C. J. WEEKS.
POSTMAN'S RACK.
(Application filed Mar. 29, 1902.)

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Witnesses

J. P. Britt,

C. U. Weeks,

Attorneys
To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES J. WEEKS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Tarrytown, in the county of Westchester, State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Postmen’s Racks; and I 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 racks in general, and more particularly to racks for use by postmen in sorting mail to correspond to the houses on their routes, the object of the invention being to provide a rack in which may be placed the letters as they are sorted, and which rack may be manipulated to fold the holding-fingers thereof down against the body of the rack when the latter is not in use.

A further object of the invention is to provide a construction which will be simple and cheap of manufacture and easily manipulated.

In the drawings forming a portion of this specification, and in which like numerals of reference indicate similar parts in the several views, Figure 1 is a perspective view showing the rack with the holding-fingers in operative positions. Fig. 2 is a longitudinal sectional view showing the rack with the fingers folded down against the base. Fig. 3 is an elevation showing one pair of fingers.

Referring now to the drawings, the present rack comprises a box-shaped base 5, in the sides of which are formed perforations 6, which align in pairs, while in one end 7 of the base is formed an opening 8.

In connection with the base of the rack there is employed a shift-rod 10, through which are formed transverse perforations 11, and with the shift-bar are connected the fingers of the rack. The fingers are formed of wires, each of which is bent into U shape to form the arms 12 and 13 and the connecting-bight, which is divided by the offset supplemental bight 14 to form the two main bight-sections 15 and 16. The supplemental bight of each wire is engaged with a perforation 11 of the shift-rod 10. The shift-rod is disposed within the base, and the portions 15 and 16 of each wire are engaged with a pair of alling perforations 6, and as the portions 15 and 16 are offset and parallel with the supplemental bight 14 the arms 12 and 13 will be rocked into erect positions or into reclining position against the outside faces of the sides of the base when the shift-rod is reciprocated. To hold the shift-rod normally and yieldably at one limit of its movement and in position to hold the arms lowered against the outside faces of the sides of the base, a helical spring 17 is attached to one end of the shift-rod and to the adjacent end of the base, so that when the rod is moved to swing the arms into erect positions the helical spring is drawn outwardly or put under tension. When the rod is released, the spring returns to its normal position and carries the rod with it. When the rod is moved against the action of the spring, the arms are swung into erect positions, and when the rod is moved by the spring the arms are lowered. At the opposite end of the shift-rod from the helical spring is a spring latch-tongue 20, which projects through the opening in the end of the base and at the free end of which is a knob or handle 21, which may be grasped to draw the rod against the tendency of the helical spring to engage the shoulder 22 of the latch-tongue with the outer face of the end of the base to hold the rod against the influence of the helical spring and with the arms in erect position. When the rack is not in use or when it is to be put away, the latch-tongue may be raised from engagement with the end of the base, and the helical spring will then draw the rod longitudinally and swing the arms against the base.

It will be noted that each of the wire members of the rack is in effect a double bell-crank lever, and when the ends thereof or arms are projected above the base the letters or other pieces of mail may be disposed between each pair of arms and the next pair of arms, the arms acting to separate the letters into separate piles.

In practice modifications of the specific construction shown may be made, and any suitable materials and proportions may be used for the various parts without departing from the spirit of the invention.

What is claimed is—

1. A rack comprising a base having a closed
upper surface to support letters of different lengths; said base having an opening in one end, a plurality of U-shaped wires having their bight portions journaled in the sides of the base for movement of their end portions above and below the upper surface of the base said bight portions being centrally offset, a single shift-rod pivoted to the bight portions and projecting at one end through the opening in the end of the base, and a spring connected with the opposite end of the shift-rod and to the adjacent end of the base to hold the rod yieldably at one limit of its movement with the ends of the U-shaped wires in lowered positions, the projecting end of the shift-rod having a notch to receive the end of the base to hold the rod against the action of the spring.

2. A postman's rack comprising a base having a continuous upper surface, and having an opening at one end, arms pivotally mounted in the sides of the base for movement into position above and below the upper surface of the base, a shift-rod mounted in the base and operatively connected with the arms for shifting them and a spring connected to one end of the shift-rod and to the base for holding the rod with the arms lowered, the opposite end of the shift-rod projecting from the base and adapted for engagement with the base to hold the rod against the action of the spring.

3. A rack comprising a base, a plurality of U-shaped wires having their bight portions journaled in the base and having central offset supplemental bight portions, a shift-rod pivotally connected with the supplemental bight portions, a spring connected with the shift-rod for holding it yieldably at one limit of its motion, and a latch-tongue connected with the opposite end of the rod and adapted for engagement with the base to hold the rod against the tendency of the spring.

4. A rack comprising a hollow base having a continuous upper surface, a plurality of separating devices connected in pairs and journaled in the sides of the base for movement into erect and reclining positions above and below the upper surface of the base respectively, a shift-rod within the base connecting the separating devices for actuating them, and yieldable means within the base and connected with the rod for holding it yieldably with the separating devices in erect positions, said rod projecting at one end from the base and constructed to engage the base to hold the rod against the action of the yieldable holding means.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

CHARLES J. WEEKS.

Witnesses:

W. C. WRIGHT,

HERBERT H. SMITH.