

(No Model.)

A. JOHNSTON.  
MAIL BAG FASTENING.

No. 254,772.

Patented Mar. 7, 1882.

Fig. 1.

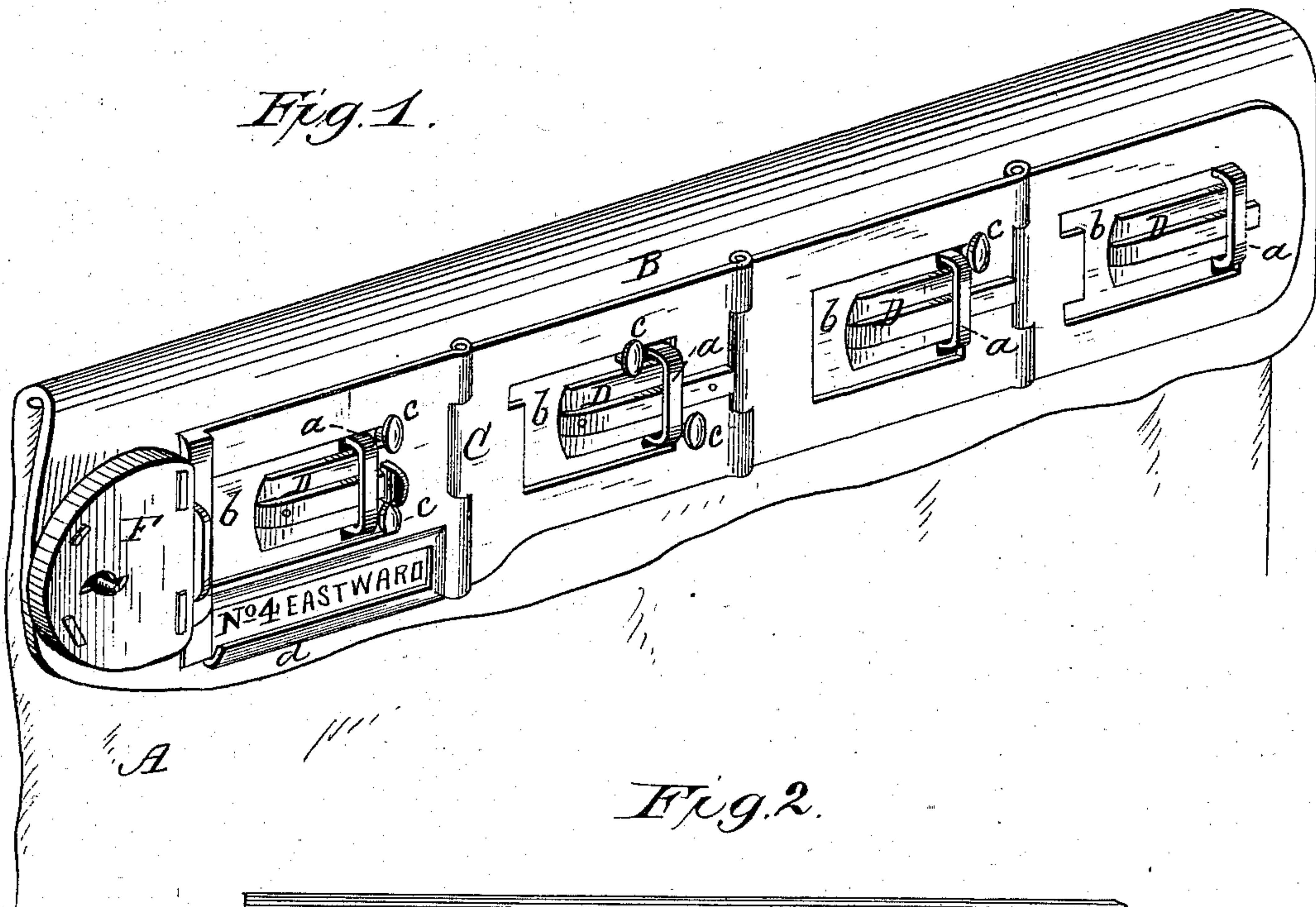


Fig. 2.

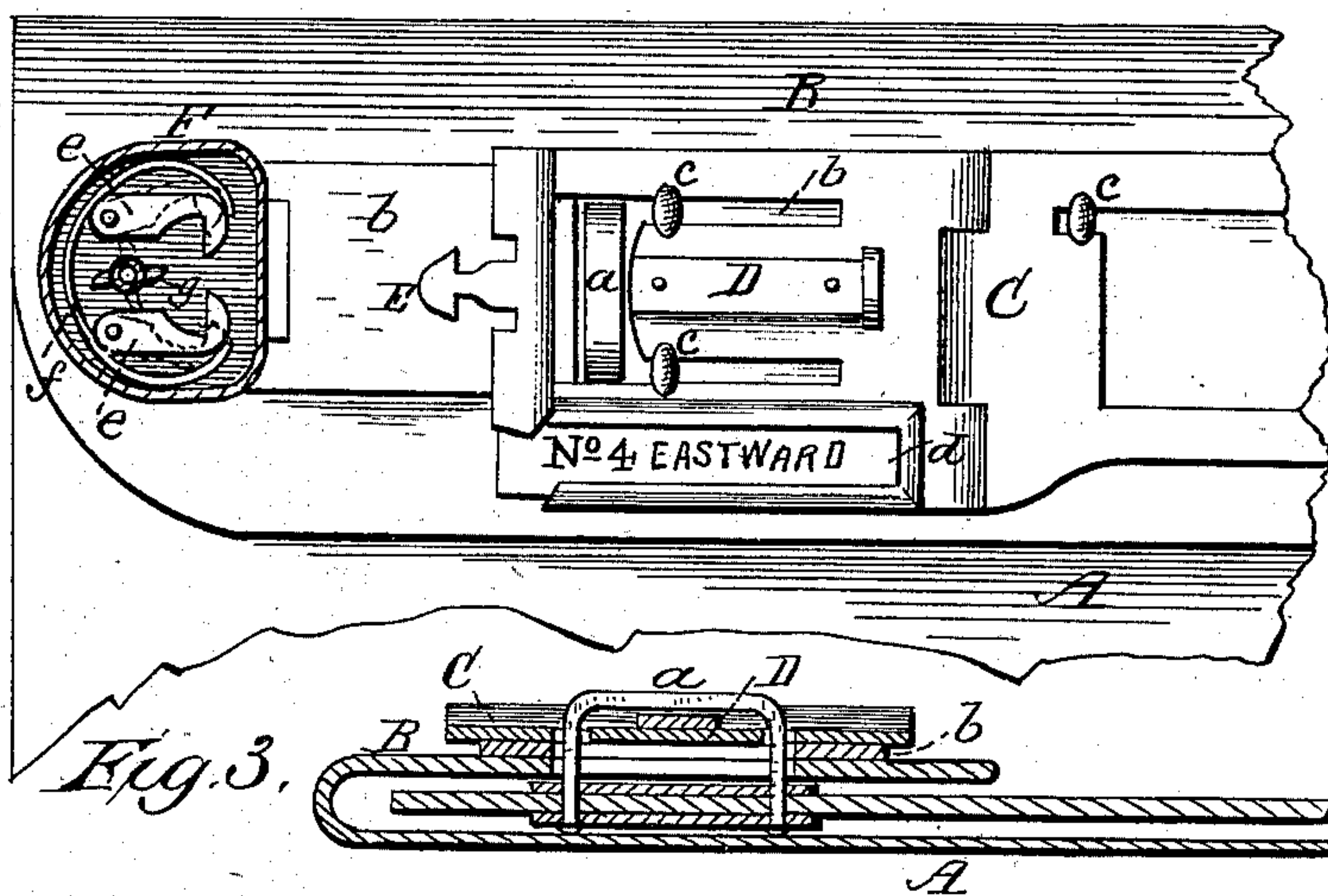
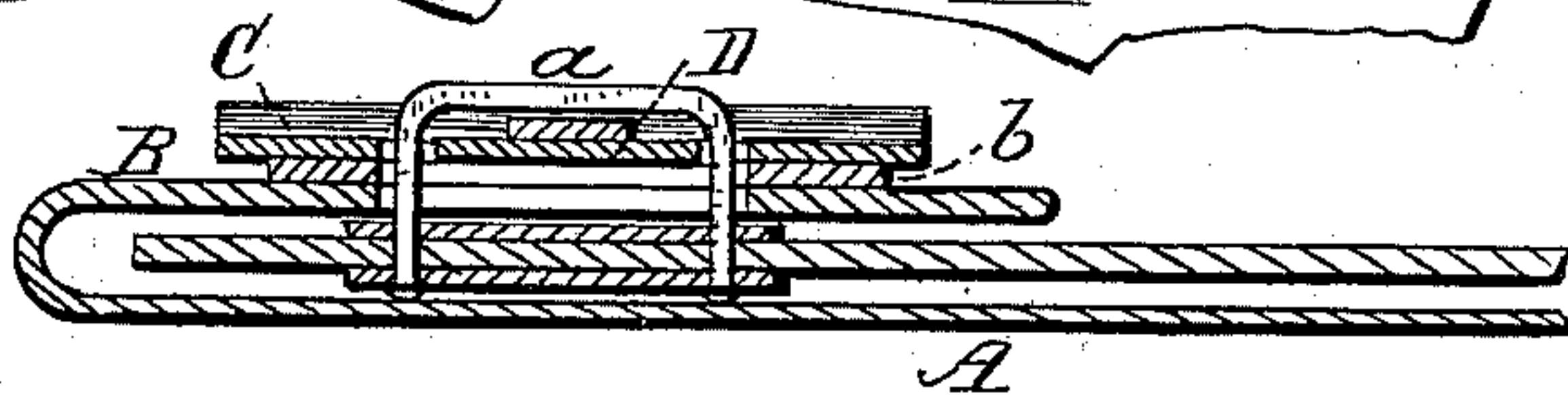


Fig. 3.



Witnesses,  
P. L. Ourand,  
L. L. Miller

Inventor,  
Abner Johnston,  
per Cha. H. Fowler,  
Attorney



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ABNER JOHNSTON, OF BAINBRIDGE, NEW YORK.

## MAIL-BAG FASTENING.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 254,772, dated March 7, 1882.

Application filed December 19, 1881. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ABNER JOHNSTON, a citizen of the United States, residing at Bainbridge, in the county of Chenango and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Bag Fastening, Indicator, and Lock; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the same, reference being had to the annexed drawings, making a part of this specification, and to the letters and figures of reference marked thereon.

Figure 1 of the drawings is a perspective view of my invention; Fig. 2, a front elevation, with the upper plate of the lock removed to show the interior construction, and the tongue of the hinged plates disconnected therefrom; and Fig. 3 is a cross-section taken on a line through one of the staples.

The present invention has relation to that class of mail-bag fastenings in which are employed a series of metal plates provided with tongues and longitudinal slots and connected to a flexible strap, the bag having studs or projections adapted to slide in the slots and staples for the reception of the tongues.

The object of the invention is to improve the construction of the above class of fastenings, as will be hereinafter described, and subsequently pointed out in the claim.

In the accompanying drawings, A represents the mail-bag, of the usual construction, with the flap B to close over the mouth of the same. To the outer side of the front of the bag is securely fastened a series of staples, *a*, which, when the flap B of the bag is closed, pass through elongated openings in said flap. Between these openings are plates *b*, secured to the upper side of the flap B, and having guides *c*, which extend up through openings in a hinged metallic strap, C, formed of sections hinged or jointed together, the guides *c* also serving to retain the strap C on the flap B of the bag and limit its sliding movement. Each jointed section of the strap C is formed with a tongue, D, which passes through the staples *a*, thereby fastening the flap to the bag at intervals throughout its entire width. The hinged or jointed strap C has openings, through which pass the staples *a*, and the last one of the series of jointed sections of the strap has a shouldered tongue,

E, and a receptacle, *d*, for a card having the name of the place or station thereon.

The lock F, which is firmly and securely fastened to the flap B, is constructed as follows: Two claws, *e*, are pivoted to the under plate of the lock, which grasp the shouldered tongue E and hold it, a curved spring, *f*, keeping the jaws engaged with the shoulders on the tongue.

When it is desired to unlock the bag the claws *e* are made to disengage with the shouldered tongue E by the pivoted arm *g*, the outer ends thereof being brought against the claws and forcing them in an outward direction, this being accomplished by a suitable key constructed for the purpose.

The position of the claws and pivoted arm when in the position to withdraw the tongue E is fully shown in dotted lines, Fig. 2, and the jointed strap is required to be moved but a short distance in order to disconnect the tongues D with the several staples, thereby enabling the flap of the bag to be raised.

The bag is self-locking, and by sliding the strap C in a direction toward the lock, as the tongue E strikes the ends of the claws *e*, it will force them outward until the shoulders on the tongue are embraced by the claws through the action of the spring *f*.

My improvement can be readily applied to any of the ordinary mail-bags with comparatively little expense, and its practicability and easy operation in locking or unlocking the bag save much time and labor, as well as avoiding the annoyance and trouble usually experienced with the old or common style of bag.

Having now fully described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

In a mail-bag fastening, the jointed strap C, having tongues D and the shouldered tongue E, in combination with the staples *a* and lock F, consisting of the pivoted claws *e*, pivoted arm *g*, and spring *f*, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

In testimony that I claim the above I have hereunto subscribed my name in the presence of two witnesses.

ABNER JOHNSTON.

Witnesses:

FRANKLIN B. PHINNEY,  
CHAS. S. HYND.