

J. C. Gaston,
Envelope.

No. 87253

Patented Feb 23, 1869.

Fig. 1.

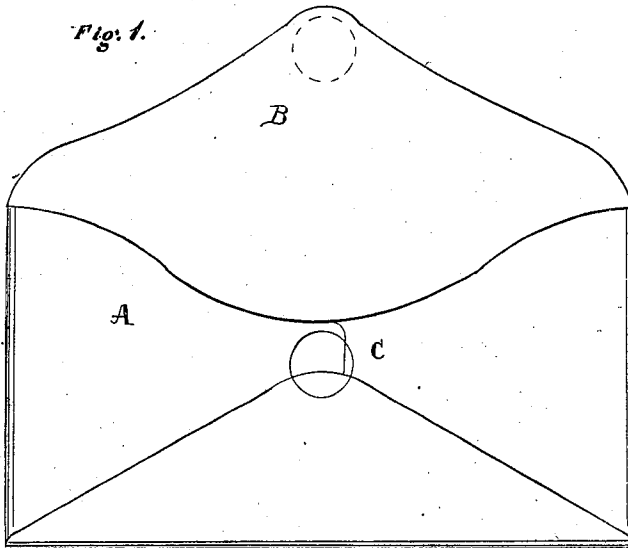
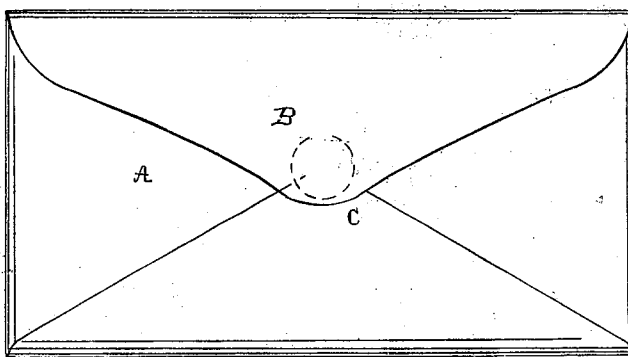


Fig. 2.



Witnesses.

L. A. Hailor.
P. T. Dodge

Inventor,

J. C. Gaston
by order of Messrs
his attys.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

J. C. GASTON, OF CINCINNATI, OHIO.

IMPROVEMENT IN ENVELOPES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 87,253, dated February 23, 1869.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, J. C. GASTON, of Cincinnati, in the county of Hamilton and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Sealing Envelopes; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, making part of this specification, and to the letters of reference marked thereon, like letters indicating like parts wherever they occur.

To enable others skilled in the art to construct and use my invention, I will proceed to describe it.

My invention relates to letter-envelopes; and consists in the application of a colored paste or gum to the back of the envelope, and in puncturing or bruising the flap, so that in sealing the punctured or bruised portion of the flap will be fastened immediately over the colored paste or gum, which will strike through the flap, and thus render it impossible to unseal and reseal the envelope without sure indications that the same has been done.

In the drawings, Figure 1 represents one of my prepared envelopes open, and Fig. 2 represents the same envelope closed and sealed.

As is well known, in preparing envelopes the inner surface of the flap is covered near its outer edge with a thin surface of gum-arabic or other suitable substance, and in order to seal them this gum is usually moistened with the tongue, and then the flap is pressed against the back of the envelope, when it adheres and the envelope is sealed.

When envelopes are sealed in this way they can be, and often are, surreptitiously opened by moistening the parts sealed with warm water, or in some similar way, and their contents examined or abstracted, or both examined and abstracted, and the envelope then carefully resealed without leaving any indications of having been tampered with.

The object of my invention is to produce an envelope that when once sealed cannot be opened without having upon it conclusive evidence of the fact.

In order to accomplish this object I take any ordinary envelope, A, and apply to its back at the place where the flap B is sealed

a thin layer of colored gum, C, as shown in Fig. 1. Any kind of gum suitable for sealing purposes, colored with india-ink, indigo, or any suitable pigment, may be used. I then puncture that portion of the flap B which will come immediately over this layer of gum, in the form shown Figs. 1 and 2, or in any other form that may be desired, as in the form of an initial letter or letters or a monogram.

Instead of puncturing, as shown, the flap may be stamped or partially cut through, or bruised, or treated in any manner that will either leave small openings in the flap, or so loosen the fibers of the paper that it will readily absorb the colored gum when moistened. This done, I seal the envelope in the usual way, as shown in Fig. 2, when the coloring matter at C, becoming moist, at once strikes up through the stamped, punctured, or bruised lines in the flap, and are outlined on its outer surface, as shown in Fig. 2.

When an envelope is thus treated and sealed moisture cannot be applied to the flap for softening the gum without causing the colored gum to spread beyond the lines thus given to it, and, as I have found by actual experiment, the envelope can in no way have its sealing tampered with without leaving unmistakable marks of the fact.

The importance of having envelopes possessing this desirable quality needs only to be stated to be appreciated. By the aid of machinery they can be produced almost as cheap as the ordinary gummed envelopes. Persons desiring envelopes for their own private use can stamp the flap with their initials, so that they will show clearly on the outside of the flap when sealed. Corporations or other parties using a seal may have the same outlined on the flap in a similar manner.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim is—

The method of treating and preparing envelopes, substantially as herein described, for the purpose of protecting their sealing against surreptitious tampering, as set forth.

J. C. GASTON.

Witnesses:

H. B. MUNN,
P. T. DODGE.