

(No Model.)

E. E. HICKOK.
FASTENER FOR ENVELOPES.

No. 533,809.

Patented Feb. 5, 1895.

Fig. 1.

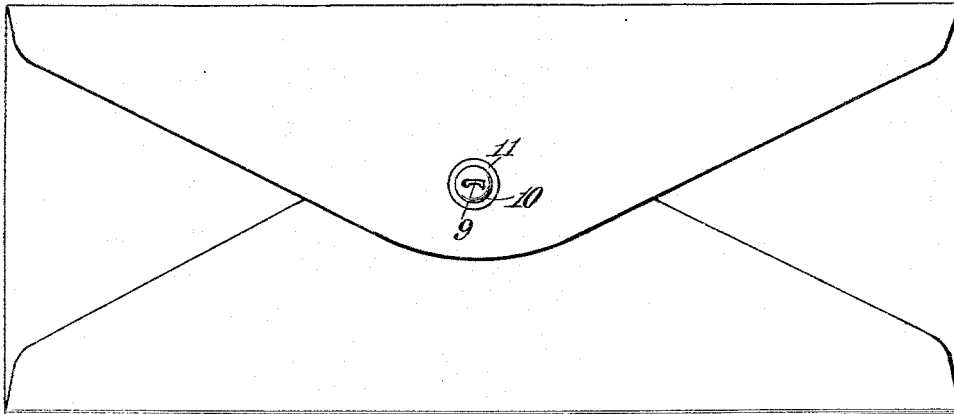


Fig. 2.

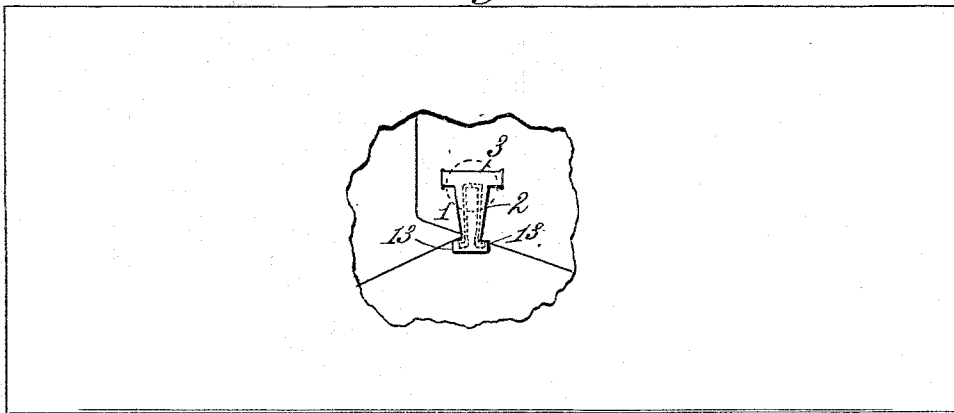


Fig. 3.

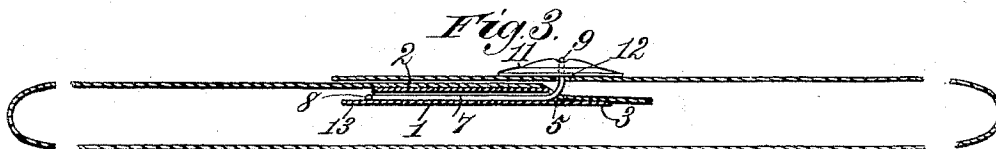
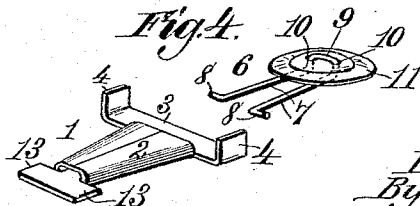


Fig. 4.



Witnesses.
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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FASTENER FOR ENVELOPES.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 533,809, dated February 5, 1895.

Application filed October 1, 1894. Serial No. 524,622. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ELBERT E. HICKOK, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city of St. Louis and State of Missouri, have invented new and useful Improvements in Fasteners for Envelopes, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to an improved fastener for envelopes and has for its object to provide an effective locking device for envelopes, parcels, packages, and the like, whereby it will be impossible to open the envelope or other wrapper without destroying the same and thus indicating the fact to the receiver.

To this end my invention consists in the novel features and the construction and combination of parts hereinafter fully described and definitely pointed out in the claims following the description, due reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, wherein—

Figure 1 is a plan view of an envelope with my improved fastener applied thereto. Fig. 2 is a similar view looking from the opposite side a portion of the envelope being removed. Fig. 3 is a central longitudinal section, and Fig. 4 is a detail perspective view of the fastener detached from the envelope.

Referring to the drawings numeral 1 indicates a sheath formed from a single piece of sheet metal and comprising a tapered tubular portion 2 formed by bending and overlapping the edges of the sheet metal blank, as shown, to form a flattened tube, and a head 3 provided with projecting tangs 4 which are adapted to be passed through slits cut in the envelope and then bent down upon the paper similar to the well known paper fastener. A slit 5 is also cut in the envelope opposite the upper open end of the envelope to permit the insertion of the spring locking arms, as will more fully hereinafter appear.

6 indicates the spring locking arms formed from a single piece of wire bent or doubled to form the parallel portions 7, 7, terminating at their ends in oppositely projecting hooks 8, 8, and at the opposite end forming a loop 9 bent up at a right angle to the plane of the parallel portions 7, 7, the locking arms being passed through perforations 10, 10, formed in a metallic disk 11, the bent loop 9 permitting the disk to lie flat against the flap

of the envelope when the arms are passed through a slit 12 formed therein for the purpose.

In applying the fastener to an envelope the sheath 1 is secured to the back of the envelope upon its inner side slightly below the upper edge by means of the tangs 4, a slit 5 being cut opposite the upper open end of the sheath as described, and the spring locking arms 6 are passed through the slit 12 which is cut in the flap of the envelope at a point that will lie opposite the upper open end of the sheath 1.

To fasten the device the spring locking arms 6 are thrust into the tubular sheath, the tapered walls of which gradually compress the locking arms until the hooked ends of the latter emerge through the lower contracted end of the sheath when the arms will instantly spring apart and cause the hooks 8, 8, to project over the end of the sheath thus rendering it impossible to withdraw the arms from the sheath without first compressing the former.

In order to prevent the hooked ends of the arms from being compressed by pinching the same through the paper I provide the sheath with a guard comprising two flanges 13 that project laterally in opposite directions from the under side of the contracted end of the sheath and lie beneath the hooked ends of the spring locking arms 6 when the latter are inserted in the sheath, so as to prevent the said hooked ends from being forced inwardly by pressing between the finger and thumb or otherwise. It will thus be evident that when the device is applied to an envelope in the manner described and the two parts are locked together it will be impossible to open the envelope without cutting, destroying, or mutilating it and thus rendering the fact that the envelope has been tampered with readily apparent.

I have described my improved fastener as being applied to an envelope, but it will be evident that the same may be employed for fastening packages, parcels and wrappers of every kind, and when employed on large packages the spring locking arms, instead of being formed of the wire may be formed from a steel bar or the like.

The device is especially useful as a seal for registered letters, express packages, and the

like, and for the transmission of parcels containing valuable matter, the fastener rendering it impossible to abstract any of the contents without rendering the fact apparent. 5 The disk 11 may be ornamented in any suitable or preferred manner and when the envelope is closed all the parts of the device excepting the disk are concealed.

The device can be manufactured at small 10 cost adding but little to the cost of envelope, and owing to its extreme lightness will not materially add to the cost of transmission in postage.

Having described my invention, what I 15 claim is—

1. In an envelope fastener, the combination with a tapering tubular sheath having open ends and provided at its lower end with oppositely projecting lateral flanges and at its 20 upper end with tangs for attachment to an envelope, of spring locking arms formed from a single piece of wire and provided with op-

positely projecting hooked ends and intermediate its ends bent to form a loop projecting at a right angle to said arms and adapted to 25 pass through the flap of the envelope, and a disk provided with perforations through which the looped end of the locking arms is inserted, substantially as described.

2. In an envelope fastener, the combination 30 with a tapering tubular sheath having open ends and provided with tangs for attachment to an envelope, of spring locking arms formed from a single piece of wire as shown and provided with oppositely projecting hooked ends, 35 and a disk connected to the opposite end of said arms, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal in presence of two subscribing witnesses.

ELBERT E. HICKOK. [L. s.]

Witnesses:

G. R. SNEED,

MICH. HURST.