United States Patent [19]

Hiersteiner

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[54] **EASY OPENING ENVELOPE**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **229/85**
[51] **Int. Cl.** **B65d 27/16,** B65d 27/34
[58] **Field of Search** 229/80, 81, 85

[56] **References Cited**

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

The seal flap of an envelope has a portion reinforced by folding and adhesive connection, the reinforced portion being divided from the remainder of the seal flap by a line of tear perforations. A releaseable adhesive connection is made between the outside of said portion and the back of the envelope whereby said portion may be peeled across the back of the envelope to open same.

3 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures

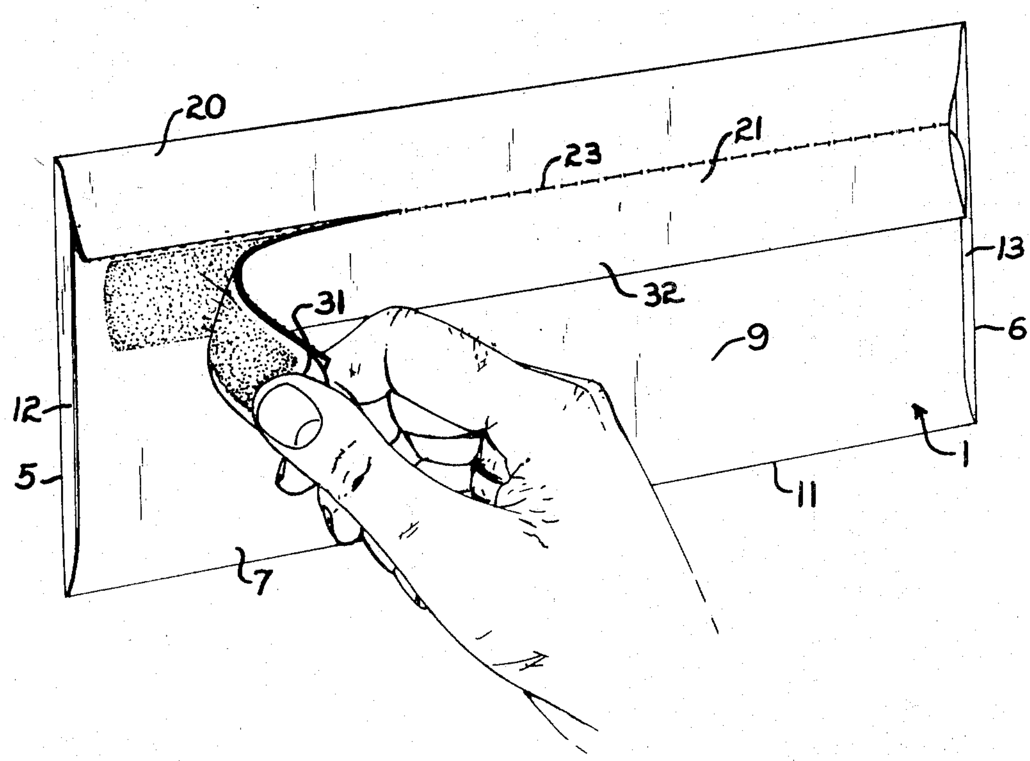


Fig.1.

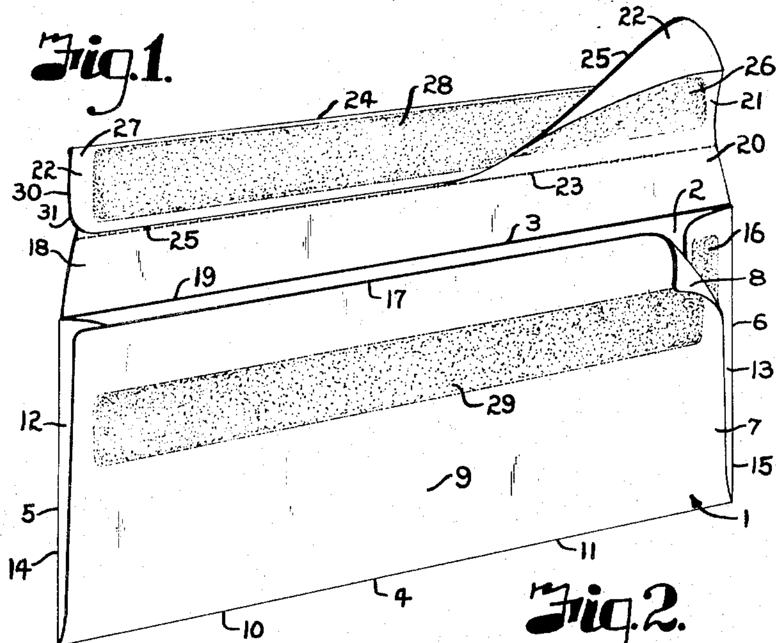


Fig.2.

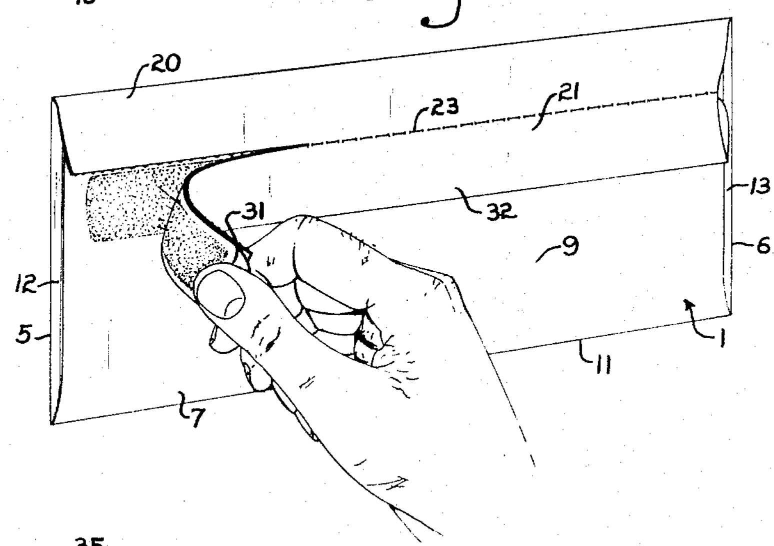
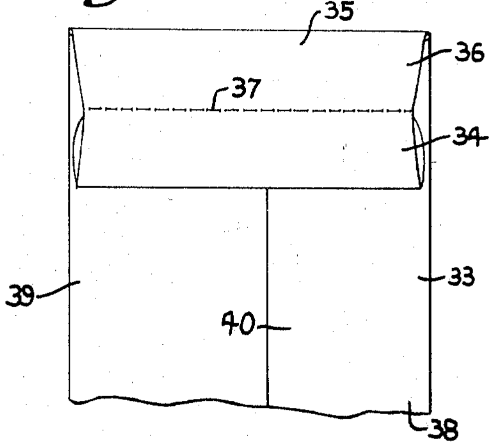


Fig.3.



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EASY OPENING ENVELOPE

This invention relates to envelopes which are easily opened after sealing and more particularly such envelopes which are of simple and inexpensive construction.

Conventional envelopes are difficult to open by hand without the assistance of a letter opener or the like. This has produced a demand for easy opening envelopes which has resulted in many variations thereof. However, heretofore, such easy opening envelopes have been complex, and therefore, expensive to produce and/or have been difficult to manipulate.

It is, therefore, the principal objects of the present invention to provide an easy opening envelope of relatively simple construction; to provide such an envelope which is simple to seal and open; to provide such an envelope arrangement which is easily understood by the user; to provide such an envelope construction which generally follows standard envelope design and, thus, is inexpensive to manufacture; and to provide such an envelope which is extremely well suited for its intended purpose.

Other objects and advantages of this invention will become apparent from the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein are set forth by way of illustration and example certain embodiments of this invention.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an open envelope embodying this invention with portions shown peeled back to reveal the construction thereof.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the envelope in sealed condition and in the process of being opened.

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary perspective view of this invention associated with an end-opening envelope.

Referring to the drawings in more detail:

The reference numeral **1** generally indicates an envelope embodying this invention. The envelope **1** comprises a front panel **2** having upper edge **3**, lower edge **4** and side edges **5** and **6** respectively. A back panel **7** substantially overlaps the front panel **2** and has an inside surface **8**, an outside surface **9** and a lower edge **10** joined to the lower edge **4** of the front panel and forming therewith a fold line **11**.

Side flaps **12** and **13** are joined to the front panel side edges **5** and **6** forming side fold lines **14** and **15**. The side flaps **12** and **13**, in this example, are folded inwardly over the front panel **2** and are respectively at least partially overlapped by the back panel **7**. Adhesive strips **16** secure the back panel **7** to the respective side flaps **12** and **13** defining a pocket **17** between the front panel **2** and the back panel **7** for receiving contents (not shown) in the usual manner.

A pocket closure flap **18** is joined to the front panel upper edge **3** along a fold line **19** and has a length, measured normally to the upper edge **3**, sufficient to substantially overlap the back panel **7** when folded down on the fold line **19**.

The closure flap **18** has first, second and third body portions respectively designated **20, 21** and **22** which extend longitudinally of the upper edge **3**. The first body portion **20** joins the front panel **2** along the upper edge **3** and a line of tear perforations **23** divides the first body portion **20** from the second body portion **21**. The third body portion **22** is folded into overlapping relation with the second body portion **21** along a fold line **24** whereupon the third body portion **22** has a free edge **25** terminating adjacent the tear perforations **23**, FIG. **1**.

An adhesive strip **26** is positioned between the firmly engages the second body portion **21** and third body portion **22** whereby the third body portion **22** displays an exposed surface **27** facing in the same direction as the back panel outside surface **9** when the closure flap **18** is in its extended (envelope open) condition, FIG. **1**.

An adhesive strip **28** is applied over the exposed surface **27**, said adhesive strip being of the releaseable type, noted below. A further adhesive strip **29** is applied to the back panel outside surface **9** in cooperative relation with the adhesive strip **28** whereupon the strips **28** and **29** overlap in contacting relation when the pocket closure flap **18** is folded down along the upper edge fold line **19**. The adhesive strip **29** is preferably of a known type which will cooperate with the strip **28** to seal therewith upon the application of pressure but permits separation under force without substantial damage to the paper upon which the adhesive strips are applied. In the preferred form, the adhesive strips **28** and **29** are latex, however, other releaseable adhesives may be used for the strips **28** and **29**, or any arrangement of materials, including a single strip, which will seal and subsequently release under force as indicated.

The respective adhesive strips **28** and **29** are operably spaced inwardly of the side extremities **30** of the third body portion **22**, thereby forming a tab portion **31** available for grasping, FIG. **2**. Further, the third body portion **22** extends laterally beyond the second body portion **21** so that the tab portion **31** includes an integral exposed projection at the side extremity **30** formed by the third body portion **22**. This projection at **30** has a peripheral edge curved inwardly toward the beginning of the tear perforations **23**, FIG. **1** (**37** in FIG. **3**). Also, the side extremities of the first body portion **21** and second body portion **22**, in these examples, taper inwardly of the envelope toward the beginning of the tear perforations **23**, best illustrated in FIG. **3**, whereby an area of high stress is formed at this point which is put into a shear configuration by the side extremity **30** when the tab portion **31** is pulled, FIG. **2**.

Through the above described construction, the second and third body portions **21** and **22** form a reinforced opening strip **32** which separates under force from the back panel **7** and along the tear perforations **23**.

In use, the envelope contents (not shown) are inserted into the pocket **17** in the usual manner and the pocket closure flap **18** is folded down over the front panel upper edge **3**. The opening strip **32** is then adhesively connected to the back panel **7**, in the case of pressure sensitive latex, by merely applying pressure. When it is desired to open the envelope, the tab portion **31** is grasped and the opening strip **32** is peeled along itself as shown in FIG. **2**, thereby separating the strip **32** from any connection to the remainder of the back panel and thus effectively providing access into the pocket **17**.

A second embodiment of this invention is illustrated in FIG. **3** wherein the easy opening strip configuration is sued on an end-opening envelope. Thus, the envelope **33** is provided with an opening strip **34** which separated from the first body portion **35** of a pocket closure flap **36** along a line of tear perforations **37**. In this embodiment, the back panel **38** is made up of overlapping top and bottom panels **39** and **40**.

It is to be understood that while certain forms of this invention have been illustrated and described, it is not to be limited thereto except insofar as such limitations are included in the following claims.

What I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. An envelope comprising:

a. a front panel having an upper edge, a back panel substantially overlapping said front panel and defining a pocket therebetween opening toward said upper edge,

b. a pocket closure flap joined to said panel upper edge and having a length normal to said upper edge sufficient to overlap said back panel when folded down, said closure flap including the integral first, second and third body portions extending longitudinally of said upper edge, said first body portion being adjacent said upper edge,

c. a tear line dividing said first body portion and second body portion, said third body portion being

folded into overlapping relation to said second body portion and having a free edge adjacent said tear line and a side edge projecting laterally beyond said second body portion and directed toward the beginning of said tear line, said second and third body portions being secured together forming a tear strip, and

d. releaseable adhering means positioned between said tear strip and said back panel when said closure flap is folded down, said adhering means being operably spaced inwardly of said third body portion side edge.

2. The envelope as set forth in claim 1 wherein:

a. said third body portion side edge is curved inwardly toward the beginning of said tear line.

3. The envelope as set forth in claim 1 wherein:

a. said first body portion and said second body portion have side extremities tapering inwardly of the envelope toward the beginning of said tear line.

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