This invention appertains to collection and deposit receptacles and more particularly to a novel attachment for mail boxes of the well known type used in rural districts.

Rural mail boxes are generally provided with an outgoing mail signal flag for the convenience of the mail carrier placed upon the box or a signalling position and to an inoperative non-signalling position for indicating to the mail carrier whether or not there is mail in the box for his collection. As far as I am aware, there is no means for indicating to the owner more specifically described from the owners' houses, this works a hardship upon the owner, particularly during the winter months.

It is therefore, one of the primary objects of my invention to provide a novel signal member for the mail box which will automatically move to a clear signalling position visible to the eye both from the front and rear of the box upon the opening of the box door by the mail carrier when he deposits mail therein.

Another salient object of my invention is to provide a signal attachment for rural mail boxes embodying a signal member of any desired shape treated so as to be clearly visible to the eye at a considerable distance therefrom permanently attached to the box by a flexible connector and detachably secured to the door of the box in such a way that upon the mere downward swinging of the door, the signal member will detach itself from the box door by gravity and fall to a clear signalling position below the box and be suspended in such position by the flexible connector.

A further important object of my invention is the provision of a signalling attachment for rural mail boxes to indicate whether or not mail has been deposited in the box by a mail carrier embodying, in one preferred form, a signal plate of any desired outline and a flexible connector securing the plate to the box, the plate having an eye for detachably receiving the inclined bill of a hook or like member on the mail box door, so that upon the lowering of the door, the plate will slide off of the bill of the hook by gravity to its suspended signalling position.

A still further object of my invention is to provide a signalling attachment for mail boxes of the above character, which will be durable and efficient in use, one that will be simple and easy to manufacture and one which can be placed upon the market and incorporated with a mail box at a low cost.

With these and other objects in view, the invention consists in the novel construction, arrangement and formation of the features thereof and in the method of utilising them for the purpose sought to be attained.

Figure 1 is a front elevational view of a rural mail box showing the door in its closed position with my novel signalling attachment incorporated therewith, the door being shown in its closed position and with the signalling member in full lines in its non-signalling position, the door being shown in dotted lines in its open position and the signalling member in its suspended position in dotted lines.

Figure 3 is a fragmentary longitudinal sectional view through the mail box and showing the door closed and the signalling member in its signalling position.

Referring to the drawing in detail, wherein is shown one preferred embodiment of my invention, the letter B generally indicates a rural mail box and A my novel signalling attachment for incoming mail.

The mail box B is of the type now in general use in rural districts and will not be described in detail, but the same includes a body 5 having a door 6 at the front thereof hinged at its lower end as at 7. The door is normally maintained in its closed position by a suitable latch 8. The body of the box can be provided with a movable signal flag 9 for indicating to the mail carrier whether there is mail in the box or not for his collection.

My novel signal attachment A for indicating whether or not there is incoming mail in the box for the owner thereof includes a signalling member 10 preferably for the sake of economy, in the nature of a flat plate. This signalling member can take various shapes and forms such as the shape of a star, or as illustrated, a circular disc. The signalling member is treated so as to resist rust and so that the same can be clearly seen by the eye at a considerable distance therefrom and the opposite faces of the member can be painted a bright red, if such should be preferred.

The signalling member 10, is secured to the box B by a flexible connector 11, such as, as shown, a chain. One link of the chain is passed through an opening 12 formed in the signalling member and is secured to the box therefrom. An eye 13 is also formed in the signalling member, preferably at a point diametrically opposite the opening 12.

Means is provided for permanently securing the flexible connector 11 at its end opposite to the end carrying the plate to the mail box, and for also detachably securing the plate or signalling member 10 in a raised position on the box. In the form shown, this means can take the form of a hook 14 and the hook includes a bill 15 which inclines outwardly at an angle to the face of the door 6 and an attaching shank 16. The attaching shank 16 passes through an opening 17 in the door and is secured in place against movement by inner and outer clamping nuts 18. One outermost link of the chain receives the shank 16 and is held securely thereby being clamped between the door and one of the nuts.

From the description so far, it can be seen that the signalling member 10 is loosely connected to the door by the flexible connector 11.

In use of the attachment, the signalling disc is held in a raised inoperative, non-signalling position by passing the eye 13 over the bill 15 as is clearly shown in Figures 1 and 2, in full lines.

Upon opening the door 6 by the mail carrier for the depositing of mail therein, the bill 15 of the hook will move to a lowered position with its free end downward and the signalling member 10 will slide off of the same by its weight, and will be held in a suspended position below the box by the flexible connector 11, as best shown in full lines in Figure 2. The flexible connector 11 is long enough, so that the signalling member will hang below the bottom wall of the box and hence the signalling member is readily visible both from the front and the rear of the box to indicate that there is incoming mail in the box.

If the mail carrier is collecting mail from the box and is not placing any incoming mail in the box, the carrier merely has to place the signalling member 10 back on the hook to its inoperative signalling position.

Obviously, the signalling attachment can be easily connected with new mail boxes or with mail boxes already in use.

Various changes in details may be made without departing from the spirit or the scope of my invention, but what I claim is new is:

1. In a rural mail box including a body, a front entrance door normally closing the front end of said box

2. A door-controlled signal for mail box

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3 Claims. (Cl. 232—35)
and hingedly connected to the body at its lower end for downward swinging movement, a signal for indicating whether or not incoming mail has been deposited in the box by a mail carrier including a freely movable signal plate, a hook secured to the front face of the door having a bill spaced from said door with its outer end in a vertical raised position when the door is closed, and a flexible connector secured at one end to the plate and having its other end secured to the door adjacent said hook, said flexible connector being of such a length that when the signal plate is suspended from the connector the same will hang below the lower wall of the box, said signal plate having an eye and being detachably connected to the door by the passing of the eye over the bill of the hook, whereby the signal plate will be held in a raised inoperative position above the bottom of the box, said signal plate being slidable off of the bill of the hook by gravity when the door is swung to a lowered position.

2. In a rural mailbox construction, in combination, a conventional-type rural-type mailbox closed at one end and open at the opposite mail-inserting and removing end, a closing door for said open end, the lower end portion of said door being pivotally mounted on the bottom of said box and said door being adapted to swing outwardly and then downwardly to uncover the open end, a suspension hook fixedly secured to the central exterior side of said door, a signalling plate having an apertured end portion suspended on said hook, and a chain attached at one end to said signalling plate and attached at its opposite end to said mailbox whereby, when the door is swung open, said signalling plate automatically disengages itself from said door and drops from a non-signalling position on the door to a chain suspended signalling position below said box.

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