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G. W. JOHNSTON.
LACING DEVICE FOR BOOTS OR SHOES, &c.
APPLICATION FILED JULY 7, 1902.

NO MODEL.

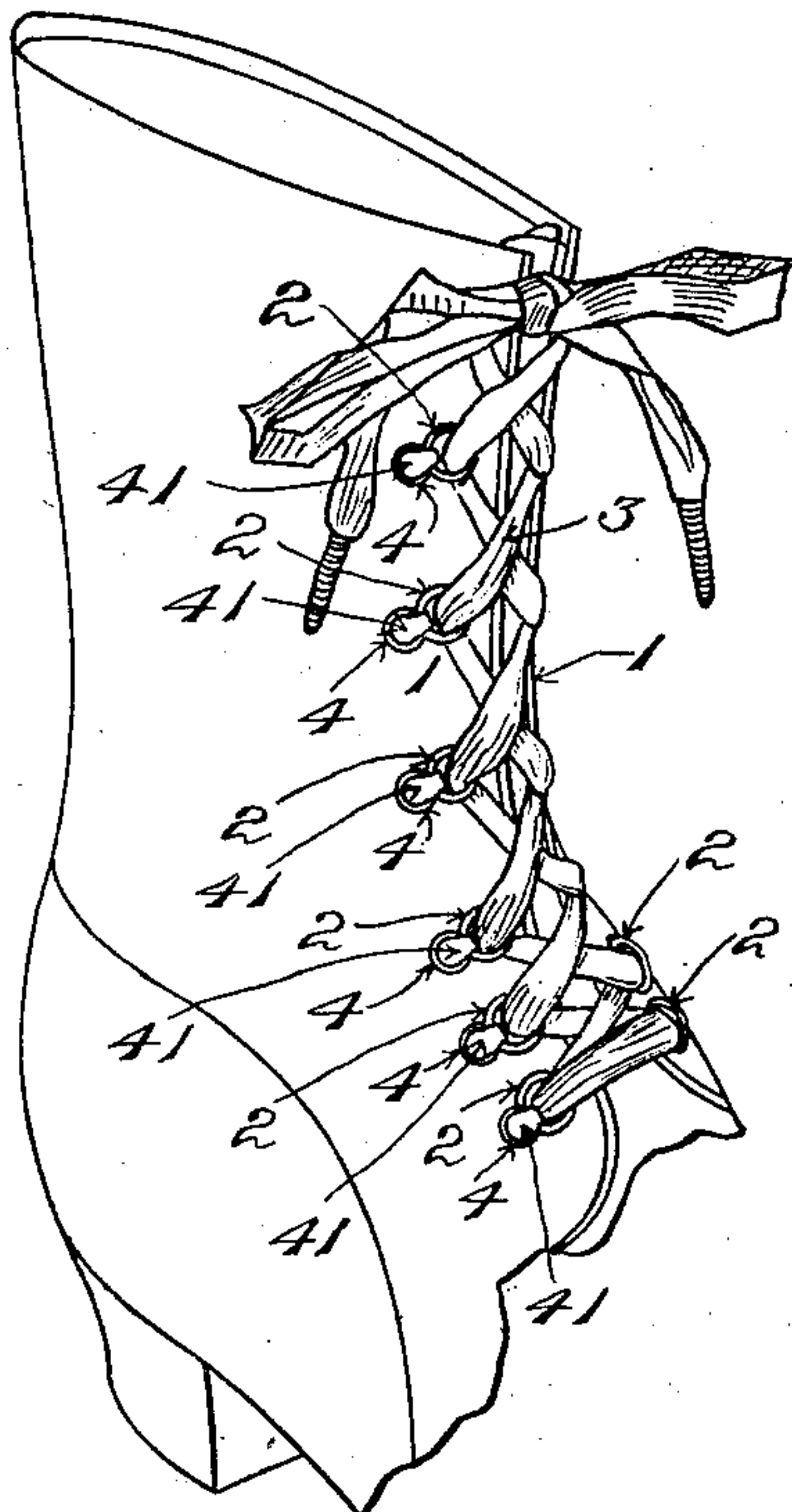


Fig. 1.

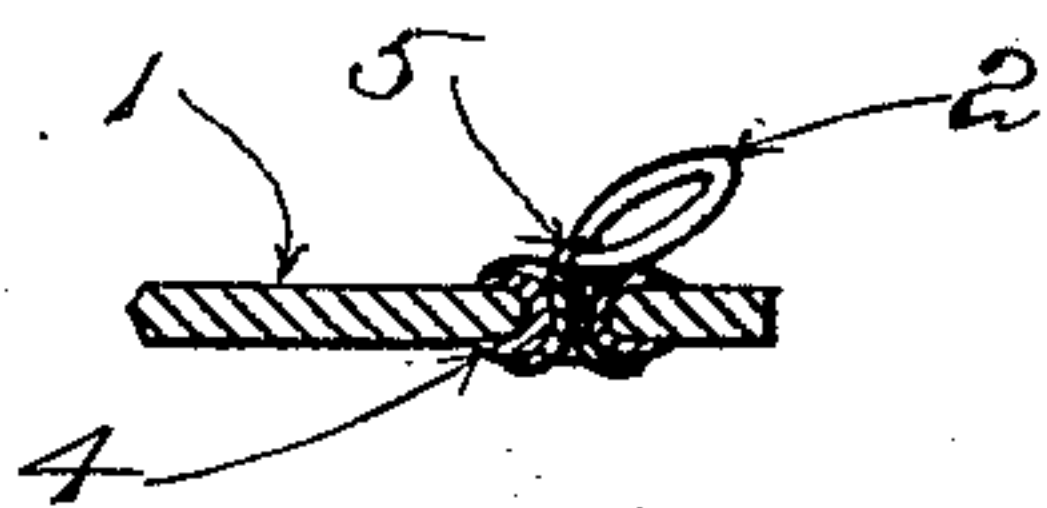


Fig. 3.

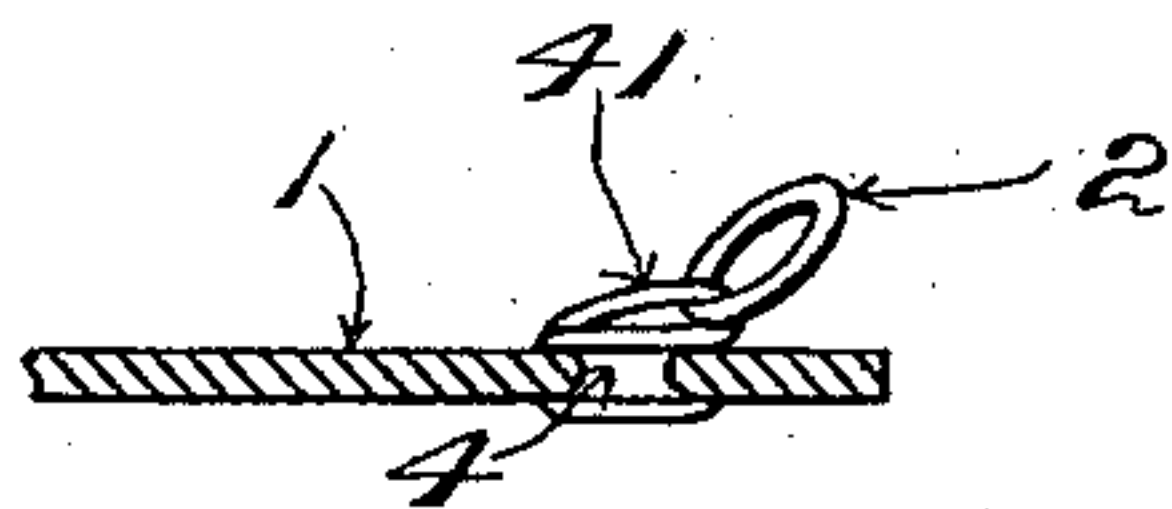


Fig. 2.

Witnesses:

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GEORGE W. JOHNSTON, OF DORCHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS.

LACING DEVICE FOR BOOTS OR SHOES, &c.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 736,106, dated August 11, 1903.

Application filed July 7, 1902. Serial No. 114,545. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, GEORGE W. JOHNSTON, a citizen of the United States, residing at Dorchester, Boston, in the county of Suffolk, State of Massachusetts, (whose post-office address is 89 Devon street, Dorchester,) have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Lacing Devices for Boots or Shoes, &c., of which the following is a specification; reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

The lacing-studs at present in use on boots and shoes, so far as known to me, have the drawback that the hooks thereof catch and fray or wear the cloth garments which come in contact therewith. This renders them more or less unsatisfactory and has operated to prevent their use in connection with boots and shoes which are worn by women on account of the injury which they do to skirts. A lace does not render or slip with full freedom around said hooks in pulling apart the meeting edges of the upper of a boot or shoe, and hence when unfastening and removing a boot or shoe the said meeting edges of the upper are not separated with complete readiness and facility. In order to render said edges free to be separated sufficiently, more or less assistance has to be given to the lace in causing it to draw around the lacing-studs, and it usually requires to be unlaced in part or in whole from the said studs.

The main object of the present invention is to provide lacing devices which shall be free from the disadvantages of lacing-studs—that is to say, which shall be free from tendency to injure skirts or other garments coming in contact with them, and through which the lace shall run or render with readiness, facilitating thereby both the operation of drawing up and fastening a boot or shoe and that of unfastening and removing the same.

I have illustrated the invention in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 shows portion of a laced shoe with an embodiment of the invention applied thereto. Fig. 2 is a sectional detail showing the means of securing or anchoring a lacing-ring to the shoe or other article on which it is used. Fig. 3 is a somewhat similar view showing a modified means of securing or anchoring the ring.

Having reference to the drawings, the portions of the upper at opposite sides of the opening at the front of the shoe are designated 1 1. Along each of the meeting edges of the said portions is secured a line of lacing-rings 2 2, extending either the whole or a part of the length of the edge. Herein the said line is shown extending the entire length. Each of the said rings is flexibly and loosely anchored to the upper. The mode and means of connection are such that the ring may play or swing vertically with relation to the surface of the upper, while normally the ring lies flat against the said surface, and that in addition the ring is free to shift edgewise laterally to conform to varying directions of transverse strain in use. The rings thereby are enabled to conform freely to all the movements of the foot of the wearer of the shoe to which the invention is applied and of the different muscles of the said foot. In this way perfect ease and comfort are insured.

3 designates the lace, which is threaded through the said rings, as shown.

In anchoring the ring 2 to the upper an eyelet 4 is employed. This is inserted into a hole formed in the upper and is clenched therein, as shown, as usual in setting eyelets. An eyelet is preferred to a solid pin or stud, inasmuch as its flanges after the clenching take an efficient hold upon the material in which the eyelet is set, and the eyelet is not so easily torn out of place by strain as is a solid rivet. The ring may be connected with the eyelet in different ways. In Figs. 1 and 2 the head of the eyelet is formed with an integral tongue 41, which is caused to engage with one side of the ring, the said tongue being passed loosely through the central opening of the ring and being bent down over the ring, so as to form a bearing in which the ring is held securely with freedom to play freely in a direction vertical with relation to the surface of the upper and also to shift edgewise laterally to conform to varying directions of transverse strain. In Fig. 3 a staple 5 is fitted to the ring, and the legs thereof are passed down through the central hole of the eyelet and spread sufficiently to hold the ring and eyelet from separating. When the device shown in Fig. 3 is applied to the upper of a shoe, the free extremities of the said legs

are clenched similarly to the entering edge of the eyelet.

The rings lie close against the surface of the upper and are free from all tendency to 5 fray or wear the garments which come in contact therewith. Consequently they are well fitted to be used on footwear for women. The rings may be circular, as shown, or this particular shape or form may be departed from 10 as found necessary or desirable. The lace will draw through the same with greater facility and readiness than it will around lacing-studs, and consequently a shoe may be opened up for removal very quickly and conveniently, and adjustment of the lace by hand 15 in loosening the same or partial unlacing ordinarily will not be required.

While I have described the invention more especially with reference to its employment 20 with boots and shoes, I wish it to be understood that the invention is not altogether restricted to use in this particular connection and that I contemplate applying the same to other garments as well.

25 A particular advantage possessed by my lacing-rings over lacing-studs is the fact that the lace cannot accidentally become disengaged from the rings when loosened, except by drawing it endwise out therefrom, and 30 consequently after drawing the shoe onto the foot of the wearer it is necessary simply to pull the lace tight and tie the same.

I claim as my invention—

35 1. The lacing device comprising the eyelet to pass through a hole in the article to which the device is applied and be fastened by upsetting the same, and having a ring-retainer

connected therewith, and the ring having the said retainer passed freely through its central opening, whereby the ring is loosely and 40 flexibly connected with the said eyelet and adapted to swing in a plane perpendicular with relation to the surface of the material in which said eyelet is set, and also to shift edgewise laterally to conform to varying directions 45 of transverse strain.

2. The lacing device comprising the eyelet, having the securing-tongue, and the ring having the said tongue passed freely through its 50 central opening and thereby loosely and flexibly connected with the said eyelet, whereby the ring is adapted to swing in a plane perpendicular with relation to the surface of the material in which said eyelet is set, and also 55 to shift edgewise laterally to conform to varying directions of transverse strain.

3. The lacing device comprising the eyelet having the ring-holder formed integrally therewith, and the ring having the said ring-holder passed freely through its central open- 60 ing and thereby loosely and flexibly connected with the eyelet, whereby the ring is adapted to swing in a plane perpendicular with relation to the surface of the material in which said eyelet is set, and also to shift edgewise 65 laterally to conform to varying directions of transverse strain.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

GEORGE W. JOHNSTON.

Witnesses:

CHAS. F. RANDALL,
ARTHUR F. RANDALL.