

[54] **ARTICLE HOLDER FOR EXTERIOR OF BOX FOR CONTAINING MAIL OR THE LIKE**

[76] Inventor: **Henry Carl Voegeli**, 918 Gibbs Rd., Venice, Fla.

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[58] Field of Search **232/33, 17, 39; 24/263 SB, 67.3; 248/231, 226 E, 204, 361 A**

[56] **References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

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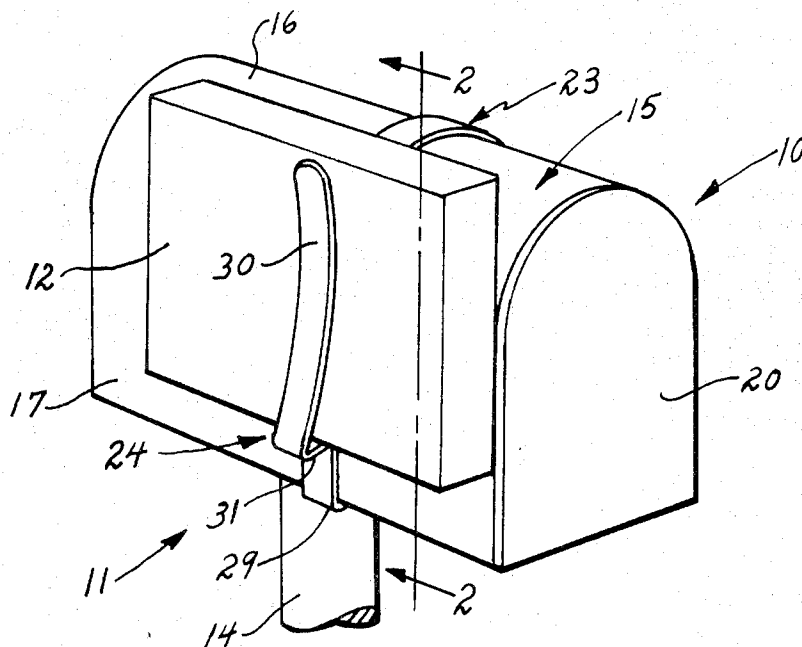
Primary Examiner—Francis K. Zugel
Attorney—Harry B. O'Donnell, III et al.

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ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a device for holding an article, such as a package, periodical or the like, that can be readily connected to the exterior of a box for containing mail or the like, having at least two spaced apart, generally parallel, protruding surfaces. Basically, the device comprises: a band having a first end that is hooked for engagement with one of the protruding box surfaces and a second end that can be extended about the box toward a second one of the protruding box surfaces; a lever-like handle having a first end that is hooked for engagement with the second one of the protruding box surfaces, a distal end opposite its hooked end and a pivotal area intermediate its hooked and distal ends; and yieldable means for interconnecting the second end of the band and the pivotal area of the handle and performing dual functions of connecting the band and handle to the box and also yieldably urging the handle into engagement with the exterior of the box with sufficient force to retain the article therebetween.

10 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



ARTICLE HOLDER FOR EXTERIOR OF BOX FOR CONTAINING MAIL OR THE LIKE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to boxes for containing mail and the like, and, more particularly, to a device that can be connected to such boxes to hold an article, such as a package, periodical or the like, on the exteriors thereof.

Heretofore, various prior-art devices have been contrived for attachment to a mailbox to hold packages and periodicals to the box exterior. One extremely simple form of such prior-art devices is described in detail in U.S. Pat. No. 1,071,082, which issued to F. R. Peck on Aug. 26, 1913. While Peck's holder means are quite simple in that they comprise merely a single, continuous wire-like holder, the holder deteriorates rather rapidly and soon loses its resilience in service. And, although U.S. Pat. No. 1,024,266, issued to V. C. Koons on Apr. 23, 1912, describes a more substantial holder device than that of Peck and utilizes a pivoted holder arm that is yieldably urged against the box exterior by a tension spring, the Koons base member must be permanently attached to the box exterior by rather complex fastener means, including six rivets.

The present invention provides a novel article holder device for this purpose that is improved over these aforementioned prior-art devices in operation and ease of connection to the box.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a device for holding an article, such as a package, periodical or the like, that can be readily connected to the exterior of a box for containing mail or the like, having at least two spaced apart, generally parallel, protruding surfaces. Basically, the device comprises: a band having a first end that is hooked for engagement with one of the protruding box surfaces and a second end that can be extended about the box toward a second one of the protruding box surfaces; a lever-like handle having a first end that is hooked for engagement with the second one of the protruding box surfaces, a distal end opposite its hooked end and a pivotal area intermediate its hooked and distal ends; and yieldable means for interconnecting the second end of the band and the pivotal area of the handle and performing dual functions of connecting the band and handle to the box and also yieldably urging the handle into engagement with the exterior of the box with sufficient force to retain the article therebetween.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The present invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a somewhat schematic fragmentary elevational perspective view of a typical rural-type mailbox having a presently preferred embodiment of the present invention connected to its exterior and holding a package thereto;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken along line 2—2 of FIG. 1, but showing the package removed; and

FIG. 3 is an exploded, perspective view of the elements forming the presently preferred embodiment of the device of the present invention illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Turning now to the drawing, and more particularly to FIGS. 1 and 2 thereof, there is illustrated a typical box 10 for containing mail and the like, having a presently preferred embodiment of a novel device 11 that is provided in accordance with the present invention connected to its exterior and holding an article 12, such as a package, periodical and the like, thereto.

The device 11 has particular utility for holding articles which are too large to be contained within the interior of the box 10.

As further shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the box 10 is a typical rural-type mailbox having a bottom wall 13 that is mounted generally horizontally atop an upright post 14 which is, in turn, seated in the ground. The box 10 further includes an arched portion 15 which forms its top 16 and its left and right side-walls 17 and 18 which are interconnected to the bottom wall 13 by a permanent rear wall 19. The front of the box 10 has an access opening (not shown) through which mail and the like can be inserted into the box interior and which is provided with a bottom-hinged closure member 20 shown in its closed position.

As further shown in FIG. 2, the box 10 has two spaced apart generally parallel, protruding surfaces 21 and 22 which protrude generally vertically from the bottom of the box 10 and are respectively formed by downward extensions of its left and right sidewalls 17 and 18.

As best shown in FIG. 3, the presently preferred embodiment of the holder device 11 of the present invention consists of only three basic elements: a band 23; a lever-type handle 24; and yieldable means, such as a tension spring 25.

As further shown in FIGS. 1-3, the band 23 has a first end 26 that is hooked for engagement with one of the protruding box surfaces (the right one 22 as illustrated) and a second end 27 having an aperture 28 through it that can be extended about the box 10 toward but spaced apart from a second one of the protruding box surfaces (the left one 21 as illustrated).

The lever-like handle 24 has a first end 29 that is hooked for engagement with the second one of the protruding surfaces (the left one 21 as illustrated), a distal end 30 opposite from its hooked end 29 and a pivotal area 31 that is located intermediate its hooked and distal ends 29 and 30 and is provided with an aperture 32.

The opposite ends of the yieldable means or tension spring 25 are provided with hooks 33 and 34 which are respectively passed through the apertures 28 and 32, to interconnect the second end 27 of the band 23 and the pivotal area 31 of the lever-like handle 24 and to perform dual functions of readily removably connecting the band 23 and handle 24 to the exterior of the box 10 and also yieldably urging the distal end 30 of the lever-like handle 24 towards engagement with the exterior of the box 10 (its top 16 and left sidewall 17 as illustrated) with sufficient force to retain the article 12 therebetween as shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 2 shown the retracted or empty position of the holder device 11 in solid lines, while indicating in shadow lines the extended or article-receiving position to which the distal end 30 of the lever-like handle 24 can be easily manually moved by an operator against the yieldable retractive force of the yieldable means 25.

It should be apparent that while there has been described what is presently considered to be a preferred embodiment of the present invention in accordance with the Patent Statutes, changes may be made in the disclosed apparatus without departing from the true spirit and scope of this invention. It is, therefore, intended that the appended claims shall cover such modifications and applications that may not depart from the true spirit and scope of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A device for holding an article, such as a package, periodical, and the like, that can be readily connected to the exterior of a box for containing mail and the like having at least two spaced apart, generally parallel, protruding surfaces, comprising:

- a. a band having a first end that is hooked for engagement with one of said surfaces and a second end that can be extended about said box toward a second one of said surfaces;
- b. a lever-like handle having a first end that is hooked for engagement with said second one of said surfaces, a distal end opposite its hooked end and a pivotal area intermediate its hooked and distal ends; and
- c. yieldable means for interconnecting said second end of said band and said pivotal area of said han-

dle and performing dual functions of connecting said band and handle to said box and also yieldably urging said handle into engagement with the exterior of said box with sufficient force to retain said article therebetween.

2. The invention of claim 1, wherein said yieldable means comprises spring means.

3. The invention of claim 2, wherein said spring means comprises a tension spring.

4. The invention of claim 3, wherein said surfaces are generally vertically protruding.

5. The invention of claim 3, wherein said protruding surfaces comprise downward extensions of the left and right sides of said box.

6. The invention of claim 5, wherein said box is a rural-type mailbox.

7. The invention of claim 1, wherein said surfaces are generally vertically protruding.

8. The invention of claim 1, wherein said protruding surfaces comprise downward extensions of the left and right sides of the said box.

9. The invention of claim 8, wherein said box is a rural-type mailbox.

10. The invention of claim 1, wherein said box is a rural-type mailbox.

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