April 17, 1934. A. H. WOODWARD 1,954,971

ENVELOPE LETTER

Filed Aug. 24, 1931

Fig. 1

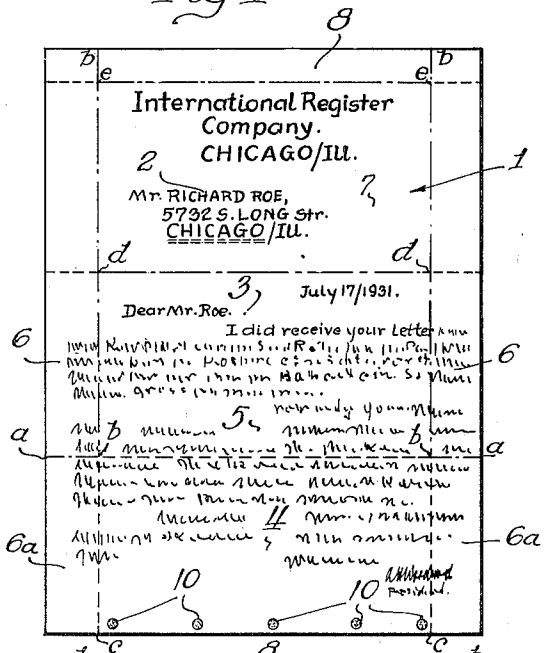


Fig. 2.

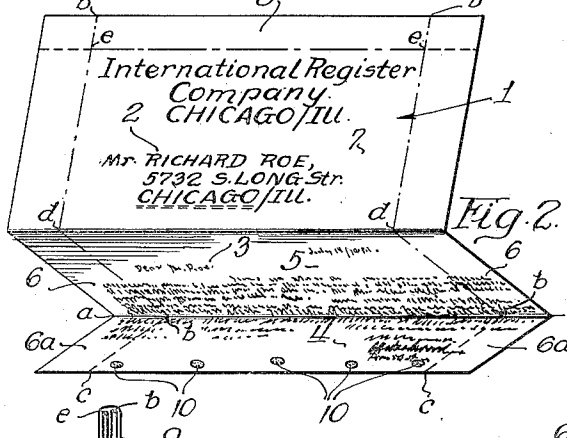


Fig. 4.

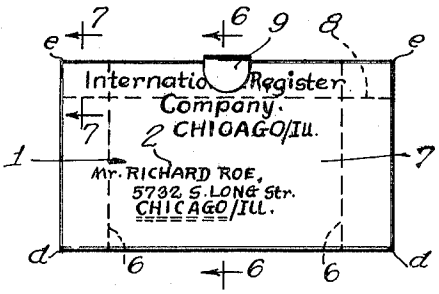


Fig. 5.

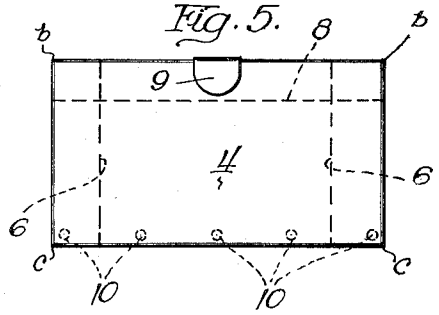


Fig. 3.

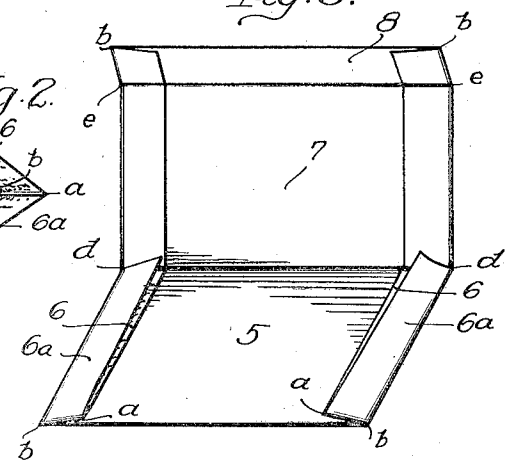


Fig. 6.

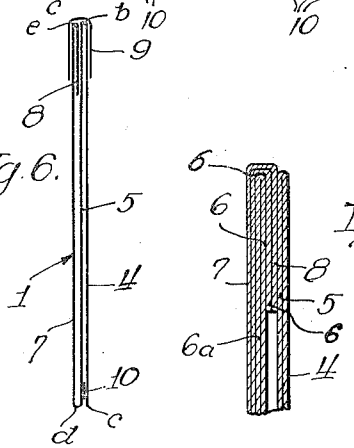


Fig. 7.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

1,954,971

ENVELOPE LETTER

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Application August 24, 1931, Serial No. 558,975

3 Claims. (Cl. 229—92.1)

This invention relates to letter forms and analogous devices and has to do more particularly with the provision of a letter or like instrument folded and secured, with facility, to provide an enclosure in the form of an envelope which effectively conceals the body of the letter.

One of the main objects of my invention is to provide a method of folding a sheet of paper, or other suitable material, such as is commonly used for reception of writing or printing thereon, whereby such sheet may be folded with facility, and without preliminary treatment, to provide an enclosure for the letter in the form of an envelope, thus eliminating the use of envelopes.

It is a further object of my invention to provide a sheet of the character stated adapted for reception of the name and address of the party to whom such letter is to be sent, as well as the salutation and the body of the letter itself, this sheet being so creased as to be folded with facility so as to leave the name and address of the party exposed upon the face of the sheet in the same manner as upon an envelope, the remainder of the sheet being folded upon itself so as to cover effectively the salutation and the body of the letter.

A further object of my invention is to provide a method of folding whereby a sheet of paper or like material can be folded with facility, and by mechanical means, into the form of an envelope.

Further objects and advantages of my invention will appear from the detailed description.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a face view of a sheet of paper with the lines of folding in accordance with my invention indicated thereon;

Figure 2 is a face view of a letter partially folded in accordance with my invention;

Figure 3 is a perspective back view of the letter of Figure 2, with the sides folded;

Figure 4 is a front view of the letter completely folded in accordance with my invention and ready for mailing;

Figure 5 is a back view of the completely folded letter of Figure 4;

Figure 6 is a section taken substantially on line 6—6 of Figure 4; and

Figure 7 is a section taken substantially on line 7—7 of Figure 4.

In carrying out my invention, the letter is written upon a sheet 1 of paper in the usual manner, but with the name and address 2 of the addressee a slightly greater distance above the salutation 3 than is the common practice. The body of the letter, including the signature, is then written upon the sheet 1, following the salutation, in the usual manner. After the letter has thus been written upon the sheet, the sheet is folded transversely along the line *a—a*, the crease thus produced being away from the observer as the sheet is viewed in Fig. 1, as indicated by the dotted line. This disposes the lower portion 4 of the sheet face to face with the intermediate portion 5 thereof in superposed relation thereto. The lateral portions of the sheet are then folded rearwardly along the lines *b—b* as indicated by the dot and dash lines, providing marginal elements 6 which are folded rearwardly against the back of the sheet, it being noted that the marginal elements 6*a* of lower portion 4 of the sheet are folded forwardly along the dotted lines *c—c*. The sheet is then again folded transversely along the line *d—d* as indicated by the dot and dash line, thus disposing the upper portion 7 of the sheet back to back with the intermediate portion 5 and with the face of the upper portion 7, bearing the name and address of the addressee, exposed. It will be noted that the line *d—d* extends between the salutation 3 and the name and address 2, so that, with the letter folded in this manner, the salutation and the body of the letter are completely enclosed and concealed, and the name and address of the addressee is exposed upon the face of upper portion 7 of the letter in the same manner as upon an envelope of conventional type. The letter is again folded along the dot and dash line *e—e* so as to provide an upper marginal element 8 disposed at the rear of upper portion 7 of the sheet. The lateral portions of this marginal element 8, together with the underlying upper end portions of the marginal elements 6 are then tucked between the rearward face of portion 5 of the sheet and the lower ends of the portions of the marginal elements 6 at the ends of portion 5 of the sheet, which portions of the marginal elements 6 are now disposed in front of and in superposed relation to marginal elements 6*a* at the ends of lower portion 4 of the sheet.

With the letter folded in the manner described, the salutation and the body of the letter are completely enclosed and concealed, and the name and address of the addressee is exposed upon the face of upper portion 7 of the sheet in the same manner as upon an envelope of conventional type. The letter thus folded is ready for transmission through the mails, and the postage or stamp is applied thereto, at the upper righthand corner of portion 7 of the sheet, in the

same manner as it is applied to an envelope. Preferably, though not necessarily, the letter is sealed closed by means of a seal 9, of paper or other suitable material, of known type, which seal has an adhesive applied thereto and extends over the upper edge of the folded letter, being secured to the front face of portion 7 thereof and the back face of portion 4 of the letter sheet. Also, if desired, the lower edge of portion 7 of the sheet may be secured to the upper edge of portion 5 by an adhesive, as indicated at 10, or in any other suitable manner, as by means of a seal similar to the seal 9. I also contemplate sealing the letter closed by means of the stamp, which may be secured about the edge of the folded letter in the same manner as seal 9, and may replace the latter.

By folding the letter in the manner illustrated and described, the edge portions of the resulting envelope-like structure are effectively reinforced by the folded marginal elements of the sheet in such manner as to reduce likelihood of tearing or other damage to the letter during transit thereof. Also, the end portions of the marginal element 8 are formed of two thicknesses of material and are disposed between portions of the sheet, each of which is also formed of two thicknesses of material. This is advantageous as reducing liability of tearing of the sheet, or of the envelope-like structure, at the upper corners thereof.

The folding of the letter sheet is such that it may be accomplished readily by mechanical means, such as a suitable machine provided for that purpose. This is an important feature of my invention. In practice, the letters are written upon the sheets of paper in the usual manner, with the exception that the name and address of the addressee is disposed a slightly greater distance above the salutation than is the present practice, as above noted. After the letters have been written they may be stacked and placed in a suitable machine, capable of folding the letters, in the manner illustrated and described, at high speed. In the event that a letter comprises two or more pages, the sheets of such a letter are disposed in proper superposed relation, and may all be folded together in the same manner as a single sheet, to produce an envelope-like structure such as that illustrated and above described.

By my invention I not only eliminate the use of envelopes and the expense incident thereto, but I also eliminate, to a great extent, the time required to fold the individual letters and insert them into envelopes. Also, the possibility of placing a letter in the wrong envelope is eliminated, and the letterhead, when used, is exposed and serves as an advertising medium.

While I have illustrated the letter with the name and address a slightly greater distance than usual above the salutation, by way of example, this is not essential. The letter may be written with the usual distance between the name and address and the salutation, if desired.

When the letters are to be folded by machinery, in the manner above described, the letter sheets are of ordinary type and are not creased preliminary to the folding operation. Any ordinary sheet of paper or like material, commonly used for letters or other purposes, may be written or printed upon in the usual manner and then folded by machinery to provide an enclosing envelope for the letter, as previously described. This has the advantage that the sheet need not be creased or otherwise marked, preliminary to the folding thereof, which avoids any possible difficulty in handling the sheets, such as might be caused by preliminary creasing thereof. Also, the expense incident to preliminary creasing or marking of the sheets is avoided.

In establishments where the volume of correspondence is not sufficient to justify the use of a folding machine, or in any case where such a machine is not available, the letters may be folded by hand. In such instances, and as a matter of convenience, the letter sheets may be suitably marked to indicate the proper method of folding thereof. This marking may take the form of light creases in the sheet, properly related for folding thereof in the manner above described, or any other suitable marking may be employed. For example, the sheet may have impressed thereon suitable lines of different characteristics, as indicated in Figure 1, such lines indicating the proper direction of the respective folds to be made. If the sheet is preliminarily creased for folding the creases should preferably be light so as not to interfere with handling of the sheets or insertion thereof into typewriters or other machines for printing upon the sheets. Also, this preliminary creasing should be sufficiently light to avoid any objectionable interference with the operation of writing or printing upon the sheet.

What I claim is:

1. In a device of the character described, a rectangular sheet of material of uniform width and length bearing on one face thereof a name and address and a text therebelow, the sheet being folded transversely to provide an upper portion, an intermediate portion and a lower portion, said sheet also being folded lengthwise adjacent each side and for the full length thereof to provide marginal elements disposed at the back of the sheet, the lower portion and the intermediate portion of the sheet being disposed face to face to conceal the text and the upper portion being disposed back to back with the intermediate portion to expose the name and address upon the face of said upper portion, the marginal folds at the sides of the lower portion extending over the marginal folds at the sides of the intermediate portion and cooperating therewith to prevent separation of the lower portion and intermediate portion for unauthorized observation of the text, the marginal folds of all of the portions of the sheet being disposed between said upper portion and said intermediate portion and enclosed and shielded thereby.

2. In a device of the character described, a rectangular sheet of material of uniform width and length bearing on one face thereof a name and address and a text therebelow, the sheet being folded transversely to provide an upper portion, an intermediate portion and a lower portion, said sheet also being folded lengthwise adjacent each side and for the full length thereof to provide marginal elements disposed at the back of the sheet, the lower portion and the intermediate portion of the sheet being disposed face to face to conceal the text and the upper portion being disposed back to back with the intermediate portion to expose the name and address upon the face of said upper portion, the marginal folds at the sides of the lower portion extending over the marginal folds at the sides of the intermediate portion and cooperating therewith to prevent separation of the lower portion and intermediate portion for unauthorized observation of the text, the marginal folds of all of the portions of the sheet being disposed between said upper portion and said intermediate portion and enclosed and

shielded thereby, the folded sheet being sealed at its upper and lower edges and unsealed at its sides.

3. In a device of the character described, a sheet of material intended for reception upon one face thereof of an ordinary business type of letter, said sheet being folded transversely to provide an upper portion for reception of the addressee's name and address and an intermediate portion and a lower portion for reception of the text of the letter, the sheet being also folded lengthwise adjacent each side and for the full length thereof to provide marginal elements disposed at the back of the sheet, the lower portion and the intermediate portion of the sheet being disposed face to face to conceal the text and the upper portion being disposed back to back with the intermediate portion to expose the name and address upon the face of said upper portion, the marginal folds at the sides of the lower portion extending over the marginal folds at the sides of the intermediate portion and cooperating therewith to prevent separation of the lower portion and the intermediate portion for unauthorized observation of the text, the marginal folds of all of the portions of the sheet being disposed between said upper portion and said intermediate portion and enclosed and shielded thereby.

ARTHUR H. WOODWARD.