

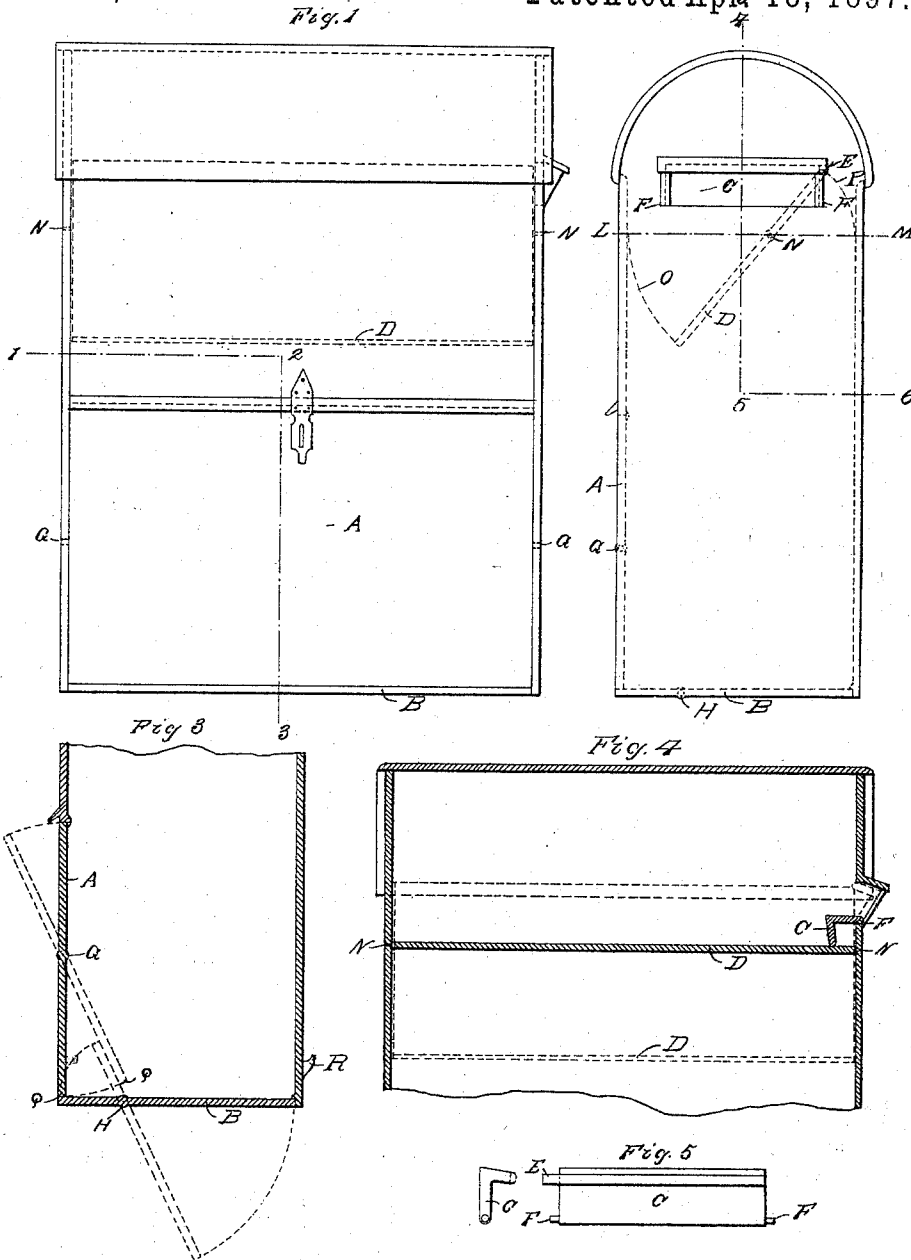
(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

C. F. FUSTING.
LETTER BOX.

No. 580,547.

Patented April 13, 1897.



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Fig. 6.

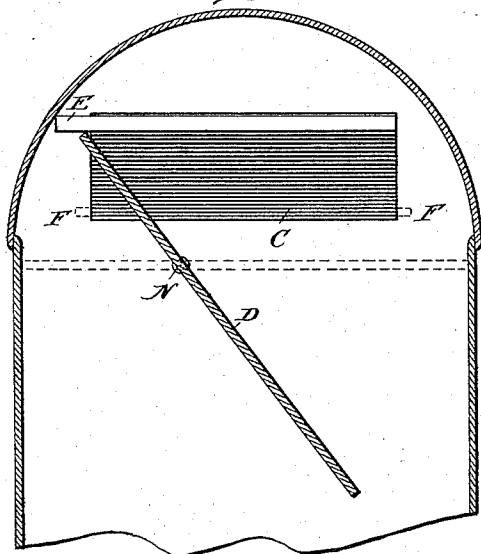


Fig. 7.

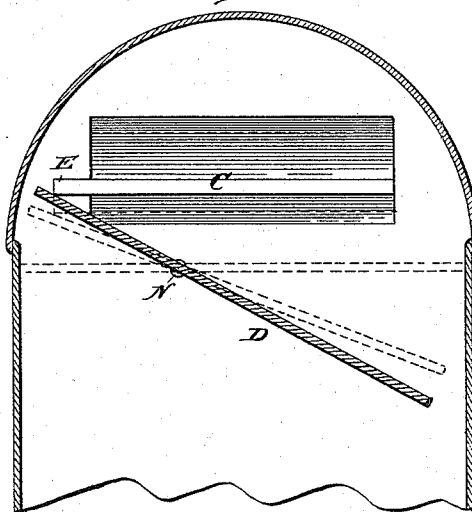


Fig. 8.

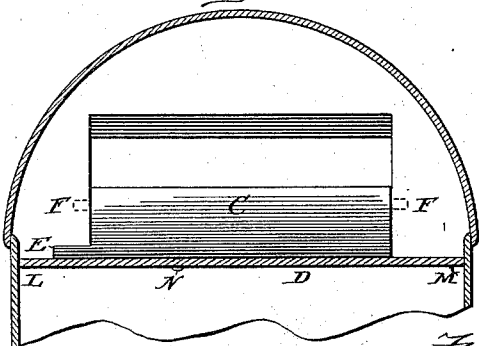


Fig. 9.

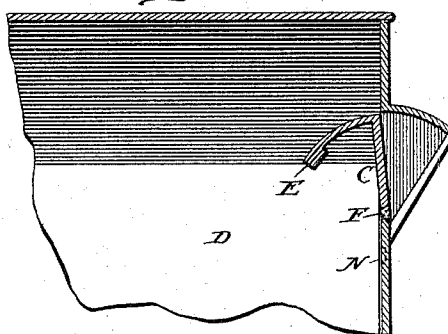
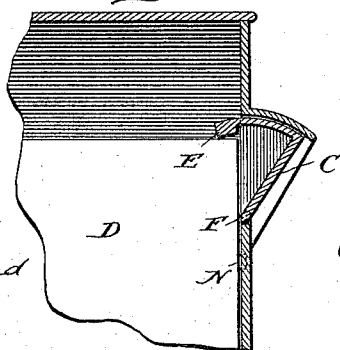


Fig. 10.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 580,547, dated April 13, 1897.

Application filed August 28, 1895. Serial No. 580,743. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES F. FUSTING, residing at Catonsville, in the county of Baltimore and State of Maryland, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Letter-Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to improvements in boxes designed for the collection of mail-matter; and the objects of my improvements are to provide for the safety of mail-matter so collected, to protect it from damage from the weather, to expedite the emptying of the contents of the box, and to facilitate the prompt collection of the contents.

For carrying out those objects my invention consists of certain parts and combinations of parts which will be particularly pointed out in the claims concluding this specification, in connection with the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a front view of a letter-box embodying my improvements. Fig. 2 is an end view of the same. Fig. 3 is a vertical section taken on the line 1 2 3 of Fig. 1, showing the provision for expediting the emptying of the contents of the box. Fig. 4 is a vertical section through the upper receiving portion of the box, taken on the line 4 5 6 of Fig. 2, showing the flap in open position; and Fig. 5 shows the pivoted flap of the receiving-opening for the mail and its cam-acting part. Fig. 6 is a transverse section of the upper portion of the box, showing the flap on the inner side fully closed and the pivoted shelf fully open and in engagement at one end with the cam part of the flap. Fig. 7 is a like view showing the relation of the cam-acting flap and the shelf in the position of the former seen in Fig. 9. Fig. 8 is a like view showing the relation of the cam-acting flap and the shelf in the position of the former seen in Fig. 10. Fig. 9 is a view like Fig. 4, the cam-acting flap and the shelf being in the positions seen in Fig. 7 in full lines; and Fig. 10 is a view like Fig. 9, the cam-acting flap and the shelf being in the positions seen in Fig. 8.

The box may be of the usual deep oblong form with rounded top. Preferably in the narrow side of the box, near its top, is the opening through which the mail-matter is put into

the box. This opening is closed by a flap C, which is horizontally pivoted at F F at the base of said opening so as to open inward. In its closed position the flap stands inclined outward from its pivots within a hood or weather-housing, the inner walls of the sides of which have ribs which form stops to limit the outward closing movement of the flap, as seen in dotted lines in Fig. 4 and in full lines in Fig. 10.

At its free edge the flap has an inward-projecting part which is adapted to fit and close beneath the top of the hood, and this inner projecting part preferably extends beyond the end of the flap, as at E, and has the function of a cam-arm in its cooperation with the pivoted shelf. The relation of these pivoted parts is such that when the flap is closed within the hood, as in Fig. 10, its cam-acting arm E is within the inner wall of the box and the shelf inclined in open position with one edge standing under the cam-acting part and maintains therewith a constant contact.

Below the opening the shelf D is pivoted at N N, the pivots being at right angles to the pivots of the flap and to one side of the middle of the width of the shelf, so that one side of the latter will automatically swing downward to elevate its opposite side against the cam-acting part of the flap to close and to maintain it closed, as seen in Fig. 6.

The shelf fits within the inner walls of the box and closes its chamber below the flap when the latter is open. In this relation of the parts the shelf is brought to a horizontal position L M, Fig. 2, and is held in such position so long as the flap cam-acting part is pressed upon it by the hand of the person in opening the flap.

In the movement of the shelf it describes the arcs O P, Fig. 2, with the inner walls of the box, and the distance of its pivots below the base of the opening and the extent of the inward-projecting cam-acting part of the flap are so related that the cam-acting part E will act upon the edge of the shelf so as to nearly close the shelf with the walls of the box before the flap has been sufficiently pushed in to open the opening, so that in these positions of the pivoted parts, as seen in Figs. 7 and 9, an instrument could not be inserted over the flap into the box and passed below

the shelf. In this particular the security of the mail is made certain.

The release of pressure upon the flap when pushed in upon the shelf to deposit the mail thereon instantly causes the shelf to turn by gravity sidewise upon its pivots and deliver the mail below it, and by such movement the shelf closes the flap by impinging upon and beneath its cam-acting part.

In the lower part of the box, preferably at the front side, is a door A, hung upon horizontal pivots G mediately of its width in the side walls of the box, so that in being opened its upper part will swing outward and its lower part will swing inward from a vertical position.

The bottom B of the box is also pivoted at H in the side walls of the box, so that its front end is adapted to tilt inward and upward and its rear end swings downward toward the front. The pivots of the door and of the bottom stand in parallel relation, but the pivots of the bottom are located nearer its front than its rear edge, so that it will automatically swing downward by gravity when the door is free to be opened. The relation of these two pivoted parts is such that the opening of the door opens the bottom and the closing of the door closes the bottom, such closing and opening movements being effected by the sliding bearing of one part upon the other at the lower front corner of the box, as I shall now describe.

The lower edge of the door is adapted to form a bearing-joint with the upper side of the bottom at Q, while the inner edge of the bottom, when closed, forms a joint with a rib on the inner wall of the back of the box, as seen in Fig. 3. Since to open the door it can be only forced inward at its lower end over the top surface of the bottom, the latter by the gravity of its inner end will swing down with the upper surface of its inner end in sliding lapping contact with the outer surface of the lower end of the door, and thereby form a chute-discharge of the door and of the bottom, both parts standing in the same plane as a single part inclining from the front to the rear. In this position of the parts the door is closed against the discharge of the contents at the front, so that they can only be discharged from the bottom in a rearward direction. In this inclined position of the parts the lower portion of the front door abuts upon the upper inner surface of the front portion of the bottom, and the front door is held in partial open position by the bottom, which is itself held open by gravity, the point of contact between the parts being between the pivots of said parts and within the chamber of the box. The pulling open of the door therefore releases the bottom, which of its weight falls in open position, swinging downward to the front, maintaining its contact and continuity with the door, so as to form an inclined chute within the box standing to the rear whereby the con-

tents drop down and out of the box by their own weight.

In closing the door the movement of both door and bottom are reversed, the lower edge of the door pressing upon the front part of the bottom, raising it into a horizontal position and closing it with the rib at the lower edge of the inner side of the rear wall of the box, where it is sustained and made secure by the closed position of the door, in moving to which its lower edge slides upon the surface of the bottom until the lower edge of the door abuts squarely upon the upper surface of the bottom at its front edge.

A lug R on the back of the box near its lower edge serves to hook the mail-bag upon, so that, the collector holding the bag at the front, the letters will drop therein from the box at once and are protected from the weather while the box is being emptied.

The facility and the convenience for discharging the contents and for collecting them as they are discharged from the box are important advantages in the speed and ease with which the work is done, for in collecting the contents of the box the mail-bag need only be hung to the box and the door need only be unlocked, when the work is done, the emptying of the letters being complete and as quick as the movement which opens the door, which permits the bottom to fall open into the bag.

Weather-strips are used to form the hood over the flap and as a protection at all the points of contact of the door and the bottom.

The door may be secured by hasp and lock or lock and key, as desired.

I claim as my improvement—

1. In a letter-box having a door pivoted horizontally mediately of its width, and a bottom pivoted at one side of the middle of its width, the door being arranged to abut at its lower edge upon the top of the bottom at its front edge, whereby when the door is closed it secures the bottom closed, and when the door is opened the bottom is caused to swing down and toward the front, bringing the door and the bottom in the same plane standing obliquely rearward.

2. In a letter-box, the front door pivoted mediately of its width and closing against a lip at the upper edge of the door-opening, and a bottom pivoted near the front of the box and adapted to close at its rear edge against the lower edge of the door in the way described, whereby the door and the bottom are caused to lap with the front edge of the bottom outside of the lower edge of the door in discharging the mail.

3. In a box for collecting mail-matter, a chute discharging bottom therefor consisting of a bottom pivoted so that in being opened its rear edge will swing down and its front edge will swing up within the box, and a front door pivoted so that its upper edge will swing out and its lower edge will swing within the box and form a plane with and a continua-

tion of the inner surface of the bottom, in the way set forth.

4. The combination, in a letter-box, of a front door hinged to open inward at its lower
5 end, and a bottom hinged to open downward and frontward at its inner end, said hinged parts when in open position lapping with each

other within the box and forming an inclined plane standing from the front to the rear, for the purpose stated.

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Witnesses:

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