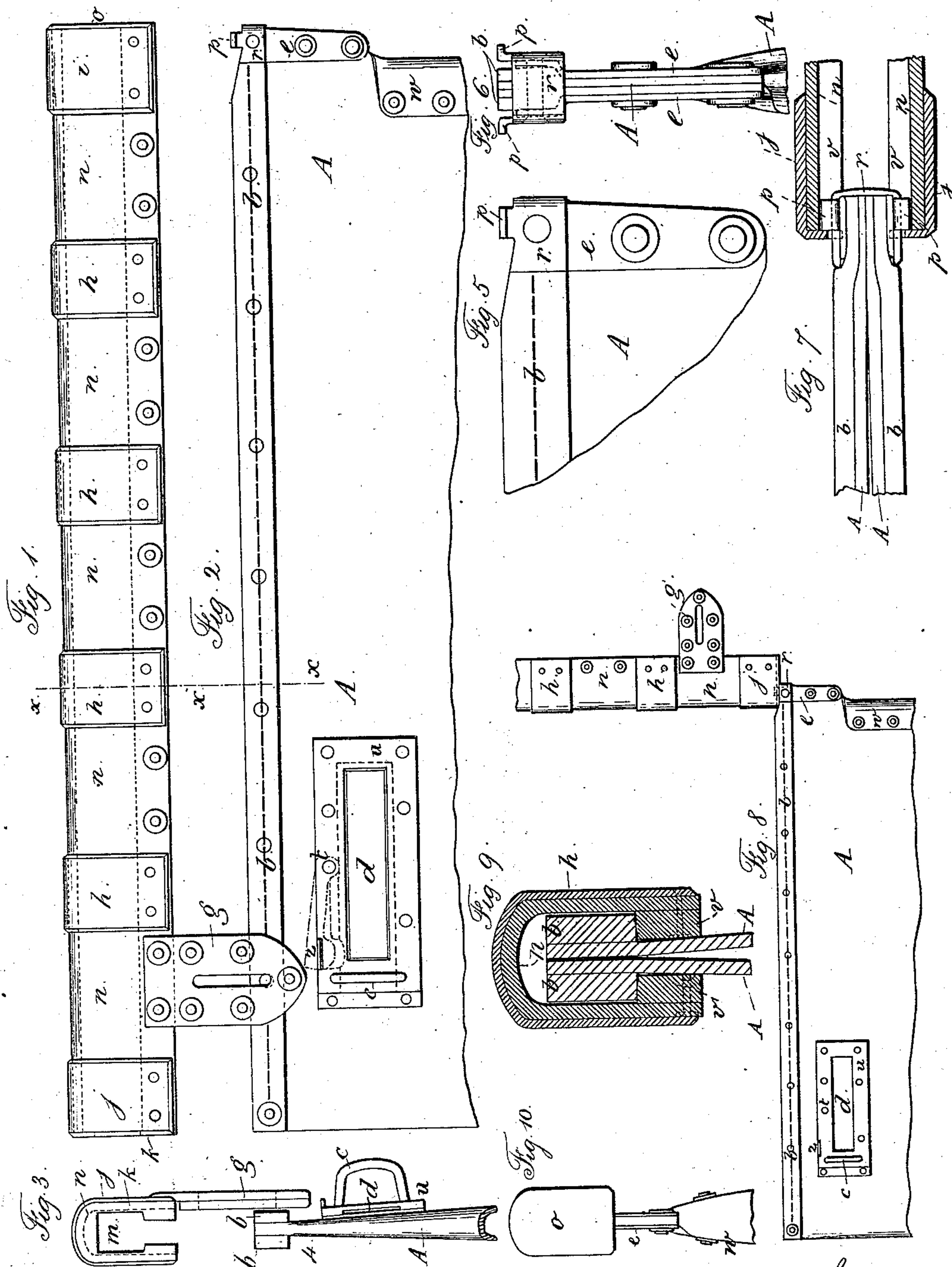


(No Model.)

T. H. SMITH.
MAIL BAG FASTENING.

No. 285,518.

Patented Sept. 25, 1883.



Witnesses:
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

THOMAS H. SMITH, OF BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS.


MAIL-BAG FASTENING.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 285,518, dated September 25, 1883.

Application filed August 1, 1883. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, THOMAS H. SMITH, a citizen of the United States, residing at Bloomington, in the county of McLean and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Bag Fastenings, of which the following is a specification.

Before my invention sectional metallic flanges had been attached to the exterior edges of the mouth of the bags, over which a series of -shaped metallic links, connected together by their centers, were drawn, and these links covered, if need be, with a leather flat; also, continuous round flexible ribs or welts on the outer rim of the mouth had been used, over which metallic links were drawn, united by a leather strap in their centers; but these fastenings were not reliable, and such difficulty existed in drawing the links on and off by their clogging or catching that neither of these methods has been introduced into practical use.

The object of my invention is, first, to make both the flanges, attached to the bag, and the fastenings slipped over them, continuous and flexible; second, to obviate, as far as possible, the clogging, catching, and hitches incident to the former methods, and thereby to render the sliding on and off of the hood or fastening smoother, easier, quicker, and more regular than heretofore; third, to prevent access to or tampering with its contents until the fastening is unlocked and withdrawn; fourth, to protect the contents from dust and rain, and to keep the fastening attached to the bag and prevent its being lost. I attain these objects by the mechanism illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 represents a side view of the hood or fastening separated from the mail-bag; Fig. 2, the top or mouth of the mail-bag, over which the hood slips. Fig. 3 is a front end view of Fig. 1; Fig. 4, a front end view of Fig. 2. Fig. 5 is an enlarged view of the back corner of the mail-bag's mouth; Fig. 6, a rear end view of Fig. 5. Fig. 7 is a plan or top view of Fig. 5. Fig. 8 is a side view of the mail-bag's mouth, with the hood slipped off and swinging free on the pivots which still connect it with the bag. Fig. 9 is an enlarged sectional view

at *x x*, Figs. 1 and 2, of the hood slipped over the mouth of the bag; and Fig. 10 is a rear end view of the hood on the bag.

A represents the top of the mail or other bag, near its mouth. The bag may be of any desired size or character; and I remark that my improvement may be applied to satchels or hand-bags, if desired.

Along the outside of the two edges of the mouth of the bag A are riveted, sewed, or otherwise securely fastened two external square or rectangular continuous flexible flanges, *b b*, as seen in Figs. 2 and 4, composed of thick firm leather, or other suitable flexible material, and which, when the mouth of the bag is closed, form a double flange along the outside edges of the mouth, (in the shape of a T,) as seen in Figs. 2 and 9.

The leather, canvas, or other material of which the bag is made is lapped and riveted or sewed along the back, as shown at *w*, to within about two inches of the top, where the sides are no longer lapped, but laid together flatwise, and project and are firmly secured together, with the ends of the flanges *b b*, by the metal plates *e e*, which are riveted together. These plates *e e* are riveted on the projection formed by the sides, laid flatwise together, so as not to form a kink or pocket to catch the mail-matter on its discharge from the bag, but to allow the mouth of the bag, when open, to form a perfect circle. These plates *e e* are bent to partly take in the flanges *b b*, and are countersunk in them. Around the top of the plates *e e* runs the metal band *r*, securely riveted in place and likewise countersunk in the flanges, the sides of the band being even with the sides of the flanges, so that the hood may slip unimpeded evenly along both. This band *r* has two horns, *p p*, projecting upward and outward, and, as shown in Figs. 2, 5, 6, and 7, a little beyond the sides of *r* and the flanges, for a purpose hereinafter specified.

The hood *n n n n*, shaped like an inverted U, is made of leather or other suitable material. Along its two edges, on the inside, run two rectangular continuous flexible flanges, *v v*, (see Fig. 9,) composed of firm thick

leather, or other suitable material, and securely attached thereto by rivets, sewing, or other means. The U shape of the hood is given and preserved by metal U-shaped straps or clip-pieces *h h h h*, *i*, and *j*, preferably of steel, all similar, and all fitting over the outside of the leather hood and securely riveted thereto. The hood thus formed is smooth, or nearly so, on the inside from end to end. Said hood cannot be spread apart on account of the metal straps or clip-pieces, which keep it in shape and yet permit it to be flexible. When the hood is drawn over the T formed by the flanges *b b*, on closing the mouth of the bag the flanges of the hood slide along and fit snug up under the flanges on the bag and firmly close it as well against intrusion as against rain or dust. The hood and its flanges are best constructed to fit snugly to the sides of the bag, as well as up against the under sides of the flanges on the bag. The rear end of the hood is closed by the metal end piece, *o*, soldered, welded, or otherwise securely fastened to the rear metal strap, *i*, which forms a stop, preventing the rear end from being drawn over the mouth of the bag. The front metal strap or clip-piece, *j*, has a metal face, *K*, soldered, welded, or otherwise securely fastened to it, in which an opening, *m*, is cut, as shown in Fig. 3, large enough to permit the flanges on the mouth of the bag to pass through; but this opening is not quite as large as the open space inside of the hood, and therefore catches on the horns *p p*. In drawing the hood off, the flanges attached to the top of the bag pass smoothly through it until the face *K*, attached to the metal strap or clip-piece *j*, reaches the horns *p p*. These catch on the metal front piece, *K*, and retain the hood attached to the bag ready to be slipped on again, to prevent its being lost, and at the same time allow the hood to swing freely on the pivot formed by these two horns, so that it does not impede the discharge of mail or other matter from the bag, as shown in Fig. 8, and at the same time allows the mouth of the bag to be opened to form a complete circle, the interior of the hood being sufficiently larger than the opening *m* and the band *r*, and flanges *b b* being also sufficiently cut away in front of the horns *p p*, as shown in Fig. 2, to permit this free swinging movement of the hood upon the horns. There is a hasp, *g*, attached to the hood *n*, and slotted to pass over the staple *e*, to be secured by padlock or other fastening.

u is a metal frame, riveted to the bag *A*, with an open face, into which, through a slide, the destination-card *d* (somewhat larger than the open face) is slipped.

z is a movable metal slide attached on the pivot *t* with a tongue, which, when pressed down, prevents the destination-card *d* from being slipped either in or out.

When the hood is on the bag it slides along close against the flanges *b b* on the one side and the metal frame *u* on the other, pressing the metal slide *z* into place, and preventing the destination-card *d* from being removed or changed until the bag is unlocked and the hood removed.

By these improvements I am enabled to maintain the objects stated above, and the parts are sufficiently flexible to prevent any portion from being bent or injured by the rough handling to which mail-bags are exposed.

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

1. A bag with rectangular or triangular continuous flexible flanges, secured to the outside edges of its mouth, adapted to receive the continuous hood or sheath, substantially as shown, and allow it to slide freely thereon, substantially as set forth.

2. A bag having continuous rectangular or triangular leather or other flexible flanges on the outside edges of its mouth, in combination with a flexible hood or sheath, preferably of U shape, having internal continuous leather or other flexible rectangular or triangular flanges securely attached to its inside edges, and metallic straps or clip-pieces to keep the hood in proper shape transversely, substantially as and for the purposes set forth.

3. The hood or sheath, made of leather or other flexible material, preferably of U shape, with internal continuous leather or other flexible flanges or strips, and with metallic clip-pieces secured transversely to the exterior of such hood, substantially as set forth, and adapted to be used with a bag having exterior flanges at its mouth.

4. The hood *n*, having the interior flanges, *v v*, and exterior metal clips, *h*, in combination with the end piece *i*, having a closed plate, *o*, the end piece *j*, having a notched plate, *K*, and having the locking-clasp *g*, substantially as set forth.

5. The combination, with the bag *A* and hood *n*, having a notched front plate, *K*, of the horns *p p*, substantially as set forth.

6. The frame *u*, secured to the mail or other bag *A*, having the metal lever *z*, in combination with the flanges *b b* of the bag and *v v* of the hood *n*, having a hasp, *g*, all substantially as and for the purposes above set forth.

Signed at Bloomington, in the county of McLean and State of Illinois, this 27th day of July, A. D. 1883.

THOMAS H. SMITH.

Witnesses:

E. H. MINER,
C. W. SENSENEY.