

[54] **POUCHED CONTINUOUS ENVELOPE SYSTEM**

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[22] Filed: **June 21, 1974**

[21] Appl. No.: **481,752**

[52] U.S. Cl. **229/69; 229/72; 229/85**

[51] Int. Cl.² **B65D 27/10; B65D 27/34; B65D 27/08**

[58] Field of Search..... **229/72, 85, 69**

[56] **References Cited**

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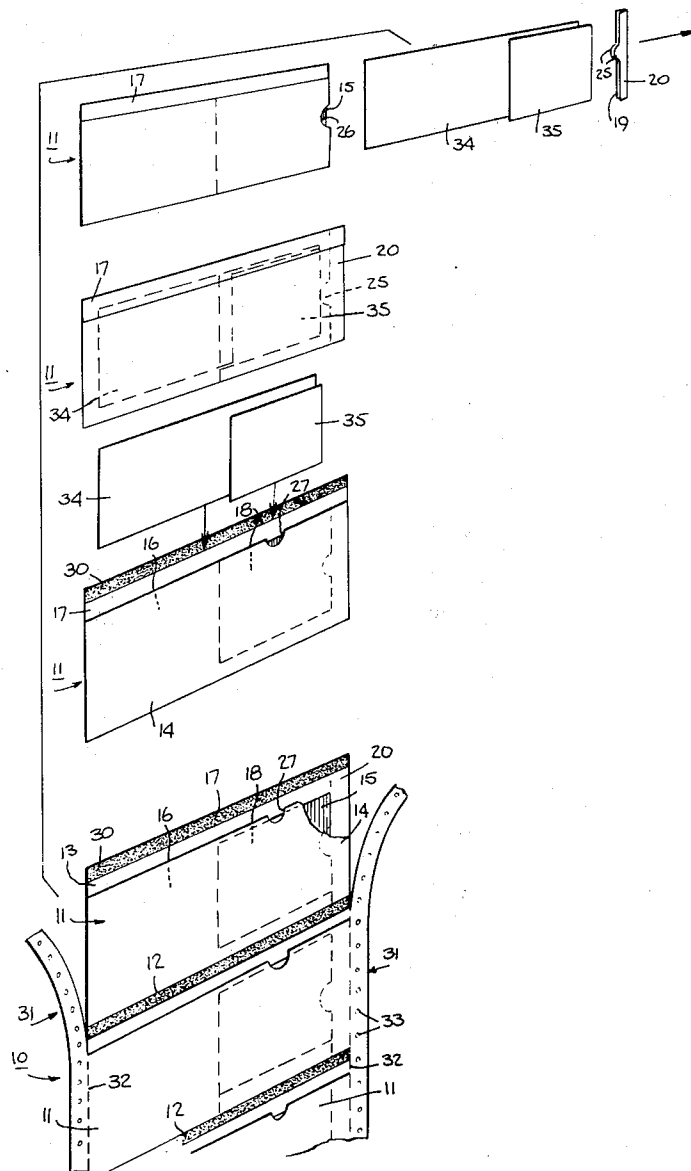
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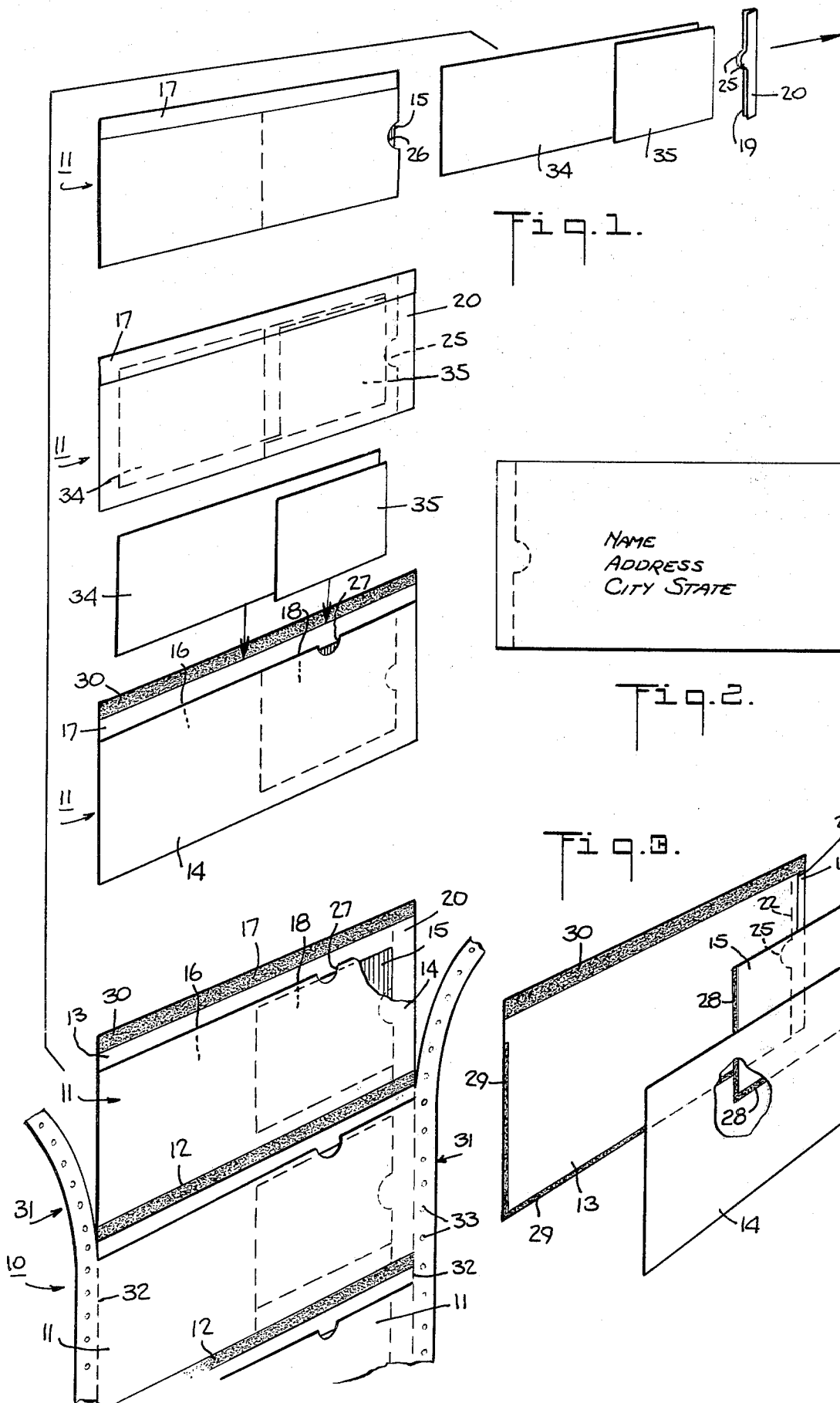
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

Each envelope of the continuous envelope assembly includes a back ply secured to a front ply to define an open ended main pocket and a flap to fold over the front ply to close the pocket. In addition, an insert ply is secured within the pocket to one of the front or back plys in order to form an insert pocket. Each of the front and back plys has a tear-away portion along one side which permits the envelope, after sealing, to be opened from the side in order to simultaneously expose the contents of the insert pocket and the main pocket.

10 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures





POUCHED CONTINUOUS ENVELOPE SYSTEM

This invention relates to a pouched continuous envelope assembly. More particularly, this invention relates to a pouched continuous envelope and an envelope having an insert pocket therein.

Heretofore, various types of continuous envelope systems have been known, for example, as described in U.S. Pat. No. 3,608,816, for use with high speed processing equipment. In some instances, the envelopes have been prestuffed with an insert of self-imaging paper which allows information to be recorded on the insert through the envelope by means of a printer. For example, by feeding a continuous series of envelopes through the printer, the printer is able to impress an image on the insert through the plies of the envelope. In other cases, the assemblies can be fed through a high speed printer with or without any inserts while address information is recorded on each envelope in consecutive order. In either case, the recording of information can be programmed automatically.

In some instances, a need arises to stuff more than one insert into a series of envelopes. For example, in the case of clubs, a statement of account and bill receipts are sometimes mailed to a club member. In the case of a bank, a statement of account and cancelled checks are frequently mailed to a customer. In other cases, letters and inserts such as credit cards are mailed. Generally, in all these cases, the statement and the supplemental materials are folded together and stuffed as such into the envelopes. As a result, the addressee has been required to remove all the inserts from an opened envelope before being able to read any one such insert. This is not only annoying but cumbersome and time consuming where the supplemental materials are not of immediate importance to the addressee.

In order to overcome some of these disadvantages, suggestions have been made to construct an envelope with a side pocket into which various supplemental materials can be stuffed. However, such envelopes cannot be readily processed on automatic machines.

Accordingly, it is an object of the invention to provide a pouched continuous envelope assembly which contains envelopes having an insert pocket within a main pocket.

It is another object of the invention to provide a continuous envelope assembly which has an insert pocket separate from a main pocket for receiving supplemental materials through the top of the envelope and which can be opened from the side.

It is another object of the invention to provide an envelope having a main pocket and an insert pocket within the main pocket for receiving supplemental materials such as credit cards, bills, receipts and the like.

It is another object of the invention to provide a continuous envelope assembly having insert pockets which can be readily used on automatic inserting equipment.

It is another object of the invention to provide an envelope containing separate pockets from which materials can be selectively removed.

Briefly, the invention provides a continuous envelope system comprising a series of interconnected envelopes which can be stuffed from the top and opened from the side. Each envelope of the assembly comprises a front ply, a back ply secured to the front ply to form a main open ended pocket therewith, an insert ply within the main pocket which is secured to one of the front or

back plies to form an insert pocket, and a tear-away portion along a common edge of at least the front and back plies. The tear-away portions on each ply are secured to each other for simultaneous removal from the remainder of the envelope in order to expose each of the pockets. Each envelope also includes a closure means in the form of a flap portion on the front ply for folding over the back ply to enclose the pocket.

Generally, the envelopes are of rectangular construction with the flap portion on the front ply and located along an upper edge, that is, across the width of the envelope. In addition, the insert ply is of rectangular shape and is secured along three edges to either of the front and back plies to open in the same direction as the main pocket. The insert ply may extend over the whole width of the plies or only over a fraction of the whole width.

The tear-away portions are located along a side edge of the envelope and are defined by lines of weakening in each of the plies. Upon removal of the tear-away portions, after the envelope has been sealed, the two pockets are exposed simultaneously. In this way, the contents of either pocket may be removed without having to remove the contents of the other pocket.

In order to facilitate removal of the contents of the envelope, the tear-away portions on the front and back plies can be provided with an integral tab portion which projects into the plane of the remainder of the plies to form a recess in each of the plies upon removal. In a similar manner, the front ply may be provided with a cut-out within the plane of the open end of the insert pocket to facilitate insertion of supplemental material into the insert pocket.

Any suitable means for securing the flap of the front ply to the back ply to close the pocket therebetween may be used. For example, a strip of pressure sensitive adhesive may be applied along a face of the flap portion.

The envelopes of the assembly are secured together via the front plies with lines of weakening disposed transversely across the upper and lower edges of each front ply. In addition, a detachable edge strip is located at each side of the assembly to provide a feeding means for feeding the series of envelopes through high speed processing equipment and to aid in the securement of the plies together. Such a detachable strip may be of any known construction.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention will become more apparent from the following detailed description and appended claims taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an envelope assembly of the invention and a single envelope detached from the series;

FIG. 2 illustrates a front view of an envelope according to the invention; and

FIG. 3 illustrates an exploded view of an envelope according to the invention.

Referring to FIG. 1, a continuous envelope assembly includes a plurality of envelopes 11 which are interconnected together along transverse lines of weakening 12 at the upper and lower edges.

Referring to FIGS. 1 and 3, each envelope 11 is made up of a front ply 13 of rectangular shape, a back ply 14 of rectangular shape and an insert ply 15 of rectangular shape. The front and back plies 13, 14 are secured together near three sides in order to form a main open-ended pocket 16. In addition, the back ply 14 is of

smaller length *L*, that is, in the vertical direction as viewed, then the front ply 13. In this way, the front ply 13 is formed with a flap portion 17 which is sized to fold over the back ply 14 to enclose the main pocket 16. The insert ply 15 is secured along two edges to the back ply 14 (or the front ply 13) in order to form an open-ended insert pocket 18. The open-end of the insert pocket 18 is located near the same side as the opening to the main pocket 16.

Referring to FIG. 3, each of the front and back plys 13, 14 includes a tear-away portion 19, 20 along a side edge which is defined by a line of weakening 22, 23 and adjacent the side of the insert pocket 18.

The tear-away portions 19, 20 of the front and back plys 13, 14 are each provided with a tab portion 25 which projects into the remainder of the respective plys. Upon removal of the tear-away portions, a recess 26 is formed in each of the front and back plys 13, 14 (FIG. 1) to facilitate removal of any inserts within the respective pockets 16, 18.

The back ply 14 is also provided with a recess 27 along the upper edge within the plane of the insert ply 15 to facilitate entry into the insert pocket 18.

The construction of each envelope 11 is such that the insert ply is secured to the inside surface of the back ply 14 by lines of adhesive 28 along two edges on the insert ply 15 to leave a side unsecured to the back ply 14. The back ply 14 is, in turn, secured to the front ply 13 by lines of adhesive 29 along three edges on the front ply 13. The line of adhesive 29 along the tear-away edge of each envelope 11 is disposed outside the lines of weakening 22, 23, i.e., to the right as viewed in FIG. 3, in order to avoid interference with the opening up of the pockets 16, 18. In addition, insert ply 15 terminates just before the line of weakening 23 of the back ply 14.

Alternatively, the insert ply 15 may extend beyond the line of weakening 23 and have a line of weakening or perforation aligned with the lines of weakening 22, 23 of the front and back plys 13, 14 which can be readily torn upon removal of the tear-away portions 19, 20 of the front and back plys 13, 14.

A suitable means, such as a strip of adhesive 30, is mounted along the upper edge of the flap portion 17 of each envelope 11 to facilitate securement of the flap portion 17 to the outer surface of the back ply 14 in order to close the pockets 16, 18 of the envelope.

Referring to FIG. 1, the assembly 10 is also provided with a feeding means 31 at each side to allow feeding of the assembly 10 through a machine such as a high speed printer or continuous printer as is known. Each feeding means 31 is defined by a detachable strip on each of the front and back plys 13, 14 of the envelopes 11. Each of the front and back plys 13, 14 also has a line of weakening 32 separating these strips from the tear-away portions 19, 20 and each line 32 is located outside of the lines of adhesive 28, 29. In this sense, the means 31 is made up of two pieces which are unconnected to each other but which are connected to the respective front and back plys 13, 14. Each feeding means 31 also includes a series of holes 33 for registering with suitable pins within processing machinery as is known.

As shown in FIG. 1, an envelope assembly 10, after passing through a printer (not shown) has the feeding means 31 removed and each envelope 11 is sequentially removed from the assembly. At this time, various materials can be stuffed into the respective pockets 16, 18 of each envelope 11. For example, as shown, a state-

ment of account form 34 can be inserted into the main pocket 16 while a number of bill receipts 35 are inserted into the insert pocket 18. Thereafter, the envelope flap portion 17 is folded over and sealed to the back ply 14 in order to seal the envelope 11. The envelope 11 can then be mailed to an addressee named on the front face of the envelope 11 as shown in FIG. 2. The information regarding the addressee can be placed on the envelope 11 at any time during processing as is known.

Upon receipt, the addressee grasps the tear-away portions 19, 20 located along the edge of the envelope 11 in one hand and the remainder of the envelope in the other hand. Next, in a simple one-step operation, the tear-away portions 19, 20 are then snapped from the remainder of the envelope 11. This simultaneously exposes both the main pocket 16 and the insert pocket 18 to the side of the envelope. At the same time, the recesses 26 in the front and back plys of the envelope are formed. The contents 34, 35 within the pockets 16, 18 can then be selectively removed from the sides of the pockets 16, 18. For example, the statement of account 34 can be removed from the main pocket 16 while leaving the receipts 35 in the insert pocket 18. Alternatively, the insert pocket 18 can be emptied first.

It is noted that the tab portion 25 can be sized relative to the insert 34 in the main pocket so that a portion of the insert 34 is disposed between the tab portions 25. In this way, the insert 34 can be removed simultaneously with the tear-away portions 19, 20 upon opening of an envelope 11.

The invention thus provides an assembly of envelopes each of which contains an insert pocket separate from a main pocket. In this way, various materials which are to be mailed can be maintained separate from each other for separate removal upon reaching an ultimate addressee.

The invention also provides a continuous envelope assembly that can be used in automated equipment wherein prestuffed self-imaging inserts can be provided with information and thereafter other materials can be inserted into the insert pockets for mailing purposes.

The invention further provides an envelope assembly which can be easily fabricated to define separate pockets. In this respect, the insert plys can be secured to the front plys in a separate operation and the front plys thereafter secured to the back plys. This can be carried out on automated equipment in various known manners.

What is claimed is:

1. A continuous series of interconnected envelopes, each said envelope comprising a back ply, a front ply secured to said back ply to form a first open-ended pocket therewith, a flap portion on one of said plys for folding over the other of said plys to enclose said pocket, at least one insert ply within said pocket secured along at least two edges thereof to one of said front and back plys to form an insert pocket within said first pocket, said insert ply having an edge unsecured to said front and back plys, a tear-away portion along a common edge of each of at least said front and back plys and adjacent said unsecured edge of said insert pocket, each of said tear-away portions being defined by a line of weakening said tear-away portion being secured to each other for simultaneous removal from the remainder of said envelope to expose each said pocket for removal of the contents of the insert pocket from said side of said insert pocket corresponding to said un-

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secured edge and the corresponding side of said envelope.

2. A continuous series of envelopes as set forth in claim 1 wherein each of said front and back plys is rectangular and said tear-away portions thereof are located on a side of said envelope.

3. A continuous series of envelopes as set forth in claim 2 wherein said insert ply is rectangular.

4. A continuous series of envelopes as set forth in claim 1 wherein said tear-away portion of each said front and back plys each include a tab portion projecting into the remainder of each said respective ply for forming a cut-out in each respective ply upon removal of said respective tear-away portions.

5. A continuous envelope system comprising a series of interconnected envelopes wherein each envelope includes

a back ply interconnected to a back ply of an adjacent envelope,

a front ply secured on said back ply to define an open-ended pocket therewith, said front ply being of smaller length than said back ply to define a flap portion on said back ply for folding over said front ply to close said pocket, an insert ply secured along at least two edges thereof to one of said front and back plys to define an insert pocket having an edge unsecured to said front and back plys,

each of said front and back plys having a tear-away portion along one edge and adjacent said unsecured edge of said insert ply for exposing said pockets upon removal of said tear-away portion to permit removal of the contents of said pockets from the side of each said insert pocket corresponding to said unsecured edge and said corresponding side of each of said envelopes, each of said tear-away portions being defined by a line of weakening and

a detachable edge strip at each side of said series of envelopes to provide a feeding means for said series of envelopes.

6. A continuous series of interconnected envelopes, each said envelope comprising

a front ply, a back ply, means securing said front ply and said back ply together to form a first open-ended pocket therein, a flap portion on said back ply for folding over said front ply and having means thereon to secure said flap portion to said front ply to enclose said pocket, an insert ply within said first pocket secured along at least two edges thereof to one of said plys to form an insert pocket within said

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first pocket, said insert pocket having an edge unsecured to said front and back plys, and a tear-away portion along a common edge of each said front and back plies and adjacent said edge of said insert pocket, each said tear-away portion being secured to an overlying tear-away portion for simultaneous removal from the remainder of said envelope to expose each said pocket for removal of the contents of said insert pocket from the side of said insert pocket corresponding to said unsecured edge, each of said tear-away portions being defined by a line of weakening.

7. A continuous series of interconnected envelopes, each said envelope comprising a rectangular front ply having a tear-away portion along one edge thereof; a rectangular back ply secured to said front ply about three edges thereof to form a first opened-ended pocket therebetween, said back ply including a tear-away portion along one edge thereof superimposed upon a tear-away portion located along the corresponding edge of said front ply, and a flap portion for folding over said back ply to close said pocket; and an insert ply secured in place between said front and back plys to define an insert pocket within said first pocket, said insert ply having an edge unsecured to said front and back plys, said insert pocket terminating at said unsecured edge adjacent said tear-away portions of said front and back plys whereby after closing of said flap portion on said back ply and upon removal of said tear-away portions, said pockets are simultaneously exposed for removal of the contents of the insert pocket from said side of said insert pocket corresponding to said unsecured edge and the corresponding side of said envelope each of said tear-away portions being defined by a line of weakening.

8. A continuous series of envelopes as set forth in claim 7 which further includes means on said flap portion for securing said flap portion to said back ply.

9. A continuous series of envelopes as set forth in claim 7 wherein said insert ply is rectangular and is secured along at least two edges to one of said front and back plys to define an opening into said insert pocket, said latter opening being located under said flap portion upon folding of said flap portion over said back ply.

10. A continuous series of envelopes as set forth in claim 7 wherein said back has a recess therein overlying said insert ply to expose said insert ply and provide access to said insert pocket.

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