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MOISTENING DEVICE

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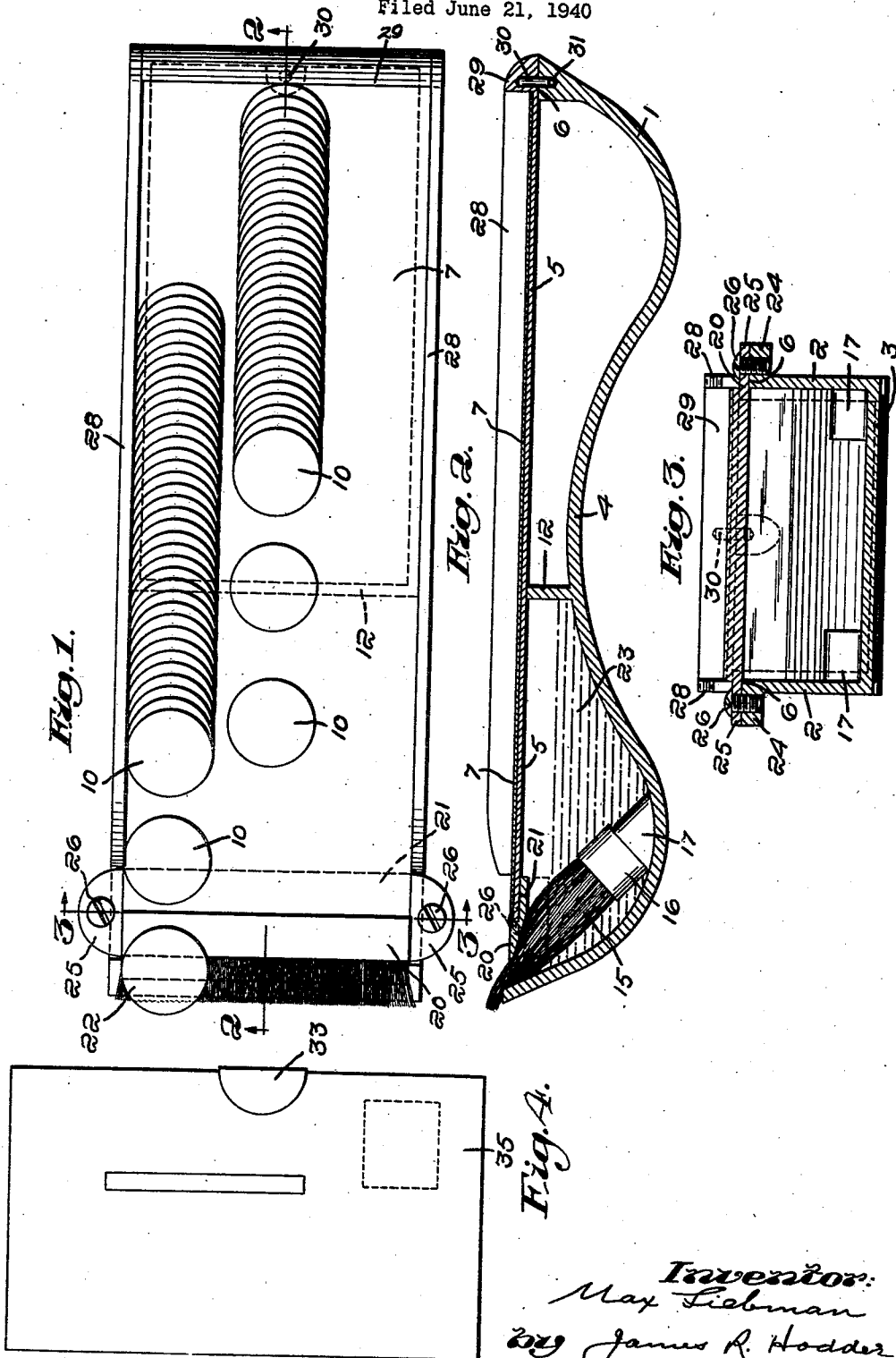


Fig. 4.

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MOISTENING DEVICE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 91—38)

My present invention is a novel and improved moistening device for use especially in holding, separating, moistening, and handling small gummed articles used in mailing, such, for example, as seals, wafers, or small individual gummed labels, hinges, or the like.

These articles are particularly difficult to separate and handle and, furthermore, are used in large quantities and must be moistened and handled individually by hand and are usually applied to seal circulars, return postcards, or the like mailing matter, where large numbers are employed but do not permit of any substantial expense being charged for such service. It is, therefore, of great importance to have a moistening device which will facilitate the speed of operation, holding, separating, moistening, and applying and to permit the individual applying of small gummed articles at high-speed and at trifling cost.

Therefore, the object of my present invention is to provide an inexpensive and serviceable moistening device especially intended for handling small seals, wafers, or gummed labels in an expeditious and satisfactory manner.

In carrying out my present invention I provide a receptacle which may be positioned anywhere, such as on a stand, desk, or table, which will hold a predetermined supply of liquid and permit a brushing element to be immersed in the liquid, projecting sufficiently at the delivery end of the device to permit the moistening operation, and to afford a cover with a surface which will hold and facilitate the separation of a mass of such gummed articles.

This is done by the simple operation of utilizing the index or other finger of the hand of the operator, sliding an individual gummed article from the stack, effecting the separating of the same on the table, and continuing the sliding action across the moistening brush to apply the label to a mailing article or the like. For this purpose I supply a suitable casting of suitable design, which may be of metal, plastic, or any other suitable substance, with a liquid-holding portion, brush-holding portion, and removable table and with its friction surface to aid in the separating action.

Referring to the drawing illustrating a preferred embodiment of my present invention:

Fig. 1 is a plan view;

Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a cross-sectional view on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1, and

Fig. 4 is a diagrammatic view of an envelope illustrating the application of a seal as applied thereto.

The device comprises a box-like receptacle designated generally at 1, having sides 2—2, and a bottom 3, preferably formed integral with the sides, said bottom also preferably being of a curved contour substantially as indicated at 4 in Fig. 2 to facilitate carrying and holding the device when filled with a moistening liquid.

A removing cover 5 is adapted to fit within the top of the receptacle fitting over the marginal flanged portions of both sides and rear, as indicated at 6, Figs. 2 and 3, which cover preferably has a roughened or friction surface and may be of felt or cloth 7, which will facilitate the separation of a seal or gummed article 10 from a stack of same, which may be placed on top of the cover 7, said stack being inclined substantially as illustrated to facilitate the separation of the endmost member 10. A central partition 12 is provided to give support to the top 7 and to confine the liquid-holding portion of the device at one end, as shown at the left of Fig. 2. A brushing element 15 is arranged to be fitted in the liquid-receiving end, being positioned at an angle by having the bristle-holder 16 of the brush resting against a pair of bevelled lugs 17—17 at each side of the base portion of the liquid-containing part of the device, as best shown in Figs. 2 and 3.

Across the delivery end of the device adjacent the brushing element 15, I apply a cross-brace 20 in position to compress and hold the bristles of a brushing element and with the rear part of the cross-brace 20 recessed or shouldered at 21 into which the forward end of the top 5 with its felt or other anti-friction surface covering 7 fitted flush therein, so that the seals 10 when separated from the mass on the top of the surface can be slid over the cross-brace 20 and with the gummed surface in contact with the brushing element, as shown in Fig. 1 by the seal 22.

Liquid 23 will be fed up to the projecting surface of the brushing element by capillary attraction and thus be in position at all times to moisten gummed articles in contact therewith as the same are slid over the cross-brace 20. To hold the cross-brace 20 conveniently in position, I form a pair of lugs 24—24 on each side of the delivery end of the device, and the cross-brace 20 has ends 25—25 extending sufficiently to permit screws 26 to be set therethru into correspondingly tapped recesses in the lugs 24 and thus

retain the cross-brace firmly in position on the device.

It is desirable to have the cover 5 housed below the ridge portion 28 of each side extending lengthwise of the device and with a rearwardly extending cross-ridge 29 formed on the cover itself; and I provide a pin 30 fitted into a recess 31 in the central part of the rear of the receptacle 1 in position to engage a corresponding recess in the ridge 29 of the cover so that when the cover is applied or removed, a single lifting or lowering of the heel portion of the cover 5 will act to release or apply the pin 30 thereto, thus retaining the cover in assembled position.

In the operation of the device, the cover 5 is removed and, if necessary, the cross-brace 20 is also released and the brushing element fitted in place at the delivery end of the device. Thereupon the cross-brace is applied, the screws 26 tightened, and the brush is in permanent position. The cover 5 can be readily lifted and water applied to the receptacle where the brush element is contained and the cover thereupon replaced.

A stack of seals, labels, or other small articles are then supplied to the top of the felt or roughened surface 7, such material or seals usually coming in stacks, which are tilted slightly to facilitate separation of same, whereupon the operator, with her finger, quickly separates and slides a seal 10 over the cross-brace 20 and applies the same as shown at 33 to the circular or, as here shown, a return postcard 35, and repeats this operation.

The device can be made of any length, size, weight, and color, and of suitable material to be attractive in appearance and should withstand any usage. While primarily intended for such

small articles as wafers, seals, and labels otherwise difficult to handle, it can, of course, be utilized for other moistening devices, such as passing the gummed flap of an envelope over the moistening element.

In the attached drawing, I have illustrated a brushing element, which is preferred, but it is, of course, within the scope of the invention to utilize a roller or any other moistening element which may be desired.

I claim:

A moistening device of the kind described adapted to store, separate, and moisten seals, wafers, or the like small gummed articles, comprising a receptacle having a removable cover, a removable cross-plate, a liquid-containing portion in the receptacle, and a moistening element positioned in the receptacle under the cross-plate to feed liquid above the level of the cross-plate adjacent the delivery end of the receptacle to moisten the gummed surface of articles moved thereover, said removable cover having a roughened surface on which to hold and facilitate the separation of a small gummed article from the mass of such gummed articles stored on said roughened surface, said cross-plate having a smooth polished surface over which the articles separated from said stack may slide, the top of the cross-plate and the said roughened surface being substantially in alignment, the upper part of the moistening element being positioned adjacent said cross-plate whereby small gummed articles, when stored in horizontal stacks on the roughened portion of the removable cover, may be separated and slid across the smooth top of the cross-plate and in contact with said moistening element.

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