

M. Smith,

Mail Bag,

N^o 42,802.

Patented May 17, 1864.

Fig. 1.

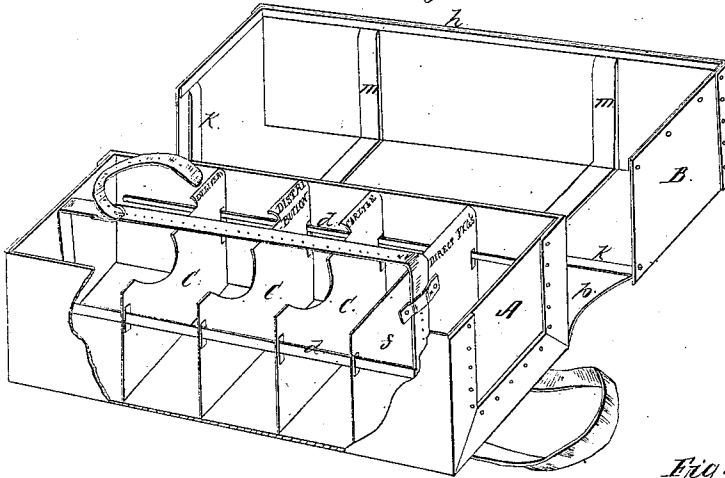


Fig. 2.

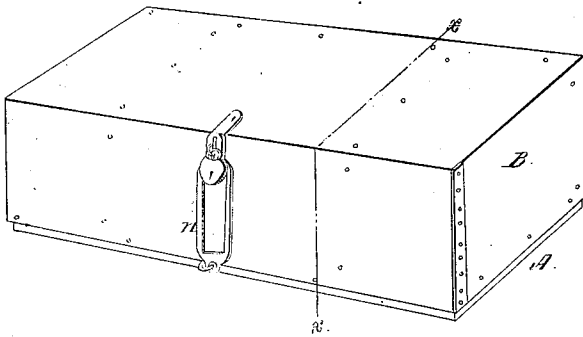
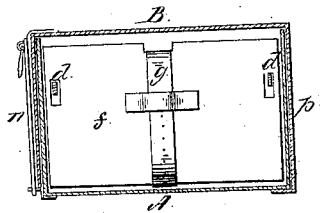


Fig. 3.



Witnesses:
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Inventor:
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MARSHALL SMITH, OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

MAIL-POUCH.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 42,862, dated May 17, 1864.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MARSHALL SMITH, of the city and county of St. Louis, and State of Missouri, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Mail-Pouches; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and clear description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters of reference marked thereon and made to form a part of this specification.

The object of this invention is the production of mail pouches which will be much more convenient and far better adapted to the use required of them than any device for a like purpose now known in the mail service, and which at the same time will be more economical than the ordinary mail-bags in common use; and the nature of my invention relates first to the use of sliding or adjustable partitions.

In reference to the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of my improved mail-pouch, represented as being open and a part of the front side removed in order to show clearly the construction and arrangement of the sliding partitions. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the pouch as closed and secured ready for transportation, and Fig. 3 is a transverse sectional view taken at a point indicated by the red line *x x*.

A represents the body of the pouch, and B the lid or cover, which will be of suitable material, solid sole-leather being preferred.

The lid B is constructed with the strong metallic frame *m m k h*, and is attached to the pouch by the broad hinge piece *p*, which may be a part of the lid and riveted or otherwise firmly secured to the back edge of the bottom of the pouch, as seen in Fig. 3. By this method of constructing and attaching the lid or cover the pouch is at once secured against depredation by prying up the lid, the pouch being inclosed and enveloped in the strong metallic frame of the lid; but when opened the cover falls away from the pouch, as seen in Fig. 1, and does not in any way inconvenience the person packing or unpacking its contents.

c represents a series of sliding or adjustable partitions, which will be arranged within the pouch substantially as shown in Fig. 1. They may be formed of suitable sheet metal, and for additional support and strength their

ends may be turned over small metallic rods. Suitable recesses will be formed in the ends of said partitions, which will be adapted to receive the straps *d d*. The said straps *d* will be of suitable material, strips of sheet metal being preferred, and they will be secured to the body of the pouch, at or near the ends thereof, in such manner as to be adapted to support and sustain the said partitions in their proper vertical positions, and at the same time permit them to be easily adjusted or moved, as the nature of the service may require. It is desirable that the said straps *d* should be secured in such manner as to be easily detachable, in order to permit the convenient removal of said partitions, if desired. Portions of the partitions may be cut out, as represented, to facilitate the removing of letters.

f represents a follower, which may be of sheet metal somewhat heavier and thicker than the partitions. *g* is a strap, which will be secured at one end of the pouch, and is adapted to encompass the contained matter of the pouch and secure the same rigidly in a compact form, as will be at once fully understood by reference to the drawings.

The pouches will have as many sliding partitions as there are offices or mail-stations on the line of the way-route upon which such pouches may be employed; and these partitions will be labeled permanently in the proper order of the offices upon the line, and also under the head of each office on the line, with the names of all offices supplied therefrom, respectively. The matter for these offices will be placed between the proper partitions, separated only by the post-bills, which will be folded face out over the top of the first letter of each package in such manner that the name of the office for which the letters are intended can be easily read across the package. The written heading of the post-bills will in this manner answer every purpose of the ordinary directions upon the wrapper; and in case the use of post-bills should be dispensed with by the Post Office Department colored cards could be used to separate the packages.

It will now be readily seen that the partitions *c* may be easily adjusted to the spaces required for the different packages of mail matter to be forwarded in the pouch, and that the mass may be secured by means of the strap

g and follower *f* in such manner as to prevent any wearing or chafing of the contained letters, so that they will arrive at their destination in as perfect order as when mailed.

It is well understood that much time and labor are involved in the opening and closing of mail bags or pouches upon which straps and staples are employed as means of fastening. To overcome this objection so far as may be possible, and at the same time to preserve intact all the other advantages of my improved pouch, it is first necessary to render the edges of the lid *B* as rigid and firm as possible, due reference being had to weight, economy, and durability. To accomplish this, a strip of suitable metal, *h*, is firmly riveted to the laps of the lid, near the edges thereof, by means of which the front lap of the lid will be rendered sufficiently rigid and the front corners suitably strengthened and stiffened. The rear ends of the end laps will be secured by means of angle-irons *k k*, which will be permanently riveted to the said laps and to the body of the lid, as clearly shown in Fig. 1.

Upon the front of the lid *B*, at or near the center thereof, and thoroughly secured by means of a suitable staple, will be arranged a metal bar, *n*, in the lower end of which will be made a slot, through which the staple *r* of the body of the pouch may be made to pass when it may be desired to close and lock the pouch. By means of the aforesaid devices the laps of the lid are secured firmly in their proper places in such manner that violence alone will enable an unauthorized person to reach the contents of the pouch, and at the same time the objectionable straps and numerous staples are entirely dispensed with.

If found necessary or desirable, a band of metal may be riveted to the body of the pouch near the edges of its sides.

The drawings herewith presented represent a mail-pouch formed with one compartment only; but it will be readily understood that the improvement herein set forth is equally adapted to pouches of various sizes and to those having two or more compartments.

It is obvious that the securing hasp or bar *n* may be varied in its construction and arrangement and still produce the same desirable result—as, for instance, the said bar may be attached to the body of the pouch instead of the lid, or one or more links may be employed in place of a solid bar. I do not therefore confine myself to the particular construction or arrangement of the said device.

Having thus described my improvement, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In combination with a mail pouch, the adjustable partitions *c c c*, substantially as described, for the purpose set forth.

2. In combination with a mail-pouch, a lid or cover provided with a metallic frame, *m m k k*, for the purpose of giving strength to the said pouch and security to its contents, substantially as described.

3. In combination with a mail-pouch, the broad hinge-piece *p*, for the purpose of allowing the lid to fall clear away from the body of the pouch, substantially as described and for the purpose set forth.

4. In combination with the adjustable partitions *c c c* of a mail-pouch, a compressor, *f g*, for the purpose of securely keeping the letters between the said partitions, substantially as described.

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Witnesses:

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