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3,531,046

DESTRUCTIBLE ENVELOPE WITH DETACHABLE BUILT-IN RETURN ENVELOPE

Filed Nov. 8, 1968

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

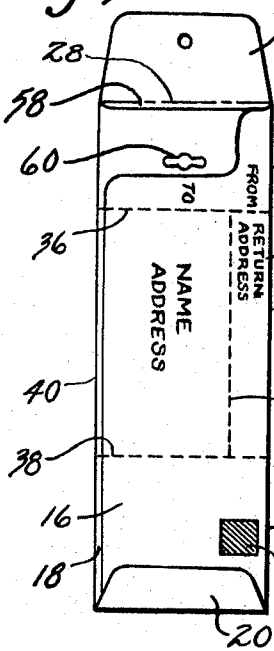


Fig. 2

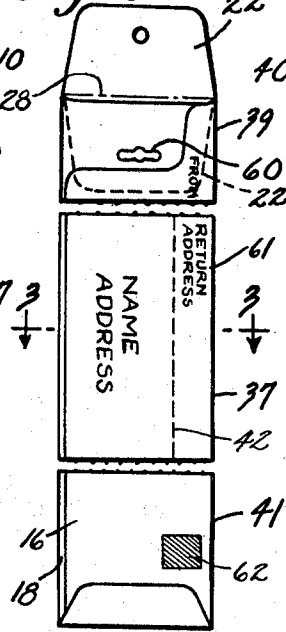


Fig. 3

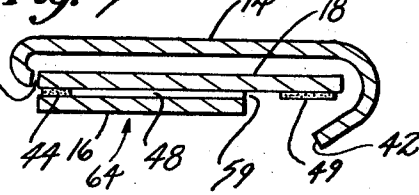


Fig. 4

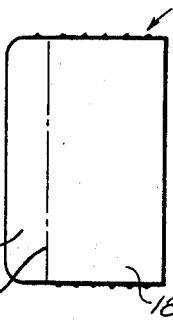


Fig. 5

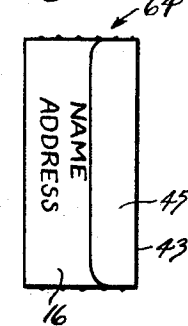


Fig. 6

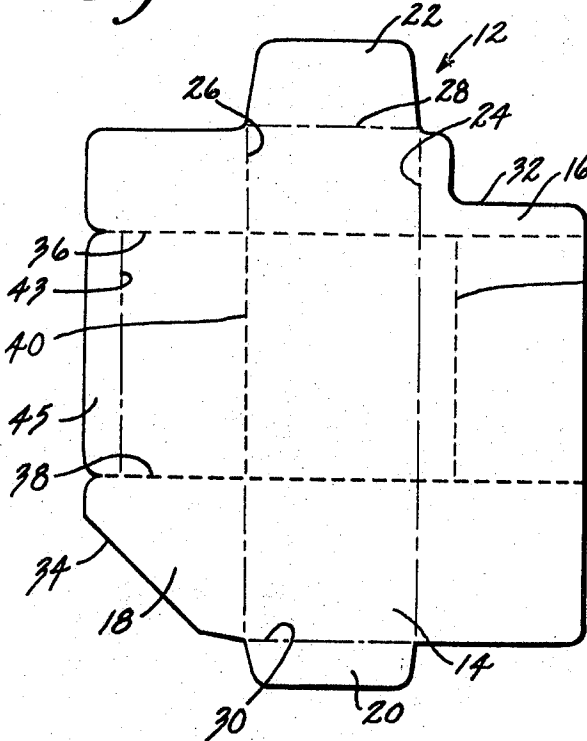
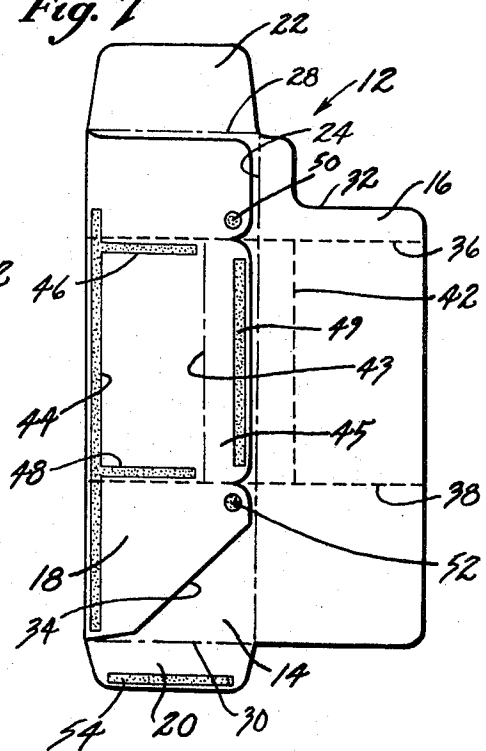


Fig. 7



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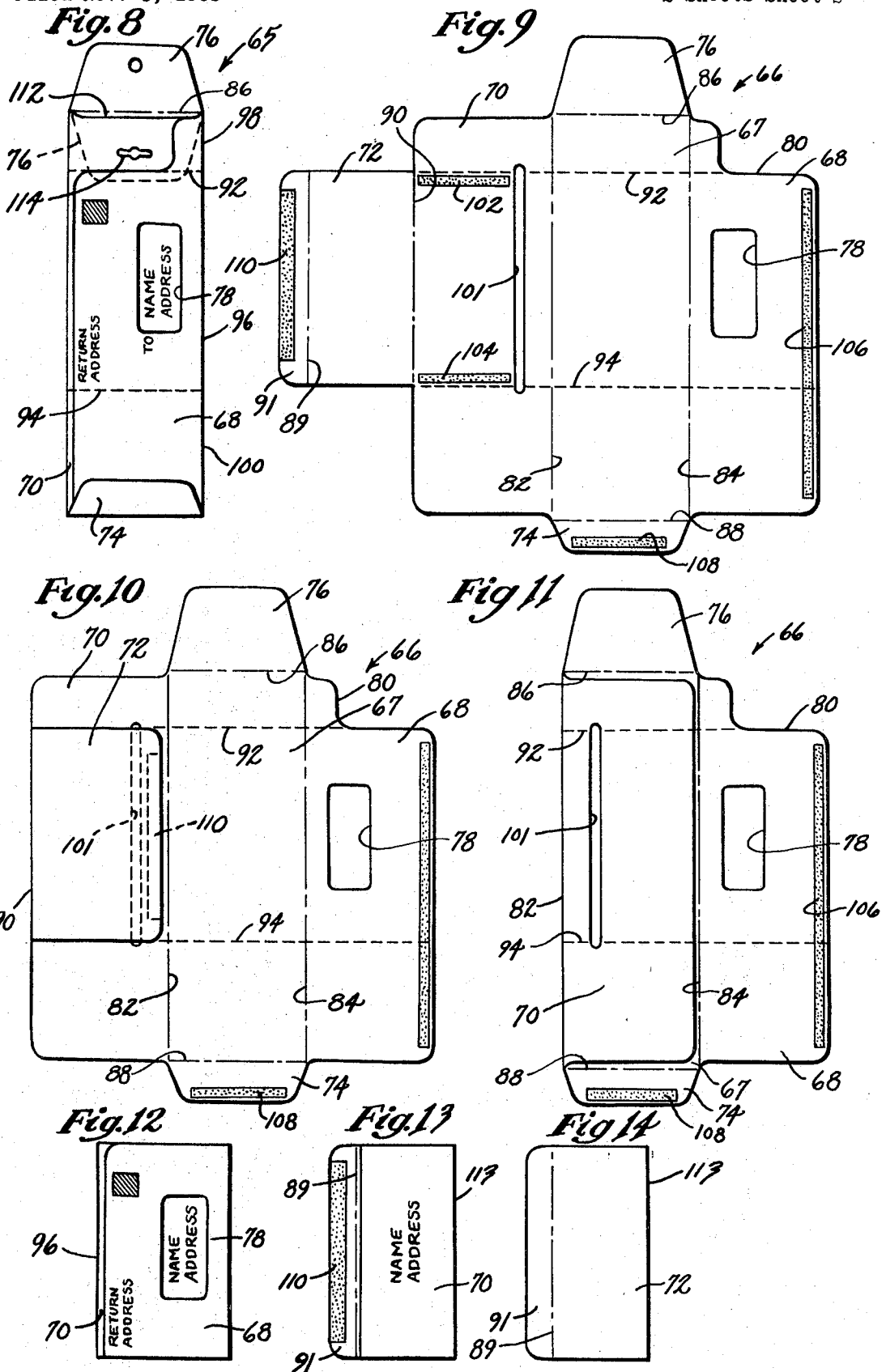
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## DESTRUCTIBLE ENVELOPE WITH DETACHABLE BUILT-IN RETURN ENVELOPE

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11 Claims

### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A destructible envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope made from a blank of sheet material including a plurality of connected panels folded into overlying relation and forming a main envelope compartment open at one end. Two of the panels are attached together in face-to-face relation forming a return envelope compartment with a mouth opening into and toward one side of the main compartment. The main envelope is divided into three separable sections by two spaced apart lines of weakening which extend transversely thereof. The return envelope is associated with the central section and becomes accessible after the main envelope has been destroyed by separating the sections thereof.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates in general to envelopes and deals more particularly with destructible envelopes of the type having built-in detachable return envelopes.

The general aim of this invention is to provide improved envelopes of the aforescribed type particularly adapted for manufacture on automatic envelope making machinery and suited to carry material to a receiver and to provide a return envelope to carry a return message or payment to the sender.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with the present invention, a destructible envelope with a built-in returnable envelope is comprised of at least three panels joined together in overlying relation to form a main envelope compartment open at one end. One of the panels is attached in face-to-face relation to another of the panels to form a return envelope integral with and substantially concealed within the main envelope. A means is provided for dividing the main envelope into separable sections, the return envelope being associated with one of the sections and being accessible after the sections have been separated.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front view of an envelope embodying the present invention.

FIG. 2 is similar to FIG. 1 but shows the envelope after sections thereof have been separated from each other.

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along the line 3—3 of FIG. 2, and shows a return envelope associated with the center section and detached from the remaining portion of the latter section.

FIG. 4 is a front view of the return envelope of FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a rear view of the return envelope of FIG. 3.

FIG. 6 is a front view of a blank from which the envelope of FIG. 1 is folded.

FIG. 7 is similar to FIG. 6 but shows the blank in a partially folded condition.

FIG. 8 is a front view of another envelope embodying this invention.

FIG. 9 is a front view of a blank from which the envelope of FIG. 8 is folded.

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FIG. 10 is similar to FIG. 9 but shows the blank in a partially folded condition.

FIG. 11 is similar to FIG. 10 but shows the blank after it has been further folded.

FIG. 12 is a front view of the central section of the envelope of FIG. 8 after detachment from the envelope.

FIG. 13 is a front view of a return envelope detached from the section of FIG. 12.

FIG. 14 is a rear view of the return envelope of FIG. 13.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Turning now the drawings and referring first to FIGS. 1—7, a destructible envelope with a built-in return envelope embodying the present invention and indicated generally at 10 in FIG. 1 is formed from a unitary blank 12 shown in FIGS. 6 and 7. The blank is cut from paper stock or from any other suitable material by die or other suitable means. A plurality of folds or score lines divides the blank 12 into a plurality of panels and flaps which include a rear panel 14, a front panel 16, an intermediate panel 18, an end sealing flap 20 and a closing flap 22. The rear panel 14 is generally rectangular in shape and, as oriented in FIGS. 2 and 3, is defined by side fold lines 24 and 26, an upper fold line 28 and a lower fold line 30. The other panels may be made in various slightly different shapes, but preferably and as shown each of these panels is also generally rectangular and substantially equal in width to the rear panel. When the blank 12 is cut, an upper portion of the front panel 16 is cut away as indicated at 32 and the lower corner of the panel 18 is also trimmed therefrom as indicated at 34.

Two spaced apart lines of weakening 36 and 38 extend transversely of the fold lines 24 and 26. The latter lines of weakening serve to divide the envelope 10 into three separable sections, which include a central section 37 and end sections 39 and 41, and may be formed either before or after the envelope 10 is formed from the blank 12. Preferably, and as shown, these lines of weakening are formed on the blank before it is folded. Another line of weakening 40 is formed on the blank 12 and extends across the central section thereof between the lines of weakening 36 and 38 coincident with the fold line 26. Still another line of weakening 42 is formed to extend across the front panel 16 in parallel spaced relation to the fold line 24 and between the lines 36 and 38. A fold or score line 43 is formed on the intermediate panel 18 spaced inwardly from the free side edge thereof and extends between the lines of weakening 36 and 38 to define a marginal portion 45.

Various means may be employed to further connect the panels to form a main compartment and to attach at least a portion of one of the panels in face-to-face relation to another panel to form a return envelope compartment, but preferably lines of adhesive are applied to the surface of the blank 12 for this purpose before the blank is folded. Thus, a line of adhesive 44 applied to the rear surface of the intermediate panel 18 near the fold line 26 extends upwardly from the lower edge and generally toward the panel upper edge as shown in FIG. 7. Additional lines of adhesive 46 and 48 extend from the line 44 transversely of the central section of the panel 18 near the lines of weakening 36 and 38 respectively to define boundaries of the return envelope compartment. The marginal portion 45 ultimately serves as the closing flap for the return envelope and for this reason another strip of adhesive 49 is applied to the rear surface of the marginal portion 45 near the free side edge thereof. Preferably the adhesive 49 is of re-moistenable type and is permitted to dry before the envelope 10 is formed from the blank 12.

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Additional adhesive is employed to connect the various panels to form the main envelope 10 and for this purpose spots of adhesive 50 and 52 are applied to the end sections of the panel 18 near the free side edge of and near the lines of weakening 36 and 38, respectively, as shown in FIG. 7. Another line of adhesive 54 is also applied to the front surface of the end closing flap 20 along the free edge thereof.

The sequence in which the panels are folded into overlying relation will be evident from consideration of FIGS. 6, 7, and 1, respectively, in that order. First, the intermediate panel 18 is folded inwardly along the fold line 26 and into overlying relation with the rear panel 14, as shown in FIG. 3. Next, as will be evident from FIG. 1, the panel 16 is folded along the fold line 24 so as to overlie the intermediate panel 18. Associated portions of the panels 14 and 18 are connected in face-to-face relation along the lines of adhesive 44, 46 and 48 to form the return envelope compartment. The spots of adhesive 50 and 52 serve to connect the panels 14 and 18. It should be noted, however, that the line of adhesive 49 remains adhered to the panel 18 but does not adhere to the panel 14. Lastly, the panel 20 is folded along the fold line 30 into overlying relation with the front panel 16 and is connected thereto by the line of adhesive 54. Portions of the panels 14 and 18 cooperate with the panel 16 and the end flap 20 to define an elongated main envelope pocket or compartment which has a mouth 58 at the upper end thereof as shown in FIG. 1. Another somewhat smaller envelope compartment is formed between the central section of the panels 14 and 18, the lines of adhesive 44, 46 and 48 defining the margins of this return envelope compartment which has a mouth 59 which opens into the main compartment toward the side fold line 24.

The closing flap 22 is foldable to a closed position as it appears in FIG. 2 to provide a closure for the mouth 58. In the illustrated embodiment 10 a fastener 60 which has bendable tabs or wings is secured to the intermediate panel 18 and serves to releasably retain the closing flap 22 in its closed position. However, if desired, a strip of adhesive (not shown) may be applied to the flap 22 for sealing it closed.

When the envelope 10 is received, the contents may be removed therefrom by opening the flap 22. Thereafter the return envelope may be detached from the main envelope 10 by separating the end sections 39 and 41 from the central section 37 along the lines of weakening 36 and 38 as shown in FIG. 2. The panels which comprise the center section 37 are further separated along the lines of weakening 40 and 42 to provide access to the mouth return envelope, as best shown in FIG. 3. The end portions 39 and 41 and portions of the panels 14 and 18 bounded by the lines of weakening 36, 38, 40 and 42 may be discarded. It will be noted that the discarded pieces of the envelope 10 carry the original return address and the original postage respectively indicated at 61 and 62 in FIGS. 1 and 2.

The return envelope, indicated generally at 64 in FIGS. 3-5, includes parts of the panels 14 and 18 between the lines of weakening 36 and 38. The front surface of the panel 16 which forms the rear surface of the return envelope 64 has the name and address of the receiver imprinted thereon. The front surface of the return envelope 64 may, if desired, have the name and address of the sender imprinted thereon and may also carry return postage, since this front surface will be concealed in the main envelope compartment and will not be exposed until the return envelope has been separated from the main envelope. A return message or payment may be placed in the return envelope 64 and the envelope sealed for return mailing by moistening the adhesive strip 49 on the marginal portion or sealing flap 45 and folding the latter sealing flap to its closed position shown in broken lines in FIG. 5.

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Another envelope embodying the invention and indicated generally at 65 in FIG. 8 is made from a unitary blank indicated generally at 66 in FIGS. 9-11. Like the previously described blank 12, the blank 66 is divided into a plurality of panels by a plurality of fold or score lines and includes a rear panel 67, a front panel 68, a first intermediate panel 70, a second intermediate panel 72, an end sealing flap 74 and a closing flap 76. When the blank is formed, a window 78 is cut in the front panel 68 and an upper portion of the latter panels is cut away as indicated at 80. The rear panel 67 is generally rectangular in shape, being defined by side fold lines 82 and 84, an upper fold line 86 and a lower fold line 88. The other panels are also generally rectangular and substantially equal in width to the rear panel 67. A side fold line 90 connects the first and second intermediate panels 70 and 72. Another fold or score line 89 spaced from the free edge of the panel 72 extends across the latter panel to define a marginal portion 91 which ultimately serves as a sealing flap for the return envelope.

Spaced apart lines of weakening 92 and 94 extend transversely of the blanks 66 and divide it into three sections which include a central section 96 and two end sections 98 and 100 as shown in FIG. 1. The lines of weakening 92 and 94 may be formed either before or after the blank is folded, but preferably and as shown, these lines and the various score lines are simultaneously formed before the blank is folded. When the blank is cut a slit or slot 101 is cut in the panel 70 spaced from the fold line 82 and extending between the lines of weakening 92 and 94.

As in the previously described construction, lines of adhesive are provided for connecting the panels to form a main envelope compartment and for attaching one of the panels in face-to-face relation to another panel to form a return envelope compartment concealed within the main compartment. Thus, lines of adhesive 102 and 104 are applied to the front surface of the panel 70 extending between the fold line 90 and the slit 101, respectively, adjacent the lines of weakening 92 and 94 as shown in FIG. 9 for attaching the two intermediate panels in face-to-face relation. Another line of adhesive 106 is applied to the front panel 68 near the free side edge thereof and still another line of adhesive 108 is applied to the end flap 74 to the lower edge thereof for further connecting the various panels to form the main envelope 65.

In the illustrated envelope 65, a seal for the built-in return envelope is provided by a line of adhesive 110 applied to the front surface of the panel 72 along the marginal portion 91. Preferably this adhesive is of remoisenable type and is allowed to dry before the blank 66 is folded.

The sequence in which the panels are folded to form the envelope 65 will be evident from consideration of FIGS. 9, 10, 11, and 8 in stated order. The panel 72 is first folded along the fold line 90 and into overlying relation with the panel 70, the lines of adhesive 102 and 104 serving to attach the latter two panels together in face-to-face relation. It should be noted that the marginal portion 91 which carries the adhesive strip 110 is disposed beyond the slot 101 in the direction of the fold line 82 as best shown in FIG. 10. The two panels 68 and 72 and a portion of the panel 70 between the lines of weakening 92 and 94 form the body of the return envelope, the mouth of the return being especially defined by the edge of the slot 101 nearest the fold line 90 as shown in FIG. 10. The intermediate panels 70 and 72 are next folded into overlying relation with the rear panel 67 along the fold line 82 to the position shown in FIG. 11. Thereafter, the front panel 68 is folded into overlying relation with the panel 70 and is connected thereto by the line of adhesive 106. Finally the end sealing panel is folded along the fold line 88 and into over-

lying relation with an associated portion of the front panel 68 and is connected thereto by the line of adhesive 108.

The panels 67, 68 and 74 cooperate with portions of the panels 70 and 72 to define a main compartment which has a mouth 112 at its upper end. The return envelope indicated at 113 is formed by the central portion of the panels 72 and 70 and is wholly disposed within the main compartment. A return envelope compartment somewhat smaller than the main compartment is defined by the fold line 90 and the lines of adhesive 102 and 104, the mouth of the latter compartment opening toward the fold line 82.

The closing flap 76 is foldable along the fold line 86 to a closed position indicated by broken lines in FIG. 8 and provides a substantial closure for the main compartment. A fastener 114 secured to the panel 70 serves to releasably retain the closing flap 76 in its closed position.

It will be noted that the window opening 78 is in registry with an associated portion of the panel 70 which forms the rear surface of the return envelope 113. The address of the receiver may be imprinted on the latter panel through the window 78 as shown in FIG. 8. The return address of the sender and the postage is preferably applied to the outer surface of the front panel 68.

When the envelope is received, the contents may be removed therefrom by opening the closing flap 76. Thereafter, the return envelope 113 may be separated from the main envelope 65 by separating the end portions 98 and 100 from the central portions 96. When the central portion 96 is separated from the end portions, the return envelope will automatically separate from the associated central portions of the panels 67 and 68 and the marginal portion of the panel 70 adjacent the fold line 82. This separation occurs at the slot 101, thereby providing a means for immediate access for the return envelope.

As previously noted the address of the receiver is imprinted on the rear surface of the return envelope 113. The address of the sender may, if desired, be imprinted on the front surface of the return envelope and return postage affixed thereto so that the return envelope is ready for immediate use. The address of the sender and return postage is of course hidden from view until the return envelope has been separated from the main envelope by virtue of its location with the main envelope compartment.

I claim:

1. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope comprising at least three panels in overlying relationship, means connecting said panels to form a main envelope compartment, means attaching one of said panels in face-to-face relation to at least a portion of another of said panels to form a return envelope compartment separated from said main compartment by one of said panels and having a mouth opening to said main compartment and substantially inaccessible before destruction of said main envelope, means dividing said main envelope into separable sections, said return envelope being associated with one of said sections, and means providing access to said return envelope mouth after destruction of said main envelope by separation of said sections.

2. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope as set forth in claim 1 wherein said main compartment has a mouth at one end of said main envelope and said return envelope compartment has a mouth opening toward one side of said main envelope.

3. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope as set forth in claim 1 wherein said dividing means comprises two spaced apart lines of weakening extending across said main envelope and said one section is intermediate said two lines.

4. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope comprising at least three panels in overlying relationship, means connecting said panels to form a main envelope compartment, means attaching one of said panels in face-to-face relation to at least a portion of another of said panels to form a return envelope compartment having a mouth opening to said main compartment and substantially inaccessible before destruction of said main envelope, two spaced apart lines of weakening extending across said main envelope and dividing said main envelope into separable sections, said return envelope being associated with one of said sections intermediate said two lines, and another line of weakening extending across said one section between said two lines of weakening providing access to said return envelope mouth after destruction of said main envelope by separation of said sections.

5. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope as set forth in claim 4 wherein said connecting means includes a plurality of fold lines and said other line of weakening is coincident with one of said fold lines associated with said one section.

6. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope comprising a folded blank of sheet material including at least three panels in overlying relationship connected together along a plurality of fold lines to form a main envelope compartment, said panels including a rear panel, a front panel connected to one side edge of said rear panel along a first one of said fold lines, and a first intermediate panel connected along one side edge to the other side edge of said rear panel along a second one of said fold lines and disposed between said front and rear panels, means attaching one of said panels in face-to-face relation to at least a portion of another of said panels to form a return envelope compartment having a mouth opening to said main compartment and substantially inaccessible before destruction of said main envelope, first and second lines of weakening extending transversely of said main envelope between said first and second fold lines dividing said main envelope into separable sections, said return envelope being associated with the one of said sections intermediate said first and second lines of weakening, and means providing access to said return envelope mouth after destruction of said main envelope by separation of said sections.

7. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope as set forth in claim 6 wherein said panels are of substantially equal width, said front panel and said intermediate panel respectively comprising said one panel and said other panel, said attaching means includes a first line of adhesive extending along the free side edge of said front panel and adhered to said intermediate panel near said second fold line, a second line of adhesive extending from said first line of adhesive and generally toward said first fold line near one of said lines of weakening and a third line of adhesive extending from said first line of adhesive generally toward said first fold line near the other of said lines of weakening, and said access means includes a third line of weakening extending between said first and second lines of weakening coincident with said second fold line and a fourth line of weakening extending across said front panel between said first and second lines of weakening in spaced relation to said one fold line.

8. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope as set forth in claim 6 wherein said panels include a second intermediate panel connected to the other side edge of said first intermediate panel along a third fold line and disposed between said rear panel and said first intermediate panel, said first and second intermediate panels respectively comprising said one panel and said other panel.

9. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope as set forth in claim 8 wherein said panels are of substantially equal width, said con-

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necting means include a line of adhesive securing the free side edge of said front panel to a marginal portion of said first intermediate panel near said second fold line, and said dividing means comprises a slit extending across said first intermediate panel between said first and second lines of weakening in spaced relation to said second fold line separating said marginal portion from the remainder of said first intermediate panel.

10. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope comprising at least three panels in overlying relationship, means connecting said panels to form a main envelope compartment, means attaching one of said panels in face-to-face relation to at least a portion of another of said panels to form a return envelope compartment having a mouth opening to said main compartment and substantially inaccessible before destruction of said main envelope, two spaced apart lines of weakening extending across said main envelope and dividing said main envelope into separable sections, said return envelope being associated with one of said sections intermediate said two lines, and a slit extending across said other panel between said two lines of weakening separating said portion of said other panel con-

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necting to said one panel from a remaining portion of said other panel, said slit partially defining said return envelop mouth and providing access thereto after destruction of said main envelope by separation of said sections.

11. A destructible main envelope with a built-in detachable return envelope as set forth in claim 1 wherein said panels include a front panel, a rear panel and at least one intermediate panel disposed between said front panel and said rear panel and said intermediate panel comprises said one panel.

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DAVID M. BOCKENEK, Primary Examiner

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