

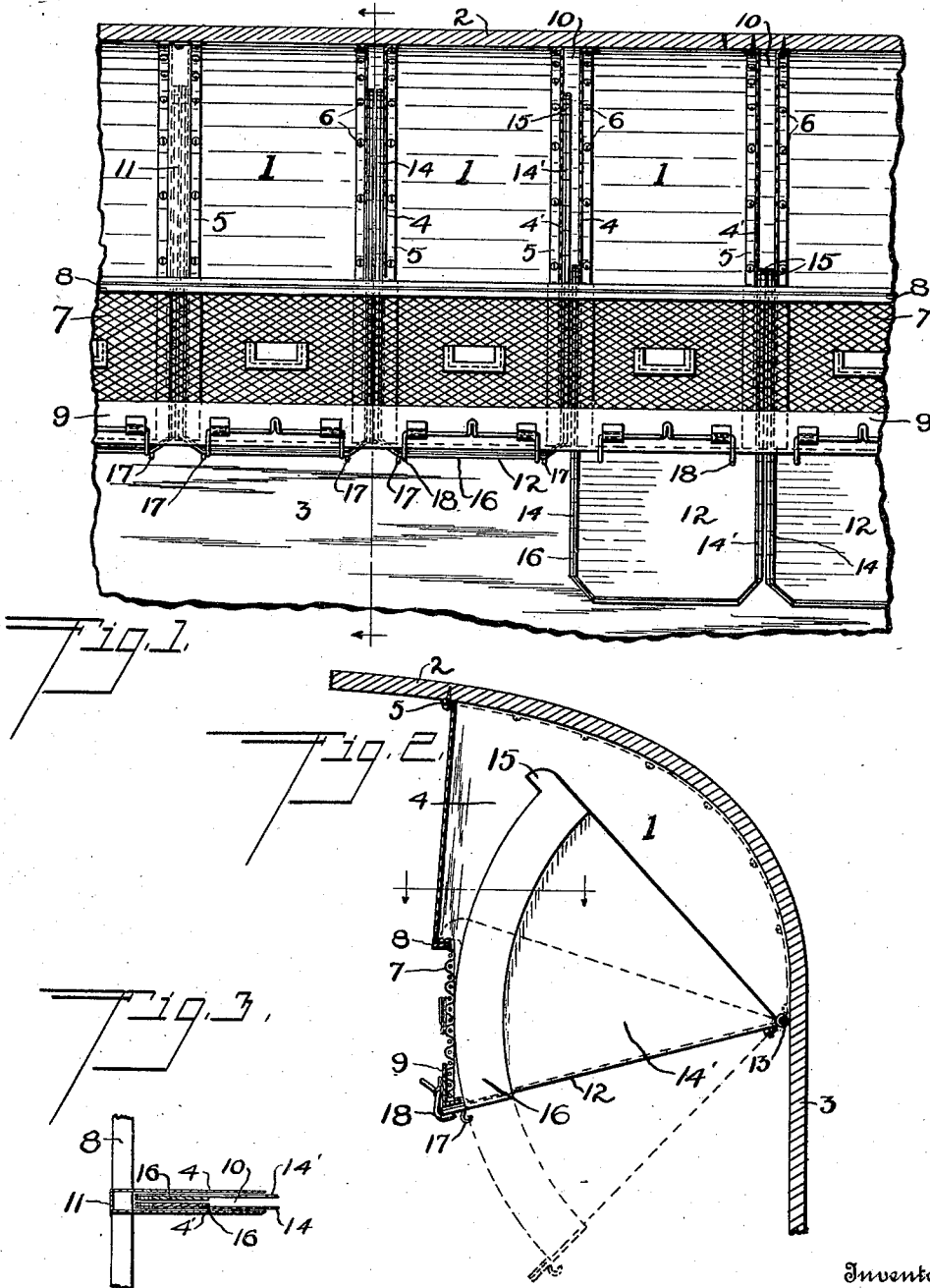
J. T. JOHNSTON.

MAIL BOX.

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Inventor

Witnesses

Ray G. Kraz
Chas. Bellas

John T. Johnston,
By Willard Eddy, Attorney

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN T. JOHNSTON, OF OMAHA, NEBRASKA.

MAIL-BOX.

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Specification of Letters Patent.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN T. JOHNSTON, of the city of Omaha, county of Douglas, and State of Nebraska, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Boxes, which improvements are described in the following specification and are illustrated by the accompanying drawings.

My invention relates primarily to those mail boxes which have hinged bottom chutes, and are built into railway postal cars for the purpose of receiving mail from manual distribution and of discharging the same into mail bags by dumping.

It is the object of the invention to prevent mail from lodging unduly in or about the mechanism of a box of this type; to make certain a complete dumping of its load; to utilize parts of the car as parts of the box; to use a special reinforcement of the chute as means for stopping and supporting that member when dumped; to improve a mail box of this type generally; and to unite a series of such boxes in a special manner. To accomplish this object I attach dependent side walls of the box to the roof of the car, and provide the chute with upstanding side walls which have a sliding or telescopic engagement with the outer faces of said dependent walls.

The best manner in which I have contemplated applying the principles of my invention is shown in said drawings; in which—

Figure 1 is a front elevation of a series of mail boxes which are constructed and united in accordance with those principles, parts of the structure being omitted from the view for the purpose of showing construction. Fig. 2 is a transverse vertical section between two of said boxes on the section line of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a partial horizontal section on the section line of Fig. 2.

In these views the numeral 1 denotes an entire mail box, so constructed. The top of the box is a portion of the roof 2 of a modern steel postal railway car, while the back of the box is a portion of an adjoining side wall 3 of the same car. The vertical side walls of the box, denoted by numerals 4 and 4', are sheets of iron or other metal, having bent-over edges, or flanges 5, which are joined to the top and back of the car by screws 6. The upper front part of the box is open as a mouth to receive mail; while the lower front part of the same is closed

by a wire netting 7, which is stretched between the horizontal front rails 8 and 9. These rails may be attached rigidly to a convenient portion of the frame or walls of the car. The same rails and the intermediate netting 7 are closely united, by soldering or otherwise, with the front edge of each of the side walls 4 and 4'. When several of these boxes are united in a single structure, as in Fig. 1, a narrow chamber 10 is formed between their adjacent and parallel side walls 4 and 4'. This chamber is closed above and behind by the roof and side wall of the car, and in front by the wire netting 7 and by a front wall 11, which extends from rail 8 to the roof of the car, and is united with both of those parts and with said adjacent walls. All those parts of the box which have now been described are stationary and rigidly united together.

The chute, which is the movable member of the box, consists of a flat sheet-metal bottom 12, which is fastened to the side of the car, at the back end of the box, by hinges 13, and of two vertical and parallel sheet-metal sides, 14 and 14', which are formed integrally with the bottom of the chute, and bent upward to work in the bottomless chambers 10. These sides 14 and 14' are provided each with a forwardly projecting catch or shoulder 15, which engages the top of rail 8 when the chute is thrown open, as at the right in Fig. 1. The chute is also provided with a reinforcing strip or plate of iron 16, which is applied to the sides and bottom of the chute, near its forward end, and to the side of shoulder 15, and forms, when the box is open, an incomplete dependent loop, supported by the front rail 8, and containing and supporting the front end of the chute in its dependent position. The bottom of the chute is also provided with hooks 17, on which an open mail-bag may be hung; while rail 9 is provided with a catch 18, to engage the bottom of the box, when closed.

Such being the construction of my improved mail box, it is obvious that in the use and operation of the same the object of the invention is fully accomplished in respect of all the proposed particulars which are above stated. Mail is prevented from lodging unduly in or about the mechanism of the box by such an arrangement of parts that the opening from the inside of the box into chamber 10, is upward only; while that chamber itself is open downward only;

the dumping of the mail from the box by the tilting of the chute is complete, because the latter has no top or back on which mail can lodge, when the chute is open; the roof and side of the car are utilized for the top and back of the box; by means of catches 15 and 18, the reinforcement 16, in which the free end of the chute is set, stops and upholds the chute in its alternative raised and lowered positions, shown in the drawings; and the contiguous upstanding walls of adjacent chutes are advantageously arranged to work in a secluded chamber 10. Consequently, in the use and operation of my improved mail box, no straggling letter can loiter in the chute, when tilted down, or jump over its upstanding walls at any time, or hide in the bottomless chamber 10, or otherwise lose itself in transit from the mouth of the box to the mouth of the mailbag.

I claim as my invention—

1. In mail-handling apparatus, a number of open-front boxes, comprising a continuous back wall, which is part of a vertical wall of a mail car; a continuous top of said boxes, which is part of the roof of said car; an equal number of pairs of dependent side walls, which are united with said roof and with said vertical wall; and narrow bottom-

less chambers, which separate adjacent pairs of said dependent walls; in combination with an equal number of hinged chutes, which are provided with upstanding side walls, working in said chambers; and means for catching and supporting said chutes in raised and lowered positions.

2. In mail-handling apparatus, a series of open-front mail boxes, which are structurally united by a continuous back wall, forming part of a vertical wall of a mail car, and by a continuous top, forming part of the roof of said car, and which comprise a series of pairs of dependent box walls, united with said continuous back wall and with said continuous top, and separated by intermediate bottomless chambers; in combination with a corresponding number of hinged chutes, which are provided with upstanding side walls, working in said intermediate chambers, and with means for supporting suspended mailbags; and means for catching and supporting said hinged chutes in raised and lowered positions.

In testimony whereof I hereto set my name in the presence of two witnesses.

JOHN T. JOHNSTON.

Witnesses:

WILLARD EDDY,
MAX R. VIPPELL.