

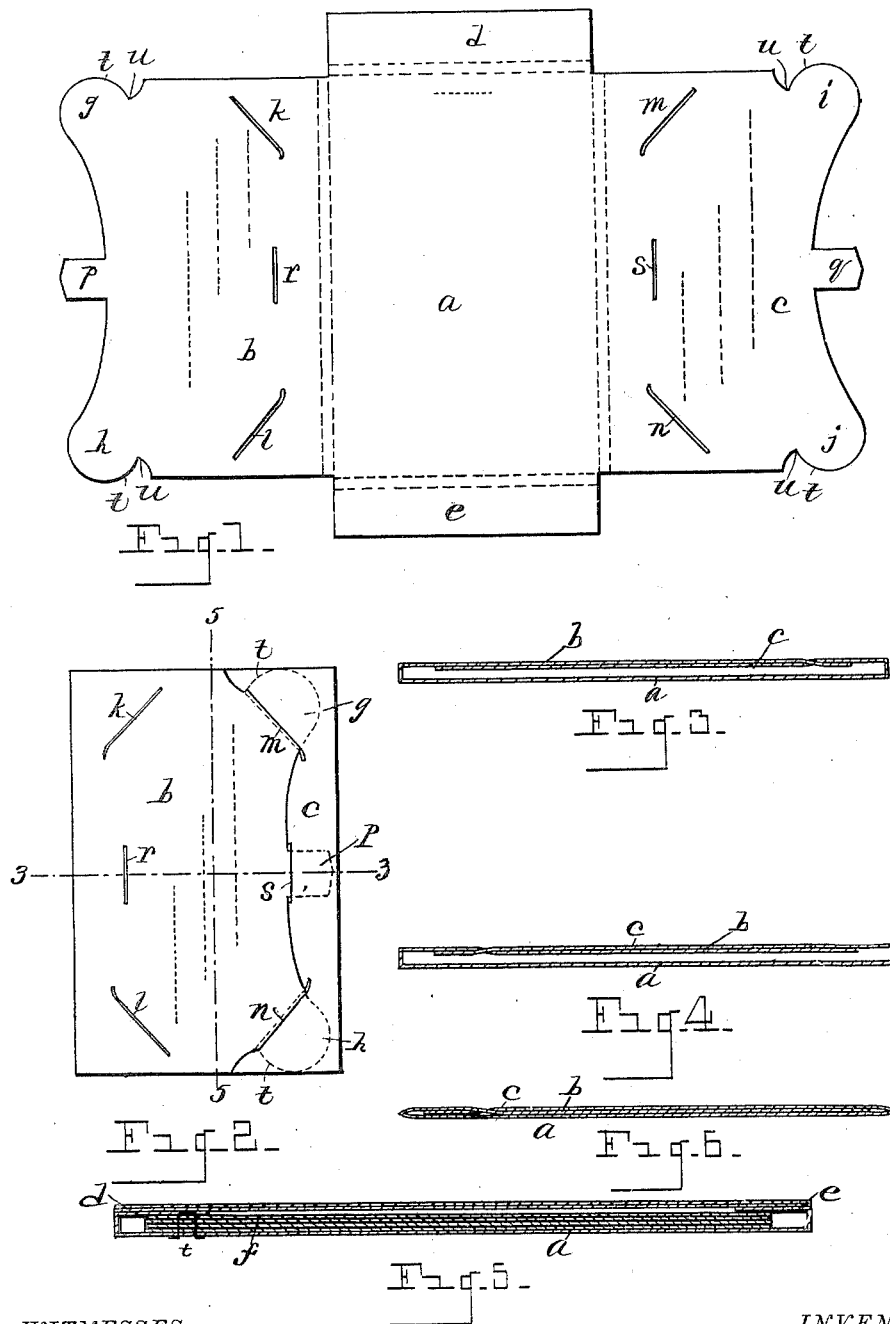
No. 649,768.

Patented May 15, 1900.

T. M. SHERRIFF.  
INTERLOCKING RETURN ENVELOP.

(Application filed June 22, 1899.)

(No Model.)



WITNESSES.

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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## INTERLOCKING RETURN-ENVELOP.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 649,768, dated May 15, 1900.

Application filed June 22, 1899. Serial No. 721,419. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, THOMAS M. SHERRIFF, a citizen of the United States, residing at Detroit, county of Wayne, State of Michigan, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Interlocking Return-Envelops; and I declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, 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, which form a part of this specification.

My invention has for its object to provide an interlocking return-envelop; and it consists of the construction hereinafter described and claimed, and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a view in plan showing the envelop unfolded. Fig. 2 shows the envelop folded in one position. Fig. 3 is a view in section on the line 3 3, Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a similar sectional view, but showing the envelop folded in a different manner, as hereinafter explained. Fig. 5 is a view in section on the line 5 5, Fig. 2; and Fig. 6 is a view in section similar to Fig. 4, but illustrating a modification of the device.

More particularly, my invention is designed to provide an interlocking return-envelop adapted for mailing various samples—as of cloth, paper, photographic proofs, manuscripts, and the like—the envelop being also adapted for the return of the samples, the envelop being thereby simple and economical, as well as facilitating the sending and return of the samples without any change of envelops other than the difference in interlocking the two flaps of the envelop.

In the drawings the body of the envelop is illustrated at *a*, the same being provided with lateral flaps or leaves, (indicated at *b* and *c*.) The body of the envelop is also provided with end flaps *d* and *e*. These lateral and end flaps are designed to be folded in any suitable manner to embrace the samples indicated, for example, in Fig. 5, at *f*. In Fig. 1 the dotted lines at the sides and ends of the body *a* indicate lines upon which said flaps may be folded to constitute a "box-envelop," a box-

envelop being also indicated in Figs. 3, 4, and 5. However, the flaps may be folded by a single fold, as indicated in Fig. 6, as I do not limit myself to any special kind of an envelop, whether it be a box-envelop or otherwise.

A special feature of this invention consists in the construction of the flaps or leaves *b c*, each of said leaves or flaps being constructed with similar interlocking tongues at their outer edges, as indicated, for example, at *g* and *h* on the flap *b* and at *i* and *j* on the flap *c*. The flap *b* is provided with slits (indicated at *k* and *l*) to receive the tongues *i j* of the flap *c*. Similarly the flap *c* is provided with slits *m n* to receive the tongues *g h* of the flap *b*. In large-sized envelops I prefer also to provide each of the flaps *b c* with one or more additional tongues, as indicated at *p* and *q*, the flaps *b c* being provided each with corresponding slits *r* and *s*, the slit *r* being adapted to receive the tongue *q* and the slit *s* being adapted to receive the tongue *p*. Either of the flaps *b c*, as the flap *b*, may be provided with the address of the party to whom the samples are first sent, as indicated by the dotted lines upon the flap *b*. The other flap, as the flap *c*, may bear the return-address of the sender, as indicated by the dotted lines on the flap *c*, Fig. 1.

The operation of the device will be evident. The envelop shown in Fig. 1 being folded to inclose the samples *f* might be folded with the tongues of the flap *b* engaging the corresponding slits of the flap *c*, the flap *b* folding over and outside the flap *c*. Upon returning the samples the two flaps *b c* are folded in reverse position, the flap *c* bearing the return-address being folded on the outside of the flap *b* and the tongues of the flap *c* engaging the corresponding slits of the flaps *b*, the two positions being indicated in Figs. 3 and 4.

The provision of the envelop with the interlocking tongues and slits on the two leaves overlapping the one the other upon which the outbound and return addresses are placed and by means of which samples may be securely inclosed, safely delivered, easily opened, and readily returned possesses great and obvious advantages. No loops or bands are required to engage the device and hold

the parts in place, liable to engage other matter in the mail-bag. By simply reversing the overlapping leaves or flaps the envelop may be employed to send out a sample and for its safe return. The address of the sender might naturally be printed upon the flap to be overlapped on the outside on the return of the package, so that the one returning the samples would have nothing to do but simply to interlock the tongues of the proper flap or leaf with the corresponding slits of the other leaf or flap. These interlocking reversible address leaves or flaps, with tuck ends or tongues and corresponding slits, are believed to be novel.

15 The whole envelop, with the tongues and slits, may be cut out in a single operation. A sheet of paper may first be suitably printed suitable for a series of envelops and then the envelops be cut out, as above described, by a suitable die. The folded end flaps *d e*, it will be seen, will be firmly held in place when the leaves *b c* are folded over and interlocked the one with the other. The side and end creases (indicated by the border-lines around the body of the envelop in Fig. 1) may be of any width to form a box-envelop of any desired thickness. The outer interlocking tongues and slits are preferably located near each end of the leaves *b c*. When the interlocking slits or tongues are employed, as in large envelops, they are preferably located midway the ends of the said flaps or leaves. The samples *f* inclosed in the envelop are preferably secured to the body *a* by one or more staples *t* at one end thereof.

I do not limit myself solely to the construction of the envelop with the end flaps *d e*, inasmuch as in certain kinds of samples these flaps might be dispensed with. The tongues *g h i j* are formed with shoulders *t*, which may be formed by recessing or cutting away a part of the end margins of the flaps *b c*, as indicated at *u*, permitting the shoulders *t* when the tongues are inserted into the corresponding slits to form a lock at the end of the corresponding slit, as indicated more particularly in Fig. 2, so as to prevent the accidental disengagement of the tongues with the slits. In this manner the leaves are readily locked in their engagement the one with the other when the package is closed ready for mailing, dispensing with any necessity for any other locking device or feature or supplementary fastening—as, for example, a rubber band or cord.

55 This is an important feature to have the shoulder on the tongues to form a lock in connection with the corresponding slits. To this end also the slits corresponding to the tongues on the ends of the leaves or flaps should be constructed at an angle to the marginal edge and to the folding-line of the flaps, as indicated in the drawings. The slits are extended at their inner ends a little beyond the corresponding tongues to give room for the engagement of the tongues with the slits and

the disengagement of the tongues therewith. It will be seen that in their normal position, as indicated in Fig. 2, the marginal ends of the flaps registering with the marginal ends of the folded body effectually bring the shoulders *t* into normal position projecting under the corresponding slitted flaps, so as to form an effectual lock. The intermediate slits *r s* are made parallel to the folding edges of the flaps and the corresponding tongues *p q* are inserted straight thereinto, as shown. The flaps, it will be seen, are parallel one with the other and of substantially equal length with the body portion of the envelop. The shoulders of each flap project in opposite directions, so that when folded and engaged with the corresponding slits of the opposite flap the flaps will be locked effectually in position, the shoulders of the tongues projecting in opposite directions, preventing any longitudinal movement of either flap sufficient to disengage the tongues with the corresponding slits.

What I claim as my invention is—

1. An interlocking return-envelop having a body provided on opposite sides thereof with parallel reversible overlapping address-flaps, each of said flaps constructed with plural slits located toward its inner margin at opposite ends thereof, and with plural locking-tongues located on its outer marginal edge at opposite ends thereof, said tongues constructed to engage in the corresponding slits of the opposite flap, and thereby to lock the flaps in folded position, substantially as set forth.

2. An interlocking return-envelop having a body provided with parallel reversible overlapping address-flaps projecting from the opposite sides of the body, said flaps each constructed with locking-tongues on its outer marginal edge at opposite ends thereof, and with slits toward its inner margin at the opposite ends thereof, said tongues each constructed with a locking-shoulder to engage the corresponding slit, the shoulders on the tongues projecting in opposite directions, substantially as set forth.

3. An interlocking return-envelop having a body provided with parallel reversible overlapping address-flaps on opposite sides thereof, each of said flaps constructed with tongues on its outer marginal edge toward opposite ends thereof and with slits toward its inner margin at opposite ends thereof, said tongues constructed with locking-shoulders projecting in opposite directions, and said slits constructed at an angle to the folding-line of the corresponding flap to receive the corresponding tongues of the other of said flaps, substantially as set forth.

4. An interlocking return-envelop having a body portion provided with parallel reversible overlapping address-flaps extending longitudinally of the body, and of substantially the same length as the body portion, each of

said flaps constructed with locking-tongues  
on its outer marginal edge toward opposite  
ends thereof, and with angularly - extended  
slits toward its inner margin at the opposite  
5 ends thereof, whereby when the flaps are  
folded over the body portion, the tongues of  
one of the flaps are engageable with the cor-  
responding slits of the other flap and thereby

lock the flaps in folded position, substantially  
as set forth. 10

In testimony whereof I sign this specifica-  
tion in the presence of two witnesses.

THOMAS M. SHERRIFF.

Witnesses:

N. S. WRIGHT,  
M. HICKEY.