MULTI-PURPOSE ENVELOPE
Bernard Klein, Shawnee Mission, Kan., assignor to Tension Envelope Corporation of Kansas City, Kansas City, Mo., a corporation of Delaware
Filed July 5, 1963, Ser. No. 293,103
5 Claims. (Cl. 229—82)

This invention relates to a multi-purpose envelope which is easily opened, and particularly without impairment thereof for reuse as a filing jacket or the like. The envelope of the present invention is, therefore, adapted, among other uses, for mailing insurance policies, certificates, documents, papers and other articles which are to be kept for convenient reference.

A principal object of the invention is to provide a mailing envelope in which an enclosure may be easily inserted through an insert opening, either by hand or by machine, and sealed in preparation for safe delivery through the mail, and which has a partially sealed withdrawal opening that is easily opened incidentally to withdrawal of the enclosure therethrough without impairing the envelope, so that if desired the envelope may be used as a jacket or reference container.

While the envelope of the present invention is useful in many ways, it is especially useful by insurance companies. For example, when insurance applications are received by insurance companies and approved, policy writers prepare the insurance documents, filling in pertinent information and attaching any and all riders involved in the insurance coverage requested in the applications. The insurance policies are then folded and inserted in jackets by hand, after which the jackets are inserted into mailing envelopes, either by hand or with automatic inserters and sealing machines. Every effort is made to mail the policies to the insured the same day the policies are prepared. In order to do this, most companies, near the end of the day, will pull whatever personnel is required away from their regular work to the task of folding and inserting the policies, together with identification cards, into the jackets, and the jackets into mailing envelopes. Since most policies are many pages thick and carry rider sheets attached thereto, the first job of folding and the second job of insertion into the open end policy jackets is not only difficult but extremely time consuming. Also, there is the added cost of the second envelope. This situation exists in insurance companies of all sizes, as the number of policies written is usually in proportion to the number of employees available to handle the end of the day operation.

With the combination envelope of the present invention, the folded policies are easily placed in the combination envelopes by way of an elongated insert opening, which is subsequently closed and sealed by a closure flap, corresponding to the insert opening and closure flap of a conventional envelope. The combination envelopes can, therefore, be stuffed and sealed by automatic machinery, thereby saving on the cost of separate jackets and the cost of labor and time involved in preparing the policies for mailing. Also, since the combination envelopes are easily and quickly opened at an end thereof without breaking the seal of the closure flap, the envelopes are subsequently used for the insured by the policies. Thus the cost of a separate jacket is saved.

It is a further object of the invention to provide an envelope construction that is desirable for direct mail solicitation in that the envelope permits sufficient view of a tantalizing enclosure which, coupled with an easy opening feature, makes for an envelope that causes the recipient to want to see what is inside.

In accomplishing these and other objects of the invention, I have provided an improved structure, the preferred form of which is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view partly in section of a multi-purpose envelope constructed in accordance with the present invention and showing the closure flap open.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the end of the envelope having the withdrawal opening, and particularly illustrating the small sealing tab.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view showing the tab severed and the enclosure being withdrawn from the envelope.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the withdrawal end of the envelope with the corner of the back panel turned back for better illustrating the sealing and retention tab.

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary section on the line 5—5 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 6 is a section on the line 6—6 of Fig. 2, showing the retention of an enclosure in the pocket of the envelope.

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of a modified form of the invention, especially adapted for solicitation uses, and showing the closure flap open to expose the insert opening through which an enclosure is to be inserted, with parts of the envelope broken away to better illustrate the construction thereof.

Fig. 8 is a perspective view showing a modified form of the blank, partially folded to show the sealing tab in a different position, which position is adjacent the bottom edge of the envelope.

Fig. 9 is a perspective view of the envelope of Fig. 7, showing the closure flap folded and sealed ready for mailing.

Fig. 10 is a section on the line 10—10 of Fig. 9, showing retention of the enclosure or insert contained therein.

Fig. 11 is a perspective view of the envelope of Fig. 7, showing an end of the envelope after being opened and illustrating removal of the enclosure therethrough.

Fig. 12 is a fragmentary, perspective view of said end of the envelope after the enclosure has been completely removed.

Fig. 13 is a fragmentary section on the line 13—13 of Fig. 9, illustrating retention of the enclosure by the end seal tab.

Referring more in detail to the drawings, and first to the form of the invention illustrated in Figs. 1 to 6, inclusive:

1 designates an envelope constructed in accordance with the present invention, and which includes generally elongated rectangular panels 2 and 3 overlying each other and integrally connected along one of the longer edges thereof by a fold 4 which constitutes the bottom edge of the envelope. One of the shorter edges at one end of the panels, for example, the panel 3, has a side flap 5 that is preferably folded inwardly on a fold 6 to be positioned between the panels. The flap 5 is provided on the outer face thereof with adhesive 7 that makes sealing contact with, for example, the panel 2 to close that end of the envelope pocket 8.

The other end 9 of the envelope has a small tab 10 which extends from the panel 3. The tab 10 of the present envelope is near the upper corner thereof and is folded inwardly between the panels 2 and 3 on a fold 11, for connection with the inner face of the panel 2 by means of adhesive 12. The end 9 of the envelope is, therefore, open between the bottom fold 4 and the adjacent side edge 13 of the tab 10, to constitute the major portion of a removal opening 14 for the envelope when the tab 10 is severed, as later to be described. To facilitate removal of the contents of the envelope from the opening 14, the corresponding end edges of the panels 2 and 3 are each provided, intermediate the bottom fold
The edge 17 of the panel 2 opposite the bottom notch 15 and 16 is normally unconnected with respect to the panel 3, to provide an insert opening 18 (FIG. 1) coextensive with the width of the envelope, and through which the enclosure is inserted initially into the envelope, as described. Extending along the insert opening 18 and integral with the panel 3 is an extension providing the closure flap 19, adapted to be folded as indicated at 20 (FIGS. 2, 3 and 5) on a score 21 (FIGS. 1 and 4). In the illustrated instance the closure flap 19 has a stripe 22 of adhesive (FIGS. 1 and 4) by which it is sealed to the panel 2 upon moistening thereof. An alternative, the closure flap 19 and panel 2 may be provided with pressure sealing gum, to provide a pressure seal, if desired. With a pressure sealing gum, no moisture is required. In order to facilitate cutting through of the tab 10, the fold 11 is provided with a line of perforations 23.

The modified forms of the invention shown in FIGS. 7 to 13 are especially for direct mail and solicitation purposes. The envelope of FIG. 7 is substantially like the form just described, and the same numerals are used to designate the principal parts thereof. However, the upper edge 17 of the panel 2 terminates short of the score 21 to provide a large insert opening 18, but the panel 3 is of a height to provide an adequate length of adhesive 12 to firmly seal the tab 10 thereto. The upper edges 24 and 25 of the side flap 5 and tab 10 extend above the edge 17 of the panel and preferably up to the score 21, as indicated at 25 and 26 (FIG. 7). The ends of the insert opening 18 are definitely defined by the folds 6 and 11 of the side flap 5 and tab 10, respectively, so that the folds provide guides to guide an enclosure into the envelope while providing an insert opening of large size.

The panel 2 may be provided with a window opening 27 to expose the name and address 28 on the enclosure 29, to save addressing of the envelope. The panel 3 may, if desired, be provided with a window opening 30 to expose a tantalizing portion of the enclosure, in which case the opening 30 preferably may be covered by a transparent patch 31 applied to the inner face of the panel 3 by an adhesive 32.

While in the illustrated instance the window opening 27 is in the panel 2 and the window opening 30 is in the panel 3, they may be reversed if desired, to conform with the nature of the enclosure and the placement of the addresses thereon.

The envelope of FIG. 8 is substantially of the same construction, but the tab 10' is connected with the panel 3 between the notch 16 and the bottom fold 4 by a fold 11', and is sealed to a lower portion of the panel 2 by adhesive 12'. The fold 11' has a line of perforations 23'. In using the envelopes of the invention, an enclosure 29 may be inserted through the insert opening 18 into the pocket 8, with ends of the enclosure being guided within the folds 6 and 11. This may be accomplished by hand or in an automatic inserting machine. If the closure flap is provided with pressure sensitive adhesive, all that is required in making a seal is a slight pressure on the closure flap, but if a remoistening type of adhesive is used, the machine will have mechanism to moisten the gum 22 on the closure flap 19, as well as means to fold the closure flap over the insert opening 19 in making sealing contact with the panel 2. The enclosure 29 inserted is kept in alignment with the pocket of the envelope by reason of the folds 6 and 11 of the side flap 5 and tab 10, consequently, the enclosure cannot work out of the opening 14 with the tab 10 intact. Attention is directed to the fact that the adhesive 22 on the closure flap seals to the portion of the panel 2 that is secured to the tab 10, by the adhesive 12.

In the envelope illustrated in FIGS. 7 to 13, the address 28 on the enclosure 29 appears in the window 27, but if the envelope has no window opening, as in the case of the envelope of FIGS. 1 to 6, inclusive, an address may be applied to the outer face of one of the panels 2 or 3, as desired.

When the envelope of FIG. 7 is constructed and sealed as described, the enclosure 29 is safely retained within the pocket 8 of the envelope and cannot escape through the opening 14 because that end of the enclosure 29 butts against the fold 11 of the tab 10, as shown in FIGS. 6 and 10. The tab 10 is not only sealed to the panel 2, but also, through the panel 2, to the closure flap.

When the envelope is received by the addressee, the tantalizing portion of the enclosure is quickly noticed and the envelope is readily opened by taking hold of the enclosure where it is exposed by the notches 15 and 16 and pulling the enclosure against the fold 11. The enclosure will move with comparative ease and simultaneously cut the fold 11 of the tab 10 at the line of perforations 23. This is effected since the fold at the perforations will give way before the adhesive 12 which is backed by the adhesive on the closure flap. When the tab 10 is severed from the panel 3, as shown in FIGS. 3, 11 and 12, the opening 14 is extended completely to the fold 20 of the closure flap 19, so that continued grip and pull on the enclosure effects its complete withdrawal without in any way disturbing the seal of the closure flap 19 or changing direction of the pull. After the enclosure has been read, it may be returned to the envelope by way of the opening 14, and the envelope will now serve as a filing jacket.

Although the tab 10 is illustrated and described as being integral with the panel 3, it may be integral with the panel 2 and sealed to the panel 3, without departing from the invention.

The envelope of FIG. 8 is used in a similar manner with the exception that in this case the pull on the tab 10' is resisted by both panels, which are stoutly connected by the bottom fold 4.

While one use of the envelope is described for mailing insurance policies, it is to be understood that the envelope may be used for mailing letters and other articles which the addressee may wish to retain in a filing jacket, or the envelope may be used whenever a quickly and easily openable envelope is desired.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that I have provided a combination mailing envelope and reference or filing jacket having a construction which permits the addressee to be freely inserted into the pocket 8 without catching, thereby especially adapting the envelope to automatic inserting machines. Also, the envelope when opened permits a fully open side completely from the bottom fold 4 to the fold 20. Also, there is not part of either panel that may become detached.

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

1. A multi-purpose envelope for an enclosure, said envelope including generally rectangular panels overlying each other and interconnected along two edges of said panels to close two sides of a pocket provided between said panels, said other two edges of said panels providing therebetween a closable insert opening through which the enclosure is placed in said pocket and a separate partially unsealed withdrawal opening disposed at one side of the envelope from which the enclosure is subsequently withdrawn, a tab extending from a side edge portion of one panel at the withdrawal opening and having a weakened fold extending across and closing a portion of the withdrawal opening and positioning said tab when folded in face-to-face contact with the other panel, the weakened fold and the side edges of both panels being in alignment, adhesive sealing the contacting faces of said tab and said other panel to hold the folded of said tab in fixed
position in providing an abutment for an edge of
the enclosure to prevent the accidental withdrawal
of the enclosure,
a closure flap integral with one of said panels and co-
extensive with the closable insert opening for fold-
ing over the enclosure to engage the other of said panels,
adhesive for sealing the closure flap to said other panel
to cooperate with the tab in sealing the enclosure
within the pocket and leaving the remainder of said withdrawal opening open, aligned access openings
disposed in the side edges of the panels adjacent the tab fold for gripping the enclosure and pulling the said abutting edge of the enclosure into contact with the fold of the tab to fully open the withdrawal opening for removal of the enclosure from the pocket.

2. An envelope as provided in claim 1, wherein at least one of said rectangular panels is provided with a window opening therein.

3. A multi-purpose envelope for an enclosure, said envelope including

generally rectangular panels overlying each other and interconnected along side and bottom edges of said panels to close one side and the bottom of a pocket provided between said panels,
said other two edges of said panels providing there-
between a closable insert opening through which the enclosure is placed in said pocket and a separate partially unsealed withdrawal opening disposed at one side of the envelope from which the enclosure is subsequently withdrawn,
a tab extending from a side edge portion of one panel at the withdrawal opening and having a perforated fold extending across and closing a portion of the withdrawal opening and positioning said tab when folded in face-to-face contact with the other panel, the perforated fold and the side edges of both panels being in alignment, and
adhesive sealing the contacting faces of said tab and said other panel to hold the fold of said tab in fixed position in providing an abutment for an edge of the enclosure to prevent the accidental withdrawal of the enclosure,
a closure flap integral with one of said panels and co-
extensive with the closable insert opening for fold-
ing over the enclosure to engage the other of said panels,
adhesive for sealing the closure flap to said other panel
to cooperate with the tab in sealing the enclosure
within the pocket and leaving the remainder of said withdrawal opening open, aligned access openings
disposed in the side edges of the panels adjacent the tab fold for gripping the enclosure and pulling the said abutting edge of the enclosure into contact with the fold of the tab to fully open the withdrawal opening for removal of the enclosure from the pocket.

4. An envelope as provided in claim 3, wherein said tab is disposed adjacent to said closure flap.

5. An envelope as provided in claim 3, wherein said tab is disposed between said aligned access openings and said bottom edges.

6. A multi-purpose envelope for an enclosure, said envelope including
generally rectangular panels overlying each other and interconnected to provide a pocket for the enclosure and a withdrawal opening between edges of the panels at one side of the envelope and in connection with said pocket for subsequent removal of an enclosure,
a tab extending from one panel at the withdrawal opening and having a weakened fold extending across and closing a portion of said opening and positioning said tab in face to face contact with the other panel, the weakened fold and said edges of both panels being in alignment, and
adhesive sealing the contacting faces of said tab and said other panel to hold the fold of said tab in fixed position in providing an abutment for an edge of the enclosure to prevent accidental withdrawal of the enclosure from said pocket and leaving the remaining portion of the withdrawal opening open for access to the enclosure, said weakened fold of the tab providing for completion of said withdrawal opening to remove the enclosure when the tab is broken on said weakened fold.

References Cited by the Examiner

UNITED STATES PATENTS
653,599 7/00 West.
717,418 12/02 Cost.
1,603,592 10/26 Glasner.

FRANKLIN T. GARRETT, Primary Examiner.
GEORGE O. RALSTON, Examiner.
UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,171,583
March 2, 1965

Bernard Klein

It is hereby certified that error appears in the above numbered patent requiring correction and that the said Letters Patent should read as corrected below.

In the grant, lines 2 and 3, for "assignor to Tension Envelope Corporation of Kansas City, of Kansas City, Missouri," read -- assignor to Tension Envelope Corporation, --; line 12, for "Tension Envelope Corporation of Kansas City, its successors" read -- Tension Envelope Corporation, its successors --; in the heading to the printed specification, lines 3 to 5, for "assignor to Tension Envelope Corporation of Kansas City, Kansas City, Mo.," read -- assignor to Tension Envelope Corporation, --; column 5, line 15, for "abitting" read -- abutting --.

Signed and sealed this 27th day of July 1965.

(SEAL)

Attest:

ERNEST W. SWIDER
Attesting Officer

EDWARD J. BRENNER
Commissioner of Patents