Nov. 8, 1955 J. O. TILLY 2,723,078

MAILING DEVICE

Filed Jan. 25, 1954

Fig. 1.

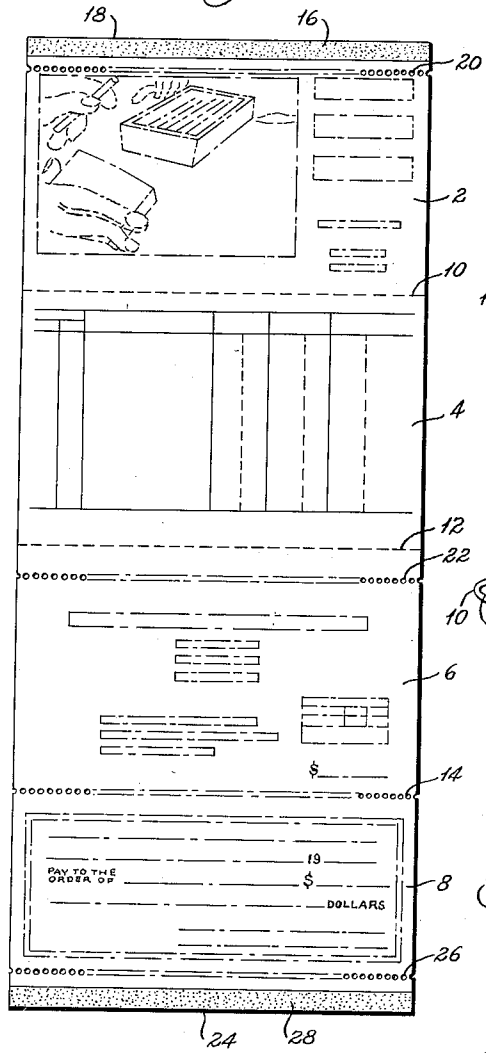


Fig. 2.

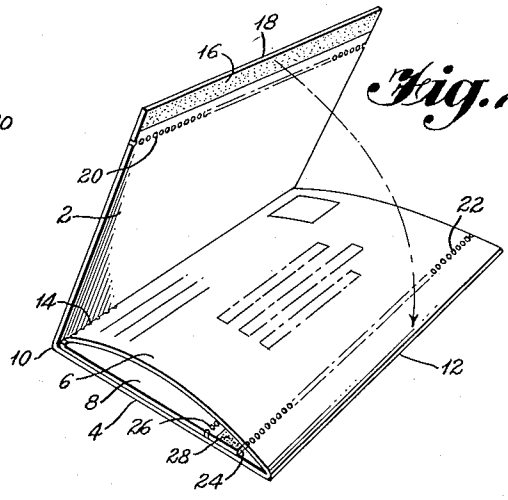


Fig. 3.

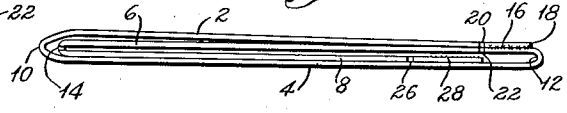
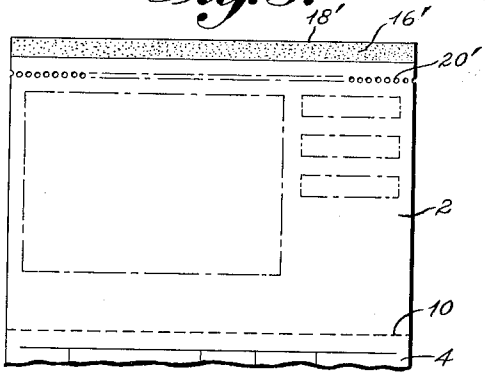


Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



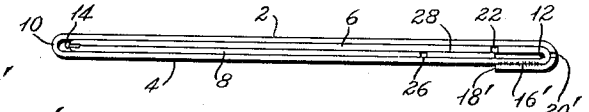


Fig. 6.

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MAILING DEVICE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 229—92.8)

This invention relates to a mailing device, and particularly to a device intended for use by the billing department of a department store or the like, although many other uses will be apparent.

The device consists primarily of a foldable sheet of paper or other suitable material provided with imperforate score lines for folding and rows of perforations defining further fold lines and tear lines. The device contemplates a folded sheet of such material bearing an itemized statement of the customer's account and balance due along with a separable insert consisting of an identification statement to be returned by the customer with his remittance and a countercheck by which the customer may effect payment. The sheet (also referred to as the "blank") is so designed and folded that the statement to be returned and the countercheck constitute an "insert" integrally joined to cover members defining a mailing envelope. The arrangement is such that the billing department of the store enters the items charged, credits, and balance on a panel of the cover members and places the proper account identification on a panel of the insert, then the same is folded and sealed with the insert between outer cover members and mailed to the customer. Upon receipt by the customer he may open the outer envelope by tearing along a row of perforations and he finds his statement, return statement and a countercheck as an integral unit, whereupon he may separate the return statement and countercheck as a unit from the cover members, fill out the countercheck in payment of the balance, then fold the insert and seal the folded return piece for mailing back to the store. Preferably an outer surface of one panel of the return insert is already provided with a mailing address directing the same to the original sender.

It is therefore an object of this invention to provide a unitary blank capable of being folded to form an outer mailing envelope and an integrally joined but separable insert therein constituting a return mail item.

It is another object of this invention to provide a mailing device formed from a single sheet of paper or the like and providing an envelope for mailing an account statement to a customer and for returning the customer's remittance, all without necessitating the provision of separate envelopes.

It is a still further object of this invention to provide a new and useful integral folded mailing device.

Further objects and advantages will become apparent to those skilled in the art as the description proceeds in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Fig. 1 represents a perforated and scored blank of sheet material embodying the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the blank shown in Fig. 1 partially folded for mailing and just prior to sealing the same;

Fig. 3 is an end view of the device shown in Figs. 1 and 2 completely sealed and ready for mailing by the store;

Fig. 4 is an end view of the insert of Figs. 1 to 3 after removal from the outer covers and sealed ready for return to the store;

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary view similar to the upper portion of Fig. 1 but showing a modification thereof; and

Fig. 6 is an end elevational view, similar to Fig. 3, but showing the modification of Fig. 5.

The sheet of material illustrated in Fig. 1 is, as shown, preferably of generally rectangular shape and is divided into a top cover panel **2**, an itemized statement panel **4**, an account identification statement panel **6**, and a countercheck panel **8**. The panel **2** may bear suitable advertising material whereas the panel **4** is intended to be provided with an itemized statement of the customer's account showing the balance due thereon. Panel **6** identifies the customer's account by name and address, billing date, account number, and whatever other information is desired. Panel **8** is provided with an imprint defining a countercheck on which the customer may insert the name of his bank, the amount of the check and his signature, in the usual way.

The cover panels **2** and **4** are integrally joined along a fold line **10** which may be impressed in the paper or which may be merely identified by a printed line. Hereinafter it is intended that the terms "score line" or "fold line" be inclusive of a crease and/or a mere printed line.

Panel **4** is joined to panel **6** along a second score line **12** but panel **6** is joined to panel **8** by a row **14** of perforations. The perforations are small and close together and define a tear line along which the panels may be readily separated in a well known manner. The panel **2** is provided with a layer of adhesive material **16** adjacent the free edge **18** of the sheet and a row **20** of perforations extends across the sheet inwardly of the edge **18** and below the adhesive material **16**. The adhesive material **16** is preferably of the "dry" type rather than a pressure sensitive material, to prevent inadvertent adhesion. The strip **16** constitutes the usual "gummed" area commonly employed with conventional envelopes and the like.

In the modification of Fig. 1 the score line **10** is parallel to the edge **18** and spaced therefrom a distance substantially equal to the distance between the score lines **10** and **12**.

The panel **6** is provided with a row **22** of perforations parallel to and slightly below the score line **12**. The panels **6** and **8** may thus be separated as a unit from the panel **4**. The row **14** of perforations between panels **6** and **8** defines a perforated fold line whereby panel **8** may be folded to overlie panel **6**.

The distance between score line **12** and the row **14** of perforations is preferably slightly less than the distance between score lines **10** and **12** and the distance between the row **14** of perforations and the lowermost edge **24** of the sheet is substantially equal to the distance between the row **14** of perforations and the row **22** of perforations. Thus it will be apparent that the panel **8** may be folded to overlie panel **6** and the panel **6** then folded along score line **12** to overlie panel **4**, as shown in Fig. 2. Thereafter panel **2** may be folded downwardly along score line **10** (as suggested by the broken arrow of Fig. 2) to overlie superimposed panels **8**, **6** and **4** and the gummed area **16** may be adhered to the outer surface of panel **6** in the area between score line **12** and the row **22** of perforations.

The countercheck panel **8** is further provided with a row **26** of perforations adjacent and parallel to but spaced from the lowermost edge **24** of the sheet and a second layer **28** of adhesive material, similar to that at **16**, is provided between the edge **24** and the row **26** of perforations.

Fig. 2 shows the device in partially folded condition wherein panels **4**, **6** and **8** are superimposed preparatory to sealing the device for mailing by the store. As evi-

denced in Fig. 2 the face of panel **6** is provided with the store's return address, which appears on that face of the panel opposite the face appearing in Fig. 1. When mailed by the store the adhesive material at **28** remains dry and is not adhered to the panel **6** but the adhesive material at **16** is dampened and secured, by adhesion, to the area between the row **22** of perforations and the score line **12** on the outer face of the panel **6**. This is shown in Fig. 3 and it is contemplated that the upper surface of panel **2** be provided with the proper mailing address of the customer whereby the device need only be placed in the mails for delivery to the customer. Upon receipt by the customer of the device in Fig. 3, he may readily "open" the mailing piece by separating the outer cover of panel **2** along the row **20** of perforations. Having thus opened the mailing piece, the customer may separate panels **6** and **8** from panel **4**, fill out the countercheck, moisten the adhesive material at **28** and secure the same to the upper edge of panel **6** immediately below the row **22** of perforations as seen in Fig. 1 whereupon the device will appear in end view as shown in Fig. 4. It is then only necessary for the customer to place the Fig. 4 device in the mail for return to the store.

In the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 5 the panel **2** is provided, adjacent its uppermost edge, with a row **20'** of perforations spaced from the score line **10** a distance substantially equal to the distance between score lines **10** and **12** (the lower portion of Fig. 5 is identical to corresponding portions of Fig. 1). Thus, when folded for mailing by the store, the row **20'** of perforations coincides with the score line **12** and the adhesive material **16'** is secured to the outermost face of the panel **4** as indicated in Fig. 6. Clearly, the row **20'** of perforations could be so positioned as to overlie the row **22** of perforations, as in Fig. 3 or to fall inward between that position and the position illustrated in Fig. 6. Furthermore, if desired, the adhesive material at **28** could be provided immediately below the row **22** of perforations on panel **6** and/or the row **26** of perforations could extend across panel **6** slightly below the row **22** and the device would be usable in exactly the same way as heretofore described.

Many department stores customarily enclose, with their statements to the customer, copies of each individual sales slip. If the hereindisclosed device is used under such circumstances the gummed strip or adhesive material at **16** may be omitted or merely not used and the free edge portion of the cover member **2** may be secured to the area between the row **22** of perforations and the fold line **12** by means of conventional "staples." Before such securement, however, the individual sales

slips may be inserted between the removable insert disclosed and the cover member **4** with their edges extending to the fold line **12**. Thus, by stapling the edge portion **18** to the cover member **4** adjacent but inwardly of fold line **12**, the inserted sales slips will be secured within the mailing piece and not lost in the mail.

While a limited number of embodiments have been shown and described herein, the invention is not limited thereto but encompasses all modifications falling fairly within the scope of the appended claim.

I claim:

A blank of sheet material adapted to be folded to define an integral mailing device having a front panel and a back panel sealed to each other to define a mailing envelope and with a separable inner structure positioned between said panels and integral therewith, said blank comprising: a generally rectangular sheet of material, a narrow sealing zone extending across said sheet adjacent and parallel to one edge thereof, a layer of adhesive material covering said sealing zone, first and second spaced imperforate score lines parallel to and inwardly of said one edge, the distance between said first score line and said one edge being about one-half the distance between said second score line and said one edge, first, second, and third spaced parallel rows of perforations extending across said sheet parallel to said second score line and on the side thereof opposite said first score line with said first row of perforations spaced from said second score line a distance substantially equal to the width of said sealing zone, said third row of perforations being spaced from but adjacent another edge of said blank opposite said one edge, a layer of adhesive material between said third row of perforations and said other edge, the distance between said other edge and said second row of perforations being substantially equal to the distance between said first and second rows of perforations, and the distance between said second score line and said second row of perforations being no greater than the distance between said score lines.

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