R. STEGEMANN & A. JOHANNES.

ELECTRICAL INDICATOR FOR MAIL BOXES.

APPLICATION FILED APR. 17, 1914.

1,124,352.

Patented Jan. 12, 1915.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

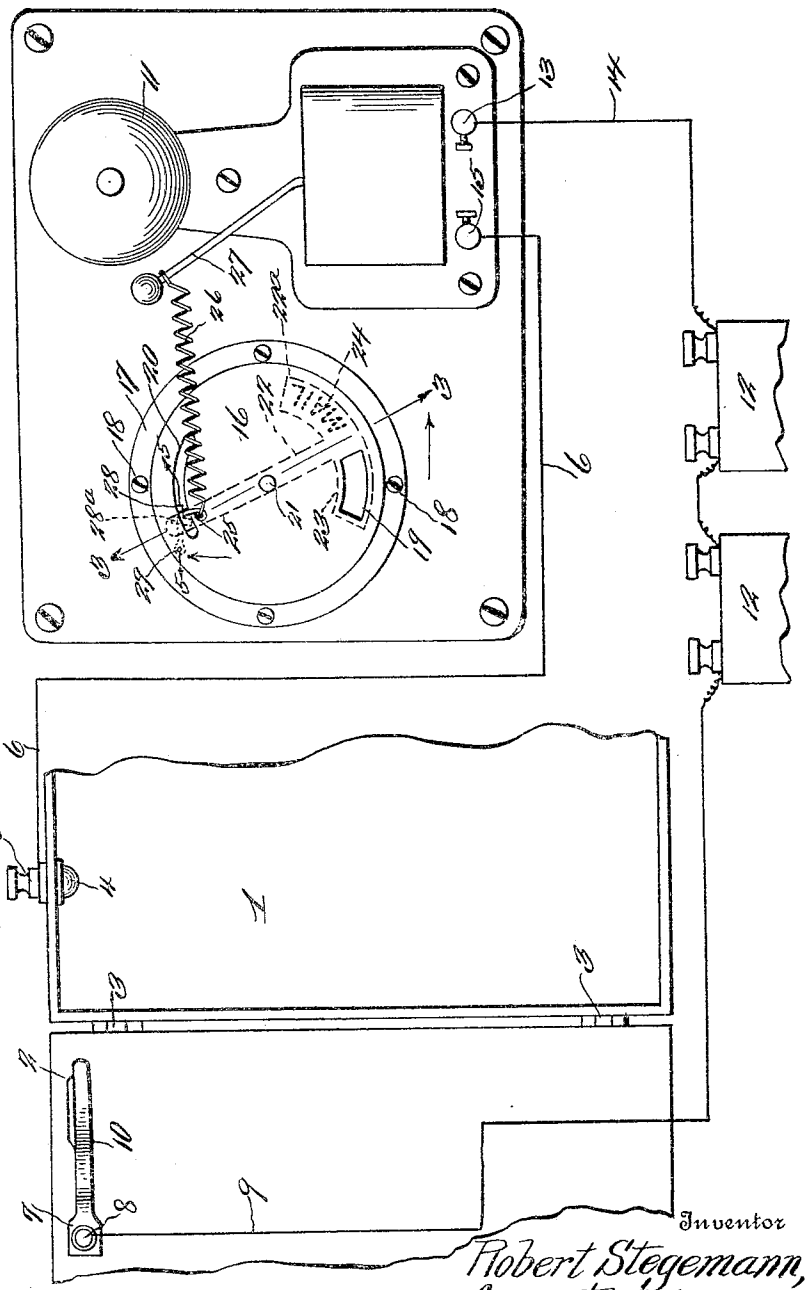


Fig. 1.

Witnesses

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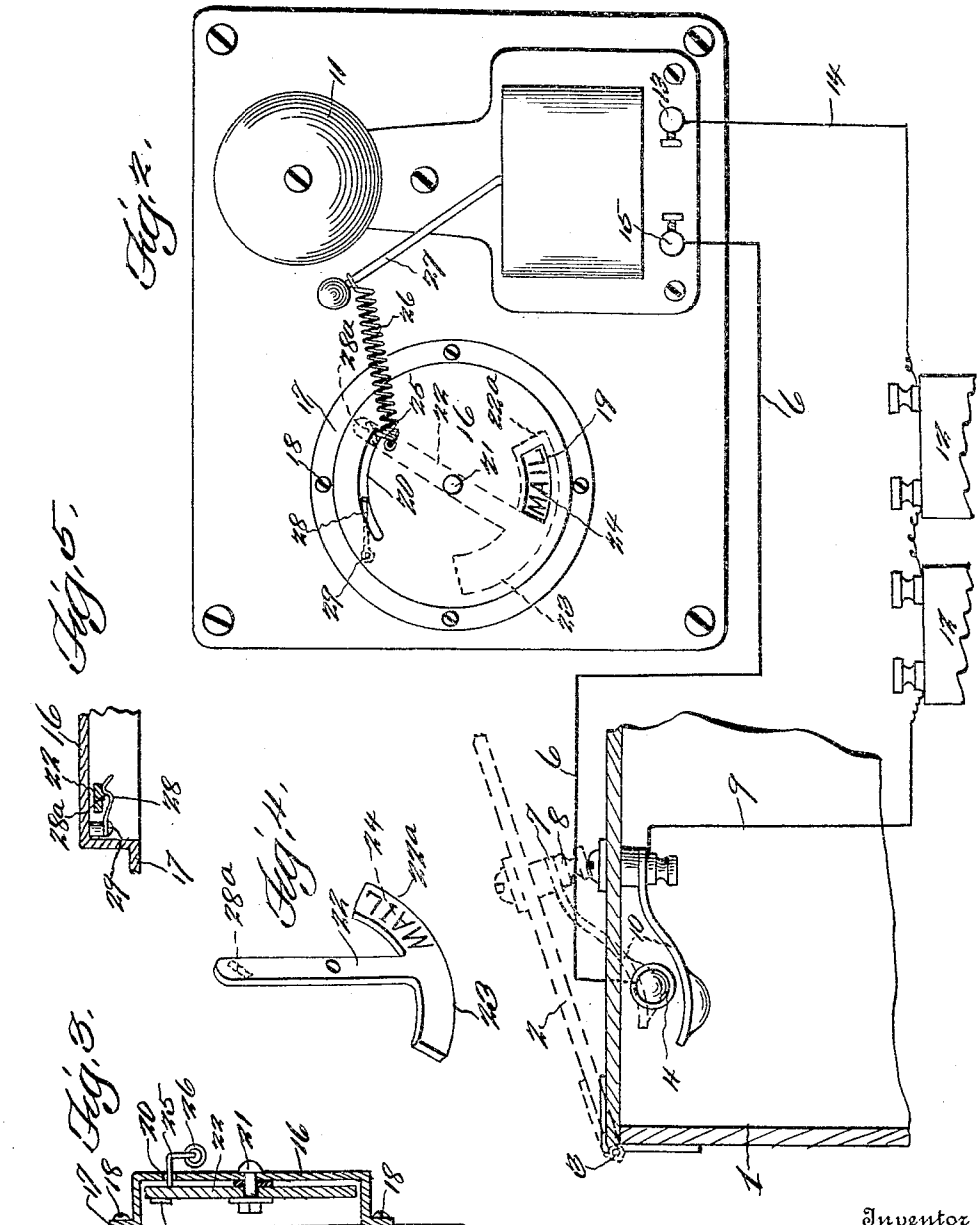
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ROBERT STEGEMANN AND AUGUST JOHANNES, OF TWO RIVERS, WISCONSIN.

ELECTRICAL INDICATOR FOR MAIL-BOXES.

1,124,352. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Jan. 12, 1915.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, ROBERT STEGEMANN and AUGUST JOHANNES, citizens of the United States, residing at Two Rivers, in the county of Manitowoc and State of Wisconsin, have invented a new and useful Electric Indicator for Mail-Boxes; and we do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention relates to a new and useful improved indicator for mail boxes, and the object of the invention is to provide means in circuit with a circuit closer between the body of the mail box and its closure, for not only sounding an alarm indicating that mail has been placed in the box, but also for revealing a sign (Mail), which likewise indicates that mail has been placed in the box. The alarm notifies the occupants in case they are at home of the insertion of the mail, while the sign indicates the insertion of the mail upon the return of occupants, that is, in case they are not at home at the time of placing the mail in the box.

In practical fields the details of construction may be subjected to alterations, falling within the scope of that which is claimed.

The invention comprises further features and combination of parts, as hereinafter set forth, shown in the drawings and claimed.

In the drawings:—Figure 1 is a diagrammatic view showing the alarm device and mail indicator in circuit with a mail box and the closure thereof, showing the mail indicator in its normal position. Fig. 2 is a similar view showing the closure of the mail box closed, the circuit having been previously and momentarily closed as the closure was being finally closed, and the mail indicator in its abnormal position revealing the mail sign. Fig. 3 is a sectional view on line 3—3 of Fig. 1. Fig. 4 is a detail view of the oscillatory lever of the indicator showing the means for holding the lever in its normal position. Fig. 5 is a sectional view on line 5—5 of Fig. 1.

Referring more especially to the drawings, 1 designates a conventional form of mail box having a lid or closure 2 hinged at 3. The body of the box is provided upon its interior with a contact member 4, which is secured in place by the binding screw 5, which forms a terminal with a wire or lead 6. A plate 7 having a binding screw or post 8 (which is in circuit with the wire or lead 9) is secured to the lid or closure 2. This plate 7 is constructed with a contact blade 10, to coöperate momentarily with the contact member 4, when the lid or closure is in the act of being finally closed, so as to momentarily close the circuit between the alarm device or bell 11 and the batteries 12, which will actuate the alarm device or bell. The batteries are electrically connected, and one of them in turn is electrically connected to the binding post 13 of the bell by the wire 14, the wire 6 is in turn connected to the binding post 15 of said bell.

The mail indicator comprises a clocklike casing 16 having a flange 17, through which screws or other fastenings 18 pass for securing the casing to a base or the wall of a room. The face of the casing has a segmental opening 19 adjacent its lower periphery, and a segmental slot 20 adjacent its upper periphery. Pivoted to the casing by means of a bolt or other suitable fastening 21 is an indicator blade or lever 22^a, the lower end of which is provided with laterally extending segmental tongues 22 and 23. The tongue 22 has the word "Mail" 24 printed, embossed or otherwise stamped thereon, while the segmental tongue 23 is blank. When the blade or lever is in its normal position as in Fig. 1, the blank segmental tongue 23 covers the opening 19, but when the alarm device is sounded, which in turn actuates the blade or lever, the tongue 22^a is in registration with the opening 19, thereby revealing or displaying the word "Mail", which indicates that mail has been placed in the box. The upper end of the blade or lever is provided with a projection 25, extending through the segmental slot 20, which projection 25 has one end of the coil spring 26 connected to it, while the other end of the spring is connected as shown to the bell clapper arm 27 of the bell 11. When the blade or lever is in its normal position, the rib 28^a of the blade is engaged by the spring device or catch 28, which is secured at 29 to said casing 16. This spring device or catch 28 is of sufficient tension, so as to overcome the tension of the spring 26, to hold the lever or blade in its normal position as in Fig. 1, but when the alarm device or bell 11 (which is in circuit with the circuit closer of a mail box), is momentarily actuated, the bell clapper

arm will vibrate toward the bell 30, which will intermittently stretch the spring 26, thereby increasing its tension, sufficiently to overcome the tension of the spring device or catch 28, which will then release the rib 28ª, thereby allowing the lever to assume the abnormal position shown in Fig. 2, thereby displaying or revealing the mail sign. After the mail man inserts the mail in the box, he closes the lid. As the lid becomes partially closed, as in Fig. 2, the contact member 10 is just about to engage the contact member 4. After the two contact members engage, they remain so engaged only momentarily as shown in dotted lines in Fig. 2, and until the lid is finally closed, as shown in full lines in Fig. 2. If desired, the mail man may hold the lid for a short period so as to cause the bell to ring for a corresponding period, then the mail man may finally close the lid, which will cause the contact member to disengage, which will again open the circuit, which will permit the alarm device or bell to cease ringing. However, after the bell has once been rung, the mail indicator blade has been actuated, and remains so permanently, until the occupants of the house restore the indicator blade or lever to its normal position as in Fig. 1. If the occupants of the house are at home when the bell is first rung, then the mail is removed from the box and the blade or lever is restored to its normal position, but if the occupants are out, the bell is momentarily rung and the lever is permanently actuated to the position shown in Fig. 2, and remains so until the occupants return, and restore the same to its normal position. In both instances, that is, whether the occupants are at home or not, the lever is actuated.

The invention having been set forth what is claimed as new and useful is:—

In combination with a momentarily actuated alarm bell, a mail indicator comprising a casing having an opening in its face adjacent its lower periphery, and a slot in its face adjacent its upper periphery disposed diametrically opposite the opening, a lever pivoted to the casing substantially midway of the opening and the slot, the lower end of said lever having a blank tongue to normally close said opening and a mail indicating tongue adapted to display the word "Mail" through said opening when the lever is actuated, the upper end of said lever having a projection extending through the slot, means engaging said projections to hold the lever with the blank tongue normally covering said opening and connections between said projections and the bell clapper of the alarm bell for actuating said lever, when the bell is actuated to display the word mail through said opening.

In testimony whereof we have signed our names to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

ROBERT STEGEMANN.
AUGUST JOHANNES.

Witnesses:
CLARA JOHANNES,
WILLIAM BUNKE.

Copies of this patent may be obtained for five cents each, by addressing the "Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D. C."