

E. S. DOW. BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Electric Stamp-Canceler.

No. 206,546.

Patented July 30, 1878.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

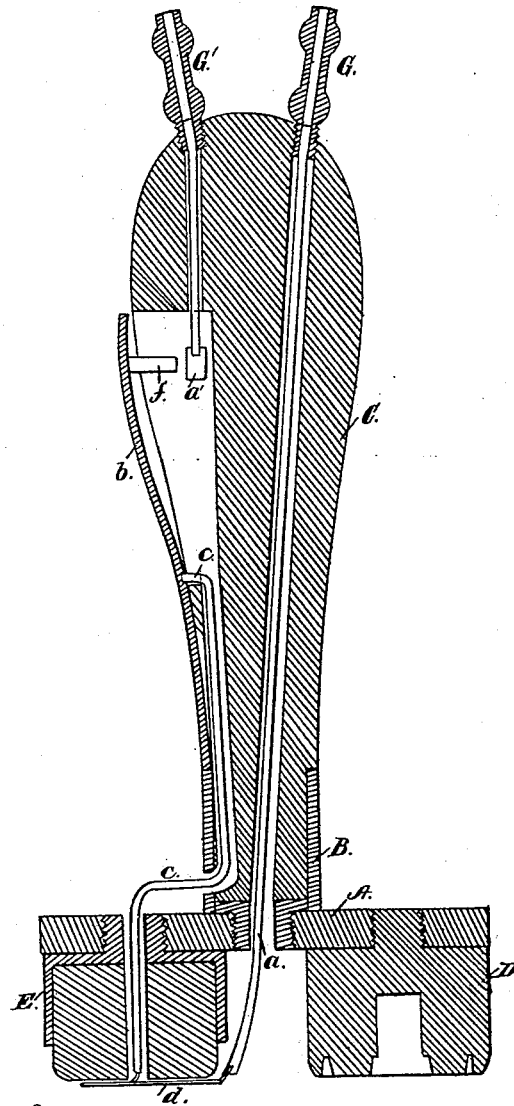
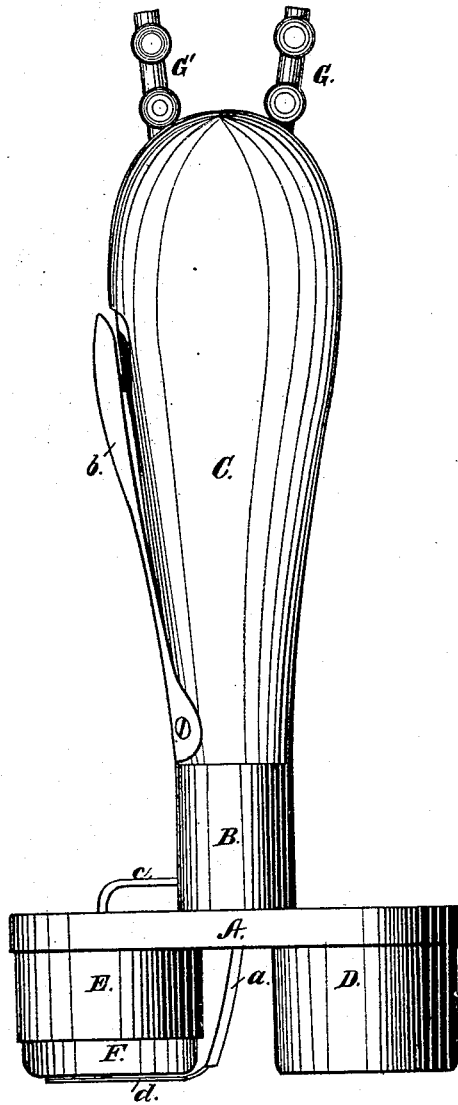
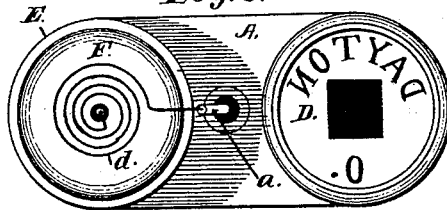


Fig. 3.



Witnesses;
Chas. M. Cook
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Inventor;
Eli. S. Dow
by his Attys;
Peck & Ritchie

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ELI S. DOW, OF DAYTON, OHIO, ASSIGNOR TO GRAHAM B. DENNIS, OF
SAME PLACE.

IMPROVEMENT IN ELECTRIC STAMP-CANCELERS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **206,546**, dated July 30, 1878; application filed
February 8, 1878.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ELI S. DOW, of Dayton, in the county of Montgomery and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Electric Stamp-Cancelers; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the same.

This invention has for its object the production of an improved stamp-canceler.

It is well known that the Government is subjected to heavy losses by reason of parties cleansing postage-stamps that have once been used and canceled, and then using them a second time, or oftener.

My invention consists in the novel construction of a hand-stamp whose die is heated by electricity, provided with a circuit-connector, which, when the handle of the canceler is grasped, completes the circuit for the purpose of heating the die, and which, when the device is laid down, automatically breaks the circuit and allows the die to cool. The novelty consists in the application to an electric stamp-canceler of an automatic circuit connector and breaker, which keeps the die constantly heated while the device is held in the hand for use, and which breaks the current to cool the die as soon as the hand is removed; also in details of construction, as will be here-with set forth and specifically claimed.

The application of my invention may be thus illustrated, reference being had to the accompanying drawing, in which—

Figure 1 is a front elevation of a die for canceling postage-stamps by electricity. Fig. 2 is a central sectional view, in elevation, of the same. Fig. 3 is a bottom-plan view of the same.

A is a metallic base-plate, of the shape shown, carrying on its top a socket, B, into which a wooden handle, C, is fitted, as represented. On the under side of the base-plate are fitted the ordinary metal die D, provided with letters for affixing the post-mark, and used with an ink-pad in the usual way, and a metal socket-piece, E, in which a short glass or other non-conducting cylinder, F, is secured, as shown.

Into the top of the handle are secured two connectors, G G', of the usual construction.

From the former of these a copper wire, *a*, Fig. 3, extends through the handle and terminates at the lower edge of the glass cylinder. From the connector G' a wire extends partly through the handle, and is united to a metal plate or block, *a'*, Fig. 2, embedded in the handle. The handle is recessed at this point, as shown, and near its lower end, over the recess, is secured a spring-plate, *b*, of the shape shown. From the lower portion of the inner side of this plate a wire, *c*, extends through the handle and down through the center of the glass cylinder F, at the lower face of which it terminates. Resting upon the lower face of this cylinder is a coil of fine platinum wire, *d*, Fig. 2, of any desired shape, having its ends connected, respectively, to the ends of the wires *c* and *a*, as shown. Connected to the inner side of the plate *b*, just over the block *a'*, is a metallic point or lug, *f*, which, upon the operator slightly pressing the plate, comes into contact with the block *a'*.

The operation of the device is as follows: Wires from the two poles of an electric battery are connected, respectively, to the connectors G G', and the die is ready for use. The operator has only to grasp the handle, when the point on the plate *b* comes in contact with the block *a'*, as before stated, and thus an electric current is established, which instantly heats the platinum wire red or even white hot. It only remains then to use the device as an ordinary hand-stamp on letters. The contact of the red-hot platinum wire with the postage-stamps burns them so effectually as to destroy them and render them unfit for further use. By using a fine wire, the depth of the burn can be confined to the stamp alone, so as not to injure the envelope or even touch it. Upon the operator releasing his grasp upon the handle the circuit is broken and the die becomes cool again almost instantly.

I am aware that it is not new to apply electricity to a die for canceling postage or other stamps, and consequently do not claim the process. Such devices, though, as have been hitherto constructed do not keep up a constant current of electricity while in use, so as to keep the die uniformly and constantly hot, but after each stroke of the die the circuit is

broken and the die becomes cool. By my construction, however, the die while being used is kept automatically and constantly heated, and only when laid down becomes cool. If the circuit were permanently maintained, so as to require special means or devices to disconnect it, the attendant might forget it, and the die might set fire to any object with which it came in contact.

While especially useful in canceling postage-stamps, this device might be employed equally well in branding beer-kegs or cigar-boxes.

Having thus fully described my invention, I claim as follows:

The combination, in an electric stamp-can-

celer, of the handle *C*, non-conducting carrier *F*, the wires from an electric battery, one *c* which is attached to a coil or die of platinum, and the spring-plate *b*, arranged upon the side of the handle and constructed as described, whereby when the handle is grasped the die is kept constantly and uninterruptedly heated, and whereby when laid aside the circuit is automatically broken, as set forth.

Witness my hand this 2d day of February, A. D. 1878.

ELI S. DOW.

Witnesses:

CHAS. M. PECK,

GRAHAM B. DENNIS.