

BOOTS AND SHOES SINCE TUDOR TIMES.

When fashion left the peaked shoes it passed to the other extreme, and shoes became so preposterously broad that in England a law was made prohibiting their extending to more than six inches in width. Instead of ending in a long viper-like point, the shoe under the Tudors became so short that the upper part only just covered the toes, and was sometimes fastened by a band over the instep.

In Edward the Sixth's time the round toes tended again to a point, and became much longer in the uppers (Fig. 27). The



Fig. 27.—Shoe of time of Edward VI.

hose, which was generally of dark-colored cloth, must have had a very pretty effect seen through light kid shoes, such as were then worn.

The shoes of the early Tudors had hardly any heels, but during the reign of Henry II., of France, contemporary with Edward VI., the French ladies wore prodigious heels to their shoes, rendering them quite cloven-footed. In both countries it was the fashion to adorn the shoes with large rosettes. In a portrait of Louis XIV., when young, his shoe is adorned with an enormous rosette (Fig. 28). There is a lady's shoe at Cluny, of the time of Henry II., with a great rose on the instep made of silver lace. This shoe has a very thin, high, wedge-shaped heel and a long metallic point, engraved in chevrons, attached to the toe. (Fig. 29.)

Concurrently with the rosetted shoes it was the fashion in France to wear a kind of *galoche*, called a *patin*, which was in reality a shoe with a wooden sole with two clumps, the interval forming a sort of arch. Every one wore them, and those of the rich were so ornamented as to attract the denunciations of the pulpit.

Luxury in shoes was carried as far under the broad-toe *regime* as under the pointed. Cardinal Wolsey is said to have worn gold shoes, by which we suppose is intended shoes embroidered with gold thread. When we read that Sir Walter Raleigh used to go to Court in shoes so gorgeously covered with precious stones as to have exceeded in value £6,600, we understand the danger which threatened England in consequence of the discovery of the New World, and why Puritans made such a stand for simplicity in dress. The "great Eliza," as we all know, had a very feminine weakness in this direction, and the gentlemen of her Court evidently played upon it. Gray introduces Sir Christopher Hatton dancing before the queen, and declares that—

"His bushy beard and shoe strings green,
His high-crowned hat and satin doublet
Moved the stout heart of England's queen.
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it."

At the close of the fifteenth century the nobility went into a fight armed *cap-a-pie*, foot-gear being as monstrous as the rest of their armor. Feet like great wedges, or formed like a vulture's claw, were the fashion when Maximilian I. became Emperor of



Fig. 29.—Lady's shoe of court of Henry II. of France.

Germany. But gunpowder exploded these final phantasies of feudalism, and, by the middle of the sixteenth century, men were riding to battle in great jack-boots. These boots were, in some cases, as may be seen at Cluny, so immense that they attracted myths akin to those which surround the "giant-killer's seven leagued boots." Thus it is gravely related by Brantome, in his

"Hommes Illustres," that John Frederick of Saxony, being surprised by Alva, after the battle of Muhlberg, while at church, fled in dismay, leaving his gigantic boots behind, either of which was "large enough to hold a camp bedstead."

There are some specimens of early boots at Cluny, one of the time of Henry III., which goes right over the knee. Doubtless these solid boots would stand years of wear and even then had an intrinsic value which caused them to descend to strange uses. Thus, in the "Taming of the Shrew," Petrucio is described as coming "in a pair of boots that have been candle-cases, one buckled, another laced."

In the time of the Tudors it was rare for a nobleman even to wear boots, but towards the latter part of the reign of James I., boots became the wear of all classes in England. Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador of the day, told his countrymen that all the citizens in London went about booted, just as if they were about to go out of town, and that all Englishmen, even the ploughmen and meanest artisans, wore boots. Nevertheless, boots had not ceased to be the distinctive mark of men in a good position. "He's a gentleman, I can assure you, sir, for he walks always on boots," says some one in a dramatic work of the time (1616). An incidental proof then is this going about in boots of the general prosperity of all classes in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

In our illustration we give two specimens of cavalier's boots, with broad toes, the leg being of a soft flexible leather that lay in folds; the distinguishing peculiarity, however, is the enormous top, which was made to turn up or down at the will of the wearer. Fig. 33 is an example of the former, Fig. 34 of the latter. They were turned down in order to exhibit the lace trimmings which were attached to the cloth linings.

This fashion of giving boots the shape of a funnel was the sole extravagance in costume which the Puritans did not discard. The boots of a Roundhead were as outrageous in the matter of tops as those of a Cavalier. If any one looks at the Puritan boot depicted (Fig. 35) he cannot fail to observe its defiant character. Not only does it plant itself on the ground with Cromwellian firmness, but there are in the folds of the leg suggestions of stern old Ironside faces; taken with the top, the outline of the back gives the profile of one of Frederick the Second's grenadiers; looked at in front you may fancy you see the Nestor of the old Imperial Guard. The

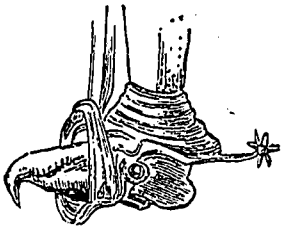


Fig. 30.—Foot-gear of German noble, end of fifteenth century.

more ordinary boot of the period is depicted in Fig. 36.

The use of the shoe-tie as the main decoration was carried to its full excess by the bewigged and bespotted beaux of the Court of the Second Charles. The ribbons of the tie were very broad, and stiffened so as to stand out several inches on both sides. Fig. 37 is a specimen.

The ladies' shoes were not broad in the toe, nevertheless they ended squarely. In an Italian example we have seen of the time of the first two Stuarts the toe resembles a duck's bill. This was cut out very much at the sides in the mode of the former century, when it was the fashion to show the color of the hose.

But in England these stiff and stately forms gave place to a more plebeian shoe. In the foot-gear of the time of William III. we have a shoe with a very encroaching point, the many furbelows and enormous stiff ties of absolutism being reduced to a pair of plain ribbons, which are firmly buckled on to the instep (Fig. 39). Ladies' shoes of the same period were sometimes slashed and decorated with a little embroidery. The little shoe (Fig. 40) below the one just described appears to be an example. Next to it is another curious specimen of foot-gear, on which we see a clog of wood fastened to the sole (Fig. 41). This in-

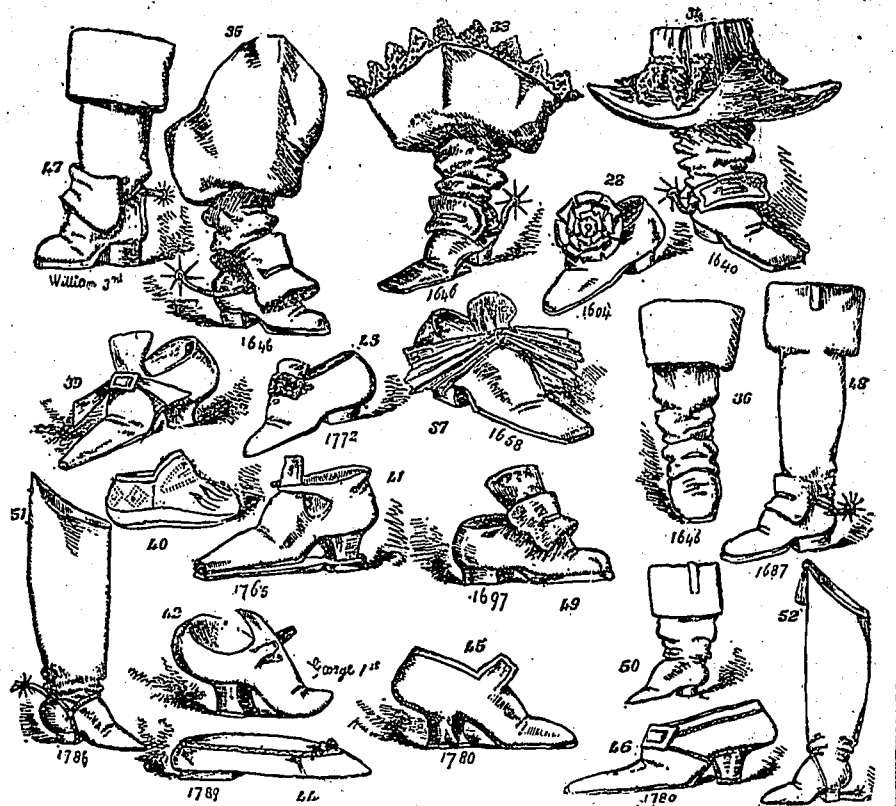


Fig. 28.—Rosetted Shoe. Figs. 33 and 31.—Cavalier's Boots. Fig. 35.—Puritan Boot. Fig. 36.—Ordinary Boot, Commonwealth. Fig. 37.—Courtier's Shoe, Charles II. Fig. 39.—Courtier's Shoe, William III. Fig. 40.—Lady's Shoe, William III. Fig. 41.—Curious Shoe, early part of Eighteenth Century. Fig. 42.—Lady's Shoe, George I. Figs. 43, 44, 45, and 46.—Shoes, George III. Fig. 47.—Boot, William III. Fig. 48.—Boot, James II. Fig. 49.—Shoe, William III. Fig. 50.—Top-boot. Fig. 51.—Boot, George III. Fig. 52.—Hessian Boot.

convenient shoe became fashionable about the latter end of the seventeenth century. From the date of our example it appears to have continued as late as 1765.

With the reign of George I., a very homely shoe comes into vogue, bearing a near resemblance in shape to the old fashioned coal-scuttle (Fig. 42). Having, however, seen many of its contemporaries at Cluny, we know that, humble as was its shape, nothing could exceed in delicacy the material or the beauty of the colors in which it was made up. Of embroidered silk, of morocco, or fancy leather, the favorite colors seem to have been sky-blue, cabbage-green, or rose. At least so we judge from the examples at Cluny, where this period—that of Louis XV.—is well represented. The general form is the same as here represented, but it becomes more picturesque and piquant than that of its English sister. The little upturned toes have a pettish air very suggestive of the frivolity of the time. Their great peculiarity is the position of the heel, which was placed almost in the centre of the foot.

During the reigns of the two simple-hearted kings, George III., and Louis XVI., ladies wore a very plain style of shoe. The heel less towards the centre became lower and lower, a large ruche covered the instep, and the toe tended to become more and more oval (Fig. 43).

The material and colors of the ladies' shoes during the last quarter of the eighteenth century had, notwithstanding their simple forms, something of the luxuriousness of the earlier generation. Thus the shoe marked Fig. 45 is of blue figured silk, richly decorated in needlework. As a rule, however, the colors become a little quieter and the trimming less profuse. The tendency is for the heel to sink more and more while the toe broadens and flattens, and sometimes elongates, as in Fig. 46.

High heels and buckles came into vogue once more with the year 1800, significant sign that reaction had once more gained the day, and expected to keep its place by coercive measures: The Napoleonic Court, however, did not patronize high heels, every one there standing on his own level, that level being exactly determined by the amount of assistance he had rendered, or was able to render, to its master's ambition. Flat shoes, sometimes round-toed, sometimes pointed, were the fashion of this period.

Few persons in the British Isles go better shod to-day than the British soldier. What his foot-gear was at the end of the seventeenth century, may be seen by a glance at the ugly boot marked Fig. 47. The boot marked Fig. 48 appears to be that of a gentleman of the reign of James II., and is not at all bad, but the military

boot is in every respect disagreeable. Enormously wide, the interior must have required stuffing, with a heel so high as to throw the whole weight of the foot on the instep, with a ponderous mass of solid leather, made weightier by a huge extra piece of leather over the instep, and a bit of iron rising from the heel to support the spur; such were the boots in which the English army won the Battle of the Boyne.

More than one pair of boots of this description are in existence. A pair found in a cupboard of an ancient building in Bagshot Park, Surrey, about 1837, are described as weighing about 10 lbs. each, being made of the thickest hide—lined and padded—with very thick soles and large rowelled spurs, attached by steel chains. Charles XII. of Sweden wore boots of this kind. From the specimen shoe of the time (Fig. 49) it will be seen that the foot-gear of the reign of William III. was remarkably solid and heavy.

Boots of the make inscribed 1786 (Fig. 51) were more worn in England at this time, while in the early part of the present century boots in which the higher part rose in front of the shin became the vogue. Under the Directory in France the general lassitude is evinced by the fact that men not only wore silk stockings and pumps in the street, but even travelled in the latter.

The tasselled Hessian boot (Fig. 52) and the well-known Wellington followed one after the other, the latter being still worn by some indefatigable sticklers for bygone fashions.

The top-boot, still the wear of huntsmen, was in common use by country gentlemen fifty years ago.

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