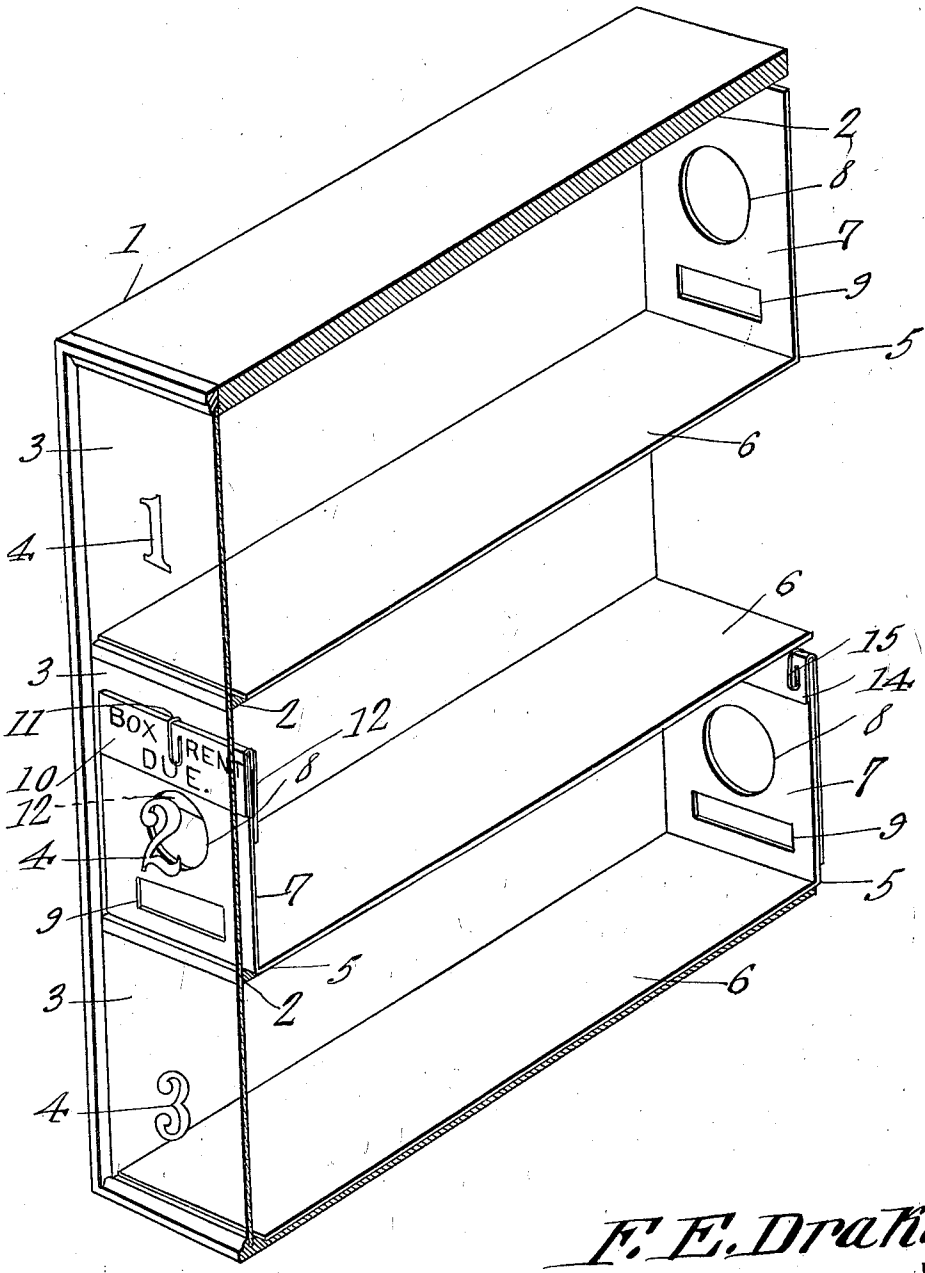
F. E. DRAKE.

POSTAL CALL BOX SYSTEM.

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1,102,886.



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POSTAL-CALL-BOX SYSTEM.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FRANK E. DRAKE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Radcliffe, in the county of Hardin and State of Iowa, have invented a new and useful Postal-Call-Box System, of which the following is a specification.

The present invention appertains to a postal call box system, and aims to provide means for facilitating the handling of the call or lock box mail, and to increase the revenue of the call boxes, by notifying the customers, in an effective manner, when the call box rents are due.

The present manner of handling the call or lock box mail in post offices, is more or less inefficient for several reasons, a few of which are mentioned to illustrate the defects or disadvantages which the present invention eliminates.

It is the practice, at the present day, to plug up unused or unrented call or lock boxes, by pieces of card board, or other articles which are handy, but this manner of closing or plugging up pigeon holes or call or lock boxes is of disadvantage or little efficiency in practice. In many instances, it is also desirable to place a notice at the inner or rear ends of the pigeon holes, such as when a customer wishes his mail forwarded, for a short period of time, to another address, whereby the notice will be called to the distributing clerk's attention, should he start to put any mail matter in the pigeon hole containing the notice, whereby the clerk may forward the mail matter, or carry out any other instructions contained in the notice. According to the present manner of applying these notices to the inner or rear ends of the pigeon holes, it is not infrequent, that the notices are not properly posted, and are not properly observed. Another disadvantage existing, is due to the fact that no effective means are provided for notifying the customers when the call box rents become due, it merely being the practice to place notice slips in the pigeon holes or boxes, which, when they are received by the customers are often overlooked, thus necessitating the distributing clerk or postmaster to place the mail matter of the delinquent customers in the general delivery pigeon holes, much to the disadvantage of both the clerk or postmaster, and the customers, and often resulting in the failure of the customers to re-rent the call boxes. In this manner, the revenue from the call boxes is considerably diminished, due to the aforesaid inefficiencies.

With the foregoing and other disadvantages or objections in view, as existing in the prevailing practice of handling the call or lock box mail matter, it is the object of the present invention to provide simple, and inexpensive means for remedying the said defects, and whereby the present device will be simple, convenient, serviceable, practical and efficient in its use.

As a more specific object, the present invention aims to provide in combination with a mail cabinet, of unique reversible drawer slides or blocks for the pigeon holes, whereby the unused or unrented pigeon holes or boxes may be effectively closed or stopped up, whereby various notices may be applied to the inner or rear ends of the pigeon holes or boxes, and whereby the customers may be properly notified when the box rents become due.

With the foregoing general objects outlined, and with other objects in view, which will be apparent as the nature of the invention is better understood, the present invention resides in the combination and arrangement of parts and in the details of construction hereinafter described and claimed, it being understood that changes in the precise embodiment of the invention herein disclosed can be made within the scope of what is claimed without departing from the spirit of the invention.

The invention has been illustrated in its preferred embodiment in the accompanying drawing, wherein the figure is a fragmental perspective view of a postal mail cabinet embodying the present invention.

In the accompanying drawing, the numeral 1 designates a postal mail cabinet, having a plurality of pigeon holes or boxes 2, which may be of any suitable dimensions, and which have their forward or outer ends provided with transparent closure or panels 3, in the manner of the ordinary call box, although it is to be understood that the closures may be in the form of key controlled doors in the manner of the ordinary lock boxes. The closures or panels 3 are provided with the box numbers 4, as usual, in order that the customer may readily find his or her respective pigeon hole or box, to see whether any mail matter is inserted or contained therein.

In carrying out the present invention, there are provided a plurality of drawer slides or blocks 5, which are adapted to be inserted in the pigeon holes or boxes in reversed positions, each of the slides or blocks 5 embodying a sheet metal bottom or base plate 6, having a rigid upstanding or upturned end piece 7 at one end, the other end of the bottom or base plate being unencumbered. The end piece 7 is provided with a central circular sight opening 8, and with a second rectangular or elongated sight opening 9 below the opening 8. The slides or blocks 5 are of a length approximately equal to that of the pigeon holes or boxes 2, and the same are also of a width approximately equal to the width of the pigeon holes or boxes, it being understood that the present invention is applicable to pigeon holes or boxes of various proportions.

In the drawing, there is illustrated a typical arrangement of the slides or blocks. In the upper pigeon hole or box, No. 1, the slide or block 5 is inserted with the end piece 7 at the rear or inner end, so as to close the inner end of the said pigeon hole or box, whereby the distributing clerk cannot accidentally or inadvertently misdirect or place mail matter therein. It is to be noted that the end piece 7 will be held in place by the bottom plate 6 with which it is integral and rigid, the outer end of the bottom plate 6 resting against the closure 3 to prevent the forward or outward movement of the slide. In the intermediate or second pigeon hole or box, No. 2, the slide or block 5 is inserted in a reversed position, so that the end piece 7 is disposed adjoining or rests against the closure 3, or at the forward or outer end of the pigeon hole or box. Thus, a notice slip 10 may be applied to the upper or free end of the end piece 7 upon the outer side thereof, by means of a suitable clip 11, so as to inform the customer, that the rent is due. The slip 10 may contain any suitable notice, such as "Box rent due," thereby informing the customer in an effective manner, the notice slip 10 being left upon the slide or block, until the rent is paid. The receipt, statement, or the like, 12 may be clamped upon the inner side of the end piece 7, by means of the clip 11. Thus, when the customer calls for his or her mail, the receipt or slip 12 may be readily removed and handed to the customer. After the rent has been paid, the slide or block may be withdrawn, to leave the pigeon hole or box unencumbered. It is to be noted that when the block or slide is inserted as seen in the pigeon hole or box No. 2, should any mail be inserted into the said pigeon hole or box, the same will rest upon the bottom plate 6 and may be readily seen through the sight opening 9 of the end piece 7, the sight opening 8 also exposing the box number from the rear or inner end of the box. In the lowermost or third pigeon hole or box, No. 3, the block or slide 5 is inserted in the same manner as in box No. 1, a notice slip 14 being applied over the outer face or outside of the end piece 7, and being attached to the upper or free edge of the said end piece by means of a suitable clip 15, whereby the notice will be readily called to the distributing clerk's or postmaster's attention, should any mail matter be attempted to be inserted in box No. 3. The notice slip 14 contain various notices, such as a notice to forward the customer's mail, for a period of time, to a temporary address, as will be apparent. The notice slip 14 may also contain notice that the customer has left a certain amount of stamps within the pigeon hole or box, to be used for forwarding postage on second, third and fourth class matter.

From the foregoing, the advantages arising in the use of the reversible drawer slides or blocks in the pigeon holes or boxes, will be obvious to those versed in the art, the present device being of considerable relief to the distributing clerks or postmasters, and being comparatively simple and convenient in its use, as well as practical, serviceable and efficient. The present invention not only assists in handling the lock and call box mail matter, but also serves to increase the revenue from the call boxes, by properly notifying the customers when the rents become due. Thus, as seen in box No. 1, in the drawing, the unused or unrented pigeon holes or boxes may be effectively closed, to prevent the distributing clerks from accidentally throwing or placing mail therein, during rush periods. As seen in box No. 2, the present invention enables the clerk or postmaster to effectively notify the customer when the call box rent becomes due, and as seen in box No. 3, the present invention enables the notices to the distributing clerks or postmasters, to be effectively applied to the inner or rear ends of the pigeon holes or boxes. It will therefore be obvious that the present invention overcomes the disadvantages incident to the present manner of handing of the lock and call box mail matter, and in the present manner of serving notice to the call box customers by merely placing a notice slip or receipt in the pigeon holes or boxes.

From the foregoing, taken in connection with the drawing, the several advantages and capabilities of the present invention will be obvious to those versed in the art, and further comment is deemed unnecessary.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new is:

The combination with a postal mail cabinet, including pigeon holes having transparent closures at their outer ends, of reversible drawer slides insertible into the

pigeon holes and each including a sheet metal bottom plate of a length approximately the same as the length of the pigeon holes and having a rigid upturned end piece at one end, the end piece having a sight opening therein, and being arranged to support notice slips thereon, and the slides being insertible into the pigeon holes in reversed positions, whereby when the slides are inserted into the pigeon holes in one position, the end pieces will close the inner ends of the pigeon holes and will be held in place by the bottom plates resting against the closures of the pigeon holes, and whereby when the slides are inserted into the pigeon holes in the other position, the end pieces will rest against the pigeon hole closures to leave the inner ends of the pigeon holes open for the insertion of mail matter onto the bottom plates within the pigeon holes.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own, I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

FRANK E. DRAKE.

Witnesses:
JOHN C. RATLIFF,
HOWARD A. DRAKE.

Copies of this patent may be obtained for five cents each, by addressing the "Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D. C."