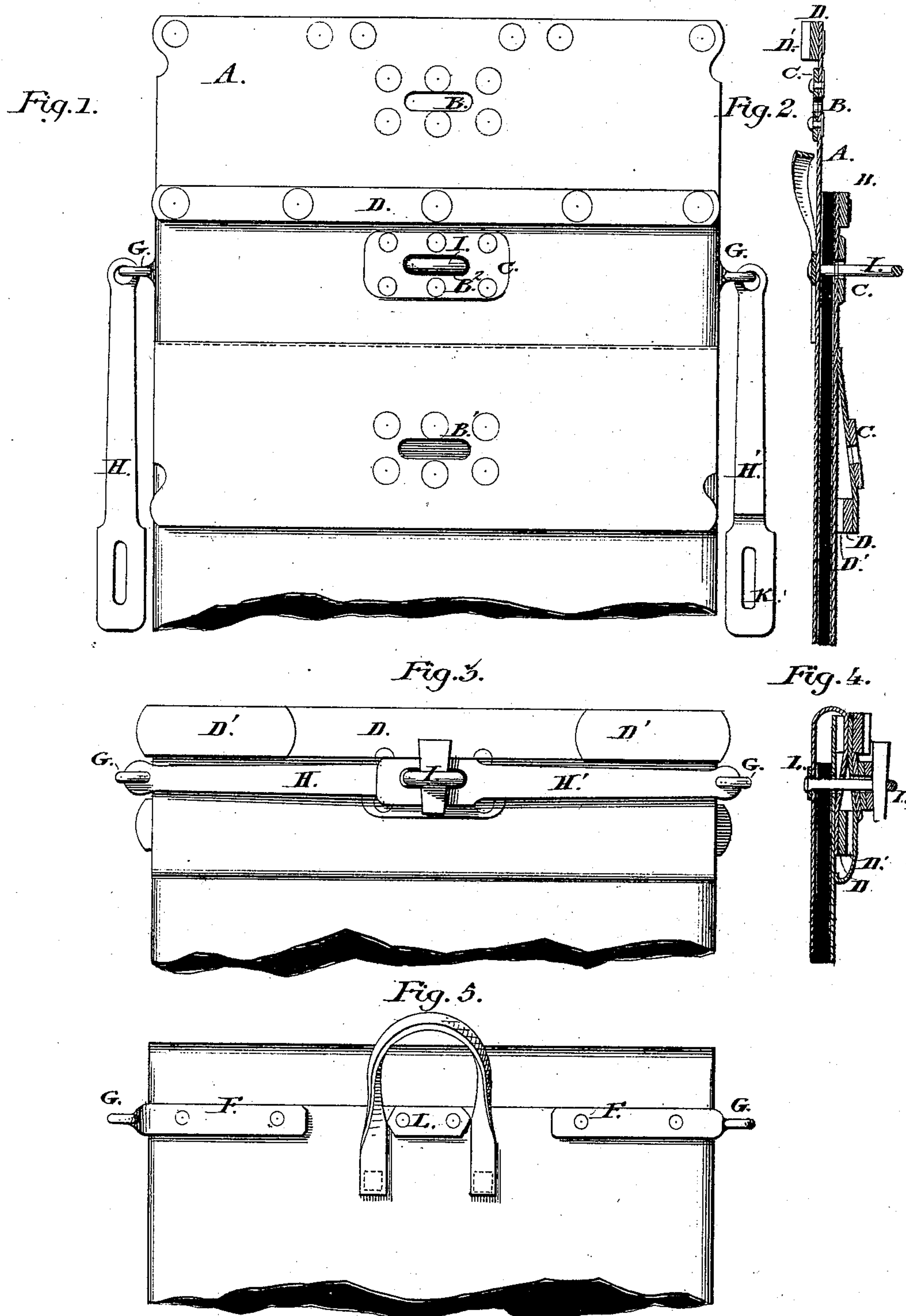


E. W. TROUT.
MAIL BAG FASTENING.

No. 177,034.

Patented May 2, 1876.



Witnesses:

R. J. Calhoun
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Inventor:

Emerson W. Trout.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EMERSON W. TROUT, OF REED CITY, MICHIGAN.

IMPROVEMENT IN MAIL-BAG FASTENINGS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **177,034**, dated May 2, 1876; application filed March 30, 1876.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EMERSON W. TROUT, of Reed City, in the county of Osceola, in the State of Michigan, have invented a new and Improved Mode of Securely Fastening United States Mail-Bags; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters of reference marked thereon, making a part of this specification.

My invention is an improvement upon the manner of fastening and securing mail-bags; and it has for its object the complete security of mail matter in transportation from liability to unfastening or tearing asunder by violent means.

The bag, which is fashioned in the usual way, has a flap extending up from its mouth, which is pierced by a slot, surrounded by an escutcheon, to slip over a staple, which is secured by riveting against a plate of metal on the back of the bag. This flap has secured to it a solid strip of sole-leather, extending across the full width of the bag, and is mounted with solid pieces of iron at either end, which are firmly riveted to the flap. Another flap is secured to the front leather of the bag; and it has also at its loose edge a similar strip of sole-leather and iron mountings. When the bag is fastened this second flap drops down in front of the bag out of the way.

The front leather of the bag is guarded by a strip of sole-leather, like that on either flap, extending the full width of the bag, and riveted to it. Both flaps and the front leather of the bag have slots surrounded by metal escutcheons to slip over the staple.

On the back of the bag, at either side, are metal plates, provided with eyes or loops. In these loops, at either side, are hinged counter plates or bars, one of which is recessed at its larger end to receive the other, which fits snugly against it. These bars lap together over the staple.

In the accompanying drawing, Figure 1 is front elevation of bag, with the back flap up and front flap down, the bag being open.

Fig. 2 is a transverse section of bag open. Fig. 3 is a front elevation, showing bag closed and secured. Fig. 4 is a transverse section of same. Fig. 5 is a back elevation of bag closed.

Similar reference-letters denote like parts in all the figures.

A is the back flap, having the slot B, with escutcheon C. D D are the strips of sole-leather secured to the edges of the flaps and the front leather of bag. D' D' are the metal plates forming the armor to the flaps. E is the staple fastened with the plate L and rivets to the bag at its back. F F are plates, with eyes or loops G G, riveted to the back leather of the bag. H H' are the counter plates or bars, which lap over each other, and are secured by a padlock through the staple I. K is the recess in plate or bar H', which fits snugly over the plate H.

It will be observed that in fastening the bag the flap A is thrown down, so that the slot B will slip over the staple I. The flap or apron K is then lifted up until the corresponding slot B' slips over the staple and rests on the flap A. The counter plates or bars are then placed one on the other, and the bag is then ready for the padlock. When the bag is opened the bars drop to either side, and are entirely out of the way.

In noticing the manner of securing the bag it will be seen that the plate L, to which the staple is riveted, the plates M, and bars H H' combine to hold the mouth of the bag firmly closed, as if clamped in a vise, while the plates D' D' serve as a protection to the fastening against rough handling.

It is obvious also that the leather strips D D, when the bag is closed, form a recess to receive the bars H H', and which, in a manner, protect them from friction and liability to being bent or torn asunder by rough usage.

Being aware that the manner of closing the mouths of mail-bags with double flaps is old and common, I claim nothing for this broadly; but

What I do claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In a mail-bag, the combination of the two flaps, with plates F and L attached to the back of the bag, the staple I and the bars H H', all arranged as described, for the purpose set forth.

2. In combination with the two flaps, the sole-leather strips D D D and metal armor-

plates D' D'; as and for the purpose set forth.

Dated Reed City, February 28, 1876.

EMERSON W. TROUT.

Witnesses:

A. J. CALHOUN,

A. H. McCLELLAN.