M. Smith,

Mail Bag.

No. 38,362. Patented Apr. 28, 1863.

Fig. 3.

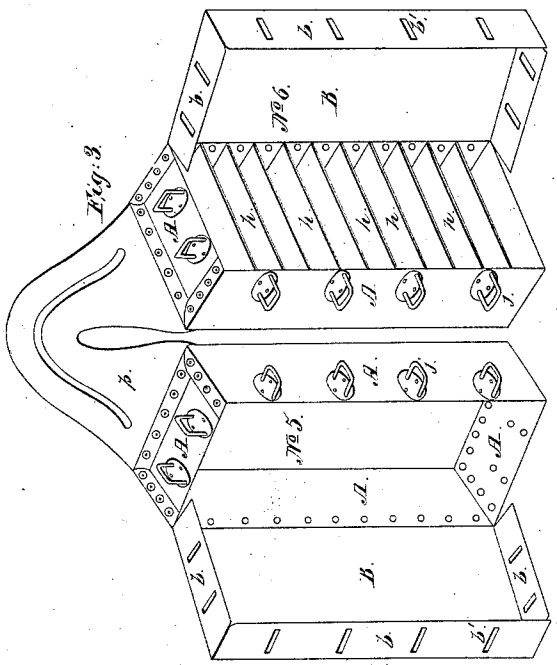


Fig. 1.

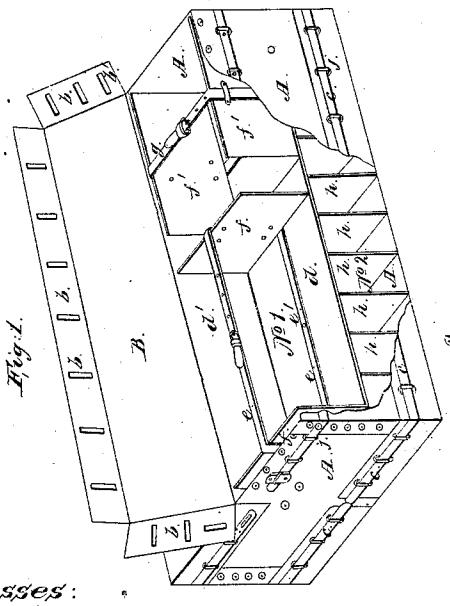
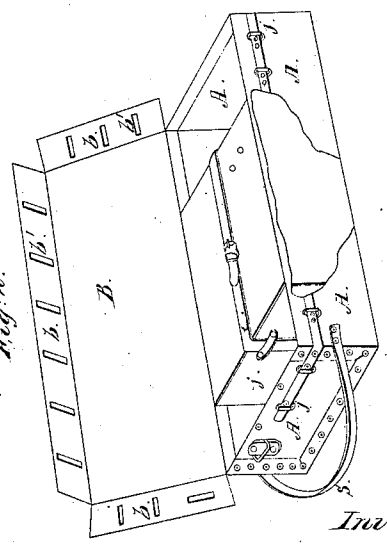


Fig. 2.



Witnesses:

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MARSHALL SMITH, OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

IMPROVEMENT IN MAIL-POUCHES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **38,362**, dated April 28, 1863.

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, clear, and exact 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.

It is a well-known fact that the employment of wrapping-paper and twine is, and has been, the occasion of vast expense in the postal service of the United States, while the clerical labor necessarily involved in the proper wrapping, tying, and directing letters, and packages of letters forms no inconsiderable item of expenditure to be added to the above.

I am aware that many devices have been essayed, having for their object the abolition of paper and twine for wrapping letters in the Post-Office Department of the United States, but all such devices have alike failed to accomplish the desired end or to be adopted to any considerable extent into the postal service.

The object of my invention is the construction of a compact, portable, simple, and durable pouch for the transportation of letters, which, in proportion to its utility, may be more economical than the devices now in common use for similar purposes, and which at the same time may be so formed and arranged that the unwrapped letters may be deposited and secured therein beyond the danger of chafing, rubbing, being torn, or otherwise injured by falling or by any rough handling or usage incident to the ordinary exigencies of the postal service, and also in such manner that the contained letters may be always convenient to the hand and eye of any person authorized to open the pouch, thereby preventing, as far as possible, any delay in changing or examining the mail, and greatly facilitating the early and rapid distribution of the contained letters; and the nature of my invention relates to the construction of mail-pouches having one or more compartments, which may be opened, and which will be supplied with devices adapted to secure the contained letters in a perfect manner for large or small post-offices and for way or through mails, thereby dispensing with the employment of wrapping-paper and twine in the transportation of letter-mails, and otherwise saving much time, labor, and expense, as hereinafter described and represented.

In reference to the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of my improved mail-pouch, representing it as being formed with four compartments. This construction of the mail-pouch is adapted to be employed upon mail-routes having many post-offices, some of which may be large and others small. Fig. 2 is a perspective view representing the pouch constructed with one compartment and adapted to the transportation of through mails. Fig. 3 is a perspective view representing the construction of pouch adapted to the transportation of mails on horseback.

A represents the walls of the pouch, formed of suitable material—solid sole-leather being preferred on account of its consistency, elasticity, durability, and general adaptation to the purpose—with the corners and angles firmly riveted together in a strong and substantial manner.

B represents the lids or covers of the pouch, formed of the same material as the walls A, and made to form a part of the pouch. The covers B are made with laps *b*, which are adapted to close down over the edges of the walls A and receive the staples *j* through the slots *b'*, thereby, by the aid of straps *c*, forming a safe, convenient, and permanent fastening of the cover.

The pouch, Fig. 1, has four compartments, formed by the partitions *d* and *d'*, two of which are represented, a portion of the wall A being broken out for that purpose.

The upper compartment, No. 1, is provided with a strap, *e*, secured to partition *d* at *e'*, upon which are slipped the followers *f*. This device is adapted to the securing of letters of the ordinary size, the width of the compartments being adapted to the length of ordinary business-letters. The strap *g*, secured to the partition *d* in the same manner as strap *e* with its followers *f'*, is arranged to operate crosswise the compartment No. 1, and is adapted to the securing of packages larger than ordinary letters.

The compartment No. 2 is provided with a series of partitions, *h*, the spaces between which are calculated to receive small parcels of letters intended for small post-offices along the line of the mail-route, and the names of the different post-offices for which the contents

of said spaces or chambers is severally intended may be marked upon the partitions. The contained letters of compartment No. 2 will be properly secured by closing and securing the cover B.

The compartments 3 and 4 of pouch, Fig. 1, (not shown in the drawings,) are in the rear of compartments No. 1 and No. 2 on the opposite side of the pouch, and may be furnished with securing devices similar to straps *e g* and followers *f f'*, being thereby adapted to receive a large number of letters intended for large post-offices.

The partitions *d*, *d'*, and *h* and followers *f f'* may be formed of tar-board or other suitable light material.

The pouch, Fig. 2, has one compartment, which is represented as being partially filled with letters, which are secured by means of devices similar to those before described, the straps *e* and their movable followers *f* being adapted to confine and properly secure the contained letters without reference to their number.

The pouch, Fig. 3, intended for the transportation of mails on horseback, will be constructed of the same kind of materials, and in a manner similar to those before described. It may be formed with one compartment, No. 5, for newspapers, and one, No. 6, having a series of chambers, for letters, the band *p* being adapted to pass over the saddle or the back of a horse. This style of pouch may be made with the requisite number of chambers for the route upon which it is to be employed.

The strap S (shown in Fig. 2) is intended for the convenience of persons who may receive the pouches upon railway-trains in motion, forming, as it does, an open loop, through which the arm of the person on the train may be accurately thrust, and thereby to a certainty secure the pouch upon the train.

Pouches intended for through mails, intended for distributing post-offices, may be formed with two compartments, one of which may be adapted to contain letters for distribution and the other letters for delivery, and the sizes of the pouches may be varied according to the nature of the service required.

Having described the construction of my invention, the mode of using the same may be briefly set forth as follows: The letters to be forwarded will be assorted in the usual manner and arranged in parcels for the different post-offices to which they may be addressed. Then the large packages of letters will be placed, without wrapping or tying, in the proper pouch for through mails, and there secured by means of the straps and followers, as previously set forth. The accompanying way-bill may be secured under the strap or at one end of the package. The small packages for way post-offices, with their way-bills, will be placed properly labeled in the chambers before mentioned. The pouches will be closed, locked, and forwarded in the usual manner.

Having described the construction and use of my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

The employment of the mail-pouch A B, constructed substantially as herein described and represented, having one or more compartments, provided with the securing devices *e f g f'*, or formed with a series of chambers, substantially as herein shown, specified, and represented, for the purposes set forth.

In testimony of which invention I have hereunto set my hand and seal, at St. Louis, Missouri, this 24th day of December, A. D. 1862.

MARSHALL SMITH. [L. S.]

In presence of—
H. E. CLIFTON,
E. A. SKEELE.