

- [54] **HOLDER FOR MARKING MATERIAL**
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[51] Int. Cl. **B43k 21/00**
[58] Field of Search **401/82-84, 95**

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[57]

ABSTRACT

A holder having a receptacle for slidably receiving a stick of marking material such as soapstone. An indexing member resiliently holds one end of the soapstone stick, slides with the stick, and engages one of several longitudinally spaced stops on the receptacle to control the extent of projection of the soapstone. The indexing member is depressible to disengage the stops for slidable readjustment of the longitudinal position of the soapstone.

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3 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures

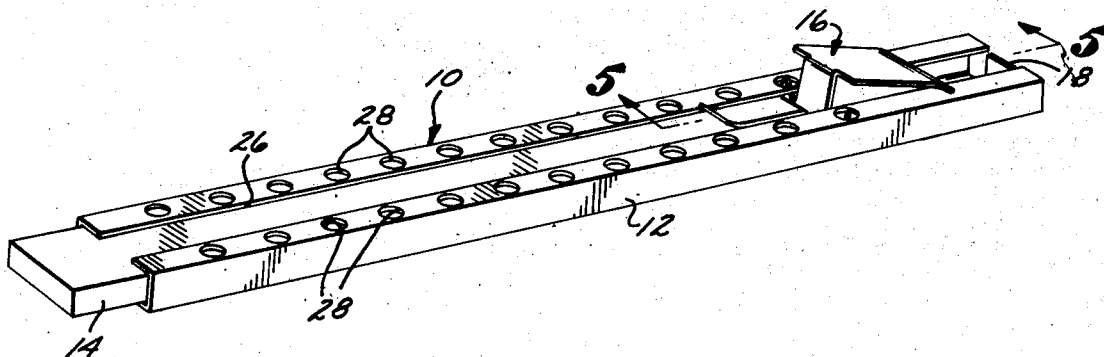


FIG. 1

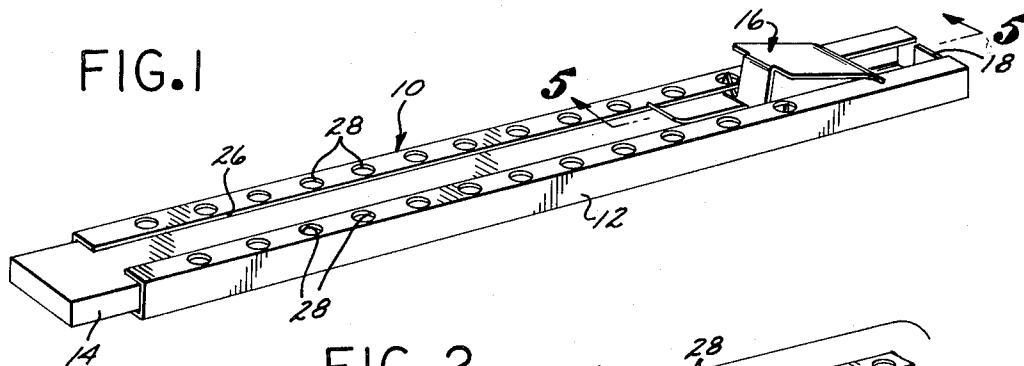


FIG. 2

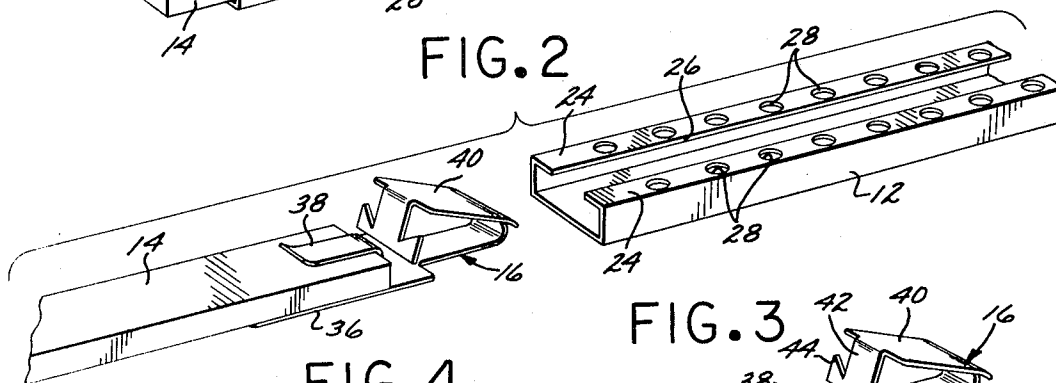


FIG. 3

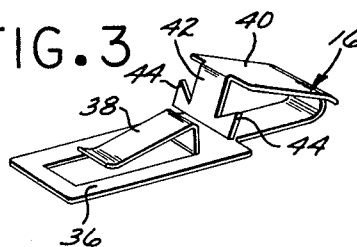


FIG. 4

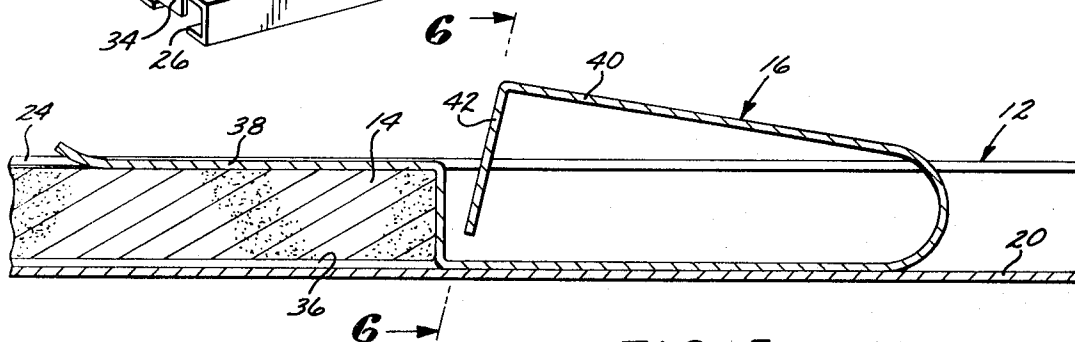
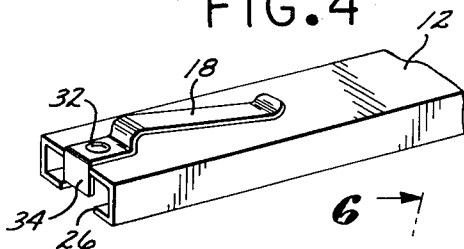


FIG. 5

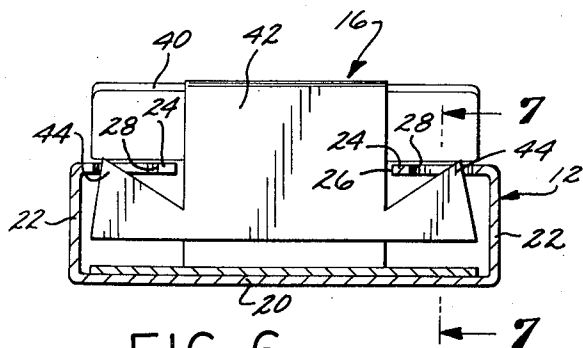


FIG. 6

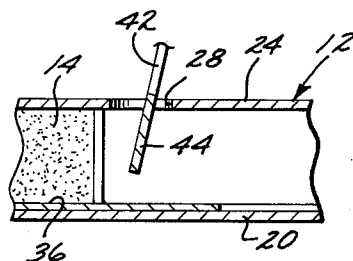


FIG. 7

HOLDER FOR MARKING MATERIAL

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a holder for a stick of marking material, and particularly a solid stick of material such as soapstone.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Solid sticks of marking material such as soapstone have been used for years by welders and the like to mark metal for cutting, bending, and welding. Usually the soap-stone is kept from falling out of the receptacle by a leaf spring or the like in the receptacle, and which engages the sides of the soapstone. In addition, a nut and bolt arrangement is included to engage the receptacle and form a stop to prevent backward movement of the soapstone. However, such a holder is unsatisfactory because the leaf spring is ineffective to hold the short length of soapstone which remains when it is almost completely consumed. Consequently, a fairly long piece of the soapstone must be discarded and wasted. Also, the retaining screw is awkward to operate because it requires two hands, one to support the holder and the other to rotate the retaining screw. This means the welder must lay down his torch or tuck it under his arm while he manipulates the holder, an awkward and sometimes dangerous procedure.

SUMMARY

According to the present invention a holder is provided for a stick of marking material, and the holder is operable to index the marking stick back and forth with a press of the thumb. Positive stop means are included to prevent inadvertent overtravel or projection of the marking stick out of its receptacle. An indexing member is slidable within the receptacle and includes a base portion and a clip portion adapted to engage opposite surfaces of the stick to hold it in position. The indexing member also includes an actuator portion projecting outwardly of the receptacle and adapted for thumb depression to effect disengagement between structure of the receptacle and stop elements integral with the actuator portion.

Because the indexing member securely holds the end of the soapstone, it can be used until it is almost completely consumed. Moreover, since the indexing member actuator portion can be thumb depressed, with the receptacle in the palm of the hand, only one hand is needed to index the marking stick along the length of the receptacle.

The indexing member is preferably a unitary structure made of resilient sheet material, the component portions of the indexing member being struck or punched out of the sheet material. This provides an inexpensive structure in which the resilience of the material is utilized to provide the bias necessary to hold the marking material in position and urge the stop means into restraining engagement.

Other objects and features of the invention will become apparent from consideration of the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a holder for a marking stick, according to the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of one extremity of the holder receptacle, the indexing member, and one extremity of the marking stick, illustrating the manner in which the indexing member and stick are slid into the receptacle;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the indexing member;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the underside of the extremity of the receptacle opposite the extremity from which the marking stick normally projects;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged view taken along the line 5—5 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 6 is a view taken along the line 6—6 of FIG. 5; and

FIG. 7 is a view taken along the line 7—7 of FIG. 6.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to the drawings, there is illustrated a holder 10 comprising, generally, an elongated container or receptacle 12 for slidably receiving an elongated stick of marking material or soapstone 14; an indexing member 16 adapted to resiliently hold the soapstone 14 and operative to index or advance the soapstone 14 along the length of the receptacle 12, thus controlling the length of soapstone 14 projecting from one end of the receptacle 12. The opposite end of the receptacle 12 mounts a pocket clip 18 for attachment of the holder to the user's pocket or the like.

As best seen in FIGS. 1 and 6, the receptacle 12 is generally rectangular in cross section to accommodate the rectangular section of the stick of soapstone 14. It includes a base 20, and a pair of upwardly extending, spaced apart side walls 22 integral with the base 20 and terminating in opposed, inwardly projecting ledges or flanges 24. The flanges 24 are spaced apart to define an elongated slot 26 within which portions of the indexing member 16 are movable, as will be seen. The flanges 24 includes pairs of transversely aligned stop means or openings 28 uniformly spaced apart along the length of the receptacle 12.

The receptacle 12, indexing member 16 and clip 18 are preferably made of resilient, corrosion resistant sheet material, such as stainless sheet steel. The resilience of the material is useful to develop a bias when it is bent or deformed slightly.

The pocket clip 18 is attached by means of a rivet 32 to the end of the receptacle 12 opposite the end from which the soapstone 14 normally projects. One extremity of the clip 18 engages or is closely adjacent the side of the receptacle 12 and thereby is adapted to clamp the material of a pocket or the like between the clip 18 and receptacle 12 to maintain the holder 10 in the pocket. The opposite end of the clip 18 includes an inwardly formed or transversely directed tab 34 which obstructs or blocks the adjacent open end of the receptacle 12 to form a positive end stop for the soapstone 14.

The indexing member 16 comprises integral portions formed out of the material of the member 16, including a flat base portion 36 adapted to overlie and slide along the length of the receptacle base 20. The base portion 36 underlies the inner extremity of the soapstone 14, and a clip portion 38 punched or otherwise formed out of the material of the base portion 36 extends transversely and then longitudinally to overlie the opposite face or surface of the soapstone. The clip portion 38 is biased inwardly against the soapstone and holds it in

position by virtue of the soapstone being wedged or slid between the portions 36 and 38.

The base portion 36 also includes a relatively narrow rearwardly and then reversely bent and upwardly extending section which projects out of the slot 26. The outwardly projecting portion thereof is made wider than the slot 26 to form a flat actuator portion 40 overlying the flanges 24. The actuator portion 40 includes a narrower section 42 extending inwardly through the slot 26. The section 42 terminates in a wider section located immediately behind the clip portion 38 and characterized by transversely spaced apart, upwardly projecting stop elements or prongs 44. These extend into engagement with one pair of the pairs of openings 28 and are disengageable therefrom only when the actuator portion 40 is depressed. This develops a bias tending to urge the prongs 44 upwardly into re-engagement with the openings 28.

Thumb depression of the flat actuator portion 40 allows the operator to hold the holder 10 in the palm of one hand, without having to set down his torch, for example. The resulting disengagement of the prongs 44 from the openings 28 enables the soapstone 14 to be slidably indexed back and forth, as desired.

The section 42 is raked or sloped inwardly and toward the open or marking end of the receptacle 12. This orients the prongs 44 so that they tend to more easily slide across the margins of the openings 28 with slight depression of the actuator portion 40. This facilitates outward indexing of the soapstone 14. However, the same slope more positively engages the prongs 44 in the openings 28 when there is pressure upon the soapstone 14 tending to move it inwardly. This is desirable to provide a secure stop to hold the soapstone 14 firmly during marking.

In operation, a fresh stick of soapstone 14 is urged between the portions 36 and 38 of the indexing member 16 and the developed bias holds the soapstone 14 in position. As best viewed in FIG. 2, the mounted soapstone 14 and the indexing member 16 are then slid into the open end of the receptacle channel until the member 16 is in the position illustrated in FIG. 1.

Outward movement of the soapstone 14 is accomplished by depressing the actuator portion 40. This disengages the prongs 44 from the associated openings 28. Pushing longitudinally against the member 16 with the thumb thereafter slides the soapstone 14 farther out of the receptacle 12. Release of the actuator portion 40 enables the bias of the member 16 to outwardly urge the prongs 44 into engagement with the next set of the openings 28 to again securely hold the soapstone 14 in position.

The present holder 10 thus enables the welder or other user to operate the holder with one hand and further enables consumption of nearly the entire length of the soapstone.

Various modifications and changes may be made with regard to the foregoing detailed description without departing from the spirit of the invention.

I claim:

1. A holder for marking material, said holder comprising:

an elongated receptacle including a base and a pair of upwardly extending side walls terminating in opposed, inwardly projecting flanges spaced apart to define an elongated slot, said receptacle further including pairs of complementary openings located in and spaced along the length of said flanges; and an indexing member made of resilient sheet material and including a base portion and an integral clip portion biased toward said base portion to hold a rearward extremity of an elongated marking stick for slidable movement of said stick and said base portion over said base of said receptacle in a forward direction to project said stick out of one end of said receptacle and in a rearward direction to retract said stick, said indexing member further including an integral actuator portion formed as a reversely bent rearward extension of said base portion, the reversely formed forwardly extending section of said extension projecting outwardly of said slot, said actuator portion including a pair of outwardly projecting elements engageable in one pair of said pairs of openings in said channels to constrain said indexing member against movement relative to said receptacle, said forwardly extending section of said actuator portion being connected to said elements such that inward movement of said actuator portion disengages said pair of elements from said openings without outward tipping of said base portion whereby said indexing member and stick are freely slidable in both forward and rearward directions.

2. A holder according to claim 1 wherein said pair of elements slope in a rearward direction to facilitate disengagement of said elements from said openings on forward movement of said indexing member.

3. A holder according to claim 1 and including a pocket clip element secured to said receptacle adjacent one extremity and including an end portion disposed across the end of said receptacle opposite said one end and thereby blocking projection therefrom of said stick.

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