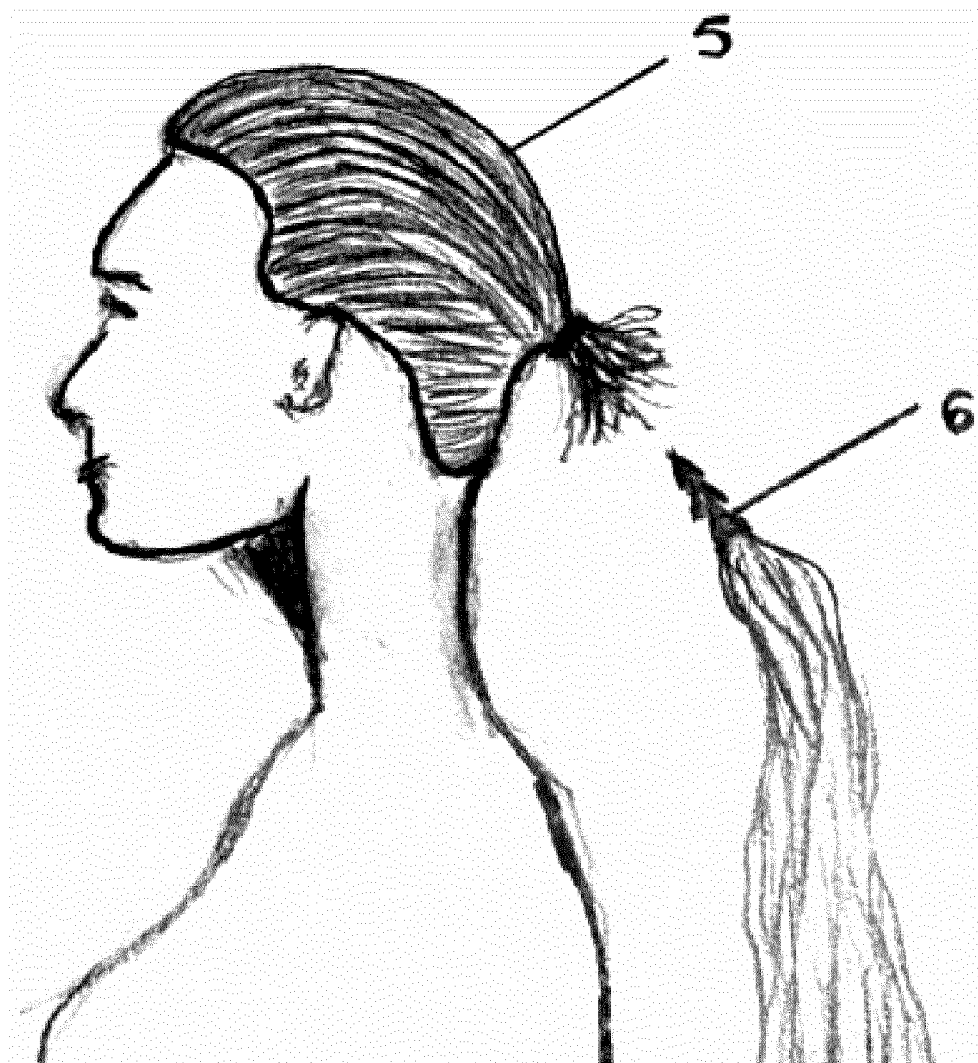


Figure 4

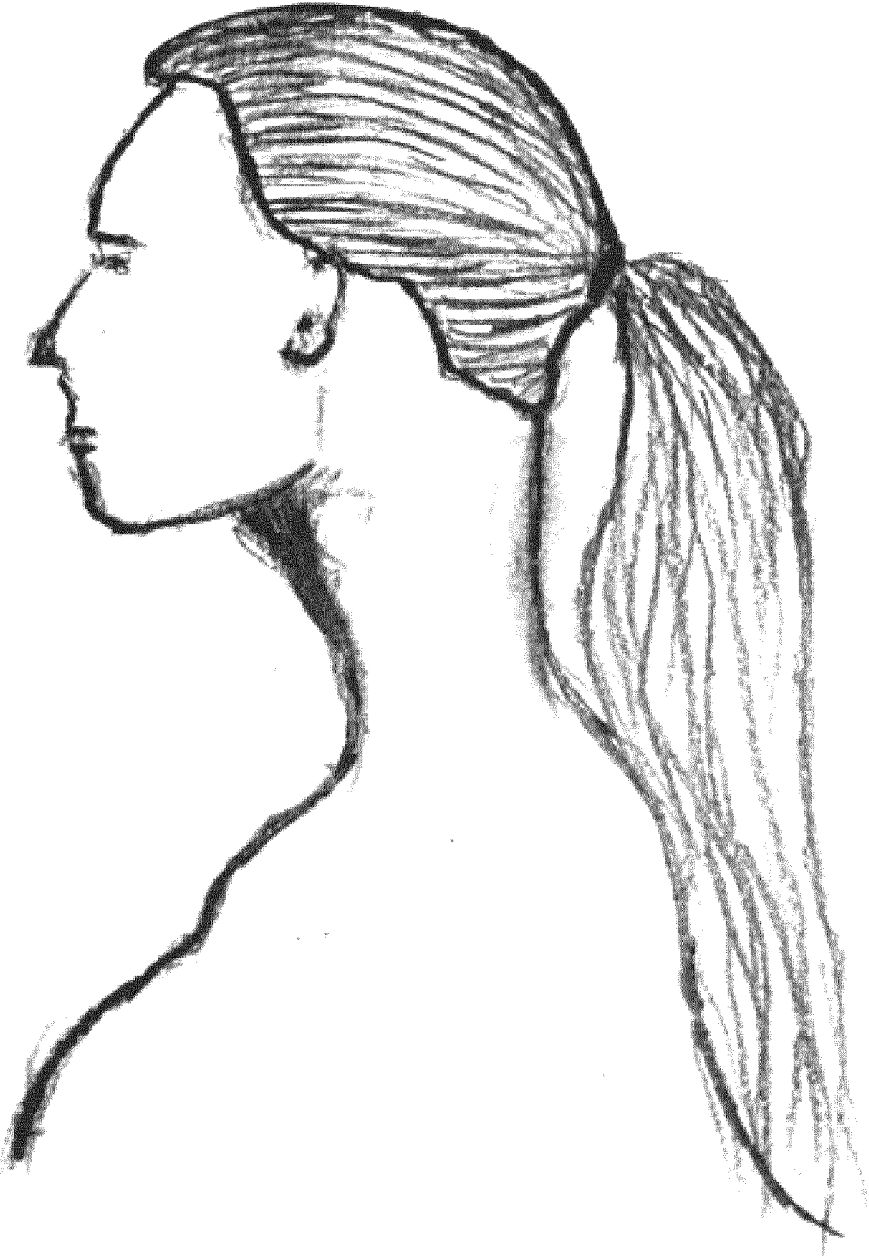


Figure 5



**IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO
HAIR ACCESSORIES**

[0001] The present invention relates to hair accessories, such as hair extension pieces and in particular to devices which can be used to improve the length and volume of a ponytail. More particularly to ponytail extension pieces that can be held in place by the band used to create the ponytail (sometimes known as a bobble).

[0002] Hair pieces have traditionally been fixed into a head of hair with a clasp or clip. For example, a fashion accessory comprising hair attached to a claw type hair grip that may be attached to a ponytail in order to enhance the volume and length of the ponytail is known.

[0003] When a thicker and longer ponytail is required, a clip-on ponytail is often the preferred device. However attachment can cause discomfort and it does not always grip firmly to the ponytail incurring the risk that the accessory may fall out. Furthermore, when the ponytail accessory is clipped in, it can be obviously perceived as fake so that it is obvious that one is wearing a hair accessory to promote thicker and longer hair. This is undesirable as the wearer usually wants others to believe that their hair is real, rather than fake.

[0004] U.S. Pat. No. 5,937,867 describes a hair piece that can add volume and length to a ponytail and uses a circular grip to attach the hair piece around the outside of a bobble of a ponytail and also has a hair weft attached to the grip.

[0005] U.S. Pat. No. 7,017,589 boosts the volume of a ponytail but not the length, it has no hair weft, it merely provides a hair grip that clips on at the root of a ponytail (in the middle) and is secured thereto to boost the volume of the ponytail.

[0006] The invention provides a hair accessory that can boost both the volume and length of a ponytail and which slides directly into the head of hair, particularly the already formed ponytail and is retained therein. It is preferred that the ponytail is already formed so that the accessory can be pushed into the already formed ponytail and is held in place by the bobble used to form the ponytail. The head of hair is typically in the form of a ponytail formed with its bobble and the accessory is preferably retained within the head of hair at least in part by the band used to create the ponytail. The invention therefore provides a hair piece that is firmly attached which has a natural look and which does not cause any discomfort.

[0007] The present invention comprises a hair accessory comprising a segment of hair extending in a first direction secured to a means of attachment wherein the means of attachment also extends in the first direction and is provided with means for securing the accessory within and protruding from a head of hair.

[0008] The attachment means of the hair accessory of the present invention can therefore be pushed directly into the head of hair which may comprise an already formed ponytail so that it is retained therein by the bobble of the ponytail. It may then be locked in place by the band used to create the ponytail so providing a dual form of retention due to the shape of the attachment means and also the pressure from the band. The segment of hair can be such that it will both increase the volume and length of the hair. There are alternative ways of keeping the device in place other than plastic grips; however the main focus of this invention is a device that can be inserted into a ponytail such that the hair grips the attachment means and the ring pressure of the ponytail ensures that it stays in

place. Such an accessory can also be used with hair styles other than a ponytail providing they support this attachment system.

[0009] Various forms of attachment may be employed. For example, it may be a single arrowhead like structure of it may be a strip with a plurality of barbs may be employed the barbs being positioned so that they are readily pushed into the head of hair but prevent the hair accessory from being easily detached in use. Alternatively, the attachment means may be a ring through which the hair passes provided with a tapered flange at its circumference. The tapering being in a direction away from the head of the user preventing easy removal of the accessory from the head of hair. In another version the attachment means may be provided with a hook to engage with the already formed ponytail. The attachment means may be metal or plastic and should be designed to have adequate strength with the minimum increase of weight. The attachment may be removable from the weft of hair that is part of the accessory so that it can be used with other wefts of hair perhaps of different sizes, shapes and/or colours.

[0010] The hair that is employed in the accessory may be natural, human or animal or may be synthetic.

[0011] The invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings and figures in which show alternate forms of a hair device according to the invention.

[0012] FIG. 1 shows a hair device on its own.

[0013] FIG. 2 shows the hair device of FIG. 1 from an alternative view.

[0014] FIG. 3 shows a female who is about to insert the hair device of FIG. 1 into her ponytail.

[0015] FIG. 4 shows a female with the hair device of FIG. 1 inserted into her ponytail.

[0016] FIG. 5 shows another hair device of the invention employing an alternate means of attachment.

[0017] Referring to the drawings in which the reference numerals refer to like parts, FIG. 1 displays a hair device of the invention; FIG. 4 shows the hair device of FIG. 1 attached to the ponytail. The attachment means of the ponytail device is made up of a cylindrical base (1) with grips (3) attached to the base that allow the device to be smoothly inserted into a ponytail, once inserted where the grips keep the device firmly gripped in the ponytail (5). The hair device can be placed into the ponytail already formed with a bobble so that the hair weft is able to blend in with the user's natural hair; the attachment means relies on the pressure from the ring (bobble) (7) used to create the ponytail to hold it in place. The hair weft is firmly attached to the hair device by a band (2) which surrounds the hair weft and compresses the hair tightly so that the hair is unable to fall out. FIG. 2 shows an alternative view of the hair device, this device is simply inserted into a ponytail to provide a longer and thicker ponytail. FIG. 3 shows a female with her natural hair tied in a ponytail by means of ring or bobble (7), her hair is short and thin and she requires more volume (5), the hair device is displayed near her ponytail (6) and is about to be inserted into the ponytail, and the Figure therefore shows the direction in which the hair device is inserted. FIG. 4 displays the finished result and shows how one will appear once the hair device is inserted. As one can see the hair device can be inserted safely and instantly, providing instant length and volume. The accessory is held in place by the combination of the attachment means and the ring (7) and can be removed when the ring is removed to release the ponytail.

[0018] FIG. 5 shows an alternate form of hair piece in which the attachment comprises a ring (8) provided with a flange (9) to secure the hair piece within a head of hair.

[0019] Any suitable materials can be used to make the hair device of the present invention, the hair weft can be of different thickness, synthetic or natural hair and can be of different colour which can be selected according to the wishes of the user. The device can vary in size depending on how long and thick one desires their ponytail and the device does not necessarily require the plastic grips it has to keep it in place.

1. A hair accessory comprising:

a segment of hair extending in a first direction secured to a means of attachment

wherein the means of attachment also extends in the first direction and is provided with means for securing the accessory within a head of hair.

2. A hair accessory according to claim 1, wherein the attachment means is provided with one or more barbs to secure the accessory within the head of hair.

3. A hair accessory according to claim 1, wherein the attachment means comprises an arrowhead.

4. A hair accessory according to claim 1, wherein the accessory is provided with a hook.

5. A hair accessory according to claim 1, wherein the attachment means is a ring provided with a tapered flange which secures the accessory within the head of hair.

6. The a hair accessory according to claim 1, wherein the hair accessory extends a length and a volume of a ponytail.

7. The hair accessory according to claim 6, wherein the accessory is held in place within the ponytail by the pressure due to the band employed to create the ponytail.

8. The hair accessory according to claim 6, wherein the attachment means of the accessory is inserted into the ponytail within a bobble of the ponytail.

9. A hair accessory according to claim 2, wherein the accessory is provided with a hook.

10. The hair accessory according to claim 2, wherein the hair accessory extends a length and a volume of a ponytail.

11. The hair accessory according to claim 3, wherein the hair accessory extends a length and a volume of a ponytail.

12. The hair accessory according to claim 4, wherein the hair accessory extends a length and a volume of a ponytail.

13. The hair accessory according to claim 5, wherein the hair accessory extends a length and a volume of a ponytail.

14. The hair accessory according to claim 9, wherein the hair accessory extends a length and a volume of a ponytail.

15. The hair accessory according to claim 14, wherein the accessory is held in place within the ponytail by the pressure due to the band employed to create the ponytail.

16. The hair accessory according to claim 7, wherein the attachment means of the accessory is inserted into the ponytail within a bobble of the ponytail.

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