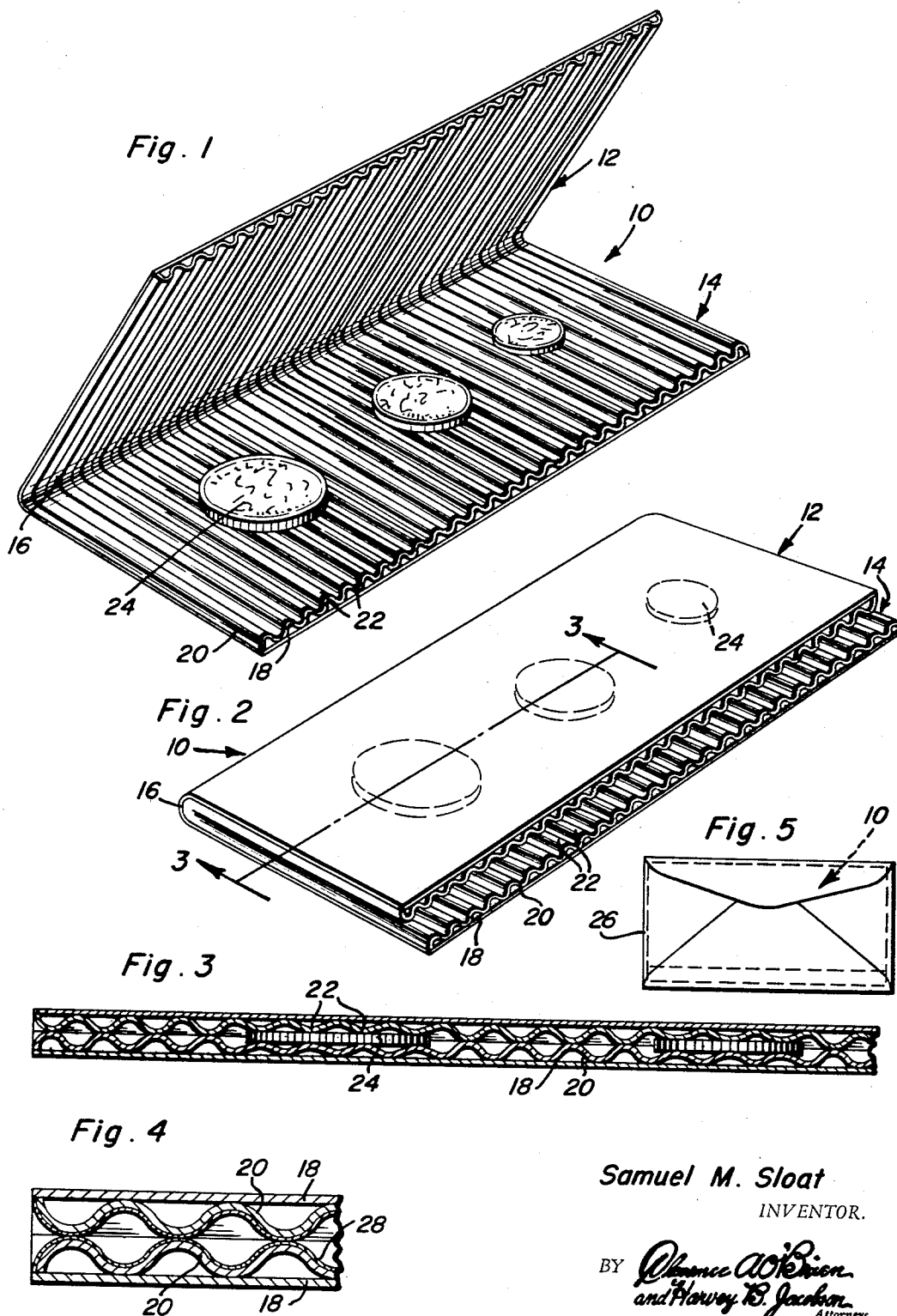


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S. M. SLOAT
PROTECTIVE MAILER
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PROTECTIVE MAILER

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A protective mailer defined by two overlapping panel sections which receive coins, small machine parts, electronic components or the like therebetween. The inner faces of the two overlying panels are defined by corrugated sheets which are coated with a pressure sensitive adhesive of the type which will only adhere to itself and not to a received item. Upon a closing of the two panels over a coin or the like the coin will depress the opposed corrugations and the panels will be secured to each other completely about the coin.

The instant invention relates to protective mailers of the type which receive and protectively retain coins, or similar small items, which are to be sent through the mail in a conventional postal envelope.

More particularly, it is a primary object of the instant invention to provide a protective mailer which is capable of receiving one or more items, generally coins, in a manner whereby a sealed pocket is automatically defined for the item with the exterior of the mailer presenting no indication of the presence of an item therein.

Another highly significant object of the instant invention resides in the provision of a protective mailer which while capable of completely concealing the presence of one or more coins, is extremely lightweight in nature so as to enable its inclusion, along with several coins, in a conventional size envelope for mailing at a first class rate. This inherent lightness of the mailer itself which enables the use of a regular size envelope, in conjunction with the ability to completely conceal the presence of a coin or coins, is particularly significant in reducing incidents of stealing on the part of any who might handle the particular envelope or envelopes involved, this being a substantial problem long experienced by those concerned with the sending of coins through the mail. More specifically, conventional coin mailers either incompletely disguise the presence of coins, or, in an effort to disguise the presence of coins, are of such a bulk and weight as to require either excessive postage for regular size envelopes or the use of small envelopes which in itself would present an indication, to one looking for such, of the presence of a coin.

In conjunction with the above object, it is also an object of the instant invention to provide a coin mailer which can receive any size or type of coin and automatically define a retaining pocket therefor, thereby eliminating the necessity of providing preformed pockets such as tend to substantially increase both the bulk of and the expense incident to the production of the conventionally available type mailers.

Furthermore, it is an object of the instant invention to provide a protective mailer which can be completely opened so as to expose the entire contents thereof without

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destroying of the mailer, and which, as a result thereof, can in fact be re-used for a limited number of times.

Basically, the mailer of the instant invention comprises a pair of panels folded from a single blank into overlying relation to each other with the coins, or other small items, received therebetween. The blank is formed by two thin paper-like sheets, the inner one of which is provided with transversely extending corrugations throughout the length thereof thereby introducing a substantial degree of rigidity without the heavier weight normally encountered in cardboard mailers. In addition, the inner corrugated sheet, upon an overlapping of the panels, will, through an inward depressing or crushing thereof, automatically define a seat for a received coin with the presence of this coin not being detectable from the exterior of the folded mailer either by sight or by feel. The corrugated sheet is to be surface coated with a pressure sensitive adhesive of the type which will adhere only to itself and not to the received coin or coins whereby, upon a folding of the panels upon each other and about a received coin or coins, the panels will firmly adhere to each other completely about the coins. Because of the nature of such adhesive, it will be appreciated that the panels can be easily pulled apart for the exposure of the coins. In order to facilitate an opening of the mailer in this manner, the free lateral edge of one of the panels has been extended so as to provide a gripping flange.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of an open mailer having several coins received therein;

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view of the closed or sealed mailer;

FIGURE 3 is an enlarged cross-sectional view taken substantially on a plane passing along line 3—3 in FIGURE 2 and illustrating the manner in which an automatic coin pocket is defined without disrupting the exterior surface of the mailer;

FIGURE 4 is an enlarged cross-sectional view illustrating the adhesive surface coating; and

FIGURE 5 is a reduced rear elevational view of a conventional postal envelope with the mailer of the instant invention received therein.

Referring now more specifically to the drawings, reference numeral 10 is used to generally designate the protective mailer comprising the instant invention. This novel mailer comprises two overlappable panels 12 and 14 integrally formed from a common blank folded along a longitudinally extending fold line 16. The blank itself is defined by two paper-like layers or sheets 18 and 20, the outer sheet 18 being flat and the inner sheet 20 having transversely extending corrugations 22 throughout the length thereof. These sheets 18 and 20 are of course intimately bonded to each other throughout the entire contacting area thereof so as to provide an integral item.

The corrugating of the inner layer 20 is particularly significant in that it introduces a substantial degree of rigidity into the mailer 10 while only slightly increasing the weight thereof, especially as compared to the weight increase which would be experienced were an equal de-

gree of rigidity achieved through the incorporation of a thick cardboard sheet as in mailers now in conventional use.

As will be noted in FIGURE 3, in addition to providing for a desired degree of rigidity, the corrugations 22, upon an overlapping of the panels 12 and 14, provide a definite spacing between the overlapping outer sheet portions of the panels 12 and 14 between which a coin 24, or the like, can easily be accommodated through a crushing or deforming of the portions of the corrugations 22 contacted by the coin 24, without a corresponding change in the appearance of the smooth outer surface of the mailer 10. In this manner, one looking at a sealed envelope 26, such as indicated in FIGURE 5, would see no indication of any coin bulge or the like. By the same token, as is more probable, one running his fingers lightly over the envelope would also encounter no coin indicating bulges, only the smooth exterior surfaces of a contained article which, to all appearances, could be a folded letter. In light of the nature of the corrugated sheet 20, it will be appreciated that no preformed pockets for the coins are necessary, on the contrary, any size or type coin can be placed within the mailer with the pocket being automatically defined therefor upon the closing of the panels 12 and 14, this pocket generally receiving and concealing the coin, and also providing an effective cushion which will protect the coin during transit. This latter feature of providing in effect a cushioning layer for the pocketed reception of an item might possibly be of more significance when dealing with small delicate electronic parts or the like for which the protective mailer of the instant invention might also be used.

In order to effectively seal the panels 12 and 14 to each other so as to retain the coin or coins therein, the inner surface of the corrugated sheet 20 is to be provided with a coating of pressure sensitive adhesive 28 of the type which will adhere only to itself and not the received item or items. In this manner, the upper panel 12 is brought down over the lower panel 14 and the coins 24 positioned thereon, after which one need merely run his hand along the overlapped panels so as to produce an effective sealing of the panels to each other completely about the coins with the corrugations in the vicinity of the coin 24 depressing slightly so as to accommodate the coins without forming a corresponding deformation in the exterior surface or outer sheet 18. FIGURE 4 illustrates the manner in which the corrugation defined ridges directly abut and are adhesively secured to each other. Thus, if it should be so desired, it will be appreciated that the adhesive 28 need to provided only on these contacting ridge portions. Further, and with particular reference to FIGURE 2, it will be noted that the bottom panel 14 has the free transverse edge portion thereof projecting laterally beyond the free edge of the upper panel 12 so as to provide a gripping flange whereby a separation of the adhesively secured panels 12 and 14 is facilitated. When so separated, the adhesive coating 28 being such so as to allow for this separation with no damage to the panels and little detrimental effect on the adhesive qualities of the adhesive coating 28, the entire interior of the mailer 10 is exposed for ready viewing or access to the contained items. Further, in light of the manner in which the mailer 10 itself can be completely opened, it will be appreciated that a re-use thereof for a limited number of times is possible with different coins, subsequently inserted, also forming their own cushioned pockets in the same manner as the first received coins, the originally deformed corrugations 22 tending to return to their pre-deformed configuration.

It should be appreciated that the thicknesses of the sheets 18 and 20 have been exaggerated for the purposes of illustration in the drawings. In actual practice, the folded mailer will be approximately one-eighth to three-sixteenths inch thick, this being sufficient so as to accommodate most coins in the manner set forth supra, while at the same time being of a bulk which cannot be easily

distinguished from that of a conventionally folded letter by one rapidly running his fingers over the sealed envelope. As an example of the advantages of the protective mailer of the instant invention, attention is directed to the fact that, utilizing this lightweight mailer, up to three U.S. quarters can be sent in a conventional postal envelope approximately six inches long by first class mail for six cents. The mailer will of course closely conform to and substantially fill the envelope as illustrated in FIGURE 5 of the drawings.

A final advantage to be particularly set forth resides in the fact that, upon an opening of the mailer, the coins therein can be readily removed therefrom, there being no necessity of prying or otherwise attempting to remove the coins from deep set preformed pockets such as could be damaging both to the coins and to the mailer.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A protective mailer for small items such as coins or the like comprising upper and lower superimposed panels, each of said panels having a smooth outer surface and a compressible inner surface capable of deforming in response to engagement with an item received between said panels, and means for securing said inner surfaces together for the retention of an item positioned therebetween, said panels being integrally and hingedly engaged with each other along one edge thereof, said compressible inner surfaces being defined by a corrugated inner sheet, the corrugations of said corrugated sheet extending transversely across each panel from the integral edge thereof to the free edge thereof, said means for securing said panels to each other comprising a pressure sensitive adhesive coating on said corrugated sheet.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein the outer surfaces of said panels are defined by a single flat sheet.

3. The device of claim 2 wherein said adhesive defines a releasable and resealable bond.

4. A protective mailer for coins or the like comprising an enlarged blank longitudinally folded so as to define a pair of overlying panels, each panel comprising a single flat outer sheet and a single corrugated inner sheet intimately bonded thereto, said corrugated sheet being defined by a plurality of compressible corrugations for deformation into an internal pocket upon pressing of the panels together about a received coin or the like, and releasable adhesive means on the inner surfaces of said corrugated sheets, said adhesive means adhering solely to itself.

5. The mailer of claim 4 wherein the longitudinal free edge of one of said panels projects laterally beyond the longitudinal free edge of the other of said panels, said corrugations extending transversely of said free edges.

6. A protective mailer for small items such as coins or the like comprising upper and lower superimposed panels, said panels being integrally and hingedly engaged with each other along one edge thereof, each of said panels having a smooth outer surface and a compressible inner surface, said compressible inner surfaces being positionable in overlying engagement with each other and capable of deforming in response to engagement with an item received between said panels so as to define an internal pocket for said item generally surrounded by the engaged compressible inner surfaces, and means for securing the inner surfaces together for retention of a received item positioned therebetween, said means for securing said inner surfaces together comprising a pressure-sensitive adhesive coating on said compressible inner surfaces.

7. The device of claim 6 wherein said adhesive defines a releasable and resealable bond.

8. The device of claim 7 wherein said compressible inner surfaces are defined by a corrugated sheet.

9. A protector for small items comprising a pair of overlying panels, each panel comprising a flat outer sheet and a compressible inner sheet, said compressible inner sheets being engageable with each other throughout ap-

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proximately the entire area thereof and being deformable in response to engagement with an item received therebetween so as to define an internal pocket, and releasable adhesive means on the contacting inner surfaces of the inner sheets, said adhesive means adhering solely to itself and adhesively securing the inner surfaces throughout approximately the entire area of engagement therebetween about any received item.

10. The protector of claim 9 wherein said inner sheets are corrugated with the corrugated sheets being defined by compressible corrugations, said pair of overlying panels being defined by an enlarged blank longitudinally folded.

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