

(No Model.)

T. H. SMITH.

MAIL BAG.

No. 297,025.

Patented Apr. 15, 1884.

Figure 1.

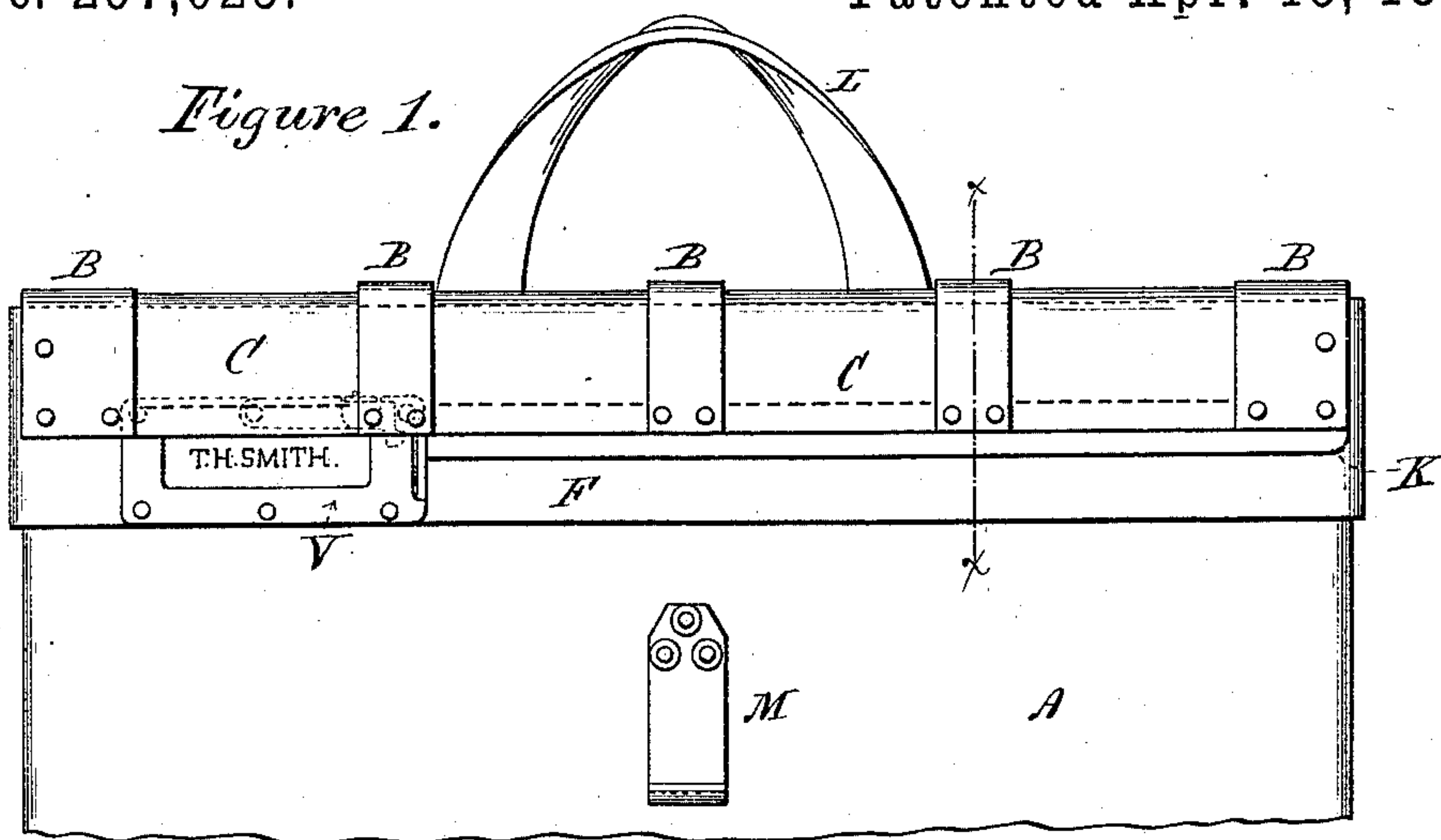


Figure 2.

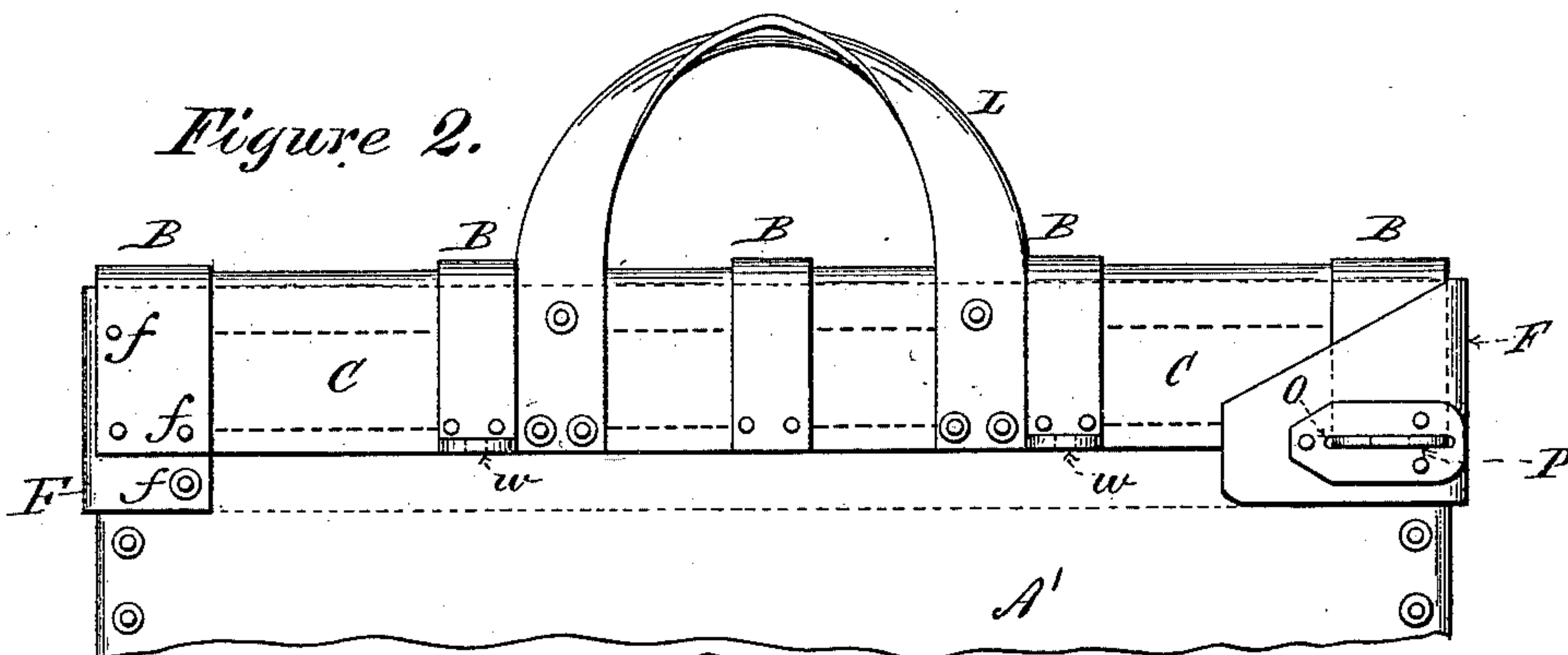
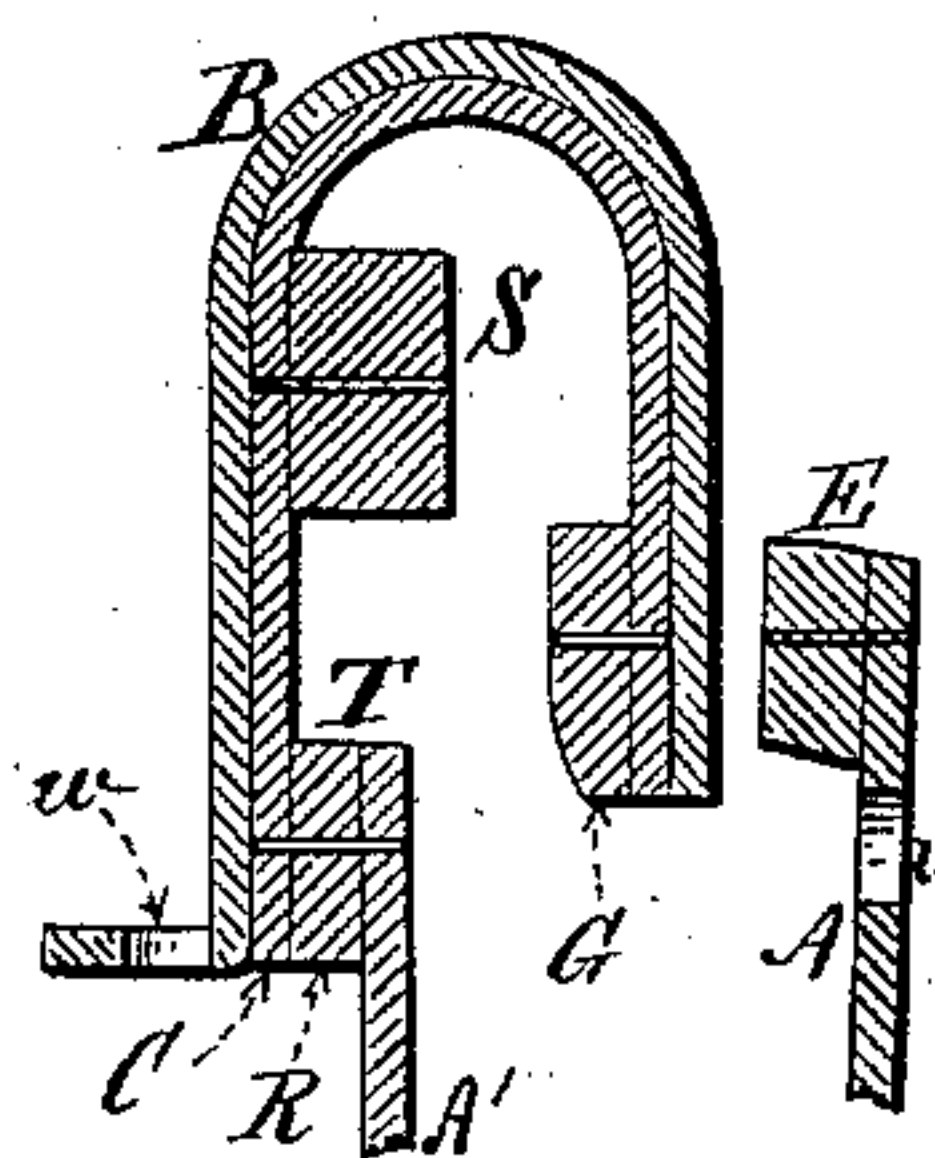


Figure 3.



Witnesses:

Geo. W. Mott

Wm. Gardner.

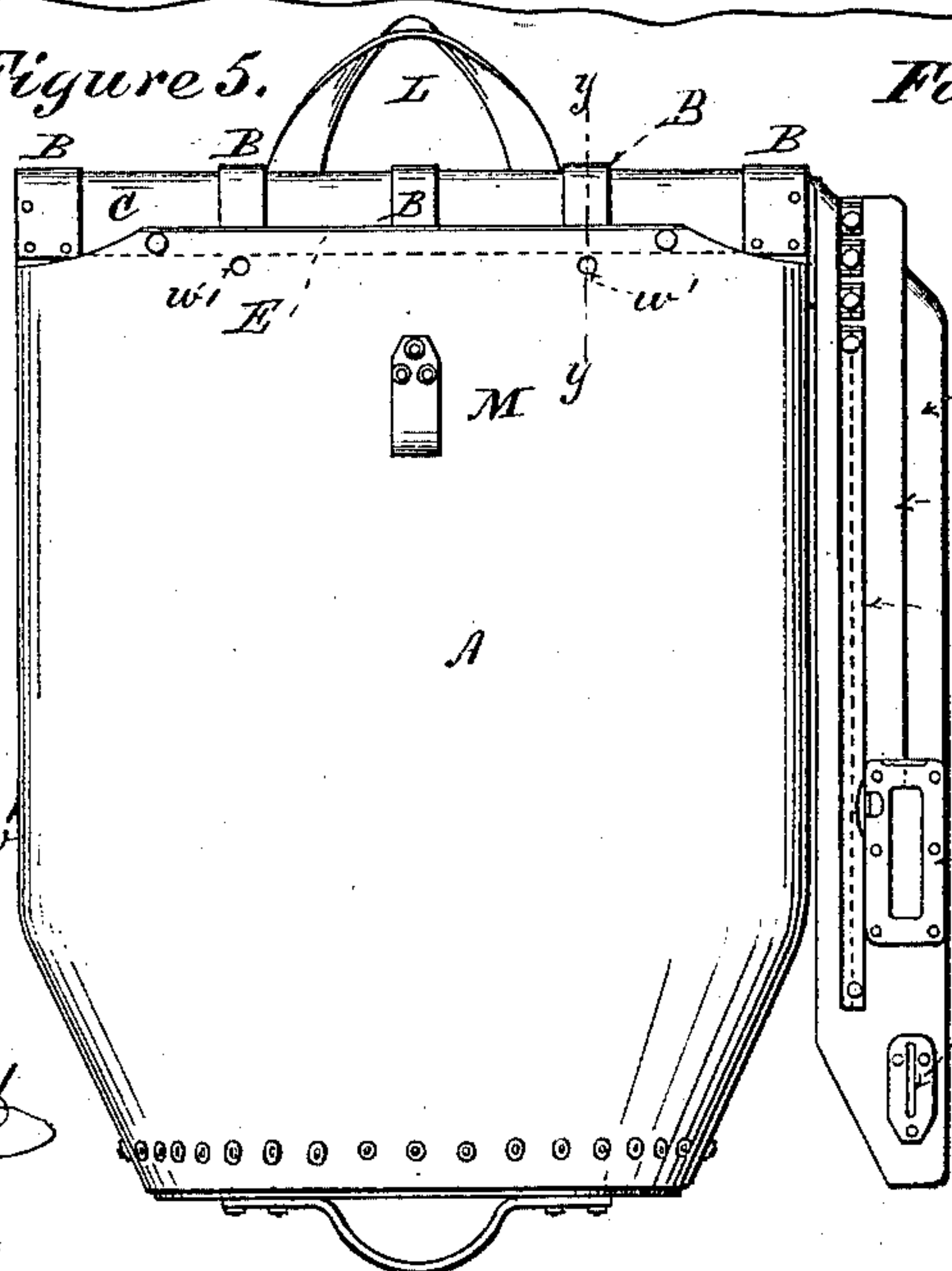
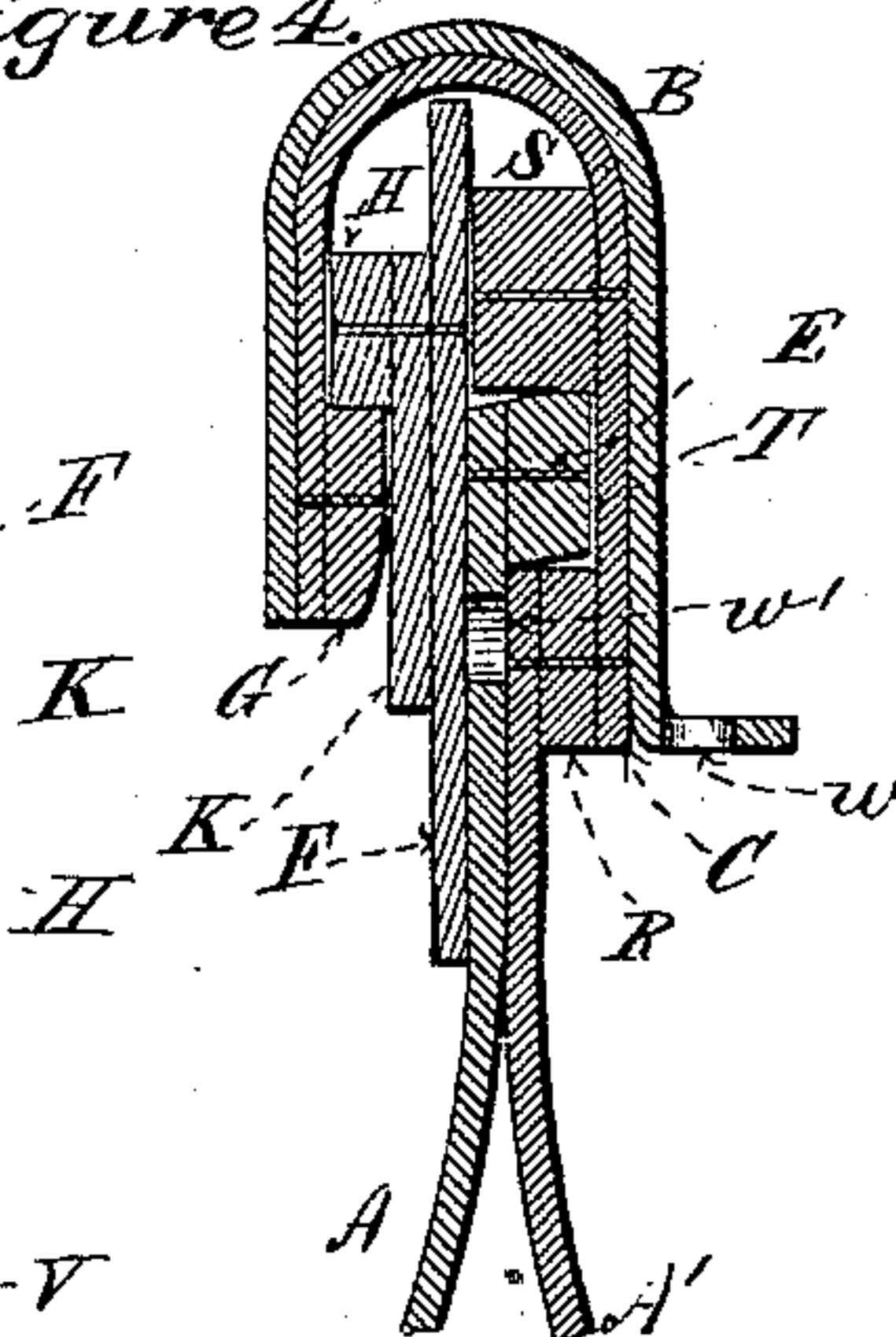


Figure 4.



Inventor:
Thomas H. Smith,
By his attorney
Jas. B. Murray.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

THOMAS H. SMITH, OF BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS.

MAIL-BAG.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 297,025, dated April 15, 1884.

Application filed February 19, 1884. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, THOMAS H. SMITH, of Bloomington, county of McLean, and State of Illinois, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Mail-Bags, of which the following is a full, true, and exact description, reference being had to the accompanying drawings.

The object of my invention is to make a bag suitable for carrying the mails, or for other analogous purposes, which may be quickly opened and may be also quickly and securely closed. This result I likewise accomplish without interfering with the general flexibility of the bag. In this class of structures it is a disadvantage to provide a bag with a rigid top, and my bag will be found to be substantially flexible.

That which is new in my invention will be specified in the claims hereto attached, and I remark that my invention may also be applied to hand-bags, saddle-bags, and the like.

In my drawings, Figure 1 represents a front view of the top of the bag closed; Fig. 2, a back view of the top of the bag closed; Fig. 5, a general view of the front of the open bag; Fig. 3, a cross-section through Fig. 5, on the line *y y*; Fig. 4, a cross-section view through Fig. 1, on the line *x x*.

The bag itself may be made of any suitable material, as may be the individual parts of the structure; but I prefer to make the parts of leather and steel.

A represents the front, and A' the back, of the body of the bag, closed at the bottom, which may be of any suitable form. The top, however, should be flat when closed, and if the sides of the bag are riveted together the riveting is preferably done down the back of the bag.

Attached to the back of the bag, and overlapping the front thereof when closed, are the U-shaped metallic straps or hooks B B B, which are suitably riveted or otherwise attached to the back of the bag A. Within these clamps is the leather hood or cover C, which cover is prevented from opening and held in shape by means of these clamps B.

Attached to the cover C are the longitudinal flanges or shelves R, S, and G, R and S

being in the back of the U-shaped cover, and G in the front thereof, as shown in the drawings. The shelves or strips R and S are separated by a longitudinal channel, T, into which the lock strip or flange E of the front flap of the bag enters. The front of the mouth of the bag is provided with this flange or strip E, which may be readily inserted into this longitudinal channel in the ordinary or open condition of the bag, and the front flap and flange E may be cut away at each end, as shown in Fig. 5, to facilitate it. All of said flanges or strips E, G, H, R, and S are preferably made of leather. The distance between the strip G and the back of the bag A' is sufficient to permit the front flap, with its strip or flange, to be readily inserted and withdrawn. The strips or flanges G and E are preferably beveled off on their lower corners, and the flap of the bag and part of the top of the strip E may also be beveled, as shown in the drawings, in order to facilitate the insertion of the front flap of the bag beneath the hood into the recess T. The locking is accomplished by the strap F, which is provided with the block or strip H along its front side. This strip H may be made of one or more layers or thicknesses of leather sewed and riveted to F, and I prefer to let the lower layer, K, next the strap F, be broader than the other layers and extend below the strip G, as shown in Fig. 4, to more securely compress the flange E in the channel T. The layers above F, at the end nearest where the strap is fastened to the bag, are preferably cut in sections, and each section's edges preferably beveled to allow the heavy strap H to make the short bend in entering the cover C. This strap F is made of a sufficient length to extend through the cover C and to lap around the end of the bag, as shown in Fig. 2, where it passes over a staple. Its construction is plainly shown in Figs. 4 and 5. As shown in Fig. 4, it consists, preferably, of three thicknesses, suitably attached together, the inner one, F, being preferably the broadest, the next, K, being somewhat narrower, and finally the strip H, adapted to slide over and be locked against the shelf G, as clearly shown in the drawings. The strap F, with the strip H, when drawn beneath the cover C,

serves to compress and hold the strip E within the cavity T, preventing its withdrawal therefrom. The locking-strap F is permanently connected to the back of the bag at one end, preferably by the rivets *fff*, and at the other is provided with a slot, O, adapted to fit over a suitable hasp, P, on the back of the bag, as shown in Fig. 2. This hasp P is preferably formed by turning up the rear end of the first metallic strap, B, at right angles with the bag, and drilling a suitable hole, P, therein, as shown in Fig. 2. Other of the metal straps, B B, may have their rear ends similarly turned up and holes *ww* drilled therein, as seen in Fig. 2, and suitable holes, *w'w'*, may be punched in the front flap of the bag, as shown in Fig. 5. By means of these holes *w* and *w'* the bag may be suspended on the usual hooks in the mail-cars. A handle, L, is provided, as usual, and also a handle, M, for withdrawing the mouth of the sack. The fastening of the metal parts to the bag is preferably by riveting, and of the other parts preferably by sewing, riveting, or both.

The method of closing and opening my bag will now be readily understood. If the bag be in the condition shown in Fig. 5, the upper end of the front of the bag, provided with the strip E, is inserted beneath the cover C and placed in the channel T. The locking-strap F is then inserted under the end of the cover C, nearest to which it is attached to the bag and quickly drawn longitudinally through the U-shaped cover, the strip H locking above the block or strip G. The slot O is then placed over the staple, and the bag may be locked. It will be now readily seen that the bag cannot be opened without destroying it, for the strip E cannot be drawn out of the channel T without either breaking the leather or its fastening or the U-shaped clamps B. These are made of sufficient strength and firmness to resist all usual strains.

The bag is readily unlocked, as it has been locked, by simply withdrawing the strap F longitudinally. A card-holder, V, may also be provided of the usual pattern, and may have any suitable arrangement by which the draw-

ing of the locking-strap F beneath the cover will likewise lock the card in position so that it cannot be withdrawn.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to procure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The combination, in a bag, of a stationary hood or cover, rigid transversely, beneath which the flap of the bag is locked in position, with a locking-strap adapted to be likewise drawn beneath the hood or cover, thereby preventing the opening of the bag, substantially as described.

2. The combination, in a bag, of a stationary U-shaped cover, rigid transversely, provided with a longitudinal recess, and the flap of the bag provided with a strip adapted to rest in said longitudinal recess, with a locking-strap adapted to be drawn longitudinally beneath said hood, thereby preventing the opening of the bag except on the withdrawal of the strap, substantially as described.

3. The bag A, having its front or opening flap provided with a strip, H, adapted to engage and rest in the channel T, with a suitable locking device for preventing the withdrawal of the front of the bag from the hood, substantially as described.

4. The combination, in a bag, of a hood, C, provided with a channel, T, and the front flap of the bag provided with locking-strip E, and the strap F, provided with locking-strip H, substantially as described.

5. The combination of stationary rigid U-shaped straps or hooks permanently attached to one side of the top of a bag, provided with suitable locking devices, beneath which the flap, when closed, is locked in position, with a flexible locking-strap adapted to be drawn beneath the said straps or hooks, thereby preventing the opening of the bag, substantially as described.

Signed at New York city, in the county of New York, and State of New York, this 4th day of January, A. D. 1884.

THOMAS H. SMITH.

Witnesses:

FRANK M. CLUTE,
P. J. CHEEVERS.