United States Patent [19]

Gendron

[11] **3,912,160**

[45] **Oct. 14, 1975**

[54] **LETTER PACKAGE WITH BREAK-AWAY ITEM**

[75] Inventor: **Wilfred H. Gendron,** Wilbraham, Mass.

[73] Assignee: **United States Envelope Company,** Springfield, Mass.

[22] Filed: **Mar. 29, 1974**

[21] Appl. No.: **456,113**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **229/69;** 229/70; 229/73; 229/92.3

[51] **Int. Cl.²**.....**B65D 27/10;** B65D 27/04; B65D 27/06

[58] **Field of Search** 229/71, 73, 92.3, 92.8, 229/69, 85

[56] **References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

2,078,873	4/1937	Binger	229/92.8
2,482,080	9/1949	Lacey	229/85
2,824,686	2/1958	Hamilton	229/69
3,111,258	11/1963	Perlstein	229/92.3
3,132,796	5/1964	O'Gorman	229/92.3
3,294,423	12/1966	Mudd, Jr.	229/69
3,428,237	2/1969	Dowen	229/69
3,820,447	6/1974	Gendron	229/73 X

Primary Examiner—George E. Lowrance
Assistant Examiner—Stephen P. Garbe
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Richard L. Schmalz; Vernon F. Venne

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A letter package including a letterhead and a break-away reply item comprising part of a patch adhesively attached to the rear surface of the letterhead. The package may comprise an individual mailing piece or part of a continuous form structure.

4 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures

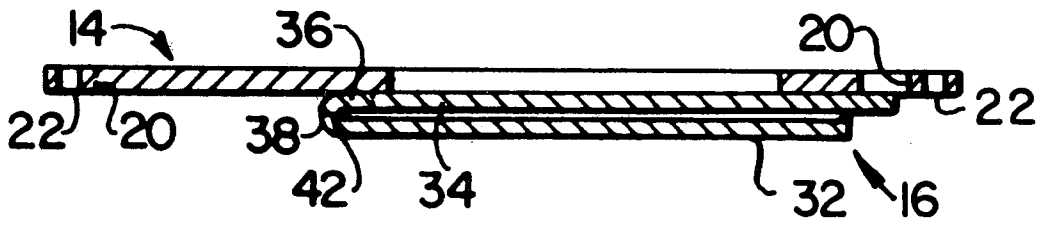


FIG. 1

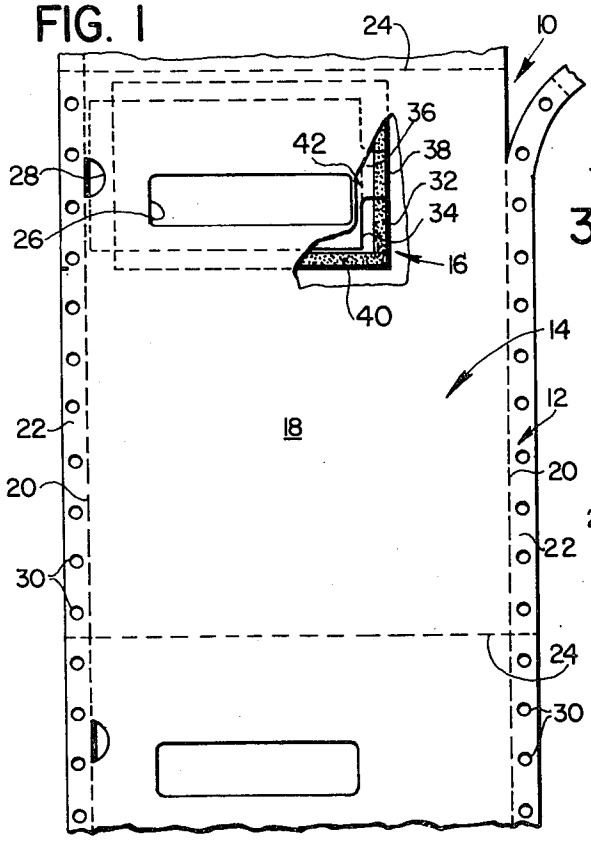


FIG. 2

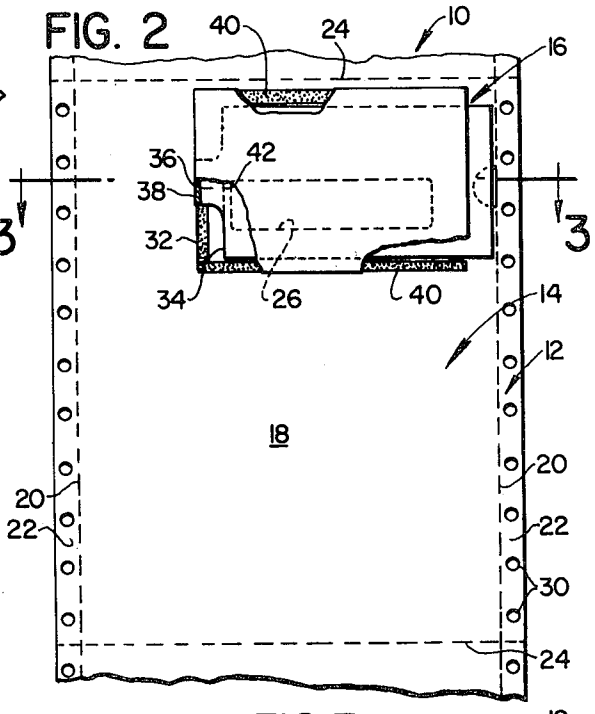


FIG. 3

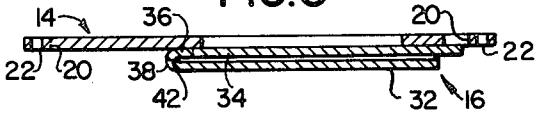
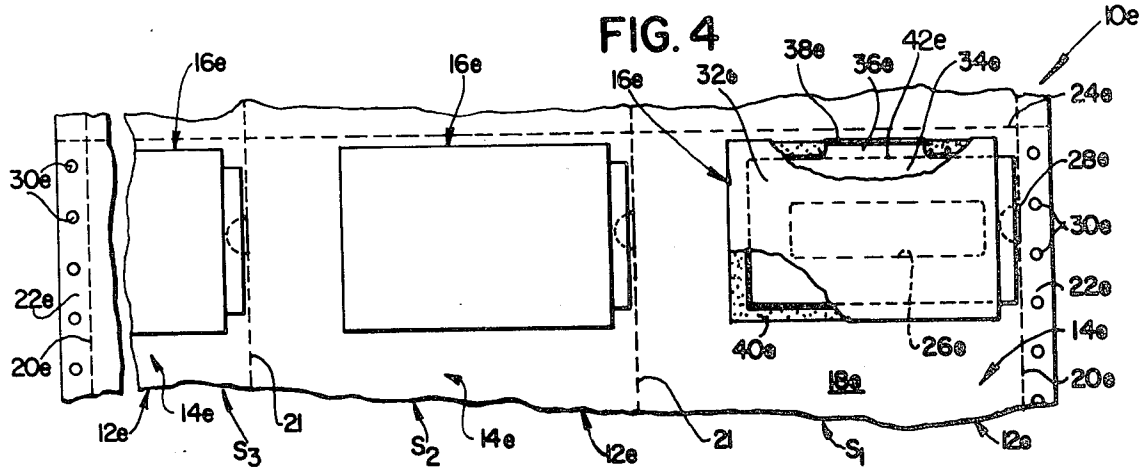


FIG. 4


10e
16e
16e
16e
32e
38e
36e
42e
34e
24e
28e
30e
30e
22e
22e
20e
14e
20e
40e
26e
18e
12e
14e
21
S3
S2
14e
12e
21
S1
12e

LETTER PACKAGE WITH BREAK-AWAY ITEM

This is a continuation of application Ser. No. 229,660, filed Feb. 28, 1972.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates in general to letter packages and deals more particularly with improved letter packages of a type which include a letterhead and an attached reply item.

The letter packages of the present invention are particularly suitable for use in direct mail advertising, fund raising, solicitation and the like and may be provided as individual mailing pieces or in series connected or continuous form. Heretofore, letter packages have been provided which include a letterhead having a patch pocket or the like containing a separate reply item, a portion of which is or may be visible through a window opening formed in the letterhead. The general aim of the present invention is to provide an improved letter package of the aforedescribed general type, which includes a break-away reply item, for high-speed production on conventional envelope making machinery and particularly adapted for use on computer printers or the like.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A letter package embodying the present invention includes a letterhead formed from sheet material and an attachment secured to the rear surface of the letterhead. The attachment has a plurality of parts joined together along at least one line of weakening. At least one of the parts comprises a reply item which overlies an associated portion of the rear surface of the letterhead and has a portion of its frontal surface exposed in a window opening formed in the letterhead. The other of the parts which comprise the attachment retain the reply item in assembly with the letterhead whereby the reply item may be separated from the letterhead along said one line of weakening.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a fragmentary front view of an assembly of series connected letter packages embodying the invention, a portion of one of the letterheads being shown broken away to reveal the attachment secured to the rear surface thereof.

FIG. **2** is a fragmentary rear view of the letter package assembly of FIG. **1.**

FIG. **3** is a sectional view taken along the line **3—3** of FIG. **2.**

FIG. **4** is a fragmentary rear view of still another assembly of series connected letter packages.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring now to FIGS. **1–3** of the drawings, an assembly of continuous form or series-connected letter packages embodying the present invention and indicated generally by the reference numeral **10** comprises a group of individual letter packages indicated generally at **12, 12** connected together in end-to-end relation. Each package **12** includes a letterhead and an associated attachment respectively indicated at **14** and **16.**

The letterheads **14, 14** are formed from an elongated web of sheet material designated generally by the reference numeral **18.** Longitudinally extending lines of weakening **20, 20** formed on the web **18** and spaced inwardly from the side edges thereof define the side edges of the various letterheads and separate a pair of longitudinally extending marginal carrier strips **22, 22** therefrom. A longitudinal series of transversely extending lines of weakening **24, 24** formed on the web **18** separate each letterhead **14** from a preceding letterhead in the series. Each letterhead has a generally rectangular form and includes a window **26** opening therethrough in the address area thereof. A generally semicircular thumb cut-out opening **28** is preferably formed in each letterhead and opens through one side edge thereof near the window **26,** substantially as shown. The assembly **10** is particularly adapted to be automatically fed through a machine. Accordingly, a longitudinal series of configurations or feed holes **30, 30** are formed in each of the carrier strips **22, 22** for engaging a sprocket or pin feed mechanism of an associated machine as, for example, an automatic typewriter, computer-printer or the like.

The attachment **16** is formed from a single piece of sheet material and includes a plurality of integral parts joined together along at least one line of weakening. A typical attachment **16** comprises a generally rectangular patch **32,** a rectangular reply item or postcard **34** and a tab **36** providing connection therebetween. The patch **32,** which is somewhat larger than the card **34** is folded into overlying relation with the card and the tab **36** along a fold line **38.** A generally U-shaped line of adhesive **40** secures marginal portions of the patch **32** and a portion of the tab **36** to the rear surface of an associated letterhead. The patch **32** cooperates with the associated letterhead **14** to form a pocket therebetween wherein the card **34** is retained by the tab **36.** A line of weakening **42** coincident with one edge of the card **34** separates it from the tab **36.** In assembly, a portion of the frontal surface of the card **34** is exposed in the window **26** to permit the name and address of a recipient to be imprinted directly on the card as the assembly **10** is fed through a computer-printer or the like printing apparatus. After completion of the printing operation, the individual packages **12, 12** may, if desired, be separated from each other and from the carrier strips by bursting the assembly along the various lines of weakening in a manner well known in the art. If desired, the assembly **10** may be conveniently fan-folded along the various lines of weakening **24, 24** for separation at some later time. Each card **34** preferably remains connected to its associated letter package until received by an addressee. The thumb cut-out opening **28** enables the recipient to conveniently grasp the outer or exposed edge of the card to separate it from the letter package. The line of weakening or perforation **42** is so formed to permit the card **34** to readily separate from the tab **36** when pulling force is exerted upon the card.

Referring now to FIG. **4,** a three-up letter package assembly embodying the invention and designated generally at **10*e*** comprises a plurality of connected letter packages **12*e***, 12*e* arranged in strips respectively designated S_1, S_2 and S_3. Each letter package **12*e*** includes a letterhead **14*e*** and an associated attachment **16*e***. The letterheads **14*e***, 14*e* are formed from an elongated web of sheet material indicated generally at **18*e***.

The letter packages **12*e***, 12*e* in each strip are arranged in series and connected in end-to-end relation along transversely extending lines of weakening **24*e***,

24*e* formed on the web **18***e*. Each of the strips S_1, S_2 and S_3 is connected in side-by-side relation to an adjacent one of the strips along a longitudinally extending line of weakening **21** formed on the web. At least one marginal carrier strip is provided for feeding the letter package assembly through a computer printer or the like. The illustrated assembly **10***e* includes two such marginal carrier strips designated at **22***e*, 22*e*. Each carrier strip **22***e* is separated from an associated strip of letter packages by a longitudinally extending line of weakening **20***e* formed on the web **18***e* and includes a longitudinal series of configurations or feed holes **30***e*.

Considering now a typical letter package **12***e* in further detail, the letterhead **14***e* is generally rectangular and has a window opening **26***e* formed therein and a generally semicircular thumb cut-out opening **28***e* formed adjacent its marginal edge near the window opening. The attachment **16***e* comprises a generally rectangular patch **32***e*, a rectangular reply item or post card **34***e* and a tab **36***e* which provides connection therebetween. As in the previously described assembly **10**, the patch is somewhat larger than the card and is folded into overlying relation with the card and the tab **36***e* along a fold line **38***e* coincident with the upper marginal edge of the patch **32***e* and generally parallel to the line of weakening **24***e*. The card **32***e* and at least a portion of the tab **36***e* is secured to the rear surface of the letterhead **14***e* by a generally U-shaped line of adhesive **40***e*. Thus, the patch **32***e* cooperates with the letterhead **14***e* to form a pocket in which the card **34***e* is at least partially disposed. A line of weakening **42***e* aligned with the upper edge of the card **34***e* separates it from the tab **36***e* to facilitate break-away removal of the card.

I claim:

1. An article of manufacture comprising at least one letter package, said letter package being adapted to be received in and carried by a mailing envelope and consisting of a generally rectangular letterhead and a reply item overlying an associated portion of the rear surface of said letterhead and attached thereto, said letterhead consisting of only one piece of sheet material having a window opening therethrough, said reply item consisting of only one other piece of sheet material and comprising a generally rectangular reply card having a portion of its frontal surface exposed in said window opening and a patch integrally connected to said reply card and separated therefrom along a line of weakening, said patch overlying the rear surface of said reply item and having marginal portions thereof adhered to said rear surface of said letterhead, said patch and said letterhead cooperating to form a pocket therebetween, said reply card being at least partially disposed within said pocket, said reply item having a frontal surface area substantially smaller than the frontal surface area of said letterhead and being spaced a substantial distance upwardly from the lower edge of said letterhead and inwardly from at least one side edge of said letterhead.

2. An article of manufacture as set forth in claim **1** wherein said reply item includes a tab connecting said reply card to said patch.

3. An article of manufacture as set forth in claim **2** wherein said one line of weakening is coincident with an associated edge of said card and forms a line of separation between said tab and said card.

4. An article of manufacture as set forth in claim **3** wherein said length of said associated edge is substantially greater than the length of said coincident line of weakening.

* * * * *