April 28, 1953 D. P. MOSSMAN, SR 2,636,669

RURAL MAILBOX SIGNAL AND NAMEPLATE ATTACHMENT

Filed March 19, 1951

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1

Fig 1

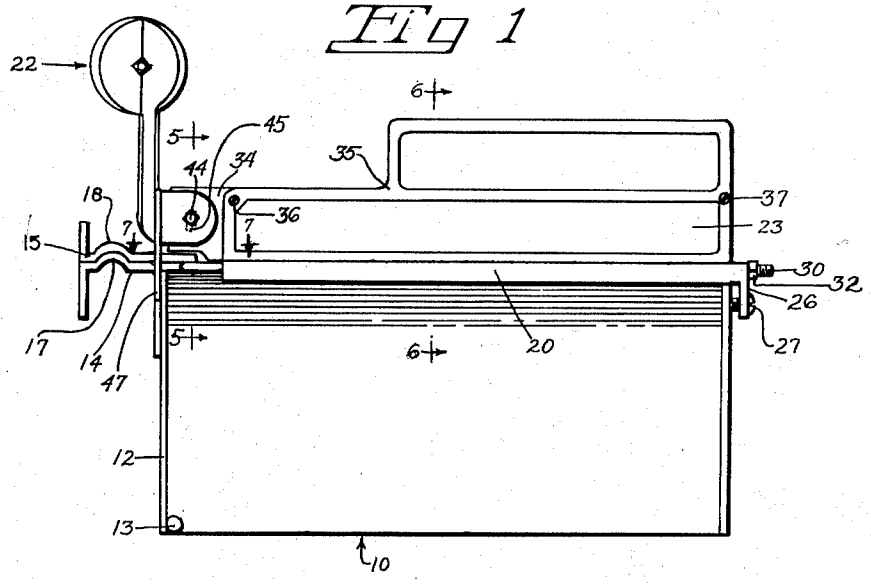


Fig 2

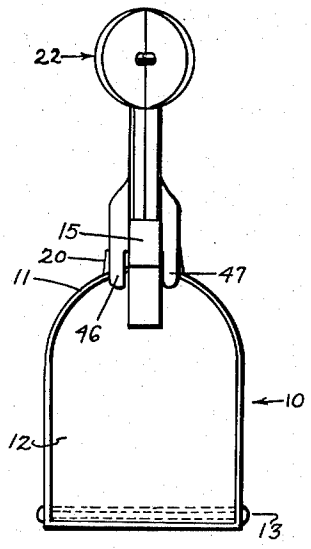
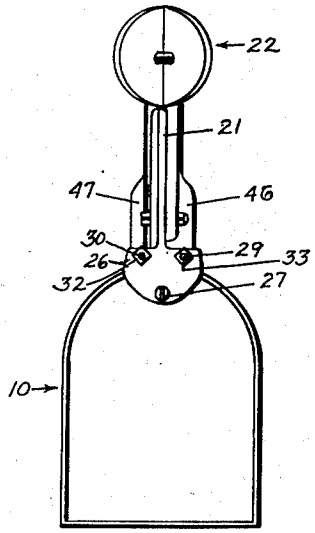


Fig 3



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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2

Fig 4

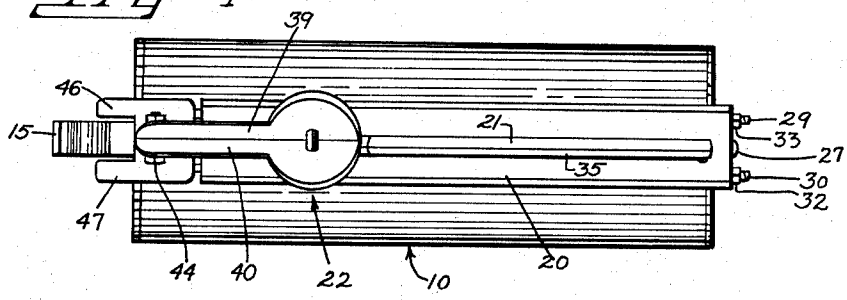


Fig 5

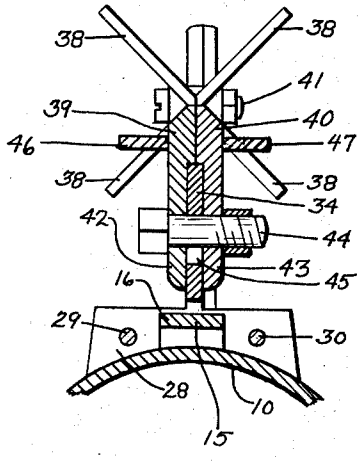


Fig 6

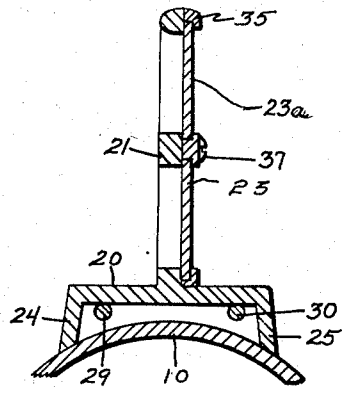
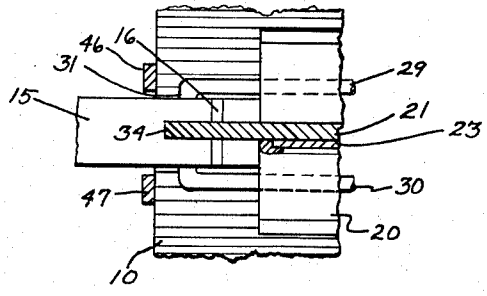


Fig 7



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RURAL MAILBOX SIGNAL AND NAMEPLATE ATTACHMENT

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Application March 19, 1951, Serial No. 216,373

3 Claims. (Cl. 232—35)

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The present invention relates to improvements in a rural mail box attachment that is adapted to provide an improved signal for communications between the box holder and the carrier and to provide a name plate. The present type of signal commonly used on mail boxes is difficult to see and is an inconvenience to the carrier as well as the box holder. The present location of the signal is not convenient for the carrier to restore it to horizontal position when he has picked up the mail in the box. The shape of the signal now used makes it difficult to determine from a distance whether or not the signal is raised.

It is the purpose of the present invention to provide an attachment that can readily be applied to the standard mail box without special tools, the attachment furnishing a signal readily visible from all directions and a name plate that makes it convenient for the mounting of the names and changing them when necessary without resorting to painting up the sides of the mail boxes.

My invention also contemplates the provision of a signal carrying attachment for rural mail boxes which positions the signal so that it is automatically lowered to horizontal position, indicating that the mail has been picked up whenever the mail box door is opened.

Rural mail boxes are pretty well standardized as to construction and shape. They are elongated, round top metal boxes with a door at one end that is hinged at its lower edge so as to swing downwardly. A latch strap of spring material is provided on the top of the box and projects forwardly over the door. The strap is raised before it reaches the forward edge of the box so as to provide the necessary spring action to cooperate with a handle strap on the door. My attachment takes advantage of the position of the large strap to aid in securing the attachment on the box so that it is not necessary to make any holes in the top of the box in order to mount the attachment. The attachment can be readily removed by the user of the box and taken with him in the event that he moves from one locality to another.

The nature and advantages of my invention will appear more fully from the following description and the accompanying drawings wherein a preferred form of the invention is shown. It should be understood, however, that the drawings and description are illustrative only and are not intended to limit the invention except insofar as it is limited by the claims.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a view in side elevation of a rural mail box to which my attachment has been applied;

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Figure 2 is a front face view of the mail box with my attachment applied thereto;

Figure 3 is a rear view of the mail box and attachment;

Figure 4 is a plan view of the mail box and attachment with the signal lowered;

Figure 5 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken on the line 5—5 of Figure 1, but showing the signal or flag of the mail box in lowered position;

Figure 6 is a sectional view taken on the line 6—6 of Figure 1; and

Figure 7 is a fragmentary sectional view taken on the line 7—7 of Figure 1.

Referring now in detail to the drawings, my invention is shown as applied to a standard mail box 10 which has a rounded top portion 11. A standard mail box has the front door 12 which is hinged at its lower edge as indicated at 13 in Figures 1 and 2. The door has a handle strap 14 secured on the face thereof. A latch strap 15 is secured to the top of the mail box and is offset upwardly a short distance back from the front adge of the mail box as indicated at 16 in Figures 5 and 7 so as to provide the necessary resilience or spring for releasably holding the two offset portions 17 and 18 in the handle 14 and in the latch strap 15.

My improved attachment comprises a base 20 that is adapted to rest upon the top of the mail box and an upright substantially central rib 21 integral with the base. The rib 21 serves to provide means to mount a signal 22 and a means to mount name plates 23 and 23a. The construction of the base 20 is illustrated best by Figures 1, 3, 5 and 6. It is of inverted channel shape with two side flanges 24 and 25 resting on the top of the mail box 10. A depending flange 26 is provided at the rear end of the base 20 to overlap with the rear end of the mail box. The flange 26 is equipped with a sharp pointed screw 27 that can be threaded into tight engagement with the rear end of the mail box. At the front end of the base 20 there is a cross flange 28 (see Figure 5) which is curved at its lower edge to rest on the mail box 10. The front and rear flanges 28 and 26 are apertured to receive the legs 29 and 30 of a U-bolt. The base portion 31 of the U-bolt is adapted to fit under the latch strap 18 so as to hold the front end of the attachment down securely on the mail box. The legs 29 and 30 of the U-bolt extend under the base 20 and through the rear flange 26. They are threaded at their free ends to receive nuts 32 and 33. This con-

struction makes it possible to attach a standard attachment to a variety of mail boxes by providing the necessary adjustment to take care of differences in distances between the rear end of the mail box and the raised portion of the latch strap 15.

The upstanding rib 21 has a forward extension 34 that is raised above the base 20 sufficiently to clear the latch strap 15. The extension 34 provides means for pivotally mounting the signal 22. The main portion of the rib 21 provides two apertures to receive the name plates 23 and 23a. These name plates may be held in place by a frame 35 and screws 36 and 37. The upper name plate 23a is shown as shortened and the rib 21 has an offset so as to permit the signal 22 to lie horizontally in front of the upper name plate as illustrated in Figure 4.

My improved signal or flag is provided with four wings 38 which are arranged at right angles to each other so as to present a round signal when viewed from any direction. As shown, the signal is made of two sections 39 and 40, each section carrying two of the wings 38. The sections are secured together at the center of the wings by a bolt 41. The sections have ears 42 and 43 that are offset at right angles to the main portions of the sections and these ears are spaced from each other to provide a channel to receive the rib extension 34. A bolt 44 pivots the ears 42 and 43 on the extension 34. The extension 34 has a vertically elongated slot 45 therein for the bolt 44.

The two arm sections 39 and 40 of the signal have fingers 46 and 47 thereon and these fingers are extended beyond the arm sections to move down in front of the door 12 when the signal is raised to upright position as illustrated in Figure 1. It is evident that when the door 12 is pulled open, the fingers 46 and 47 will transmit the door movement to the signal and cause the signal to swing into horizontal or lowered position. The fingers 46 and 47 and the pivot bolt 44 are offset with respect to the center of gravity of the signal so that when the signal is in upright position, it tends to remain there. The elongated opening 45 prevents any binding of the signal when the door is opened by permitting a certain amount of vertical movement of the bolt 44.

It is believed to be evident from the foregoing description that my improved attachment for rural mail boxes provides a simple and easily applied means to furnish a mail box with a better signal and a more convenient means for displaying the name of the mail box holder. The attachment is so constructed that it requires no modification of the standard mail box for mounting. It makes the work of the mail carrier easier since it is not necessary for him to even touch the flag when he is simply picking up mail that has been left in the box by the box holder. It is only when the box holder or the mail man places mail in the box that it is necessary to bring the signal to upright position.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. A signal and name plate attachment for rural mail boxes having a front door and a latch strap for the door, said attachment comprising a saddle member having a long narrow base adapted to rest on the top of a mail box and a name plate and signal supporting rib extending lengthwise of the base and projecting upwardly therefrom, said base having a depending apertured flange at one end adapted to overlap the rear end of the mail box and having means thereon for seating against the rear end of the mail box, the base having an end flange at the end opposite said depending flange apertured to receive a U-bolt, a U-bolt adapted to fit beneath the latch strap, and extended through the flanges of said base, and a signal pivoted on the end of said rib nearest the door of the mail box for movement between an upright position at the front of the box and a horizontal position over the rib.

2. A signal and name plate attachment for rural mail boxes having a front door and a latch strap for the door, said attachment comprising a saddle member having a long narrow base adapted to rest on the top of a mail box and a name plate and signal supporting rib extending lengthwise of the base and projecting upwardly therefrom, a depending member at the end of the base most remote from the door for engaging the rear wall of the box and a loop hooked under the latch strap and secured to the base for securing said base to the box, and a signal pivoted on the end of said rib nearest the door of the mail box for movement between an upright position at the front of the box and a horizontal position over the rib.

3. A signal and name plate attachment for rural mail boxes having a front door and a latch strap for the door, said attachment comprising a saddle member having a long narrow base adapted to rest on the top of a mail box and a name plate and signal supporting rib extending lengthwise of the base and projecting upwardly therefrom, means including a loop hooked under the latch strap and secured in said base for securing said base to the box, a signal pivoted on the end of said rib nearest the door of the mail box for movement between an upright position at the front of the box and a horizontal position over the rib, and a finger fixed to said signal and extending in front of the door when the signal is upright, to lower the signal upon opening of the door.

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