No. 782,397. PATENTED FEB. 14, 1905.

W. E. HINGSTON.

SAFETY ENVELOP.

APPLICATION FILED AUG. 24, 1903.

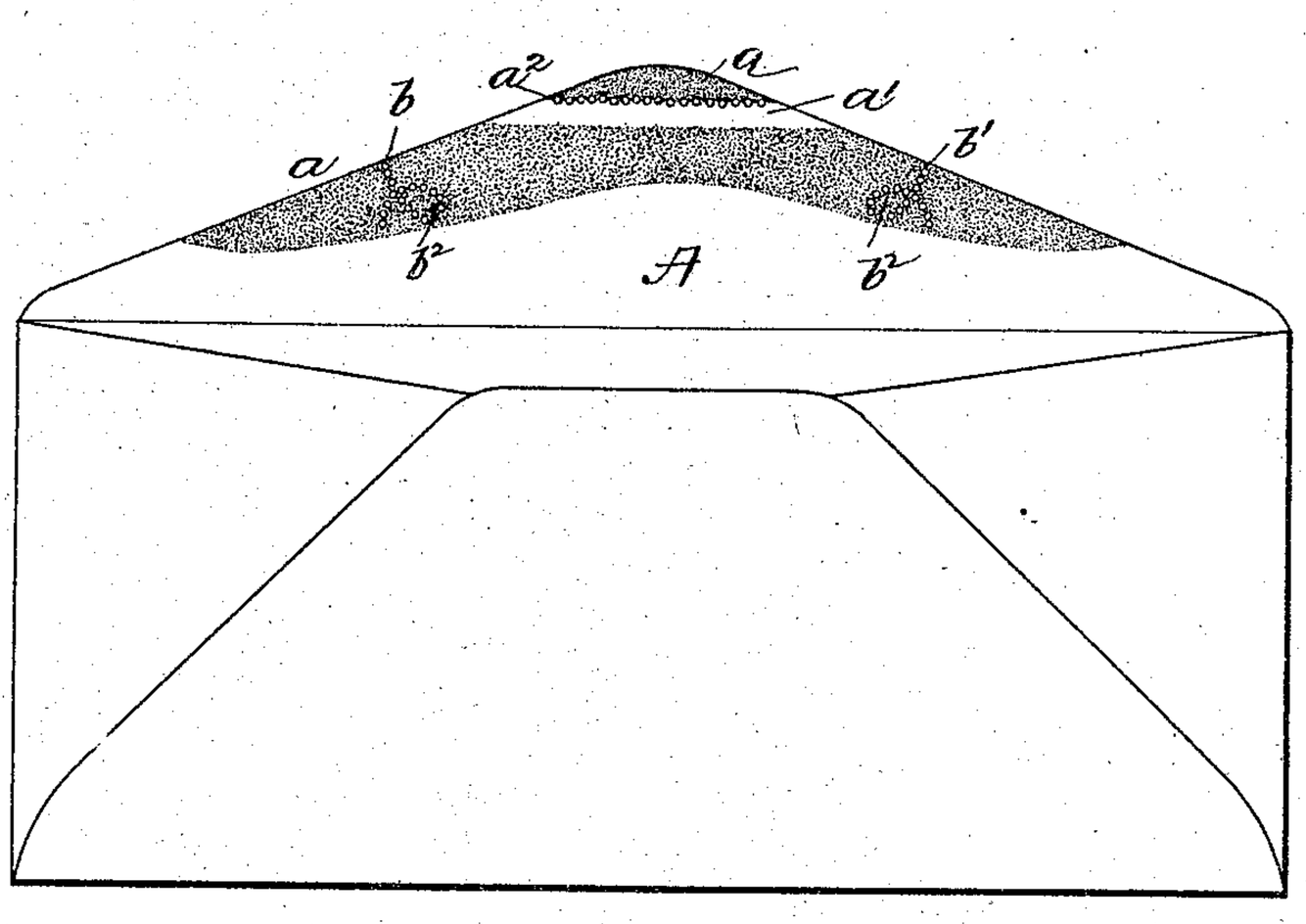

Fig. 1.

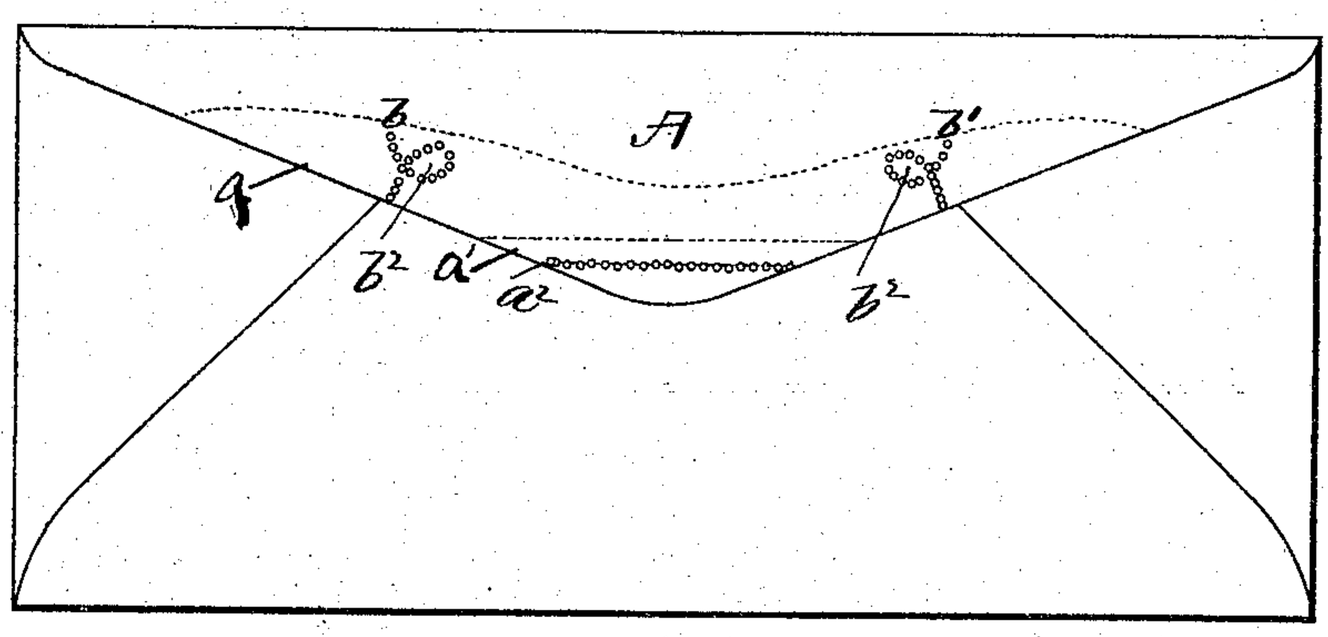

Fig. 2.

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No. 782,397. Patented February 14, 1905.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILLIAM E. HINGSTON, OF BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS, ASSIGNOR TO JOHN W. MORRISON, TRUSTEE, OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

SAFETY-ENVELOP.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 782,397, dated February 14, 1905.

Application filed August 24, 1903. Serial No. 170,621.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM E. HINGSTON, of Brookline, county of Norfolk, and State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Safety-Envelops, of which the following is a specification.

The object of my invention is to provide a simple means of preventing the opening of an envelop without detection; and it consists in an envelop a portion of the gummed surface of which has been punctured and preferably, also, left ungummed, so that any attempt to open the envelop after it has been permanently stuck will result in the detachment of certain portions of the seal or other flap, as will now be described.

My invention will be understood by reference to the drawings, in which—

Figure 1 illustrates my invention as embodied in the seal-flap of an envelop, the flap being shown unsealed, Fig. 2 showing the same envelóp sealed.

In the drawings the envelop seal-flap is marked A. It is provided with gum in the usual manner, as indicated at *a*, except that a strip, preferably straight and not necessarily very wide, is left ungummed, as shown at *a'*, and the outer edge of this ungummed strip substantially coincides with a line of very fine perforations—say one thirty-second or one sixty-fourth of an inch in diameter—which extend from one edge of the flap of the envelop to the other along the border of this ungummed portion of the seal-flap, as shown at a^2. The purpose of this construction is that when the envelop has once been sealed if some person should wish to tamper with its contents and for this purpose should steam it, as is usually done, or wet it in some way to dissolve the gum this steaming or wetting would cause the fibers connecting the perforations to weaken so materially as to tear the paper along the line of perforations when the flap is pulled away from the body of the envelop. This having been done, while it may leave the tip of the flap still stuck to the body of the envelop, it would be extremely difficult to reseal the envelop, because of the unsealed strip of the flap which having no gum upon it would tend to curl up or warp, being full of moisture, and even if stuck down would show, by reason of the fact that it was stuck down with mucilage, that the envelop when received by the person for whom it is intended was not sealed in the manner intended. I also prefer to provide the flap with other perforations (shown at *b b'*) as extending in directions radial to the edge of the envelop. In this case the arrangement of perforations is preferably as shown, so that the main body of the flap will be torn away from the spot b^2 of the flap surrounded by perforations which stick fast to the body of the envelop. It will therefore be extremely difficult, if not almost impossible, to unite the flap with the body of the envelop again without overlapping the spot, and so indicating that the envelop has been tampered with since its original sealing. In this case also the perforations should be very fine, and it is preferable that the line of perforations should begin at the very edge of the flap, so that the edge shall be cut, thus making it easier for the fibers to be torn away when the envelop is steamed.

With this instruction it will be easy to devise other means of embodying my invention, which consists, primarily, in supplying the seal or other flap with perforations and preferably with an ungummed strip extending from edge to edge of the flap, as shown. I have shown the ungummed surface *a'* as straight; but it may be curved or of any desired shape, but should extend from edge to edge of the flap. It is desirable that the perforations shall be very near together, so that but little fiber shall be left between the perforations and the flap shall tear at the perforations with the exercise of but little strength on the part of the person trying to open the envelop.

Whereas I have shown my invention for purposes of illustration as applied to the seal-flap of an envelop, the invention is not so limited, but may of course be embodied in any flap.

What I claim as my invention is—

In an envelop, a flap having two gummed portions and an ungummed portion between them, and a series of perforations between one of the gummed portions and the ungummed portion.

In testimony whereof I hereunto set my name this 20th day of July, 1903.

WILLIAM E. HINGSTON.

Witnesses:
GEORGE O. G. COALE,
M. E. FLAHERTY.