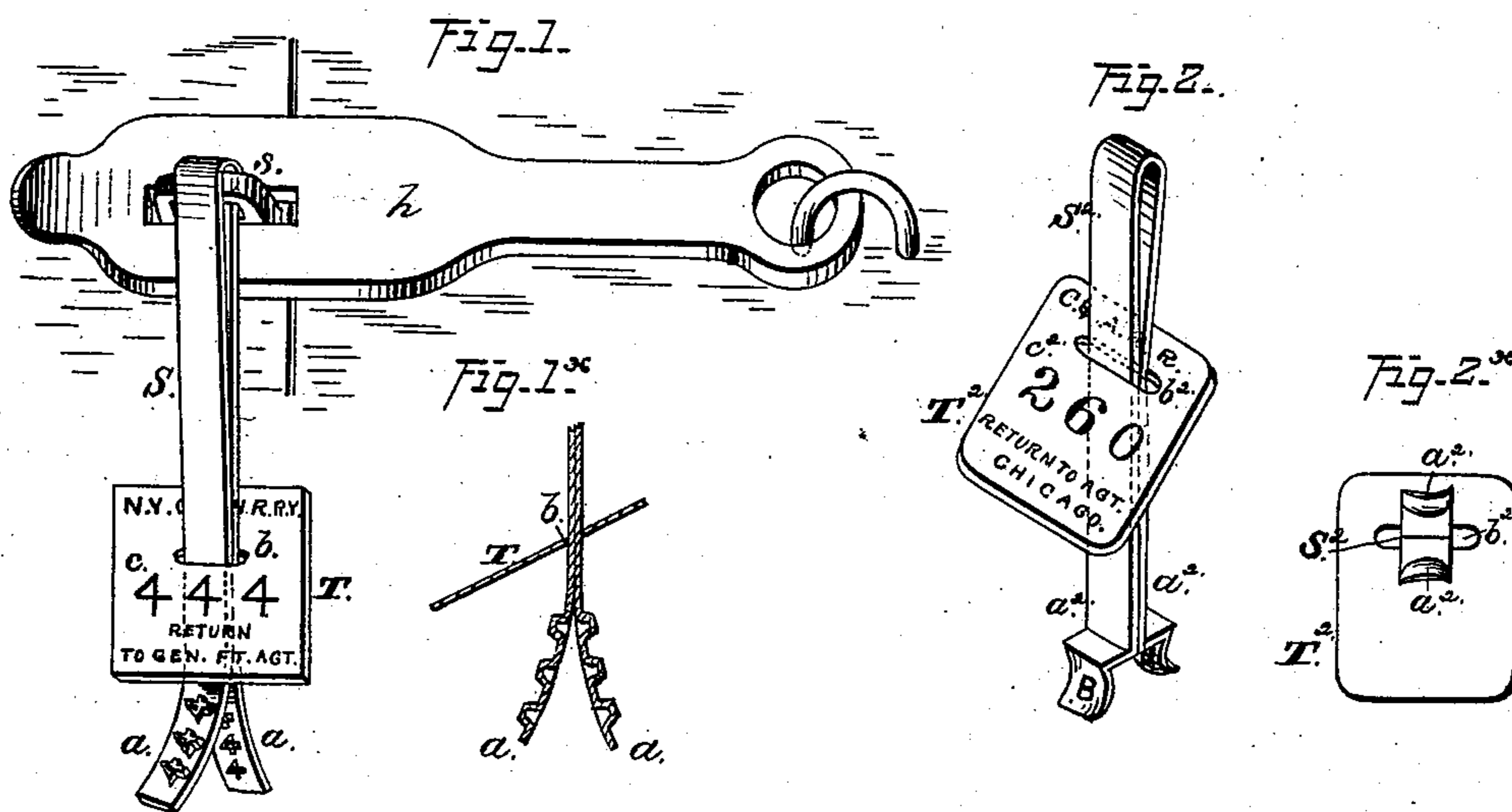


(No Model.)

E. J. BROOKS.  
Seal and Tag.

No. 236,539.

Patented Jan. 11, 1881.



Attest:

Geo. E. Hutchinson.  
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Inventor.

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by Jas. L. Ewin atty.

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EDWARD J. BROOKS, OF EAST ORANGE, NEW JERSEY, ASSIGNOR TO E. J. BROOKS & CO., OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

## SEAL AND TAG.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 236,539, dated January 11, 1881.

Application filed November 3, 1880. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EDWARD J. BROOKS, a citizen of the United States, residing at East Orange, in the State of New Jersey, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Seals and Tags, of which the following is a specification.

The present invention relates to the manufacture and use of seals and tags for railway-cars, baggage, packages of valuable merchandise, &c., and to that class of seals in which shackles of sheet metal are employed.

In my specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 178,722, dated June 13, 1876, I set forth various methods of uniting the ends of sheet-metal shackles, and also the combination therewith of labeling-tags. My present invention is additional to that described and claimed in said previous specification.

The principal object of this invention is to so combine a tag with a sheet-metal seal-shackle as to utilize the former in securely uniting the ends of the shackle without the aid of a soft-metal seal-disk, so as to form an inexpensive seal which cannot be tampered with without detection.

To this end it consists, primarily, in the combination of a tag having one or more contracted threading-holes and a sheet-metal seal-shackle, the ends of which are united by running its free ends through said tag and then pressing or stamping each protruding end of the shackle, so as to form retaining-projections thereon.

Another object of the said invention is to so combine a tag with a sheet-metal seal-shackle as to utilize the number or other distinguishing mark of the former in rendering it difficult or impossible to fraudulently duplicate a broken or defaced shackle or tag.

To this end it consists in the combination of a tag bearing a printed number or any like original distinguishing mark, and a sheet-metal seal-shackle impressed with a corresponding number or mark at the sealing operation, said impressed number or mark being composed of raised characters which form the aforesaid retaining-projections on each protruding end of the shackle.

In the accompanying drawings, which form

part of this specification, Figure 1 is a perspective view of a seal and tag combining the several features of the present invention, the same being shown as applied to a car-door fastening and pressed, and Fig. 1<sup>x</sup> represents a longitudinal section through the pressed shackle ends and the tag. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of another seal and tag, illustrating a modification, and Fig. 2<sup>x</sup> is an end view of its shackle and a back view of its tag.

Like letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in the several figures.

The seal and tag shown in Figs. 1 and 1<sup>x</sup> is composed of a sealing-strip or seal-shackle, S, of sheet metal, and a return-tag, T. The former, as furnished for use, may be an ordinary flat shackle-strip of sheet-tin, being of substantially uniform width and thickness, with its ends *a a* smooth or plain. The tag as furnished is constructed with a contracted horizontal slot, *b*, fitted to receive the plain shackle ends and to be filled, or nearly filled, by the two thicknesses of the shackle within it. The tag is furthermore provided on its face with appropriate lettering or marks *c*, consisting in the example of the initials of a railroad, the number 444 of a sealing-station on said road, and a request for the return of the tag to the general freight agent of the road, the tag being designed for return to a distributing-office after its removal from a car, for example, having indicated *en route* the station where the car was loaded and sealed, and constituting finally a check to determine the number of genuine seals legitimately used on the road, and the stations at which they were applied.

In applying the said seal and tag to a car, for example, as illustrated by Fig. 1, the shackle-strip is passed through a sealing-staple, *s*, and its ends *a a* are brought together, one upon the other, and run through the slot *b*, which they fill, or nearly fill, in their flat or unpressed condition. The shackle ends *a a* are now secured by pressing or stamping each of them so as to raise projections thereon, which preclude the withdrawal of the ends, or either of them, through the slot *b*, as illustrated by the sectional view, the tag coacting to unite the ends; and in order to detect resealing

at any point other than the original sealing-station, and thus to add to the security of the seal, said retaining-projections are in the form of raised figures—444, for example—forming a number corresponding with that upon the tag. The ends may be so secured successively by presses now in use furnished with suitable dies, and I propose to furnish a press which will raise the figures or projections upon both ends simultaneously by a simple operation. As the pressed seal and tag hangs in place, as shown in Fig. 1, the tag is supported so as to be readily examined, and its separation until the seal is cut is precluded, while its easy removal for return and reuse after the seal is cut is equally provided for.

S<sup>2</sup>, Figs. 2, 2<sup>x</sup>, represents a sheet-metal seal-shackle which may be identical with that above described until its ends *a*<sup>2</sup> are pressed; and T<sup>2</sup> represents a return-tag substantially similar to T, having a horizontal slot, *b*<sup>2</sup>, and lettering or marks *c*<sup>2</sup>.

Instead of raising figures upon the shackle ends *a*<sup>2</sup>, retaining-projections of optional shape are formed by bending and crimping the ends between the dies of the sealing-press, so as to preclude their withdrawal without such injury or defacement as will insure detection. Ends so secured may at the same time be impressed with distinguishing marks—B B, for example; but the peculiar shapes of the pressed ends may afford sufficient protection.

An additional advantage of my seal-shackle and return-tag combination in either of its forms is the safe provision which it affords for leaving partly open or partly opening the car-door sealed therewith, as provided for by chain-fastenings, for example. This is frequently desirable in order to ventilate the contents of the car or to provide for their inspection without breaking the seal, and it will be seen by reference to Fig. 1 that the seal-shackle will run freely through the hasp *h* a sufficient distance for this purpose without strain.

In producing my lettered and numbered seal-tags I prefer to cut or stamp them from sheet-tin or thin sheet-iron which has been painted or enameled red, or of any preferred color to form a background, and printed with lettering or marks of a contrasting color, or from bright tin printed with dark lettering or marks and then shellacked. Both of these methods I have practiced successfully in manufacturing under my said patent of June 13, 1876, and I do not now claim them as new. The loose shackles must in all cases be made of brittle tin or equivalent sheet metal which will receive the described bends and impressions, but will not stand hammering out and restamping. The return-tags may be stamped out of

any sufficiently cheap sheet metal and provided with the described lettering or marks in cameo or intaglio in the operation of so producing them, or the station-numbers or distinguishing marks may be applied, by stamping or otherwise, at a distinct operation, an object in all cases being to render counterfeiting difficult or impossible. The return-tags may also be cast or molded, and they may be made of various shapes, colors, and sizes to distinguish those belonging to different roads, as illustrated at T T<sup>2</sup>.

In some cases the tags may be cut from stiff paper or the like appropriately printed; but they are preferably rigid or substantially rigid, so as not to admit of bending without such injury as to insure detection, and this is essential when the seal and tag is to be used as a fastening device in the manner described.

I do not claim herein, broadly, the combination of a tag bearing a number or distinguishing mark and a sheet-metal seal-shackle impressed with a corresponding number or mark, nor the combination, with a car-door hasp and staple, of a rigid or substantially rigid return-tag having a threading-hole in the form of a horizontal slot, and a sheet-metal seal-shackle run through said staple outside of said hasp and through said tag and secured against withdrawal through the tag; but I intend to claim these combinations in another application for patent.

I do not claim herein, broadly, the combination of a tag with a seal, in view of my aforesaid patent for sheet-metal seal-shackles, and in view of the lead and tag seal shown in the Fred. C. Hamilton patent of September 7, 1875; but

What I claim as new and of my present invention is—

1. The combination of a tag having a contracted threading-hole and a sheet-metal seal-shackle run through said tag and provided with pressed or stamped retaining-projections on each protruding end, substantially as herein described, for uniting the ends of the shackle by the aid of the tag.
2. The combination of a tag having a contracted threading-hole and bearing a number or distinguishing mark, and a sheet-metal seal-shackle run through said tag and provided with pressed or stamped retaining-projections formed by raised characters which constitute a corresponding number or mark on each protruding end of the shackle, substantially as herein described, for the purposes set forth.

EDWARD J. BROOKS.

Witnesses:

L. FARLEY HOVEY,  
N. S. KLINE.

It is hereby certified that in Letters Patent No. 236,539, granted January 11, 1881, to E. J. Brooks & Co., assignees of E. J. Brooks, for an improvement in Seals and Tags, the grant was erroneously made to "E. J. Brooks & Co., their heirs or assigns," when it should have been to "E. J. Brooks & Co., its successors or assigns;" it appearing that said assignee is a corporation and not a firm; that the proper corrections have been made in line 16 of said Letters Patent and in the files and records of the Patent Office.

Signed, countersigned, and sealed this 14th day of February, A. D. 1881.

[SEAL.]

A. BELL,

*Acting Secretary of the Interior.*

Countersigned:

E. M. MARBLE,

*Commissioner of Patents.*