

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

S. M. FERGUSON.  
MAIL BAG FASTENER.

No. 514,183.

Patented Feb. 6, 1894.

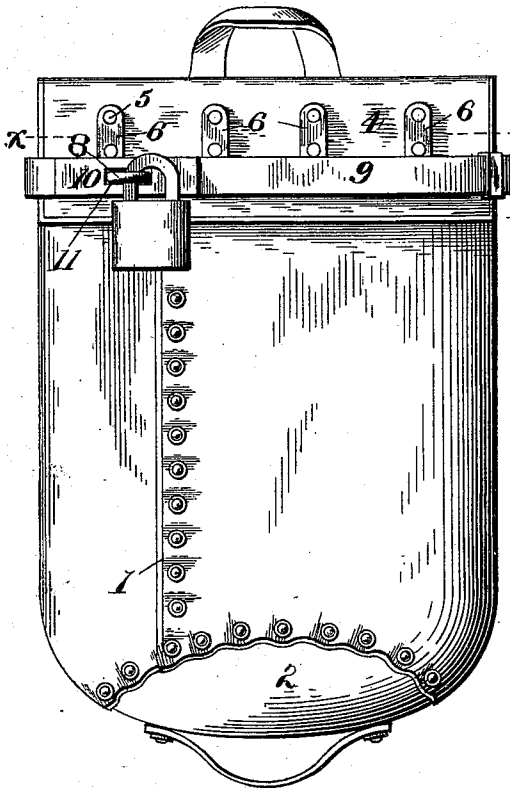


Fig. 1.

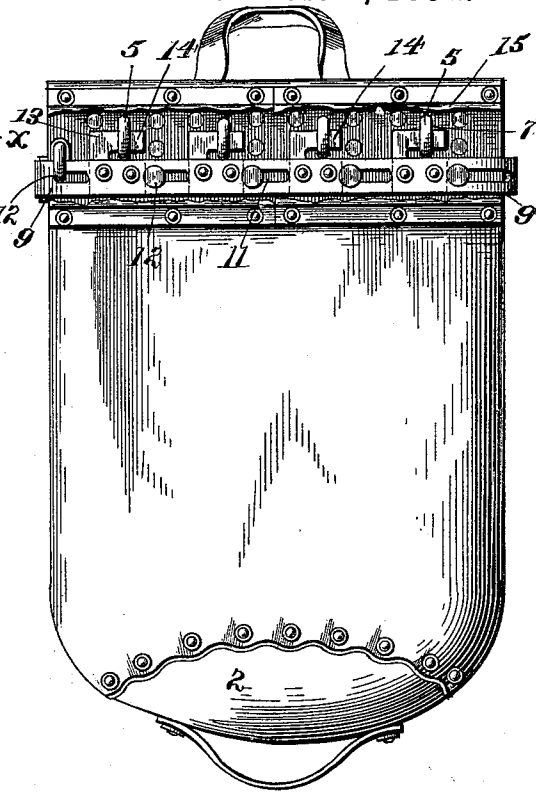


Fig. 2.

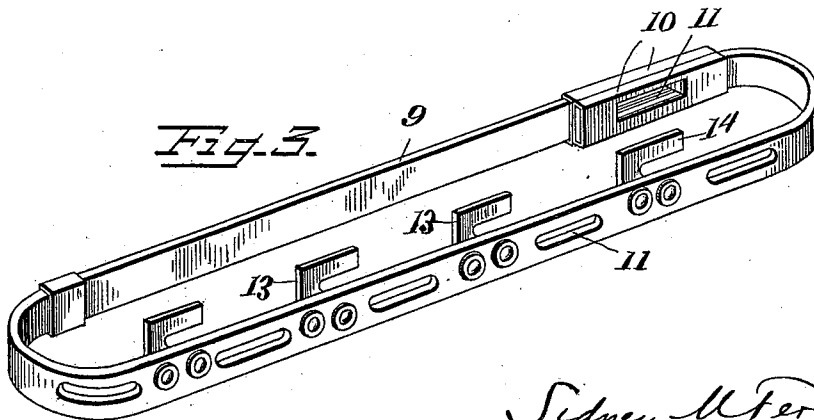


Fig. 3.

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his Attorney

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Fig. 4.

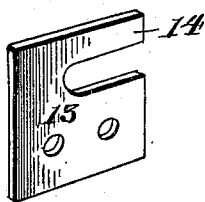


Fig. 5.

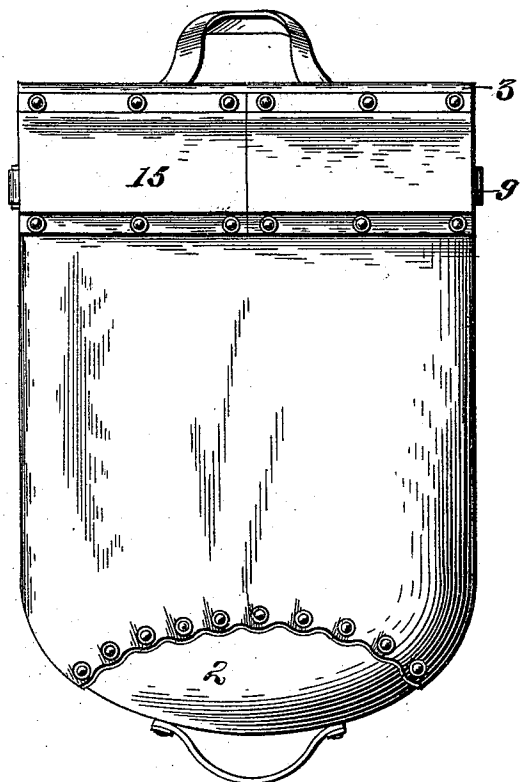
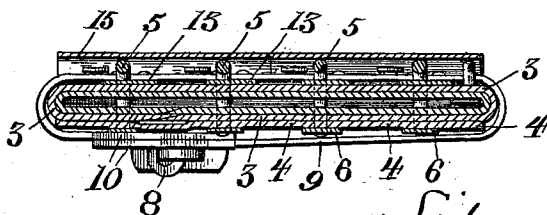


Fig. 6.



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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

SIDNEY M. FERGUSON, OF ELWOOD INDIANA, ASSIGNOR TO HIMSELF AND  
JAMES M. WELL, OF SAME PLACE.

## MAIL-BAG FASTENER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 514,183, dated February 6, 1894.

Application filed July 26, 1893. Serial No. 481,534. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, SIDNEY M. FERGUSON, a citizen of the United States, residing at Elwood, in the county of Madison and State of Indiana, have invented a new and useful Mail-Bag Fastener, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates, in general, to mail pouches or bags, and more particularly refers, to an improved mail-bag fastener or locking device, in the nature of an attachment applicable to existing bags of different types and sizes.

By this improvement, I contemplate providing a simple and inexpensive form of fastener which will effectually prevent any unwarranted access or tampering with the pouch, and which will be easy and convenient in operation, durable in use, and eminently serviceable in practice.

For the attainment of these objects, and for other purposes hereinafter enumerated, my invention comprises certain structural details, arrangement and combination of parts, all of which will be more fully described hereinafter.

The novel features of the invention are embraced in the appended claim, which is intended to accord in its scope and meaning with the prior state of the art and the existing law.

In the accompanying drawings, I have shown a preferred form of my invention embodying certain features which I deem adequate for successfully carrying out the invention in practice, however, I do not limit myself to the exact details shown and described, since various changes touching form, proportion, and minor mechanical changes may be made without deviating from the fundamental principles of the invention.

Referring to the drawings: Figure 1 is a front elevation of a mail pouch having my invention applied thereto. Fig. 2 is a similar view of the opposite or rear side of the bag with the sheath or cover for the fastening strap shown detached to disclose the underneath construction. Fig. 3 is a detail perspective view of the strap removed from the bag. Fig. 4 is a similar view of one of the locking plates shown detached from the

strap. Fig. 5 is a view similar to Fig. 2 illustrating the strap in position on the bag and covered by the leather sheath, which is omitted from Fig. 2. Fig. 6 is a transverse section on the line  $x-x$  of Fig. 1, the bag being locked.

Like numerals of reference denote like or corresponding parts in the several views of the drawings.

The bag or pouch is made of some strong, durable, and water-proof material, usually leather, with overlapped riveted seams, 1, on the side, and with the separate bottom portion, 2, riveted or otherwise secured to the body of the bag. The mouth of the bag is stayed or reinforced by a broad strip of leather or similar material, 3, made in one piece and extending clear around the said mouth with its upper edge parallel and flush with the edge of the mouth. The meeting ends of this strip are overlapped and riveted together and to the material of the bag in the usual manner, and at proper places around the mouth this strip is riveted to the underneath leather of the pouch. Thus, it will be understood that there are two thicknesses of leather for a prescribed distance below the mouth. Formed integral with this strip, 3, is the flap, 4, joined to the half of the strip, 3, which is on the rear or back side of the mouth of the bag; and to this flap are securely fastened the eye-staples, 5, spaced equal distances apart and projecting out at right-angles to the plane of the under side of the flap. These staples are held in place severally by the metal plates, 6, on the opposite side of the flap, by rivets as shown. Slightly below the edge of the mouth of the bag are formed a number of vertically disposed elongated holes, 7, cut through both sides of the bag, and in alignment respectively with the staples, 5, so that when the flap is folded down in closed position over the bag, as shown in dotted lines in Fig. 1, the staples will pass through their respective holes and project on the opposite side far enough to admit the entrance therethrough of the locking devices hereinafter described. On the outside of the flap near one corner or end thereof is secured the staple, 8, whereby the fastening strap is locked thereto by means of the usual mail-bag lock.

9 designates the locking or fastening strap consisting of a single piece of leather, and provided at each end with a wear-plate, 10, through which is formed a slot 11 to pass over the staple, 8, when the ends of the strap are there placed preparatory to locking them in position.

The strap, 9, is permanently secured in position on the bag by means of the two elongated slots, 11, severally held in place by the retaining devices, 12, on the rear side of the bag. In one instance, I show the retaining device in the form of a headed rivet or bolt and in the other, it is a staple having one prong passing through the slot, 11. By this construction, it will be clear that the strap is to permit a prescribed play or sliding movement back and forth transversely over the rear side of the mouth of the bag, yet is held against removal by means of the retaining means described. Attached at equal distances apart to the part of the strap which lies within and between the two retaining devices, 12, is a series of locking plates, 13, L-shaped in outline and projecting upwardly from the upper side of the strap. The horizontal member or finger, 14 of each of these locking plates overlies and is adjacent to a staple hole 7, so that when the flap is closed and the staples carried thereby project through the slots, 7, to the rear side, the fingers, 14, are adapted to be shoved back and forth in and out of the said staples to lock or unlock the same against removal. When the flap is closed, the operator can lock the flap in position by pulling the loose end of the strap in one direction, and can unlock it by pulling in the opposite direction. When it is desired to close the bag for transportation, the strap is pulled into locked position and its ends passed over the staple, 8, and the mail-lock then applied. In this way, no one can slip the hand under the flap into the bag while the lock is over the ends of the strap in the staple, 8.

The locking plates on the rear side of the strap are covered, concealed and protected by a sheath or shield 15, of leather made in two parts as shown and secured over the rear side of the strap.

My improved fastener can be attached readily to any form of pouch now in use without any change whatsoever in the bag, and in an inexpensive manner. In use, it will be found to be exceedingly convenient and useful when applied to the portable forms or mail pouches such as are carried by mounted post-messengers and the like.

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

A mail pouch fastener, consisting of a strap completely encircling the bag near its mouth and permanently fixed thereto by a retaining bolt passing through an elongated slot, a series of L-shaped locking plates carried by said strap and projecting from one side thereof, a stay strip secured around the mouth of the pouch and provided with a series of staple-holes passing through both edges of the mouth of the pouch, a flap formed integral with said strip and carrying a series of staples on its under side which are adapted to pass through the said holes to engage the locking plates carried by the strap, a locking staple on the outside of the said flap adapted to receive the slotted ends of the fastening strap and to also admit the entrance of a mail lock, a mail lock to secure the ends of said strap over the lock staple, and a sheath covering the locking plates and staples, substantially as set forth.

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

SIDNEY M. FERGUSON.

Witnesses:

JAMES A. VAN OSDAL,  
A. E. GORDON.