

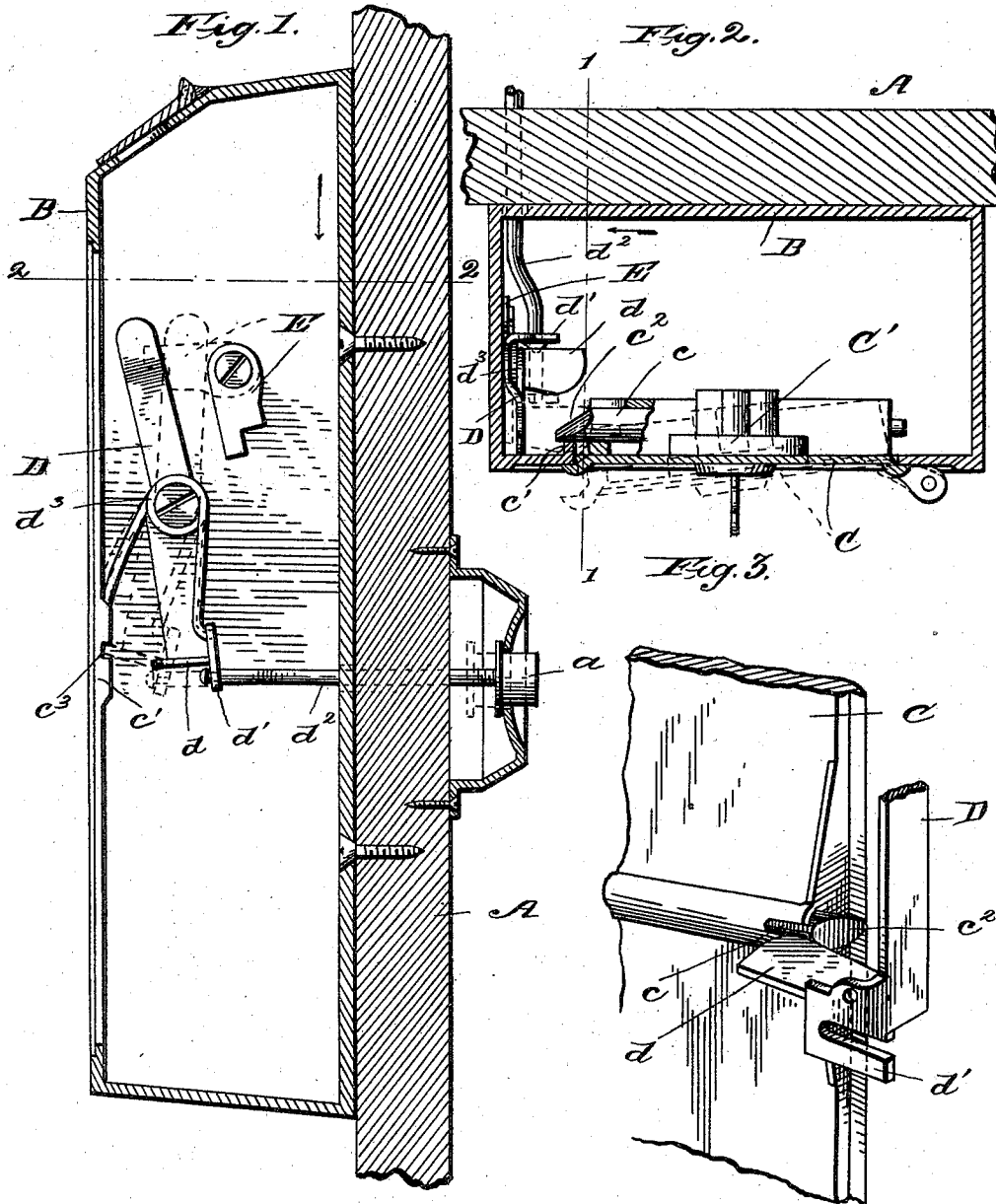
(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

J. G. TIBBITS & J. HEBERLING.
LETTER BOX.

No. 581,892.

Patented May 4, 1897.



Witnesses

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(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 2.

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Fig. 4.

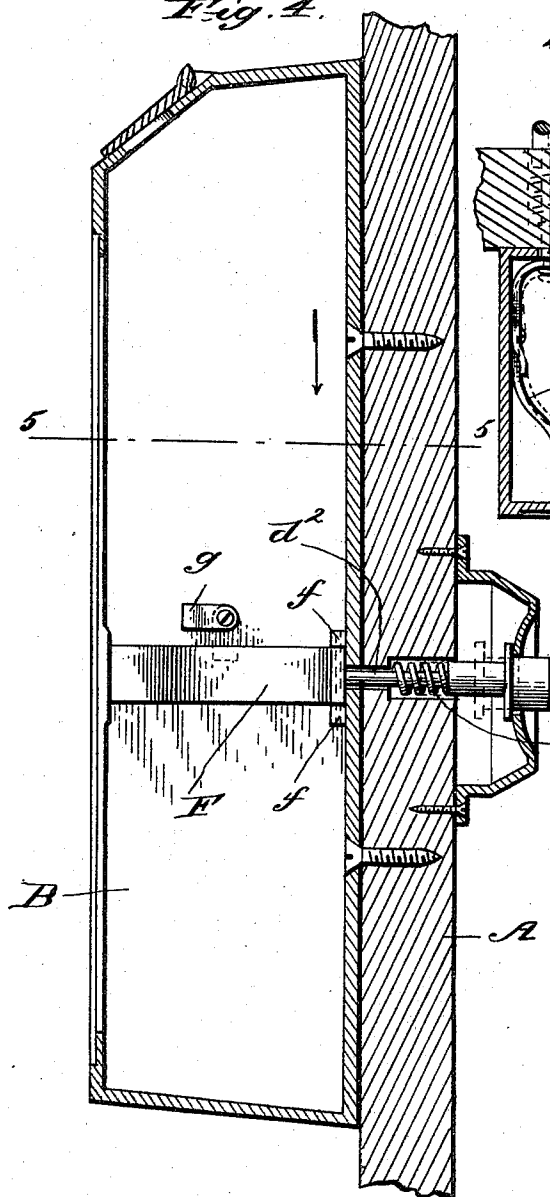


Fig. 5.

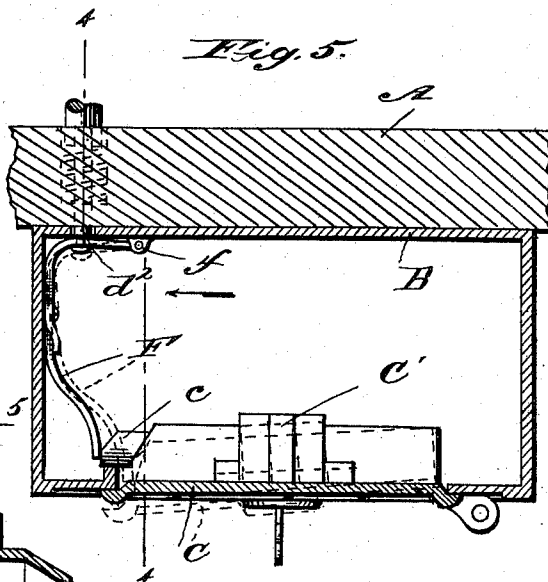
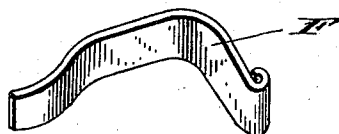


Fig. 6.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN G. TIBBITS AND JOHN HEBERLING, OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK.

LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 581,892, dated May 4, 1897.

Application filed November 18, 1895. Serial No. 569,338. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, JOHN G. TIBBITS and JOHN HEBERLING, citizens of the United States, residing at Rochester, in the county of Monroe and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Letter-Boxes, of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

Our invention relates to letter-boxes, and especially to that class of boxes known as "house" letter-boxes which are intended to be secured to the door of a house and in which the postman deposits the mail.

The object of our invention is to provide a box of this character which, while it can be opened from the outside of the door by means of a key, as is usually the case in this class of devices, it can also be readily opened from the inside, by means of mechanism which we shall describe hereinafter in detail, without the use of a key.

Our invention comprises also means whereby the unlocking mechanism, which is operated from the interior of the house, can be temporarily secured against operation, so that it cannot be used to open the box, and the latter will then be accessible only to those having a key.

Referring now to the drawings, Figure 1 is a vertical section of a mail-box embodying our invention, taken on the line 1 1 of Fig. 2. Fig. 2 is a transverse section taken on the line 2 2 of Fig. 2. Fig. 3 is an enlarged perspective view of the bolt and the lower end of the arm or lever which throws the bolt. Fig. 4 is a vertical sectional view taken on the line 4 4 of Fig. 5, showing a modified form of bolt-operating mechanism. Fig. 5 is a transverse sectional view of the modification, taken on line 5 5 of Fig. 4. Fig. 6 is a detail perspective view of the lever shown in Figs. 4 and 5.

A denotes a portion of a door to which the mail-box B is fastened. Said box may be of any suitable construction, as our invention is adapted to be applied to boxes of the ordinary type.

C denotes the swinging door in the front of the box, said door having the usual sliding spring-bolt *c*, housed in a suitable casing on the back of the door. Said bolt *c* engages the

ledge *c'* on the inside of the box-front to secure the door C, the bolt being beveled at its front end at *c''*, as usual.

Pivoted to the side of the box is a lever D, said lever having the two portions *d d'* at its lower end bent at right angles to the main portion of the said lever. The portion *d'* of the lever D has a slot cut therein, as clearly shown in Fig. 3, which slot holds the headed inner end of a sliding rod *d''*, said rod passing through an aperture in the back of the box B and through the door A and being provided at its inner end with a push-button *a*, mounted in a suitable rosette, as shown in Fig. 1. The portion *d* of the lever D has a rounded edge at its front, so that when the said lever is forced forward by pressing inwardly on the push-button *a* the rounded edge of said portion *d*, striking the beveled end *c''* of the bolt *c*, will force the latter into its casing and clear of the ledge *c'* and so release the door. The bolt-casing is slotted at *c''* to permit the rounded edge of portion *d* to force the bolt *c* far enough to clear the catch or ledge *c'*. Said ledge *c'* is provided with a notch *c''*, into which the rounded edge of the portion *d* of the lever D is forced, and will thus not only force the spring-bolt *c* clear of the ledge *c'*, but also positively push the door C open.

The lever D is normally held in the position shown in full lines in Fig. 1 by a spring *d''*, which we have shown in the present case as being mounted on the pivot of the said lever D, one end of the spring *d''* engaging an aperture formed in the part *d'* of said lever and the other end bearing against the front of the box B.

In Figs. 2 and 5 we have shown the usual arrangement of key-operating mechanism at C', the keys being shown in position in the locks, but as this key-operating device forms no part of our present invention we do not deem it necessary to describe any particular form thereof.

Pivoted to the side of the box B, near the upper end of the arm D, is a dog or latch E, which normally hangs in the position shown in full lines in Fig. 1, but when it is desired to secure the bolt-operating mechanism just above described in its normal position, so that it cannot be operated from the inside of the house to throw the bolt, said latch is

thrown to the position shown in dotted lines and drops behind the upper end of the lever D, which is bent outwardly, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, to permit the latch to drop behind it, the forward portion of the latch being notched, as shown, to engage the upper portion of the said lever.

In the modification shown in Figs. 4, 5, and 6 the bolt-operating mechanism consists of an angular lever F, pivoted at one end to lugs *f* on the rear inner wall of the box B and connected to the operating-rod *d*⁴, the forward end of said lever F being bent or offset from the main portion thereof, so that it may rest against the end of the spring-bolt *c* when the door is closed. The lever F is normally in the position shown in full lines in Fig. 5, being held in position by a spring *f*³, (shown in Fig. 4,) which surrounds the operating-rod *d*⁴. When the operating-rod *d*⁴ is forced inward by pressing on the push-button, the unlocking-lever F will be thrown into the position shown in dotted lines, and the spring-bolt *c* will be forced into its casing and release the door. A latch *g*, pivoted just above the lever F, can be dropped to the position shown in dotted lines and lock said lever F, so that it is inoperative, and the bolt *c* can then only be thrown by means of the key.

From the foregoing it will be apparent that we have provided a mail-box which can be readily unlocked and opened from the inside of the house, and thus the trouble of going outside and using a key is avoided, and yet the ordinary key may be used to operate the lock. Further, the unlocking mechanism, as described above, can be rendered inoperative, if desired, and the box will then be secured against access by any one except those provided with a key.

Having thus described our invention, we claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent—

1. The combination with a letter-box adapted to be secured to a house-door, of a swinging door for said box, a sliding locking-bolt carried by said box-door, an unlocking-lever pivoted on the inner wall of the box to engage said bolt and force it from its locking position and at the same time throw the box-door open, and means for operating said unlocking-lever, substantially as described.

2. The combination with a letter-box adapted to be secured to a house-door, of a swing-

ing door for said box, a locking-bolt carried by said door and adapted to be operated from the outside with a key, independent unlocking mechanism within said box to actuate said locking-bolt and force the door from its closed position, means for operating said unlocking mechanism from the inside of the house-door, and means for securing the bolt-actuating mechanism against operation.

3. The combination with a letter-box adapted to be secured to a house-door, of a swinging door for said box, a sliding locking-bolt carried by said door, a spring-lever pivoted to the inner wall of said box and adapted to throw said locking-bolt from its locking position and positively force the door from its closed position, a push-rod for actuating said spring-lever from the inside of the house-door, and a locking-dog to temporarily secure the said spring-lever from operation.

4. The combination with the letter-box B, of the swinging door C therefor, the sliding bolt *c* on the inside of said swinging door, the spring-lever D pivoted to the inner wall of said box B and provided with the portion *d* at its lower end, said portion *d* being adapted to throw said sliding bolt *c* from its locking position and to force the swinging door C from its closed position, the actuating-rod *d*² secured to the lower end of said spring-lever D and the lever-locking dog E, for temporarily securing said lever against operation, pivoted to the inner wall of the box.

5. The combination with the letter-box B adapted to be secured to a house-door, of the swinging door C for said box, the sliding bolt *c* on the inside of said swinging door C, said sliding bolt having a beveled end, as *c*², and adapted to be operated by means of a key from the outside of the box, a spring-lever pivoted to the inner wall of the box the free end of which is adapted to bear against the beveled end of said sliding bolt and throw the latter from its locking position and at the same time force the door C from its closed position, and a push-rod *d*² for actuating said spring-lever.

In testimony whereof we affix our signatures in presence of two witnesses.

JOHN G. TIBBITS.

JOHN HEBERLING.

Witnesses:

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GEO. TRUESDALE.