Aug. 28, 1962 H. R. DAY 3,051,371

ENVELOPES

Filed May 19, 1960

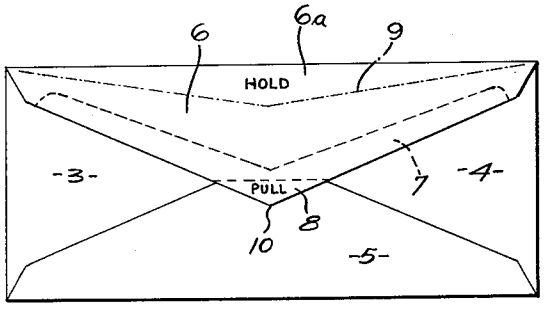


Fig. 1

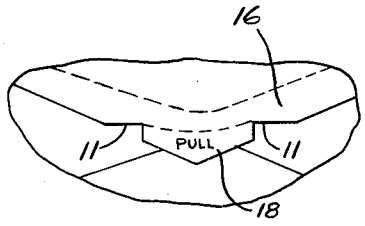


Fig. 5

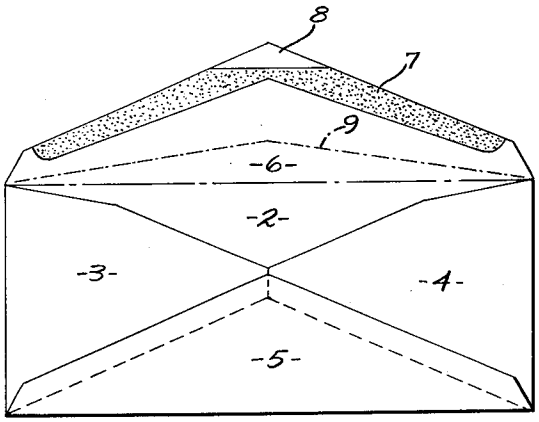


Fig. 2

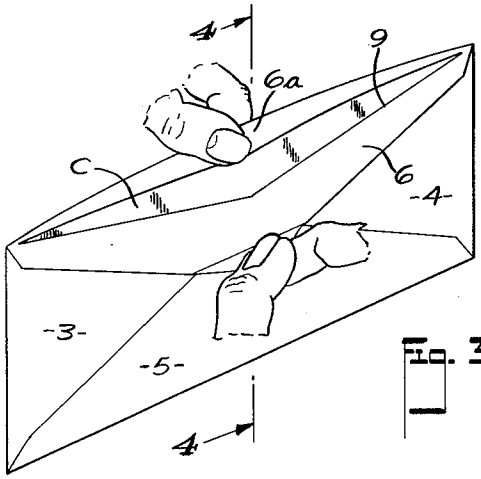


Fig. 3

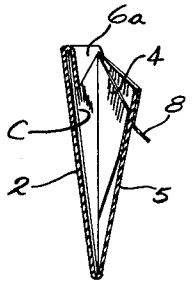


Fig. 4

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ENVELOPES

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This invention relates to envelopes, such as are used, for example, in the transmission of letters and the like.

The invention has for its primary object the provision of an envelope which is so constructed as to enable it to be readily opened without the use of the usual letter opener or bladed instrument.

A further and more specific object of the present invention is the provision of an envelope having a perforated or scored tear line and a full tab, whereby upon the application of a slight pulling force to said tab, the envelope is readily caused to be opened along said tear line.

A further and more specific object of the present invention is the provision of an envelope in which the tear line and the pull tab thereof are quite inexpensively and quite inconspicuously formed, so that in cost and in appearance, envelopes embodying the present invention differ but very slightly from standard or conventional envelopes.

A further object of the present invention is the provision of an envelope which is generally characterized by its structural simplicity, the economy of its manufacture, and the ease with which it can be opened.

Further objects of the present invention, and certain of its practical advantages, will be referred to in or will be evident from the following description of envelopes embodying the invention, as illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which

FIG. 1 is a rear elevational view of an envelope embodying the present invention, the sealing flap of the envelope being in sealing position;

FIG. 2 is a similar view, but with the sealing flap of the envelope in raised position;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the envelope as it is being manually opened;

FIG. 4 is a detail cross-sectional view of the opened envelope, the view being on the line 4—4 of FIG. 3; and

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary rear elevational view of an envelope having a slightly modified sealing flap to provide a slightly modified pull tab.

Before specifically describing the envelopes here illustrated for the disclosure of the present invention, it is to be understood that envelopes embodying the invention may take various forms. It also is to be understood that the terminology and the phraseology herein used is for purposes of description and not of limitation, as the scope of the present invention is denoted by the appended claim.

Referring now to the accompanying drawings, and particularly to FIGS. 1 to 4 thereof, the envelope constituting the embodiment of the invention there shown is designated as a whole by the reference numeral **1**. Like standard or conventional envelopes, the envelope **1** is made from a single sheet of paper or the like and is provided with a generally rectangular front section and four generally triangular flaps. Specifically, there are a pair of end or side flaps **3** and **4** which are folded or turned inwardly from the side or end edges of the front section so as to overlie the rear surface thereof, a bottom flap **5** which is folded or turned upwardly from the bottom edge of the front section to also overlie the rear surface thereof, and a top flap **6** which is adapted to be folded or turned downwardly from the top edge of the front panel to also overlie the rear surface thereof when closing of the envelope is desired. As with standard or

conventional envelopes, the envelope **1** has the upper edge portions of its bottom flap **5** overlapping and adhesively secured to the lower edge portions of the side or end flaps **3** and **4** to thereby provide the envelope with an upwardly opening pocket for the reception of a letter or the like.

Like standard or conventional envelopes, the envelope **1** has its sealing flap **6** so proportioned with respect to the other three flaps that when said sealing flap is folded or turned downwardly for closing of the envelope, the lower edge portion of said sealing flap overlies the upper edge portions of said other three flaps, as best shown in FIG. 1 and as will be readily understood.

For envelope-sealing purposes, the underside or inner surface of the lower edge portion of the envelope's sealing flap **6** is provided with suitable adhesive **7**, as is usual. However, as best shown in FIG. 2 and unlike standard or conventional envelopes, the apex portion **8** of the lower edge portion of the sealing flap **6** is free of adhesive. The purpose of this is to make such adhesive free portion **8** a pull tab for use in the opening of the envelope, as will hereinafter appear.

For envelope-opening purposes, the sealing flap **6** of the present envelope is perforated or scored along a line **9** extending substantially across the envelope in spaced relation to the upper and lower edges of the sealing flap. As here shown, the perforated or scored line **9** is of generally V shape, thus generally corresponding to the lower edge of the sealing flap, although the angle formed by the two sides of the V of the line **9** is a much larger angle than that formed by the two sides of the V of the lower edge of the sealing flap.

In use thereof, the present envelope is closed and sealed in the usual manner, and as will be particularly noted from FIG. 1, the present envelope differs but slightly in appearance from standard or conventional envelopes.

The manipulation of the present envelope to open it is shown in FIG. 3. The envelope above the perforated or scored line **9**, particularly above the apex of the line **9**, constitutes a holding portion **6***a* which is adapted to be manually grasped and held, such as by the thumb and the forefinger of one hand of the person who is opening the envelope. The triangular pull tab **8** is similarly grasped and held, such as by the thumb and the forefinger of the other hand of the person who is opening the envelope. If, by chance, the envelope is to be opened by a person who has but one hand, either the envelope portion **6***a* or the pull tab **8** may be held by the teeth of such person, as will be readily understood. With the holding area **6***a* and the pull tab **8** grasped and held, a manual force is applied, preferably of abrupt character, to separate such held area and such pull tab, with the result that the envelope is torn open along the perforated or scored line **9**, as in FIGS. 3 and 4. With a properly applied and relatively abrupt separating force, the envelope will snap open along substantially the entire length of the tear line **9** in practically an instantaneous manner, as will be readily understood.

As best shown in FIG. 4, the portion of the sealing flap **6** of the envelope above the tear line **9** thereof remains in its downwardly folded condition when the envelope is opened, and thus may, as in FIG. 4, overlie the contents C of the envelope. If so, such contents are prevented from falling from the envelope in the opening thereof. Also, the contents C may be replaced in the opened envelope and again releasably held therein by the depending top portion **6***a* of the envelope's sealing flap **6** overlapping the contents C with the fold on the upper edge of flap **6** tending to hold portion **6***a* resiliently in the position illustrated.

If desired and as shown in FIG. 1, the envelope may

have printed thereon instruction symbols or legends for the opening of the envelope. For example, the word "Hold" may be printed on the upper portion of the sealing flap **6**, such as above the apex of the tear line **9**, to indicate where the envelope is to be held in the opening of it. In a similar manner, the word "Pull" may be printed on the tab **8** to indicate that it is to be pulled in the opening of the envelope.

In the modification of FIG. 5, a sealing flap **16** is provided having the same general triangular shape as the sealing flap **6** of the envelope of FIGS. 1 to 4. However, in the sealing flap of FIG. 5, a notch 11 is provided at each side of the pull tab **18** so that such pull tab more noticeably projects from the body of the sealing flap and thus its function as a pull tab is more readily apparent. Like the tab **8** of the envelope of FIGS. 1 to 4, the pull tab **18** of the modification of FIG. 5 is free of adhesive, as will be readily understood.

From the foregoing, it will be evident that envelopes embodying the present invention are particularly useful where large quantities of mail must be handled. The envelopes are quickly and easily opened, each with one abrupt motion, and without loss or damage to the contents thereof. Physically handicapped persons can readily open the envelopes and the use of opening implements, such as the usual bladed letter openers, are wholly unnecessary. The cost of the envelopes over standard or conventional envelopes is negligible and the differences in appearance therebetween is not noticeable.

To those skilled in the art to which the present invention relates, other features and advantages of envelopes embodying the invention will be obvious.

I claim:

An envelope comprising a front section, a back section and a closure flap integral with said front section and depending from the upper edge thereof for overlapping envelope-closing engagement with portions of said back section, said closure flap being free of openings therein and being provided with adhesive means for envelope-sealing purposes, said closure flap also being provided between said sealing means and its upper edge with a scored or perforated line of weakness extending substantially across the closure flap, at least the middle portion of said line of weakness being spaced from the upper edge of the closure flap to thereby provide above the line of weakness a closure flap space which may be manually held in fixed relation to that portion of the envelope front section which is in alignment with said closure flap space, and said closure flap also being provided at its lower edge and thus below said line of weakness with a pull tab which is free of adhesive and which can be conveniently grasped, whereby the opening of the envelope, when sealed, along the line of weakness in said closure flap can be readily effected by manually holding the aforesaid closure flap area in fixed relation to that portion of the envelope front section which is in alignment thereby and by manually grasping and pulling the pull tab in a direction away from the front section of the envelope.

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