

(No Model.)

I. G. LANE.
STREET LETTER BOX.

No. 446,257.

Patented Feb. 10, 1891.

Fig. 1.

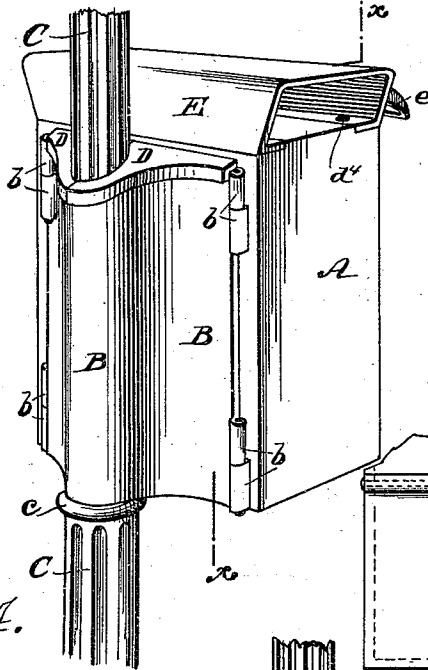


Fig. 2.

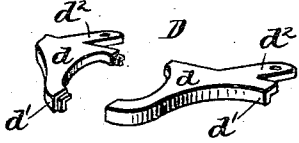


Fig. 3.

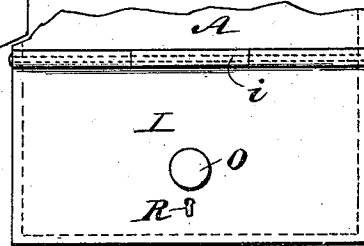


Fig. 4.

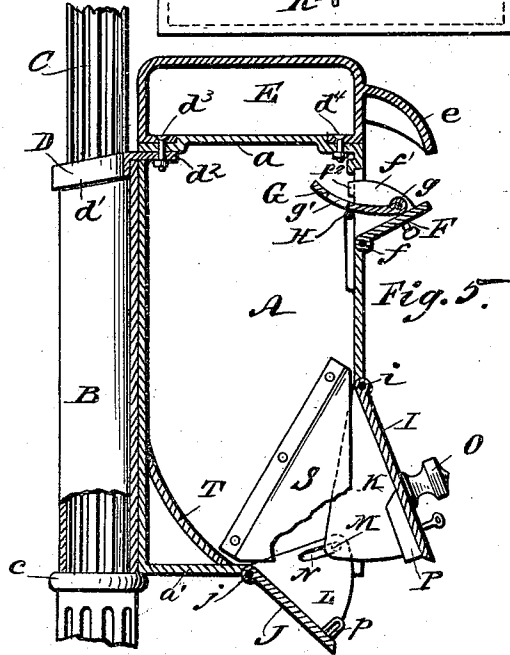
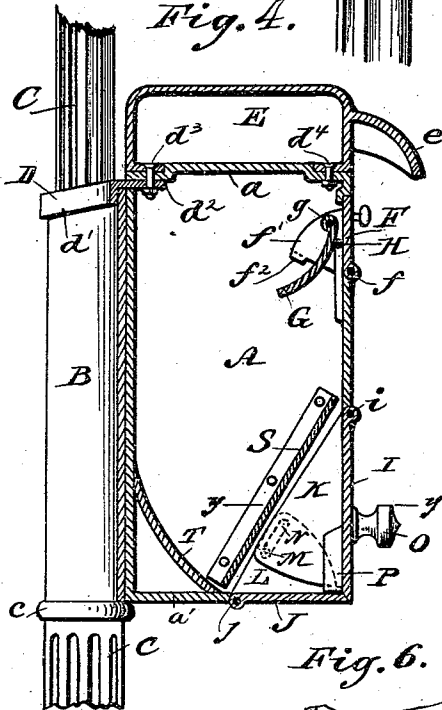
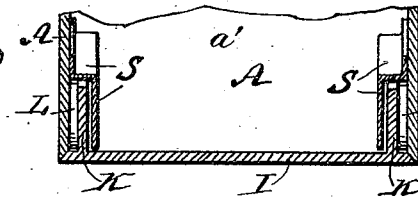


Fig. 6.

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STREET LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 446,257, dated February 10, 1891.

Application filed August 28, 1890. Serial No. 363,333. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, IRA G. LANE, of the city, county, and State of New York, have invented a new and Improved Letter or Mail Box, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to letter or mail boxes of that class commonly used upon lamp-posts or other outdoor supports to facilitate collection of mail-matter for accommodation of the public; and the invention has for its object to provide an efficient, reliable, conveniently-operative box of this character.

The invention will first be described, and then will be particularly defined in the claims hereinafter set forth.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, in which similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures.

Figure 1 is a rear perspective view of my letter or mail box and part of a lamp-post to which it is attached. Fig. 2 is a detail top perspective view of the two-part rear cap-plate of the box. Fig. 3 is a detail front view of the lower door portion of the box. Fig. 4 is a vertical sectional view taken through the box on the line *x x* in Fig. 1, and showing the box closed. Fig. 5 is a like view with the box opened both at its upper receiving or drop lid and at its lower discharge-doors, and partly broken away; and Fig. 6 is a detail sectional plan view taken on the line *y y* in Fig. 4.

I propose to make my letter or mail box entirely of iron to promote its strength and durability and the security of its contents, and at the same time provide a most substantial and neatly-finished connection of the box to ordinary lamp-posts to which mail-boxes are usually attached.

To the rear side or face of the main body A of the box is fixed a back plate B, which is preferably cast separately, and is fastened to the box-body by rivet-pins, which pass through pairs of lugs *b* formed on the box and plate. This back plate is convexed outward at its vertical central portion to provide room inside of it for the lamp-post C, on a shoulder or bead *c* of which the back plate rests to sustain the box. To give a more attractive finish to the box than the open top of the rear or back plate would afford, I provide this plate

with a cap or cover D, which is preferably made in two parts *d d* to allow its application to the back plate and around the lamp-post. The cap has a sloping surface to shed rain easily, and is preferably provided with a pendent marginal flange *d'*, which overlaps the outer face of the back plate. The cap may be held to the box-body and its back or hanger plate in any approved manner. I show the two parts *d d* of the cap provided each with a lug or lip *d²*, which is passed through a slot in the back of the box-body beneath its top plate *a*, and is held by a bolt *d³*, which I prefer to utilize also for fastening to the body A an upper hood E, presently described. It will be seen that the back plate B gives a more substantial connection of the box to a post-support than rings or collars commonly employed for the purpose, and said back plate, more especially when the cap D is used with it, gives a very neat and ornamental finish to the box and its post-support.

The hood E is intended to protect from rain, snow, or other storms mail-matter such as newspapers and packages too large to be passed into the box-body through its front letter-drop-lid opening, and which are usually left exposed upon the tops of ordinary mail-boxes. I show the hood E made with opposite lower flanges, through which pass the above-named bolts *d³* and front bolts *d⁴*. The hood-flanges are preferably let into rabbets at the top *a* of the box-body A, and the bolts *d³* *d⁴* preferably have countersunk heads, which leave the body top or floor on which the mail-matter rests beneath the hood perfectly flat and unobstructed to allow most convenient placing of mail-matter under or within the hood and as convenient collection of matter therefrom. I prefer to make the hood E open at both ends; but it may be left open only at one end by casting a flange on it, which will close its other end. The hood is also preferably provided with a front apron *e*, forming an auxiliary hood or guard, to prevent entrance of rain or snow into the main box-body through the mail-deposit opening when the drop-lid F is open, said apron also serving as an auxiliary fender or guard against abstraction of mail from the box through the drop-lid opening.

The drop-lid F is hinged at its lower edge

by a pin f to the front wall of the box-body A and has end flanges f' , forming guards, which at their inner parts or corners have lips or flanges f'' , which limit the opening of the lid by contact with the box front. To the end guard-flanges f' of the drop-lid is hinged at g , as near as may be to the lid front, a tray G, which swings freely on its pivot g , and is preferably concaved at its upper face or is made of a metal plate having a concavo-convex form transversely, and which is adapted to rest upon a rod or bar H, which is attached to the box front and crosses the drop-lid opening of the box. When the drop-lid is pulled open, the free swinging tray G will, by riding over the cross-rod or bar H, be swung up into about horizontal position, as shown in Fig. 5 of the drawings, to receive letters or other mail-matter, and as the drop-lid is closed the tray then swings down automatically behind the rod H and will drop the mail-matter into the box, as will be understood from Fig. 4 of the drawings. It will be noticed that the drop-lid having this swinging tray attached is quite self-closing, as the riding backward of the lower face of the gravitating tray over the rod H operates to close the lid and hold it closed. Hence it requires the slightest touch of the hand only to start the drop-lid inward, whereupon it closes of itself and remains closed until intentionally opened again to drop mail-matter into the box. It will also be seen that the shape, location, and general arrangement of the tray relatively with the drop-lid and the box-deposit opening are such that it is practically impossible to abstract mail-matter from said opening past the tray, which thus forms a reliable guard at the opening.

I make the mail-discharge opening of my letter-box at both its front and bottom portions and employ doors I J, respectively, at said openings. The door I is hinged at i at its upper edge to the box front, and the door J is hinged at j at its rear edge to the box bottom a' . The door I is provided at each end with an inwardly-projecting guard-plate K of angular form and widest at the bottom, and the door J is provided with corresponding end guard-plates L, of angular form and widest at their forward ends. These pairs of guard-plates K L lap on each other at each end or side of the mail-box, and the plates on one discharge-door are provided with pins which work in slots in the plates on the other door and cause both doors to open and close simultaneously. I prefer to fix the pins M in the guards K of the front door I, and to make the slots N, which receive the pins, in the guards L of the bottom door J. By pulling a knob O, fixed to the front door I, both discharge-doors will be opened simultaneously, as shown in Fig. 5 of the drawings, and by pushing in the door I both doors will be closed at once, as in Fig. 4, and may be so secured by any suitable lock device P, preferably on the front

door and adapted to engage an eye or detent p on the other door, said lock being openable by a key inserted at a hole R in the front door. Any other suitable lock may be used. I also provide guards S S, one at each side of the main box-body and fixed at one edge thereto and overhanging the door-guard plates K L, to prevent retention of the mail-matter by the guards and prevent clogging of the guards by the said matter. (See Figs. 4, 5, and 6 of the drawings.) The door-guards prevent discharge of the mail-matter through the open doors to either side and assure direct sliding of the matter into a bag or pouch held below the doors. To assure discharge of mail from the box, an inclined and preferably slightly-concaved chute-plate T is fixed within the box at its lower rear corner, and whereby, when the doors I J are opened, all the mail-matter in the box will fall at once from it into the pouch or receptacle carried by the collector.

If desired, the swinging tray G in the drop-lid may be provided with a slot g' , through which letters may be dropped directly into the body of the mail-box when the drop-lid is open, said slot being shown in Fig. 5 of the drawings. The transverse rod or resistance piece H, which the tray G rides over as the drop-lid opens, may be substituted by an upward extension of the front plate of the box-body, as will readily be understood.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A mail-box provided with a rear attaching and supporting plate concaved to accommodate a post-support between it and the body of the box, substantially as described.

2. A mail-box provided with a rear attaching and supporting plate concaved to accommodate a post-support between it and the body of the box, and a cap-plate or cover fitted to the box and rear plate and around the post-support, substantially as described.

3. A mail-box provided with a top hood forming a weather-guarded newspaper or package compartment on the box, said hood having an auxiliary apron shielding the box drop-lid and adjacent opening, substantially as described.

4. A mail-box having a hinged drop-lid provided with a swinging tray, combined with a relatively stationary rod or resistance piece on the box-body, substantially as described, whereby as the drop-lid is opened the tray will be swung upward to receive mail-matter and on closing the lid the tray will fall to drop the matter within the box, substantially as described.

5. A mail-box fitted at its discharge-opening with two right-angularly disposed hinged doors coupled together for simultaneous operation, substantially as described.

6. A mail-box fitted at its discharge-opening with two hinged doors, one door having

slots and the other door having pins entering the slots and causing simultaneous operation of the doors, substantially as described.

7. A mail-box fitted at its discharge-opening formed partly in its front and partly in its bottom, with front and bottom doors at said opening, one door having slots and the other having pins entering the slots for operating the doors simultaneously, substantially as described.

8. A mail-box having a discharge-opening at its front and bottom walls and provided with doors adapted to close said opening, and having inwardly-extending end guards, the guards of one door having slots and the guards of the other door having pins entering said slots for operating both doors simultaneously, substantially as described.

9. A mail-box fitted at its discharge-open-

ing with two hinged doors provided with inwardly-projecting end guard-plates engaging each other for simultaneous operation of the doors, combined with guards fixed to the interior of the box and covering the end guards of the closed doors, substantially as described.

10. A mail-box provided with a discharge-opening formed partly in its front and partly in its bottom, combined with front and bottom doors coupled together for simultaneous operation, and a chute at the rear lower corner of the box delivering the mail-matter as the doors are opened, substantially as described.

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Witnesses:

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