(No Model.) 2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

M. G. KNIGHT.

MAIL BAG.

No. 541,097. Patented June 18, 1895.

Fig. 1.

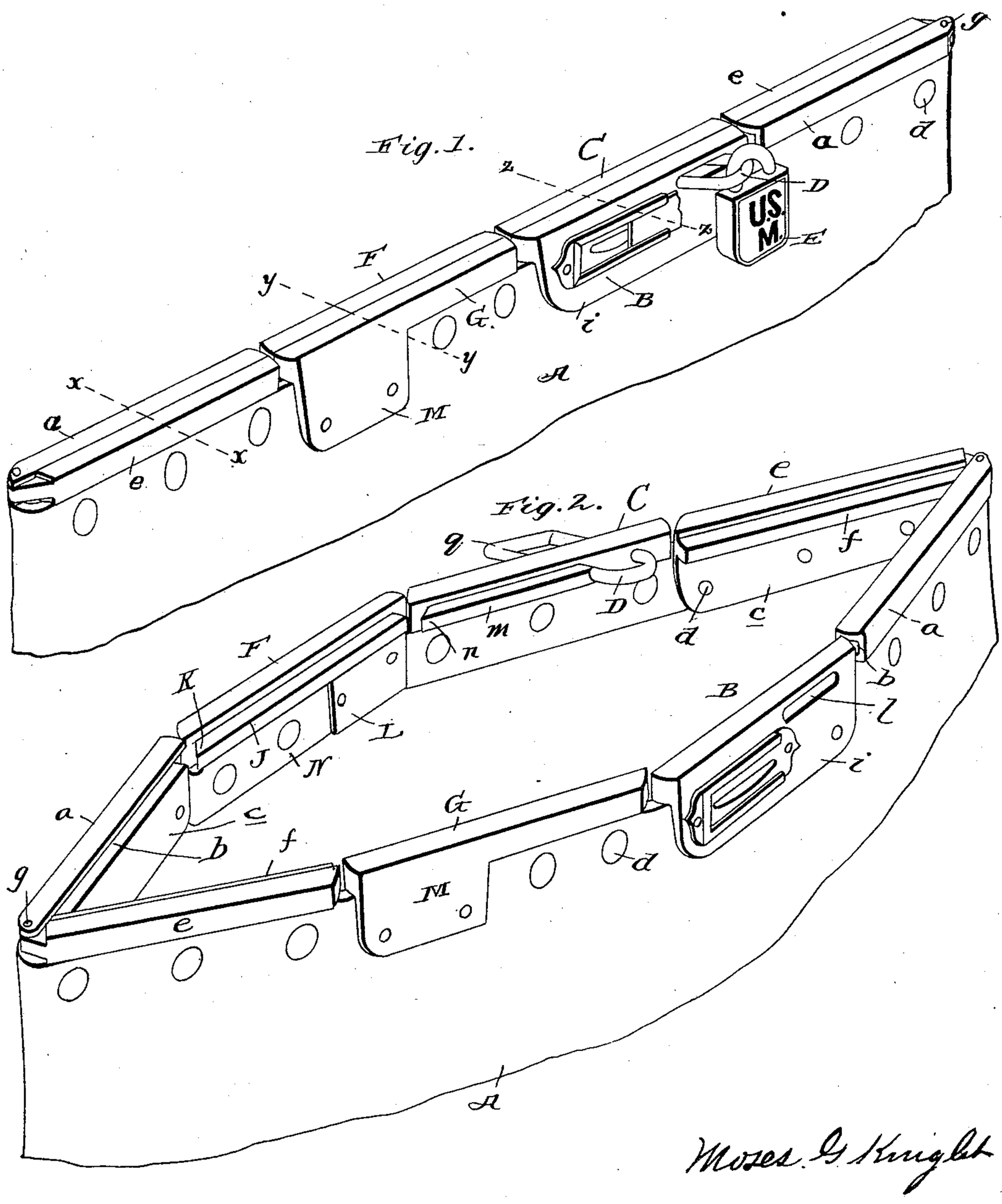

Fig. 2.

Witnesses:
C. A. Snider
W. F. Matthews.

Moses G. Knight
Inventor

By James J. Sheehy
Attorney

(No Model.) 2 Sheets—Sheet 2.

M. G. KNIGHT.

MAIL BAG.

No. 541,097. Patented June 18, 1895.

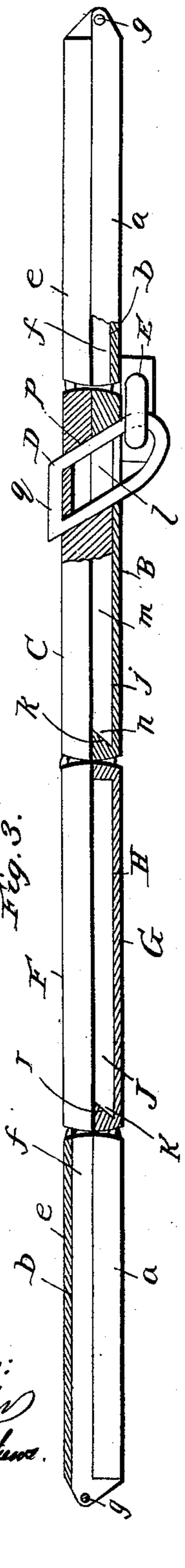

Fig. 3.

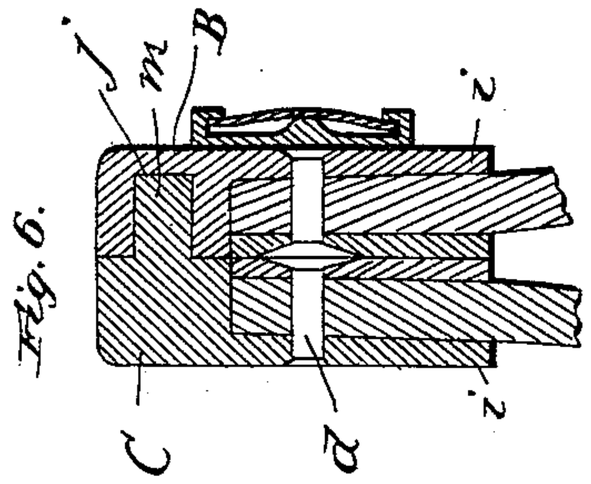

Fig. 6.

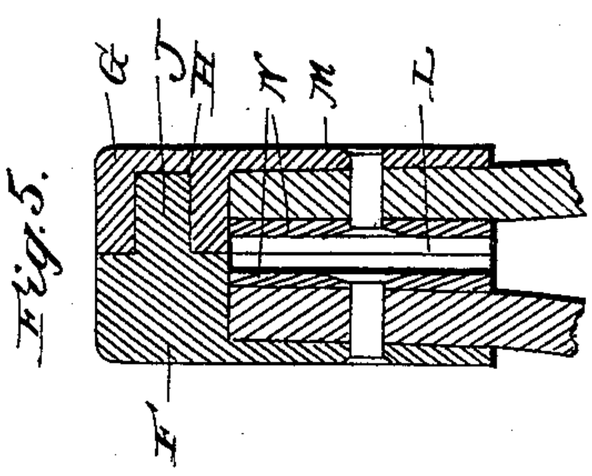

Fig. 5.

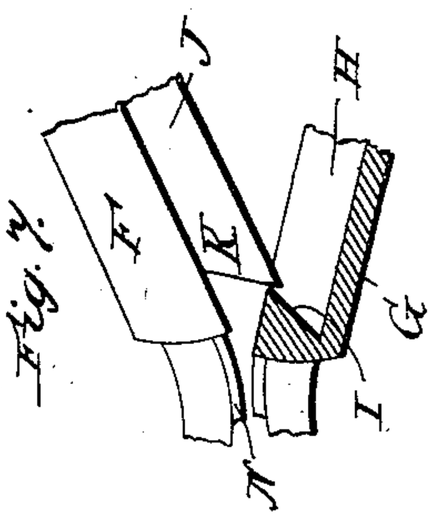

Fig. 7.

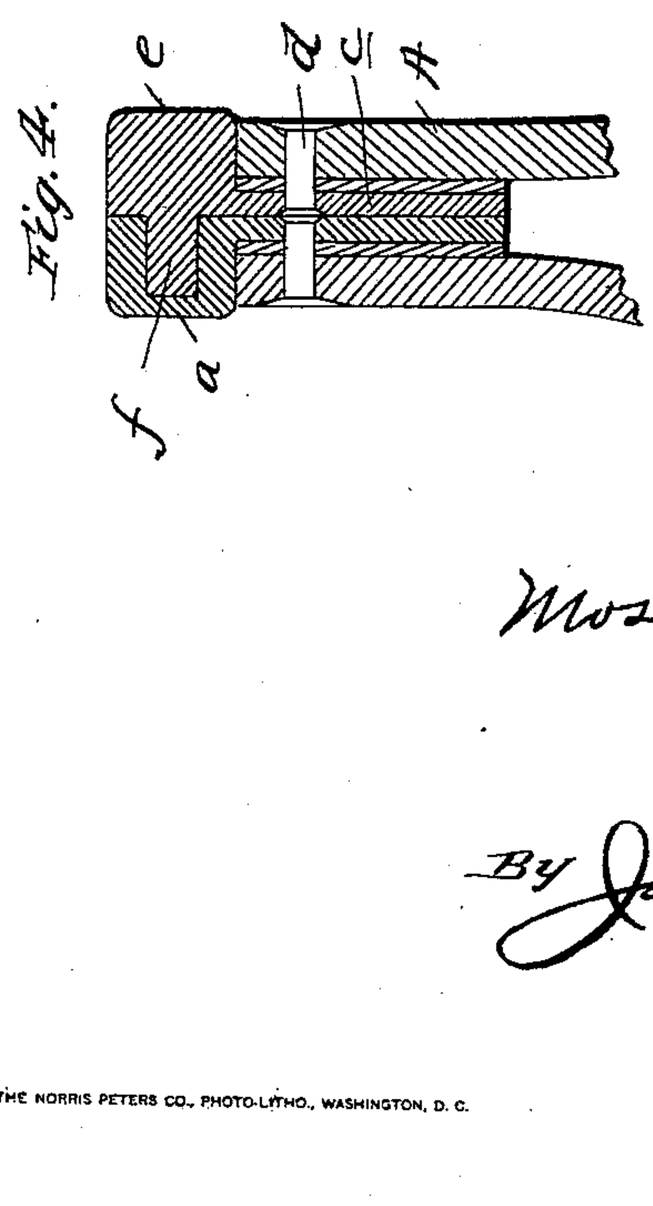

Fig. 4.

Witnesses:
C. A. Pauley
N. F. Matthews.

Moses G. Knight
Inventor

By James J. Kelly
Attorney

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MOSES G. KNIGHT, OF OAK CLIFF, TEXAS, ASSIGNOR OF THREE-FOURTHS TO WILLIAM M. WARD, WILLIAM M. C. HILL, AND LEE H. HUGHES.

MAIL-BAG.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 541,097, dated June 18, 1895.

Application filed January 15, 1895. Serial No. 535,001. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MOSES G. KNIGHT, a citizen of the United States, residing at Oak Cliff, in the county of Dallas and State of Texas, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Bags; and I do 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 relates to improvements in mail bags, and it has for its prime object to provide such bags or pouches with a secure, efficient, and durable fastening for the mouth which can be easily and quickly opened and closed.

Other objects and advantages will appear from the following description and claims when taken in connection with the annexed drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of my improved device, showing the same applied to a part of a mail bag or pouch. Fig. 2 is a similar view with the parts in an open position. Fig. 3 is a view partly in longitudinal section and partly in plan. Fig. 4 is a sectional view taken in the plane indicated by the dotted line *x x* on Fig. 1. Fig. 5 is a similar view taken in the plane indicated by the dotted line *y y*. Fig. 6 is a similar view taken on the dotted line *z z*, and Fig. 7 is a sectional detail view of the extension-plate.

Referring by letter to said drawings: A, indicates a part of a mail bag or pouch, which may be of leather or other suitable material, such as used in the mail service. To the upper edge or mouth of the bag, I apply my improved fastening device, which consists of a number of metallic plates. In the illustration I have shown the improvements as composed of eight plates but it is obvious that more or less may be used according to the capacity of bag employed; it being necessary that there should be two inner or intermediate plates, and it is desirable that there should be two extension plates, as will presently appear. The hinge plates are connected in pairs at the folding line of the bag or pouch, and comprise a plate *a*, having on its inner side, throughout its length a groove *b*, and depending from the inner side of said plate, is an integral flange *c*, which also extends throughout the length of said plate or approximately so. The plate is secured to the upper edge or mouth of the bag by placing this attaching or depending flange *c*, on the inner side thereof, and securing the two together by rivets *d*, or the like. The opposite plate *e*, has a similar depending flange *c*, to be attached to the upper edge of the bag in a similar manner, and is provided on its inner side, throughout its length with a tongue *f*, which is designed to enter the groove *b*, in the opposite plate, and these two plates are connected together in a hinged manner by means of a pintle, stud *g*, or the like, which may take through the grooved or recessed branches of the plate *a*, and through a hole in the outer end of the tongue *f*. It will thus be seen that when the plates are closed or forced together, the tongue of the plate *e*, will enter the groove of the plate A, and firmly close the same. As before described, there are two sets of hinged plates which are similarly constructed, and there should be at least one set of intermediate or locking plates.

B, indicates one of the locking or intermediate plates. This plate is provided with an attaching flange *i*, and is applied to the outer side of the sack at the mouth, where it is secured by rivets *d*, in a manner similar to the hinge plates; the only difference being that the hinge plates are applied on the inner side of the sack, while the locking or intermediate plates are applied on the outer side, but all plates overlie the edge at the mouth of the sack. The plate B, is recessed on its inner side for the greater portion of its length, as shown at *j*, and the groove or recess has an oblique or undercut portion *k*, at one end as better shown in Fig. 3, of the drawings, and at the opposite end of this groove or recess *j*, is a transverse slot *l*, which passes through the plate B, for a purpose which will presently appear.

C, indicates the opposite locking plate. This plate is provided with an attaching flange *i*, and applied to the sack in a similar manner to the plate B. On the inner side of this plate C, is a longitudinally-disposed tongue *m*, which is designed to extend into the groove *j*, when the mouth of the bag has been closed,

and this tongue is cut obliquely at one end as shown at *n*, so as to snugly engage the undercut or oblique portion *k*, in the groove or recess *j*. The plate C, is provided with two transversely-oblique holes *p*, and the end walls of the transverse slot *l*, in the opposite plate are also oblique or in the same plane with said holes.

D, indicates a staple. This staple is provided at one end of the parallel branches with a transverse bar or a connection *q*, which may be formed integral therewith, and is closed after the said branches of the staple have been passed through the holes *p*, of the plate C. This staple is free to play or slide in said holes *p*, but cannot become detached from the plate and the staple is sufficiently long to pass through the slot *l*, in the opposite plate B, and receive a padlock E, such as usually employed in the railway mail service. By the arrangement of the slots and the employment of the slidable staple, it will be seen that in addition to the locking, I also have a dovetail fastening for the locking plates; the undercut *k*, and oblique portion *n*, forming one end of the dovetail and the oblique slot and holes with the staple forming the other end of the dovetail so that it is not only necessary to remove the padlock, but it is also necessary to slide the staple, so that the plates may flex before the mouth of the bag can be opened, and I attach importance to these features of construction.

It will be understood from the construction described that the mouth of the bag cannot be closed by simply pushing the plates together, but they must be brought together in such a manner that the oblique portion of the tongue on one of the locking plates will engage the oblique undercut in the slot of the opposite plate first, so as to close in a hinged manner.

The plate B, is provided on its outer side with a tag or label holder such as at present employed.

The parts thus far described would be sufficient for some bags at present in use, but as there are other and larger bags also used, I provide in connection with such parts, what I call extension plates, as they are designed to increase or extend the mouth opening. There are two of these plates employed arranged opposite each other and are indicated in the drawings by the letters F, and G. The plate G, is provided on its inner side with a longitudinal slot or groove H, and the end of the groove farthest from the locking parts has an oblique undercut I, as better shown in Fig. 7. The opposite extension plate F, is provided on its inner side with a longitudinally-disposed tongue J, which is designed to enter the groove in the plate G, and this tongue is cut obliquely at one end as shown at K, to engage the oblique wall of the slot in said plate G, so that the undercut end of the tongue must be first placed in or against the undercut wall of the grooved plate before the two plates can be brought together in a closed manner, and by reason of this construction and the employment of the dovetail in the lock plate, the extension plates cannot be separated until the locking plates have first been opened. Each of the extension plates has a depending flange L, on its inner side and a similar flange M, on its outer side for attachment to the bag. Each flange extends nearly the length of one of the extension plates, and is arranged out of the same longitudinal plane so as to form an interspace between the inner and outer flanges for the reception of the upper edge of the bag which is attached thereto by rivets or the like.

A narrow strip N, of leather or other suitable material is preferably placed on the inner side of the bag and on the inner side of the flanges of the plates, and receives the securing rivet, as shown.

While I have described very specifically and in detail the construction of parts precisely as shown, yet I do not wish to be understood as confining myself to such exact construction as some of the parts will permit of modifications without departing from the spirit of the invention.

Having described my invention, what I claim is—

1. A mail bag, having two fastening plates secured one at each side of the mouth thereof; one of the plates having a groove on its inner side, with an oblique wall at one end of the groove and the opposite plate having a tongue to enter the said groove and also having an oblique portion at one end to engage the oblique wall in the grooved plate, in combination with the staple D, passing through both "plates" for holding them together, substantially as specified.

2. A mail bag, having two fastening plates, one secured to each side of the mouth thereof, one of the plates having a groove on its inner side, and also an oblique, transverse slot, and the groove having an oblique wall at one end, and the other plate having two oblique holes to register with the slot in the opposite plate, and also having a tongue to enter the slot or groove and a staple or the like arranged in said holes and adapted to enter the slot in the opposite plate, substantially as specified.

3. A mail bag fastening, comprising hinged plates, locking plates, and extension plates, all secured to the mouth of a bag, the hinged plates having a groove in one section, and a tongue in the opposite section to enter the groove, one of the locking plates having a longitudinal groove on its inner side with an oblique wall at one end thereof, and a transverse slot at the opposite end, the opposite locking plate having a dovetail longitudinally-disposed tongue to enter said groove and holes or apertures at one end of the dovetail tongue, and a staple movable obliquely in said holes and adapted to enter the transverse slot of the

opposite plate, and one of the extension plates having a slot on its inner side with an oblique wall at one end, and the opposite extension plate having a tongue with an oblique or undercut at one end to engage the oblique wall in the slotted plate, all adapted to operate, substantially as specified.

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

MOSES G. KNIGHT.

Witnesses:
A. L. ELLIOTT,
A. B. RAWLINS.