

April 19, 1949.

L. G. HALLAMORE

2,467,475

MAILBOX WITH SIGNAL

Filed Nov. 12, 1946

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

PUSH
BUTTON

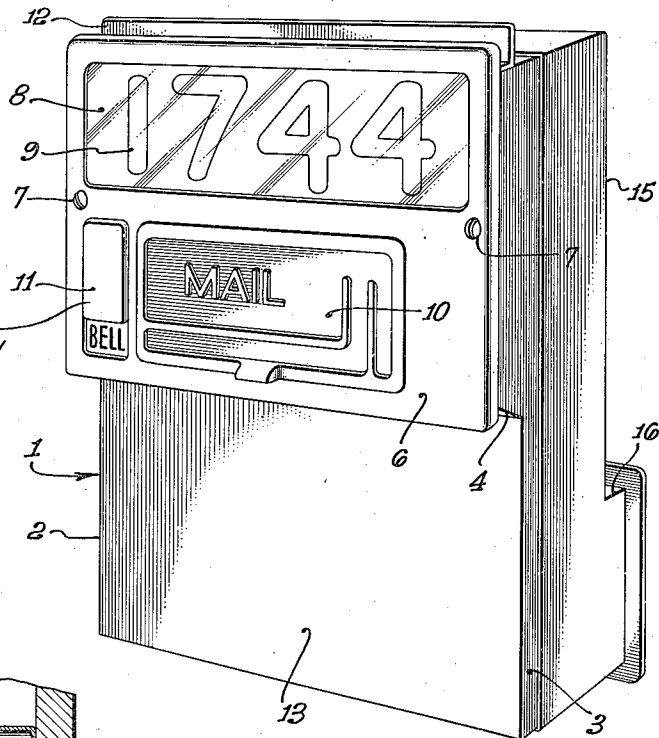
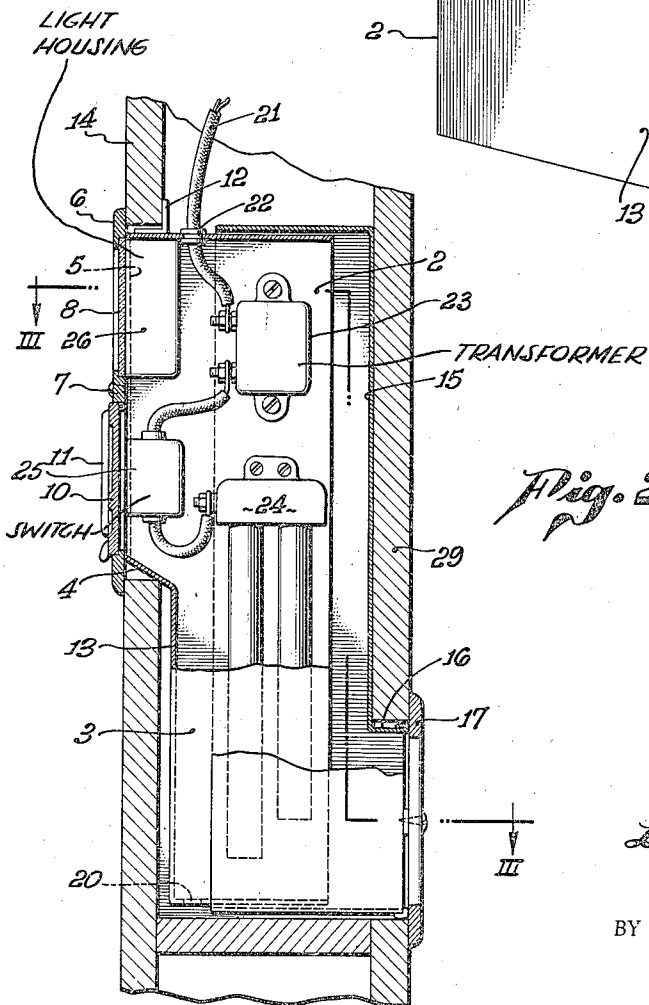


Fig. 2.



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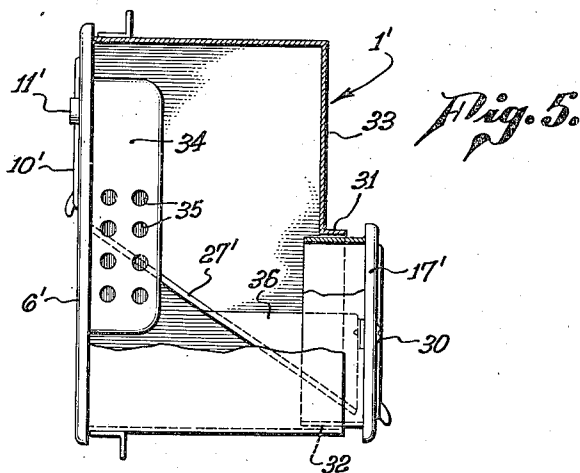
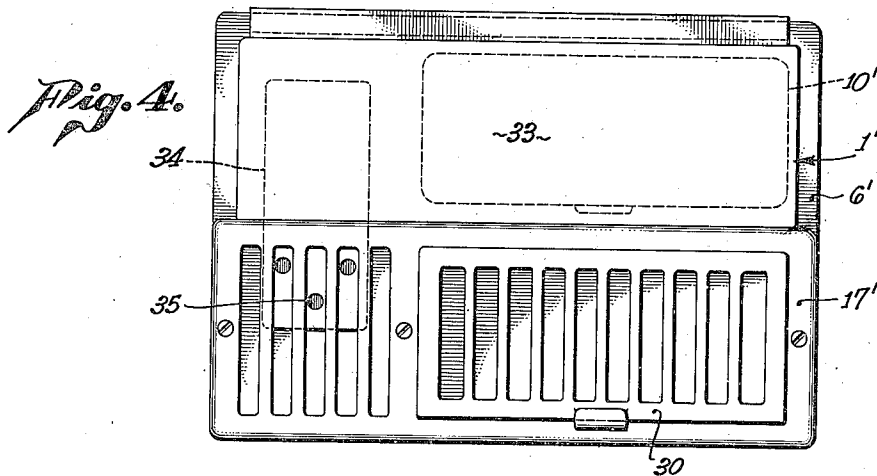
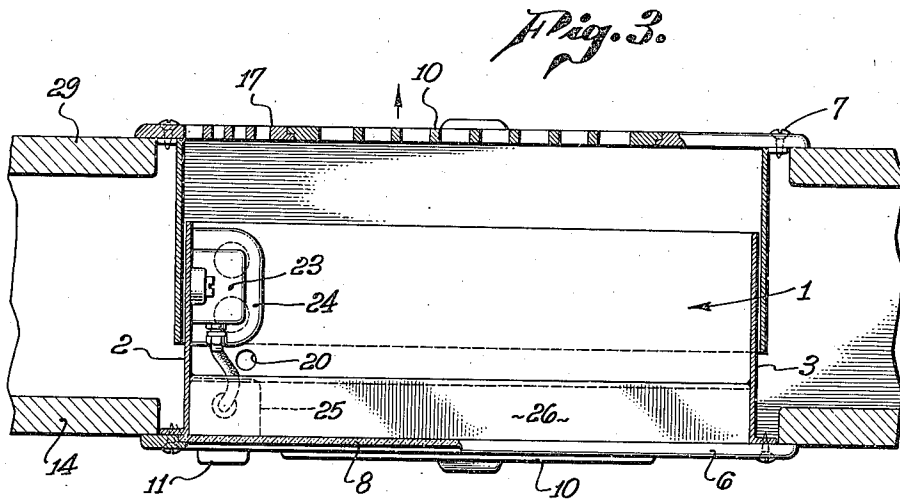
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2 Sheets-Sheet 2



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MAILBOX WITH SIGNAL

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2 Claims. (Cl. 177-7)

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This invention pertains to an improved building accessory and is particularly directed to an arrangement of elements whereby a house or other dwelling may be provided with a simply installed, efficient, combination mail drop or mail receiver and signalling means, the interior of the mail receiver acting as a resonating chamber for the signal means.

Practically every dwelling is provided with some mail-receiving aperture in communication with either the interior of the dwelling or with a container positioned within the wall and accessible through a door on the interior face of the wall. In addition, every dwelling is provided with some door-bell or other signalling means, the push button being located near the main entrance while the bell, chime or the like is located at some other portion of the dwelling. In many instances, moreover, the dwelling is provided with an illuminated house number or street number so as to permit ready identification of the dwelling.

Prior methods of construction necessitated the use of extensive wiring and much duplication of wiring in order to supply electrical energy to a light source positioned back of the house number and to properly connect the push button with a transformer and with a chime or bell. Not only was the installation costly but in addition repairs often necessitated the tracing of wires from one point to another and repair work to stucco, plastering, etc.

The present invention eliminates the time-consuming and expensive installation and centralizes all of the equipment so that repairs may be readily made.

The invention, moreover, permits the use of chimes, bells, or other signalling devices located within the container or receptacle so as not to disfigure the interior walls of the dwelling, the arrangement being such as to permit the container to act as a resonating chamber for the efficient amplification and distribution of sound of the signalling means.

An object of the present invention, therefore, is to disclose and provide a unitary, self-contained, adjustable, wall box provided with suitable apertures and capable of being employed as a receptacle for mail, and a receptacle and resonating chamber for a signalling means.

A further object of the invention is to disclose and provide a wall box capable of being readily installed in a wall and connected to an electrical conduit, such wall box or receptacle being adapted to receive mail and simultaneously

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act as a resonating chamber for a signalling means.

These and other objects of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description of exemplary forms embodying the construction embraced hereby, reference being had to the appended drawings for illustrative purposes.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a perspective three-quarter front elevational view of a building accessory embraced by this invention.

Fig. 2 is a side elevation with the outer wall partly removed, showing the device as it appears in a wall of a dwelling.

Fig. 3 is a horizontal section taken along the plane III-III of Fig. 2.

Fig. 4 is a rear view of a modified form of unit.

Fig. 5 is a side elevation of the modified form, the outer casing being partly broken away.

Most signalling means, such as bells or chimes used in dwellings, offices, etc., operate at a lower voltage than ordinary house current and therefore must be supplied with current from a step-down transformer. The push button or switch is generally located near the main entrance, the transformer is very often located in a closet or out on a service porch, and the chimes are located at still another place. Such arrangement requires considerable wiring and expenditure of a large amount of time.

Ordinarily, electrical conduits are laid between the studs of a wall and in accordance with the present invention the wiring problems described hereinabove are dispensed with by the use of a wall box capable of being inserted into the wall between studs, the box being provided with a front opening and a rear opening, the front opening being displaced vertically with respect to the rear opening. The front opening may be provided with a hinged cover through which mail may be inserted. Similarly, the displaced rear opening may be provided with a hinged closure and provide access to the compartment from the interior of the house or dwelling.

As shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3, the unit may comprise two telescoping sections so as to permit the accessory to be inserted in walls of varying thickness. It may be stated that the unit comprises a pair of wall boxes each provided with one open end and side walls, said boxes being telescopically engageable. For example, the front box 1 may be provided with side walls, such as 2 and 3, and a forwardly extending neck includ-

ing the shoulder 4 defining an aperture or opening. The side walls, such as 2 and 3, may be provided with lips 5 to which a front cover plate 6 may be attached as by means of the screws 7. The front cover plate in the illustrated form of device may carry a rabbetted opening into which numerals or house numbers may be inserted and suitably retained. Such house number plate 8 may be made of glass or plastic provided with an opaque background and translucent numerals 9. The cover plate 6 may also be provided with a hinged mail drop closure 10 and a push button 11 capable of energizing a signalling means.

An upstanding flash rib 12 may be carried by the top side of the box 1, such ribs being spaced from the edge of the port in the face of the box and preferably extending in a plane parallel to the enclosed front face portion 13 of the box. This permits the entire device to be inserted in a wall and allows stucco, siding or other surfacing construction material 14 to extend beneath the edges of the cover plate 6, as best shown in Fig. 2.

The other wall box portion is also provided with telescoping sides and is partly enclosed in back as by the rear face 15. Such rear face is provided with a neck 16 defining a port extending rearwardly. The two boxes may be telescoped so as to slidably engage one another, permitting the rear face 15 to be positioned at varying distances from the front face 13 of the front box 1. A suitable closure frame 17 is attached to the port formed by the neck 16 and is preferably grilled, apertured, or otherwise formed so as to readily permit sound to pass therethrough. The frame 17 may be provided with a hinged door opening into the interior of the dwelling so as to permit access to the inside of the chamber formed by the two telescoping boxes.

The bottom and top of one of the boxes, such as the box 1, may be provided with ports or with the partly punched-out portions through which an electrical conduit may be passed. A partly punched port is indicated at 20 and a conduit 21 is shown passing through the port 22.

Attached to the side wall 2 of the box element 1 is a transformer 23 and signalling means, such as the chime 24. The push button communicates with a suitable spring-actuated switch 25. The conduit 21 is connected to the transformer and the transformer supplies current to the signalling means 24 through the switch 25. All of this equipment is therefore readily available and may be preinstalled in the wall box before the box is inserted into the wall, requiring only that the electrical cable or conduit 21 be connected to the transformer. A suitable light source may be positioned within a housing 26 and also connected to the wiring so as to illuminate the numerals 9 of the identifying plate 8.

It will be noted that interior plastering or finish, such as is indicated at 29, may cover the rear face 15 of the rear box, permitting the frame 17 to properly rest against such plastering or finish.

It is also to be noted that the chime or signal 24 is not separated or partitioned away from the mail compartment so that sound generated by the signal means 24 may resonate throughout the chamber formed by the two wall boxes and be emitted through the reticulated or foraminous rear panel or door positioned in the frame 17. A light, open wire screen may be placed around the chimes 24 to prevent mail from rest-

ing thereagainst. In actual practice it has been found that the use of a metallic resonating chamber formed by these two wall boxes causes the sound of the signal means to be amplified and to penetrate to the furthest recesses of a dwelling.

The signal means need not be electrically operated. The push button 11 may mechanically actuate a signal bell. Moreover, it is not necessary that the two boxes telescope in precisely the manner illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2. Figs. 4 and 5 illustrate a modification wherein the rear closure frame 17' is reticulated and is provided with a hinged mail door 30, this entire closure frame 17' being connected to a rectangular element 32 which is slidably received within a rearwardly extending port adjacent the bottom of the box 1', such port being defined by the bottom of the box 1' and a lip 31 formed in the back panel 33. Walls of various thickness may be accommodated by sliding the rectangular open-ended element 32 through the port.

In the form of device illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5, moreover, the front closure or plate 6' is provided with a mail opening in the upper portion whereas the lower portion carries the house numerals. The push button 11' may be mechanically connected to a spring-actuated or mechanical signalling means contained within a housing 34 fastened to the front plate 6' and contained within a separate housing or case provided with numerous perforations or ports, such as 35, through which the sound may emanate and reverberate within the wall box. A plate or chute 27' provided with rearwardly extending wings 36 may be positioned diagonally within the wall box so as to direct mail from the lower edge of the front mail opening to the bottom of the rear mail opening 30. A device of the character illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5 need not be electrically connected to the wiring in any manner unless it is desired to use a source of illumination for the house numbers.

It is to be noted that both of the forms illustrated show the entire wall box as a resonating chamber for the chime or signal so that the space is effectively utilized not only as a receptacle for mail but also as a resonating chamber. The ease of installation, simplicity of construction, and accessibility in event of repairs constitute important features of the invention.

I claim:

1. A building accessory comprising: a sheet metal box including telescopically engageable portions, said box forming a single enclosed chamber, said box including a front panel provided with an outwardly extending neck adjoining the top portion of said box and defining a front port; a closure member including an outwardly opening door for said front port; a rear panel for said box, said rear panel including a port therein adjacent the bottom, said ports being vertically displaced out of alignment; and signal means positioned within the box whereby sound generated by the signal means will resonate in the single chamber of the box prior to passage through the port in the rear panel.

2. A building accessory comprising: a sheet metal box including telescopically engageable portions, said box forming a single enclosed chamber, said box including a front panel provided with an outwardly extending neck adjoining the top portion of said box and defining a front port; a closure member including an outwardly opening door for said front port; a rear

panel for said box, said rear panel including a port therein adjacent the bottom, said ports being vertically displaced out of alignment; an electrically operated signal means positioned within the box; a transformer within the box; a signal switch carried in the front closure member; conductor means connecting the switch, transformer and signal means; and an upwardly extending flash rib carried by the top of the box for mounting in a wall.

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