(No Model.)

F. G. MEAD.

POSTAL CARD.

No. 263,347. Patented Aug. 29, 1882.

Fig. 1.

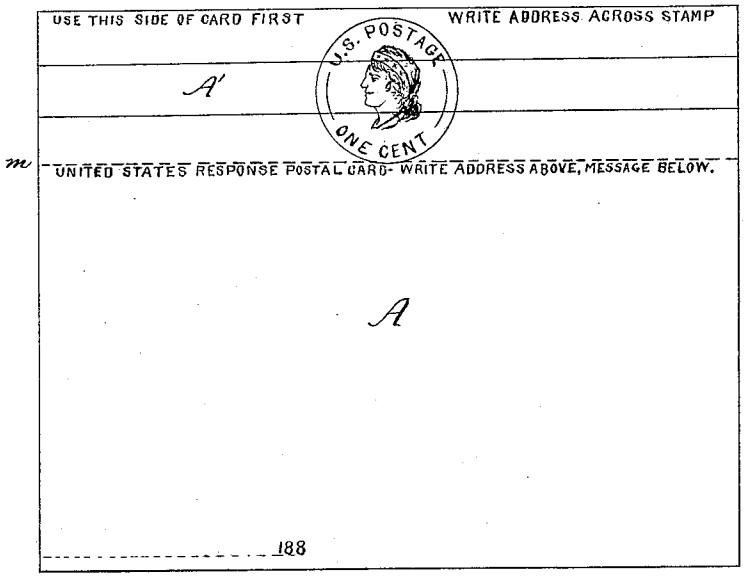


Fig. 1a.

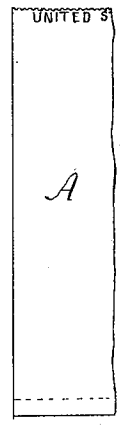


Fig. 2.

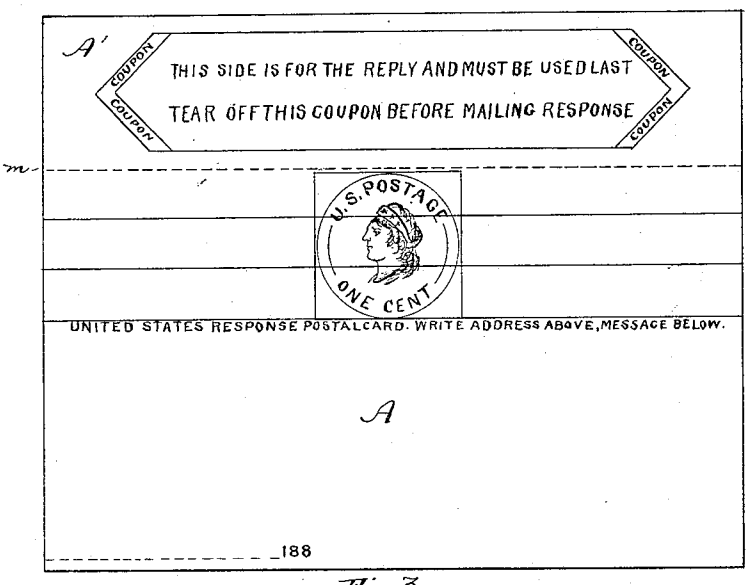


Fig. 2a

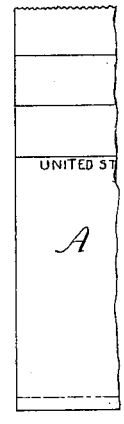
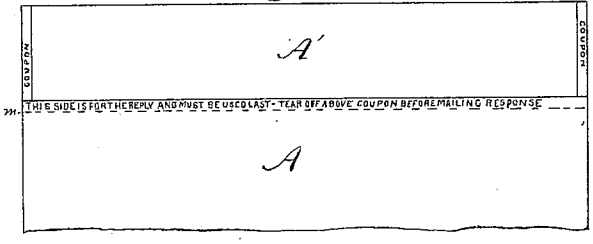


Fig. 3.



Witnesses:
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Charles R. Searle.

Inventor:
F. G. Mead
by his attorney
B. L. Stafford

N. PETERS. Photo-Lithographer. Washington, D. C.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FREDERICK G. MEAD, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

POSTAL-CARD.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 263,347, dated August 29, 1882.

Application filed March 24, 1882. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FREDERICK G. MEAD, of New York city, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements relating to Postal-Cards, of which the following is a specification.

My improved card is a return postal-card. The importance of return-cards, which can be used first to convey the message direct, and then to travel back to their place of starting and convey the response, has been some years acknowledged, and many attempts have been made to meet the want. I put the stamps on opposite faces of a single unfolded card, and provide a space for the message in either direction on a part of the same face which contains the address; but an area less than the whole face of the card is provided on the reverse side for the return address and message, and the surplus portion is removed before the card is mailed on its return. The coupon or portion thus removed contains the address, which serves to direct the card on its outward journey. The reduced area of the return-cards distinguishes them from the cards which are making their outward journey. If the sender chooses to write in the proper address to facilitate the return, there can be no confusion, because the large size indicates plainly that it is the address on the coupon or removable stub which is to control. On the return passage there is but one address. Ordinarily there will be but one address on the card in its outward journey. Always the address for the outward direction is removed by the removal of the stub or coupon before its return. The portion thus removed may be about one-quarter of the entire area of the card. The invention will accommodate the public, avoid the discomfort and complication due to folded cards, and relieve the officials from any care in searching for canceling-marks or the like to determine in which direction the card is to traverse.

The following is a description of what I consider the best means of carrying out the invention.

The accompanying drawings form a part of this specification.

Figure 1 represents what I will term the "face" side of the complete card. Fig. 2 represents the reverse side of the same. Fig. 1ª shows a portion of the face side after the coupon or portion containing the address for the outward journey has been removed. Fig. 2ª similarly shows the reverse side. Fig. 3 shows a modification on a smaller scale. It shows a portion of the reverse side before the coupon is removed. In this figure the reverse side of the removable coupon is left nearly blank.

Similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures.

The entire card, as manufactured, is composed of two areas, A A′, separated by a distinct line, *m m*, which may be weakened by perforations, or by partially cutting off by any suitable process; but it is important that it be not so conditioned as to fold, but shall remain extended in the usage to which it is subjected in transportation and handling. The portion A may be of the exact dimensions common in ordinary postal cards. The appended portion or coupon A′ may be of the same length and of about one-third the width of A. One side of the entire card A A′ is available for use on the outgoing journey. The coupon or portion A′ carries the stamp and the outgoing address. The portion A on the same side carries the outgoing message. The back face of the coupon A′ may, if thought desirable, be left blank for an additional portion of the outgoing message; but I prefer that the back face of the coupon be blackened or otherwise conditioned, so that it is not available for any purpose. The reverse face of the main portion A is alone available for the return journey. It is provided with a stamp for the return journey, and its area is divided, a portion being appropriated for the return address and stamp, and another portion of the same back face of the part A is alone available for the return message. The coupon A′ is always to be removed before the card is mailed on its return journey. The presence or absence of the coupon A′ determines at once whether the card is on its outward or return journey. If the coupon is present the address thereon controls, and it is perfectly immaterial whether the address for the return journey has been already filled in or not.

I propose, as a matter of further convenience, to distinguish the outward and return faces of the card by a difference in the form and relative location of the postage-stamps, and also by a difference in the color of the ink

used in the stamps, in the rulings, and in the lines of instruction, &c. The whole surface of the face of the coupon A′ may be delicately tinted to distinguish it from the main body A, if desired. If the sizes determined on are such that the portion A, which travels alone on the return journey, is of the same dimensions as an ordinary postal-card, and the card is larger on its outgoing journey by the addition of the part A′, the mails are required to carry the excess A′ in one direction only. This effects an economy of transportation as compared with most of the previous efforts in this direction. Unlike the folded cards employed by some governments, my card, either in its full size or in its reduced area, can be handled in the mails with the same facility as ordinary postal-cards. It will cost less to manufacture than the folded cards. By printing the stamp in a faint underlying color, and in such position on the card that it is canceled by the written address on its face, the post-office department is saved the labor of the cancellation of the stamps, and the stamp for the original or outgoing journey is further and fully canceled before the return journey by the tearing off of the coupon. Thus if a large number of these cards are mailed together, as is often the case where postal-cards are used for commercial purposes, much labor and time will be saved the post-office by avoiding the necessity for especial cancellation of the stamp. I propose, in addition, to print specific instructions thereon in regard to the use of these cards. The reverse side of the coupon or portion A′ may, if preferred, be made incapable of receiving ordinary writing by making it black or a very deep color, or by cross-shading or otherwise obscuring it. In that case such lettering as may be required or desirable to impart instructions may be left white thereon. Such may be useful to insure against an ignorant person putting any important portion of the return message thereon. In the exceptional cases, where this card is deposited in the post-office for the return journey without the previous removal of the coupon A′, the rules may require the postmaster either to return to the sender or to remove the coupon A′ himself.

If preferred, the back of the portion A′ may be left white, with specific instructions along the line *m m* that the portion above must be torn off before the card is used for the return message.

Modifications may be made in the details. The proportion of the coupon A′ to the part A may be varied. The position of the stamps and their sizes and forms may be varied.

I esteem it practicable to have the coupon A′ at the end instead of the top of the card. It is theoretically possible to remove the coupon by an oblique line, thus leaving the card A for the return journey in the irregular shape which would result from such oblique clipping; but I prefer the form and proportions indicated.

The material need not be weakened along the line *m m*, when for any reason it is preferred to retain the full strength and stiffness of the card throughout.

I claim as my invention—

A return postal-card in a plain form, with a removable coupon, A′, having the address and stamp for the outgoing journey on such coupon, and with the stamp and place for the address for the return journey on the reverse side of the main part A, all adapted to serve substantially as and for the purposes herein specified.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand at New York city, this 23d day of March, 1882, in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

FREDERICK G. MEAD.

Witnesses:
A. E. FIRMIN,
B. E. D. STAFFORD.