

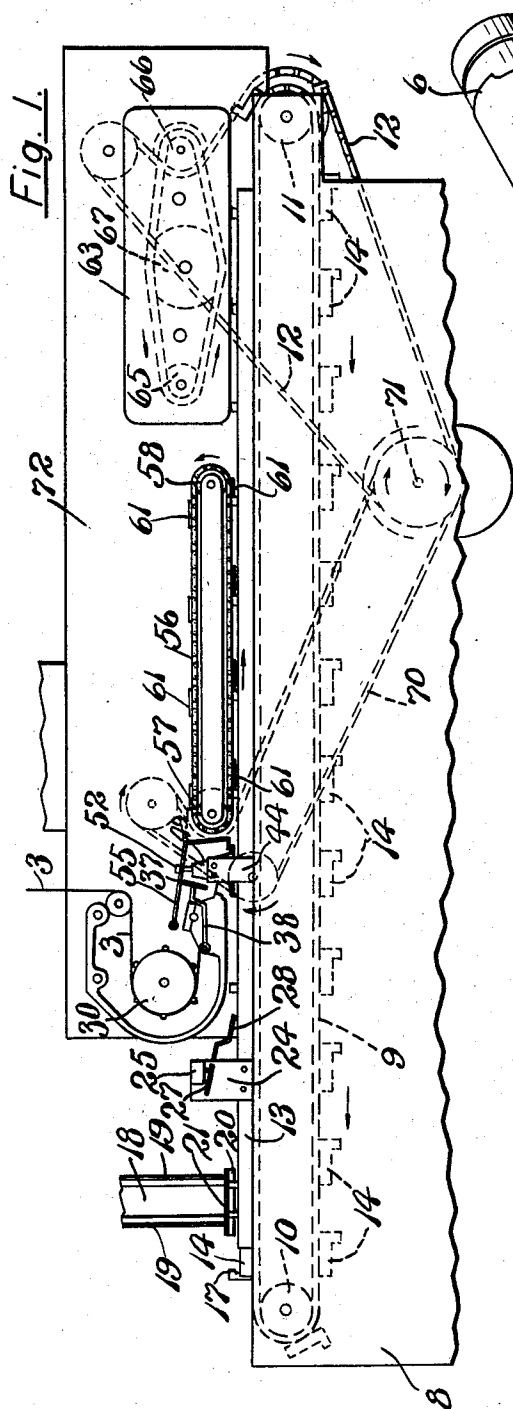
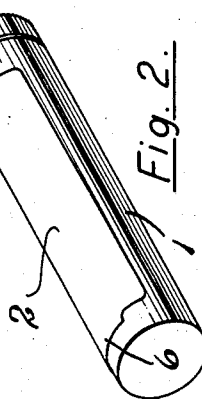
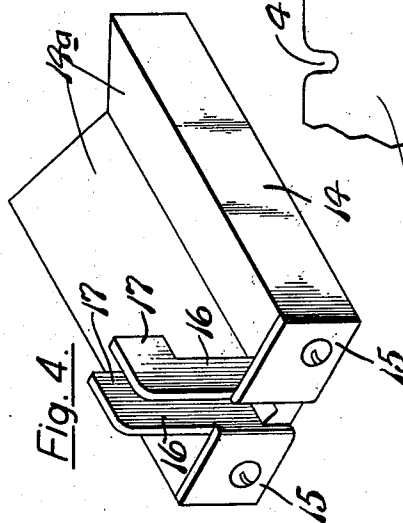
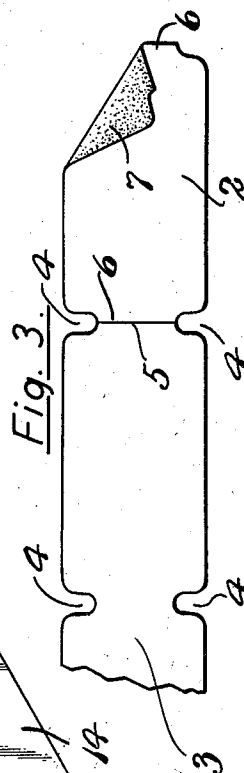
Dec. 16, 1958

H. B. TUTHILL
LABELING MACHINE

2,864,522

Filed May 7, 1956

8 Sheets-Sheet 1



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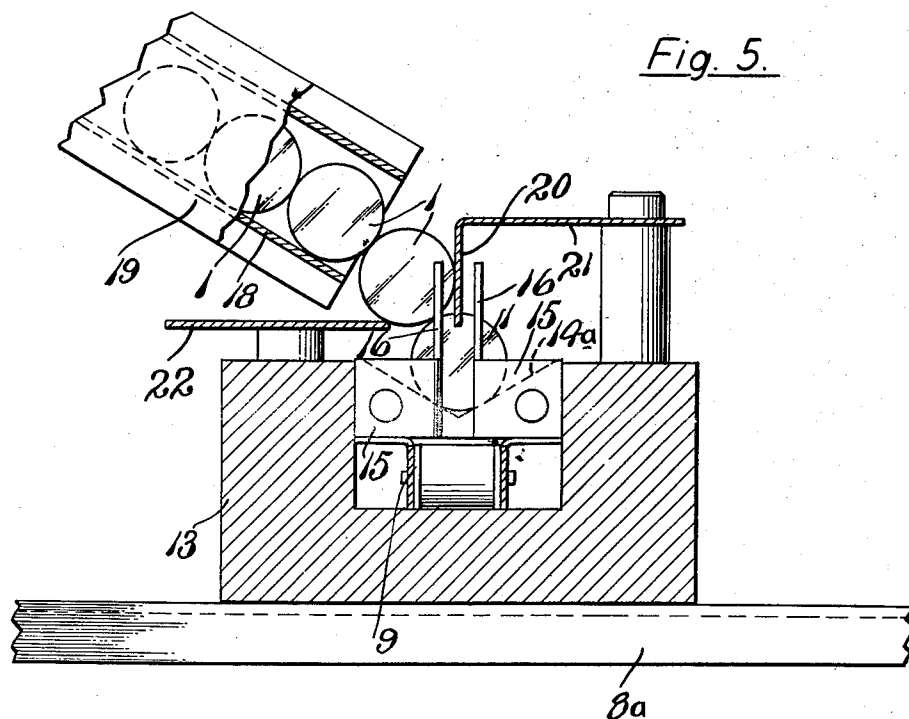
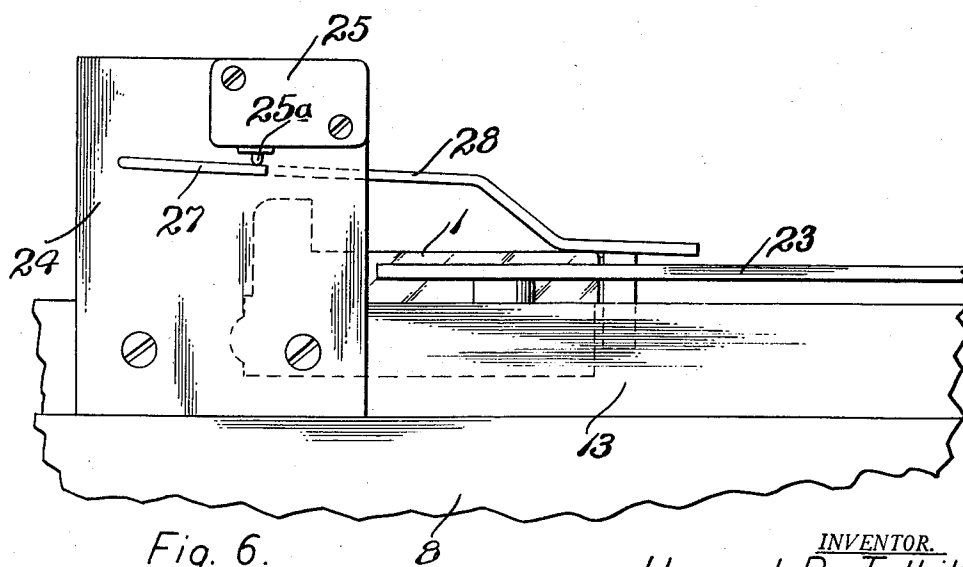
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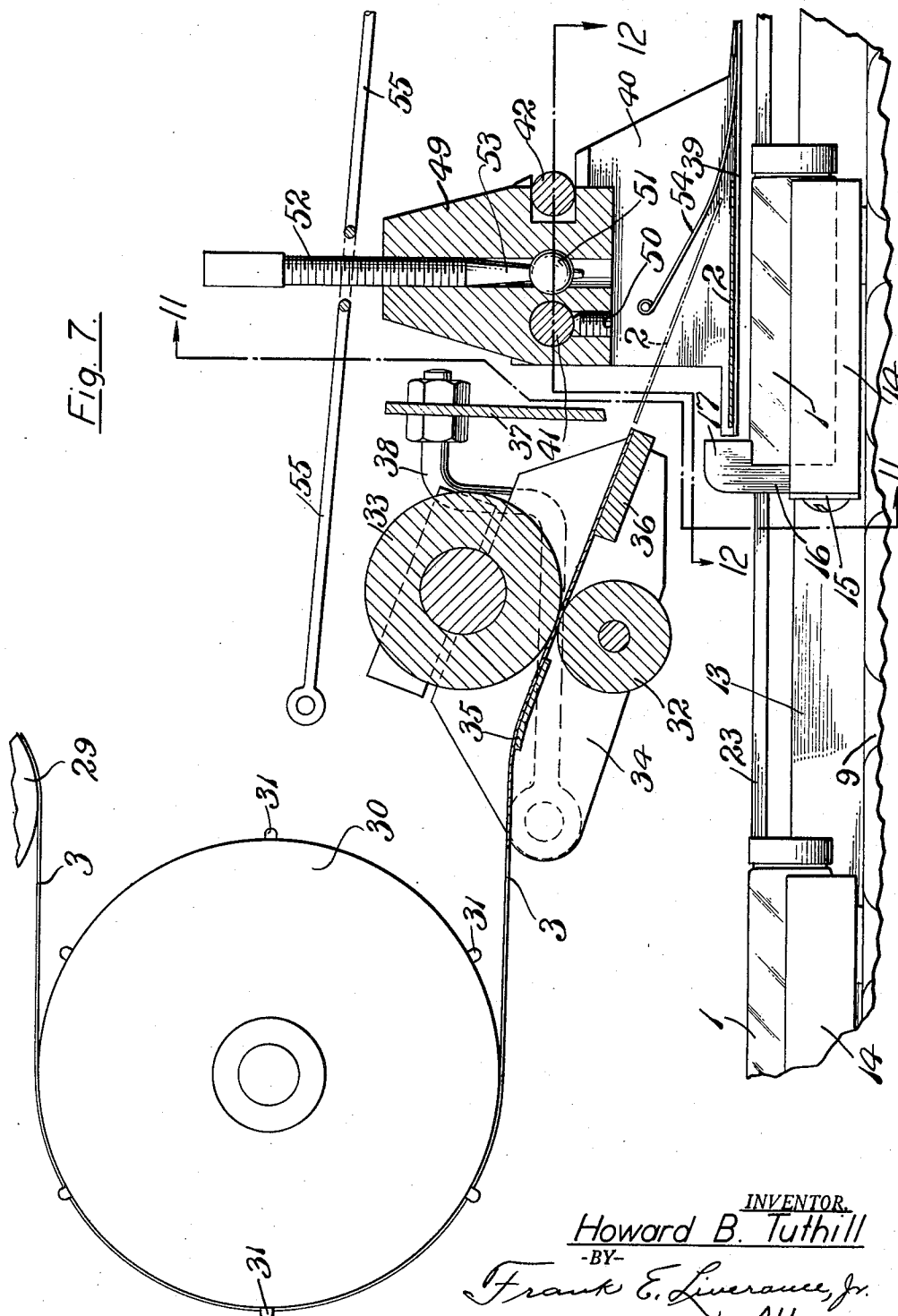
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8 Sheets-Sheet 3



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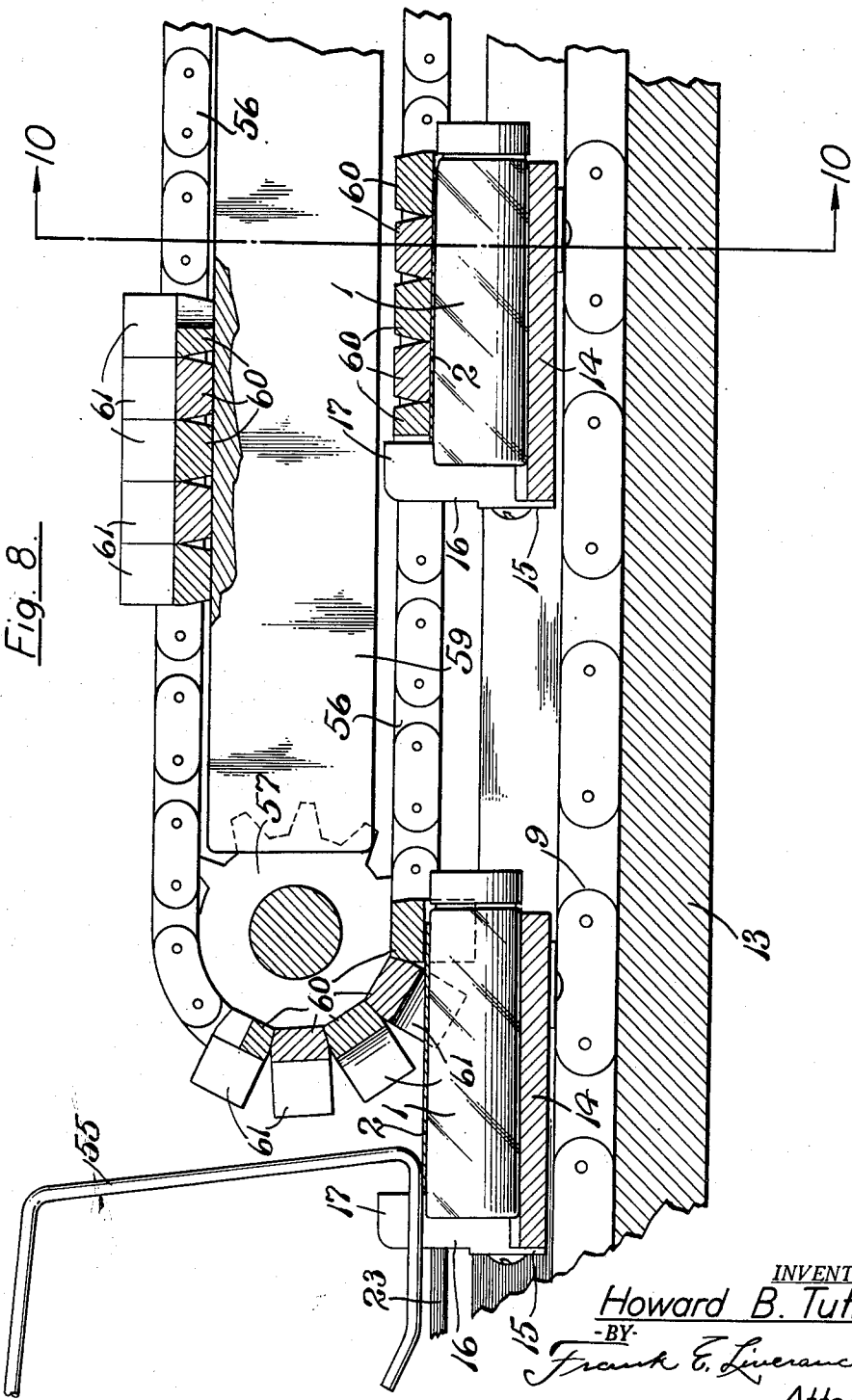
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8 Sheets-Sheet 4

Fig. 8.



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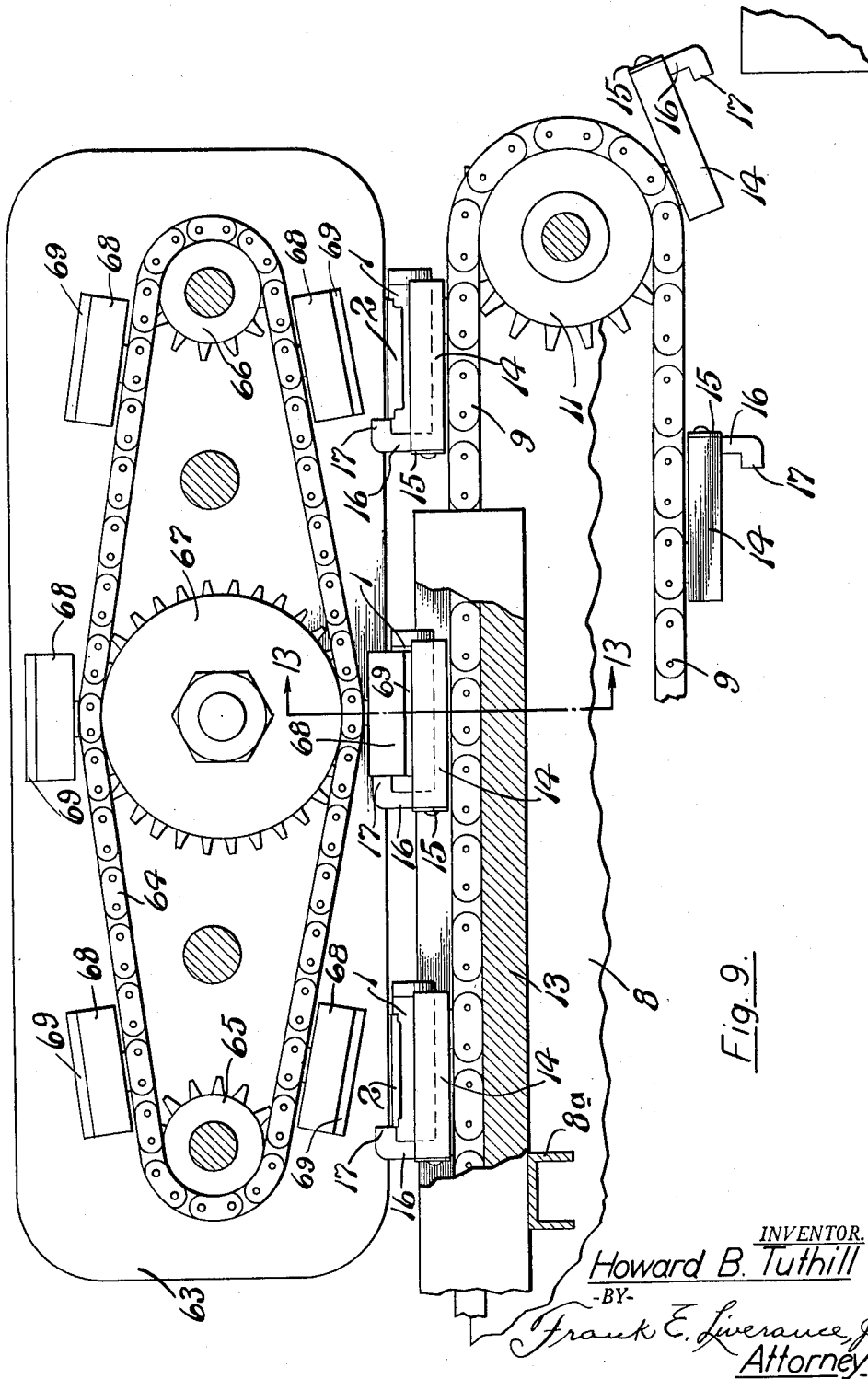


Fig. 9.

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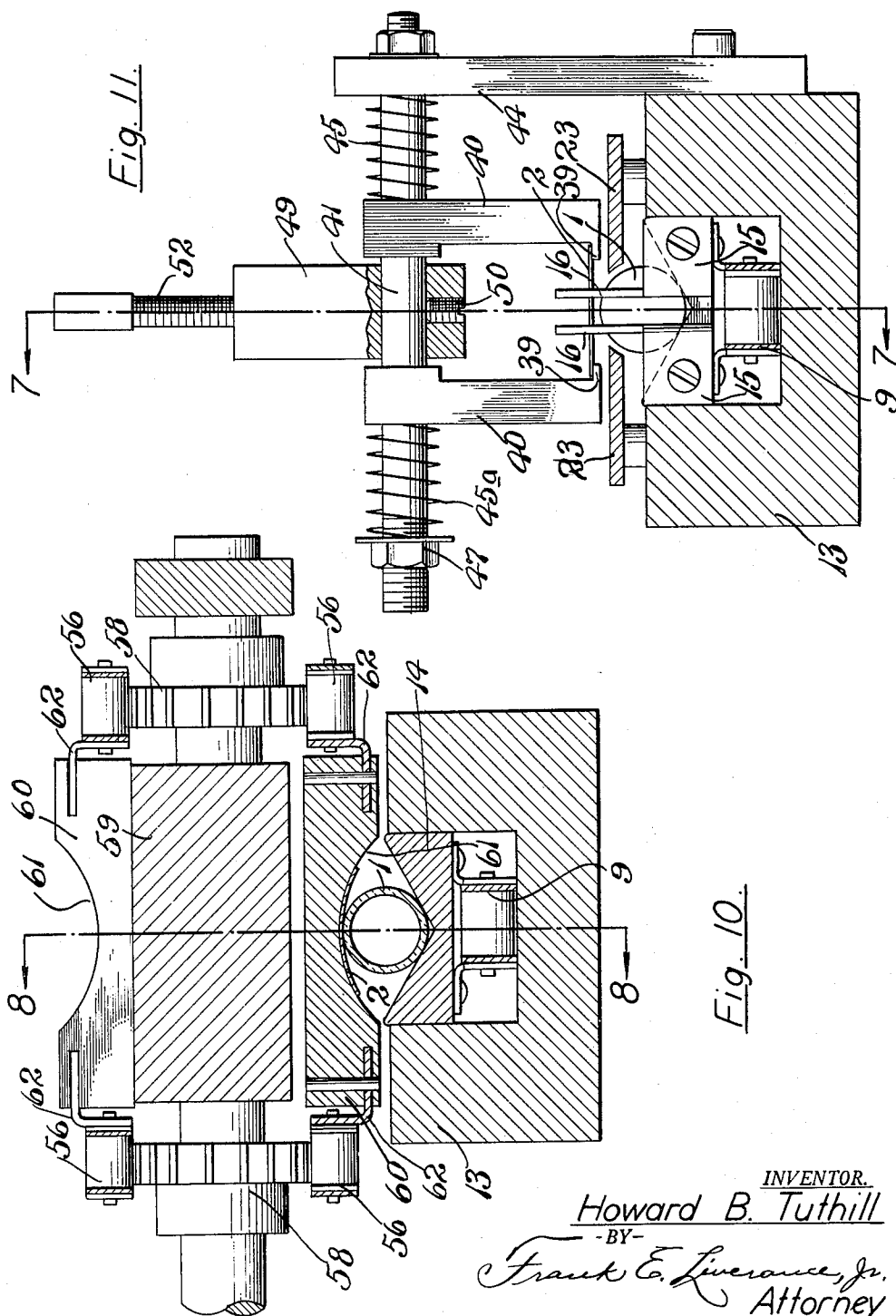
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Fig. 12.

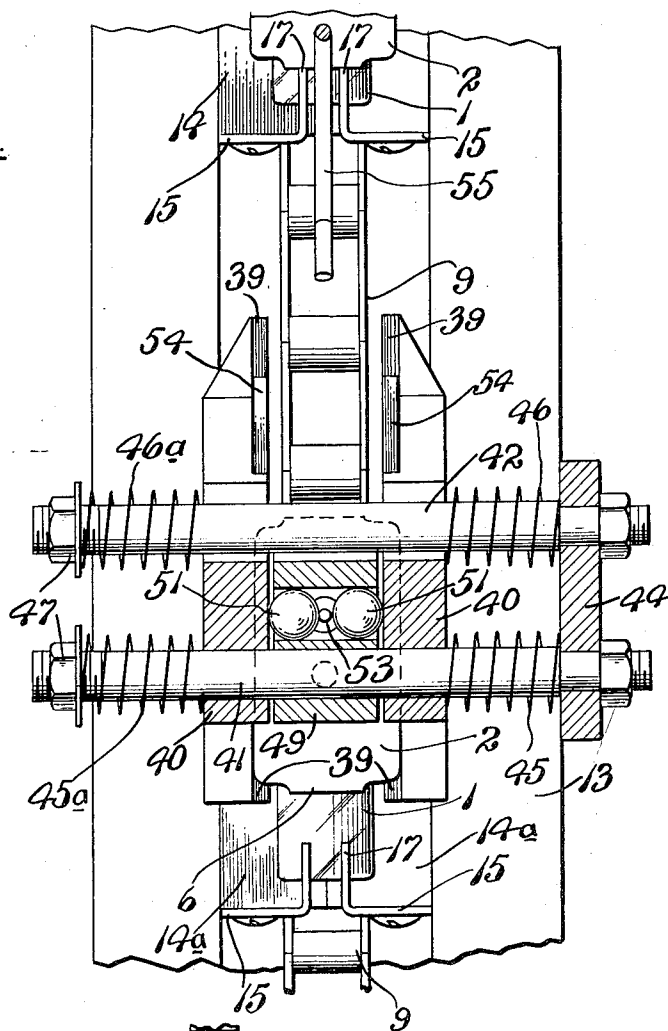
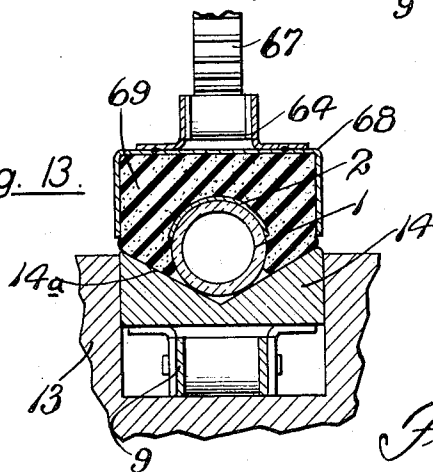


Fig. 13.



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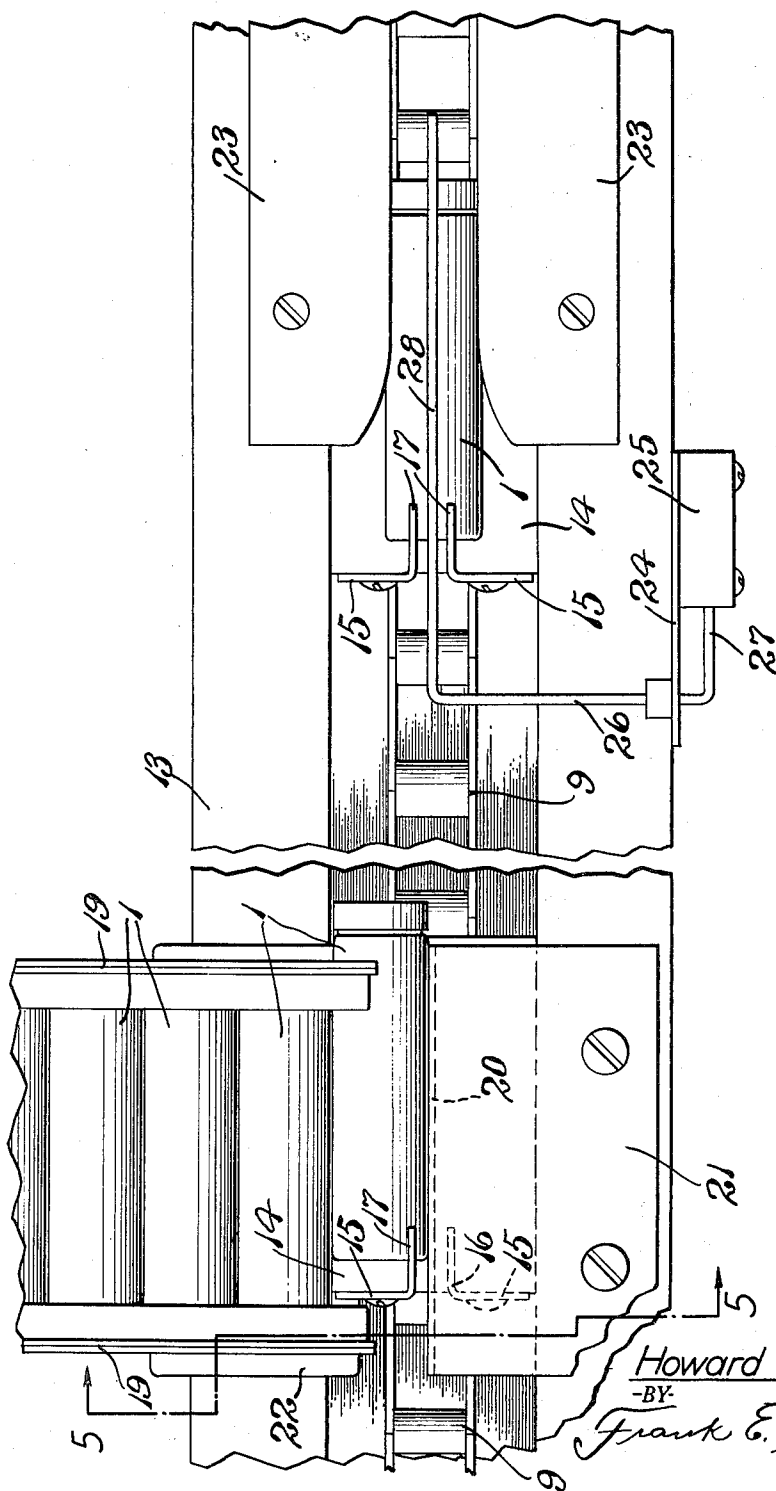
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8 Sheets-Sheet 8



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2,864,522

LABELING MACHINE

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Application May 7, 1956, Serial No. 583,036

12 Claims. (Cl. 216—29)

This invention relates to a novel and extremely useful and practical label attaching mechanism primarily directed to the rapid attachment of labels to small bottles, vials and the like, which may be circular in cross section, or be generally rectangular in cross section with rounded corners, the labels extending to and being cemented to such rounded corners as well as intermediate flat portions of the bottles, and in general for cementing labels to the outside of bottles not only of the cross sections stated but to any bottles on surfaces of which the labels are placed and secured.

The high quantity cementing of labels to the outer surfaces of bottles and, in general lengthwise thereof, has heretofore been difficult so that in practice the securing of the labels in place has been relatively slow. With my invention the bottles are carried on an endless conveyor being deposited one after another on spaced individual carriers for the bottles. As they are moved horizontally and in the direction of their lengths a label is deposited lengthwise on each bottle, cemented lengthwise thereof between its opposite side edge portions, the cementitious material on the free longitudinal edge portions being softened and rendered tacky, followed by the immediate pressing down of such free longitudinal edge portions against the bottle or vial. A label is attached to each bottle or vial securely and is properly positioned with its side edges parallel to the longitudinal axis of the bottle and with its end edges properly spaced and positioned with reference to the lower and upper ends of the bottle, there being obtained a substantially uniform label attachment to the bottles and with high quantity production of label attachment.

A structure embodying my invention by means of which the stated functions and results are obtained is disclosed in the following description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, in which,

Fig. 1 is an elevation of the label attaching machine at relatively small scale.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a small bottle or vial with a label attached thereto illustrating one bottle form to which labels may be attached with my invention.

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary plan of a continuous label strip from which the labels in succession are individually severed.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of a bottle or vial carrier, a plurality of which are secured in space relation to each other on an endless conveyor in the label attaching machine.

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary enlarged transverse vertical section through the guiding track for such conveyor at the loading station of the machine, substantially on the plane of line 5—5 of Fig. 14, the vials being shown as moving by gravity downwardly in a delivery chute for the bottles, located at a side of such guiding track and conveyor.

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary enlarged elevation of the automatic switch control which is operated by each bottle as it passes for starting the label depositing mechanism

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in operation immediately before the bottle reaches the position of label deposit.

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary enlarged longitudinal section and partial side elevation of the label depositing unit of the mechanism, next beyond the periodic control mechanism therefor shown in Fig. 8, such section being substantially on the plane of line 7—7 of Fig. 11.

Fig. 8 is a similar longitudinal vertical section on the plane of line 8—8 of Fig. 10, and partial side elevation of the mechanism at the stage where the labels are partially cemented in place.

Fig. 9 is a similar side elevation and partial section at the delivery end of the machine showing the unit for completing cementing of the labels.

Fig. 10 is a transverse vertical section substantially on the plane of line 10—10 of Fig. 8.

Fig. 11 is a similar transverse vertical section substantially on the plane of line 11—11 of Fig. 7.

Fig. 12 is a plan view with some parts shown in horizontal section on the plane of line 12—12 of Fig. 7.

Fig. 13 is a fragmentary transverse section on the plane of line 13—13 of Fig. 9; and

Fig. 14 is a fragmentary plan view at the front portion of the labeling machine showing the bottle delivery station of the machine where the bottles or vials are fed one after another to the conveyor thereof.

Like reference characters refer to like parts in the different figures of the drawings.

With my invention small bottles or vials, which may be of a generally cylindrical form indicated at 1 in Fig. 2, have elongated labels 2 cemented lengthwise thereof. Each label 2 of the form shown is one of a continuous length or strip 3 of labels. Such strip at its side edges, at spaced intervals, has inwardly extending recesses 4 (Fig. 3), a label being severed from the strip by a transverse cut at 5 from a recess 4 at one side edge of the strip across to the opposite recess, each label at each end having a short projecting relatively wide tongue 6 as shown. The label strip at its inner or under side is coated with a suitable thermoplastic cementitious material 7 which becomes soft and tacky when heat is applied thereto. It is to be understood that the cylindrical form and circular cross section of the bottles or vials 1 may be varied as the machine which I have invented is not limited to cementing labels solely to such forms or types of bottles. Bottles which are generally rectangular in cross section but with rounded corners may have labels cemented thereto with my machine.

In the structure of the machine, vertical spaced, supporting sides 8 connected by cross members 8a, as many as may be needed, carry an endless chain conveyor 9 which at its opposite ends passes around sprockets 10 and 11, the rear sprocket 11 being on a horizontal shaft which may be driven by a chain 12 from a suitable source of power later described, and which also simultaneously drives other parts of the machine as hereinafter appearing. Such conveyor in the disclosure shown has horizontal upper and lower runs parallel to each other.

The upper run of the conveyor rides in a deep longitudinal groove, rectangular in cross section, in a track or guide 13 which is at the upper portions of the support and is fixed to upper cross members 8a of the supporting frame (Fig. 5), being held securely in rigid relation to and forming a part of the supporting frame of the mechanism.

Lengthwise of the conveyor 9 and spaced from each other equal distances are bottle or vial carriers 14, best shown in Fig. 4. Each is somewhat elongated and generally rectangular in cross section, but with its upper sides inclined downwardly and inwardly to provide converging

surfaces 14a which meet midway between the longitudinal sides of a carriage 14.

At the rear end of each carrier 14 a metal ear 15 is permanently secured, one at each side of the longitudinal center line of the carrier block 14, each at its inner end being bent at right angles to extend forwardly and thence extending upwardly in vertical arms 16 which, at their upper ends, terminate in forwardly extending horizontal ears 17. Such ears 17 and the arms 16 with which they are integrally connected are spaced horizontally from each other as shown in Fig. 4 and constitute indexing elements for both the articles resting on the converging surfaces 14a and the labels deposited on these articles. With the conveyor driven and running at a continuous uniform speed, such carriers passing around the sprocket 10 come to and are guided lengthwise of the track 13, being of a size and shape so that at their upper sides (Fig. 5) they are nearly flush with the upper sides of the track 13 as shown. The parts 16 and 17 extend above such track and above the upper sides of the carriers.

The vials or bottles 1 which are to have labels attached are fed by gravity to the carriers, one after another as they move in the upper run of the conveyor from one end of the machine to the other. The gravity chute down which the bottles or vials move has an upwardly and outwardly inclined bottom 18 (Fig. 5) and sides 19, such feed chute being open at its lower end immediately above and to one side of the guide groove or passage in the track 13. The lowermost vial comes to rest at one side against a vertical flange 20 bent to extend downwardly from a horizontal plate 21 which is fixedly secured to the guide track 13 at the side opposite that at which the delivery chute is located (Fig. 5). The flange 20 is located in a vertical plane substantially coincident with the longitudinal center lines of the carriers 14. The lowermost vial also comes to rest against the inner portion of a horizontal plate 22 below the delivery end of a chute (Fig. 5).

When a carrier comes to a lowermost bottle or vial 1 as thus held, one of the forwardly extending ears 17, that to the left in Fig. 5, is brought against the bottom end of the vial and will move the vial bodily with the conveyor (Fig. 14) in the direction that the upper run of the conveyor is moving until the vial has passed beyond the flange 20 and plate 22, whereupon it will move into the trough at the upper side of the carrier 14 and be centrally disposed between the opposite sides of the carrier. The next lowermost vial in the inclined feed chute will then move down to the position previously occupied by the lowermost bottle, so as to be in position to be removed when the next succeeding carrier comes to it.

After the lowermost bottle or vial 1 has been delivered to a carrier 14 on the conveyor, it is moved with such carrier until it comes to the two spaced horizontal plates 23 (Fig. 14) which, if the bottle is not accurately centrally positioned on the carrier 14, will automatically move the bottle to such position. When in such central position, the end of the bottle which has been engaged by one of the fingers 17 will be lowered sufficiently that such end of the bottle will extend underneath both of the fingers 17 and be engaged at its closed end by the arms 16, occupying the position shown at the right in Fig. 14. Substantially at the time it reaches such position, the bottle in its movements automatically closes a switch which completes a circuit for rendering the label severing and depositing unit operable.

A vertical supporting plate 24 is fastened securely at one side of the guide bar 13 between the carrier loading station and the adjacent ends of the plates 23. On plate 24 a switch enclosing box 25 is permanently secured, having a switch circuit opening and closing member 25a (Fig. 6) extending downwardly. In its lowermost position it is inoperative to close the circuit. An operating lever for such switch includes an intermediate horizontal section 26 mounted for rocking movement on the plate

24, having an arm 27 turned at right angles which extends underneath the movable switch contact member 25a. At the other end of the intermediate section 26 an arm 28 is bent which lies over the bottles passing underneath it. At its free end the arm 28 (Fig. 6) rests upon the bottles as they come to it and is lifted, thereby simultaneously lifting the free end of arm 27 and closing the switch will set the label depositing and severing unit in operation.

Such periodic operating label severing and depositing unit (Fig. 7) is not new but is well known and need not be specifically described in detail. The label strip 3, wound in a roll at 29, is drawn from such roll around the disk 30, which has a plurality of pairs of pins 31, spaced a distance equal to the distance between successive pairs of recesses 4 in the label strip 3. The label strip 3 passes from such disk 30 between rollers 32 and 33 carried on a support 34 and over guiding and severing plates 35 and 36. A cutting or severing knife 37 on arm 38 pivotally mounted on the support 34 is above the plate 35. It is periodically moved downwardly and back again to upper position to sever a label on the line 5 (Fig. 3), the label being shown as it is severed in dot and dash lines in Fig. 7, and in full lines in the lower horizontal position to which it falls after it is severed.

Such actuation of the label depositing unit occurs each time the switch at 25 is closed. There is a cycle of operations which moves the label strip one step only a distance equal to the length of a label and severs it so as to fall to the position shown in Fig. 7. Severing labels periodically at timed intervals by closing an electric circuit switch at the intervals of time required is old and well known to those skilled in the art.

When the severed label falls to its lower position, it is caught and supported by inwardly extending relatively long horizontal flanges 39 (Figs. 7 and 11), one at the lower edge of each of two spaced side members 40 located a distance apart such that the label falls freely between them but is in close proximity to the inner sides of the members 40, the flanges 39 extending toward each other.

Such side members 40 are supported at proper position above conveyor 9 and the bottles or vials passing underneath flanges 39 by horizontal rods 41 and 42 spaced from and parallel to each other which are bolted securely at one end to a supporting plate 44 at a side of and permanently secured at its lower end to the guide track 13. Between such supporting plate 44 and the nearest member 40, light coiled compression springs 45 and 46 are around the rods 41 and 42 while at the free end of each of such rods a washer and nut 47 is carried, between which and the outer side of the opposite member 40 similar coiled compression springs 45a and 46a are located. The action of such springs is to tend to move the members 40 toward each other.

A block 49 of the shape shown best in Fig. 7, at its lower end is located between the side members 40 and extends above them. The rod 41 passes through such block 49 while the parallel rod 42 enters a recess therefor (Fig. 7) and also recesses in conjunction with that in block 49 made in the side members 40. Rod 41 and block 49 are held in fixed relation to each other by a set screw 50. The block 49 carries two balls 51 in horizontal alignment with each other in a horizontal passage bored through such block (Fig. 12). Also a vertical passage is made through the block from its upper to its lower end, interiorly threaded to receive a vertical screw 52, the lower end portion of which is tapered at 53 and passes between the balls 51 (Fig. 7).

It is clear from this construction that the springs 45, 45a, 46, and 46a press the side members 40 against the balls 51 and that such balls 51 may be adjusted by operating the adjusting screw 52 separating them greater or less distances. The set screw 50 may be released to accurately position the block 49 so that the vertical axis of the set screw 52 is directly over the longitudinal center line of a carrier 14 or a label 2 thereon, and thereafter

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by adjusting the balls 51 to greater or less distances apart the side members 40 may be adjusted so that the longitudinal edges of the label 2 will be in close proximity to the sides of such member 40 but will not rub or bind thereagainst.

Upon a label 2 being severed from the label strip 3 and dropping to horizontal position against the flanges 39, it is in the path of movement of the ears 17 which coming against the adjacent end of the label move it in unison with the vial 1. The adjacent end of the bottle being against arms 16 and the end of the label against the ears 17, such label is at a fixed, predetermined distance from the closed end of the bottle and is held parallel to the length of the bottle. In such movement it passes underneath a pivotally mounted, light weight, member 54 (Fig. 7) which, resting upon the label as it passes beneath it, maintains it in flat condition and against aimless movement of any character until the label has passed beyond the free end of the member 54. It does this just as the label at its opposite end reaches the cementing unit of the machine. In order to maintain the label against undesired inadvertent or accidental movement when it passes from the elongated flanges 39 and drops against the upper side of the vial 1, another gravity member 55 also pivotally mounted at one end extends over the label unit and thence down and is formed at its free end as shown in Fig. 8 so as to rest upon and hold the label in proper position with reference to the vial until such time as the vial with the label against its upper side comes to the entrance of the label cementing unit or cementing portion of the machine.

The cementing unit of the machine, beyond the label depositing unit a short distance in the direction of the movement of the conveyor 9, includes endless chains 56 horizontally positioned and spaced from each other and located over the upper run of the conveyor 9. Such chains 56 are carried on front sprockets 57 and rear sprockets 58 on suitable shafts. They go around an elongated heater 59 which is preferably electrically heated and maintained at a substantially constant temperature.

In the length of the chains 56 and extending across between them and secured thereto are a number of series of spaced label heating and pressing members, each series consisting of a plurality of bars 60 which at their outer portions are formed with shallow and relatively long concave recesses 61 (Fig. 10). The bars 60 are connected with the chains 56, there being a sufficient looseness of connection and play permitted that the bars carried by the lower run of the chains 56 will press against a label over a vial 1 (Fig. 10) and in turn press it against such vial. The bars are shaped as shown, being generally trapezoidal in cross section so as to move around the sprockets 57 and 58 without binding and one of the outside bars is slotted as shown to avoid interference with the ears 17 (Fig. 8).

When the series of bars 60, each series forming a label attaching unit, are carried over the elongated heating element 59, bearing and riding thereagainst, heat is transmitted from the heater 59 to such bars, raising the temperature thereof. The bars 60 maintain such temperature until they reach the label 2 (Fig. 8) over the vial which is entering such unit. The label will conform to the concave recess at 61 and will press against a series of the bars, shown as five in number in a series. An intermediate longitudinal zone of the label between its side edge portions and extending from one end to the other where it contacts the upper side of the vial (Fig. 10) is cemented to said vial due to softening of the thermoplastic material 7 at the under side of the label; and those portions of the label which extend away from and not in contact with the vial will have such material softened and rendered tacky.

It is evident (Fig. 1) that this engagement of the bars 60 of a series with a label continues throughout the movement of the lower run of the chains 56 so that by the

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time the bottle or vial with its label partly cemented thereto leaves the heating bars 60 a secure cementing of a lengthwise zone at the middle portion of the label to the bottle or vial has taken place, and the thermoplastic cementitious material 7 at the lower side of the label at those portions which are free of the bottle or vial is in a condition so that upon pressing them against the vial, a cementing of such free portions over their entire surfaces will occur.

Immediately after leaving the lower run of the chains 56 and the heated bars 60 carried thereby, the upper run of the conveyor 9 moves underneath the final label securing unit of the mechanism. Such final unit, best shown in Fig. 9, includes a supporting plate 63 on which an endless chain 64 is carried, at its ends passing around sprockets 65 and 66, with a sprocket 67 of increased diameter midway between the sprockets 65 and 66. The chain 64 is spread farthest apart midway between its ends and converges toward its ends where it passes around the end sprockets 65 and 66.

On such chain a plurality of label affixing shoes are carried in spaced relation to each other, so that one of them comes to a vial and a label at its upper side partially cemented thereto as each of such bottles and labels are moved underneath. Such final cementing shoe consists of a channel housing 68, preferably of sheet metal, which on the lower run of the chain is open at its lower side and is filled with a yielding, compressible and resistant member 69 of sponge rubber or equivalent material. On its under side it is longitudinally grooved midway between its sides to receive and embrace the vial 1 and label 2 thereon as in Fig. 13. Such engagement with and embracing of the vial and label occurs at the lowermost portions of the lower run of the chains 56 underneath the large sprocket 67. The outwardly extending portions of the label at each side free of cemented connection to the vial 1 upon leaving the chains 56 and the heating bars carried thereby, are wrapped or forced or bent into contact with the vial 1 and the softened, tacky, thermoplastic cementing material 7 makes a complete, cemented attachment of the label to the vial.

The shaft which carries the sprocket 65 is driven (Fig. 1) by a chain 70 from the same shaft 71 which drives the chain 12, which in turn drives the conveyor 9. Chain 70 may also operate the label feeding and severing unit at the times it is put into operation by closing switch 25. The label unit, the heater and partial cementing unit, and the final cementing unit may be mounted upon a support 72 fastened to and extending above the upper side of the main frame support 8, 8a of the label attaching machine. The driving shaft 71 for the entire mechanism is to be driven in any suitable manner from any suitable source of power such as an electric motor with reduction change speed gearing between the shaft of the motor and shaft 71, all of such detail being well within the capacity of those skilled in the art and therefore not shown and described.

The label attaching machine shown in the drawings and described in the description is one by means of which labels may be attached to bottles or vials having cylindrical surfaces, this being one of the most difficult surfaces to mechanically cement labels. Of course, label attachment to other surfaces, such as at the side of a bottle which is flat but has rounded corners is also readily performed. The machine also is available in attaching labels to the flat sides of bottles of rectangular cross section where the labels do not reach to corners and bend around them. In other words, the invention as to all of its uses to which it may be put is not to be restricted to the cementing of labels to any one form, or shape or size of a bottle, but is of value in very rapidly cementing labels one after another to various types of bottles or vials.

The invention is defined in the appended claims and

is to be considered comprehensive of all forms of structure coming within their scope.

I claim:

1. A label attaching machine for containers comprising, an endless conveyor having an elongated upper run, means for continuously driving said conveyor, a plurality of spaced container carriers connected and movable with said conveyor, means for delivering containers, longitudinally aligned with the direction of said conveyor, one after another, to successive container carriers, means for depositing a label at the upper side and lengthwise of each container, a member mounted on each of said container carriers and traveling with said containers for positioning the label lengthwise of said container, means for heating said labels and simultaneously pressing the labels against their associated containers, said labels at the sides thereof against said containers having a heat softened adhesive coating, and yielding, resilient means pressing said labels against said containers over the entire surfaces of said labels immediately after said heating of the labels.

2. A label attaching machine comprising, an endless conveyor having an elongated upper run, means for continuously driving said conveyor in one direction, a plurality of spaced container carriers secured to and movable with said conveyor extending above the upper run thereof, means for depositing a container on each of said carriers in succession, one after another, and with said containers parallel to the length of said conveyor, means for depositing a label against the upper side of each container lengthwise thereof, means for heating said labels in succession and pressing them against said containers at an intermediate longitudinal portion of each of said labels, said labels at their sides in contact with the containers having a heat activated adhesive coating, and means to press the longitudinal edge portions of said label against the container after heating said labels, said last mentioned means comprising a generally soft, resilient, cushioning member longitudinally recessed at its under side to embrace a label and upper portion of the associated container, an element for rocking said pressing means parallel to the direction of movement of said conveyor as it embraces said container with said pressing means initially engaging one end of the label and longitudinally thereof progressively engaging the label for yieldingly wiping the lateral edges of the label onto the container and pressing the label over its entire area against said container.

3. In a label attaching machine, a movable carrier for a container having means for holding a container in position thereon for movement in the direction of the length of said container, means for depositing a label having a heat sensitive adhesive coating at its under side against the upper side of the container lengthwise thereof, means for heating the label and pressing it at an intermediate longitudinal zone thereof against said container, and yielding pressing means recessed longitudinally at its under side embracing the upper portion of said container, an element for rocking said pressing means parallel to the direction of said carrier as it embraces said container with said pressing means initially engaging one end of the label and longitudinally thereof progressively engaging the label for wiping the lateral edges of the label onto the container, pressing the label over its entire area against said container, after heating said label.

4. A horizontal endless conveyor, means for continuously driving said conveyor, a plurality of bottle carriers fixed at spaced intervals in the length of said conveyor, each comprising a generally rectangular block, the outer side of which has a surface against which a bottle is adapted to be longitudinally located, and two spaced outwardly extending arms fixed to each bottle carrier at one end thereof, in front of which a bottle is adapted to be placed, said arms, at the outer ends thereof having,

each, a forwardly extending ear adapted to extend over the adjacent end of a bottle carried on the associated carrier.

5. Structure having the elements in combination defined in claim 4, said carrier at its upper side having a generally trough form with downwardly and inwardly converging sides, and an inclined chute, down which bottles are adapted to move by gravity located to one side of said conveyor, a fixed stop against which the lowermost bottle engages at its side, and a plate against which the under side of the lowermost bottle rests, said stop and plate being spaced from each other, and one of said arms and ear thereof passing between said stop and plate to engage against an end of the lowermost bottle and move it with the bottle carrier to which said arm is secured.

6. In a machine for attaching labels to containers, a movable carrier for said containers having a means for holding a container thereon for movement in the direction of the length of said container, an indexing element on said carrier for positioning said container longitudinally of said holding means; means for supporting a label immediately above said carrier; a portion of said indexing element being movable through said holding means for sweeping the label therefrom onto the adjacent container; affixing means for pressing said label about said container.

7. In a machine for attaching labels to containers, a movable carrier for said containers having a first means for holding a container thereon for movement in the direction of the length of said container, an indexing element on said carrier for positioning said container longitudinally of said first means; second means for supporting a label immediately above said carrier; a portion of said indexing element being movable through said second means for sweeping the label therefrom onto the adjacent container; third means pressing against said label and holding it against said container as it is swept from said second means.

8. In a machine for attaching labels to containers, a movable carrier for said containers having a first means for holding a container thereon for movement in the direction of the length of said container, an indexing element on said carrier for positioning said container longitudinally of said holding means; second means for supporting a label immediately above said carrier; a portion of said indexing element being movable through said second means for sweeping the label therefrom onto the adjacent container; a member for heating said label and tacking it to said container; affixing means for wrapping said label about said container; third means pressing against said label and holding it against said container as said label is moved from said second means to said heating member.

9. In a machine for attaching labels to containers, a movable carrier for said containers having a means for holding a container thereon for movement in the direction of the length of said container, an indexing element on said carrier; said indexing element having a first surface for contacting and positioning one of said containers longitudinally of said holding means; an arm for contacting said container and urging it against said first surface; said indexing element having a second surface above said container; means for supporting a label immediately above said carrier; said second surface of said indexing element being movable through said support means for sweeping the label therefrom onto the container contacting said first surface; affixing means for pressing said label about said container.

10. In a carrier for transporting containers one by one through a label applying means while lying in a trough-shaped holder, said label applying means having a member for supporting a label above said carrier, the improvement in said carrier comprising: an indexing element mounted on said holder at the end thereof opposite

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the direction of movement of said holder; said indexing element having a first surface for nesting the end of said container and a second surface above said first surface and forward thereof for nesting the end of a label in said member and urging it out of said member.

11. In a carrier for transporting containers one by one through a label applying means while lying in a trough-shaped holder, said label applying means having a member for supporting a label above said carrier, the improvement in said carrier comprising: an indexing element mounted on said holder at the end thereof opposite the direction of movement of said holder; said indexing element having a pair of first surfaces spaced laterally of said holder for nesting the end of said container and a pair of second surfaces spaced laterally of said holder above said first surfaces and forward thereof for nesting the end of a label in said member and urging it out of said member.

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12. In a holder for supporting containers for labeling, said holder being adapted to be mounted on and movable with a conveyer, the combination comprising: a V-shaped trough adapted to receive a container longitudinally therein; an indexing element mounted at one end of said trough and projecting upwardly therefrom; said indexing element having a lower container contacting and positioning surface; said indexing element also having an upper label contacting and positioning surface offset longitudinally of said trough with respect to said container contacting surface.

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