No. 768,100. PATENTED AUG. 23, 1904.

F. L. WALSH.

MAIL BOX.

APPLICATION FILED FEB. 12, 1903.

NO MODEL.

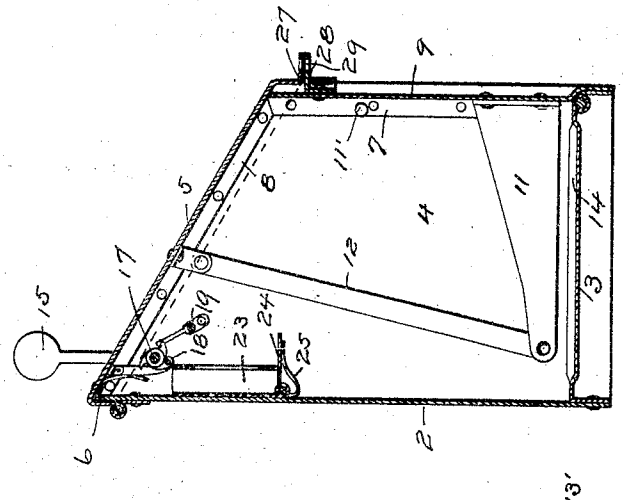


FIG 3

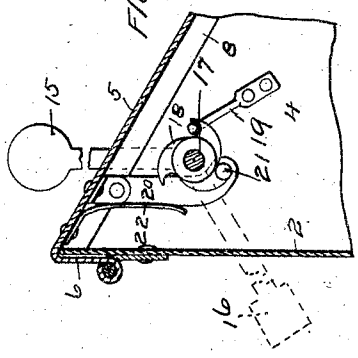


FIG 4

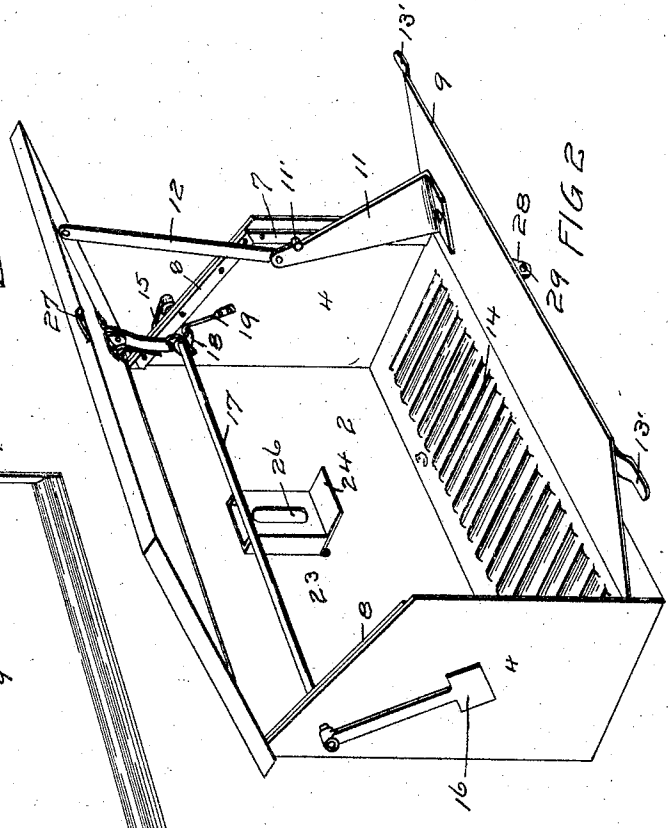


FIG 2

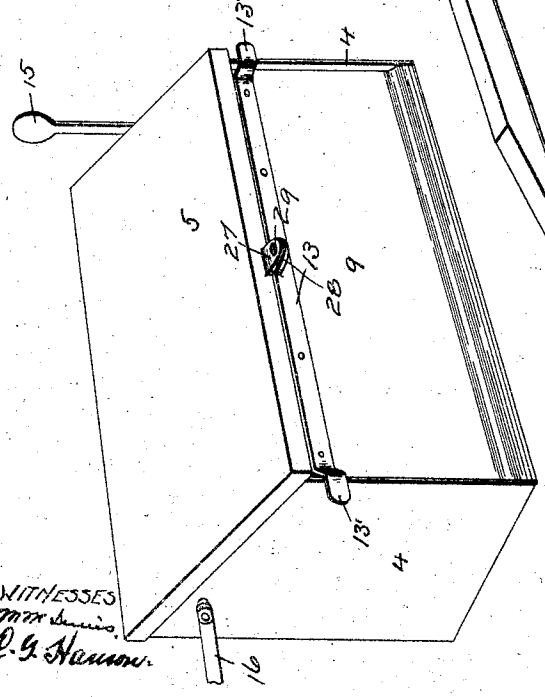


FIG 1

WITNESSES
Max Senio.
C. G. Hanson.

INVENTOR
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BY Paul & Paul
HIS ATTORNEYS

No. 768,100. Patented August 23, 1904.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FRANK L. WALSH, OF LONG LAKE, MINNESOTA.

MAIL-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 768,100, dated August 23, 1904.

Application filed February 12, 1903. Serial No. 143,035. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FRANK L. WALSH, residing at Long Lake, Hennepin county, Minnesota, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to mail-boxes capable of general use, but designed particularly for farmers on rural free-delivery routes.

The object of the invention is to provide a box that will be simple in construction and inexpensive to manufacture and one from which the carrier can easily and conveniently remove the mail to be taken to the office and as readily place therein the mail to be delivered.

A further object is to provide means for indicating to the farmer when the carrier has deposited mail in the box and to the carrier when the box contains mail to be collected.

Other objects of the invention will appear from the following detailed description.

The invention consists generally in a box having a hinged cover and wall provided with pivotally-connected members or arms.

Further, the invention consists in pivoted signal devices.

Further, the invention consists in a coin box or receptacle, and, further, the invention consists in various constructions and combinations, all as hereinafter described, and particularly pointed out in the claims.

In the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification, Figure 1 is a perspective of a mail-box embodying my invention in its closed position. Fig. 2 is a similar view showing the box open. Fig. 3 is a transverse section, and Fig. 4 is a detail of the signal-operating mechanism.

In the drawings, 2 represents the rear wall, 3 the bottom, and 4 the ends, of a mail-box, which I prefer to make of sheet metal, though any other suitable material may be employed. The upper edges of the ends 4 are inclined or beveled, as shown, so that the cover will rest in a sloping or inclined position thereon, and the rear edge of the cover is provided with a depending flange 6, that is hinged to the back wall 2. 7 and 8 are straps secured to the walls 4 and serve to strengthen and brace the same.

A rural-delivery route is usually quite long, and it is essential that the carrier lose no time in removing mail from the box or placing it therein. It is evident that if the box has a large opening the carrier can work much more expeditiously than where the opening into the box is small, and I therefore prefer to hinge the front wall 9 to the bottom 3 and set it in from the edge thereof against the straps 7 to form a substantially weather-tight joint, and I also prefer to extend the flange 6 around the edge of the cover 5 to lap down over the walls of the box to render it weatherproof.

An arm 11 is secured on the wall 9 and pivotally connected at its inner end with the cover 5 by a link 12. A stop 11′ limits the movement of the arm 11 in one direction. The normal position of the arm and link is shown in Fig. 3. This connection between the front wall and cover will cause their simultaneous movement, and it is evident that when both are thrown open to the position shown in Fig. 2 a large opening is provided through which the carrier can easily remove mail from the box or place it therein, and in case there is no mail to be removed the carrier upon opening the box can throw the mail to be delivered therein without stopping his delivery-wagon.

At the upper edge of the wall 9 I prefer to provide a strap 13, which braces said edge and is provided with projecting ends 13′ to be grasped when it is desired to open or close the box. For convenience in removing the mail I prefer to provide a series of corrugations 14 in the bottom, which will allow the carrier to slip his fingers under the letters or papers and gather them up without loss of time, and, as shown in Fig. 3, I prefer to set the bottom up between the end and side walls for the purpose of making the box as near weatherproof as possible and at the same time strengthen the base.

The forward edge of the cover overlaps the front wall to protect the interior of the box from the weather, and, as shown by the drawings, I prefer to arrange the pivot connecting the link 12 with the cover nearer the hinge of said cover than the corresponding pivot at

the other end of the link is to the hinge of the front wall. It will therefore happen that the pivot connecting the link and cover will swing on a shorter arc than the opposite pivot, and consequently the initial movement of the cover will be quicker than the corresponding movement of the wall, and when the box is opened the flange of the cover will clear the upper edge of the front wall.

The mail-boxes are sometimes placed some little distance from the farmer's house, and it frequently happens that the carrier will pass by without any of the occupants of the farm-house seeing him, and in that case it will be necessary to make a trip to the box to ascertain whether or not any mail has been placed therein. It will also be necessary for the carrier to open the mail-box to ascertain whether the farmer has placed any mail therein to be collected. To avoid such unnecessary examinations of the box, I prefer to provide signal devices consisting of targets 15 and 16, secured upon the ends of a shaft 17, that is arranged within the box and extending through the walls 4 thereof. These targets are oppositely arranged, one being up while the other is down, and one of them will be appropriate for the carrier-signal and the other for the farmer. A three-toothed ratchet 18 is secured on said shaft, and a spring 19, engaging the teeth of said ratchet, prevents premature movement of the same. A dog 20 is provided on the cover 5 and carries a pin 21, that is normally held in engagement with the teeth of the ratchet by a spring 22. When the cover 5 is raised for the signal 15, being in the position shown in Fig. 4, the dog will rotate the ratchet and shaft one step and swing the signal to a down position, raising the other signal a corresponding distance. Raising the cover three times will cause a complete revolution. Assuming that the circular signal is designated as the carrier's signal, upon placing mail in the box for the farmer the carrier will swing this signal to its up position, and as the signal will be painted some contrasting color from that of the box the farmer will be able to distinguish it from a distance and upon seeing the signal in its raised position will understand that mail has been placed in the box for the family. Upon opening the cover to remove the mail the signal will be swung down to a depressed position. When the farmer places mail in the box to be collected, he will raise the other signal, which will preferably be painted a different color from that of the carrier-signal and is also of different shape. The carrier seeing this signal in its raised position will understand that there is mail in the box to be collected, although there may be no mail to be delivered. If the circular signal is not raised when the carrier passes, the family will understand that no mail has been delivered, and if the carrier in passing does not see the square signal raised he will understand that there is nothing in the box to be collected.

It sometimes happens that the farmer has no postage-stamps for a letter that he desires to mail or desires a number of stamps or a money-order, and in that case it is customary to place the loose money in the box to be taken up by the carrier on his route. It is inconvenient for the carrier to gather up this money, particularly where it is in small coins lying in the bottom of the box, and I therefore prefer to provide a coin-box 23, secured preferably to the rear wall on the inside and having an open upper end through which the coins are deposited. A plate 24 closes the bottom or lower end of the box and projects beyond the same and is hinged to the rear wall, being held in engagement with the box 23 by a spring 25. The coins are removed from the box by striking the plate 24 and depressing the same, whereupon the coins will slide out into the hands of the operator. To enable the carrier to distinguish whether there are any coins or not in the box, I provide a slot 26 therein, which may or may not be covered with glass, as preferred.

Ordinarily boxes of this kind are not locked; but I have shown clips 27 and 28 on the cover and front wall having holes 29, through which a padlock may be inserted and the box securely locked.

I claim as my invention—

1. A rural-delivery mail-box, comprising a bottom and a rear wall secured thereon, a front wall hinged to said bottom, end walls connecting said rear and front walls, a hinged cover having depending flanged edges that overhang and form weatherproof joints with the walls of said box when it is closed, and pivotal connections provided between said cover and front wall, the pivot uniting said connection to said cover being nearer the hinge of the latter than the opposite pivot and the hinge of said wall, substantially as described.

2. A rural-delivery mail-box, substantially rectangular in form, comprising a bottom and a rear wall secured thereon, a front wall hinged to the forward edge of said bottom, a strap or brace provided on said front wall and projecting beyond the ends thereof, end walls secured to said bottom between said front and rear walls and having upper edges that are inclined toward the front of the box, and a cover having a depending rear edge that is hinged to said rear wall below the upper edge thereof and a forward edge that overhangs said front wall when the box is closed, and pivotal connections between said front wall and cover, the connection to said cover being nearer the hinge thereof than the corresponding connection is to the hinge of said wall thereby causing a quicker initial movement

of said cover than the corresponding movement of said front wall, for the purpose specified.

3. In a rural-delivery mail-box, the combination, with the box-body, of a shaft mounted therein, signals 15 and 16 mounted on said shaft and oppositely arranged, a hinged cover, a dog carried thereby, and a ratchet mechanism provided on said shaft and arranged to be engaged by said dog to oscillate said shaft and raise or lower said signals.

4. In a rural-delivery mail-box, the combination, with the wall thereof, of a coin-box secured thereon and having open ends, a plate hinged beneath the open lower end of said box and projecting beyond the same, and a spring for normally holding said plate in engagement with said box.

5. A rural-delivery mail-box, comprising a bottom and rear and end walls secured thereon, a front wall hinged to said bottom, a cover hinged on said rear wall and having depending flanged edges that overhang and form weatherproof joints with the walls of the box when it is closed, an arm rigidly secured to said front wall, a link pivotally connecting said arm and said cover, and a stop arranged to engage said arm and limit the outward movement of said front wall, substantially as described.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this 9th day of February, 1903.

FRANK L. WALSH.

In presence of—
RICHARD PAUL,
C. G. HANSON.