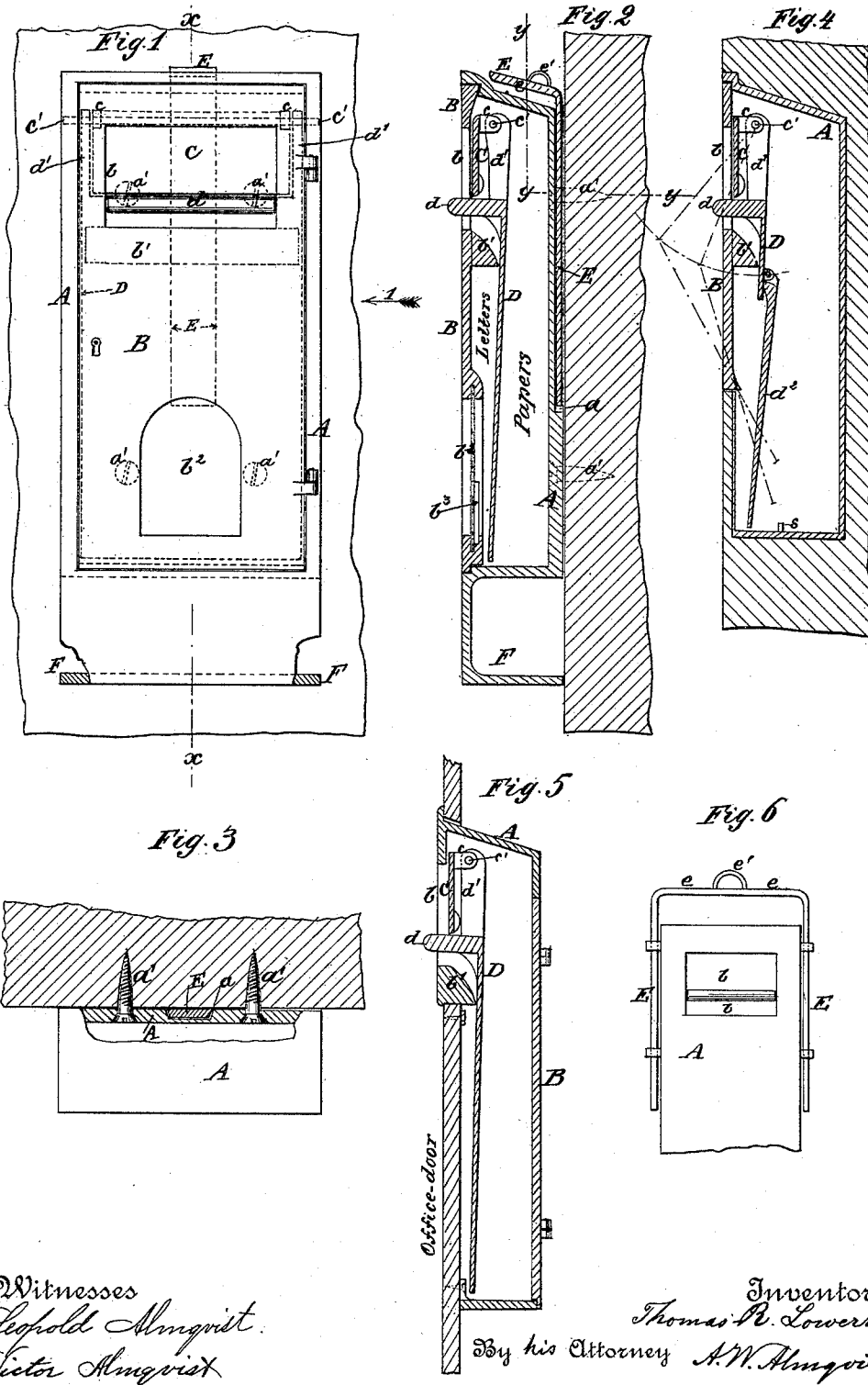


(No Model.)

T. R. LOWERRE.
LETTER BOX.

No. 465,580.

Patented Dec. 22, 1891.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

THOMAS R. LOWERRE, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 465,580, dated December 22, 1891.

Application filed May 14, 1891. Serial No. 392,681. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, THOMAS R. LOWERRE, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Letter-Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

My invention comprises a letter-box of two compartments, one behind the other, one for letters and the other for papers and packages, both accessible from the same door and separated by a swinging partition, which is normally tending toward the smaller or letter compartment, but yielding toward the larger or paper compartment, so as to increase the letter-space with the accumulation of deposited letters; also means for preventing abstraction of letters from the box without opening the lock, and means for holding upon the box mail-matter placed there for collection by the carrier.

The invention will be hereinafter described and claimed with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 represents a front view of my improved letter-box as adapted to be attached to a wall, post, or other object. Fig. 2 is a vertical section of the same, taken on the line *xx* of Fig. 1 and seen in direction of arrow 1. Fig. 3 is a top view, partly broken out along the line *yy* of Fig. 2, showing the arrangement of the sliding mail holder or keeper. Fig. 4 is a vertical section, similar to Fig. 2, of a modification of the letter-box adapted to be placed within a wall, as is usual in flat-houses and other places, and whereby, for neatness of appearance, the door or visible portion may be much shorter than the depth of the box. Fig. 5 is a vertical section similar to Fig. 2, showing the letter-box adapted to be attached to and through an office-door from the inner side thereof, the mail-matter being deposited in the box from the outside of the office-door, and the door of the letter-box being on the back of said box and accessible only from within the office. Fig. 6 is a front view of part of the letter-box, showing a modification of the sliding mail-keeper.

A is the frame of the box, and B the door hinged to the frame, as shown in Figs. 1 and 5.

When the box is secured to the outer surface of a wall, door, post, or other object, the fastening-screws *a'* are applied from the inside of the box through the rear wall thereof, as in Fig. 2, so as to be inaccessible for removal from the outside. In boxes thus secured I prefer to arrange the screws on both sides of the center line of the back or rear wall of the box, so as to leave clear of obstructions a groove *a*, formed in the middle of the back, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, in which a metallic or other sufficiently heavy bar E fits to slide freely. This bar has an angular bend, forming an arm *e*, which projects over the top of the box for the purpose of depressing by the weight of the bar E, and thus retaining upon the box mail-matter placed there to be collected by the mail-carrier.

To facilitate the raising of the bar E, it may be provided with a knob or handle *e'*.

The simplest and most convenient arrangement of the keeper E is that shown in Figs. 1 and 2; but it may be arranged to slide in a guide or guides on one or both sides of the box, with the arm *e* traversing the top in a position about parallel with the front or rear walls, as shown in Fig. 6.

F is a shelf underneath the box formed by an angular bend in the casting, also for the purpose of temporarily holding mail-matter for collection by the carrier, the shelf being accessible from both sides of the box, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2.

The door B has (except when applied to the back of the box, as shown in Fig. 5) an opening *b* through its upper portion, through which opening mail-matter is dropped into the box. At the lower edge of said opening is a cleat *b'*, having a downward and inward inclined surface projecting far enough to shield and protect the letters deposited. This cleat is old, except as applied on the hinged door. Farther down the door may be provided with another opening having a glass pane *b²* and within the latter a tag-pocket *b³*, (see Fig. 2,) showing the name of the owner or on a card deposited by the carrier the time of the last collection, as described in my former patent, No. 277,586, dated May 15, 1883.

The box is divided by a swinging partition

D into two compartments, the smaller one, in front of the partition, being the receptacle for letters and the larger, behind the partition, being the receptacle for newspapers, packages, and circulars.

The partition D, from the shelf, board, or cleat *d* down to the bottom of box, is solid—i. e., without opening—and of width to fit the inside width of the box, with clearance only to move freely backward and forward. This partition has arms *d'* rigid with it, which arms extend upward behind the front at opposite sides of the opening *b* and serve to suspend the partition in position to swing upon pivots or a rod *c'*, having bearings in the side walls of the box. The holes in the arms *d'*, by which the partition is thus pivoted, are arranged forward of the formal longitudinal center line of gravity of the partition, thereby causing the latter to hang normally forward with its lower end, so as to limit the letter-space to its minimum until swung back by the accumulated letters, thus also exerting a constant forward pressure upon the letters and preventing them from getting edgewise across the space.

The board *d* is a rigid part of the partition D, projecting forward from the same through the opening *b* a little beyond the front surface of the box, and is of suitable width to fill the width of the opening *b* with clearance to move freely. It is also so arranged, as shown in the drawings, that while projecting through the opening *b* it divides it into an upper larger opening, through which newspapers and packages may be dropped over the board *d* into the rear compartment of the box, and a lower small opening, through which letters may be dropped under the board *d* and over the cleat *b'* into the front compartment of the box.

A reference to Fig. 2 will make clear that an attempt to abstract letters deposited in the box would be frustrated, because the necessary movement inward of the partition D to gain needed space between it and the cleat *b'* brings the outer edge of the board *d* nearer to the lower edge of the opening *b* and closes the letter-drop opening too much for access.

C is a swing-door covering from the inside the upper or paper drop-opening for the purpose of excluding dust. It is suspended by perforated lugs *c* upon the same rod or pivots *c'* on which the partition D hangs, and is swung inward and thus raised when passing mail-matter through the opening, after which it resumes its normal position by gravitation only.

When the box is placed within a wall, as in Fig. 4, and the door B is shorter than the depth of the box, I make the lower part *d²* of the partition D separately and hinge it to the back of the upper main part sufficiently far up to cause it to rise and swing out with the said upper part through the door-opening when the partition D is swung forward to give access to the paper-compartment.

For removing the mail from the box, the

door is first opened and the letter-compartment emptied. Then the partition D is swung forward and the paper-compartment emptied. When the door is in the rear of the box, as in Fig. 5, it is evident that access is first gained to the paper-compartment and then to the letter-compartment.

When the distance between the front and rear walls of the box is so great that a swinging back of the partition D against the rear wall would leave sufficient space between the front edge of the shelf *d* and the cleat *b'* for abstraction of letters, such excessive throw of the partition D is prevented by a stop *s*, secured, preferably, to the bottom of the box, as shown in Fig. 4.

I claim—

1. In combination with a letter-box, a partition dividing the said box in two compartments, one for letters and one for other mail-matter, said partition being suspended in the said box in position normally tending to close the openings through which the letters are deposited in the letter-compartment.

2. In combination with a letter-box having a cleat below the drop-opening, a dividing-partition suspended within said box in position normally tending toward said cleat and provided with a board above said cleat, said board covering the entrance to the letter-compartment.

3. The combination, with a letter-box having a drop-opening *b*, of a partition D, dividing the said box in two compartments, one for letters and one for other mail-matter, and a board or shelf *d*, dividing the said opening into two drop-openings leading, respectively, one to each of the said compartments.

4. The combination, with a letter-box having a door shorter than the box, of a swinging partition, dividing said box in two compartments, the lower part of the said partition being hinged to the upper or main part, substantially as described.

5. The combination, with a letter-box having the drop-opening on a vertical part thereof and a closed top without opening and having a vertical guide or groove in one of its walls, of a bar sliding in said guide and provided with an arm extending over the top of said box for holding mail-matter thereon.

6. The combination, with a letter-box having the drop-opening on a vertical part thereof and a rearwardly downward inclining closed top without opening and having a vertical guide or groove in the outside of its rear wall, of a bar sliding in said guide and provided with an arm extending forward over the top of said box for holding mail-matter thereon.

7. The combination, with a letter-box, of a door hinged thereto and provided with a drop-opening *b* and a suspended partition dividing the said box in two compartments, said partition having a shelf or board *d* projecting through said drop-opening and dividing the same into two drop-openings leading,

respectively, one to each of the said compartments.

8. The combination, with a letter-box having drop-opening *b*, of an interior swinging
5 partition *D*, having a shelf *d* projecting in said drop-opening, and a stop *s*, limiting the rearward movement of the said partition, substantially as set forth.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my invention I have signed my name, in 10 presence of two witnesses, this 9th day of May, 1891.

THOMAS R. LOWERRE.

Witnesses:

ALFRED K. MONTGOMERY,
JOHN JENNINGS.