

(12) **UK Patent Application** (19) **GB** (11) **2 425 756** (13) **A**

(43) Date of A Publication **08.11.2006**

(21) Application No: **0508940.4**

(22) Date of Filing: **03.05.2005**

(71) Applicant(s):  
**John David Tradewell**  
**70 Aysgarth Rise, Marton Road,**  
**BRIDLINGTON, York, YO1 7HX,**  
**United Kingdom**

(72) Inventor(s):  
**John David Tradewell**

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service:  
**John David Tradewell**  
**70 Aysgarth Rise, Marton Road,**  
**BRIDLINGTON, York, YO1 7HX,**  
**United Kingdom**

(51) INT CL:  
**B43L 19/00** (2006.01)

(52) UK CL (Edition X ):  
**B6P PW4A PW4B**

(56) Documents Cited:  
**GB 2147561 A** **GB 0776230 A**  
**WO 2000/028855 A1** **US 2686495 A**  
**US 2070048 A** **US 1925388 A**  
**US 1551959 A** **US 1005924 A**

(58) Field of Search:  
UK CL (Edition X ) **B6P**  
INT CL **B43K, B43L**  
Other: **EPODOC, WPI**

(54) Abstract Title: **Text or graphic censoring device**

(57) A portable discrete text or graphic censoring device which can be used to render sections of text or graphics illegible without external assistance to prevent recognition by unauthorised or undesirable persons or systems. The device comprises a holder 2, nib 3 and abrading surface 4. Preferably the component parts are shaped, sized or orientated for specialised applications and may include additional fittings. The surface may be abraded by blades, wires, grains, teeth or protrusions 4 either integral with or attached to the device. A substance held in a reservoir 6 or separate container may be applied to the surface simultaneously with abrasion or separately. The substance may be ink-like to degrade or render illegible the text or graphics. The degree of abrasion may be manually controlled. The component parts may be joined together permanently or temporarily and renewed or replenished as required.

Figure 2A

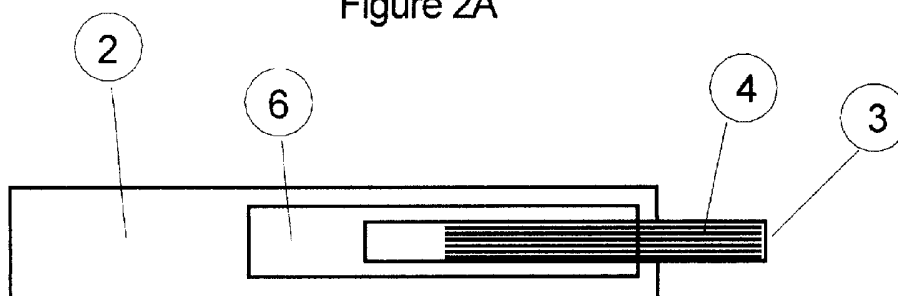


Figure 1A

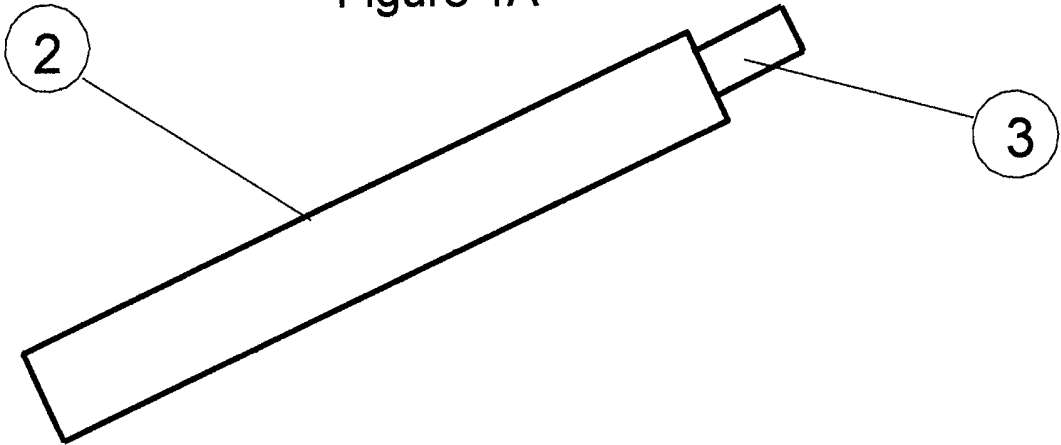
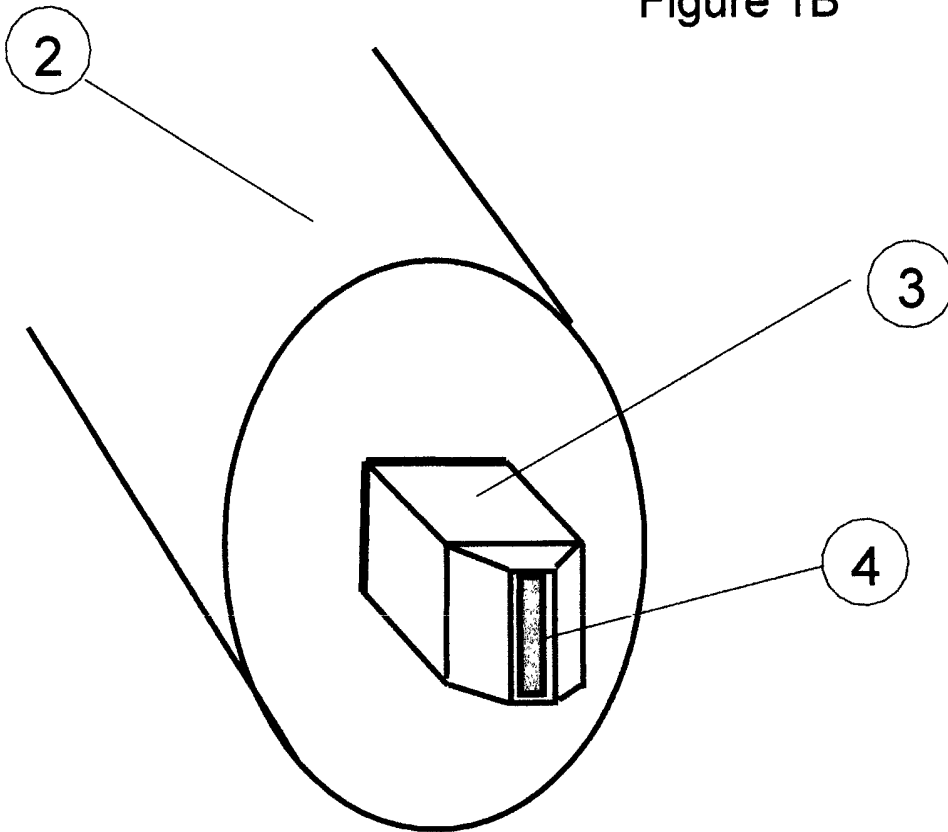


Figure 1B



2 / 4

Figure 2A

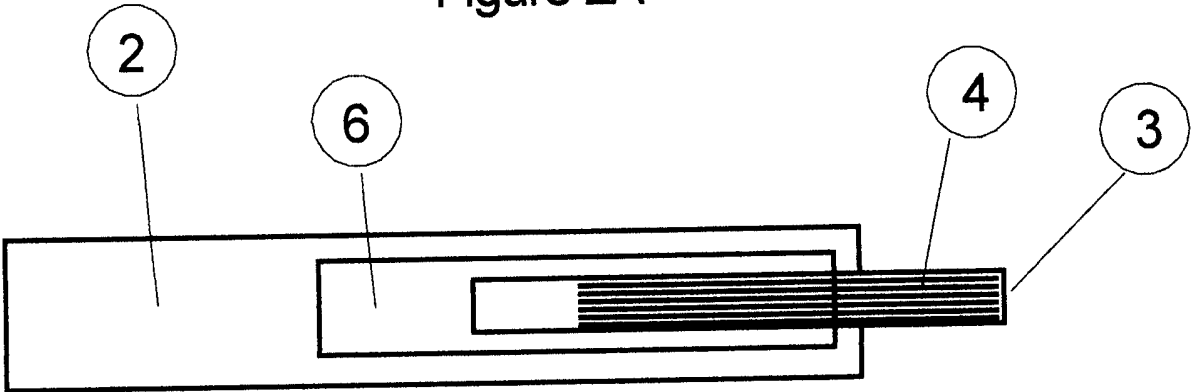
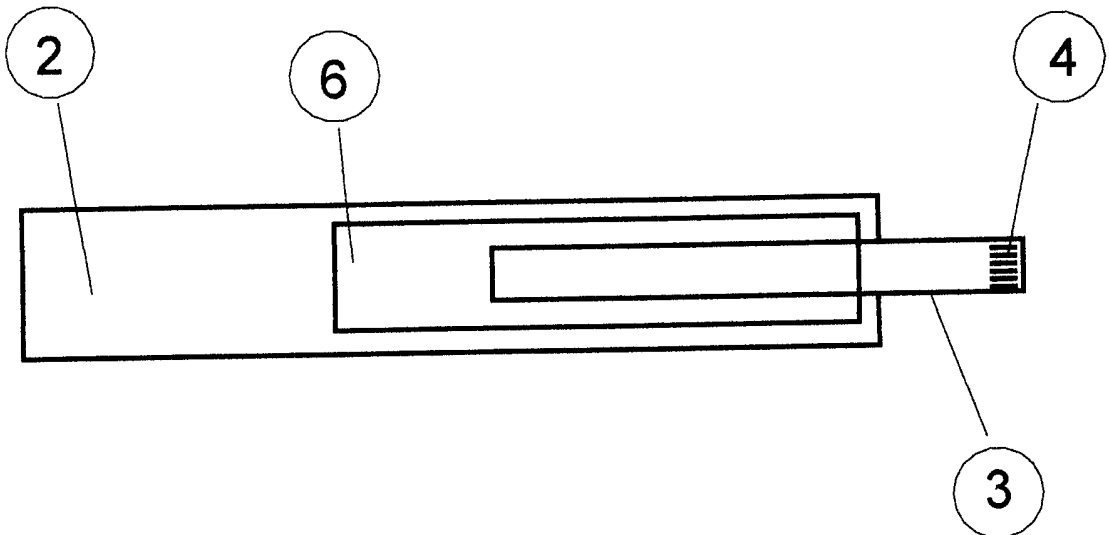


Figure 2B



3 / 4

Figure 3A

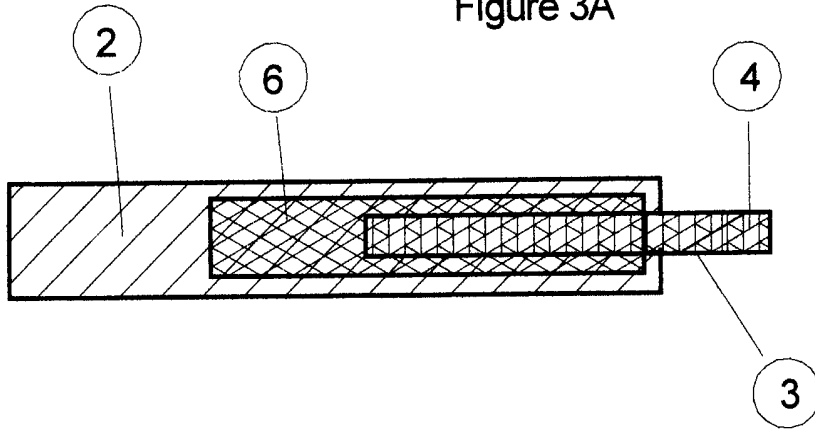


Figure 3B

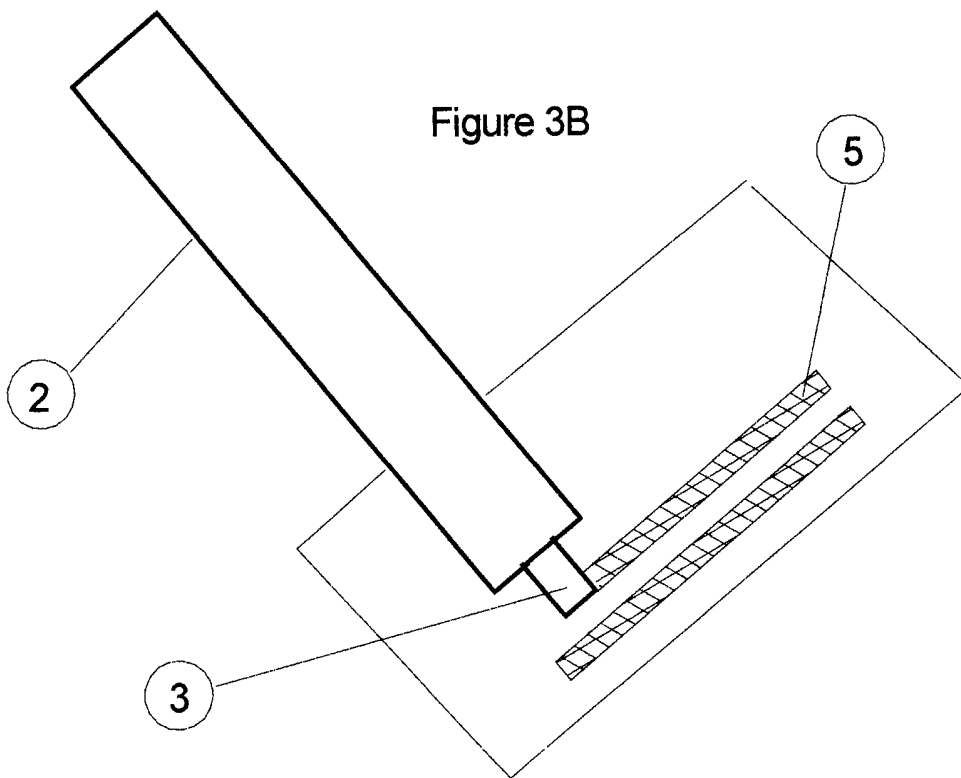


Figure 4A

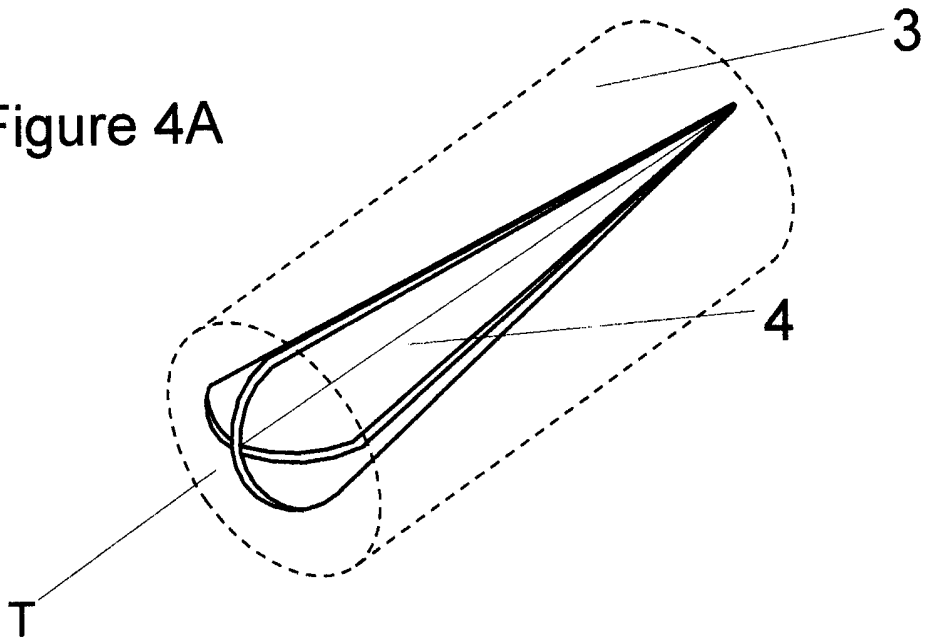


Figure 4B

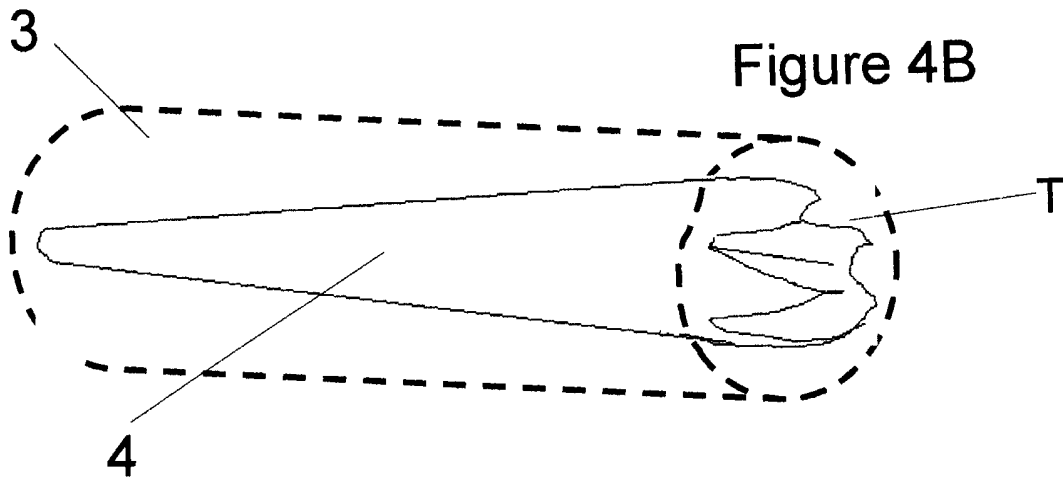
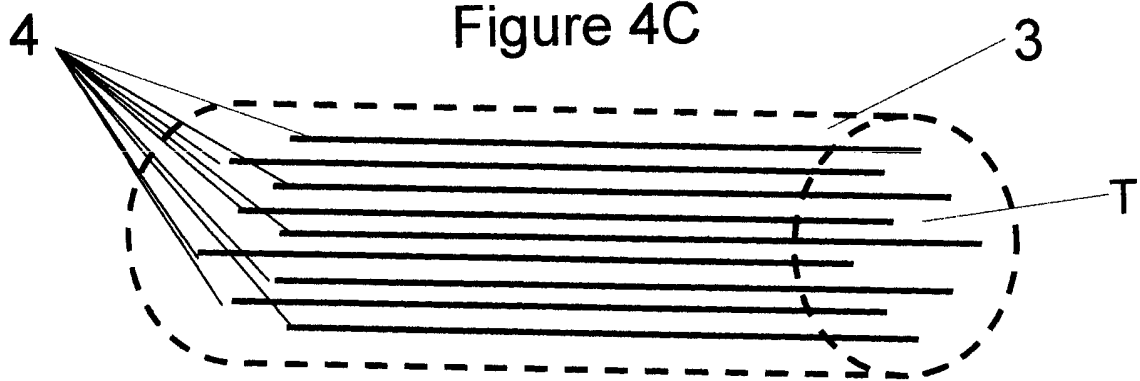


Figure 4C



**Text / graphic Censoring Device****DESCRIPTION**

This invention relates to a handheld Device for use in discretely allowing the user to destroy the legibility of printed text or graphics in order to prevent their being recognized or read thereafter.

Although the following description refers almost exclusively to use of the Device for rendering conventionally printed text and graphics illegible, it will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art that derivations of the present invention can also be used to destroy the legibility of almost any substantially two-dimensional art, markings or text applied to almost any surface or medium and by almost any means.

Currently there is no convenient way to render illegible, selected confidential information within a document whilst leaving other text unaffected and preserving the whole document intact for reference.

Personal and confidential information contained within printed material is increasingly misappropriated and/or used unlawfully or in a manner detrimental to the rightful owner or custodian. Typically, this practice is widespread in the offence known as 'identity theft'.

It is commonly required for documentation containing sensitive information to be retained by the rightful owner for reference purposes and is therefore vulnerable to theft, copying or duplication. However, it is usually only necessary to retain such documents for their general information content and not for their identifying information or particularly sensitive data. Examples of this type of documentation are financial statements, invoices and legal correspondence etc. Furthermore, there arises the inevitable question of how to dispose of the said documents once their legitimate use is finished. The only available methods by which sensitive documents may be sufficiently destroyed or rendered illegible prior to disposal are multiple cut close shredding or incineration.

The means by which both aforesaid measures can be invoked are, by their very nature inconvenient, relatively costly and cumbersome, lacking portability, requiring operational skill and additional external resources and posing attendant risk to person and property. The most significant impediment however, to the use of currently available methods is inconvenience – particularly where relatively small quantities of documents or text are involved.

Obviously, destruction of the total document/s, renders them unavailable for reference with consequent inconvenience. A further disadvantage of shredding is the potential re-construction of a destroyed document by a determined thief or other unauthorized person.

A perceived alternative to destruction of the document or artwork concerned may be to mark the required confidential section/s with an indelible pen or ink-like substance in some way. In the majority of such cases however, the text or graphics in question may still be recognizable by a determined examiner using methods including the use of strong light and viewing from the reverse of the document or text surface.

Particularly for those most at risk from so called 'Identity Theft', the requirement is for a means of quickly and readily safeguarding individual or small quantities of relatively infrequently handled documents.

What is required is an easy to operate, fully portable and flexible method of rendering completely illegible only those portions of print, text or graphics considered to pose a confidentiality or security risk whilst leaving the remainder of the document or artwork intact and legible.

It is therefore an aim of the present invention to provide a Device which would enable anyone possessing common basic skill to readily treat selected sections of graphics or text to render them illegible whilst leaving the remainder of the text unaffected.

According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a pen-like Device containing an ink-like substance discharged through a nib which is fitted with a means of abrading the printed surface to which the nib and thereby the ink-like substance is applied.

The said pen-like Device comprises a container optionally holding an ink-like substance to which is fitted at least one nib through which the ink-like substance if provided flows as required. A close fitting nib cover in the form of a cap is optionally provided to shield the nib from unwanted contact, damage or drying of the ink-like substance etc. The nib is fitted with an integral means of scratching abrading or penetrating the printed surface to which it is applied when in operation.

In use, the Device is operated in a similar way to a conventional hand-writing pen by its application as many times as necessary to the selected text or graphics until the desired degree of illegibility is achieved. Repeated use upon the same location and/or the application of a certain force may result in the effective destruction of the immediate area of application.

Illegibility of the text or graphics treated by the Device is achieved partially or wholly by application of the integral means of abrasion or in conjunction with an opaque ink-like substance.

Preferably the shape and size of the ink-like substance container would render it suitable for comfortable and easy hand-held use in the same manner as a conventional hand held writing instrument.

In one embodiment of the Device, the means of abrading the printed surface is an integral part of the nib and forming part of the inherent construction thereof.

In a further embodiment of the Device, the means of abrading the printed surface is in the form of some suitable material is detachably attached or inserted into the nib either at the discretion of the user or during the manufacturing process.

In a further embodiment of the Device, no ink-like substance or other coloured marking medium is provided, the necessary treating of the surface concerned being affected simply by the abrading means contained within or upon the Device.

In a further embodiment of the Device, the precise number, type and level of engagement of the abrading means and/or the amount and type of marking ink-like substance applied (if provided), is totally or partially under the manual control of the operator, thus allowing a wide freedom of use.

In a further embodiment of the Device, the number, type and level of engagement of the abrading means and/or the amount and type of ink-like substance applied (if provided), is semi-automatic and dictated by the pressure applied by the operator or by other means of control.

In a further embodiment of the Device, the body of the Device, precise nature of the abrading means, the ink-like substance (if provided) and optional selection controls may be dictated by and designed to suit a particular application with specific requirements.

In a further embodiment of the Device, the ink-like substance supplied may be in the form of a solid, liquid, powder or gel with corrosive or otherwise destructive properties which is especially deigned to chemically attack the text, graphic or surface medium to which the Device is applied.

In a further embodiment of the Device, there may be provided a plurality of nibs, each convenient for a specific type of application by virtue of its size, shape, means of abrasion and ink-like substance (if provided).

Preferably the means of abrading the printed surface is arranged in such a way as to be essentially level with the normal surface of the nib and become effectively progressively exposed to the surface during application of the nib.

In any embodiment of the Device, the means of abrading the printed surface may comprise one or more forms or items of suitable material whether provided as an integral part of the nib or introduced as separate attachments or inserts.

Preferably, the ink-like substance (if provided) within the Device is of a relatively fast drying, indelible type of a dark colour, thus adding to the function of illegibility.

Principal operation of the Device is entirely under the control of the operator and its effects can be infinitely varied dependant upon the nature of the text or graphics to be obliterated, the surface upon which they are printed, the degree of pressure applied by the user and the number of times the Device is applied to any specific text or graphic.

Operation of the Device is almost identical to that which might be used by an operator to mark (indelibly or otherwise) or to highlight a portion of text or graphics in the way currently accepted and employed on a daily basis. The essential difference between the foregoing and the effects of the Device described herein is that the proposed Device seeks to render any treated text or graphics completely illegible to even the most determined examiner.

Dependant upon the nature of the printed surface, if it is desired to merely render the text or graphic visually illegible whilst preserving the fundamental nature of the said printed surface, then the number of applications and the pressure applied thereby can be minimal and not substantially more than required to conventionally mark or highlight. If however, it is desired that the section containing the text or graphics in question be destroyed, then a small number of repeated applications will cause complete destruction of the immediate printed surface thereby. In the case of a typical paper or suchlike surface, this action will cause sufficient physical abrasion to effect actual disintegration of the surface so treated.

Preferably the main structure of the Device, acting as both the handle and the ink-like substance (where provided) container would be formed from a light, non-toxic, durable material of a size and of a suitable material for an operator to handle easily or be receptive to the addition of a suitable handling means.

The application of a typical embodiment of the Device would entail the operator applying the nib or abrading material of the Device to the text or graphic to be obscured and rubbing the said nib or material over the surface concerned. The pressure thus applied to the printed surface would cause the abrading means to score, scratch, cut, shred or otherwise abrade the surface whilst the ink-like substance (if provided) will flow onto the same local area as that addressed.

Thus it can be seen that the ability of the present invention to secure the confidentiality of printed, written or otherwise created text or graphics lies principally in its ability to allow physical degradation of the surface so printed with the optional addition of an ink-like substance or other coloured substance if desired.

It will be apparent to any person skilled in the art that variations of any combination of type, relative size, structure, orientation, shape or attachment or arrangement thereof of the body, nib and/or abrading means may be constructed in order to specifically treat certain combinations of surfaces, types of text or to accommodate particular circumstances.

Embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying figures wherein:

Figure 1A is a perspective view of a Device according to one embodiment of the present invention showing main body or holder 2 and nib 3 comprising, containing or housing abrading means;

Figure 1B is an enlarged perspective view of the nib 3 showing the means of abrading 4 inset or contained within;

Figure 2A is a sectional (cut-through) diagram of a typical embodiment of the Device showing the placement and position of the abrading or cutting means 4 situated substantially within the nib 3 which is surrounded by or connected with optional ink reservoir 6;

Figure 2B is a sectional (cut-through) diagram of a further embodiment of the Device showing the placement and position of the surface abrading or cutting means 4 situated adjacent the application tip of the device at the extremity of nib 3 which is surrounded by or connected with optional ink reservoir 6;

Figure 3A is a sectional (cut-through) diagram of a further embodiment of the Device showing the placement and position of the surface abrading or cutting means 4 when forming a substantial part of or dispersed throughout the nib material 3 which is surrounded by or connected with optional ink reservoir 6;

Figure 3B is a perspective view of a typical embodiment of the Device in use on a section of text 5;

Figure 4A shows a type of abrasion means 4 comprising a single item that may be provided within nib 3. The extremity T represents the operational surface of the abrading means and which is applied to the surface to be treated.

Figure 4B shows a further single configuration of abrading means 4 substantially contained within nib 3 and indicating the operational extremity T

Figure 4C shows yet another configuration of abrading means 4 wherein the abrading means comprise a number of items 4 – with their respective extremities forming the operational surface T

## **CLAIMS**

- 1. A portable discrete Graphic or Text Censoring Device which can be used to render illegible items or sections of text or graphics readily with no external assistance and with minimal skill for the purpose of preventing the recognition of said text or graphics by unauthorised or otherwise undesired persons or systems.**
- 2. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in Claim 1 wherein any of the component parts may be specially shaped, sized or relatively orientated so as to address the requirements of specialised applications.**
- 3. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein any of the component parts are provided with additional fixed, moving or removable fittings so as to best accommodate the skill level, disposition or circumstances of those operating the Device.**
- 4. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the means of abrading or physically affecting the surface operated on may be any one or a combination of a number of provisions capable of affecting the said surface including blades, wires, granular inclusions, teeth or protrusions of any material construction either forming an integral part of the Device itself or attached separately.**
- 5. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the means of abrading the surface operated upon, if not an integral part of the Device or a separate attachment, may be attached by any suitable means including friction, adhesives, welding, mechanical fastenings or special fittings.**
- 6. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the main body of the Device or separate container may contain a substance which is applied to the surface operated upon either simultaneously with the act of abrasion or separately.**
- 7. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the ink-like substance if provided is of a suitable composition so as to aid in the degradation or rendered illegibility of the printed surface addressed by the Device.**

Claims cont:

8. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the degree of abrasion or illegibility caused to the printed surface is controlled by the operator via a combination of the strength and repetition of application together with optional control if provided of the means of abrasion.
9. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein component parts of the Device may be fastened together either permanently or temporarily by any means compatible with expedient manufacture or efficient performance.
10. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the desired objective may be obtained by the employment of one or several Devices either operated together or independently
11. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the desired objective may be obtained by the joining together of several Devices whether temporarily or otherwise.
12. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein the Device is provided with one or a plurality of means for storing, carrying or displaying the Device when not in use.
13. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device as claimed in any preceding Claim wherein provision is made whereby any or all attributes of the Device can be renewed or replenished as required.
14. A Graphic or Text Censoring Device substantially as described herein with reference to Figures 1A to 3B of the accompanying drawings.



For Innovation

**Application No:** GB0508940.4

**Examiner:** Stephanie Parry

**Claims searched:** 1 to 14

**Date of search:** 14 August 2006

**Patents Act 1977: Search Report under Section 17**

**Documents considered to be relevant:**

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X	1, 2, 4, 8, 12, 13	US 1925388 A (HUTTER) Figs, page 1 lines 1-12, page 2 lines 46-54 and 82-87
X	1, 2, 4, 6 to 8, 10, 12, 13	GB 776230 A (LADEUZE) Figs, page 1 lines 12-36
X	1, 2, 4, 8, 12	US 1551959 A (KLEIN) Figs, page 1 lines 8-25
X	1, 2, 4, 8, 12	GB 2147561 A (SHERLOCK) Figs, page 1, col 1 lines 1-10, col 2 lines 4-13
X	1, 2, 4, 8, 12, 13	US 2686495 A (HUTTON) Figs, col 1 lines 1-13, 31-45
X	1, 2, 4, 8, 12, 13	US 1005924 A (BALDWIN) Figs, page 1 lines 10-16, 49-54, page 1 line 103 to page 2 line 3
X	1, 2, 4, 8, 12	US 2070048 A (HENDERSON) Figs, page 1, col 1 lines 8-33, page 2 col 1 line 69 to col 2 line 7
X	1, 2, 4, 8, 12	WO 00/28855 A1 (BRESLIN) Figs, page 2 lines 8-18

**Categories:**

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application



For Innovation

**Field of Search:**

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC<sup>X</sup> :

B6P

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC

B43K; B43L

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report

EPODOC, WPI