(No Model.) 3 Sheets—Sheet 1.

A. D. CUSHING & A MITCHELL.

HOUSE DOOR LETTER BOX.

No. 491,534. Patented Feb. 14, 1893.

Fig. 1.

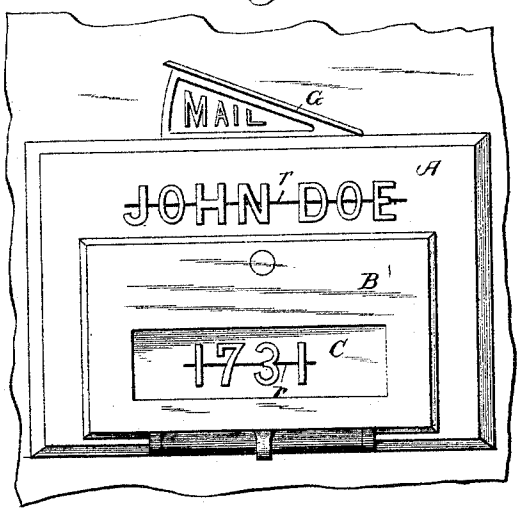

Fig. 2.

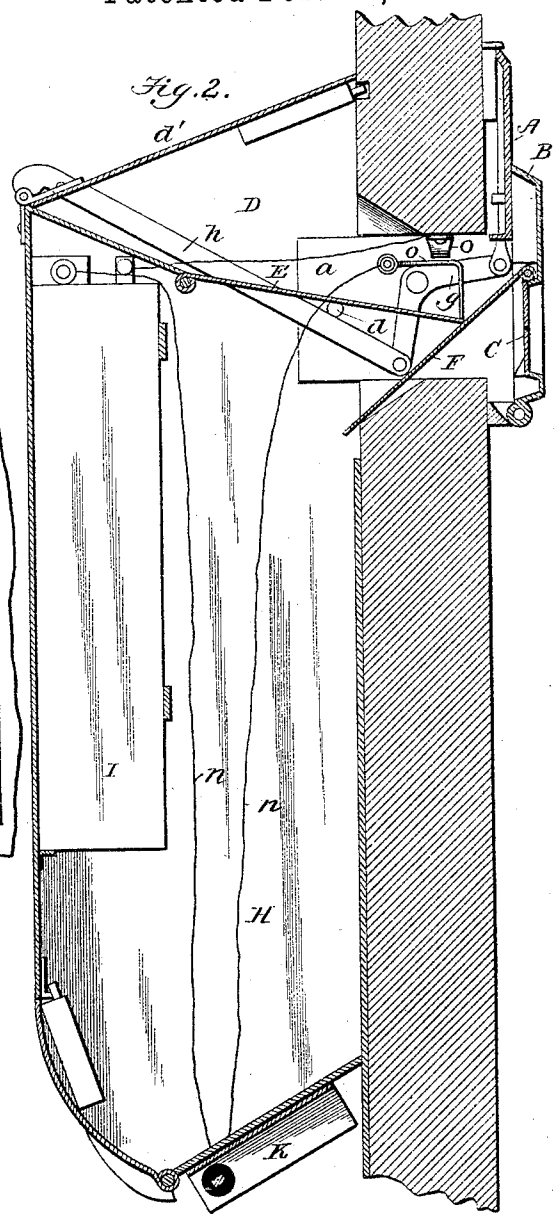

Fig. 7.

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(No Model.) 3 Sheets—Sheet 2.

A. D. CUSHING & A MITCHELL.

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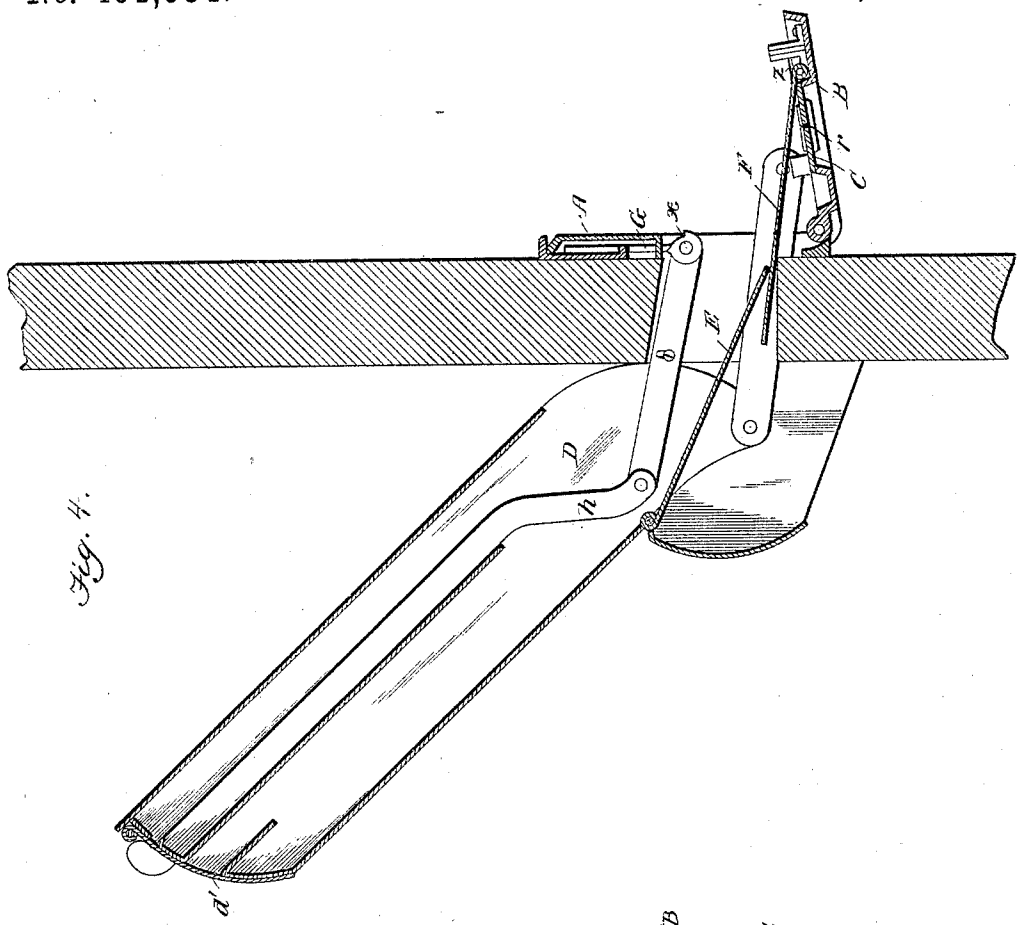

Fig. 4.

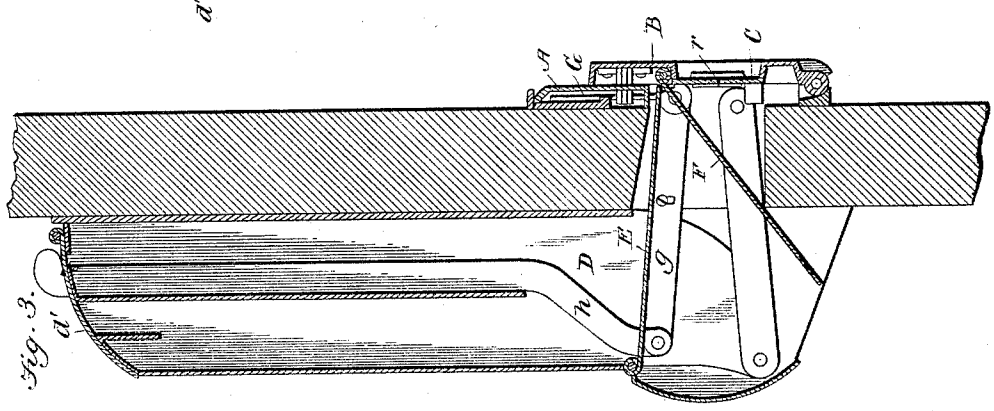

Fig. 3.

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A. D. CUSHING & A MITCHELL.

HOUSE DOOR LETTER BOX.

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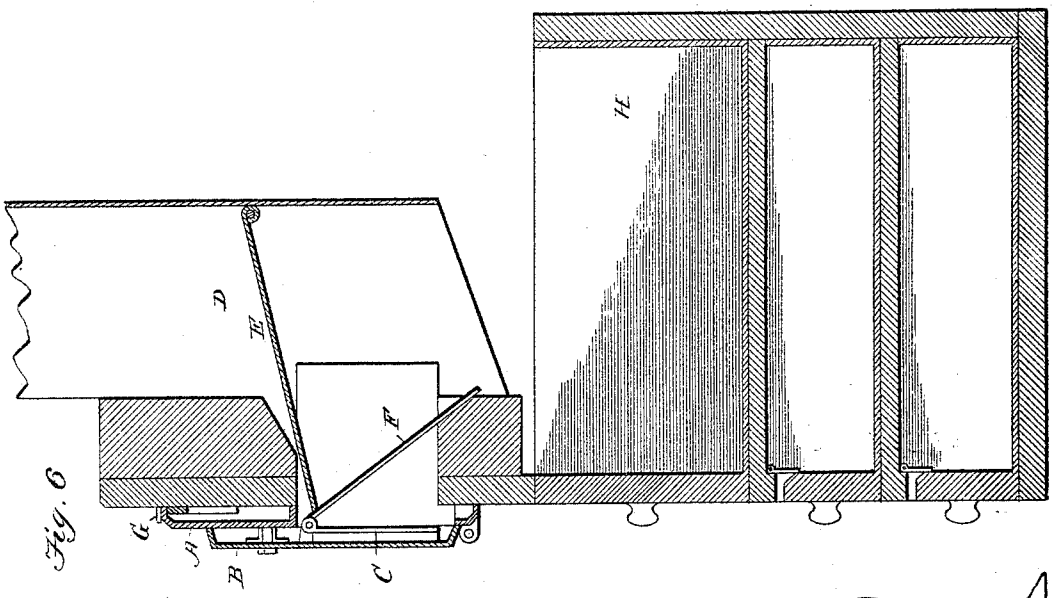

Fig. 6

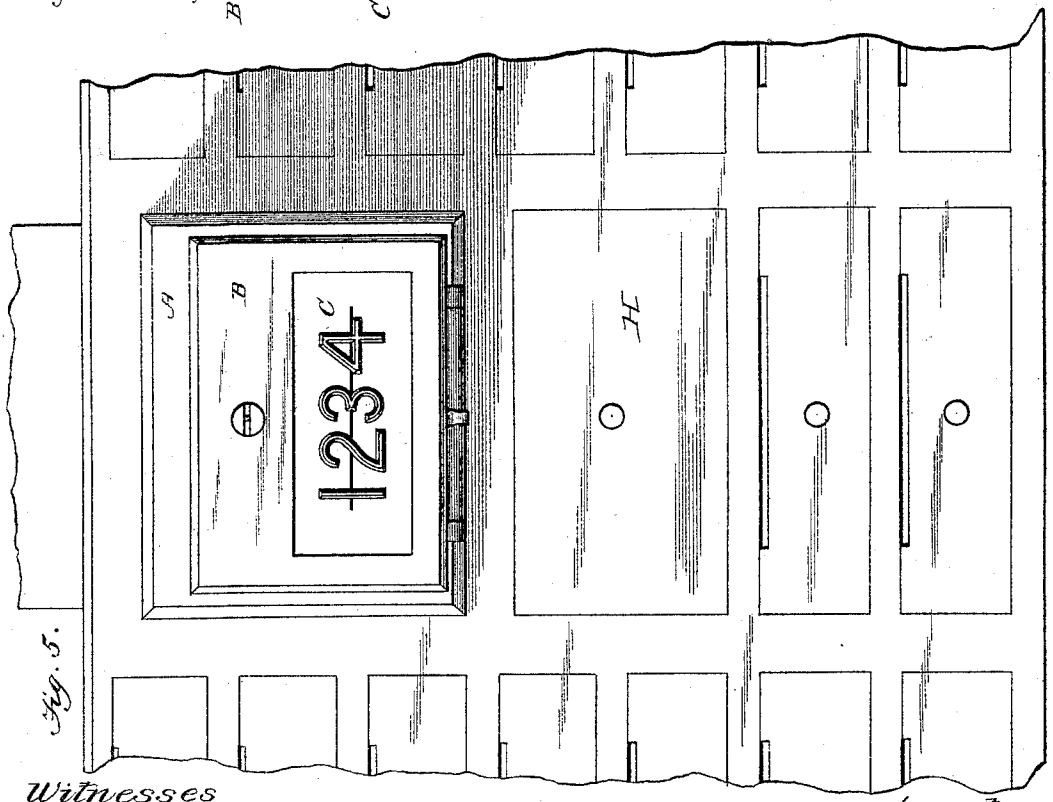

Fig. 5.

Witnesses

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALFRED DARLING CUSHING AND ALEXANDER MITCHELL, OF WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA, ASSIGNORS TO THE POSTAL IMPROVEMENT COMPANY, OF NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA.

HOUSE-DOOR LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 491,534, dated February 14, 1893.

Application filed October 8, 1891. Serial No. 408,077. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, ALFRED DARLING CUSHING and ALEXANDER MITCHELL, citizens of the United States, residing in the city of Wheeling, Ohio county, West Virginia, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Boxes; and we do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

Our invention relates to improvements in mail boxes especially adapted as a delivery and collection box for offices and private houses.

The invention consists essentially in the combination of a face plate having a port or passage through it, a door having a mail port through it, a flap pivoted to said door, a box or receptacle for mail to be collected, an apron flexibly connected with the box and a connection between the door and apron for holding the latter above the flap when the door is closed and permitting it to drop and form a chute over the door when the same is opened.

The invention also consists in other combinations hereinafter described and claimed.

In the drawings, Figure 1, is a front view of our invention, as applied to the door of a building; Fig. 2, is a section of the same; Fig. 3, is a section showing a modification of the compartment for mail to be collected; Fig. 4, is also a section of the same in position when the box door is open for the collection of the mail by the postman; Fig. 5, is a front view of the invention as applied to a wall, as in an office building, and Fig. 6, is a section of the same showing compartment for mail collections in the form of a chute which may extend to the top floor of a building. Fig. 7 is a section across the face plate showing the letter slot and an edge view of a letter.

A is the face plate having an opening through it, adapted for attachment to a door or wall, and B is a door also having an opening through it, hinged to the face plate and held closed by a suitable lock the key of which is to be carried by the postman.

C is a flap loosely hung in the door to normally close the opening in said door.

The face-plate is provided with flanges *a a* for projecting through a slot or port through the door of a house or a wall and these flanges also afford a convenient means of securing the mail collection box to the back of the house door or wall and said box and face plate together.

D is the box or receptacle for mail to be collected. This box is secured in place behind the wall and coupled with the face plate by means of bolts or rivets *d d* extending through the sides of the box and flanges *a a*. The box or receptacle may be provided with a swinging lid *d'*, as shown in Fig. 2 to be opened for the introduction of mail matter to be collected, or the box may extend upward and receive the mail through a slot or otherwise, as shown in Figs. 3, 4 and 6.

E is an apron loosely pivoted within the box forming its bottom or lower wall.

F is a tongue or bar loosely pivoted to the door B and arranged so that its lower end rests on the boundary of the opening through the house door or wall as shown. The front end of the apron rests at all times on this tongue, and when the door B is opened, the apron falls as shown in Fig. 4, and forms a chute down which the mail matter slides through the opening in the face plate ready for collection by the postman.

G is an indicator for disclosing the presence of mail in the collection box, and is provided to do away with the necessity of opening the door B when the box is empty. This indicator or signal is conveniently operated through the medium of lever *g* and rod *h* when the lid *d'* is raised to deposit mail for collection. One end of the lever is coupled with an arm of the indicator and one end of the rod is operatively coupled with the lid in such way that after the lid has adjusted the signal it will drop back to normal position while the signal remains in its adjusted position. The lid may or may not be locked, as may be desired or required.

In Figs. 2 and 6, we have shown a pocket or compartment H for the mail delivered to house or office which may be kept locked to prevent unauthorized persons from handling the mail after delivery.

In Fig. 2, we have shown the application of an electric bell to give a sound signal whenever the flap C is operated, as in the delivery of mail through the slot in door B. I is a dry battery, K an electro-magnetic vibrating bell, *n n* circuit wires, and *o o* relatively movable contact terminals. The connections and arrangements of parts may be varied indefinitely, the conditions being that the movement of the flap inward shall close the electric circuit and thus cause a bell to ring.

In Figs. 5 and 6, we have shown the invention as applied in an office building, wherein the receptacle for mail collection is also a chute or channel for conducting the mail from upper floors to the main floor. This collection box and chute may be arranged adjacent to, and used in connection with, a cabinet or system of private drawers, as shown in Fig. 5, said drawers being for individual mail of occupants of the building. One drawer, as H, immediately back of and below the mail slot may be of considerable capacity for the reception of the mail of such tenants as desire distribution by the janitor who may have the key to this box only.

The signal bar G is provided at its lower end with a detent or shoulder *x* and the door carries a spring latch *z*, so that when the signal has been raised it cannot be returned to normal position out of sight, accidentally or otherwise, until the door B has been opened for the collection of the mail.

The face plate, the door or the flap, or any two of them are provided with a narrow slot *r*. In these slots letters or figures having split shanks are inserted and the parts of the shanks are bent outward to secure the letters in place. These letters or figures are applied in such order as to give the number of the house or the name of the occupant, or both. By this means we economically provide universal door and number plates in connection with our letter boxes.

Having now described our invention, what we claim, is—

1. The combination of a face plate having a port, a door having a mail slot or port, a box or receptacle for mail to be collected, an apron flexibly connected with the box, a flap and means, controlled by the door, for holding the apron above the flap when the door is closed and for permitting it to drop and form a chute over or on to the door when the same is opened, substantially as described.

2. The combination of a face plate having a port, a door having a mail slot, a flap pivoted to the door, a box or receptacle for collection mail, an apron flexibly connected with the box and a tongue connected with the door for holding and dropping the apron, substantially as described.

3. The combination of a mail box, a lid or cover for said box, a door leading from outside a wall to said box, a signal outside the box, a lever directly connected with the signal, a direct connection between the lever and the lid and a catch or dog arranged to engage the signal bar and hold it in adjusted position when the door is closed, substantially as described.

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

ALFRED DARLING CUSHING.
ALEXANDER MITCHELL.

Witnesses:
W. G. RAMAGE,
EDWARD L. VEITH.