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STAMP HINGE MOISTENER

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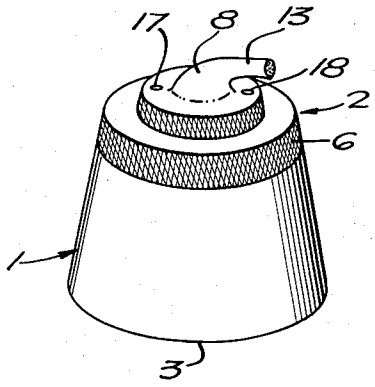


FIG. 1.

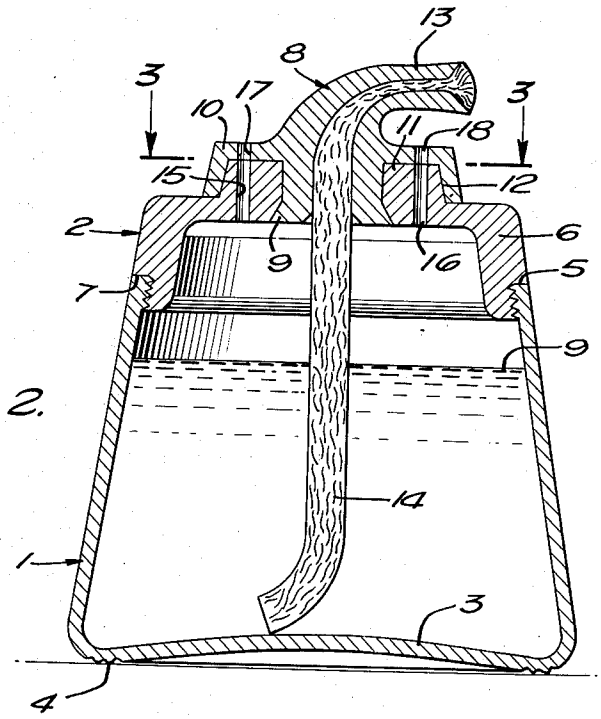


FIG. 2.

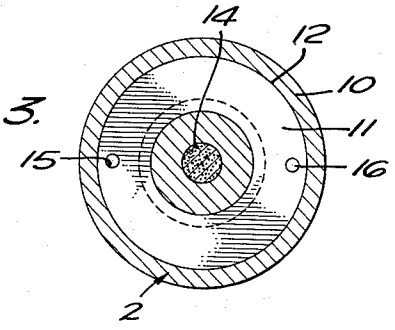


FIG. 3.

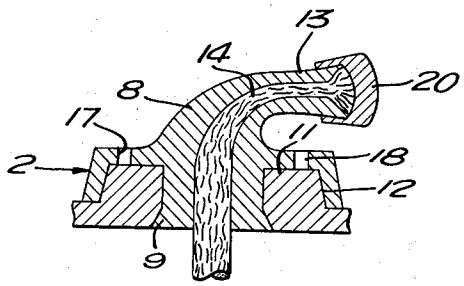


FIG. 4.

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STAMP HINGE MOISTENER

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This invention pertains to a device for moistening stamp hinges or similar articles with a wetting agent.

It is customary in philately to mount postage stamps in albums through the use of special paper hinges. These hinges are relatively small, folded strips of paper dimensioned to be hidden when the stamp is affixed in place. An adhesive is included on the hinge which serves both to secure the hinge to the undersurface of the stamp and to the page of the album as well. A water soluble adhesive is used, and when properly moistened, the hinge will cause no damage to the stamp to which it is applied. This is despite the fact that it contacts the surface of the stamp having mucilage or glue on it.

It is of particular importance to avoid over application of moisture to the stamp hinge. This can result in inadvertent bonding of the stamp to the page of the album and can cause a drastic reduction in the value of the stamp. Following normal procedures, it is quite difficult to mount stamps without occasionally applying excess moisture so as to result in attendant injury to the stamp. The mounting of stamps also has been a relatively slow and tedious job, and there has been no means of rapidly and accurately applying the wetting agent to the stamp hinge.

According to the present invention a device is provided to greatly facilitate moistening of stamp hinges or the like. This includes a container that receives the wetting agent which is fed through a wick through a nozzle-like outlet on a screw-type lid. The end of the wick thus provides a localized source of wetting agent of ideal dimensions for use with small stamp hinges. The tip portion of the lid is rotatable relative to the remainder of the lid so that vent holes may be aligned at the time of use. These openings are essential for allowing air to enter the receptacle as the supply of the wetting agent is used up. Otherwise the wetting agent will evaporate immediately from the end of the wick and it cannot be used continually. When the device is not in use, the tip portion is rotated to close off the vent openings to conserve the supply of wetting agent. If desired, a cap may be included to fit over the end of the tip, likewise to confine the wetting agent to the interior of the reservoir.

Thus it is an object of this invention to provide a means for correctly applying moisture to stamp hinges or similar items.

Another object of this invention is to apply wetting agent to a stamp hinge or the like without danger of damage to a stamp to which the hinge is attached.

A further object of this invention is to provide a continuously usable wick-feeding device.

An additional object of this invention is to provide a moisture-feeding device having closable vent holes.

These and other objects will become apparent from the following detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the device of this invention,

FIG. 2 is an enlarged longitudinal sectional view of the invention,

FIG. 3 is a transverse sectional view taken along line 3—3 of FIG. 1, and

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary longitudinal sectional view of the lid portion of the device with the vent openings closed and a cap in place over the end of the wick.

The device of this invention includes a receptacle portion 1 over which is fitted a lid assembly 2. Preferably the entire construction is of plastic material which is particularly suitable because of its chemical inertness, as well as its resistance to breakage. Various plastics may be employed, and these may be opaque, clear or translucent as desired. The latter two types are advantageous in that they permit a ready visual determination of the amount of liquid within the reservoir. It is obvious, of course, that materials such as glass or metal may be utilized also, as desired.

The lower reservoir portion 1 includes a relatively wide base end wall 3 to assure stability, and on its bottom surface may include circumferential beads 4 for offering a resistance to sliding movement of the device on a table top. The open upper end of the reservoir terminates in a shoulder 5 and is internally threaded to engage complementary threads on the lower cap portion 6 of the lid assembly 2. This brings shoulder 7 of the cap element 6 into contact with shoulder 5 of the reservoir, so that a seal is provided where these two elements are joined.

A central opening in the cap portion 6 rotatably receives a tip element 8, the lower end of which may include an upset head portion 9 for retaining the tip in place on the cap member 6. A radial flange 10 extends over the upper end wall 11 of the cap member, and downwardly along the frustoconical side wall 12 of this outer portion of the cap. This flange provides the unit with a neat appearance and also assures that there is an effective moisture-proof seal between the tip portion 8 and the cap element 6. Preferably the outer circumferential walls of the portions 6 and 8 of the lid assembly are knurled to facilitate their rotation.

The tip portion 8 includes a laterally extending nozzle-like projection 13 extending toward the side of the unit. An elongated opening extends through element 8 from the end of projection 13 to the interior of reservoir 1. This aperture receives a wick 14, positioning it so that one end extends to the exterior of the unit at projection 13, while the other end of the wick depends downwardly to the bottom of the reservoir 1.

Relatively small longitudinal openings 15 and 16 extend through the end wall 11 of the cap member 6, while similar openings 17 and 18 are provided in the radial wall of flange 10 of the tip portion 8. These apertures may be brought into registry by proper relative rotation of the tip and cap portions of the lid assembly, as seen in FIGS. 2 and 3. This permits air to enter the reservoir in the portion above the water or other wetting agent 19 received in the reservoir.

In use of the device of this invention, therefore, the fluid is introduced into the reservoir and the lid assembly is screwed into place. The vent openings 17 and 18 are brought into alignment with corresponding holes 15 and 16 through proper rotation of the tip portion 8 relative to the cap member 6. The device is then ready for use in moistening stamp hinges.

The relatively small outer end of the laterally projecting portion 13 of the tip provides an appropriately dimensioned device for applying moisture to the stamp hinges. At the same time, the aligned vent holes permit air to enter the reservoir as the moisture is used up, thereby allowing its continual use. In the absence of the vent openings, the device would be impractical because moisture immediately would evaporate from the end of the wick but would not be replaced by the other moisture being fed through the wick. This is because it would require pulling a vacuum for the fluid to then pass through the wick, and the capillary attraction of the wick is not sufficient to give such a force. However, with the vent openings as in the present design, there is no hindrance

to the capillary feeding of the wetting agent **19** up through the wick **14**.

In this manner, it is possible to rapidly apply moisture to stamps while continually mounting them within an album. The wick supplies precisely the right amount of fluid for the adhesive of the stamp hinge without endangering the stamp to which it is applied. In the usual instances the projecting portion **13** is positioned so that it extends directly away from the user. It is possible then to see the stamp hinge as it is passed over the wick **14**. This permits not only the appropriate amount of moisture to be applied to the stamp hinge, but also facilitates the application of this moisture to exactly the proper location despite the relatively small dimensions of the stamp hinge.

After a desired quantity of stamp hinges have been moistened, tip portion **8** is rotated relative to the cap **6** so as to result in the misalignment of openings **17** and **18** with respect to apertures **15** and **16**. This position is shown in FIG. 4. As a result, the vent openings are closed and the wetting agent cannot evaporate through them. In addition, if desired, a cap **20** may be provided which is fitted over the outer end of the projection **13**, precluding also the escape of moisture through this route. The sealing of the unit in this manner is particularly important where a wetting agent other than water is utilized. These preparations normally are more volatile than water so that without sealing the reservoir there could be an unduly fast loss of moisture from the unit.

It is obvious that the device of this invention is not limited to use with stamp hinges, but may be used to advantage whenever a precision application of moisture is needed.

The foregoing detailed description is to be clearly understood as given by way of illustration and example only, the spirit and scope of this invention being limited solely by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A device for moistening stamp hinges or the like comprising a receptacle member, a lid assembly, said lid assembly including a first member threadably engaging the upper portion of said receptacle member, said first member having a central aperture in the end wall thereof, a second member having a portion extending through said aperture in said first member, a flange extending over said end wall of said first member, and a tip portion extending upwardly from the central portion of said flange and laterally to one side of said assembly, said second member being rotatable relative to said first member, said first member including at least one aperture in said end wall, said second member including at least one aperture in said flange alignable with said first mentioned aperture at a relative rotational position of said first and second members, said second member including a centrally disposed aperture therethrough, and a wick extending through said aperture in said second member from the distal end of said tip portion and depending therefrom to the interior of said receptacle for contact with fluid therein for conducting said fluid to said distal end of said tip portion.

2. A device as recited in claim 1 including in addition a closure member for said opening at said distal end of said tip for precluding escape of moisture through said wick.

3. A device for moistening stamp hinges or the like comprising a receptacle member; a lid assembly, said lid assembly including a first member removably engaging the upper portion of said receptacle member, said first member having a transversely extending wall having an opening therethrough, a second member, said second member having a portion extending through said aperture, a flange extending over said wall of said first member, and a tip portion extending upwardly from said flange and laterally to one side of said portion that extends through said aperture, said second member being rotatable relative to said first member, said first member including at least one aperture in said wall, said second member including at least one aperture in said flange alignable with said first mentioned aperture at a relative rotational position of said first and second members, said second member including an aperture extending from the distal end of said tip portion through said flange and said portion extending through said aperture in said first member, thereby providing communication between the interior and exterior of said receptacle; and a wick extending through said aperture in said second member from said distal end of said tip portion and depending therefrom into the interior of said receptacle for contact with fluid therein for conducting said fluid to said distal end of said tip portion.

4. A device as recited in claim 3 in which said first member includes side wall portions and said flange includes a lip overlying and complementarily engaging said side wall portions of said first member.

5. A device as recited in claim 3 in which said portion of said second member extending through said aperture in said first member includes a radially enlarged portion engaging the under surface of said wall, for thereby retaining said second member in engagement with said first member.

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