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COMBINED WAY BILL, CONSIGNEE'S RECEIPT, AND AGENT'S RECORD ENVELOPE.

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(No Model.)

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

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COMBINED WAY-BILL; CONSIGNEE'S-RECEIPT, AND AGENT'S-RECORD ENVELOP.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 618,662, dated January 31, 1899.

Application filed March 5, 1898. Serial No. 672,673. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, RANSOM A. GROUT, a citizen of the United States, residing at Estherville, in the county of Emmet and State of Iowa, have invented a new and useful Combined Way-Bill, Consignee's-Receipt, and Agent's-Record Envelop, of which the following is a specification.

The purpose of this invention is to materially reduce the cost generally incurred in the keeping of accounts and records by concerns engaged in the handling and transmission of freight, and to reduce the chances for making mistakes to a minimum, and to obviate the cost attendant upon maintaining a "freight-received" book. As generally practiced, an agent receiving freight or other goods for transportation makes out a way-bill for the same, which is given in care of the conductor or other agent in charge of the carrier by means of which the goods are transported. The agent receiving such freight makes a copy of the way-bill which he receipts for the company and gives to the consignee upon the payment of the transportation charges. The bill itself, with comments, is forwarded to the freight auditor. In order to preserve a record of the transaction, a copy of the way-bill is entered in a freight-received book, the initial cost of which is considerable, besides the time consumed in making the entry. These items in the aggregate add materially to the cost of keeping a record of the transaction and appreciably reduce the profits.

In accordance with this invention the forwarding agent at the time of making out the way-bill produces duplicate copies of the items by a manifold process, and these copies, together with the way-bill, are forwarded to the receiving agent in the form of a complete envelop, and the agent separates the copies and gives one to the consignee and presents the other for his signature, and the way-bill, with proper indorsements thereon, is forwarded to the freight auditor. The copy of the way-bill signed by the consignee is properly filed away by the receiving agent for future reference and serves as his record of the transaction, thereby doing away with the necessity for making a copy of the way-bill for the consignee and entering the same in the freight-received book usually provided for this pur-

pose. Inasmuch as the way-bill does not have to be copied, no chance arises for mistakes on this account.

For a full understanding of the merits and advantages of the invention reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings and the following description.

The improvement is susceptible of various changes in the form, proportion, and the minor details of construction without departing from the principle or sacrificing any of the advantages thereof, and to a full disclosure of the invention an adaptation thereof is shown in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figures 1 and 2 are obverse and reverse views, respectively, of the combination envelop-sheet. Fig. 3 is a detail view in perspective of the complete combination-envelop, parts being broken away and showing the carbon-sheet between the flap and the rear portion of the envelop.

Corresponding and like parts are referred to in the following description and indicated in the views of the drawings by the same reference characters.

The envelop comprises, essentially, a middle part 1 and end portions 2 and 3, the latter being separated from the former by lines of perforations or other means which will admit of the parts being readily separated when required. The middle portion 1 has end flaps 4, which are folded over the end portions of the part 3 and pasted thereto, forming an envelop of which the end portion 2 constitutes the flap. The parts 1, 2, and 3 are similarly printed and ruled with respect to the matter designating the destination, date, name of the company or concern issuing the way-bill, the name of the shipper and consignee, the character of freight, weight, rate, and expense. The matter enumerated is, such as constitutes the essential part of way-bills in general use and may vary according to the design and the character of the means for transportation. The middle portion 1 is printed on one side of the sheet constituting the combination way-bill and is forwarded to the freight auditor, being the way-bill proper. The space 5 immediately above the vertical columns bearing the various headings indicating the name of the shipper, the consignee, freight, &c., contains instructions to the con-

ductors or other persons in charge of the means of transportation. The space at the right (indicated at 6) receives the signatures of the conductors or persons in charge of the several carriers or carrier engaged in moving the freight from the place of shipment to the consignee. This way-bill, when properly signed, is forwarded by the receiving agent to the freight auditor.

The section 3 has a space 9 corresponding to the space 5, upon which instructions to the receiving agents are imprinted. The space 10 at the right end of the section 3 contains the consignee's receipt, and when this way-bill is properly signed by the person to whom the goods have been consigned the way-bill is filed away by the receiving agent and constitutes his record of the transaction.

The part 2 constitutes a bill for freight and is signed by the receiving agent upon the payment of the transportation charges by the consignee and is a receipt for the amount of charges thus paid and is given to and retained by the consignee. The space 7, corresponding to the spaces 5 and 9 of the parts 1 and 3, contains a notice to the consignee that claims for shortage, &c., must be made at once. The space 8 at the right-hand end contains the receipt of the agent for the company that the charges have been paid.

The sections 2 and 3 are printed upon the reverse side of the sheet bearing the way-bill 1, and the stock constituting the sheet upon which the several way-bills are imprinted is of stout transparent material, so as to admit of a single sheet of double-faced carbon-paper being used to make the duplicate way-bills by the shipping agent when writing out an inventory of the goods or articles received for transportation. The way-bill is filled out in the usual manner and a carbon-sheet is placed between the parts 2 and 3, and the copy thus made upon the rear side of the part 2 can be easily read upon the face side by reason of the transparent character of the paper or stock from which the way-bill is formed.

By having the way-bill folded, approximately, into the form of an envelop and the parts 1 and 3 secured by the end flaps 4 the way-bill can be manipulated and forwarded in the conduct of business in any of the usual ways.

By the use of more carbon-sheets and extra (or additional) printed forms as many copies as may be desired can be made in the same manner and with the one writing. These extra copies may constitute a "bill of lading" to be given to the shipper, a "shipping-ticket" to be placed on file by forwarding agent, or any other document needed in the conduct of that class of business, each copy varying only in the matter imprinted upon it, which matter may read so as to conform with the particular purpose for which each is intended, but all copies being printed in register, so that the matter written in will appear alike in all.

From the foregoing it will be understood that the invention primarily provides for a combination record-envelop which is transmitted in care of the conductor or other agent in charge of the carrier by means of which the goods are transported, and this envelop combines in one article not only the way-bill, but also the consignee's receipt and agent's record, thereby greatly simplifying the usual complex way of making the different records of a way-bill. It has already been pointed out that the three main sections 1, 2, and 3 of the folded paper sheet forming the envelop have respectively printed thereon a way-bill blank, a consignee's-receipt blank, and an agent's-record blank, which constitute separate and independent papers which are intended to take the place of the separate records that are usually made from a way-bill. While the three papers referred to are separate and distinct in the sense of serving separate and distinct purposes, still it will be understood that the columns or record-spaces of all three sections of the envelop are alike, so that when the sections are folded into the form of an envelop the record-spaces of the way-bill, the consignee's receipt, and of the agent's record will register, whereby the insertion of the carbon-sheet within the envelop in the manner explained will enable the freight-forwarding agent to fill out the record-spaces of the three sections at one and the same time. In this way the items of a way-bill may be transferred at the time the way-bill is made out to the consignee's receipt and the agent's record, and these three papers, by being combined in an envelop structure, can be transmitted together.

It is important in carrying out the invention that the consignee's receipt and the agent's record be printed so as to be readable on the reverse side of the folded sheet from the way-bill blank 6, printed on the central or middle section of the sheet, so that the manifolding process may be carried out. Another important advantage arising from this manner of imprinting the separate sections is that one of the side sections, which forms a flap for the envelop by being tucked within the open side of the envelop, will completely protect the consignee's receipt and the agent's record, or, in other words, the said consignee's receipt and agent's record will be disposed entirely within the envelop, while only the way-bill is exposed on the outer side of the envelop, which way-bill is signed by the conductors or other officials through whom the envelop is transmitted. This is a very important feature of the invention, as the envelop is handled by a large number of persons, and it is only necessary for the way-bill to be exposed to view for being written upon, as will necessarily occur as it passes from one official to another.

A further advantage of the construction described is to be noted in the fact that by reason of having the securing-flaps for the

folded paper sheet at the ends of the completed envelop the latter is left open at one side to receive the section forming the flap, and in this connection it will also be observed that in case it is desired to transmit a notice or other communication along with the way-bill such notice or communication can readily be placed inside of the envelop and held therein by the flap-forming section.

It will be understood that in carrying out the invention the same is necessarily susceptible to modification—such, for instance, as subdividing the consignee's receipt and agent's record into a number of divisions which are separable one from another—but in this modification, as well as in any other modification, the same essential feature is preserved—namely, the forming of the folded paper sheet in three main sections which are separable with relation to each other and have respectively printed thereon a way-bill blank, a consignee's receipt, and an agent's record.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed, and desired to be secured by Letters Patent, is—

A combination way-bill, consignee's-receipt, and agent's-record envelop, consisting of a

folded paper sheet formed in three main sections separable with relation to each other at the lines of fold and secured together at the ends of the complete envelop to leave the latter open at one side edge, the middle section of the folded sheet having imprinted thereon an exposed way-bill blank, and the other two sections having imprinted thereon so as to be readable on the reverse side from the way-bill blank, respectively a consignee's receipt and an agent's record having the same record-spaces as the way-bill blank, and adapted to register therewith and cooperate with a carbon-sheet, one of said latter sections being tucked within the open side of the envelop and thereby causing both the consignee's receipt and the agent's record to be disposed entirely within the envelop and protected from handling, substantially as set forth.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

RANSOM A. GROUT.

Witnesses:

W. J. WARD,
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