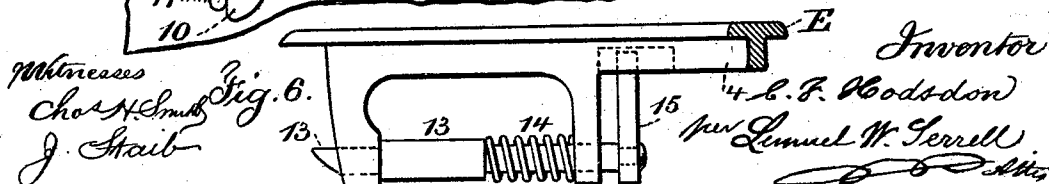
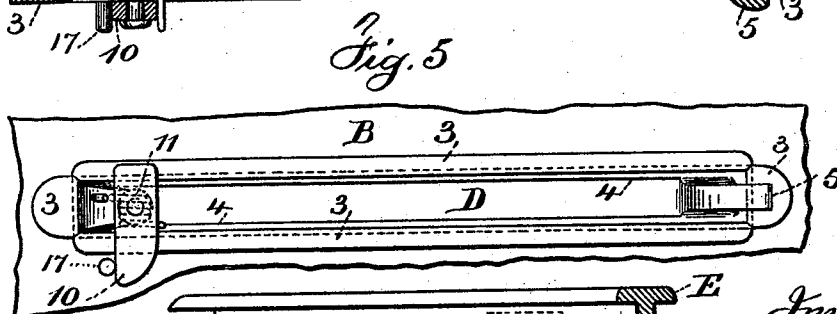
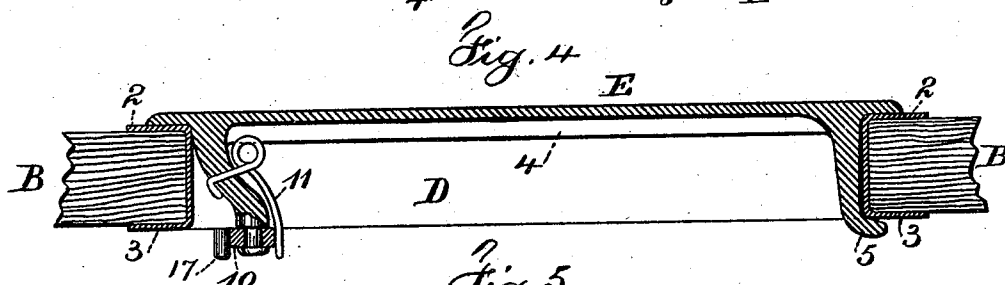
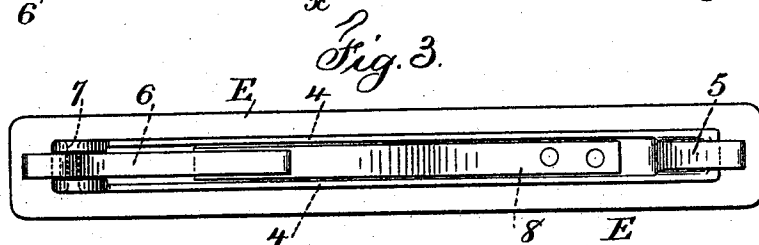
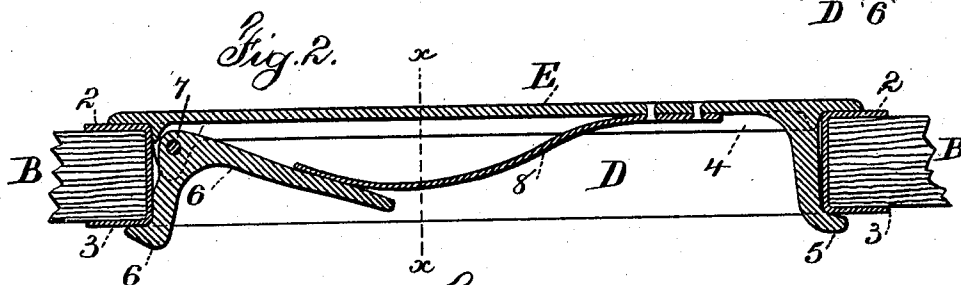
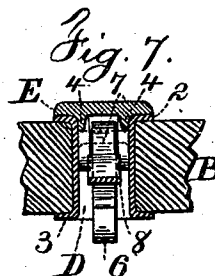
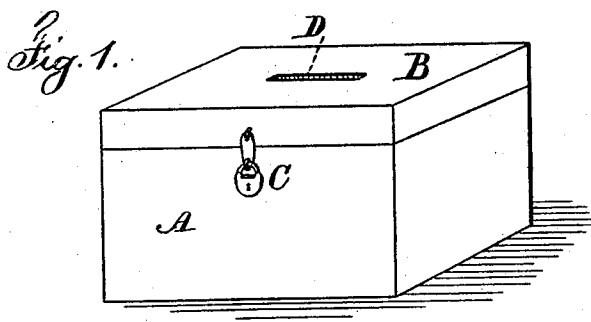


(No Model.)

C. F. HODSDON.
BALLOT BOX.

No. 478,283.

Patented July 5, 1892.



Witnesses
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J. Straub

Inventor

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per Emanuel W. Ferrell

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES FRED HODSDON, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

BALLOT-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 478,283, dated July 5, 1892.

Application filed January 18, 1892. Serial No. 418,366. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES FRED HODSDON, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city and State of New York, have invented an Improvement in Ballot-Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

In many instances, especially where the secret ballot is made use of, the ballot is of considerable size and is sometimes termed a "blanket-ballot," and this when folded up cannot be inserted into the ballot-box except through a slot of considerable size, and under all circumstances, whether the slot in the ballot-box is large or small, it is desirable that such slot shall be permanently closed as soon as the voting has terminated, in order that the contents of the box may not be tampered with and the box may be turned over to the proper canvassers without being opened. In some instances efforts have been made to close the slot in the ballot-box; but it required the box to be unlocked before this could be done. Thereby the risk of the ballots being tampered with was increased rather than lessened.

The present invention is made for easily and rapidly closing the slot in the ballot-box by a movable cap and securing the same by a spring locking device, to which access cannot be obtained until the ballot-box is opened. The consequence is that the party receiving the votes can close the slot when the voting has terminated and access to the ballots is effectually prevented until the box has been opened by the proper parties having a key to the same.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view representing an ordinary ballot-box. Fig. 2 is a section through the slot in the lid longitudinally and in a magnified size. Fig. 3 is an inverted plan of the cap or cover to be applied to the slot in the ballot-box. Fig. 4 is a section, and Fig. 5 is an inverted plan, of a modification in the locking device. Fig. 6 shows the latch as fitted to slide horizontally; and Fig. 7 is a cross-section at the line xx , Fig. 2.

The ballot-box is to be of any desired character. Usually it is of wood, with a bottom portion A and a lid B, which are properly secured together and locked by any suitable lock, such as represented at C, and the slit through which the ballots are introduced is usually at

the top of the box. I have shown the same at D. Where the slot D is of large size, the edges thereof are liable to become injured or broken, especially when the ballot-box is of comparatively soft wood. To prevent this, I make use of a lining to the slot, made of sheet-metal—such, for instance, as brass or steel—such metal being in the form of a strip bent up and joined at the ends and of a size to fit into the opening or slit in the ballot-box, and the width of the sheet-metal strip is greater than the thickness of the wood of the ballot-box, in order that the edges of the strip of sheet-metal may project both above and below the surface of the box, and the sheet metal is notched at the angles and bent over, as shown at 2 and 3, to form flanges upon the top and bottom surfaces of the lid of the ballot-box and around the opening therein. By this means a complete lining with flanges is provided for the slot in the ballot-box, which not only prevents injury to the wood, but it also allows for the removable cap being more firmly secured at the slot, as hereinafter described, and it prevents a knife or other instrument being thrust through the wood of the box to give access to the locking device of the cap.

The cap E is of a size to effectually cover the slot in the ballot-box, and it is preferably provided with a rim 4, projecting down into the slot, the cap itself being wider than the slot to form overlapping flanges, as represented, and this cap is adapted to be moved so as to give access to the slot of the ballot-box for the insertion of ballots, and when the box is to be closed the cap is brought over the opening in the box and secured by a spring locking device of any suitable character. I find it advantageous to make the cap E so that it is easily removed from the ballot-box and can be kept in the pocket of the inspector or clerk, so as to be entirely out of the way while the ballot-box is in use, and with this object in view I provide upon the under side of the cap E a hook or finger 5, which is adapted to pass through the slot and hook under the cover at one end of the slot, and the spring locking device is applied at the other end of the cap, and this spring locking device is to be adapted to automatically engage with the under side of the cover and hold the cap in

position as soon as it is inserted into the slot of the box.

I have represented in Figs. 2, 3, and 7 a latch 6, pivoted at 7 and provided with a spring 8, and the hook is of such a length that when the cap is applied to the slot of the ballot-box the hook passes down through the slot and catches beneath the lower flange 3 of the metal lining to the slot. Hence it is not possible to remove the cap until the ballot-box has been unlocked and opened, so as to give access to the latch 6, and by this means it is impossible to introduce any ballots or to abstract any from the box after the cap has been applied to the same.

In Figs. 4 and 5 I have represented the spring locking device in the form of a button 10, actuated by a spring 11, and this button in its normal position stands across the slot, and when the cap is to be applied to the slot of the ballot-box such cap E is put in position with the hook or finger 5 passing through the slot and beneath the lid, and the button 10 is turned against the action of the spring, so as to be in line with the slot, and in this position the cap is pressed down to its place and the button passes through the slot, and by the spring it is partially rotated, so as to be turned transversely of the slot, and the button being longer than the width of the slot the ends of the button engage the under side of the lid and effectually prevent the cap being lifted

up or removed. A stop is provided at 17 to limit the movement of the button 10.

In Fig. 6 the latch 13 is fitted to slide horizontally, and it is projected by a spring 14 and may have an arm 15 at the back end, passing up within the rim 4, so as to guide the same and also form a head to be seized by the fingers in drawing back the latch.

I claim as my invention—

1. The combination, with a ballot-box having a slot therein, of a removable cap adapted to cover the slot and having a finger near one end to project down through the slot and hook beneath the cover and a spring-latch near the other end of the cover to pass down into the slot and hold the cover, substantially as set forth.

2. The combination, with a ballot-box having a slot therein, of a cover of a size to cover the slot in the ballot-box and provided with a rim fitting into the slot and preventing lateral motion of the cover and a spring locking device upon the cover to pass through the slot and engage the inner surface of the ballot-box, substantially as set forth.

Signed by me this 14th day of January, 1892.

CHARLES FRED HODSDON.

Witnesses

GEO. T. PINCKNEY,
WILLIAM G. MOTT.