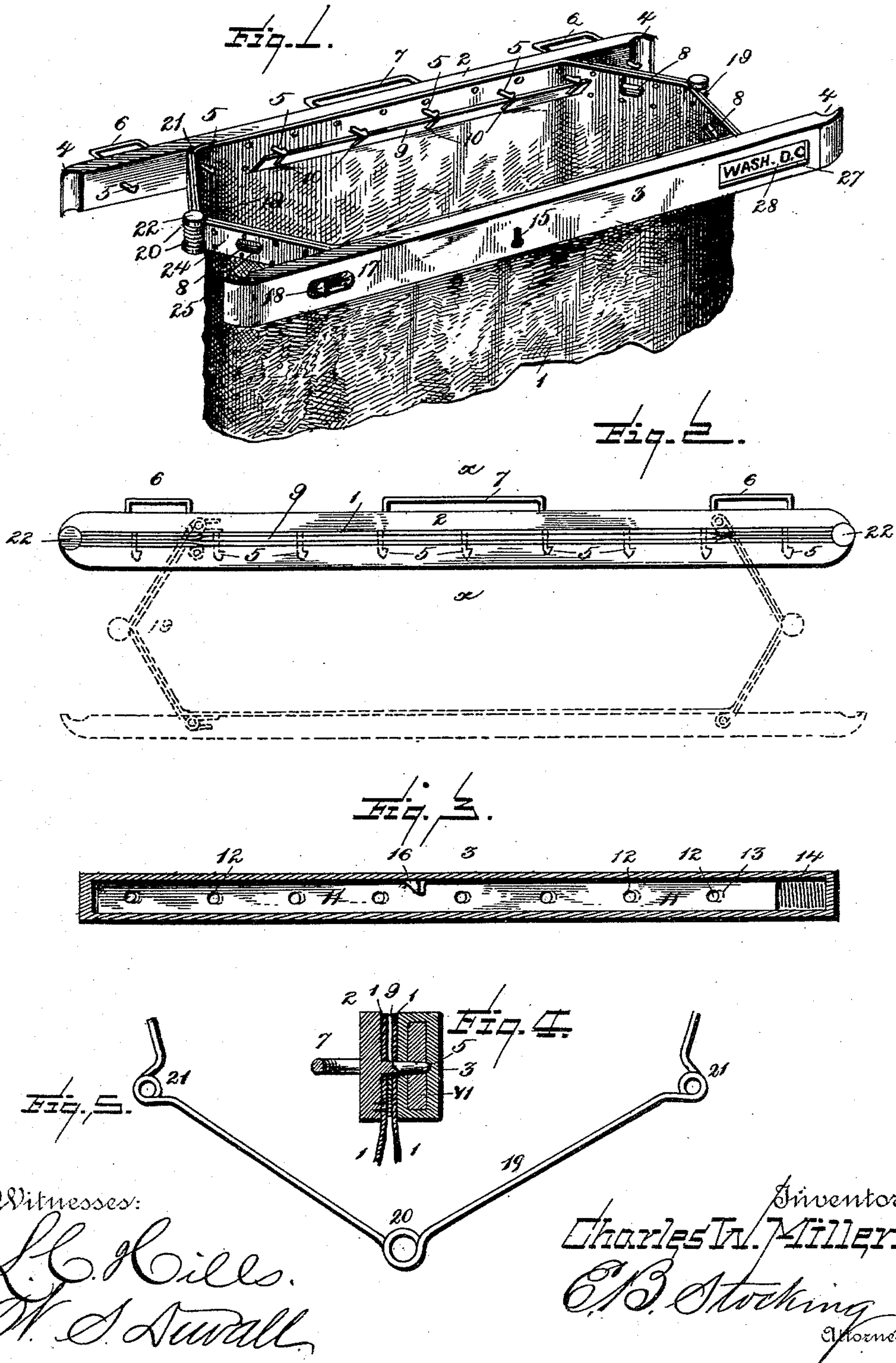


(No Model.)

C. W. MILLER
MAIL POUCH.

No. 401,196.

Patented Apr. 9, 1889.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES W. MILLER, OF CLIFTON, ARIZONA TERRITORY, ASSIGNOR OF
ONE-HALF TO CHARLES ROYCE, OF SAME PLACE.

MAIL-POUCH.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 401,196, dated April 9, 1889.

Application filed July 21, 1888. Serial No. 280,595. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES W. MILLER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Clifton, in the county of Graham and Territory of Arizona, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Pouches; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention has relation to mail-pouches; and among the objects in view are to provide a self opening and locking pouch that is simple in construction and can be easily and quickly operated, and can be manufactured at a minimum cost, and which is practically indestructible.

Further objects and advantages of the invention will hereinafter appear, and the novel features thereof will be particularly pointed out in the claims.

Referring to the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of the upper end of a mail-pouch constructed in accordance with my invention, the same being shown in an open position. Fig. 2 is a plan view, the pouch being closed as shown in full lines and open as shown by dotted lines. Fig. 3 is an interior view of the locking-plate. Fig. 4 is a transverse section on the line *xx* of Fig. 2, and Fig. 5 is a plan of the spring-hinge employed.

Like numerals of reference indicate like parts in all the figures of the drawings.

1 represents the pouch, which may be made of any suitable material, and preferably of leather, as is usual. At the opposite upper edges of the mouth of the pouch, and for a portion of its width, there are riveted opposite plates, 2 and 3. The plate 2 is preferably formed of steel, and is curved or otherwise finished at its ends and provided with transverse semicircular recesses 4, and at intervals along its inner face with inwardly-projecting shoulder-lugs 5.

Pouch-supporting hooks 6 may be projected from the outer surface of the plate 2, as may also a hand-hold, 7, if desired. Each end of the pouch 1 is formed of a bellows shape when the pouch is open, and is provided with opposite slots 8, for the passage therethrough of those of the lugs 5 which are outside of the edges of the pouch, the remainder of the

series of lugs being passed through the pouch, as clearly shown in Fig. 1.

Below the series of lugs 5 there is secured a spring-plate, 9, having slots 10, agreeing in number and location with said lugs, said plate being secured in any suitable manner to the interior of the pouch, and adapted normally to remain at an inclined position for the purpose of forming a guard, so that in emptying the sack letters and other mail-matter will not be interfered with in their passage from the pouch by means of the lugs.

3 represents the lock-plate, which is also formed of metal, preferably of steel, and is provided with an interior chamber, in which is mounted for longitudinal movement a bolt or plate, 11, having openings 12, agreeing in location with similar openings, 13, formed in the inner face of said plate, and also with the number and location of the lugs 5, formed on the plate 2. A spring, 14, is interposed between the end of the plate 3 and the end of the bolt-plate 11, the tendency of which is to force said plate toward the opposite end of the lock-plate, as clearly shown in Fig. 3.

A key-hole, 15, is formed in the outer surface of the plate 3 for the reception of a key, and is located opposite the key-receiving notch 16, formed in the plate 11.

If desired, any suitable lock may be substituted for the one herein shown, so that by a combination of false and working tumblers peculiar-shaped keys may be employed to open the pouch.

In case the pouch is to be used for only second and third class mail—such as newspapers, circulars, and other unimportant matter, where it is unnecessary to lock the same—the plate 3 may be provided at its outer surface with a slot, 17, through which a lug, 18, formed on the bolt-plate 11, projects, and in this manner the cost of the lock is reduced and all intricate mechanism done away with. The plate 3, like the plate 2, is also formed with curved ends and with semicircular transverse recesses 4 near its ends, whereby said plates are adapted for the reception of a peculiar-shaped hinge, which I will now proceed to describe.

19 represents a self-opening spring-hinge, and, as shown in Figs. 1 and 4, the same consists of a single piece of wire coiled intermediate its ends and about its center, as at

20, and near its ends, as at 21. The hinge consists of two members coiled as described, and connected at their central coil by the passage therethrough of a pin, 22, and at their side coils by similar pins, 23. The two parallel arms of the springs are connected by means of a metal plate, 24, having slots 25, registering with adjacent slots 8, formed in the pouch. Those opposite portions of the upper edge of the pouch 1 that are not riveted to the plates 2 and 3 are riveted to the metal plate 24, as shown in Fig. 1, so that the entire upper edge of the pouch is secured either to the hinges, one of each of which is secured at each end of the pouch or to the plates 2 and 3. The side coils, 21, of the spring-hinges 19 are set in recesses 26, formed in the plates 2 and 3 for their reception, and the terminals of the springs are secured by means of solder or otherwise to the inner faces of said plates.

By this construction it is apparent that, the pouch having been filled, to lock the same it is only necessary to bring the two plates 2 and 3 together, so that the locking-lugs 5 of the plate 2 will pass through and beyond the openings in the plate 12. The ends of these lugs are beveled, so as to force the plate 12 against the spring 14 until the shoulders of said lugs pass beyond the opposite face of the locking-plate, when said plate resumes its normal position and forms a lock against said shoulders, all as shown in Fig. 2. When the parts assume this position, the central coil, 20, of the spring-hinge is inclosed in the plates 2 and 3. As the pouch closes it is also apparent that the spring-plate 9 will be forced against the inner surface of the pouch, the shouldered lugs 5 passing through the slots 10 of said plate; and it is also apparent that as the pouch is closed the two opposite ends fold in a sack-like manner, and that the two, or it may be more, outer shoulder-lugs, 5, will pass through openings 8, formed in the pouch, and the openings 25, formed in the plate 24, so that the entire pouch is securely locked along its width. To unlock the pouch the key is inserted through the hole 15 in the plate 3, and by a slight turn of the same the bolt-plate 11 is drawn from under the shoulders of the lugs 5 and the springs 19 force the pouch open, in which position it remains unless locked.

Any form of hinge may be substituted for the class shown, and said hinges may be either plain or spring. It is apparent that by the formation of the coils 20 and 21 the mouth of the pouch will be held rigid when open.

If desired, the supporting-staples 6 may be omitted, and the pouch, when opened, may be supported by the projecting arms 2 and 3, the same resting upon suitable pins projecting from the wall of the car. An opening, 27, is formed in the lock-plate 3, in which may be slid a card, 28, on which appears the destination of the contents of the bag.

Having described my invention and its operation, what I claim is—

1. In a mail-pouch, the combination of a plate secured at one side of the mouth for a portion of the length of the plate, and provided with a series of locking-lugs, with a locking-plate mounted at the opposite side of said pouch and secured thereto for a portion of its length, and adapted to receive said lugs, substantially as specified.

2. In a mail-pouch, the combination of a locking-plate secured at one side of the mouth of the pouch for a portion of the length of the plate, and provided with lugs, with a locking-plate secured to the opposite side of the pouch for a portion of its length, and provided with spring-actuated locking-bolt having openings adapted to receive said lugs, substantially as specified.

3. In a mail-pouch, the combination of a plate having inwardly-projecting locking-lugs with a spring-pressed slotted guard-plate secured to the pouch under the lugs, substantially as specified.

4. In a mail-pouch, a plate having locking-lugs connected for a portion of its length to the pouch, in combination with a locking-plate secured for a portion of its length to the opposite side of the pouch, and provided with a locking-bolt for the reception of lugs, and an interposed hinge, the ends of which are connected to said plate, substantially as specified.

5. In a mail-pouch, the combination of opposite plates adapted to lock and secured to the pouch for a portion of their length with an interposed spring-hinge adapted to spring the plates apart when said plates are not locked, substantially as specified.

6. In a mail-pouch, the combination of two opposite plates adapted to lock with a spring-hinge secured to and mounted intermediate said plates, and formed with a central coil adapted to take into recesses formed in the ends of said plates when the same are closed and locked, substantially as specified.

7. The combination, with the pouch 1, of the plate 2, having the lugs 5 and connected to the pouch for a portion of its length, and of the plate 3, having the openings 13 and 15, the interposed inwardly-folding hinges 19, and the bolt-plate 11, perforated, as at 12, and having the interposed spring 14, substantially as specified.

8. The combination, with the pouch 1, having openings 8, of the plate 2, having the end recesses, 4, and the lugs 5, and of the locking-plate 3, having the openings 13, and locking-bolt 11, having openings 12, the spring 14, for actuating said bolt-plate, and of the spring-hinges 19, having the coils 20 and 21, and the stiffening-plate 24, perforated, as at 25, substantially as specified.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

CHARLES W. MILLER.

Witnesses:

W. S. DUVALL,
L. C. HILLS.