

[54] LABEL ATTACHMENT MEANS  
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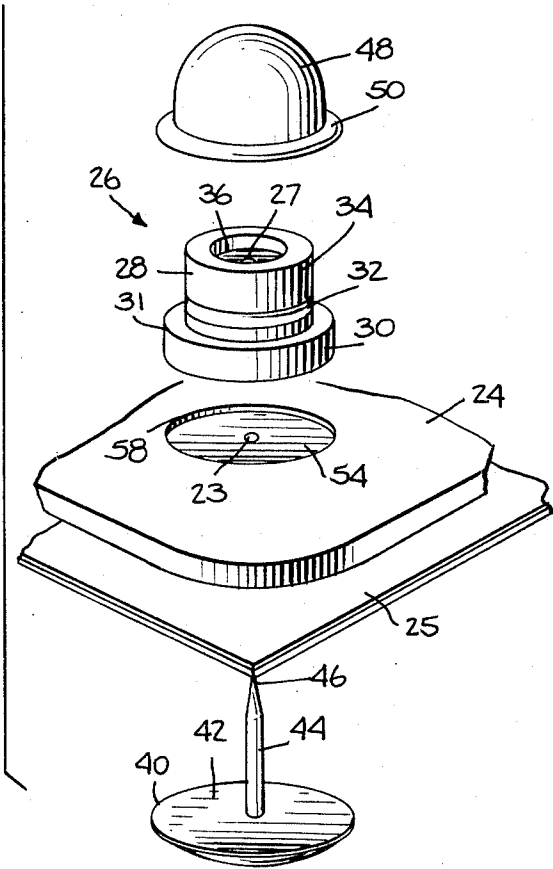
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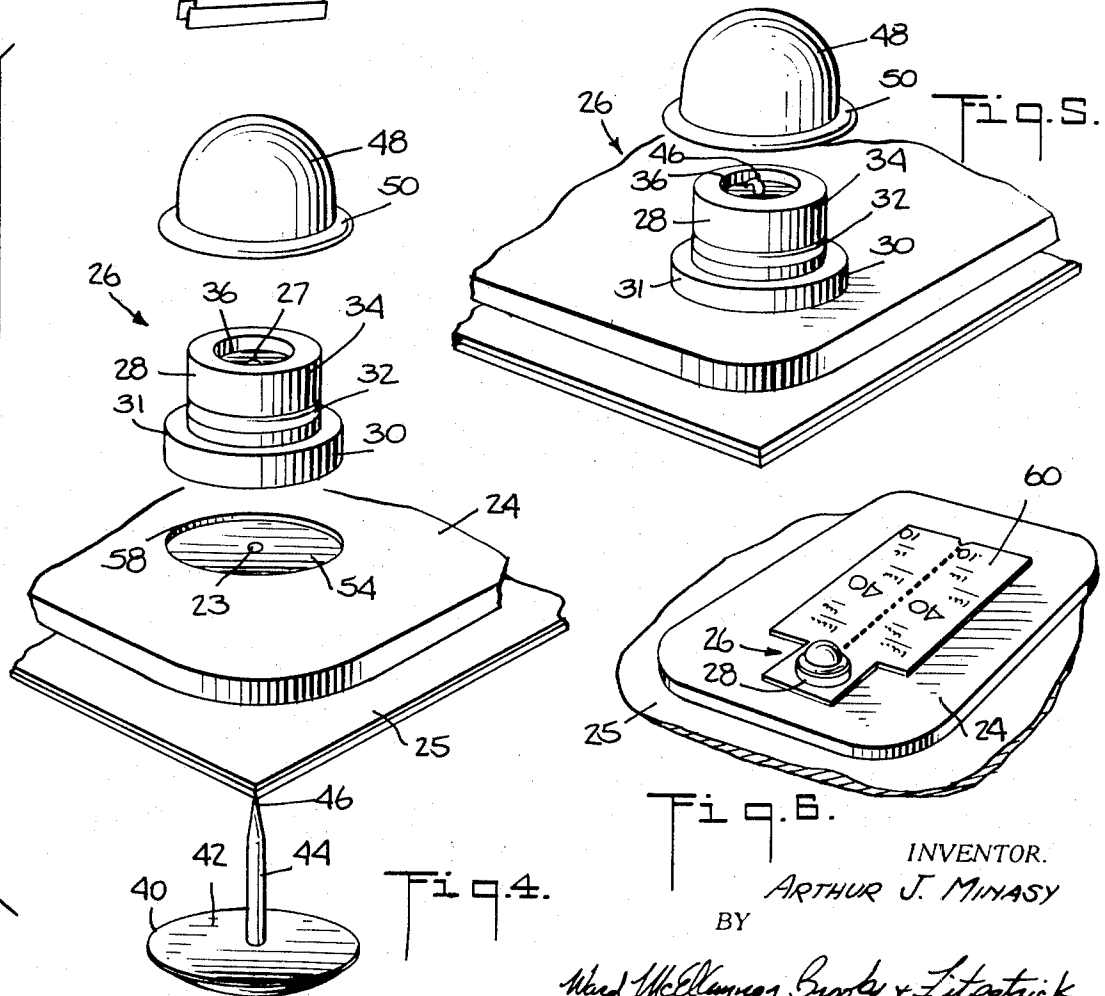
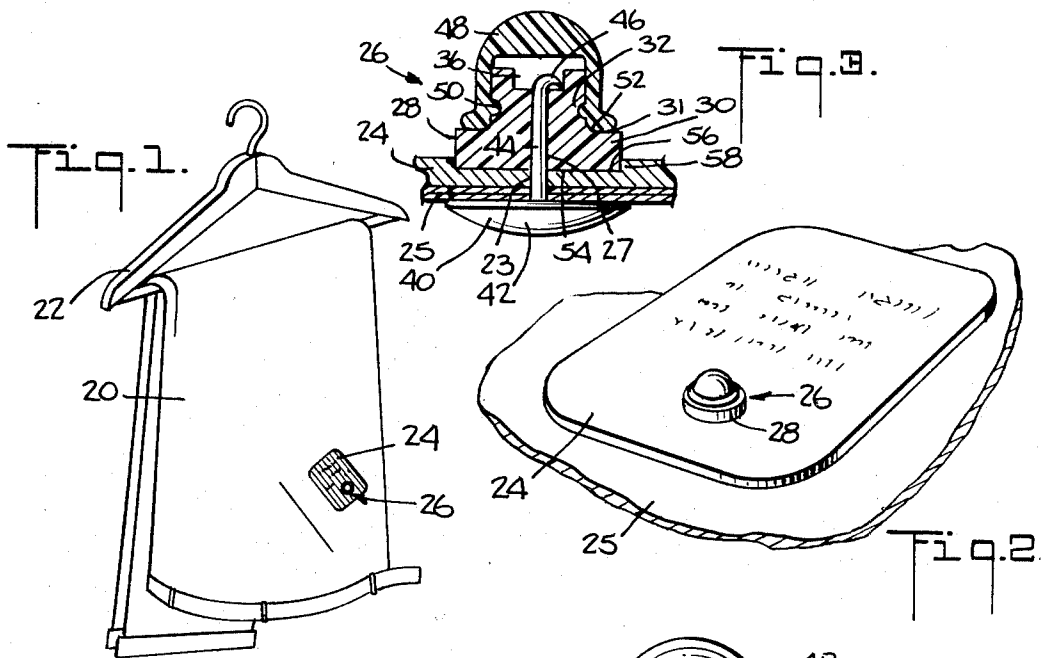
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[57] ABSTRACT  
A label attachment arrangement comprising a tack-like element whose shank passes through a label and an article of merchandising, the shank being encased by and interlocked in a button, and means for preventing the removal of the button by unauthorized persons.

9 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures





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## LABEL ATTACHMENT MEANS

This application is a continuation-in-part application of my copending application Ser. No. 6,004, filed Feb. 7, 1970, entitled "LABEL ATTACHMENT," which is a divisional application of my application Ser. No. 599,922 filed Dec. 7, 1966, entitled "LABEL ATTACHMENT."

This invention relates to the fastening of articles and more particularly it concerns the attachment of labels to certain articles of merchandise.

In retail marketing operations, goods to be sold are generally exposed to the public for personal observation and inspection. In many cases these goods are taken personally by a prospective purchaser from a display or supply counter over to a checkout stand or desk where the purchase is made. At the time of purchase, the store label is removed, thus indicating that the article is now the property of the purchaser.

A problem arises in connection with the use of labels. This problem involves the provision of a label which is inexpensive, or at least which is inexpensively secured to the articles of merchandise, and which at the same time is not susceptible to removal by a would-be shoplifter. Conventional label fastening means, which are not inordinately expensive, can easily be broken off by small inexpensive tools such as knives, files, scissors, staple removers and the like.

According to the present invention there are provided arrangements for inexpensively fastening labels to articles of merchandise in such a manner that the labels cannot be removed except by means of a special large scale apparatus or except by severely damaging the article itself.

The label attachment arrangement of the present invention comprises a first tack-like fastening element having a broad, expansive, and substantially flat head with a wire shank extending downwardly therefrom. The shank is passed through a thin sheet-like portion of the article of merchandise, (e.g., the fabric of an article of clothing). The shank then passes through a hole in the label and finally through a plastic button. The shank tip is then bent back and is embedded in the plastic button in a manner such that the shank is held in fishhook manner to the button with the button drawing up tightly with the label, the thin sheet-like portion of the article of merchandise and the head of the tack-like element. With this arrangement, the only way labels can be removed without destroying the article of merchandise is to sever the shank. However, no portion of the shank is exposed and in order to sever it, the plastic button also must be severed. Because of the large diameter of the button, simple plier-like cutting tools will not suffice and the button must be supported in a jig which holds it solidly while a knife-like blade is forced through it.

For attaching the label there is employed a large plier-like tool, one jaw of which is formed to accommodate the exposed surface of the head of the tack-like fastening member, and the other jaw of which is formed as an anvil with a curved surface. This curved surface, when pressed against the point of the shank of the tack-like fastening element, causes the point to bend around and back into the plastic button. Further squeezing embeds the shank tip into the button while at the same time it tightly squeezes the article of merchandise, the label and the plastic button together against the head of the tack-like fastener so that the label will be held securely in place.

For removing the label without destroying the article of merchandise, the attached label is laid on a surface having an opening therethrough which closely accommodates the button. A knife blade is guided for lateral movement just under the surface so that it passes through the button and through the shank. The upper part of the button is then removed and the tack-like fastener is withdrawn from the article and from the label.

According to one aspect of my invention, I provide a cap which is mounted over the end of the button element furthest from the label to enclose the end of the shank of the tack-like fastening element so as to prevent access to the end of the bent-over tack shank by unauthorized persons.

According to another aspect of my invention, I provide a recess in the label for receiving the button portion of the plastic button thereby preventing someone from wedging a tool between the button and the label for prying the fastening arrangement apart.

Still another aspect of my invention, I provide means for attaching a paper price ticket between the label and the plastic button for purposes of preventing "ticket switching" by unauthorized persons.

There has thus been outlined rather broadly the more important features of the invention in order that the detailed description thereof that follows may be better understood, and in order that the present contribution to the art may be better appreciated. There are, of course, additional features of the invention that will be described more fully hereinafter. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the conception on which this disclosure is based may readily be utilized as the basis for the designing of other structures for carrying out several purposes of the invention. It is important, therefore, that this disclosure be regarded as including such equivalent constructions as do not depart from the spirit and scope of the invention.

Several embodiments of the invention have been chosen for purposes of illustration and description, and are shown in the accompanying drawing, forming a part of the Specification, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing a label attachment arrangement according to the present invention;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged fragmentary view of the label attachment arrangement of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged, medial, longitudinal sectional view of the fastening means utilized in conjunction with the label attachment arrangement of FIGS. 1 and 2;

FIG. 4 is an exploded perspective view illustrating the assembly of elements making up the label attachment arrangement of FIGS. 1-3;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged perspective view similar to FIG. 4 but showing the attachment arrangement partially assembled; and

FIG. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary view of a label attachment arrangement which includes a separate price ticket.

In the embodiment of the invention illustrated in FIGS. 1-5, an article of merchandise, such as a pair of trousers 20, are shown hung over a hanger 22. The trousers 20 may thus be set out for display in a retail establishment for inspection and selection by prospective customers. Information concerning brand name, size, type of material and price of the trousers is presented on a label 24 which is secured to the trousers 20 by means of a label attachment arrangement indicated generally at 26. The label 24 thus serves the dual function of (a) providing the customer with pertinent information and (b) providing identification of the trousers 20 as being unsold. At the time of sale, the label 24 is removed, thus indicating that the trousers 20 are now the property of the purchaser.

As seen in FIG. 2, the label 24 is held to a layer 25 of fabric material forming a portion of the trousers 20. The label attachment arrangement 26 includes a button 28 which rests against the outer surface of the label 24. The button 28 may be fabricated from any suitable material such as a plastic material, for example, Delrin (registered trademark) or some other high density thermoplastic material and is shaped with an expansive flange 30 which rests flat against the outer surface of the label 24. The flange 30 is provided with an upwardly directed flange face 31 as best seen in FIGS. 4 and 5. An annular recess 32 is formed about the outer surface of the button 28 immediately adjacent the expansive flange 30. The button 28 extends out beyond the recess 32 for a distance and forms a cylindrical portion 34. The outer end of the button 28 is formed with a central recess 36.

As best seen in FIGS. 3 and 4, a tack-like fastener element 40 has a generally flat expansive head portion 42, and a wire-like shank portion 44 extending centrally therefrom. The shank portion 44, as shown, passes through the fabric layer 25, and through an opening 23 in the label 24 and through an

opening 27 in the button 28. The shank portion 44 is formed with a pointed tip 46 which is bent back around and is forced into the plastic material of the button 28 within its central recess 36, as seen in FIGS. 3 and 5. Hence, only the bent over portion of the shank is visible inside the central recess 36. The tack-like element fastener 40 is thus secured in fishhook fashion to the button 28.

This arrangement secures the label 24 and fabric layer 25 tightly together in a manner such that under normal handling neither is likely to be damaged. This is because the expansive head 42 of the tack-like fastener element 40 in the expansive flange 30 of the button 28 distributed pressure over a rather large area of the fabric layer 25 and the label 24.

As best seen in FIGS. 3, 4 and 5, a cap 48 is mounted over the end of the button element 28 in order to enclose the central recess 36 containing the bent tip 46 of the tack-like fastener element 40. The cap 48 is provided with an annular ridged projection 50 which is snapped into place in the annular recess 32 in the button 28, as seen in FIG. 3. The cap also has a bottom face 52, FIG. 3, which engages the upwardly directed flange face 31 of the expansive flange 30 for purposes of resisting the removal of the cap 48 from the assembly.

As best seen in FIGS. 3 and 4, the label 24 is provided with a recess 54 on its upper surface for receiving a bottom face 56 of the expansive flange 30. As seen in FIG. 3, the recess 54 has sharp corners 58 so that the bottom face 56 snugly fits into the recess thereby preventing someone from wedging a tool between the button 28 and the label 24 for prying the fastening arrangement apart.

In the embodiment of the invention illustrated in FIG. 6, there has been added a paper price ticket 60 mounted between the label 24 and the button 28. It will be appreciated that the paper price ticket is securely held in position by the label attachment arrangement so that it cannot be removed therefrom without being destroyed. Accordingly, unauthorized persons are prevented from "ticket switching." That is, such persons are prevented from taking the price ticket from an inexpensive garment and attaching it to an expensive garment for purposes of obtaining the expensive garment by paying the price of the inexpensive garment.

It will thus be seen that the present invention does indeed provide an improved label attachment arrangement which is superior in simplicity, economy and efficiency as compared to prior art label attachments.

Although certain particular embodiments of the invention are herein disclosed for purposes of explanation, various modifications thereof, after study of this specification, will be apparent to those skilled in the art to which the invention pertains.

What is claimed and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. In combination with a sheet-shaped portion of an article of merchandise, a thin flat label, a tack-like fastener element having an expansive head and a thin elongated shank, said shank passing through said sheet-shaped portion and through a small opening in said label, a thick button element having an opening therethrough closely accommodating said shank, said opening in said label being smaller than the thickness of said button element, said button element being drawn up on said shank to tightly press said sheet-shaped portion and said label between itself and the expansive head of said tack-like fastener element, said button element and said shank being solidly interlocked with each other near the end of said button element furthest removed from said label, a cap mounted over the end of said button element furthest from said label to enclose the end of said shank furthest from said expansive head.

2. An arrangement according to claim 1 wherein said cap has an inwardly annular ridged projection and said button element has a mating annular recess, said projection being snapable into said recess.

3. An arrangement according to claim 1 wherein said button element has an upwardly directed flange face and wherein said cap has a bottom face which is disposed closely adjacent said

flange face when said cap and button element are in their assembled positions.

4. An arrangement according to claim 1 wherein said button element has a bottom face and wherein said thin flat label has a mating recess on its upper surface for receiving said bottom face, thereby preventing insertion of a prying tool between said button element and said thin flat label when they are in their assembled positions.

5. An arrangement according to claim 1 further comprising a sheet-like price ticket interposed between said thin flat label and said button element.

6. In combination with a sheet-shaped portion of an article of merchandise, a thin flat label, a tack-like fastener element having an expansive head and a thin elongated shank, said shank passing through said sheet-shaped portion and through a small opening in said label, a thick button element having an opening therethrough closely accommodating said shank, said opening in said label being smaller than the thickness of said button element, said button element being drawn up on said shank to tightly press said sheet-shaped portion and said label between itself and the expansive head of said tack-like fastener element, said button element and said shank being solidly interlocked with each other at the end of said button element furthest removed from said label, said button element having a bottom face and said flat label having a mating recess on its upper surface for receiving said bottom face, thereby preventing the insertion of a prying tool between said bottom element and said thin flat label when they are in their assembled positions.

7. An arrangement according to claim 6 wherein said recess has sharp corners and there is a close fit between said button element and said thin flat label.

8. In combination with a sheet-shaped portion of an article of merchandise, a thin flat label, a tack-like fastener element having an expansive head and a thin elongated shank, said shank passing through said sheet-shaped portion and through a small opening in said label, a thick button element having an opening therethrough closely accommodating said shank, said opening in said label being smaller than the thickness of said button element, said button element being drawn up on said shank to tightly press said sheet-shaped portion and said label between itself and the expansive head of said tack-like fastener element, said button element and said shank being solidly interlocked with each other near the end of said button element furthest removed from said label, a cap mounted over the end of said button element furthest from said label to enclose the end of said shank furthest from said expansive head, said cap having an inwardly angular ridged projection and said button element having a mating angular recess, said projection being snapable into said recess, said button having an upwardly directed flange face and said cap having a bottom face which is disposed closely adjacent said flange face when said cap and said button element are in their assembled positions, said button element having a bottom face and said thin flat label having a mating recess on its upper surface for receiving said bottom face, said recess having sharp corners and said button element having a close fit in said recess.

9. In combination with a sheet-shaped portion of an article of merchandise, a thin flat label, a tack-like fastener element having an expansive head and a thin elongated shank, said shank passing through said sheet-shaped portion and through a small opening in said label, a thick button element having an opening therethrough closely accommodating said shank, said opening in said label being smaller than the thickness of said button element, said button element being drawn up on said shank to tightly press said sheet-shaped portion and said label between itself and the expansive head of said tack-like fastener element, said button element and said shank being solidly interlocked with each other near the end of said button element furthest removed from said label, and a price ticket fabricated from sheet material being interposed between said thin flat label and said button element.

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