

No. 683,153.

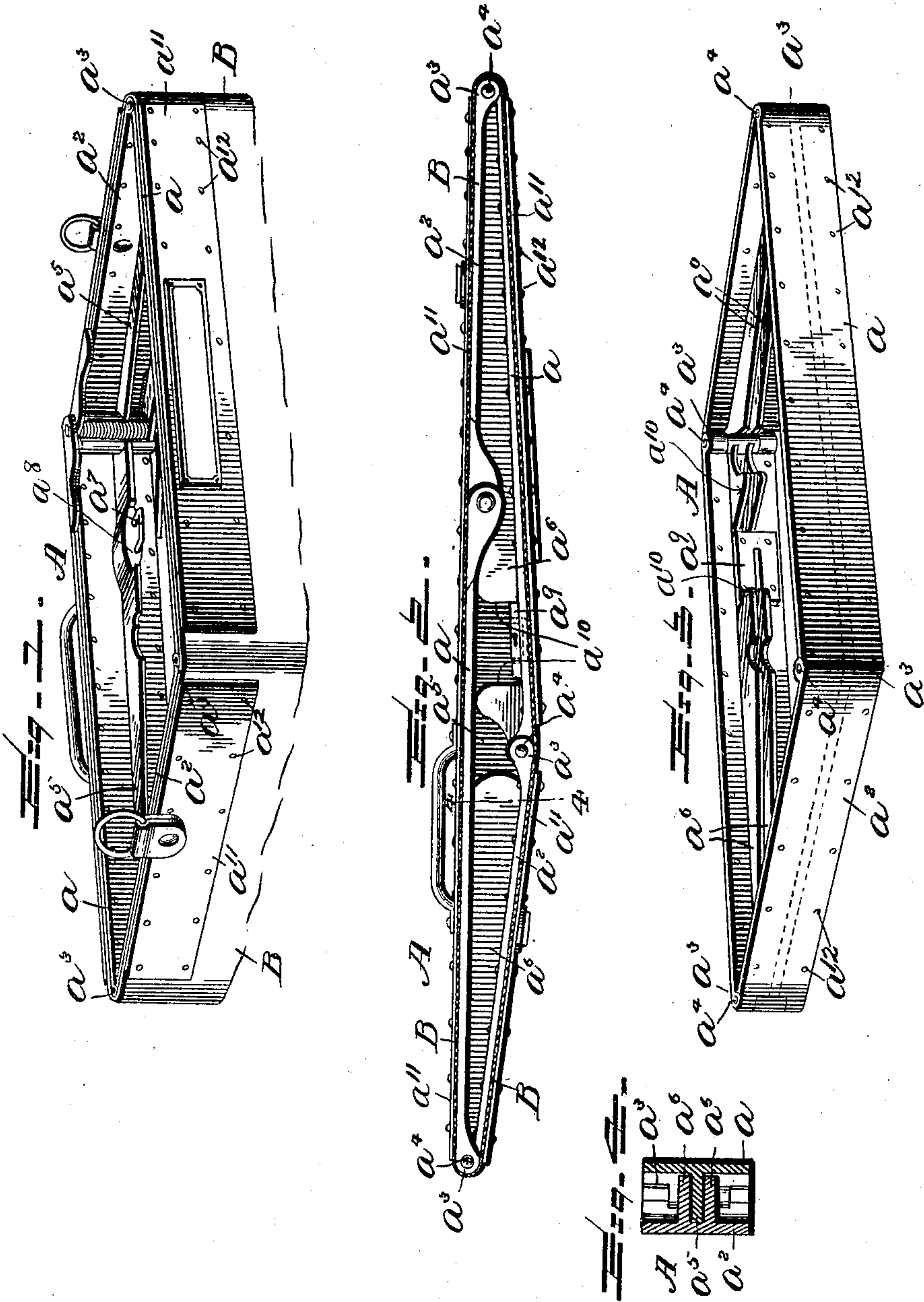
Patented Sept. 24, 1901.

S. P. STEELE.

MAIL BAG MOUTH OR CLOSURE.

(Application filed Dec. 7, 1900.)

(No Model.)



WITNESSES:

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

SIMON P. STEELE, OF AUBURN, NEBRASKA.

## MAIL-BAG MOUTH OR CLOSURE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 683,153, dated September 24, 1901.

Application filed December 7, 1900. Serial No. 39,078. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, SIMON P. STEELE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Auburn, in the county of Nemaha and State of Nebraska, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Bag Mouths or Closures, of which the following is a specification.

The object is to present a simple, durable, and efficient form of mouth or closure for mail-bags which in operation will not only afford a secure article for the purpose, but will at the same time prevent the possibility of accidental escape from the bag of mail-matter when the mouth is closed; furthermore, to present a mail-bag mouth or closure in which the lock will be so assembled with relation to the closure as to be thoroughly shielded from accident and also protected, so far as possible, from being tampered with by any unauthorized person.

The invention consists in the novel construction and combination of parts of a mail-bag closure, as will be hereinafter fully described and claimed.

In the accompanying drawings, forming a part of the specification, and in which like letters of reference indicate corresponding parts, I have illustrated a form of embodiment of my invention, together with a modification thereof, it being understood that other forms of embodiment of the same may be employed without departing from the spirit of the invention.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a view in perspective, exhibiting a mail-bag mouth-closure embodying my invention, the bag being broken away. Fig. 2 is a view in plan, exhibiting the closure in its shut position. Fig. 3 is a view in perspective of the closure, the bag being omitted; and Fig. 4 is a view in transverse section, taken on the line 4-4, Fig. 2, looking in the direction of the arrow thereon.

In a United States Patent granted to me September 25, 1900, for an improvement in mail-bags, numbered 658,729, I exhibit a mail-bag mouth-closure combining the features shown in the present invention, the only difference between the device constituting the subject-matter of the patent and that of the present application being in the arrangement of the lock by which the mouth is

closed. In the patent referred to the lock is arranged on the outside of one of the members of the closure and is opened by a key inserted in a key-opening on the flat side of the lock. The present invention resides in the change of location of such lock, in the manner in which the same may be unlocked, and in the location and arrangement of the staple or keeper for engaging the lock, the latter, of course, to be a spring-lock, as generally employed.

Referring to the drawings, A designates the bag mouth or closure, the members of which are constructed, preferably, of metal and comprise two side pieces  $a$  and two end pieces  $a^2$ , the former being the longer. These pieces are each provided at each end with appurtenances, constituting a hinge  $a^3$ , preferably by forming one part with a single tenon and the other with a double tenon, the space between the two tenons of the latter forming a mortise in which the first tenon fits, thus forming an ordinary box-hinge, the parts of which may be held assembled by the usual butt-joints or by pivots  $a^4$ . As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, one side and one end are formed with a tenon  $a^5$  to engage when the parts are closed, as shown in Fig. 2, with a mortise on the other side of the other end, the mortise, as shown in Fig. 4, being formed by two pairs of strips or flanges  $a^6$ , between which the mortise fits. As shown in Fig. 2, the tenons are tapered from toward the center of the closure, or to one side thereof, outward to each end, so that when the closure is shut, as shown in the above figure, one side and one end will form a straight line and the other side and other end will form an angle, this arrangement operating to keep the closure partly open, thereby, as before intimated, to facilitate opening of the bag, as it will be obvious that by reason of the coaction between the mortise and the tenons the two sides and two ends can never occupy parallel planes, or, in other words the side and end presenting the angle can never be folded in toward the opposite side and end a sufficient distance to pass the dead-center of the pivotal point in the center, or approximately in the center, of these two latter parts, thereby effectually obviating the presentation of any obstruction to the opening of the mouth of the bag.



In the patent referred to the tenon  $a^5$  extends entirely across one side of the bag, so that the staple  $a^7$  projects inward some distance from the tenon. In the present invention that portion of the tenon carrying the staple  $a^7$ —say for a length equal to that of the lock—is cut away or is provided with a recess  $a^8$ , and the lock  $a^9$ , instead of being secured on the outer surface of one of the side pieces  $a$ , is secured on the inner surface of one of the side pieces, the keyhole to the lock being through the top or upper edge of the lock. By this arrangement the lock will be thoroughly shielded from injury, will be prevented from being removed by force, and will, from being thus positioned, be protected from damage, as by being struck by objects in transmission.

In order that the staple  $a^7$  may enter the lock, that portion of the flanges  $a^6$  equal to a width of the staple or wider is cut away, as shown at  $a^{10}$  in Figs. 2 and 3, so that when the members of the closure are brought together the staple may readily be brought into engagement with the lock.

The bag B may be of any suitable material and is secured to the mouth or closure by plates  $a^{11}$ , the bag being first placed against the sides and ends of the closure, the plates  $a^{11}$  being then placed in position, rivets  $a^{12}$  passed through the plates  $a^{11}$  and the bag,

and the sides and the ends of the closure serving to hold the parts firmly assembled.

The other parts of the apparatus herein illustrated are not described, as they form no part of the specific improvement herein pointed out.

Having thus fully described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States, is—

A mail-bag mouth or closure, comprising four members hinged together, two of which, when the bag is closed, are adapted to lie in a straight line, and the other two at an angle to the first two members, tenons carried by one side and one end, mortises provided on the other side and other end, with which the tenons coact, a portion of the tenons on one side being cut away, a staple provided at one side of the closure, the tenon at the point of attachment to the staple being cut away or recessed, and a lock secured to the other side of the closure and, when the mouth is closed, engaging the recess of the tenon, the lock having its keyhole arranged in its upper edge, substantially as described.

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

SIMON P. STEELE.

Witnesses:

S. L. CALDWELL,

Mrs. E. F. STONE.