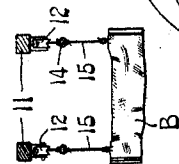
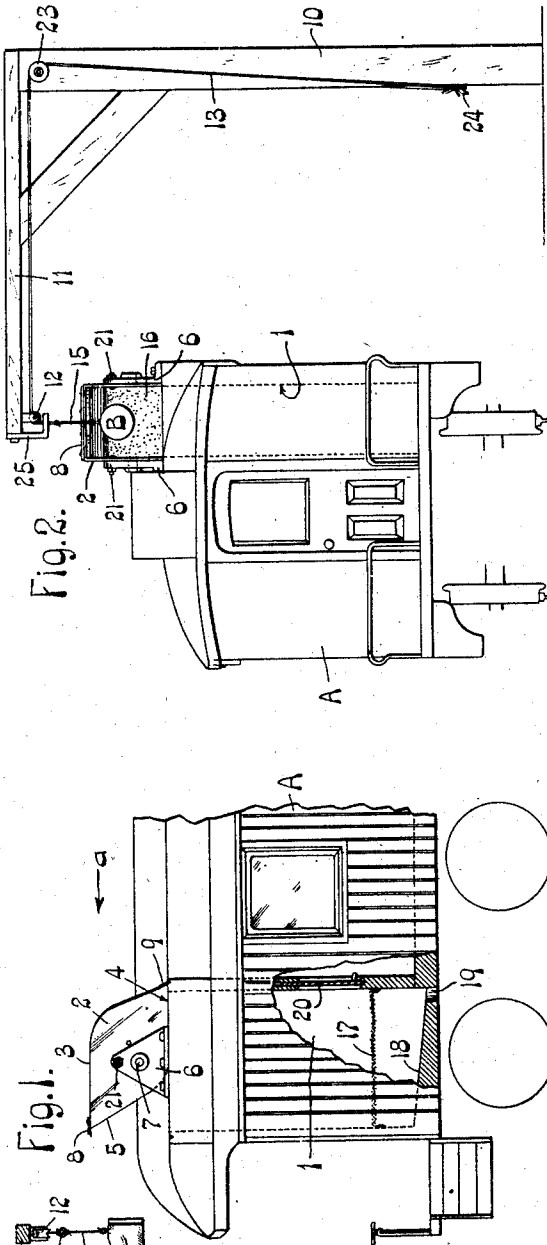


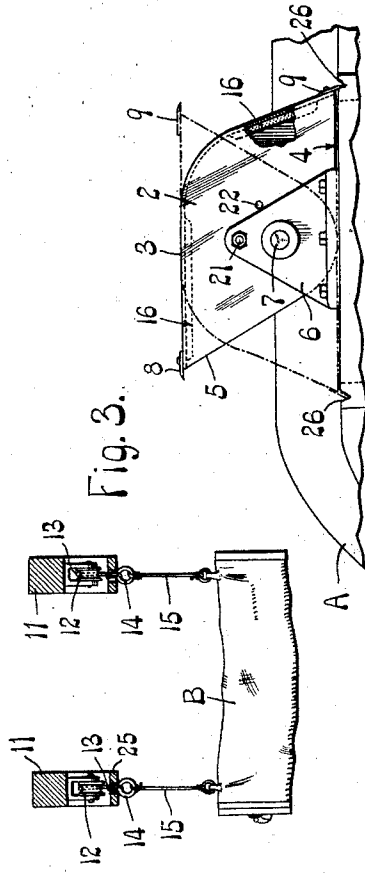
H. HOFFMANN.
 DEVICE FOR COLLECTING MAIL BAGS.
 APPLICATION FILED OCT. 19, 1908.

907,359.

Patented Dec. 22, 1908.



Witnesses
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HENRY HOFFMANN, OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

DEVICE FOR COLLECTING MAIL-BAGS.

No. 907,359.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Dec. 22, 1908.

Application filed October 19, 1908. Serial No. 458,509.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HENRY HOFFMANN, a citizen of the United States, residing at St. Louis, Missouri, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Devices for Collecting Mail-Bags, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is a side elevational view of a portion of a mail car provided with a mail bag collecting device constructed in accordance with my invention, said view also showing a mail bag supported in operative position; Fig. 2 is an end elevational view of the mail car and shows the device that is used for supporting the mail bag in operative position; and Fig. 3 is an enlarged side elevational view of the mail bag receiving member and also shows a mail bag in operative position to be collected by said member.

This invention relates to devices for collecting mail bags.

The main object of my invention is to provide a device for the purpose described that is of simple construction, which will not damage the mail bags, and which will not injure the mail clerks in the car or any person standing on the platform alongside of which the car travels.

Referring to the drawings which illustrate the preferred form of my invention, A designates a mail car provided in one end with a mail bag compartment 1, and 2 designates a mail bag receiving member that is located over an opening in the roof of the car, said opening communicating with the mail bag compartment 1. The mail bag receiving member 2 is approximately hood-shaped and comprises two side walls and a curved top wall 3 connected to the upper edges of said side walls. The member 2 can be arranged in two different positions for a purpose hereinafter described, and when it is arranged in either of its positions portions of the lower edges of its side walls rest upon the roof of the car, the side walls having edge portions 4 and 5 that are disposed at an angle to each other. The member 2 is arranged between two standards 6 on the roof of the car and its side walls are pivotally connected at 7 to said standards so that it can be swung into its two different positions. When said member

2 is arranged in the position shown in full lines in Figs. 1 and 3 the lower edge portions 4 of its side walls will rest upon the roof of the car and a portion of the curved top 3 will form the back or rear wall of the member, the opposite end of the member being open to receive the mail bags so that they can enter the compartment 1.

When the member 2 is arranged in the position shown in dot and dash lines in Fig. 3 the lower edge portions 5 of the side walls will rest upon the roof of the car and the other half of the curved top 3 will form the rear wall of said member. Cutting devices are arranged at the opposite ends of the top wall 3 of the member 2 to sever the ropes which sustain the mail bag in position and these cutting devices can either be formed by sharpening the end portions of the top wall 3 which is preferably formed of sheet metal, or they can consist of sharpened blades 8 and 9 that are connected to the end portions of the top wall 3 as herein shown.

The means for supporting the mail bags in position to be collected by the member 2 on the mail car consists of one or more standards 10 arranged adjacent the track on which the car travels and having a pair of arms 11 that project laterally over the track, as shown in Fig. 2, said arms being provided with pulleys 12 over which ropes or cables 13 pass. The cables 13 are provided with rings 14 to which a mail bag B is secured by means of ropes or other suitable devices 15 connected to the opposite ends of the bag, as shown in Fig. 1, thereby sustaining the mail bag in an approximately horizontal position and in alinement with the mail bag receiving member 2 on the roof of the mail car. When the car is traveling in the direction indicated by the arrow *a* in Fig. 1 the bag-receiving member 2 will be arranged in the position shown in said figure so that the cutting device 8 thereon will sever the bag-supporting ropes 15 and permit the bag to enter the member 2 and then fall into the mail bag compartment 1 in the car. When the car is traveling in the opposite direction the bag-receiving member 2 will be arranged in the position shown in dot and dash lines in Fig. 3 so that the cutting device 9 at the opposite end of the top wall 3 of said member will sever the bag-supporting ropes 15 and thus permit the bag to pass into the member 2 and thence into the mail bag compartment 1. I prefer to provide the inner face of the top

wall 3 of the bag-receiving member 2 with pads 16, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, so as to form a yielding buffer that the bag comes in contact with when it enters the member 2.

5 I also prefer to arrange a yielding cushion 17 inside of the mail bag compartment 1, as shown in Fig. 1, to break the fall of the bag.

In the preferred form of my invention, as herein shown, the cushion 17 is formed of
10 woven wire so that any snow, ice, water, or any other foreign substance that enters the bag compartment 1 through the bag-receiving member 2 will pass through said cushion onto the inclined floor or bottom wall 18 of the
15 mail bag compartment, said floor being provided with a drain opening 19 which permits the substance that collects on said floor to drain off of same.

One of the inside walls of the mail bag
20 compartment 1 is provided with a door 20 that can be opened to permit the mail clerk to remove the bags from said compartment. In view of the fact that the bag-receiving member is pivotally mounted on the stand-
25 ards 6 it is desirable to provide some means for locking said member in its different positions, and in the construction herein shown said means consists of movable pins or bolts 21 on the standards 6 that are adapted to be
30 forced into coöperating recesses 22 in the side walls of the bag-receiving member, the roof of the car being provided with grooves 26 for receiving the cutting devices 8 and 9 when they are in their inoperative positions.

35 The cables 13, to which the bag-supporting ropes 15 are tied, lead over pulleys 23 on the standard 10 and are secured in any suitable manner as, for example, by wrapping them around a cleat 24 on said standard.

40 To arrange a bag in position, the operator releases the cables 13 so as to permit the rings 14 on one end of same to descend. He then ties the bag-supporting ropes 15 to said rings and pulls on the cables until the rings
45 14 thereon come into engagement with stops 25 on the arms 11 through which the cables pass. The bag is now arranged in operative position, and when the mail car passes under-
50 neath same the cutting device on the front edge of the top wall of the bag-receiving member 2 will sever the bag-supporting ropes and thus permit the bag to drop into the compartment 1 in the mail car.

While I have herein shown my improved
55 device used for collecting mail bags from a

station it will, of course, be obvious that it could be used for receiving bags from a moving mail car, the bag being supported by suitable standards on the roof of the car and the bag-receiving member being carried by a
60 suitable support arranged adjacent the railway track.

A device of the construction above described comprises very few parts and can be
65 manufactured at a low cost. It does not strike the bag a blow to disengage it from its support so that it will not damage the bags as much as the devices which are now in general use. And, as the bag-receiving and
70 supporting members are arranged above the top of the car and the car is provided with a closed compartment into which the bags are discharged, the device is not apt to injure the mail clerks in the car or a person standing on
75 the platform adjacent the track.

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

1. A mail bag collecting device, comprising an approximately hood-shaped member
80 arranged above an opening in the roof of a car and having side walls and a curved top wall, the edges of said side walls being disposed at an angle to each other, standards on the roof of the car to which the side walls of
85 said member are pivotally connected, cutting devices located at the opposite ends of the top wall of said member, and means for locking said member in such a position that one of said cutting devices lies in a horizontal
90 plane above the roof of the car; substantially as described.

2. A mail bag collecting device, comprising an approximately hood-shaped member
95 arranged above an opening in the top wall of a car and communicating with a bag compartment inside of the car, standards on the roof of the car to which said member is pivotally connected so that it can be adjusted in
100 two different positions, and cutting devices on said member that are adapted to sever means that sustain a mail bag in position; substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I hereunto affix my signature in the presence of two witnesses,
105 this sixteenth day of October 1908.

HENRY HOFFMANN.

Witnesses:

WELLS L. CHURCH,
GEORGE BAKEWELL.