

No. 607,375.

Patented July 12, 1898.

J. HOWELLS.

MAIL BAG FASTENER.

(Application filed Oct. 14, 1897.)

(No Model.)

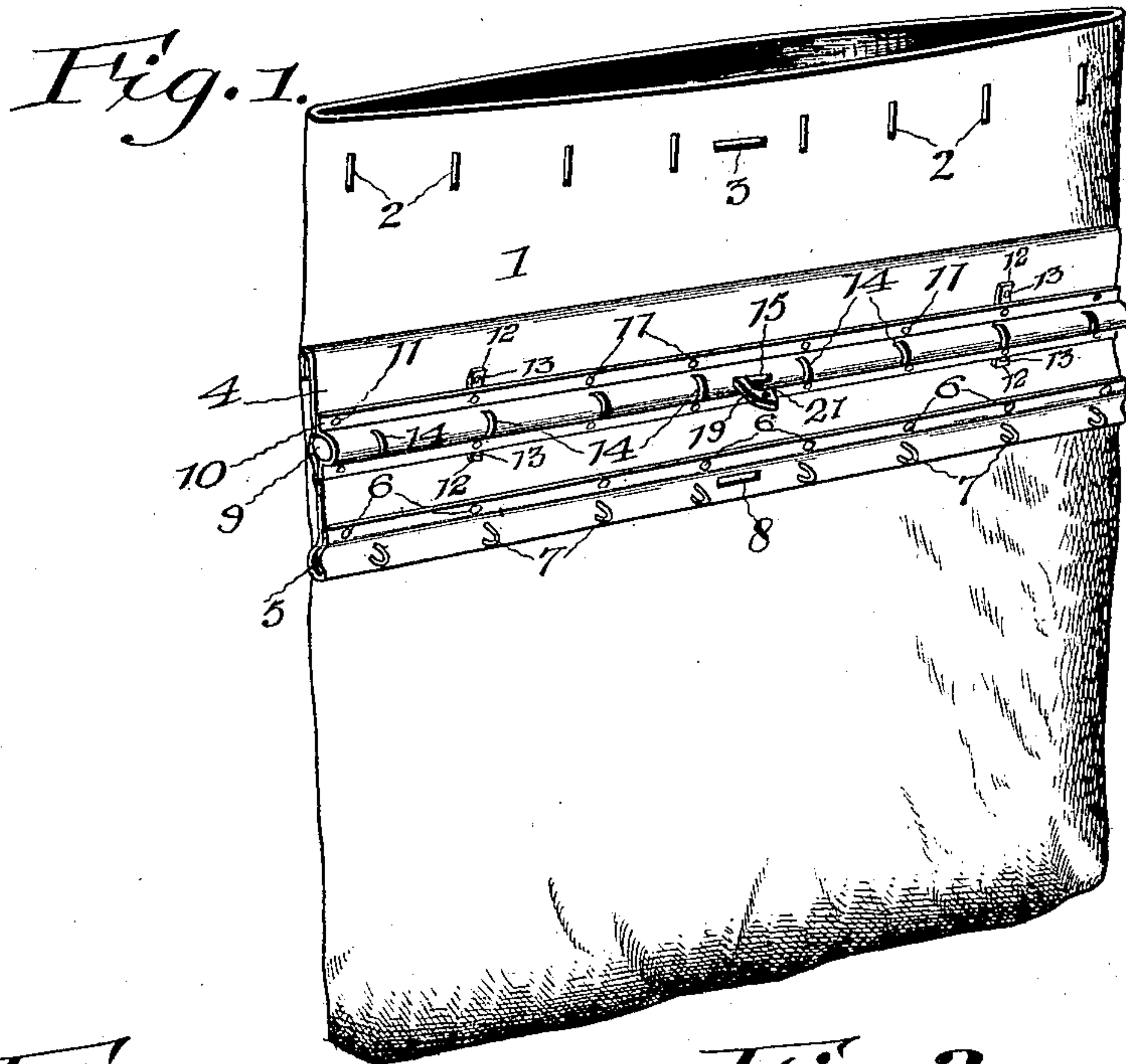


Fig. 3.

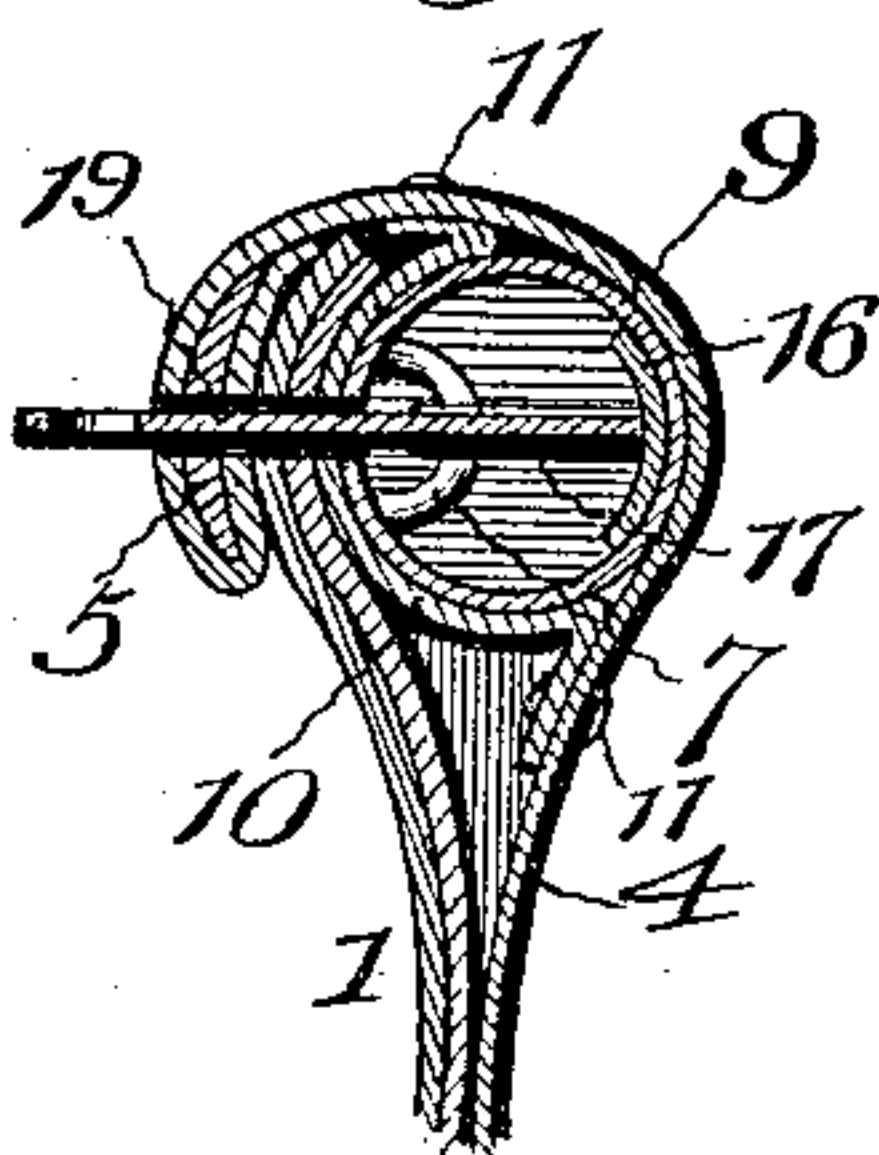


Fig. 2.

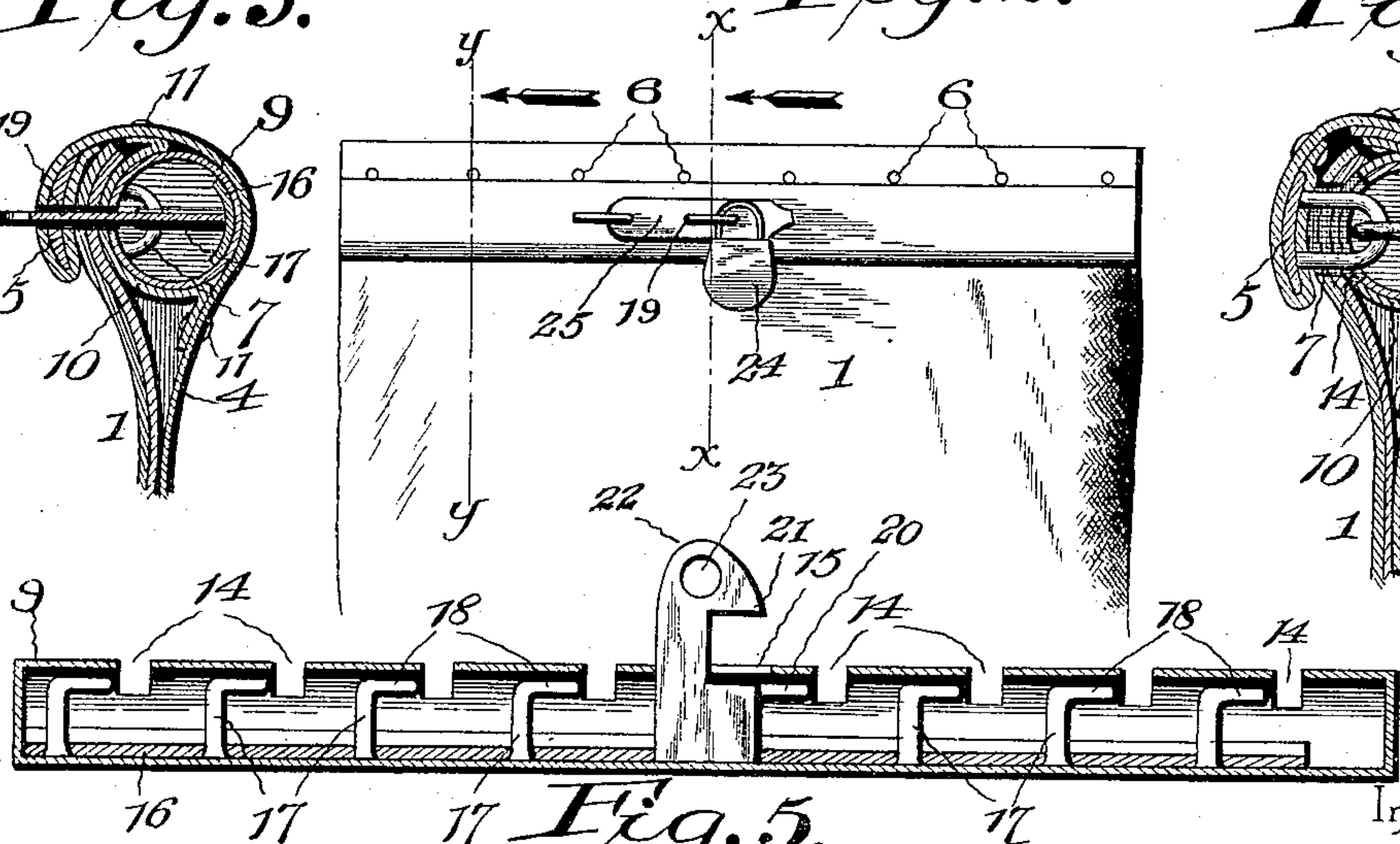


Fig. 4.

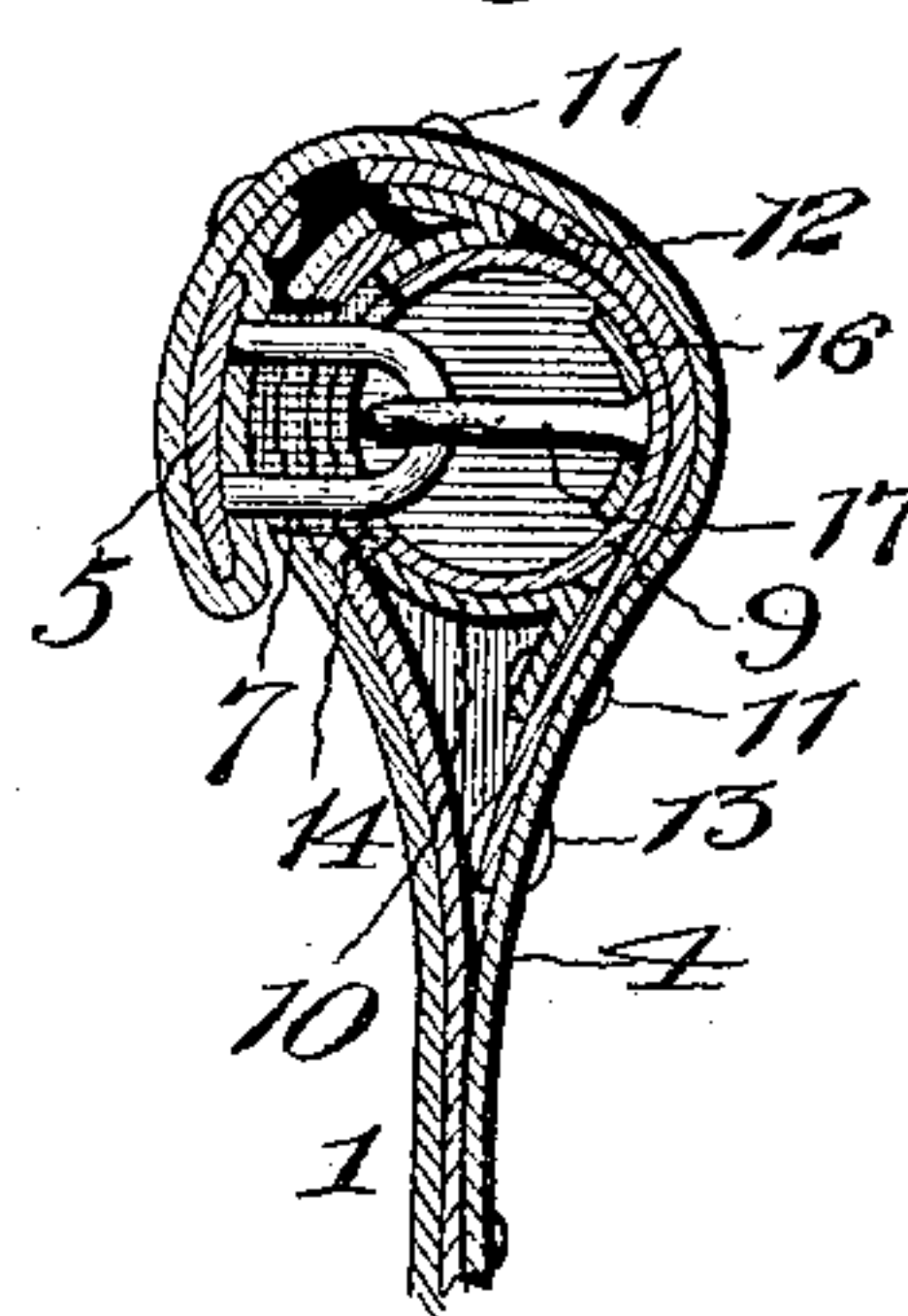
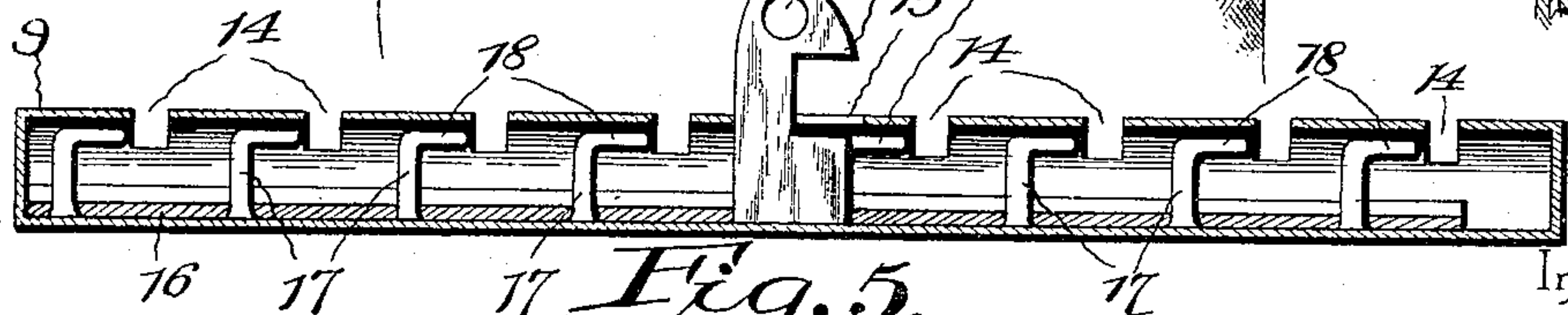


Fig. 5.



Inventor

Witnesses

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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MAIL-BAG FASTENER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 607,375, dated July 12, 1898.

Application filed October 14, 1897. Serial No. 655,172. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN HOWELLS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Sagon, in the county of Northumberland and State of Pennsylvania, have invented a new and useful Mail-Bag Fastener, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to mail-bag fasteners, its object being to provide a fastening device which will securely close the open end of the bag, and which when the bag is opened, will be entirely exterior of the bag, and thus offer no obstruction whatever to the free insertion of the mail-matter into or its removal from the bag.

With these and other objects in view the invention consists of the several details of construction, combination, and arrangement of parts, as will be hereinafter fully described, and the novel features of which will be clearly pointed out in the subjoined claims.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of a portion of a mail-bag in its open position provided with my improved fastening. Fig. 2 is an elevation of the bag closed and fastened. Fig. 3 is a vertical transverse section on the line $x x$ of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a similar section on the line $y y$ of Fig. 2. Fig. 5 is a longitudinal sectional view of the locking-bar and the tube in which it is supported.

Similar reference-numerals indicate similar parts in the several figures.

1 indicates the bag, of leather or other suitable material, the sides of which are provided near their upper ends with a series of vertically-disposed elongated openings 2, adapted to register when the sides are brought together to close the bag. They are also each provided with a horizontally-disposed elongated opening 3, about midway their width, which openings will also register when the sides are brought together.

4 indicates a flap, of leather or other suitable material, secured at one edge in any suitable manner to one side of the bag a suitable distance below the openings 2 and 3 and extending entirely across it. To the opposite free edge of the flap a transversely-curved metal plate 5 is secured, preferably by folding the flap over to form two plies with the plate between them and securing the plies together by rivets 6 or by stitching, if pre-

ferred. A series of staples 7 are secured to the concave face of the plate and project beyond the inner face of the flap, and these staples are spaced apart a distance equal to the distance between adjacent openings 2. A horizontally-disposed elongated opening 8 is formed in the plate and flap, adapted to register with the similar openings 3 in the bag when the fastening is in position to lock the bag in its closed position.

Upon the inner face of the flap 4 a metal tube 9 is secured, preferably by fitting a strip 10 of like material to the flap over the tube 9 and securing the edges of the strip to the flap by rivets 11 or by stitching, if preferred. The tubular casing of the locking device by being located at the inner end of the flap is arranged at the bend of the same when the flap is folded over the bag, and it is adapted to conform to the configuration of the fold or bend and support the same, so that the flap will not break or crack at the said bend. In order to prevent the tube from turning in its seat, I provide a plate 12 near each end of the tube, extending transversely of the tube and secured to the tube intermediate their ends and at their ends to the flap 4 by rivets 13 or other suitable fastening devices. The tube 9 and the strip 10 are provided with a series of transverse elongated openings 14, adapted to register with the similar openings 2. They are also provided with a longitudinally-disposed elongated opening 15 about midway their length.

Within the tube 9 a transversely-curved bar 16 is seated directly opposite the openings 14 and is somewhat shorter than the tube, in order that it may have limited longitudinal movement therein. A series of pins 17 are secured at their lower ends to the bar 16 and have their upper ends bent at a right angle to form locking-bolts 18 to engage the staples 7. These bolts 18 work in close proximity to the inner face of the tube 9 directly below the openings 14. A flat bar 19 is also secured to the curved bar 16 and projects through the opening 15. This bar serves as a handhold to reciprocate the bar 16, in order to move the locking-bolts 18 to and fro across the openings 14 to engage and disengage them from the staples 7. A horizontally-disposed pin 20 projects from one edge of the bar 19 and

serves as a locking-bolt for the staple which enters the opening 14, adjacent to the opening 15, toward which it projects. The pin or arm 20 also engages the inner face of the tube 9 and prevents the curved bar 16 from moving away from its seat. The outer end of the bar 19 is widened laterally to form a square shoulder 21, which, when the fastener is in position to lock the bag, will engage the outer face of the flap 4 over the plate 5 at one side of the opening 8, through which the end of the bar will project. The parts will thus be held securely together and there will be no lost movement between them.

The outer end of the bar 19 is rounded, as indicated by 22, and an opening 23 is formed in it to receive an ordinary padlock (indicated by 24) after the hasp 25 has been fitted over it.

In order to fasten the mail-bag, the two sides thereof will be brought together and the flap turned up against one side and the bar 19 inserted through the openings 3, after which the free edge of the flap will be folded over the open end of the bag and the staples inserted through the openings 2 into the openings 14 in the tube 9. The bar 19 will then be grasped and moved in the opening 15, thereby causing the locking-bolts 18 to engage with the staples, and the shoulder 21 will be engaged with the outer face of the flap and be in position to receive the hasp 25. The padlock 24 will then be secured in the opening 23, and the mail-bag will then be securely fastened.

From the foregoing description it will be seen that I have provided an exceedingly strong and efficient fastening device for a mail-bag, which will not be liable to get out of order and which will securely lock the bag in its closed position; also, that when the bag is opened the fastening device will be wholly exterior of the bag and there will be no projections on the inner face of the bag to offer obstruction to the free insertion or removal of the mail-matter.

Another advantage of my invention is that it can be easily applied to mail-bags at present in use without necessitating material change therein.

It will be understood that changes in the form, proportion, and the minor details of construction may be resorted to without departing from the spirit or sacrificing any of the advantages of this invention.

Having described the invention, I claim—

1. The combination with a mail-bag having a series of openings in each side near its open end, adapted to register when the sides are brought together, of a flap secured to the exterior face of one side of the bag below the openings and adapted to fold over the open end of the bag, a series of staples projecting from the inner face of the flap near its free edge to pass through the registering openings, and devices supported on the inner face of the flap to lock the staples in the said openings, substantially as described.

2. The combination with a mail-bag having a series of openings in each side near its open end, adapted to register when the sides are brought together, of a flap secured to the exterior face of one side of the bag below the openings and adapted to fold over the open end of the bag, a series of staples projecting from the inner face of the flap near the free edge thereof to pass through the registering openings, and a tubular locking device mounted on the inner face of the flap at the inner end thereof and located at the bend of the flap to prevent the same from breaking, said locking device being adapted to engage the said staples, substantially as described.

3. The combination with a mail-bag having a series of openings in each side near its open end, adapted to register when the sides are brought together, of a flap secured to the exterior face of one side of the bag below the openings and adapted to fold over the open end of the bag, a series of staples projecting from the inner face of the flap near the free edge thereof to pass through the registering openings, a tubular casing mounted on the inner face of the flap at the inner end thereof and located at the bend of the flap when the same is folded over the bag, the transversely-curved bar mounted in the tubular casing and provided with pins 17 for engaging the staples, and the bar 19 adapted to receive a hasp and be engaged by a padlock and provided with an arm or pin 20 bearing against the tubular casing and retaining the transversely-curved bar in position, substantially as described.

4. The combination with a mail-bag having a series of vertically-disposed elongated openings in each side at its open end, and a horizontally-disposed opening in each side substantially midway their width, of a flap secured to one side of the bag below said openings and adapted to be folded over the open end of the bag and engage its opposite side, a tube secured to said flap to engage one side of the bag and having a series of openings to register with the vertically-disposed openings in the bag, a bar provided with a series of locking-bolts movably supported in the tube, an operating-bar connected to the bolt-carrying bar projecting through the tube to pass through the horizontally-disposed openings in the bag, a bar secured to the free edge of the flap, a series of staples carried by said bar and adapted to enter the registering openings in the bag and tube, and having an opening for the passage of the operating-bar, and means to lock the operating-bar in position, substantially as described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

JOHN HOWELLS.

Witnesses:

JOHN H. SIGGERS,
ROBT. E. CRUMP.