

IN BUSK AND SANDAL.

"Fashions that are now called new,
Have been worn by more than you;
Elder times have used the same,
Though these new ones get the name."
Middleton's May of Queenborough.

and prepared very much in the same way as willow-reeds are now for the basket-trade, only that the ancients split the fibre with a primitive wedge of wood. Such was the sandal in use in the time of Rameses II., 1200 B.C.; but for people in high position the plaited fibre was covered by woven silk or wool.

The Easterns did not often use leather for the soles of their sandals,

as the cow and the ox were sacred animals, and, like illustrious men, they were embalmed after death. Another reason was that the supply of skins was limited, owing to the small amount of animal food consumed by the people, who lived principally on vegetables.

They evidently preferred vegetable matter to leather for the soles of their sandals, because they had no very sharp tools necessary for cutting leather; indeed, they had none sharper than bronze; the value and use of iron not being known to man until about 800 B.C.

"Man's earliest arms and tools were fingers, teeth, and nails; then stones and fragments from the branching woods; copper next, and lastly, as later traced, the tyrant iron."

In the cutting of leather they used a bronze tool something like a saddler's knife,* and instead of hammers they employed wooden mallets. In the accompanying sketch of the

* This kind of knife was also used in the time of Hans Sachs.

Egyptian sandal-maker, you may notice the various tools used by him.

Much of our knowledge of the ancient Egyptians has been obtained from their monuments and mummies, and from these we have not only learned the various shapes and materials of their sandals, but also that their feet were flat and long, with scarcely any curve inward, rendering them admirable sand-runners.



A SHOEMAKER'S SHOP.

(From a Roman vase in British Museum, 2000 years old.)

Who first invented shoes, or who were the first to wear them is not easy to determine, but it is supposed that when God clothed our first parents in skins of beasts, He did not leave them to go barefoot, but bestowed upon them shoes of the same material.

Whether this be so or not, we have abundant indications of the making and wearing of shoes and sandals, not only in the oldest historians and in the books of the Old and New Testaments, but in the ancient monuments of Egypt and other nations.

The very oldest form of shoe or sandal belongs to the Stone Age, and may be seen by the curious in such matters in the Museum at Mainz. This prehistoric shoe consists of a long bone, which is bored through at one end probably to make a place for a fastening, whilst the other uneven end provides the means of fastening it to the foot. The under part of the bone is planed smooth, probably by means of a flint.

The ancient Egyptians have left in their monuments the shapes of their shoes and sandals; as a rule they were made of palm-leaves or papyrus fibre interwoven like a mat,

The earliest shoe or sandal of which we have any knowledge was a sole held to the feet by straps or thongs of various widths; indeed, the Hebrew term for sandal signifies shutting in the foot with thongs.

We have no description of the sandal in the Bible itself, but we learn from the Talmud

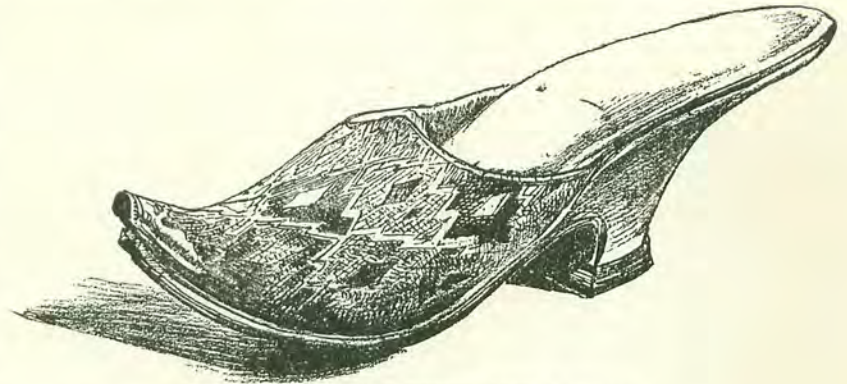


BOOTS MADE FOR THE PRINCE OF WALES, PRINCESS ROYAL, AND PRINCESS ALICE.

and other sources that the materials employed for the sole were either leather, cloth, felt, or wood, and that occasionally it was shod with metal.

Tradition says that the origin of the foot-covering among the Jews was that someone took a piece of wood and cut a slab the size and shape of the foot, which served as a sole, and fastened it to the foot with a strap, and that this was the kind worn in Abraham's time.

The Hebrew women devoted a great deal of time and money to their sandals, which were made of the seal or badger, and it was no unusual thing to see the straps or thongs ornamented with pearls, gold-work, and even precious stones; gradually it became the custom to perfume their shoes with myrrh and costly essences, and not content to draw attention to their feet by the eye and the nose, they attracted the ear also by fastening bells and other tinkling articles of metal to their sandals so as to secure at each step a pleasant noise.



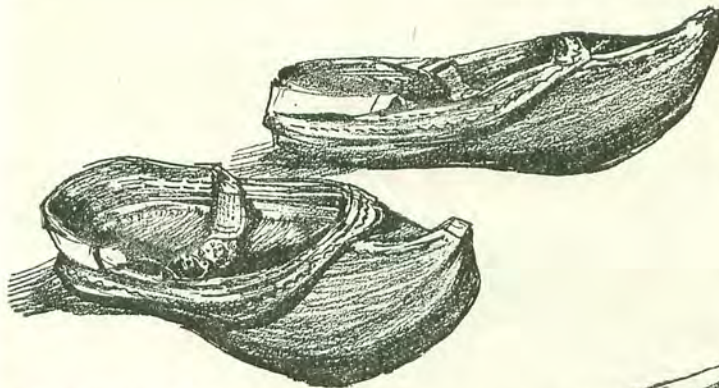
LADY'S SHOE, SILVER-TIPPED, 17TH CENTURY.

To carry or unloose a person's sandal was a menial office betokening great inferiority on the part of the person performing it, and involved a good deal of trouble. The Hebrews observed many strange customs in connection with shoes, and sought by

If a man refused to marry his brother's widow, she in the presence of all the people stepped up to him, loosed the shoe from his foot and spat on him.

The house of such a man was called among the Jews "the house of a barefoot," and he himself was known as the "shoe-loosed."

Shoe-making, or rather strap-making was a recognised trade among the Jews. On some of the sandals the thongs were so broad and so numerous as almost to cover the top of the foot.



WORN BY LORD BYRON IN GREECE, 1822.

The every-day shoes of the Israelites seem on the other hand to have been of very little value, since a pair of them is mentioned as the lowest price for which one could buy a thing or a person. If one wanted to express the utter destitution of a poor oppressed man, one said, "he is scarcely worth a pair of shoes."

A special luxury of the rich Jews consisted in having the name of their lady-love engraved on metal, which they wore on the heel of the sole, so that when they trod on the sand or soft earth, they left the impression of it behind.

Whether the shoes and sandals of the Hebrews covered the whole foot or only the sole and toes one cannot say, but we know that in Palestine a heel strap was essential to a proper sandal.



DRAB CASHMERE SIDE-LACE BOOTS, ABOUT 1840.

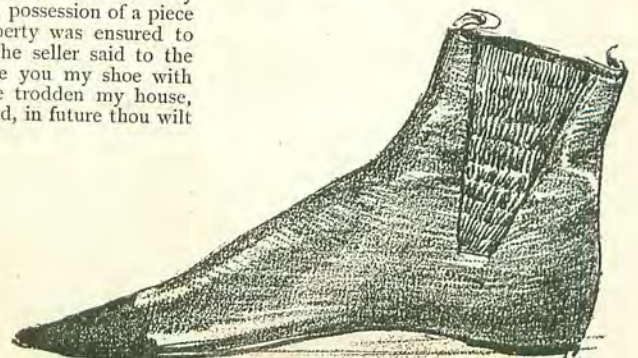
their means to convey symbolical meanings, for example, when a contract of sale was foreshadowed by the gift of a shoe. The curious custom of throwing old shoes for good luck after a bride and bridegroom is derived from the shoe being symbolical of contract. By this peculiar symbol the possession of a piece of ground or other property was ensured to the purchaser just as if the seller said to the buyer, "Herewith I give you my shoe with which up to now I have trodden my house, my garden and my ground, in future thou wilt tread them and not I."

As a rule most of the nations near Egypt adopted its form of shoe or sandal.

The Ethiopians used more ornamented straps, covering them often with precious stones and gold.



THE PRINCESS ROYAL'S BOOTS.



FIRST ELASTIC BOOT.

(Presented to Her Majesty, about 1840, by J. Sparhes Hall.)

In ancient Assyria and in Babylon the high-born were privileged to wear sandals and shoes with coverings for the heels of gay-coloured stuff; the heel being reckoned then as the vulnerable part of the foot.

The ancient Medes and Persians wore shoes of yellow leather cut out in points over the instep and toes, and the higher the rank the more colours they used and the more richly were the shoes adorned.

The ancient Arabs wore a simple rough hair sandal, a higher development being then unknown; but when the Arabs were expelled from Spain they brought with them the knowledge of preparing leather. The nomadic Arabs have sandals whose straps are brought forward and drawn between the big toe and the next, and the shape appears to have remained the same for centuries.

The ancient Greeks not only imitated the Egyptians but excelled them in the art of shoe-making. The most important work of the shoemakers was done in special districts and in the height of the nation's prosperity; the materials used being felt, leather and other stuffs, and as a rule the sandal-makers tanned the leather themselves.

Tanning seems to have been introduced very early into Greece; we know of the tanner of Smyrna in whose workshop Homer the Greek poet constantly read aloud his verses, and also of Simon the tanner of Athens, in whose house Socrates and other celebrated men met to discuss the laws of their country.

The exercise of every art and craft without regard to the trade was always honoured and esteemed by the Greeks. The Greek Iphicrates, whose father was a shoemaker, rose to the highest office in the state, and became a very famous general. One day Harmodeus taunted him with his mean origin, and in answer the General said, "My family begins its celebrated career with me, while thine will end ignominiously with thee; it is better to begin well than end badly."

Among the Greek ladies luxury attained such a height in their foot decorations that they not only coloured their toe-nails red, but polished them and wore costly rings set with precious stones on their toes.

The Spartans on the other hand exercised the greatest moderation, but in spite of their simplicity the Spartan shoes were celebrated.

Men wore boots as early as 700 B.C., and even then they were made on lasts.

The buskin was probably the invention of the women, because it made them look of more importance. It was formed of several sandal-soles laid one upon another.

The following legend is amusing:—"There was a time when the Greek women had very little taste for housekeeping, and spent a great deal of their time gadding about in search of pleasure. A clever Greek suggested to the women that they would look much better if they were taller, and invented for this purpose the leather buskin. The women were pleased, but it made walking about difficult, and they were compelled to remain more at home or in its neighbourhood. But," says the legend, "never trust women, they are ever slyer than men. One fine day they discovered that cork buskins would be much lighter than leather.

No sooner thought of than done, and the women ran away as before in search of pleasure."

It must be noticed as regards the shape of the buskin or sandal that the ancients never chose that which disfigured the foot or exercised a harmful or painful pressure on any part of it.

The Lydian and Tyrian make of shoes and sandals was considered by far the best, and it seems that even so far back a certain division of labour was introduced.

A pointed form of shoe appeared in Ancient Greece, which some centuries later found great favour among the French and English. It is wonderful what a mass of information is obtained of a country, its habits and customs, by a study of its shoes and sandals in ancient times from monuments, vases, medals and frescoes. It is often difficult to distinguish

A very interesting discovery was made a few years ago of a Roman shoemaker's workshop in Mainz, which gives a good insight into the methods of shoemaking in that early period.

The Romans were liberal patrons of the art of shoe-making, for in the time of Domitian the streets were so encumbered with cobblers' stalls that they had to be removed.

Luxury and extravagance were shown among the Romans, as among the Greeks, in the ornamentation of their shoes, and they were equally particular in keeping the purple sandal for the use of kings and those of high rank.

Sandal ties were coloured to match that of the head ribbons, and it was easy to detect the rank of a person by the colour and shape of his foot-covering.

The Roman women made their shoe or sandal an important part of their toilette; as a rule they were made of thin white or coloured leather, which fitted well, and were ornamented with silk embroidery, pearls and precious stones.

In the Imperial days the sexes rivalled each other in the extravagance of their shoes, the prevailing colours being white and red, while the Emperor and illustrious people wore gilded ones set with jewels. Later on the consuls wore golden shoes, which were superseded by red leather boots reaching to the knee, and among the people of both sexes boots with heavy nails were worn.

The Romans wore the sandal on bare feet less than the Greeks, and it gradually became the custom to use a beautifully coloured foundation and to bind the straps over it.

The senators' shoes had a turned-up point in front similar to that worn centuries later.

The priests among both Greeks and Romans wore simple leather shoes reaching to the ankle with incisions right and left, and fastened in the centre.

The colours of servants' and officials' shoes were settled by law, not only in Rome but in Greece also.

At the excavation of Pompeii, a wardrobe was found, inside which eleven shoes were discovered of tightly-fitting shapes, each having a shoemaker's last within it.

In Britain, when the inhabitants emerged from a state of barbarism, they began to adopt in a measure the costume of their conquerors;

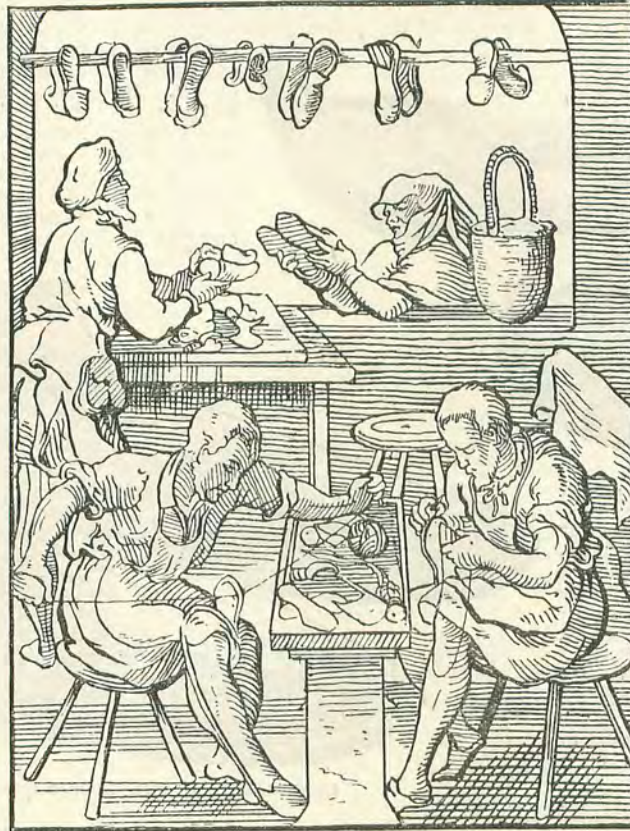
but it seems that St. Crispin, the patron saint of shoemakers, introduced the making of shoes into Britain.

The ancient Britons wore shoes made of raw cow-hide with the hair turned outward and reaching to the ankles.

The shoes of the early Saxons were constructed on the Roman model, and in the eighth and ninth centuries the Anglo-Saxons wore a sort of stocking reaching half-way up the thigh: the material was of linen as a rule, though sometimes skin, cloth and leather were made use of. Foot-coverings like these may be seen to-day among the peasants of the Abruzzi and Apennines. The Anglo-Saxon princes and high ecclesiastical dignitaries wore shoes of gold covered with precious stones.

William the Conqueror introduced very long hose reaching to the waist, which continued in fashion until Henry VIII., when they were reduced in size and fastened to the drawers.

The shoes do not appear to have altered much until the twelfth century, when they



between the foot-coverings of the Greeks and of the Romans they are so much alike.

The shoes or sandals of the Ancient Romans were originally of rude untanned leather, but as the people became more refined, shoes of more delicate material were worn.

The shoemakers worked in tents while the sandal-makers and cobblers had booths to themselves, and many from each of these sets worked in large factories at all branches of the shoe trade.

The foot-covering varied in different parts of the kingdom, and the people wore shoes, sandals, or boots according to taste and fashion.

The Roman actors used to wear such very large masks, that they made their bodies look disproportionately small, and to remedy this and raise their stature, a thick-soled boot was invented called buskin, but it was only as a rule used in tragedy. In some scenes a shoe called soccus or sock was used, and hence the phrase, "heroes of the sock and buskin," when we would call attention to a company of actors.

became an absurd form, the toes being drawn out in a peak to a great length. The historian of the day says they were invented by some one deformed in the foot, and D'Israeli affirms they were introduced by Henry Plantagenet, Duke of Anjou, 1132-1189, who had an excrescence on one of his feet. These peaked-toed boots excited the wrath and contempt of the writers of the period, and were strictly forbidden to the clergy. Robert, Duke of Normandy, persisted in wearing the old-fashioned shoe when the beaux of the day had adopted the new and absurd one, and was nicknamed "short boots" or "curt hose."

It was not a single nation, but the whole of Europe that began to vie with each other in the fashionable follies of buskin and sandal; even Germany which up to now had kept itself out of the extravagant follies of France and England, was drawn into the whirlpool, and although efforts were made to stamp out the ridiculous fashion of the pointed shoe, they proved of no avail; as time went on the point of the shoe was three times as long as the foot, and to enable the person to walk, the point was fastened to the leg by fine metal chains; even then it was difficult to wade through mud, and to remedy this evil, wooden clogs called clappers were worn. From the fifteenth century, a good many shoes of the period have been preserved, and good artists like Peter Vischer and Albrecht Dürer have left valuable works behind from which we gain information. Jost Amman was a great artist and worked in combination with Hans Sachs. He has depicted a shoemaker's workshop of his period, the sixteenth century, in which sit two men, the side-light forms an open shop-window, above which hang very wide slippers and shoes, and a pair of children's shoes; in front is a woman buying a pair; the master, Hans Sachs, is serving her; near him lies a cutting knife, in shape the same as that held by the Roman shoemaker. Hans Sachs is saying:—

"Come in, all that want a boot or shoe,
For I make them here both good and true;
Slippers lined with cloth,
Waterboots and slashed shoes of latest
fashion."

Shoes slashed in various patterns, and buskins of velvet and satin with very broad round toes were much worn in Henry VIII.'s reign, and by the time Mary was queen, they had increased so much that she, by proclamation prohibited them from being worn wider than six inches.

About the latter end of the sixteenth century, roses were worn on shoes of small size at first, but in Charles I.'s reign, they were so large as nearly to hide the shoe. The ladies, in Charles II.'s reign wore very high heels to their shoes, and men wore Spanish-leather boots ruffled with lace or lawn. Hessian boots were introduced about 1789.

The foot-gear of African nations when walking is either of skins, wood, or brass.

Shoemaking is considered by the high-class Arab as an unclean trade, and the maker is regarded as a pariah.

"The Ful," a tribe in the West Soudan, are the most intelligent of all the Africans; their tools show cleverness and their dyes are celebrated throughout Central Africa.

They are clever sandal-makers; they send them in large numbers with other leather goods to North Africa. The richer people of West Soudan wear shoes of red or yellow-tinted kid skin, which are often ornamented with embroidery, while the poor go barefoot or wear simple sandals of buffalo skin. The Nubians wear sandals cut out of a single piece of leather covering the whole foot.

The Australian Tribes did not wear sandals before European times, and their only knowledge even now of dressing leather is by stretching, scraping, and scrubbing; and the leather is sewn together with the sinews of the tail of the kangaroo after the holes have been bored by a sharply-pointed bone.

Among the ancient American nations, the Indians of the Table-land of Mexico wore sandals tied on the feet with bands as among the ancient Greeks.

The Esquimaux wrap round the thighs, legs and feet alike with leather, beside specially protecting them with big wide boots. When the wife has to carry several children at once, on a journey, for example, she packs them away in her wide boots, which are fastened with fish-bones.

When the people of Kamschatka want to be very smart they wear a special sort of half boot whose soles are yellowish or white seal skin leather, and the upper part, which is sewn on, is made of a variety of coloured pieces. These shoes are bound round the ankle with thongs embroidered lavishly with gold and silver.

In the interior of Asia, both sexes wear wide high boots; in the hot season, however, the women go barefoot.

In Tibet the foot-gear is the most important part of the people's costume, and regarded as a protection from cold; the upper part is made of woven material, and the soles are of leather.

There are many legends, tales and proverbs about shoes, boots, and sandals, which are fast passing out of the memory of this generation, but this is not the place to gather them up.

Nothing could be more suitable as a close to this article than a short description of the interesting exhibition of boots, shoes, clogs, pattens, and sandals, got up last year by the ancient Company of Cordwainers, regardless of time and pains, in their Hall in Cannon Street, in order that those who take an interest in the covering of the human foot may have the opportunity of seeing examples of that used in every age, and by all nations. And not only this, but what is even of greater importance to us English people, of noting how our workmanship and materials bear comparison with other countries, not only in times past but in the present.

The modern boot- and shoe-making is practically illustrated, and valuable prizes offered to competitors, both at home and abroad, for the best workmanship, material, and cut, and it is cheering to find that never have boots and shoes been so exquisitely fashioned and finished as they are by makers of the present day, at a moderate price.

It is a matter of satisfaction to see that in designing and fabricating the foot-gear of today, the British handicraftsmen hold their own with French and Americans, both of whom are clever, shrewd competitors.

It will be a surprise to many to see the exquisite beauty, both in texture and colouring, of the skins of kid hung up in the lower room. It is a pleasure to look at them.

In the upper hall the foot-covering of nearly every nation is represented, and some of the old Roman military boots, shoes, and sandals exhibited were unearthed from London soil by excavators, and nearly every style of boot, shoe, and sandal mentioned in the former part of this article may be seen here.

There are a few specimens in this hall of universal interest, which attract large numbers of people towards them. One is the first pair of side-elastic boots, which were presented to Her Majesty, about 1840, by Mr. Sparkes Hall, the design of which "was registered this 15th day of May at the hour of twelve o'clock at noon for Joseph Sparkes Hall, of 308 Regent Street, proprietor thereof, in pursuance of the Designs Copyright Act, 2 Vict. c. 17."

I have heard that the Queen has worn this kind of boot from that day to now. They look very old-fashioned.

Then there is a group of little black shoes and boots worn by the Princess Royal, the Prince of Wales, and Princess Alice when they were small children, about 1844-45. They are not what we should call pretty and dainty to-day, but were evidently comfortable.

Another specimen of interest is a pair of drab cashmere side-lace boots, with the laces still in them. This style of shoe came into fashion at the same time as the elastic side, about 1840.

A pair of shoes worn by Lord Byron in 1822, together with his hat and gloves, draws many people; but, perhaps most of all, a pair of boots, size 8, beautifully made from the ear of a South American elephant, attracts the public.

A pair of shoes, with silver points to the toes, looked like a pair of bellows; they were evidently the commencement of metal-pointed shoes in the seventeenth century.

We were struck with one or two so-called prize shoes, made about eighty or ninety years ago, not intended for wear but as specimens of high-class work and design, made by "Dons" (best workers in the trade) in their leisure time. The shoe or boot being finished, the "Don" would take it to the inn or hostelry and offer it for sale, as something unique, to the landlord. He sometimes would give as much as £30 for it, and then he would make a little exhibition of it, charging perhaps a shilling each for a sight of it. In this way he would make £50, covering the first outlay and having £20 to the good, not mentioning the hundreds of glasses of beer he had sold extra.

A second so made was the identical one made and exhibited to raise funds for the defence of the notorious Chartist bootmaker, Fay.

I hoped to have seen here a strong demarcation between the periods of hand-sewn and machine-made boots; this would have been interesting.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Cordwainers' Company for giving the public an opportunity, gratuitously, of viewing one of the best exhibitions of foot-gear which has ever been shown in London.

