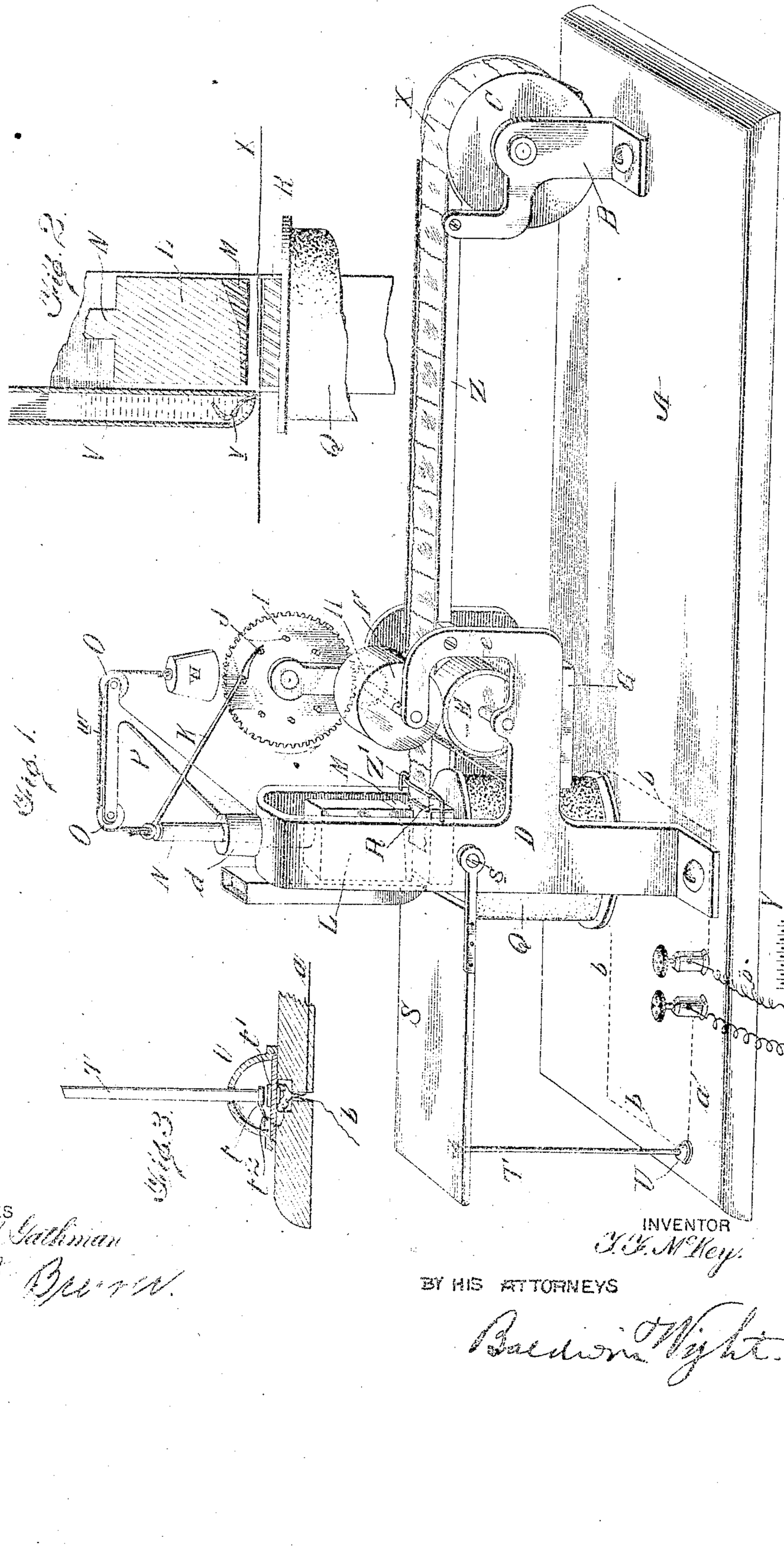
No. 826,955. PATENTED JULY 24, 1906

T. F. McKEY.

MACHINE FOR APPLYING POSTAGE STAMPS TO ENVELOPS.

APPLICATION FILED OCT. 2, 1905.



WITNESSES

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MACHINE FOR APPLYING POSTAGE-STAMPS TO ENVELOPS.

No. 826,955. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented July 24, 1906.

Application filed October 2, 1905. Serial No. 280,958.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, THOMAS F. McKEY, a citizen of the United States, residing at Albert Lea, in the county of Freeborn and State of Minnesota, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Machines for Applying Postage-Stamps to Envelops, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to machines adapted to apply stamps to envelops, &c.

It more particularly relates to machines in which postage-stamps are drawn from a roll, moistened, and applied to envelops, which may also be moistened, rendering them better adapted to receive the stamps.

According to my invention I provide a spool or reel on which is wound a strip or ribbon of stamps and carry the outer free end of the strip through feed-rolls which are actuated to move the strip intermittently to feed one stamp at a time to devices which cut the same from the strip. As the stamps are fed to the cutter they are moistened, and immediately after a stamp is cut from the strip it is pressed upon the envelop.

In the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of a stamp-affixing machine constructed in accordance with my invention. Fig. 2 is a detail view, on an enlarged scale and in section, showing particularly the relative arrangement of the moistener for the envelops, the cutter, the pressing-plunger, and the electromagnet for operating it. Fig. 3 is a detail view in section, showing the devices for making and breaking the electric circuit which energizes the magnet.

The bed-plate A supports a frame B, in which is mounted a spool or reel C, carrying a strip or ribbon of postage-stamps X. Another frame D, mounted on the bed-plate, supports feed-rolls E and F, one of which is covered with felt *e*, dipping into a tank of water G, while the axle on the other roll carries a pinion H, meshing with a spur-wheel I of larger diameter provided with a circular series of pins J, engaged by a pawl K and operated in a manner hereinafter explained. As the pawl is actuated the feed-rollers are operated to feed the stamps forward to the proper extent.

Within the frame D is arranged a plunger L, carrying on its lower end a steel shoe M and having at its upper end an upwardly-extending bar N, which passes through a guide *d* of the frame and connects at its upper end with a counterbalancing-weight W by means of a flexible connection *w*, extending over guide-pulleys O on a frame P. Immediately below the plunger is an electromagnet Q, the core of which serves as a support for that portion of the envelop to which the stamp is applied, and it is arranged close enough to the plunger to attract it when the magnet is energized. The knife or cutter R is arranged close to the core of the magnet so as to sever the stamps close to the edge of the envelop.

The table S, where the operator stands and deli[illegible]lops to the machine, is hinged at [illegible] to the frame D, and it carries a downwardly-extending rod T, passing through a casing U, and carries on its lower end within the casing a contact *t*, which coöperates with a contact *t'* to open and close the circuit of the battery Y. The rod T is normally held up by a spring t^2 to open the circuit; but when the table is depressed the circuit is closed through the electromagnet Q, and the plunger L is pulled down, causing the stamp to be severed from the strip and applied to the envelop.

If desired, the envelop may be moistened at the proper point to receive the stamp by a moistener V, comprising a tank filled with water and having a wick *v*. The strip of stamps is guided from the reel to the cutter by a trough Z, and it may be supported and guided between the feed-rolls and the cutter by a wire guide Z'.

Both the stamps and the envelops may be moistened or only one of them may be moistened.

The operation of the machine will be readily understood from the foregoing description, but briefly stated it is as follows: The operator stands at the table S and places envelops one at a time between the core of the magnet and the plunger. As each envelop is thus adjusted the operator presses down on the table, thus closing the electric circuit at *t t'* through the circuit connections *a b*. The electromagnet being thus energized, the plunger L will be drawn down, causing the stamp to be severed from the strip and then pressed down upon the envelop, the envelop having been previously moistened at the proper point or the stamp moistened in the manner before explained. As soon as the stamp is thus applied the operator releases pressure upon the table, which then rises, thus breaking the electric circuit, and the weight W causes the plunger L and the parts connected therewith to rise. In doing so the pawl K is caused to

turn the pins J to a sufficient extent to move the feed-rollers to the proper amount to feed forward the postage-stamps to the proper position to be severed and applied to an envelop at the next operation. These operations are repeated rapidly to affix stamps to envelops as quickly as the operator can feed them to the machine.

While I prefer to employ electromagnetic devices for operating the plunger, some parts of my invention are novel apart from these electromagnetic devices.

What I claim is—

1. A stamp-affixing machine comprising feed-rolls for advancing a strip of stamps, a vertically-moving plunger for pressing the stamps upon envelops, a counterbalancing-weight tending to raise the plunger, a cutter for severing stamps from the strip when the plunger descends, an electromagnetic device for drawing the plunger downward against the force of the counterbalancing-weight, and means for controlling the action of said electromagnetic device.

2. A stamp-affixing machine, comprising feed-rolls for advancing a strip of stamps, a vertically-moving plunger for pressing the stamps upon the envelops, a cutter for severing stamps from the strip, a vertically-moving table and means operated by the table for causing the plunger to descend, sever a stamp from the strip and press it upon the envelop.

3. A stamp-affixing machine, comprising feed-rolls for advancing a strip of stamps, a vertically-moving plunger for pressing the stamps upon the envelops, a cutter for severing stamps from the strip, a counterbalancing-weight for the plunger, an electromagnet for attracting the plunger and moving it downward, an electric circuit for energizing the magnet and devices for opening and closing this circuit.

4. A stamp-affixing machine, comprising feed-rolls for advancing a strip of stamps, a vertically-moving plunger for pressing the stamps upon the envelops, a cutter for severing the stamps from the strip, an electromagnet for attracting the plunger and moving it downward, a hinged table, an electric circuit for energizing the electromagnet and devices operated by the hinged table for opening and closing this circuit.

5. A stamp-affixing machine, comprising feed-rolls for advancing a strip of stamps, a vertically-moving plunger for pressing the stamps upon the envelops, a cutter for severing stamps from the strip, an electromagnet for operating the plunger, an electric circuit for energizing the magnet, devices for opening and closing this circuit, means for moistening the stamps before they are cut and means for moistening the envelops before receiving the stamps.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name.

THOMAS F. McKEY.

Witnesses:
HENRY A. MORGAN,
ANNA O. SRAUBERG.