

Feb. 18, 1969

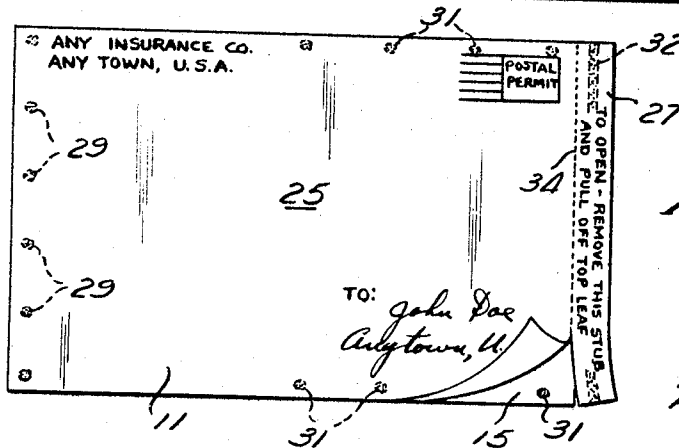
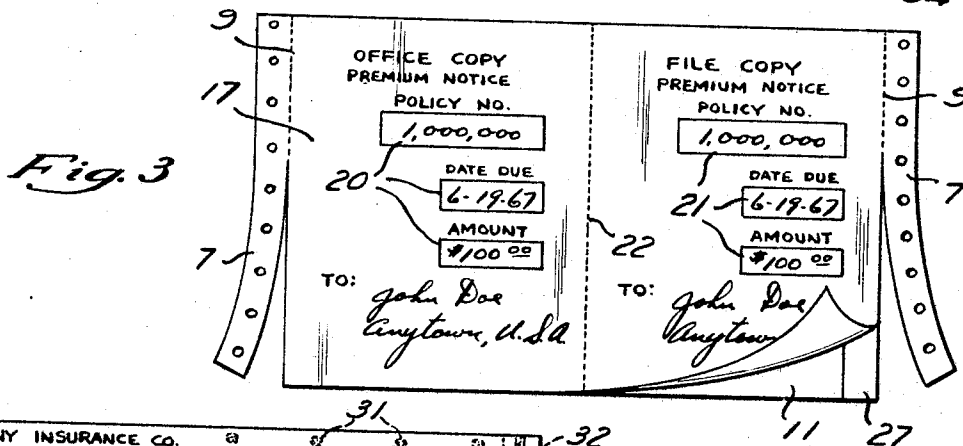
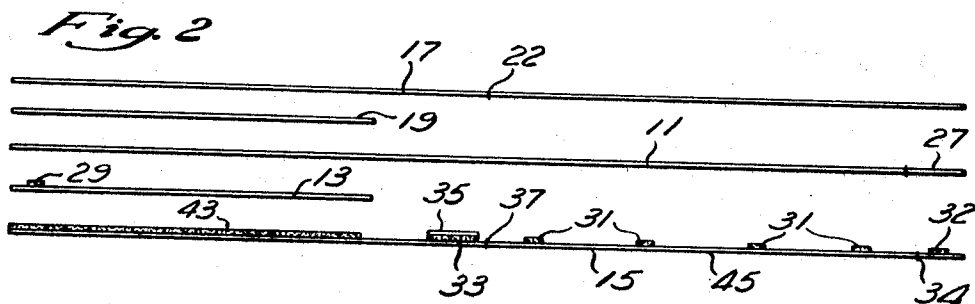
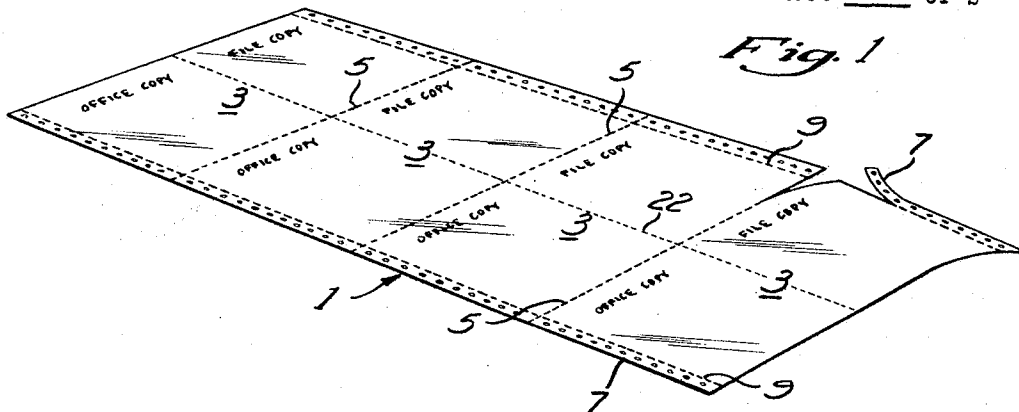
J. A. DOWEN

3,428,237

COMBINED MESSAGE AND REPLY ENVELOPES

Filed July 18, 1967

Sheet 1 of 2



INVENTOR.
JAMES A. DOWEN
BY
WATTS, HOFFMANN,
FISHER & HEINKE
ATTORNEYS

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J. A. DOWEN

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Sheet 2 of 2

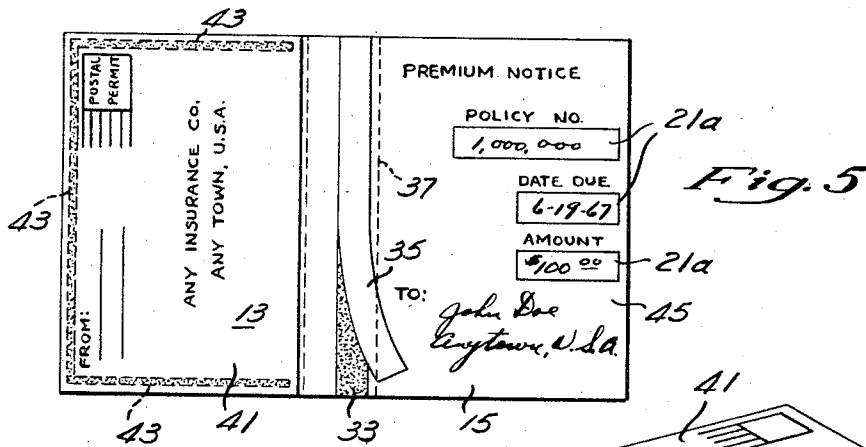


Fig. 5

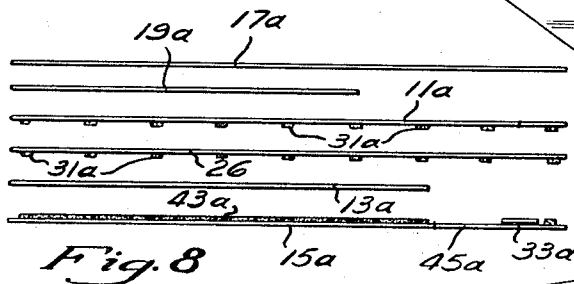


Fig. 8

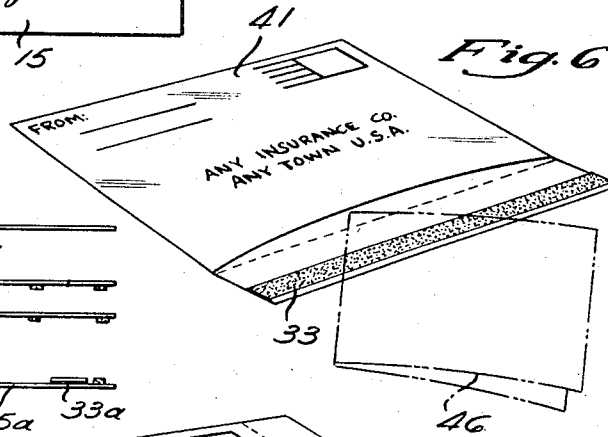


Fig. 6

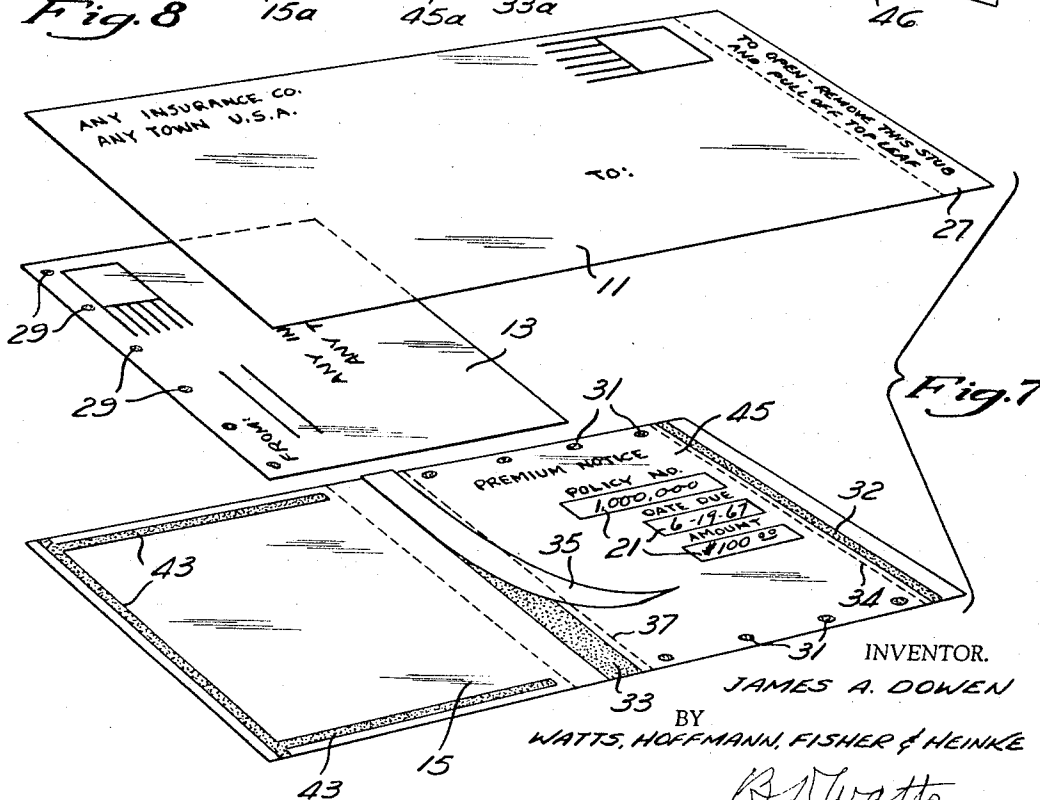


Fig. 7

INVENTOR.
JAMES A. DOWEN
BY
WATTS, HOFFMANN, FISHER & HEINKE
B. D. Swatto
ATTORNEYS

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3,428,237
COMBINED MESSAGE AND REPLY ENVELOPES
James A. Downen, Shelby, Ohio, assignor to
Shelby Business Forms, Inc.
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U.S. Cl. 229—69 4 Claims
Int. Cl. B65d 27/10, 27/06

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A business form comprising a combined mailable envelope carrying a concealed message and a return envelope for a response.

Summary

A business form embodying the present invention comprises combined mailable and return envelopes and a message concealed in the mailable envelope. The combined envelopes comprise first and third sheets of paper and a shorter, second sheet of paper between an end portion of said sheets. The three sheets are connected along their ends and sides to form the mailable envelope. The third sheet carries, on the side opposed to the first sheet, a message and a transversely extending line of protected sealing material. When the first sheet and the desired amount of the third sheet are removed, the second and the remainder of the third sheet constitute the return envelope which is ready to receive a return message and to be sealed and mailed.

Background of the invention

This invention relates to the stationary art and is particularly concerned with a business form which includes connected mailable and return envelopes requiring no manual assembly by the sender and only removal of discardable parts and insertion of a return message and sealing of the return envelope by the sendee.

Heretofore, it was customary for business houses, for example, insurance companies, stores and the like, to send out statements of sums due, but not enclose an envelope for the remittance. More recently, return envelopes have been enclosed with the statements in mailable envelopes but, while collections were improved thereby to some extent, the assembling of the several parts by the sender was both costly and time consuming, and the return envelopes were easily misplaced or were not available when the customer was in the mood to pay the bill.

Several proposals have been made to avoid the expense and annoyances referred to above but, so far as I know, each of such efforts necessitated a carrying out of formation acts by the sendee or customer to make or prepare the return envelope for mailing. Instructions were incorporated in the mailable envelope for the customer to follow in carrying out the steps of forming the return envelope. In all such instances it was easy to ignore or misunderstand the instructions or improperly to form the sheets and thus spoil the return envelope. The necessity of carrying out these forming operations were not only annoying to the sendee or customer but represented additional work and attention by the customer.

The present invention aims to provide a business form which includes a combined mailable envelope carrying a concealed message or statement of account and a return envelope. If desired, the business form may also include file copies of the same message. Also if desired, the return envelope may carry a concealed message. The mailable envelopes include discardable parts

which may be detached by the sendee, leaving the return envelope ready to be supplied with a return message and sealed. The necessary file copies for the sender, and the sendee or customer are prepared by the sendee and any concealed message in the return envelope may be filed by the sender. The return envelope is not liable to be detached, lost or spoiled prior to the time of use and sendee is called upon to perform only the simplest acts. Thus annoyance to the customer and a loss of the return envelope are avoided and the sendee is relieved of all except the simplest acts in using the return envelope.

The present invention will be better understood by those skilled in the art from the following specification taken with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a plurality of business forms embodying the present invention detachably connected together in an elongated strip;

FIG. 2 is a diagrammatic side view of one of the forms of FIG. 1, with the several sheets of the form spaced apart;

FIG. 3 is a top plan view of one of the forms of FIG. 1 showing the propelling tabs partly detached and data typed on the top sheet;

FIG. 4 is a top plan view of the mailable envelope constituting a part of FIGS. 1-3 in the process of being opened by the sendee;

FIG. 5 shows the envelope of FIG. 4 after being opened by the sendee and removal of the top sheet thereof;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the return envelope of FIG. 5 showing a check about to be inserted therein;

FIG. 7 is an exploded, perspective view of the envelope of FIG. 4; and

FIG. 8 is a view similar to FIG. 2 but showing a modified form of the invention.

FIG. 1 shows an elongated strip 1, consisting of a plurality of superimposed sheets of paper, which form a plurality of identical business forms or units 3. The strip 1 is transversely perforated, as at 5, to make it easy to detach units 3 from one another. Strip 1 carries at its edges punched propelling stubs 7 which may be readily separated from the remainder of the strip by reason of perforations 9.

FIG. 2 shows the several sheets of a unit 3 in spaced apart position. It will be understood that, if desired, two of the sheets may be omitted with the result that the business form consists of only the new combined mailable and return envelope which also embodies the present invention.

In FIG. 2, five sheets of paper are shown, designated, respectively, as first sheet 11, second sheet 13, third sheet 15, fourth sheet 17 and fifth sheet 19. The fourth sheet 17 is provided on its top surface with spaces, collectively designated by numerals 20 and 21 on each end portion for messages which are also to be reproduced within the combined envelopes. Also, the fourth sheet 17 has a space for the address of the sendee. The fourth sheet 17, when employed, is detached from the remaining sheets before the mailable envelope, consisting of first sheet 11, second sheet 13 and third sheet 15, is mailed and the fourth sheet 17 may be divided into substantially equal parts by being separated along weakened line 22 and one portion may be used as a file copy by the sender and the other portion may serve as a file copy for some interested person, for example, the agent in case the units 3 are used by an insurance company.

The fifth sheet 19 is a blocking sheet and is positioned over and is substantially coextensive with the second sheet 13 to prevent the appearance of the message 20 on the top surface of the first sheet 11. This fifth sheet 19 is removed when the fourth sheet 17 is removed.

FIG. 3 shows one of the forms 3 of FIG. 1 after messages 20 and 21 have been applied to fourth sheet 17 and

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with the stubs 7 partly removed. One corner of fourth sheet 17 is raised to expose part of the first sheet 11.

FIG. 4 shows the combined envelopes 25 of FIGS. 1-3 after the fourth and fifth sheets 17 and 19 have been removed. As FIG. 4 indicates, the face of envelope 25 bears the addresses of the sender and the addressee and a place for a postage stamp. At the postage stamp end, the envelope 25 has detachable stubs 27 connected to each of the first and third sheets by removal of which the addressee may gain access to the interior of the envelope. At its other end, dots of adhesive 29 are indicated which connect the opposed surfaces of the first sheet 11 and second sheet 13. Dots of adhesive, indicated at 31, connect the sides of first sheet 11 and third sheet 15 between stubs 27 and the adjacent end of second sheet 13. Line 32 of adhesive connects the ends of the first and third sheets adjacent to a perforated line 34. When the envelope is opened, as by removing stubs 27, the first sheet 11 may be detached from the second and third sheets and discarded.

As FIG. 2 shows, third sheet 15 carries on the surface opposed to first sheet 11 a transversely extending strip of sealing material 33 and this sealing material is protected by a covering, for example, strip of tape 35. A line of perforations 37 extends across the third sheet 15 on one side of the sealing material 33 so that the third sheet may be readily separated along that line of perforations leaving a portion of the third sheet 15 which bears the sealing material 33 to be folded over the second sheet 13 so that the sealing material may adhere to the upper surface of the second sheet 13 and seal the return envelope.

FIG. 5 shows the combined envelope 25 after it has been opened by the addressee by removal of stubs 27 and the removal of the first sheet 11 of that envelope. The return envelope is shown at 41 and includes the second sheet 13, which bears the address of the sender and has a place for a postage stamp on its upper surface and the underlying part of the third sheet 15. The second sheet 13 and the third sheet 15 are connected by a line of adhesive 43 which extends across the end and along the sides of the third sheet 15 and, hence, connects the second and third sheets along three sides of the second sheet, leaving the fourth side of that sheet free from the third sheet 15 near the middle of the latter and adjacent to the sealing material 33. The remaining portion 45 of the third sheet 15 may serve as a file copy for the addressee since it may carry reproduction 21a of the message 21 which was applied to the part of the fourth sheet 17 thereabove.

After the addressee has opened the mailable envelope 25, as by removing stubs 27 and first sheet 11, and has detached portion 45 of the third sheet 15, the return envelope 41 is ready to receive a return message and to be sealed for mailing. FIG. 6 shows the envelope with a check 46 being inserted in envelope 41 at its open end adjacent to the sealing material 33 from which the masking material 35 has been removed.

FIG. 7 shows the combined envelopes of FIG. 2 in exploded view. It will be noted in this figure that, if desired, the message 20 which was placed on the fourth sheet 17 of the business form unit 3 may appear within the envelope 25 and this message may be utilized by the sender upon receipt from the addressee by simply opening the envelope along its sides. In this manner the return envelope may be used for filing purposes.

It is to be noted that certain of the sheets of the business form or unit 3 are composed of NCR paper or another similar, carbonless paper by means of which a message may be produced on one sheet by an impact or pressure creating instrument applied to an opposed sheet. Such paper is commonly referred to by the term "NCR paper" and that term is employed herein in its usual sense that one sheet of paper bears a pigment-carrying coating on the side opposed to another sheet and that the other sheet has reproduced thereon a message having the course or character traced by an impact or pressure applying in-

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strument to the pigment-carrying sheet. A sheet may be coated (1) on its face, (2) on its back, or (3) on both face and back. Coated sheets are used which will reproduce a message on the desired surfaces of other sheets and blocking paper or desensitizing ink are used to prevent the reproduction of the message on a certain sheet or part thereof. Any suitable means may be employed to produce messages on the third sheet 15, such as a typewriter which types the messages 20 and 21 on fourth sheet 17. In this instance, sheet 17 is coated on its back or lower surface but blocking sheet 19 carries no coating and prevents the appearance on sheet 11 of the message on the left hand half of sheet 17. Sheet 11 carries coating material on both front and back and desensitizing ink (not shown) is printed on its front beneath the message 21 on the right hand half of sheet 17. That ink is not printed on the address portion of sheet 11. Sheet 13 is coated on the back, if the message 20 is to appear on sheet 15, and sheet 15 carries coating on its face. Thus messages 20 and 21 printed on sheet 17 will not appear on sheet 11 but the address of the addressee will appear on that sheet. Both messages 20 and 21 will appear on sheet 15 and these messages will be made invisible from the outside of the mailable envelope, as by the printed masking on the sides of sheets 11 and 13 opposed to sheet 15. This masking may consist of closely spaced lines through which typing therebeneath will not be legible.

FIG. 8 shows a modified form of the invention which is similar in certain respects to that of FIG. 2.

The business form of FIG. 8 consists of six sheets. Sheets 17a, 19a and 11a are quite like sheets 17, 19 and 11 of FIG. 2. Sheet 13a is quite like but somewhat longer than sheet 13 of FIG. 2 and sheet 15a is quite like sheet 15 of FIG. 2 but does not include as large a right hand end portion and is provided with a strip of sealing material 33a adjacent to its free end.

Sheet 17a is coated on the back only and sheet 19a is uncoated. Sheet 11a is coated on the front and back and desensitizing ink is printed on the face of sheet 11a above the space for the addressee's address. Sheet 13a is not coated at all, unless the message on sheet 17a is to appear on sheet 15a beneath sheet 13a, in which event sheet 13a is coated on its back. Sheet 15a is coated on its front only.

The short portion 45a of sheet 15a may be folded over and sealed to the face of sheet 13 by sealing material 35a after removal of the masking tape therefrom.

The business form of FIG. 8 includes a sheet 26 which is additional to the five sheets of the form shown in FIG. 2. This sheet 26 bears coating material on face and back and is positioned between sheets 11a and 13a and serves as a file copy of the message which is imprinted on the face of sheet 17a and part of which is to appear on the face of sheet 15a.

Sheets 11a, 26 and 13a are connected together by dots of adhesive 31a similar to the connections 31 of FIG. 2. Sheets 13a and 15a are connected by a line of adhesive 43a similar to the connection of 43 of FIG. 2.

Having thus described this invention in such full, clear, concise and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains to make and use the same, and having set forth the best mode contemplated of carrying out this invention, I state that the subject matter which I regard as being my invention is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in what is claimed, it being understood that equivalents or modifications of, or substitutions for, parts of the above specifically described embodiment of the invention may be made without departing from the scope of the invention as set forth in what is claimed.

What is claimed is:

1. A combined mailable and return envelope assembly comprising a first, a second, and a third sheet of paper of equal width arranged in superposed position with a first end edge of each sheet in alignment,

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said second sheet being shorter than said first and said third sheets so that the second end edge of said second sheet is not in alignment with the second end edges of said first and third sheets, with said first sheet adhesively joined to said second sheet only at said first end edge in a manner to allow easy detachment of said first sheet from said second sheet and said second sheet adhesively joined to said third sheet along said first end edge and along both the side edges whereby said second sheet and said third sheet form said return envelope,

said first sheet and said third sheet being adhesively joined together along their respective second edges and along both of their side edges from their second end edges to the second end edge of said second sheet thereby forming said mailable envelope and a perforated line formed on said first and third sheets between said second end edge of said second sheet and said joined second end edge of said first and third sheets thereby forming a single detachable stub which when removed permits access to the interior of said mailable envelope and easy detaching of said first sheet from said return envelope.

2. An envelope assembly as recited in claim 1 wherein said third sheet includes a strip of sealing material extending parallel to said second end edge between said perforated line and said second end edge of said second sheet and includes a removable protective covering means extending over said sealing material.

3. An envelope assembly as recited in claim 1 further including: a fourth and a fifth sheet of paper arranged in

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superposed position on said first sheet and a detachable stub connected to the end edges of all of said sheets, said fourth sheet serving as a file copy and having spaces for messages and said fifth sheet positioned between said fourth and said first sheet to prevent the appearance of the message on said fourth sheet from appearing on said first sheet whereby detaching said stub frees said fourth and fifth sheets from said mailable envelopes.

4. An envelope assembly as recited in claim 2 wherein said second sheet is substantially smaller than said first and third sheets and wherein said third sheet further includes a line of perforations between said strip of sealing material and said second end edge and the portion of said third sheet thereinbetween has a message, said portion being retained by the sender of the return envelope by detaching said portion at said line of perforations on said third sheet.

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DAVID M. BOCKENEK, *Primary Examiner*.

U.S. Cl. X.R.

229—73

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,428,237

February 18, 1969

James A. Downen

It is certified that error appears in the above identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 6, line 8, after "envelopes" insert -- to permit posting of said mailable envelope --.

Signed and sealed this 31st day of March 1970.

(SEAL)

Attest:

Edward M. Fletcher, Jr.

Attesting Officer

WILLIAM E. SCHUYLER, JR.

Commissioner of Patents