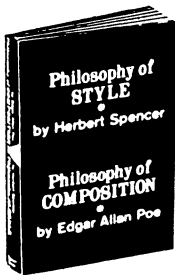


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8-19-61

INVENTIONS

Patents of the Week

A method for exploring oil reserves in the continental shelf of U. S. coasts has been patented. Among other inventions was a lower cost, frostless refrigerator.

➤ A METHOD for exploring the tremendous oil reserves locked in the continental shelf skirting the United States coast has been patented.

William B. Huckabay, Dallas, Texas, won patent No. 2,994,397 for a seismic method that gives a continuous "picture" of the earth layers underlying the ocean bottom. Rights were assigned to Socony Mobil Oil Company, Inc., New York City.

The exploration method uses sound waves sent out from a boat cutting a series of grids on the ocean waters. A combustible gas mixture within a tube is ignited, sending a slug of compressed gas toward an underwater outlet on the boat. A sudden impact at the tube's mouth converts the energy into sound waves.

The continuous stream of sound waves bounces off the various earth layers and echoes are picked up by a detector towed behind the boat. The frequency of the sound pulses can be controlled by changing the richness of the combustible mixture, the patent claimed.

A continuous seismic survey considered impractical before is now possible, Mr. Huckabay emphasized. This new source of acoustic energy also makes possible different kinds of seismic surveying over the earth's surface.

A "lower cost frostless refrigerator" containing below and just above freezing compartments was patented by Leonard J. Mann, Edgar C. Robbins, and Clifford H. Wurtz, Dayton, Ohio. Rights of patent No. 2,994,209 were assigned to General Motors

Corporation, Detroit. "No frost forms in either the below or above freezing compartments" due to the presence of dead air space within the refrigerating walls, the patent claimed.

A pocket dosimeter carried by persons working with radiation has been invented. Donald P. Jones and Heinz F. Nitka, Binghampton, N.Y., received patent No. 2,994,771, assigned to General Aniline & Film Corporation, New York City. Radiation at higher energy levels is converted to light by a fluorescent crystal, coloring a sensitive paper in the dosimeter. The color is then compared with a standard "chart" of colors representing different levels of radiation.

A warning device telling a boat operator a water skier is in trouble won patent No. 2,994,861 for Malcolm T. Reinhardt, Jr., Lubbock, and Joe B. McElmurray, Nolan, Texas. Merely by pressing a button on the tow rope handle, the water skier lights up a warning signal on the boat's dashboard. Collisions with other boats or skiers, which frequently happen when a boat operator turns to keep an eye on the skier, are avoided, the inventors stated.

A refrigerated display case whose doors open automatically when a customer reaches for a succulent meat or other refrigerated food was patented by Willard L. Morrison, Lake Forest, Ill., who assigned rights of patent No. 2,994,572 to the Union Stock Yard and Transit Company of Chicago. The customer's reaching hand breaks a photoelectric light beam, causing the door to open. By withdrawing the hand, the door again closes to prevent cold air from escaping.

A television "eye" that scans file cards for persons in other rooms was patented by Robert D. Conkright, Bronxville, and Warren D. Novak, Chappaqua, N. Y., who assigned rights of patent No. 2,994,740 to General Precision, Inc. A librarian or file clerk places the desired drawer of cards at the base of the TV unit, and the camera relays the information on each card to the viewer.

A substitute for leather was patented by James S. Proctor, Grand Island, N. Y., who assigned rights of patent No. 2,994,617 to E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, Wilmington, Del. The porous plastic material is supposedly scuff-resistant and flexible.

A toy figure with movable feet was invented by Herbert R. Beebe of Richmond Hill, N. Y., and Richard Harvey of Hollis, N. Y. Rights of patent No. 2,994,157 were assigned to American Doll & Toy Corporation. Children playing with the doll can adjust the feet for different shoe types.

• Science News Letter, 80:126 August 19, 1961

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