

[54] APPARATUS FOR HANDLING WORKPIECES OF LIMP SHEET MATERIAL

[75] Inventors: Timothy G. Clapp, Raleigh, N.C.; William R. Cole, Jr., Shelbyville, Tenn.

[73] Assignee: ARK, Inc., Shelbyville, Tenn.

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Primary Examiner—David H. Bollinger
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Senniger, Powers, Leavitt & Roedel

[57] ABSTRACT

Apparatus for handling workpieces of limp sheet material including an endless conveyor having a forward-traveling upper reach for conveying workpieces in a forward direction, each workpiece having a leading edge and a trailing edge. An airfoil extends transversely across the upper reach of the conveyor and a manifold rearward of the airfoil may deliver a jet of air in a generally forward direction between the conveyor and the airfoil as the workpiece travels forwardly under the airfoil such that the leading edge portion of the workpiece raises up from the conveyor toward the airfoil. A clamping mechanism forward of the airfoil receives the leading edge portion of the workpiece. A sensor detects the presence of the leading edge portion between the clamping members and sends a signal in response to which the clamping mechanism is activated to clamp the leading edge portion.

8 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets

