

No. 611,801.

Patented Oct. 4, 1898.

J. SWIHART.
MAIL BAG HOLDER.

(Application filed Jan. 6, 1898.)

(No Model.)

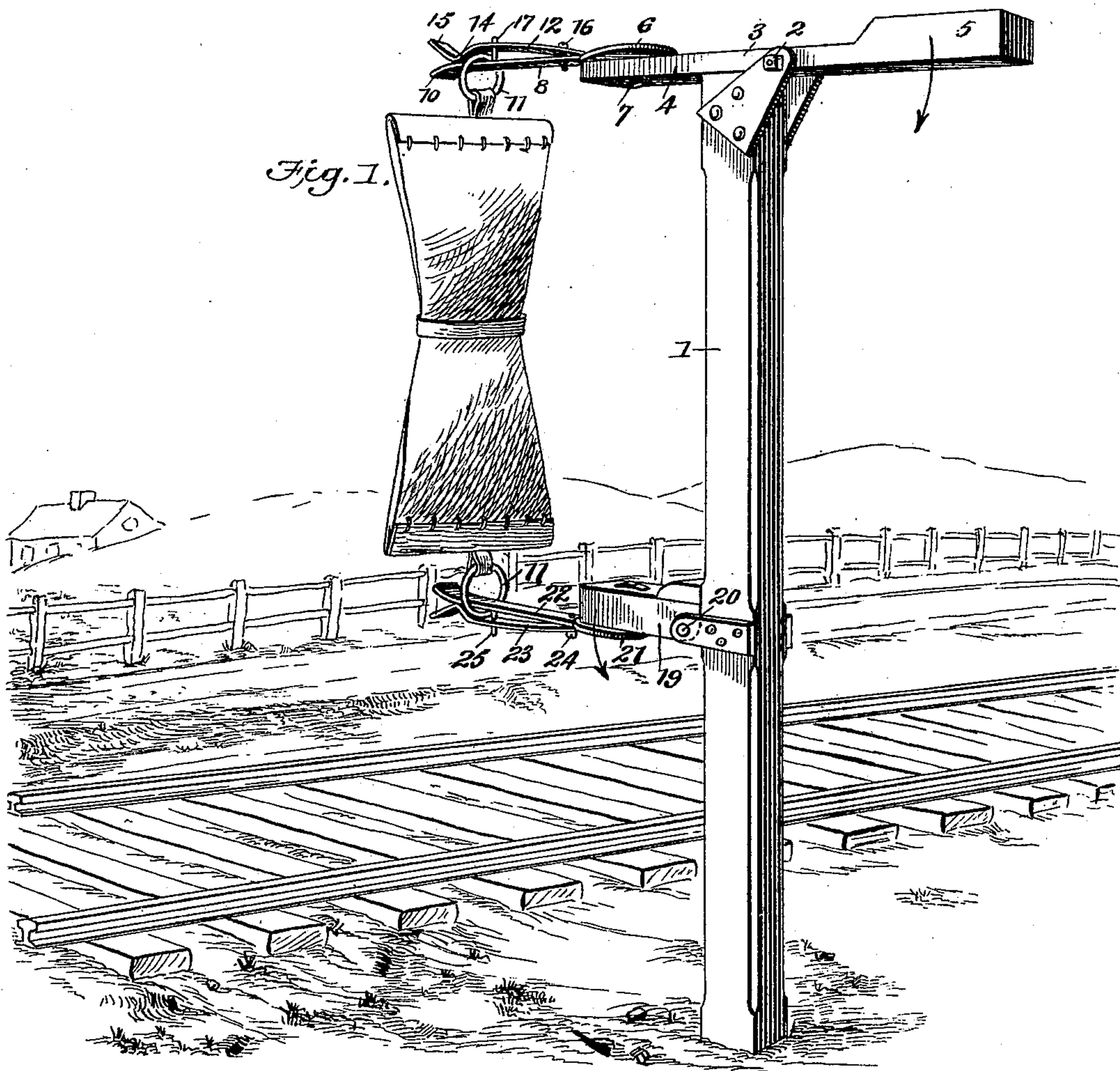


Fig. 1.

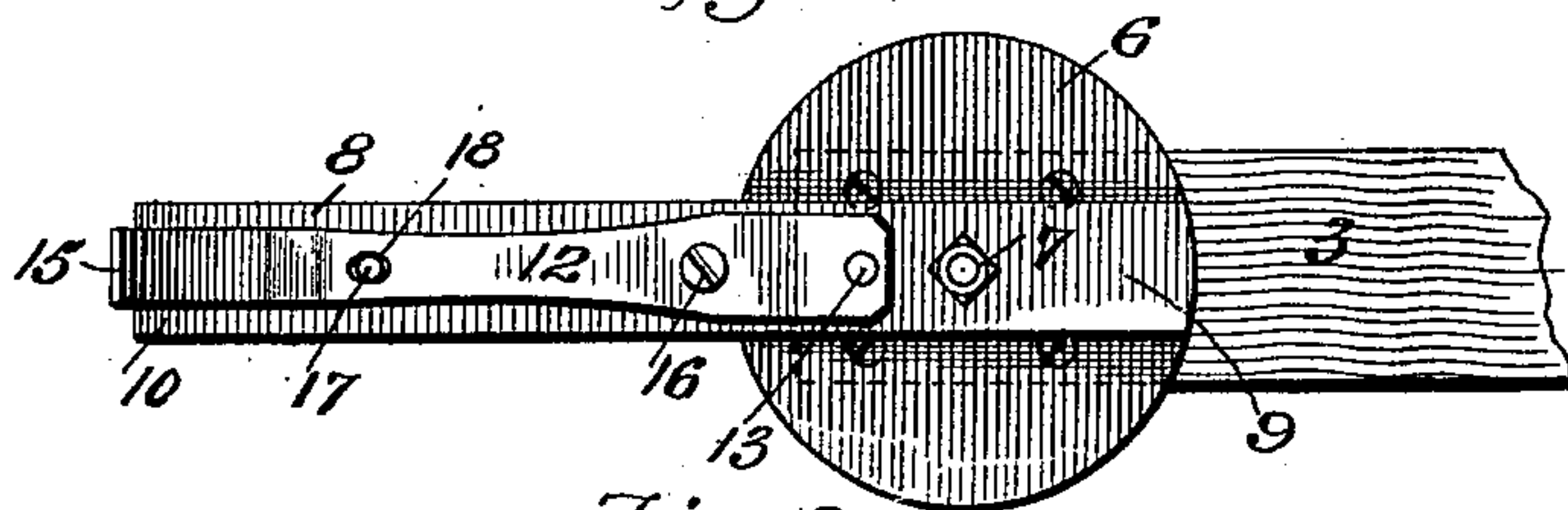
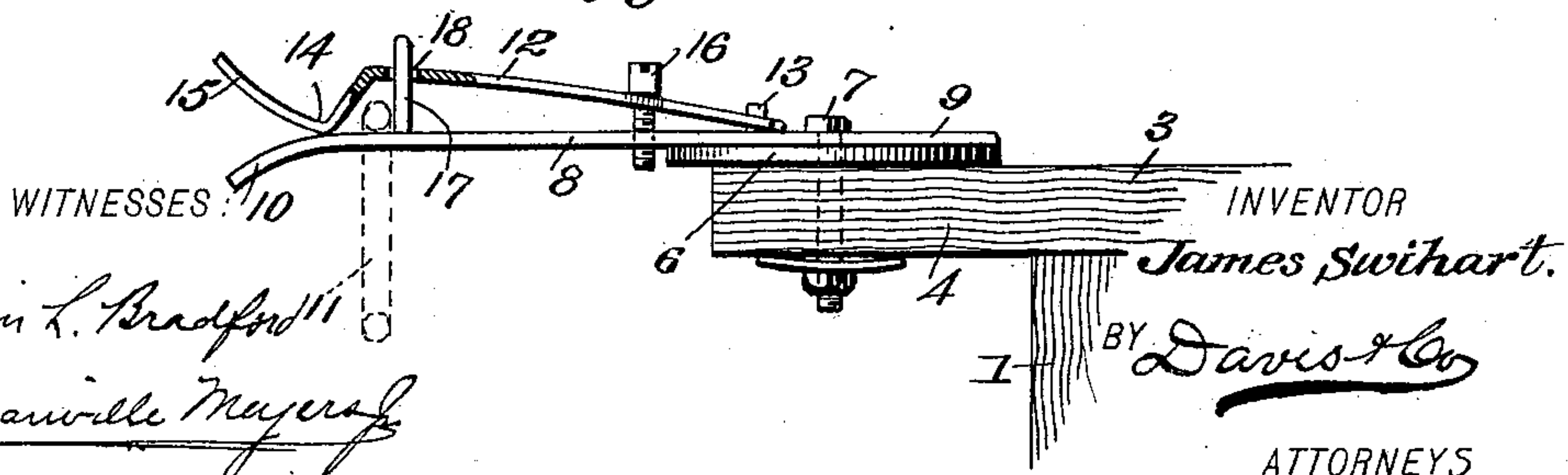


Fig. 2.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JAMES SWIHART, OF RIOTA, OHIO.

MAIL-BAG HOLDER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 611,801, dated October 4, 1898.

Application filed January 6, 1898. Serial No. 665,857. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JAMES SWIHART, a citizen of the United States, residing at Riota, in the county of Preble and State of Ohio, have invented a certain new, useful, and valuable Improvement in Mail-Bag Holders, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My present invention relates to improvements in mail-bag cranes or holders, such as are adapted to support a mail-bag in position to be caught by a moving train; and the invention relates more particularly to that type of cranes employing two hinged arms that are held in a horizontal position by the mail-bag when attached thereto and are adapted to fall by gravity into a vertical position, so as to be out of the way when the mail-bag is detached therefrom.

I am aware that it is not broadly new to provide a mail-bag crane having these general characteristics, and I do not, therefore, lay claim to such generically; but it is the purpose of my present invention to simplify and improve the details of such a device in such manner that it will be simple and durable in construction, efficient in operation, and cheap to manufacture.

Briefly stated, the invention consists more particularly in an improved construction of the mail-bag-supporting finger and retaining-spring and in a supporting table or plate for the said fingers, whereby they are at all times held in perfect alinement, so as to admit of an easy take-off of the mail-bag.

In order to enable others skilled in the art to make and use my said invention, I will now proceed to describe the same in detail, reference being had for this purpose to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a mail-bag crane constructed in accordance with my invention. Fig. 2 is a top plan view of one of the supporting-fingers and supporting table or plate, and Fig. 3 is a side elevation partly in section.

Referring now to the drawings, the reference-numeral 1 designates the supporting-post of the crane, which has hinged or pivoted upon the top thereof, at 2, a swinging beam 3, having a forwardly-extending end 4 and a rearward weighted extension 5. Se-

cured to the forward end of the swinging beam 2, upon the top face thereof, is a metal supporting table or plate 6, preferably of circular form, and loosely pivoted to the said plate and beam by means of a pivot-bolt 7 is the mail-bag-supporting finger 8, said finger being pivoted some distance from its rear end, so as to provide a rear extension 9, which lies flat upon the supporting-table and serves to retain the parts in perfect alinement. The front end of the supporting-finger is bent or curved downward, as at 10, to facilitate the insertion of the ring 11 of a mail-bag.

A spring-plate 12 is secured at one end 13 to the upper face of the supporting-finger 8 and has its forward portion tapering upward, as shown, and then bent downward at 14, so as to form a shoulder which rests upon the supporting-finger near its outer end. The extreme end of the said spring-plate 12 is bent upward and outward, as at 15, in a direction opposite to that of the end 10 of the supporting-finger 8, so that these two parts form a flaring mouth for the ready and easy insertion of the ring 11 of the mail-bag. It has been found in practice that these springs are likely to become loose after a while, and in order to overcome this difficulty or tendency I provide a tension-screw 16, which is tapped through the spring-plate 12 and supporting-finger 8 near the pin 13, and it will now be obvious that should the said spring-plate work so loose as to fail to firmly support the ring 11 of the mail-bag it can be easily tightened to increase its tension by simply screwing up the screw 16. In order to limit the backward movement of the mail-bag ring 11 between the supporting-finger 8 and the spring-plate 12, I attach a pin or lug 17 to said finger a slight distance in rear of the shoulder 14, and also provide an orifice 18 in the spring-plate 12, up through which the said pin 17 projects to act as a guide for the free end of the spring-plate and to retain the same in operative position.

The reference-numeral 19 designates a short arm which is pivoted at 20 to the post 1 and is adapted to swing downward by gravity in the direction of the arrow when not engaged by a mail-bag. To the under side of this short arm 19 is secured a supporting-table 21, similar in every respect to the table 6, heretofore

described, and the said short arm and table are also provided with a supporting-finger 22, a spring-plate 23, tension-screw 24, and stop or lug 25, each of which is constructed precisely like those heretofore set forth and need not therefore be further described.

In operation the swinging arms 2 and 19 are brought to a horizontal position and the mail-bag suspended from the supporting-fingers, as shown in Fig. 1. It will now be obvious that should a mail-train pass the mail-bag catcher on said train would grasp the bag and snatch the rings 11 from their engagement with the fingers and springs, and since the said fingers are pivoted upon the plates or tables they will swing freely around thereon and follow the direction of movement of the train to a certain extent in order that the bag may be more readily released, all as is fully understood.

What I claim is—

1. In a mail-bag crane, the combination with a post, of an arm hinged to said post, a plate or table secured to the outer end of said arm, a mail-bag-supporting finger pivoted near one end to said plate or table and lying flat thereon so as to turn freely, a spring-plate secured at one end to the finger and having its front end bent downward and outward to provide a shoulder and a flaring mouth, and a stop-pin secured to the finger behind the shoulder, said pin projecting up through an opening in the spring-plate.

2. In a mail-bag crane, the combination with a post, of a pair of swinging arms hinged

to said post, one above the other, a circular plate or table secured to the outer end of each arm, a mail-bag-supporting finger pivoted intermediate its ends and resting flat upon each table, a spring-plate secured at one end to each supporting-finger and each plate having a shoulder near its front end which abuts against the face of the fingers, a stop pin or lug behind each shoulder, and a tension-screw tapped through each spring-plate and supporting-finger, substantially as described.

3. In a mail-bag crane, the combination with a post, of a pair of swinging arms hinged to said post, one above the other, a plate or table secured to the outer end of each arm, a mail-bag-supporting finger pivoted intermediate its ends to each of said arms and tables and adapted to ride upon the latter, the outer end of each finger being slightly bent or flared, a spring-plate secured at one end of each finger, and each plate having its free end bent or flared opposite to the bend of the fingers, and a shoulder near the end of each plate, a stop-pin carried by each finger behind the said shoulders and each pin projecting up through an opening in each spring-plate, and a tension-screw tapped through each plate and finger, as and for the purpose described.

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

JAMES SWIHART.

Witnesses:

J. W. KING,

A. M. CRISLER.