

Jan. 21, 1941.

R. I. RHODES

2,229,223

MAILING BOX

Filed Oct. 21, 1938

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

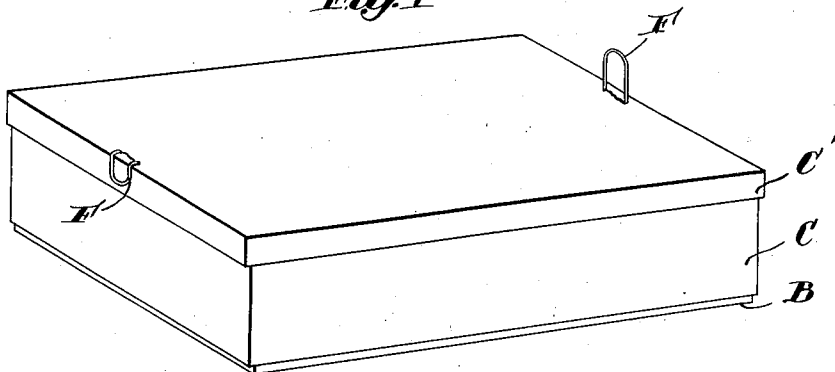


Fig. 2

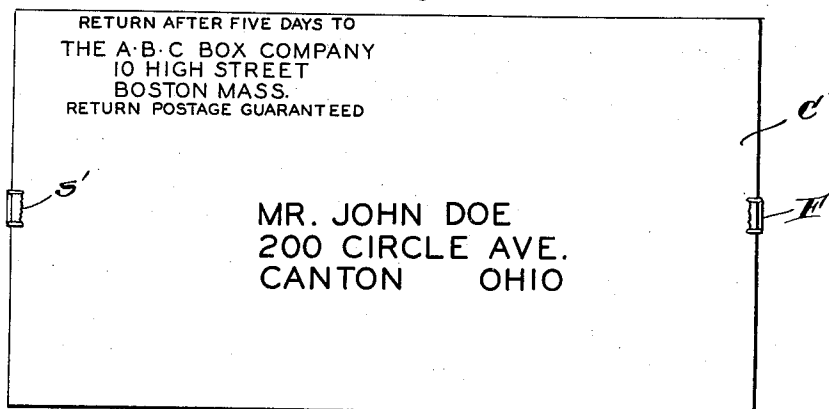
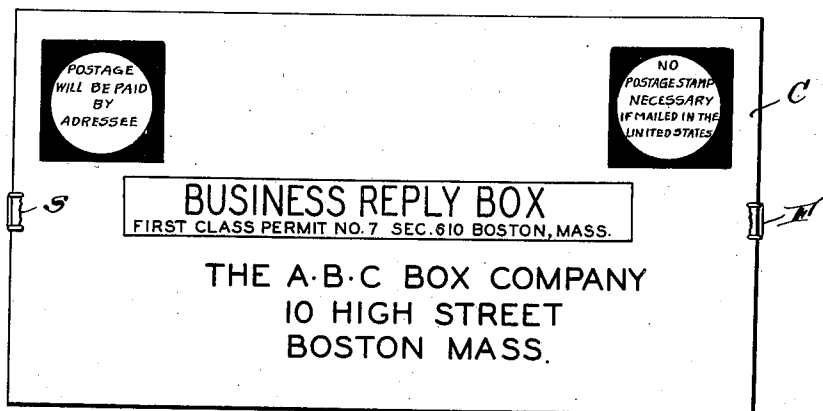


Fig. 3



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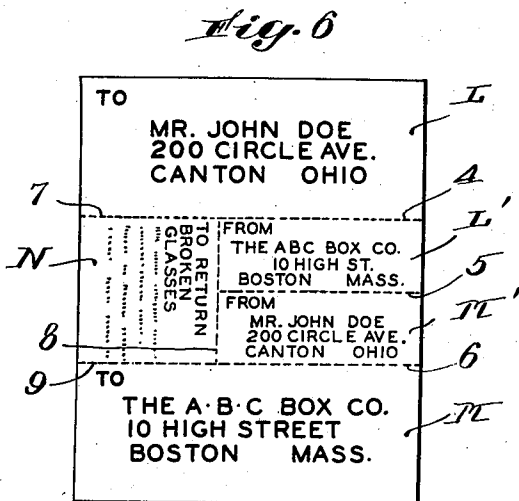
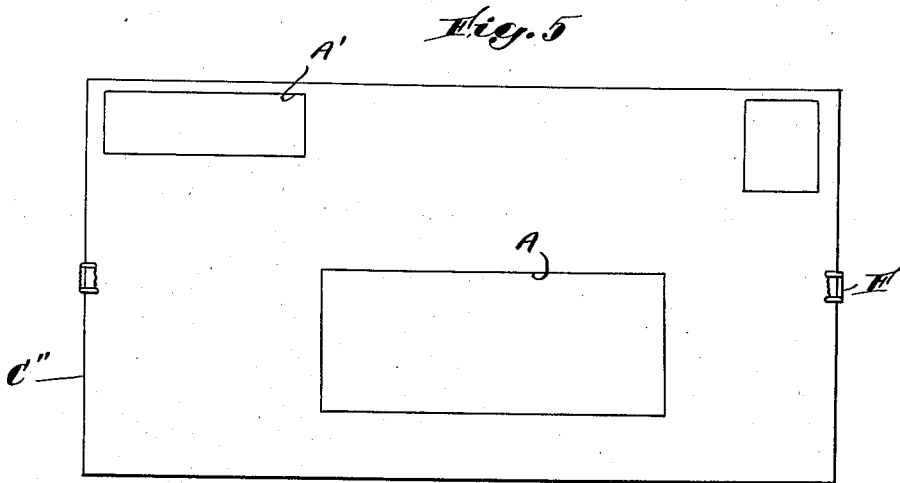
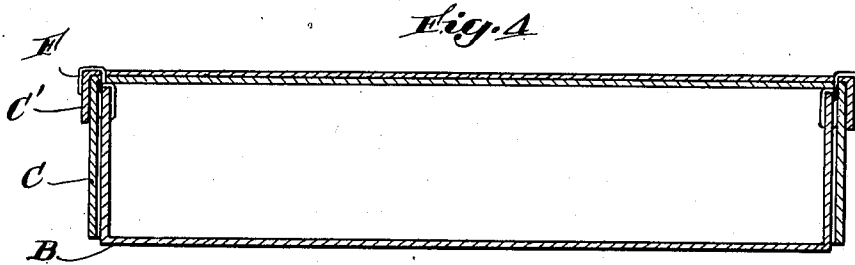
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2 Sheets-Sheet 2



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,229,223

MAILING BOX

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Mass., a corporation of Massachusetts

Application October 21, 1938, Serial No. 236,156

1 Claim. (Cl. 229—6)

This invention relates to mailing boxes and more particularly to mailing boxes of the type which can be used by a vendee to return an article to the vendor. One of the many uses of such boxes is to transport eyeglasses back and forth between an optical store and its customers. For example if the customer desires to return the eyeglasses for repair or adjustment it is desirable to employ the same box. However this is ordinarily inconvenient because of the presence of the names, address, canceled postage, etc., employed in transmitting the box to the vendee. In cases where the vendee operates a store, service station or the like, it is often desirable to store articles in the original boxes in which the articles are received by mail, but for this purpose the boxes should display the name, size, etc., of the article rather than the name, address, etc., of the vendee.

Objects of the present invention are to provide a mailing box which can be mailed without wrapping and without disfiguration by mailing indicia, which can be used conveniently for returning articles from a vendee to a vendor (or from any other addressee to the addressor), which assures the return of the box to the original sender, which involves no special expensive construction, and which requires no involved instructions for return use. Other objects will be evident from the following description and claims.

According to the present invention the box is provided with an auxiliary cover in addition to its main cover, the auxiliary cover telescoping snugly over the main cover and preferably being shallow so as not to cover the lower margin of the main cover, whereby the user naturally holds the box in one hand with the ends of the fingers overlapping said margin while the other hand lifts off the auxiliary cover. Thus the addressee automatically lifts off the auxiliary cover first; otherwise both covers would tend to come off together and, if the addressee were unfamiliar with this new type of box, he might never discover that the box has a double cover. In the preferred embodiment the main cover telescopes over substantially the full depth of the box whereas the auxiliary cover extends downwardly through only a small fraction of the box depth. When the box is to be used for storage purposes the main cover may carry indicia suitably identifying the contents. When used to return merchandise the main cover has spaces for the return postage or permit number together with the names and addresses of the addressor and ad-

dressee or spaces therefor. In any case the auxiliary cover carries the names and addresses of the original sender and addressee and the auxiliary cover may be discarded when the box is first received. In the preferred embodiment the box has flexible tongues fast to its edges and the two covers have registering openings to receive the tongues when the covers are telescoped into position. By making the tongues long enough to project through both covers they serve either to secure both covers or to secure the main cover alone after the auxiliary cover has been discarded.

For the purpose of illustration typical embodiments of the invention are shown in the accompanying drawings in which—

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a double-cover box without printing;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the outer cover with printing;

Fig. 3 is a plan view of the inner cover with printing;

Fig. 4 is a central longitudinal section with both covers in place;

Fig. 5 is a plan view of a cover having outlined spaces for the addresses and stamp; and

Fig. 6 is a plan view of a sheet of labels for use with boxes such as shown in Fig. 5.

The particular embodiment of the invention illustrated in the drawings comprises a box B, a main cover C extending almost to the bottom of the box and a relatively shallow auxiliary cover C'. Each of these three parts may be of any suitable construction, as for example the ordinary cardboard construction involving stays at the corners and paper coverings applied to the outer sides of the parts, respectively, with their margins folded inwardly over the edges of the parts. The box B is provided with wire fasteners F which are preferably constructed and arranged as disclosed in the patent to Berthold 1,669,279. The covers C and C' have registering slits S and S' to receive the fasteners F, the fasteners being long enough to extend through both covers and then project far enough to be bent over as shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 4. After the auxiliary cover C' is discarded the same fasteners may be employed to secure the main cover alone, the fasteners then projecting somewhat more and being bent somewhat closer to the box.

When the box is to be used for return mailing purposes the main cover C may be printed with suitable indicia, such as illustrated in Fig. 3, so that the box may be returned to the original

sender merely by removing the auxiliary cover C' without adding any indicia to the main cover. If the box is to be used for storage purposes the main cover may be printed with indicia indicating the contents of the box. In either case the auxiliary cover C' may be discarded upon receipt of the box by the original addressee, Mr. John Doe in the illustration.

In some cases it is desirable merely to provide the boxes with spaces for the addresses. Thus either or both of the covers may be provided with such spaces as indicated at A and A' on the cover C'' in Fig. 5. Along with these boxes the purchasers may be supplied with sheets of labels. As illustrated in Fig. 6 these sheets may comprise labels L and M shaped to fit the spaces A and labels L' and M' shaped to fit the spaces A'. As shown in Fig. 6 the four labels are interconnected with each other along lines of perforations 4, 5 and 6 and to an instruction section N along lines of perforations 7, 8 and 9. To apply the labels to the box covers they are of course torn apart along the lines of perforations, and the instruction section I may either be applied to some part of the box or it may be discarded. The back of the sheet of labels may be gummed to facilitate attachment to the boxes. The addresses may be printed in the spaces or the spaces may originally contain merely the words "To" or "From", leaving the addresses to be applied later by hand or by typewriter. In some cases it may be desirable to have some of the addresses printed by the label manufacturer, leaving other of the spaces to be filled in by the customer. For example a manufacturer may print the labels L' and M as indicated in Fig. 6 leaving the labels L and M' to be filled in by the purchaser of the boxes or by the vendee, it being understood that in each illustration the A. B. C. Box Company would constitute the vendor of the eyeglasses or other contents of the boxes and Mr. John Doe would constitute a vendee.

From the foregoing it will be evident that in grasping the box preparatory to lifting the auxil-

iary cover C' the fingers would normally grip the exposed sides of the main cover C so that there is little danger of accidentally lifting off the main cover with the auxiliary cover. To remove the covers it is necessary merely to bend the fasteners to the upright position shown at the right-hand end of Fig. 1. After the auxiliary cover is removed it may be discarded, leaving a complete box which is free from all indicia used in sending the box and which is kept clean in transit without the usual troublesome wrappings.

With a construction such as illustrated in Figs. 5 and 6 the box manufacturer may carry in stock a large quantity of boxes for use in filling orders which are too small to warrant a special run for printing the name of the customer on the boxes. When a small order comes in it is merely necessary to supply boxes such as shown in Fig. 5 together with sheets of labels which may be printed by the box manufacturer before delivery or by the customer after delivery or, as indicated above, partly by the box manufacturer and partly by the customer.

It should be understood that the present disclosure is for the purpose of illustration only and that this invention includes all modifications and equivalents which fall within the scope of the appended claim.

I claim:

A mailing container comprising a box, a main cover telescoping over the box, an auxiliary cover telescoping over the main cover, the lower margin of the main cover projecting beyond the lower edge of the auxiliary cover to afford a gripping surface, and flexible tongues fast to the edges of the box, said covers having registering openings to receive said tongues when the covers are telescoped into position and the tongues being long enough to secure both said covers by bending the tongues over said covers, whereby the auxiliary cover may be used for the mailing address and postage and then discarded, said fasteners then being bendable over the main cover alone.

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