

M. Smith, Mail Bag.

N^o 54,787.

Patented May 15, 1866.

Fig 1

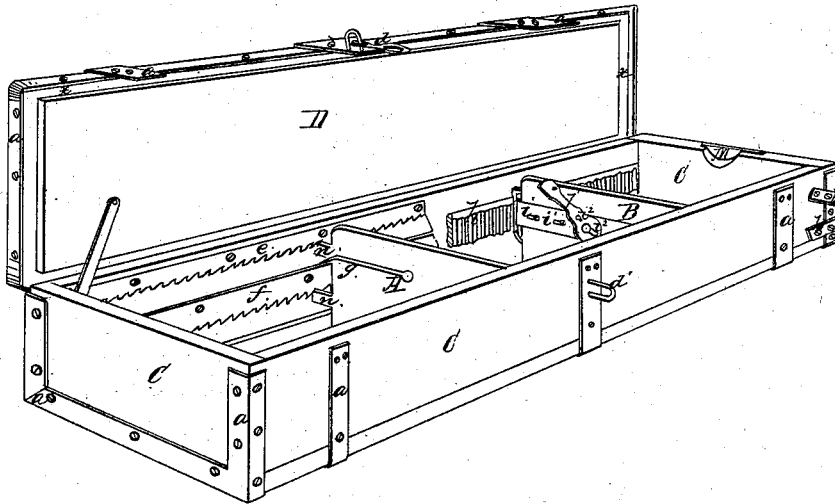


Fig 2.

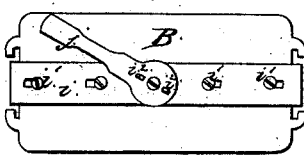


Fig 3

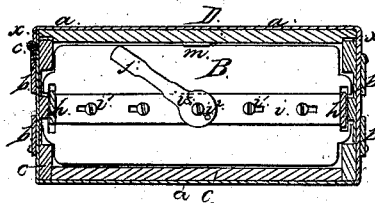


Fig 4

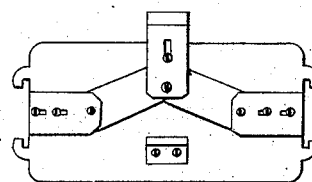


Fig 5

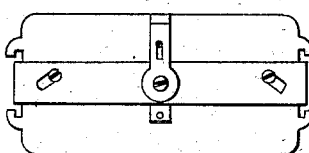


Fig 6

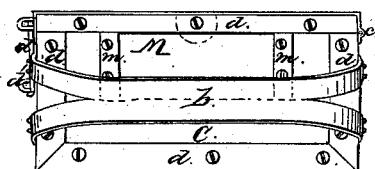
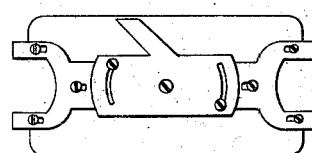


Fig 7



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MARSHALL SMITH, OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

IMPROVED MAIL POUCH OR BOX.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 54,787, dated May 15, 1866.

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 Boxes or Pouches for Carrying Mails; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and clear description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters of reference marked thereon.

Of the annexed drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective elevation of one of the boxes with the lid of it open and exhibiting two devices, A and B, for securing the letters in position during their transportation. Fig. 3 is a transverse section of the box, showing the follower or compressor B. Figs. 2, 4, 5, and 7 are elevations of followers or compressors. Fig. 6 is an end elevation of the box, showing a device for attaching a reversible direction-label to it.

This invention relates, first, to an improvement in mail-pouches as patented by myself on the 17th day of May, A. D. 1864, said improvement being on the follower and compressor which confines the letters in position in the box during their transportation. A previous patent was granted to me on the same subject on the 28th day of April, A. D. 1863. In both of the abovementioned patents the follower or compressor and partitions are described as being held in place by means of a strap or straps, or similar contrivances, which are made to pass around the partitions and hold them together or toward one end of the box or pouch. In the present arrangement the follower and compressor and partitions may be shoved up to their positions and there held by means of toothed racks or similar devices, as will be hereinafter explained; and, secondly, this invention relates to the manner of attaching the direction-label to the box; and, thirdly, to the interposition of a rubber packing between the different parts of the box to form a water-tight connection between those parts.

In the former patents the receptacle for the letters was described as a pouch made of leather. In the present description I shall describe a wooden box strapped with iron. Either form may be used, but I will now proceed to describe the wooden box.

C represents a wooden box, the lid D of which is open in Fig. 1 and closed in Figs. 3 and 6. Metallic straps *a* are made to sur-

round the box, as a means of additional security and strength. A leather strap or straps, *b*, may be fastened to one or both ends of the box to form a handle for it. The lid D is hinged to one side of the box at *c*, and is provided with a hasp, *d*, which is intended to hook over the staple *d'*, where it may be secured by means of a padlock, such as is usually employed in the mail-service of the United States.

There may be one or more partitions, (not shown in the drawings,) used in a manner similar to the partitions described in the patents already referred to—*i. e.*, to keep the different mails for small post-offices separated from each other while being transported in the same box or pouch. The follower or compressor A is made to slide between the metallic ways *e f*, the lower edges of which are cut into the form of saw-teeth. There are two springs, *g*, one of which is shown by the dotted lines in Fig. 1 fastened to the back side of the partition A, and so arranged that the outer ends of them will rest on the top smooth straight edge of the guides *f*, against which it presses to raise the follower or compressor up into the toothed indentations, as above described. There are two tenons, *n*, *n*, on each end of the follower or compressor, which enter grooves prepared for them below the ways *e f*, and against the saw-teeth of which they act. The ends of the saw-teeth which are toward the forward end of the box in which the letters are to be placed are made vertical, with an easy slope from the point of each tooth down to the base of the next tooth behind. By this arrangement of the teeth the follower or compressor may be slid up tightly to the letters by simply pushing with the hand against the back of it; but the spring *g* will raise the tenons *n n* up into the teeth on the ways *e f*, so it cannot be moved back until it is pressed down from the top enough to disengage the tenons from the teeth.

The follower or compressor B is a somewhat similar construction of a device equivalent to the one already described. In this case a corrugated plate, *h*, is fastened to each side of the box, and into these corrugations a sliding bolt or bar, *i*, is thrust by turning the lever *j* down. This construction of the bolts *i* and lever *j* will be more clearly understood by reference to Figs. 2 and 3. In those views it will be seen that the bolts are secured to the par-

tition by means of screws or rivets i' , which pass through slots in the bolts, so as to permit them to have a longitudinal motion. The bolts are connected with the levers by means of the two screws or rivets i'' , one of which is above and the other below the fulcrum of the lever, so that when it is moved in one direction both bolts will be thrown outward, and when it is moved in the opposite direction both bolts will recede. Thus it will be observed the operator can, by raising the lever with his thumb, release both ends of the follower or compressor at the same moment. In the construction here shown, when the outer end of the lever is thrown down the bolts will be out, and must remain so while the lid of the box is closed, for the end of the lever is so disposed that the lid of the box presses against it when in this position.

Figs. 4, 5, and 7 are only different forms of arranging and combining the bolts i and lever j with the follower B, and as these variations of construction are not shown in the model, and are almost endless in variety, they will not be minutely described. These devices are intended to be substituted for the strap surrounding the follower or compressor and partitions described in the patents already alluded to.

On one end of the box a recess should be cut sufficiently deep and of the proper size to receive the label M, which is arranged to slip loosely into a groove formed by this recess, and the metallic plate m screwed or otherwise fastened on the end of the box. When the lid of the box is closed it will prevent the label from getting out of place. When the lid is open the

label can be removed and replaced with the other side of it outward, thus directing the box to the post-office whence it came.

The groove which surrounds the outer edge of the lid D, and into which the top edge of the box enters when the same is closed, should have a rubber or other suitable packing, x , placed in it, so as to form a water-tight joint between the parts when the box is closed. The same kind of packing may be introduced into all the other joints of the box for the same purpose.

Having described my invention, what I claim is—

1. The combination of the box C D with the toothed ways $e f$ and sliding follower or compressor A, or corrugated ways h and followers or compressor B, or their equivalent devices, when employed as and for the purpose set forth.

2. Attaching the reversible label M to the box C, substantially as described.

3. Interposing a rubber or any other suitable packing, x , between the different parts of wooden boxes, so as to make them water-tight for the conveyance of mails.

4. A box fitted with internal partitions and followers arranged to separate parcels of mail-matter while being conveyed in the same box, the whole used as a package for inclosing mails for and in transportation, substantially as set forth.

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Witnesses:

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