

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

C. A. CUMMINGS & W. H. HILL.
HOUSE DOOR LETTER BOX.

No. 474,949.

Patented May 17, 1892.

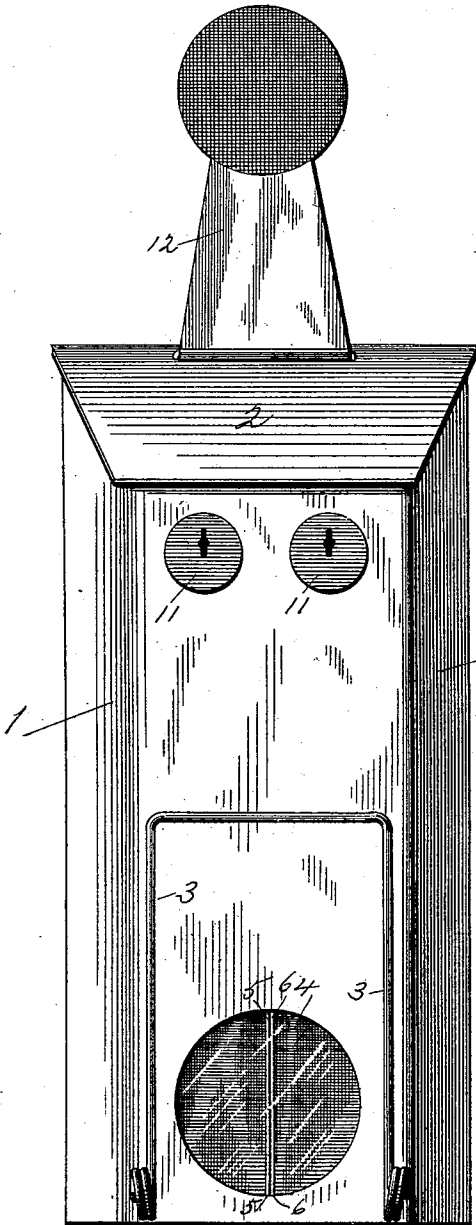


Fig. 1.

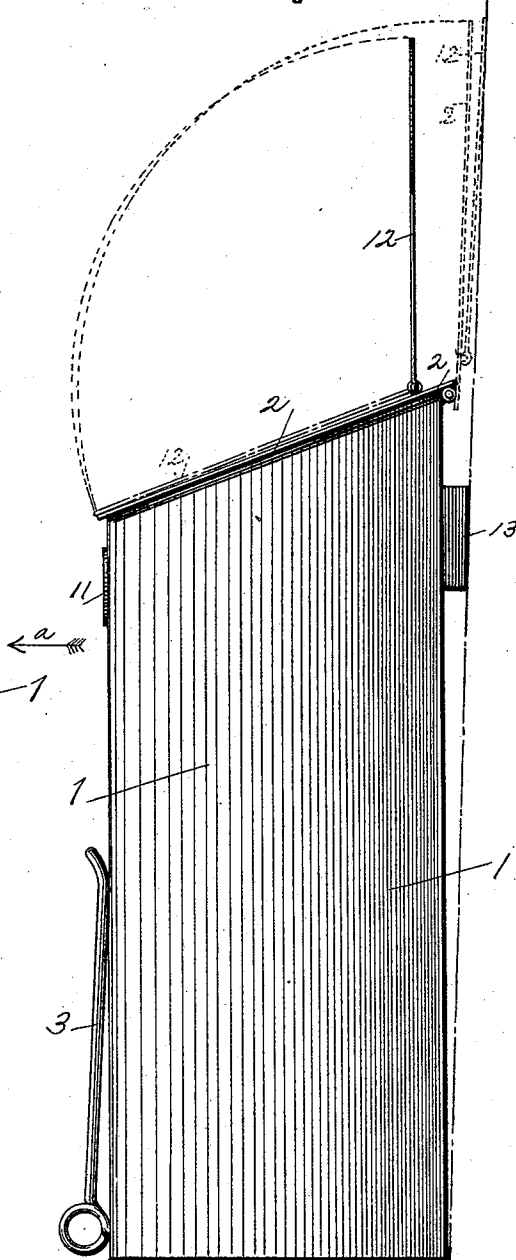


Fig. 2.

Witnesses.

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John C. Dewey

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2 Sheets—Sheet 2.

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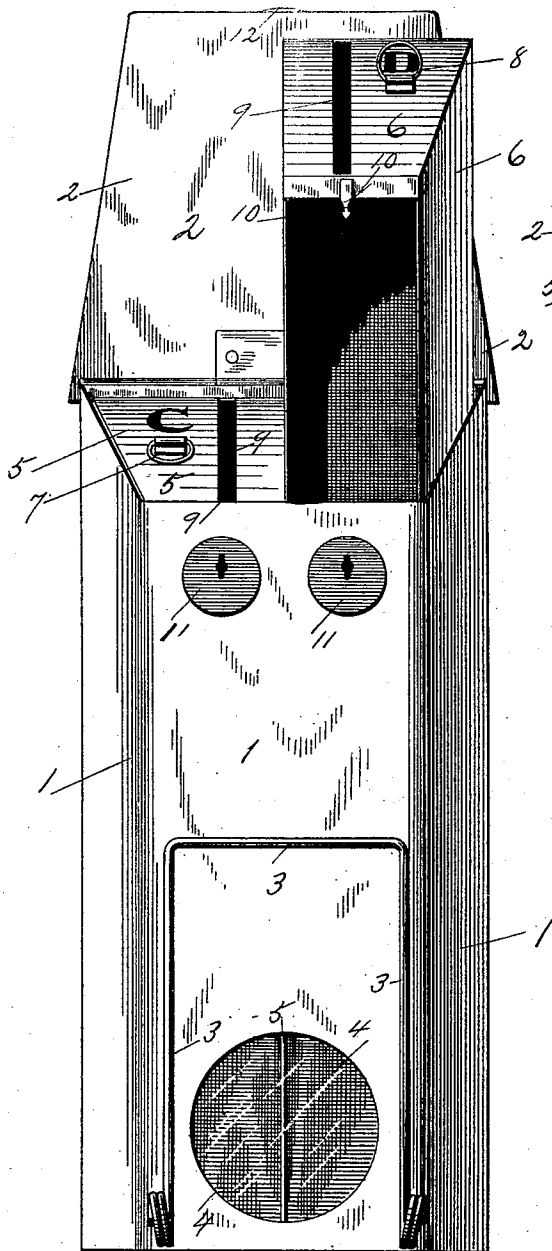


Fig. 3.

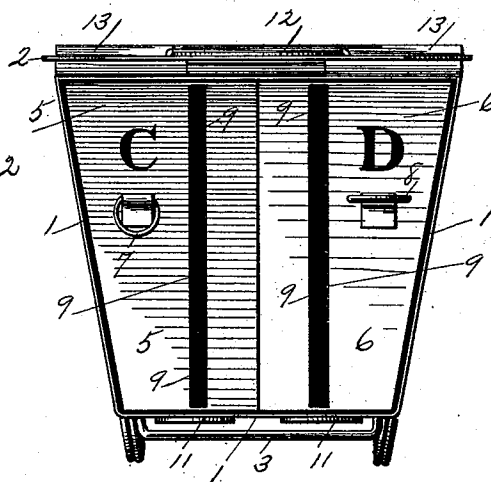


Fig. 4.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES A. CUMMINGS AND WILLIAM H. HILL, OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS.

HOUSE-DOOR LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 474,949, dated May 17, 1892.

Application filed February 26, 1891. Serial No. 382,918. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, CHARLES A. CUMMINGS and WILLIAM H. HILL, both citizens of the United States, residing at Worcester, in the county of Worcester and State of Massachusetts, have jointly invented certain new and useful Improvements in Letter-Boxes; and we do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, which, in connection with the drawings, making a part of this specification, will enable others skilled in the art to which our invention belongs to make and use the same.

Our invention relates to letter-boxes; and the object of our invention is to provide a simple and convenient letter-box containing two separate compartments, each adapted to be locked and operated independently of the other. One of said compartments is to hold mail-matter to be collected by the postman and the other to hold mail-matter delivered by the postman; also to provide a signal attachment to be used in connection with the letter-box for notifying the postman from a distance if there is any mail-matter to be collected by him from the box.

Our invention consists in certain novel features of construction and operation of a letter-box of the description above referred to, as will be hereinafter fully described.

Referring to the drawings, Figure 1 is a front view of our letter-box with the signal attachment displayed and in its elevated position. Fig. 2 is a side view looking in the direction of arrow *a*, Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a front view of the letter-box with the cover open and one of the compartments partially raised out of the box, and Fig. 4 is a top view of the box with the cover open.

In the accompanying drawings, 1 is the letter-box proper, preferably made of sheet metal. Said box is open at its upper end and provided with a hinged cover 2, adapted to shut down over said open end, as shown in the drawings. A spring-holder 3 for holding newspapers and packages may be secured to the lower part of the box 1 in the ordinary way. In the lower front part of said box 1 may be inserted a transparent disk 4 to permit of seeing the interior of the box.

Combined with the letter-box proper 1 are

two inclosed compartments or receptacles 5 and 6, made independently of the letter-box 1 and adapted to extend vertically in the box 1 and side by side, as shown in the drawings, and adapted to be moved up or down therein, in this instance by means of rings 7 and 8, secured on the top part of said compartments. The inclosed receptacles 5 and 6 may be raised out of and removed from the letter-box proper 1, if desired, to empty the contents of said receptacles. Each of the compartments 5 and 6 have, preferably, solid sides, a solid bottom, and a solid top having a narrow slot 9 therein, extending in a direction from the back to the front of the compartments. Through said slot 9 the mail-matter is passed to the interior of the compartments.

The front side of the compartments 5 and 6 is preferably made open from the top to the bottom of the compartments for the free introduction of the hand when the compartment is raised, as shown in Fig. 3, to remove the mail-matter contained therein, and it also permits of the interior of each of the boxes being seen through the disk 4, as the disk is large enough to extend beyond the adjacent sides of the two compartments, as shown in Fig. 1. A hasp 10 is secured upon the front top edge of each of the compartments 5 and 6, which hasp is preferably engaged automatically by a lock 11—one for each compartment—secured in the front upper part of the letter-box 1. The locks 11 may be of any ordinary construction and operation.

Combined with the letter-box 1 is a signal attachment movable from a point within the outline of the box to a point beyond the outline to notify the postman when said signal is displayed if there is any mail-matter in the box to be collected by him. In the present instance we have combined our signal attachment with the cover 2 of the box, and said signal attachment in this instance consists of a flat piece of metal or other material 12, hinged at its lower end on the cover 2. Said signal 12 is adapted to be raised independently of the cover and remain in an upright position, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, or to be lowered, so as to rest upon the cover, as shown by dotted lines, Fig. 2. The signal 12 is preferably hinged on the rear part of the

cover 2 and its front end extends just beyond the front edge of the cover, as shown in Fig. 3, to allow of said signal being engaged and raised without raising the cover, and, further, in case the signal is in an elevated position the raising of the cover will bring the signal against the wall or support to which the letter-box is secured and close said signal against the cover, so that the closing of the cover will also close the signal, as shown by dotted lines, Fig. 2.

The signal attachment 12 is operated independently of the operation of the letter-box proper—that is, letters or mail-matter may be placed within the receptacles in the letter-box or removed therefrom without operating the signal attachment 12. In this instance the signal attachment, being connected with the hinge-cover 2, will move with said cover when the same is open or closed, but will not be raised to display the signal except by a separate operation. It will thus be seen that the operation of the signal attachment is independent of the operation of the letter-box.

The box 1 is preferably provided with a cleat 13 upon its rear part for attaching the box to the wall or support by screws passing through said cleat from the inside of the box or otherwise.

The advantages of our improved letter-box will be readily appreciated by those skilled in the art.

We provide in a single letter-box two separate compartments made and operated independently of each other and each one provided with a separate and independent lock, said locks arranged side by side on the front side of the letter-box and operated by different keys, if desired. One of the compartments receives mail-matter to be collected by the postman. Said compartment may be lettered on the top "C" to signify "collection" compartment, and to the lock of this compartment the postman carries the key, enabling him to unlock the compartment and raise it out of the box and remove the mail-matter therefrom. The other compartment receives the mail-matter delivered by the postman and may be marked on its top "D" to signify "delivery," and the key to the lock of this compartment, which may be different from the lock of the other compartment, is carried or in the possession of the party or parties who use the letter-box. It will thus be seen that the postman only has access to the collection-compartment to remove the mail therefrom, and in practice the collection-compartment of all the letter-boxes on the postman's route may be unlocked by the same key, thus doing away with the necessity of the postman carrying a number of different keys.

By means of the signal attachment when the same is displayed, the postman is notified from a distance that there is mail-matter to be collected by him from the box. In case there is no mail-matter to be collected by him from the box the signal is not displayed, and

then if he has no mail-matter to deliver he is saved the unnecessary steps and time required to go to the box to see if there is any mail-matter to be collected.

We do not limit ourselves to the special way of combining the signal attachment with the box as shown in the drawings, as any other equivalent way may be employed, and any form or design of signal may be used in connection with the box to notify the postman of a collection to be made.

By having the slots 9 extending from the back to the front of the compartment instead of from side to side, as is customary, we are enabled to arrange the two compartments side by side, and have the locks for the same on the front side of the letter-box proper, where they are easy of access.

It will be understood that the details of construction of our letter-box can be varied some from what is shown and described, if desired, without departing from the principles of our invention.

A spring may be combined with the lower end of each of the compartments 5 and 6, so that when said compartments are unlocked they will be forced up without the necessity of raising them by hand.

Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In a letter-box, the combination, with a box provided with a transparent disk in its front portion, of two open front receptacles in the box for the reception of mail, said disk extending over a portion of the open front of each receptacle, whereby the interior of each receptacle may be seen through the disk, substantially as set forth.

2. In a letter-box, the combination, with a box provided with a transparent disk in its front portion, of two open front receptacles within the box, said disk extending over a portion of the open front of each receptacle, whereby the interior of said receptacles may be seen through the disk, and a signal attached to the box, said signal being movable from a point within the outline of the box to a point beyond the outline of the box and adapted to be operated independently of the box, substantially as set forth.

3. In a letter-box, the combination, with the box or casing, of two compartments or inclosed receptacles made independently of said box or casing and adapted to be raised or lowered and locked therein and each of said compartments having a receiving-slot therein in its upper end extending in a direction from the back to the front of the compartment, substantially as set forth.

4. In a letter-box, the combination, with the box or casing open at its upper end and provided with a hinged cover, of two compartments or inclosed receptacles extending within said box and placed side by side and provided with slots in their upper ends extending in a direction from the back to the front

of said receptacles and provided with an opening in their front sides, substantially as set forth.

5 In a letter-box, the combination, with a box having its cover hinged thereto at the rear, of receptacles in the box for the reception of mail-matter, and a signal hinged to the cover intermediate its hinge and the front, said signal being extended just beyond the
10 front edge of the cover, whereby it may be

engaged and raised to project above the top of the box to indicate to the postman the presence of mail-matter within the box, substantially as set forth.

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