(No Model.)

S. D. LOCKE.

MAIL BAG.

No. 459,875. Patented Sept. 22, 1891.

Fig. 1.

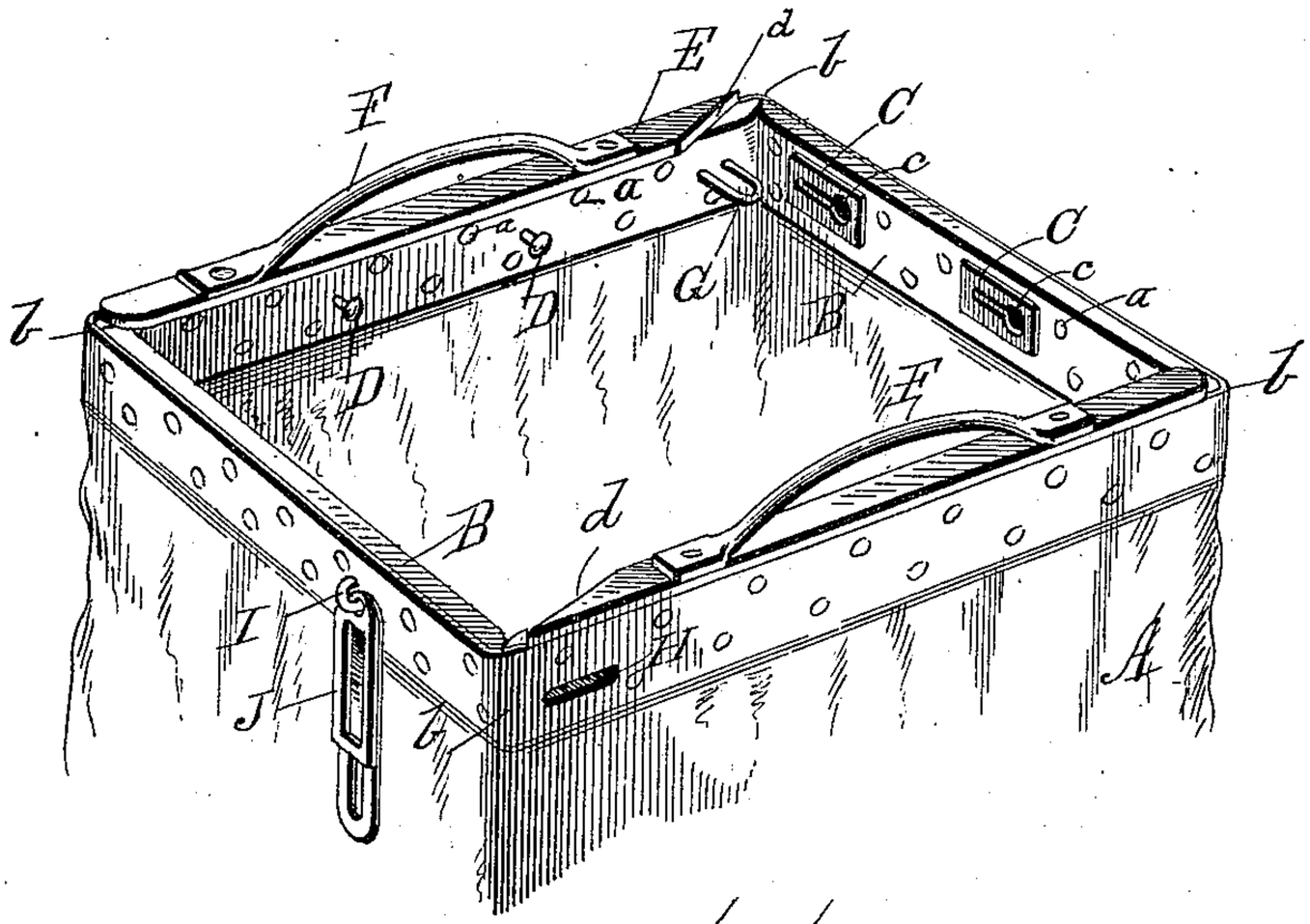


Fig. 2.

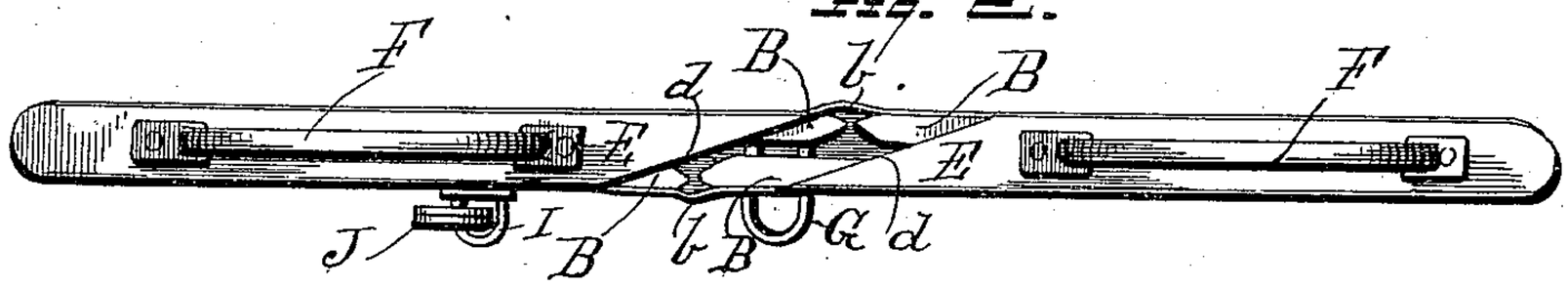


Fig. 3.

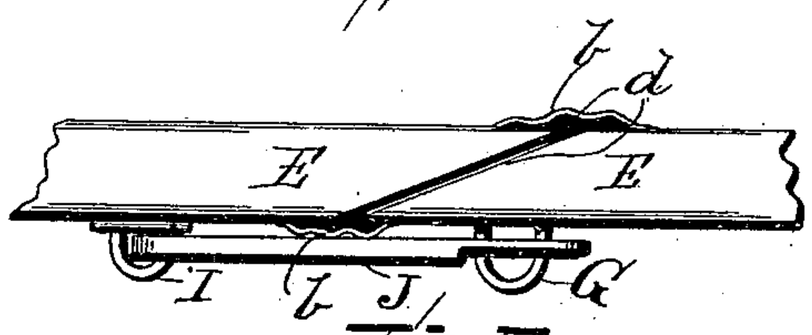
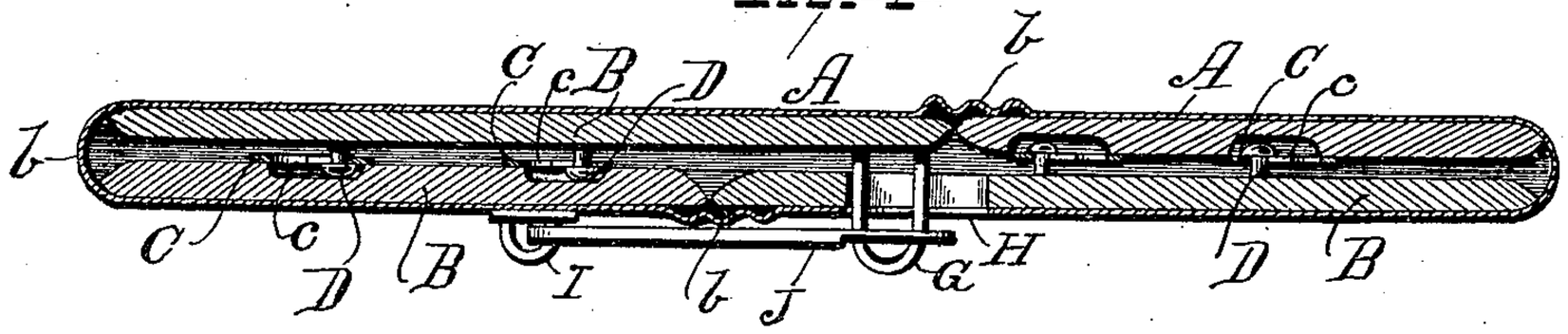


Fig. 4.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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MAIL-BAG.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 459,875, dated September 22, 1891.

Application filed August 29, 1891. Serial No. 404,141. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, SYLVANUS D. LOCKE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Hoosick Falls, in the county of Rensselaer, State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Bags, of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

This invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in that class of mail-bags wherein provision is made for the opening of the bag in such a manner that its mouth will assume a quadrangular form for the more ready insertion of the mail-matter therein.

The present invention has for its objects, among others, to so construct a mail-bag of this class that it may be readily opened or closed and so that mail-matter may not be extracted therefrom without removing the lock or defacing the bag. To attain this object, I form the mouth of the bag of four frame-pieces so hinged or connected together that when open the mouth of the bag will be of a quadrangular form, and these pieces at the ends forming the corners of the bag are so connected by double or sliding joints that one side of the bag may be moved longitudinally with respect to the other. These frame-pieces are preferably formed of hard leather; but they may be stiffened or re-enforced by a steel plate or otherwise made of any suitable material. They are provided with key-hole slots and with studs to engage the said slots, and the longitudinal movement permitted by the double or sliding joints secures the two sides of the bag together ready for the insertion of the locking device, which, when in place, prevents the bag from opening. The slots may be made in the leather or other material of the said frame-pieces, or in metal plates secured thereto, or in both, as may be found most expedient. The provision for longitudinal movement of one of the sides in relation to the other is considered a most important feature of the invention.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will hereinafter appear, and the novel features thereof will be specifically defined by the appended claims.

The invention is clearly illustrated in the accompanying drawings, which, with the letters of reference marked thereon, form a part of this specification, and in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the mouth of my improved mail-bag unlocked and opened. Fig. 2 is a top plan thereof with the frame-pieces brought together and ready to be fastened by the above-mentioned longitudinal movement. Fig. 3 is a part plan with the parts brought together by the said longitudinal movement and ready to receive the lock. Fig. 4 is a section through the bag with the parts in the position shown in Fig. 3, the section being taken through the slots in the frame-pieces.

Like letters of reference indicate like parts throughout the several views.

Referring now to the details of the drawings by letter, A designates the bag, which may be of any of the well-known or approved forms in general use.

B represents the frame-pieces, which are attached to the inner face of the bag at the mouth thereof in any suitable manner—as for instance, by rivets *a*. These pieces may be of any desired material; but I prefer hard leather of suitable thickness or thicknesses, and while they may be stiffened or re-enforced by metallic plates I do not consider such re-enforcement as necessary, except, perhaps, in exceptional cases where great strength is required. The frame-pieces are entirely disconnected from each other, except when hinges are employed, which I prefer to dispense with, and at their adjacent ends the said frame-pieces are rounded, beveled, or otherwise formed, as seen best in Fig. 4, to provide the necessary movements thereof. The portions *b* of the bag between these ends form the hinges or flexible connections between the said pieces, as most clearly shown in Fig. 4.

Two diametrically-opposite frame-pieces are provided with key-hole slots *c*, as seen in Figs. 1 and 4, which slots may be formed in the leather of the said pieces or in plates C, secured thereto in any suitable manner, or in both, as shown in Fig. 4. I have shown two slots upon each of the said frame-pieces; but it is evident that this number may be varied without departing from the spirit of the invention. Two I prefer. These slots are oppositely arranged—that is, those on the one

piece have their enlarged end extending in one direction, while those upon the other have the enlarged end extending in the opposite direction, as seen best in Fig. 4.

The other frame-pieces are provided with headed studs D, designed to engage the above-mentioned key-hole slots, as will hereinafter be made apparent.

E are lips or flanges, preferably of hard leather, secured to the upper edges of the frame-pieces, which are provided with the studs and having their inner ends beveled, as shown at *d* in Figs. 1, 2, and 3, so that when the bag is closed these beveled ends will abut against each other, as seen in Fig. 3, and form a joint midway of the width of the bag, forming practically a continuous plate covering the top edges of the mouth of the bag and the joints between the frame-pieces, so as to exclude dust, rain, and other foreign matter. These lips or flanges also serve to strengthen the mouth of the bag. The handles F of the bag are preferably attached to these lips or flanges, as seen in Figs. 1 and 2.

To one of the frame-pieces, near its end, I attach a staple G, projecting inward, and in the diagonally-opposite end of the opposite frame-piece I form an elongated slot H, designed to receive the said staple when the bag is closed, as seen in Figs. 2, 3, and 4.

To the frame-piece adjacent to that provided with the above-mentioned elongated slot there is attached a staple I, carrying the hasp-plate J, provided with a slot to engage the staple G, as seen in Figs. 3 and 4. The plate J is preferably provided with suitable means for holding the label or name-plate.

With the parts constructed and arranged as above described the operation is as follows: The bag being open, as shown in Fig. 1, and it is desired to close it, it may be done in several ways. A good way is to put the upper end back down on the edge of a table with the plate J up, then seizing the handles F one in each hand pull them apart and press the upper half of the frame down to enter the studs D in the enlarged ends of the slots, and then crowd or push the handles together until the studs have entered the slots, when the parts will assume the position shown in Fig. 3. The plate J is then placed horizontally with its slot receiving the staple G, which has previously passed through the slot H in the bag, and the lock is inserted. To open the bag it is only necessary to withdraw the lock and plate J to pull on the handles, holding the bag in the air or on the table, when the studs will move in the slots until they come opposite the enlarged ends of the said slots, when the bag can be opened into the form shown in Fig. 1. With practice a single movement only is necessary to open or close the mouth of the bag. It will be observed that the operating parts are confined within the bag and that the means which secure the said parts to the bag are located within the mouth of the bag, where they cannot be tampered with when the bag is closed; nor are they liable to become injured during transportation of the bag.

Modifications in detail may be resorted to without departing from the spirit of the invention or sacrificing any of its advantages.

What I claim as new is—

1. In a mail-bag, a mouth-piece composed of frame-pieces flexibly connected together to permit of longitudinal movement of one side of the mouth with respect to the other and having longitudinally-operative locking devices, as set forth.

2. In a mail-bag, a mouth-piece composed of frame-pieces flexibly connected together at adjacent ends to permit of longitudinal movement of one side with respect to the other, combined with interlocking means upon the frame-pieces, whereby the sliding of one side of the bag locks it at intervals along its mouth, as set forth.

3. In a mail-bag, the combination, with the mouth-piece capable of longitudinal movement one side with relation to the other, of the studs and key-hole slots on opposite frame-pieces, as and for the purpose specified.

4. In a mail-bag, the combination, with the frame-pieces flexibly connected together at their adjacent ends, of the studs and slots on opposite frame-pieces, the elongated slot in one of the frame-pieces, and the staple on another adapted to engage said slot, as and for the purpose specified.

5. A mail-bag provided with a mouth-piece having one of its sides longitudinally movable with relation to the other, and locking means operated by said longitudinal movement, as set forth.

6. A mail-bag provided with a mouth-piece having flexible corners and one side capable of movement upon or in a plane parallel with the other, and locking means operated by said longitudinal movement, as set forth.

7. A mail-bag having a mouth-piece having flexible corners and one side longitudinally movable with respect to the other, lips or flanges the ends of which are constructed to abut against each other, and locking means operated by said longitudinal movement, as set forth.

8. A mail-bag having a mouth-piece with one side longitudinally movable with relation to the other and having an elongated slot near one corner and a staple at the diagonally-opposite corner to engage said slot, and means for locking the staple in the slot, as set forth.

9. A mail-bag having a mouth-piece with one side longitudinally movable with relation to the other and having an elongated slot near one corner and a staple at the diagonally-opposite corner to engage said slot, combined with a hasp-plate located to hold the staple at one end of the slot, as set forth.

10. In a mail-bag, mouth frame-pieces flexibly connected for longitudinal movement upon each other, a staple secured to one frame-piece, an elongated slot formed in an adjacent

piece, and a hasp located to embrace the staple after a longitudinal movement of the parts, substantially as specified.

11. A mail-bag having mouth frame-pieces flexibly connected for longitudinal movement, longitudinal operative locking mechanism, and a staple-and-hasp locking mechanism arranged to bridge and stiffen the flexible connections when the bag is closed, substantially as specified.

12. A mail-bag having flexibly-connected longitudinally-movable mouth frame-pieces provided with interlocking locking devices, and two handles secured to opposite frame-pieces for moving the same in opposite directions longitudinally, substantially as specified.

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

SYLVANUS D. LOCKE.

Witnesses:
S. D. LOCKE, Jr.,
J. P. LOCKE.