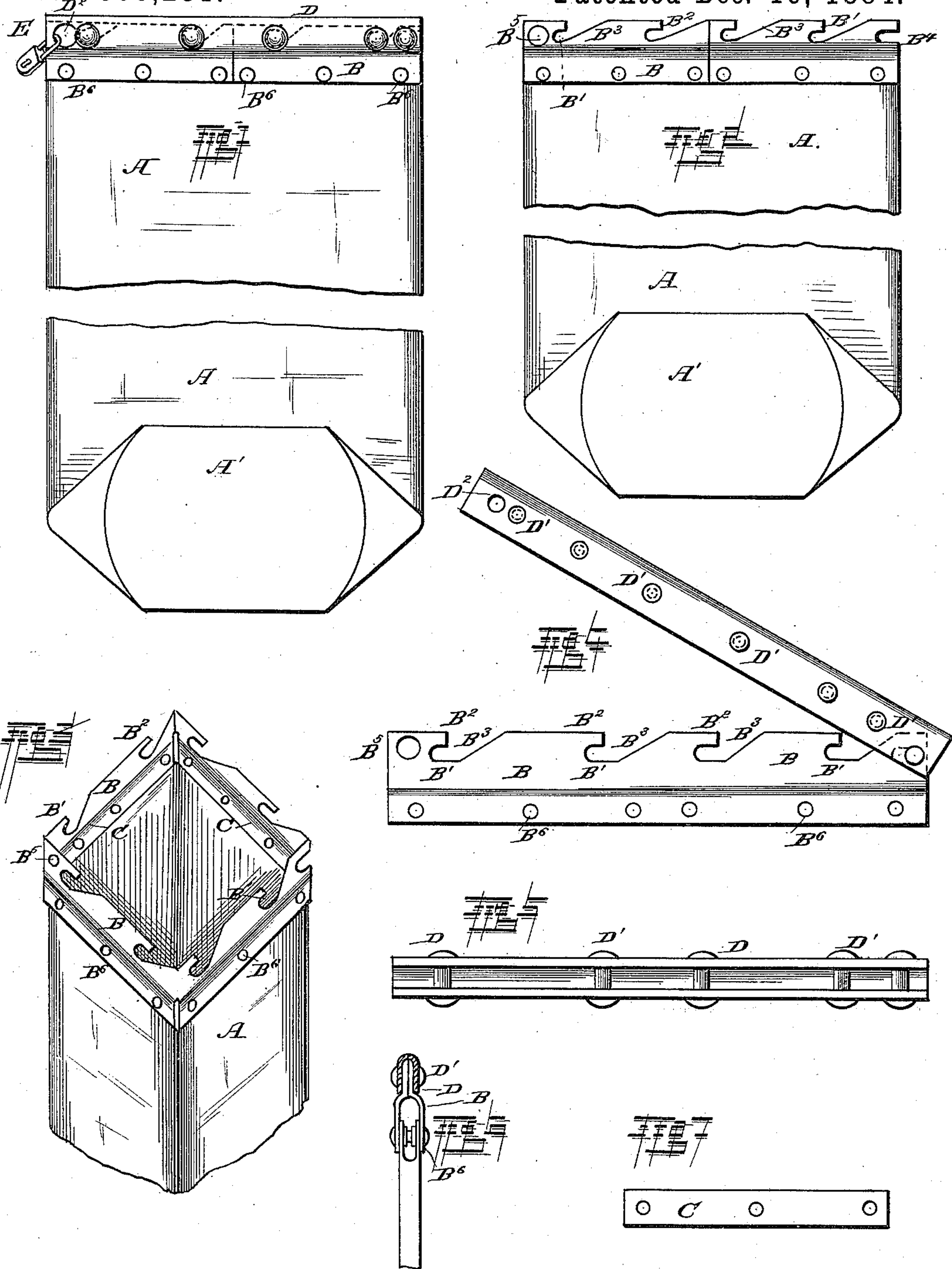


(No Model.)

B. F. KRAFT.
MAIL BAG FASTENER.

No. 309,231.

Patented Dec. 16, 1884.



WITNESSES:

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MAIL-BAG FASTENER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 309,231, dated December 16, 1884.

Application filed September 15, 1884. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, BENJAMIN F. KRAFT, a citizen of the United States, residing at the city of Reading, county of Berks, State of Pennsylvania, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Mail-Bag Fastenings, of which the following is a specification.

Although the improvement is especially adapted to mail-bags, it is also adapted for use with satchels and traveling-bags.

The object of the improvement is to furnish a fastening for mail-bags readily applied, easily manipulated, and absolutely secure when locked, and cheaply made.

The above results are attained in the use of the improvements shown in the accompanying drawings, in which corresponding letters signify corresponding parts.

Figure 1 represents a mail-bag with my improvements attached thereto. Fig. 2 represents the same bag with the locking-bar removed therefrom. Fig. 3 shows the form of mouth which the bag assumes on being opened. Fig. 4 represents the mode of applying the locking-bar; Fig. 5, a reverse plan of the locking-bar; Fig. 6, a sectional view of the improvement; Fig. 7, an elevation of the re-enforce plate.

A represents the bag of cotton duck or leather; A', the satchel-bottom of the bag. B are mouth-plates subdivided into several parts, according to the form of mouth it is desired the bag, when opened, shall assume. I give preference to a division of the same into four plates. The bag when opened will then assume a square form, as shown in Fig. 3. These plates are so formed that when laid together the lower portion, where attachment is made to the bag, shall be separated enough to admit the bag and re-enforce plates between the same.

B' are circular abutments for the locking-bar studs; B², keepers above the same; B³, inclined guides to the abutments; B⁴, bifurcated notch-abutment; B⁵, fixed locking-point; B⁶, riveting or securing holes for connection with the mouth of the bag. C are re-enforce plates, with rivet-holes corresponding with those in the mouth-plates, placed within the bag, and when the rivets B⁶ are driven the bag thickness is securely held between the two plates. D is the locking-bar, of U form in sec-

tion. D' are studs riveted in the same, the position of the studs corresponding, when the bar is in place, with the abutments in the mouth-plates; D², fixed locking-point corresponding with B⁵ of the mouth-plates when in place; E, the usual mail-bag lock.

I am aware that I am not the first to arrange a mail-bag so that when opened its mouth shall form a polygon or square, and that I am not the first to lock a mail-bag by a single bar; but I believe that my mode of accomplishing both results is novel and a useful advance upon anything preceding my improvement.

The construction of my improvement is as follows: Plates adapted in length and width to the bag or satchel to be locked are placed under a press provided with suitable punches and dies, and the hooked or equivalent abutments B', the bifurcated notch B⁴, fixed locking-point B⁵, and riveting-holes B⁶ are all produced by one movement of the press. The locking-bar D may have the stud-holes D' first punched out of a flat plate of the proper width, and then subsequently bent into the U form shown, or the plate may be first bent and the stud-holes subsequently drilled therein. The re-enforce plates are of course made to have the rivet-holes to correspond with the holes B⁶ of the mouth-plates. The plates being provided, the mouth of the bag is inserted between the mouth and re-enforce plates, and through-rivets B⁶ being driven, the bag is securely held between the same.

The operation of the improved fastener is simple. Holding the bar in the position shown in Fig. 4, with the end stud barely entered within the bifurcated notch B⁴, the bar is dropped upon the mouth-plates, the studs resting upon the inclined guides B³. The bar is then shoved forward, and the studs D' descending the inclines B³ enter beneath the keepers B² and are brought to rest against the abutments B'. The fixed locking-points B⁵ and D² are then coincident, and the usual padlock being applied, the same is securely held in the position described. To release the bar, (after the removal of the padlock,) it is simply slid back, bringing the studs out from beneath the keepers, when it is lifted away, and the bag will open out ready for filling.

In the majority of city and town post-offices

a great saving of time would be effected by the adoption of my improvement, as the locking and unlocking of the mail-bag is comparatively an instantaneous operation. In the matter of
5 wear and tear of mail-bags in transit, and in handling at the offices, a great saving would result, there being no protruding staples, chains, or straps, and all exposed surfaces being smooth, there is therefore no tendency to cut or abrade
10 each other.

The plates and locking-bar may be of any suitable metal; but I give preference to their construction of steel, particularly the locking-bar, as thereby great strength, stiffness, and
15 lightness will be combined.

The mouth-plates may be hinged at their several subdivisions; but I prefer to make them in independent pieces, as shown.

Having shown and described my invention,
20 I desire to secure by Letters Patent the following claims thereon:

1. The combination, with a mail-bag or satchel, of the mouth-plates shown and de-

scribed, in either single or subdivided lengths, adapted to receive a locking-bar, as set forth, 25 said plates provided with abutting seats having keepers and inclined guides with a bifurcated abutment at one side or end, and a fixed locking-point at the opposite side or end, secured to the mouth of the bag or satchel by a 30 re-enforce plate and rivets, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

2. In combination with a mail-bag or satchel provided with mouth-plates, as described, a locking-bar of a U form in section, provided 35 with studs adapted, when closed, to rest against the abutments of said mouth-plates, and to be retained in position by the keepers thereof, having a fixed locking-point coincident (when closed) with the fixed locking-point of said 40 mouth-plates, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

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Witnesses:

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