

Earl Swift's Slate Cleaner Patented May 8th, 1877

By Dave Maryo

Sometimes you find a bottle is not what it first appears. This is one of those bottles. This little cobalt blue bottle looks like an ink, but it is a slate cleaner bottle. Slate cleaners were needed at a time when the old one-room school houses used chalk on slate for their daily lessons. But some students used pencils to mark on the slate that could not be wiped off like chalk. The pencil marks were difficult to remove and required a good washing, leaving the slate wet and not suitable for chalk until it was dry.

That's when Earl Swift and other inventors created slate cleaners and tools to remove the pencil marks. The

bottle was originally fitted with a sponge over a cork held in place by wire. The cork had a central opening to allow the cleaning liquid to soak the sponge when the bottle was turned upside down. The bottom end of the bottle was threaded to attach a nut to hold piece of chamois skin over a pad to wipe the slate dry.

After resting in the ground for more than a hundred years only the glass bottle remains.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

EARL M. SWIFT, OF WINDHAM, CONNECTICUT.

IMPROVEMENT IN SLATE-CLEANERS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 190,644, dated May 8, 1877; application filed March 3, 1877.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EARL M. SWIFT, of Windham, in the county of Windham, and in the State of Connecticut, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Slate-Cleaners; and do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawing, making a part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of my device arranged for use, and Fig. 2 is a central longitudinal section of the same.

Letters of like name and kind refer to like parts in each of the figures.

The design of my invention is to furnish a cheap, convenient, and efficient means whereby pencil-marks upon slates can be removed; and it consists, as a new article of manufacture, in the hereinafter-described cleaner and eraser, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

In the annexed drawing, A represents a metal water-reservoir, constructed, preferably, in the form of a bottle, and provided at one end with a neck, a, which may be closed by means of a cork, B.

The cork B is considerably larger at its outer end than the interior of the neck a, and over said end is placed a piece of sponge, C, and is secured thereon by means of a wire, D, which passes around said sponge and cork, as seen in Fig. 2.

A central opening, b, provided in the cork B, permits water from the reservoir A to pass outward to the sponge C, by which means the latter is caused to be moist while water remains in said reservoir.

The device thus constructed is employed for washing pencil-marks from a slate, and enables the same to be done without the use of an unnecessary quantity of water, and without requiring the frequent wetting of the sponge, as is usually the case.

Upon or around the reservoir A, near its closed end, is fitted a cap or nut, E, which, at its inner end, is threaded to correspond to a threaded portion, a', of said reservoir, while the outer portion of said nut is conical, and fits over the correspondingly-shaped periphery of the end of the latter.

Upon the end of the reservoir A is placed a pad, F, of easily-compressible material, and over the same a piece of chamois-skin, or other suitable flexible material, G, which extends downward over the conical portion a'' of said reservoir, and is confined in place by means of the screw cap or nut E.

The chamois-skin G is for use as a dry-eraser, or for drying a slate after the same has been washed by the sponge C, and, when soiled or worn, may be removed and replaced by another eraser after removing the cap E.

The device thus constructed is simple, cheap, and efficient, and affords a convenient and cleanly means whereby slates may be cleaned from pencil-marks.

Having thus fully set forth the nature and merits of my invention, what I claim is—

As a new article of manufacture, the hereinafter-described slate cleaner and eraser, consisting of the reservoir A, provided with the neck a, the stopper B, having a central opening, b, the sponge C, secured upon the outer end of said stopper, the cap E, fitted upon the threaded and conical portions a' and a'', respectively, of said reservoir, and the pad F and flexible covering G, placed over the end of the latter, and secured in place by said cap, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing I have hereunto set my hand this 26th day of February, 1877.

EARL MYRON SWIFT.

Witnesses:
W. M. SWIFT,
I. SMITH.

E. M. SWIFT.
SLATE-WASHER.

Patented May 8, 1877.

No. 190,644.

Fig. 1.

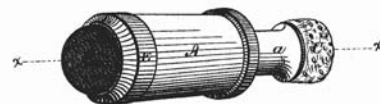
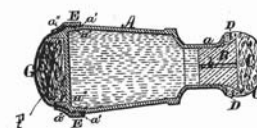


Fig. 2.



WITNESSES:
Jas. C. Hutchinson
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Caindell's & Co. his Attys