July 29, 1958 S. W. McKENDREE 2,845,047

WRITING INSTRUMENT

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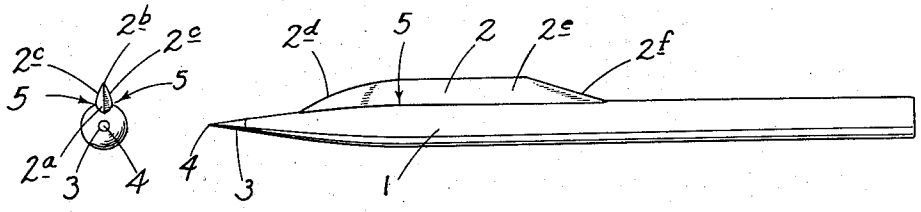


Fig. 2.

Fig. 1.

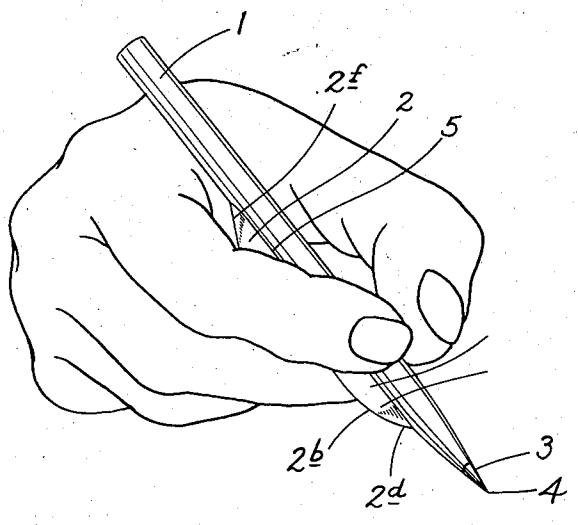


Fig. 3.

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WRITING INSTRUMENT

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3 Claims. (Cl. 120—102)

My invention relates to improvements in writing instruments such as pens and pencils, and has for its specific object such a writing instrument with an elongated shaft or barrel which is conformed to provide a comfortable finger positioning rest which minimizes the required digital pressure to prevent such writing instrument from turning about its longitudinal axis.

A further object of my invention is to provide a writing instrument of this character with such a finger rest which may also serve the dual purpose of converting said organization into a letter opener.

Pencils and pens are usually made with shafts or barrels of circular or hexagonal section. The latter provide plural flattened surfaces which aid in resisting rotation of said writing instrument and provide lands with which the forefinger, the middle finger, and the tip of the thumb may engage. Due to the small cross-sectional dimension of said shafts and barrels, the sides of said hexagonal shafts are somewhat uncomfortable and thus do not minimize the muscular effort, nor lessen the fatigue, to an adequate degree. Efforts also have been made to provide specially contoured pockets for supports to be used in connection with such writing instruments to make them more comfortable and less fatiguing in use. Manufacturing difficulties, increased costs, and variance in holding a writing instrument have limited the commercial success of these efforts.

My invention has been attained in a writing instrument of general circular section which has an elongated, radially extending fin carried thereby which provides a plurality of positions in which it can be held, and also said finned instrument, if provided with a sharpened edge, may be used as a letter opening device.

Further and other details of my invention are hereinafter described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is an elevation of a writing instrument embodying my invention;

Fig. 2 is an end elevation thereof; and

Fig. 3 is a perspective view showing one manner in which said writing instrument may be held to promote a firm, comfortable grasp without requiring excessive muscular effort.

A writing instrument embodying my invention is provided with an elongated barrel or shaft. This is of generally cylindrical section, as is shown in Fig. 2. By writing instrument, I mean to include pens and pencils, particularly mechanical pencils and cartridge-type or ball-point pens. Extending longitudinally of said barrel or shaft **1**, and substantially radial to the longitudinal axis thereof, is a fin-like shoulder **2**. Said barrel or shaft is preferably hollow to enclose a writing lead **3**, if it is a pencil, or a pen point or writing tip, if it is a ball-point pen. The specific type of writing instrument is relatively unimportant as far as my invention is concerned.

Said shoulder extends from a point adjacent the writing point **4** to a position near the longitudinal middle of said barrel. Said shoulder preferably is of generally tri-

angular section, as is shown in Fig. 2, and its base **2***a* conforms to the peripheral outline of the barrel and its apex **2***b* is spaced therefrom. Said apex preferably is formed into a relatively sharp edge which extends from the end of said shoulder adjacent the writing point rearwardly substantially throughout the entire length thereof. The sides **2***c* of said shoulder are preferably of curved conformation, rounding out from the apex towards the base. The shoulder is substantially an equilateral triangle in section. That is to say, said sides subtend substantially equal angles with respect to said apex. Said sides form oblique angles with the periphery of the barrel and define finger positioning recesses **5** at both sides of said shoulder.

In Fig. 3, the writing instrument is shown gripped between the forefinger, middle finger, and thumb, with the shoulder lying between the tips of the forefinger and the middle finger. Most people find this position accords them greatest writing comfort and minimum faitgue. Others grip the pencil so that the shoulder lies between the tip of the thumb and that of the forefinger, with both the thumb and the forefinger engaging the recesses at opposite sides of the shoulder. Another variation is to grip said shoulder between the thumb and the tip of the middle finger, with the tip of the thumb and the tip of the middle finger engaging said recesses. In any of these three positions, the hand is relaxed and the writing instrument is inhibited against rotation about its longitudinal axis.

The end **2***d* of said shoulder in longitudinal profile curves upwardly upon a smooth curve, and terminates in a central portion **2***e* which extends throughout the major portion of said shoulder. The central portion **2***e* of said apex preferably is parallel with the longitudinal axis of the barrel. The trailing end **2***f* of the shoulder subtends an acute angle with the barrel, and is preferably flattened.

The proportioning of said shoulder in the manner illustrated and described permits said shoulder to be used with a writing instrument as a letter opener, to slit the adhesive bonded flap thereof by the sharpened apex of said shoulder. When the writing instrument is inserted point first beneath said flap, it tends to apply pressure against the sharpened apex of the shoulder, which cuts through said flap along the shoulder thereof with little effort. Many people use a pen or pencil to rip the flap, but this usually produces a jagged tearing thereof and frequently breaks the writing point of a pencil or affects the writing point of a pen.

When a writing instrument embodying my invention is used in connection with a mechanical pencil or fountain pen, said barrel is cast or otherwise formed of metal or plastic, and houses the mechanical writing instrument, such as the mechanisms of a mechanical pencil or the cartridge and accessory ball-point of a pen. Said barrel is constructed to house said cartridges and mechanisms in the usual fashion, and the parts are separable and adjustable to accommodate the operation thereof, in the usual manner.

The length of the shoulder should be substantially less than the length of the barrel so that said extra length of the barrel may rest upon the web between the thumb and forefinger of the hand, in the manner shown in Fig. 3, without interference by said shoulder, which shoulder lies within the said web and the tips of the fingers and the thumb, and thus does not touch the hand except as it is gripped between the finger and thumb tips.

I claim:

1. A writing instrument comprising an elongated barrel of generally cylindrical section terminating in a writing point, and an elongated shoulder projecting radially from said barrel and terminating at one end adjacent said writing point, said shoulder being of general triangular section with its base being narrower than the diameter of said barrel conforming to the peripheral out-

line of said barrel and with its apex spaced therefrom, the point of merger of the two sides of said shoulder and said barrel thus defining plural finger positioning recesses.

2. A writing instrument comprising an elongated barrel of generally cylindrical section terminating in a writing point, and an elongated shoulder projecting radially from said barrel and terminating at one end adjacent said writing point, said shoulder being of general triangular section with its base being narrower than the diameter of said barrel conforming to the peripheral outline of said barrel and with its apex spaced therefrom, said apex terminating in a relatively sharp edge, and with the two sides of said shoulder being of curved conformation and subtending substantially equal angles with respect to said apex, the point of merger of the two sides of said shoulder and said barrel thus defining plural finger positioning recesses.

3. A writing instrument comprising an elongated barrel of generally cylindrical section terminating in a writing point, and an elongated shoulder projecting radially from said barrel and terminating at one end adjacent said writing point, said shoulder being of general triangular section with its base being narrower than the diameter of said barrel conforming to the peripheral outline of said barrel and with its apex spaced therefrom, said apex terminating in a relatively sharp edge, the point of merger of the two sides of said shoulder and said barrel thus defining plural finger positioning recesses, said shoulder in longitudinal profile terminating in obliquely sloping ends and the remainder of said shoulder defining an elongated central portion whose apex extends parallel with the longitudinal dimension of said barrel.

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