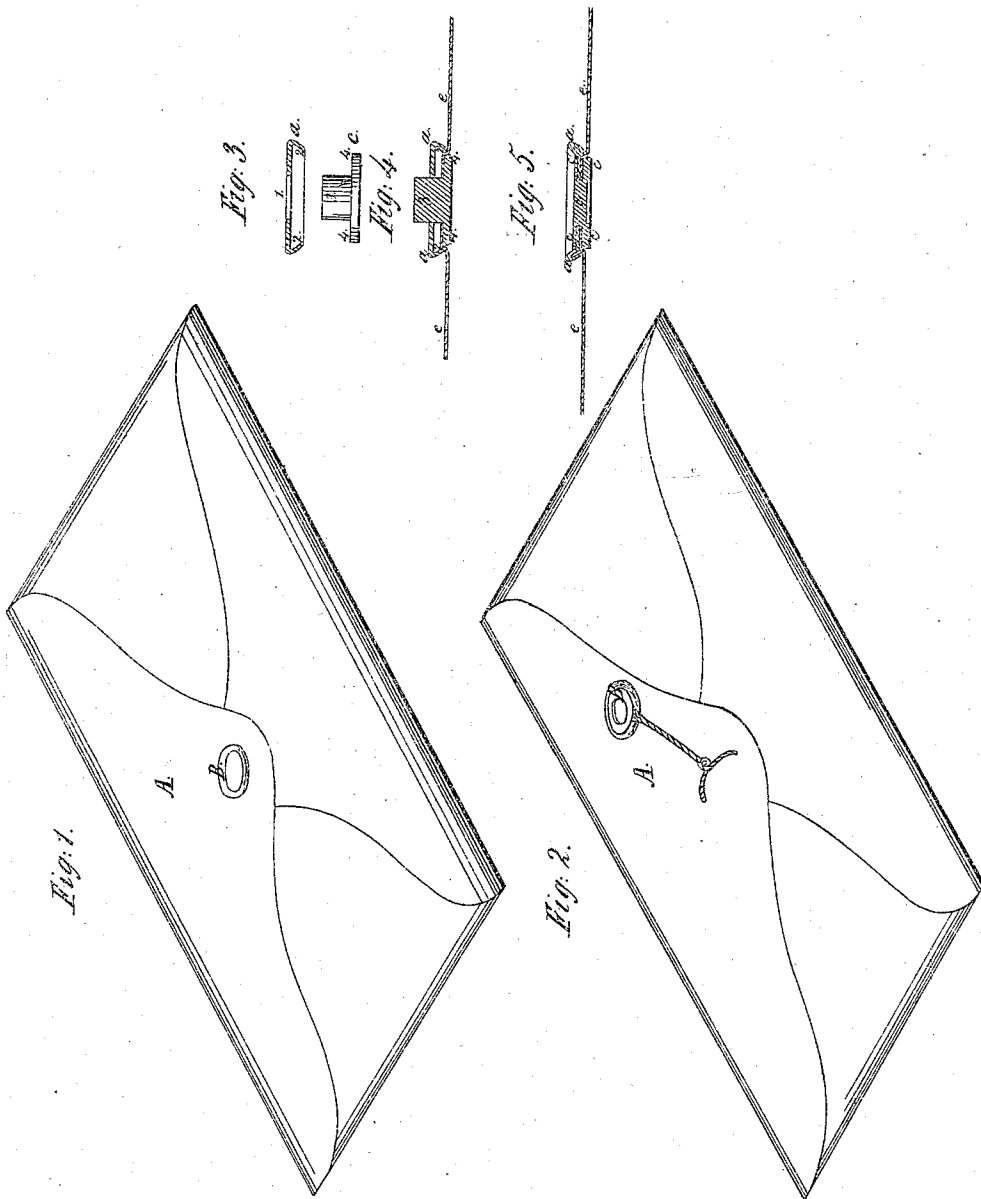


J. Wapfenstein.
Seal for Envelopes.
N^o 10,856. Patented Mar. 17, 1857.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

J. WAPPENSTEIN, OF PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

METALLIC SEAL.

Specification of Letters Patent No. 16,856, dated March 17, 1857.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOSEPH WAPPENSTEIN, of the city and county of Philadelphia and State of Pennsylvania, have invented a certain new and useful improvement in metallic fastenings for securing letters in their envelopes or other packages, and which I term a "metallic seal or wafer"; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 represents a manner of uniting a letter with its envelop, by the fastening in question. Fig. 2 represents a manner of uniting the letter and envelop by a cord, and securing the ends of the cord by the fastening in question. Figs. 3, 4 and 5, represent the two pieces of which the fastening is composed, in separate conditions so as to show the manner in which they are to be used.

I am aware that a letter has been secured to its envelop by an eyelet passing through both and I am also aware that, a metallic fastening for letters, packages, &c. has been used.

My invention relates to a fastening of a peculiar kind which, after it has been once used is destroyed, or if removed, cannot be replaced by another without detection—that is to say that it cannot be used a second time, nor substituted for another of the same kind.

To enable those skilled in the art to make and use my invention, I will proceed to describe the same with reference to the drawings.

A, represents an envelop, containing a letter, the two being united together, and the envelop sealed, by the fastening B, made after my plan as will be hereinafter explained—and A' represents an envelop containing a letter, the two united together by a cord, and the envelop fastened by said cord, the ends of said cord being secured by my fastening or wafer, so that in either case the letter could not be taken from its envelop or the envelop opened without detection.

The seal is made as follows: *a*, is a button stamped out of brass, or any other suitably

hard metal, with a hole 1, punched out of its center, and a flange 2, turned upon its periphery—this forms one part of the seal or wafer.

c, is a plug made of soft metal, its shank 3, being of just the diameter to fit the hole 1, in *a*, and the flange or base 4 of the plug, just fits within the flange 2, on the button *a*. Now the paper, letter, package, cord or whatever is to be fastened by the seal or wafer, is placed between *a* and *c*, as shown in Fig. 4, and the wafer is then slipped under a press the follower or die, and counter die of which may be furnished with letters, figures, or private marks designating the sender, or his business or profession. When the seal is subjected to the press, the soft metal plug, as well as the button will assume the shape as shown in Fig. 5, with the paper, or whatever may have been previously placed between them (as shown at *e*) securely held there—the blue lines indicating the plug—the yellow ones the button.

It will be seen in Fig. 5, that the top of the button has been pressed down, so that a circle of lettering which was stamped on top of the button, is now on its inclined side, and that neither the button nor plug can be used over again or can ever be restored to their original form again, and thus if the seal be separated or opened, or the letter taken from its envelop it is certain of detection. If desired the letter stamp, which pays its postage, or the Government stamp which designates that it is a free letter, may be fastened to or over the seal or wafer.

Having thus fully described the nature of my invention, and shown how the same is to be used or applied, what I claim therein as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is—

A metallic seal, wafer, or fastening, for securing letters, packages &c., composed of two pieces of the shape described and united together and to the thing to be fastened, substantially in the manner herein set forth.

JOSEPH WAPPENSTEIN.

Witnesses:

JNO. B. KENNEY,
WM. B. CROOKS.