No. 895,379. PATENTED AUG. 4, 1908.

C. A. LOCKE.

LETTER CLIP.

APPLICATION FILED OCT. 26, 1907.

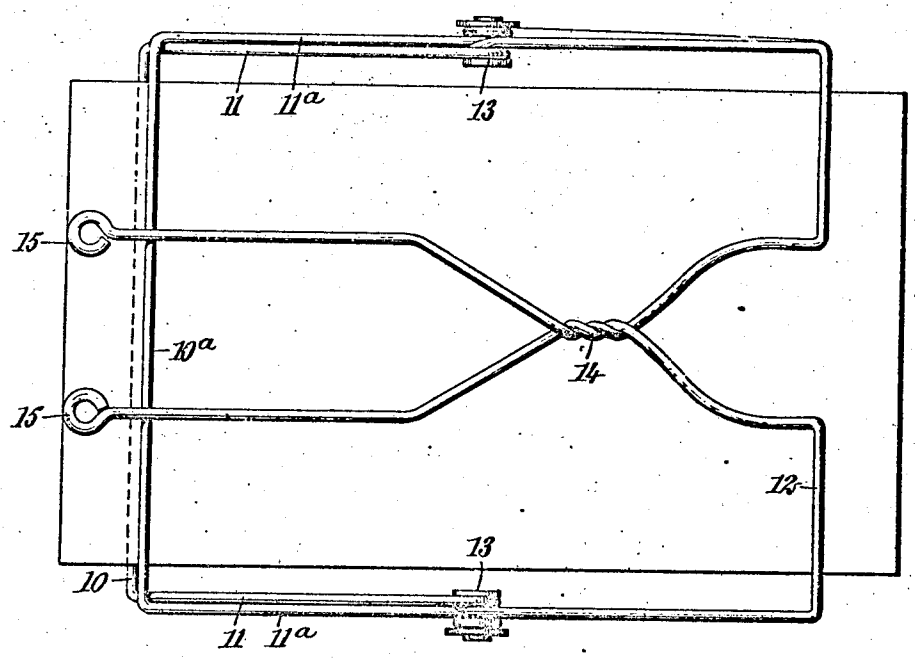

Fig. 1

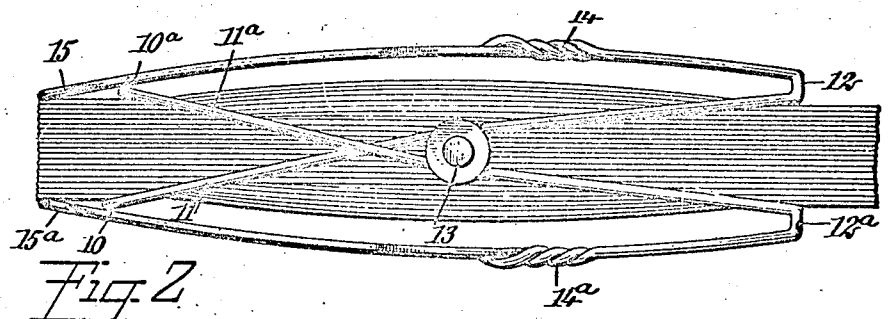

Fig. 2

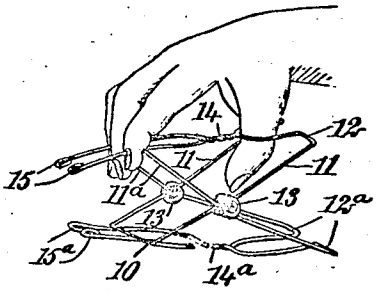

Fig. 3

WITNESSES

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LETTER-CLIP.

No. 895,379. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Aug. 4, 1908.

Application filed October 26, 1907. Serial No. 399,379.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CLARENCE A. LOCKE, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Salt Lake City, in the county of Salt Lake and State of Utah, have invented a new and Improved Letter-Clip, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

This invention relates to certain improvements in clips for securing together a plurality of letters, papers, or the like, and relates more particularly to a clip adapted for use in holding a plurality of letters together in a package.

The device is especially adapted for use in post-offices, railroad offices, and other large establishments handling a quantity of letters, and is designed to avoid the necessity for tying the letters up into separate packages, as is now commonly done.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, in which similar characters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures, and in which

Figure 1 is a top view of a package of letters secured together with my improved clip; Fig. 2 is a side view thereof; and Fig. 3 is a perspective view on a smaller scale, showing the method of opening the clip to receive the letter.

The clip may be formed of any suitable material, but is preferably formed of two pieces of spring steel wire pivoted together, and so constructed as to engage with a package of letters at a plurality of points upon opposite sides thereof and adjacent the ends of the package. The wires form two skeleton frames, through the openings in which the address on the top letter of the package or any other mark of identification, may be readily discerned. The skeleton frames include transverse clamping jaws upon each side of the package and at each end thereof, the jaws being connected by resilient portions at the sides of the package, and being so constructed that when the two jaws upon one side of the package are drawn toward each other, each of these two jaws is separated from its corresponding jaw upon the opposite side of the package.

The two wire frames are preferably substantially identical in form, and each, respectively, includes a transverse member 10 and 10^a. These transverse members lie parallel and closely adjacent each other when the clip is in its collapsed position. With letters in the clip, these transverse members or jaws lie upon opposite sides of the package, as clearly illustrated. From the ends of the transverse members or jaws extend resilient connecting bars 11 and 11^a, adapted to lie adjacent the edges of the package and to extend diagonally across the same. At the opposite end of each of these resilient diagonal bars is a second set of jaws 12 and 12^a lying parallel and adapted to engage with opposite sides of the package at the opposite end thereof from the jaws 10 and 10^a. The diagonal connecting bars 11 and 11^a are pivoted together intermediate their ends in any suitable manner. Preferably, there is provided a pivot pin 13 having enlarged heads and having each of the connecting bars twisted once around the same intermediate said heads. From the transverse members or jaws 12 and 12^a, and intermediate their ends, extend longitudinal members 14 and 14^a, adapted to lie lengthwise of the package and intermediate the edges thereof upon opposite sides. Each longitudinal member is preferably formed by the uniting of the two ends of the wire forming the transverse jaw 10 or 10^a disposed upon the opposite side of said member. As shown, one wire forms the transverse jaw 10, the two diagonal connecting bars 11, the transverse jaw 12, and the longitudinal member 14, while the jaw 10^a, the diagonal connecting bars 11^a, the jaw 12^a, and the longitudinal member 14^a are formed of the other piece of wire. The jaws 12 and 12^a preferably do not extend entirely across the package but extend inward from the edges thereof a sufficient distance to firmly hold the latter.

Intermediate the terminal portions of the transverse jaw 12, the wires going to make up the longitudinal member 14 are bent diagonally across the package to a point of intersection, at which point they are twisted together, and from which they diverge toward the sides of the package again. The ends of the two wires are bent to lie substantially parallel and engage with the outer surface of the jaw 10^a. The ends of the wires are provided with loops 15 and 15^a to prevent injury being done by said ends. As will be noted the transverse jaw 10 is integral with the terminal portions adjacent the loops 15 which engage with the jaw 10^a and press it toward the jaw 10. Likewise the terminal portions adjacent the loops 15^a press the jaw 10 toward the jaw 10^a, which latter is inte-

gral with said terminal portions. The jaws 12 and 12ª are pressed together by reason of the pivotal connections of the diagonal bars and the engagement of the jaws 10 and 10ª each with the terminal portions of the other wire. As the jaws 10ª and 12 which are designed to engage with the same side of the package of letters, are drawn toward each other, the pivotal connections of the said bars cause the jaws 10 and 12ª to approach each other, and, at the same time, cause the jaws 10 and 10ª and the jaws 12 and 12ª to separate.

To open the clip for the insertion of letters, the jaws 10ª and 12 are drawn together, as illustrated in Fig. 3, the fingers of one hand engaging with the jaw 10ª, and the thumb engaging in the recess intermediate the ends of the jaw 12. The letters are then inserted endwise between the jaws, and upon releasing the clip, the letters are firmly held, as illustrated in Fig. 1.

The device may, of course, be employed for holding a plurality of papers, checks, strips of fabric, or any other series of sheets, laminations, or separate members, to hold the same in a package.

In tying letters or the like together in packages, as is commonly done in railway mail service, twine or string is employed, and a considerable amount of time is consumed. Furthermore, it requires long practice to become an expert in rapidly forming the packages and applying the twine, and, further, the twine can be used but once. No special skill is required in applying my improved clip, and it may be applied in much less time than would be required to secure the package with twine. The clips are practically indestructible and may be used an indefinite number of times.

Having thus described my invention, I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent:

1. A clasp for a package of letters or the like, comprising two skeleton frames pivoted together and each having two transverse portions or jaws adapted to engage with the package adjacent opposite ends and upon opposite sides thereof, and a longitudinally-extending spring member carried by one transverse portion or jaw of each frame and extending longitudinally of the package into engagement with a transverse portion or jaw of the other frame.

2. A clasp for a package of letters or the like, comprising two skeleton frames pivoted together at the opposite edges of the packages and engaging with the package upon opposite sides thereof and at opposite ends thereof, and means for holding said frames in engagement with said package comprising two spring members extending longitudinally of the package upon opposite sides thereof, and each carried by one frame and extending into engagement with the other.

3. A clip formed of two pieces of spring steel, each of said pieces comprising a transverse portion adapted to engage with one side of a series of letters or the like at one end thereof, connecting portions extending diagonally of the edges of said series to the opposite end thereof, a second transverse portion upon the opposite side and at the opposite end from said first-mentioned transverse portion, and a portion extending from said second transverse portion and engaging with the first-mentioned transverse portion of the other wire, the diagonal connecting portions of each wire being pivotally connected to those of the other wire at the edges of the series, whereby two pairs of jaws are provided resiliently mounted in respect to each other, and whereby the movement of the two jaws upon one side of the series toward each other, separates each of these jaws from the other one of its pair.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

CLARENCE A. LOCKE.

Witnesses:

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W. D. MATHIS.