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71 Applicant: **NAUTILUS DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED**
New Mills
Modbury South Devon, PL21 0PT(GB)

72 Inventor: **Stott, Keith**
6 Oakwood Park Loddiswell
Kingsbridge, TQ7 4SE(GB)

74 Representative: **Harrison, Ivor Stanley et al**
Withers & Rogers 4 Dyer's Building Holborn
London EC1N 2JT(GB)

54 **Handling apparatus.**

57 Apparatus for handing and folding articles, especially pairs of socks, comprises conveyor means (13) for presenting the articles in sequence to a folding station (14), folding means for folding the articles across a notional transverse line, holding means for holding first and subsequent folded articles in face to face relationship, means for presenting a folded rider card to said folded articles, means for gripping said card and articles together, and means for securing said rider card to said articles.

The various operational means may be disposed at stations around a carousel mechanism.

The invention also includes a pick and place mechanism for withdrawing rider cards from a stack thereof and folding them about predetermined fold lines.

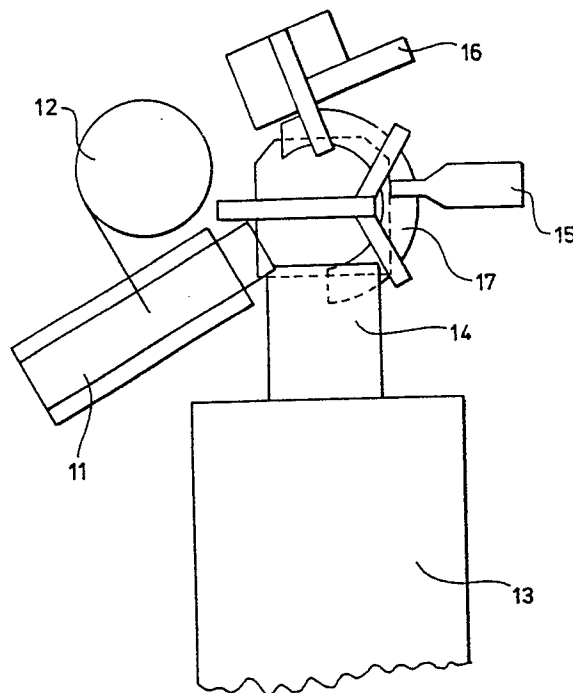


FIG 1

EP 0 373 774 A3



Application number

EP 89 31 1973

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 4)
A	US-A-4 543 768 (NISHIKAWA) * Column 5, line 31 - column 6, line 12; figures 7,8 *	1,9	B 65 B 25/20
A	GB-A-1 112 203 (HELIOT) * Figure 1 *	2	
A	FR-A-2 291 909 (JANSEN DE WIT) * The whole document *	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 4)
			B 65 B D 06 F B 65 C
<div> <div> <div>Place of search</div> <div>THE HAGUE</div> </div> <div> <div>Date of completion of the search</div> <div>19-02-1990</div> </div> <div> <div>Examiner</div> <div>CLAEYS</div> </div> </div>			
<div> <div> <div>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</div> <div> X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document </div> </div> <div> T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document </div> </div>			



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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- ☐ All claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ Only part of the claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid.
namely claims:
- ☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

X LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirement of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions.

namely:

1. Claims 1-11: Apparatus and method for folding and attaching articles to cards.
2. Claim 12: Pick and place mechanism for withdrawing rider cards from a stack and folding them.

- ☐ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid.
namely claims:
- ☒ None of the further search fees has been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims.
namely claims: 1-11