Dec. 27, 1966 S. C. FEIL 3,294,057

AUTOMATIC RURAL MAIL BOX FLAG TRIPPER

Filed Feb. 18, 1966

FIG. 1

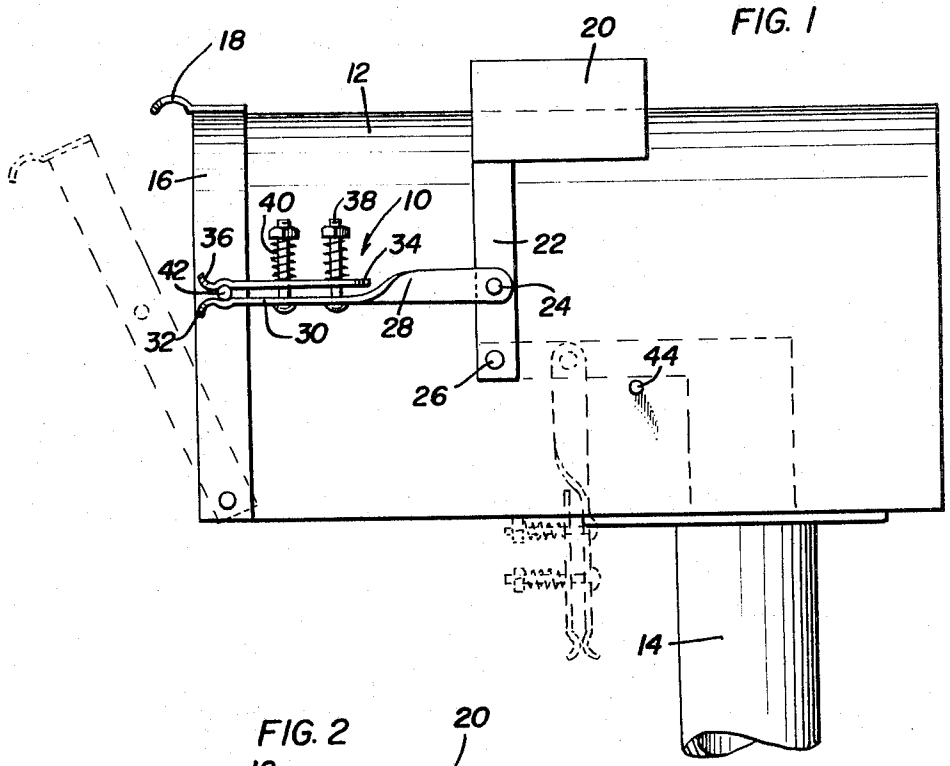
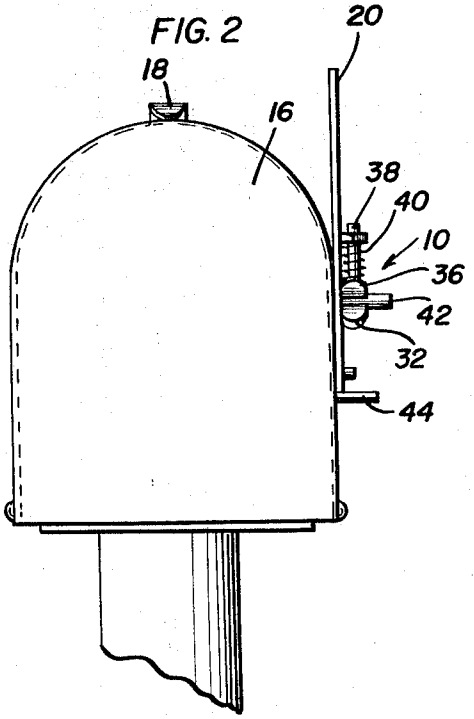


FIG. 2



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AUTOMATIC RURAL MAIL BOX FLAG TRIPPER

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1 Claim. (Cl. 116—132)

The present invention generally relates to a signalling device and more particularly to a tripping device for automatically operating a signalling flag on a mail box.

An object of the present invention is to provide a device for automatically tripping the flag on a rural mail box which will trip the flag so that it moves automatically to its retracted position when the door of the mail box is opened.

Another object of this invention is to provide an automatic rural mail box tripper that includes a spring biased latch mechanism which is frictionally engaged with a projection on the door of the mail box at one end and pivotally attached to a flag at the other end for retaining the flag in upright operative position until the door is opened and the projection thereon is disengaged from the latch mechanism.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a mail box signal flag tripping device which is simple in construction, easy to attach, time saving in use, effective in operation, long lasting and relatively inexpensive to manufacture.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a side elevational view of a mail box with the tripping device of the present invention installed thereon; and

FIGURE 2 is an end view of the construction of FIGURE 1.

Referring now specifically to the drawings, the tripping device of the present invention is generally designated by numeral 10 and is installed on a conventional rural mail box 12 that is supported by a post 14 or any other suitable means. The mail box 12 includes the door 16 and latch and handle structure 18 all of which represents conventional mail box structure.

A signal flag 20 of any suitable color, shape and configuration is mounted on a support arm 22 which has an intermediate pivotal connection 24 and a lower end pivotal connection 26 which pivotally supports the flag 20 from the mail box 12. Both pivotal connections may be in the form of bolts, rivets or the like.

A twisted clamp strap 28 is pivotally attached to the arm 22 by connection 24 and includes a clamping portion 30 terminating in a flared end portion 32. A shorter clamping strap 34 is disposed in opposed relation to clamping portion 30 and terminates in a flared end portion 36 as illustrated in FIGURE 1. A pair of bolts 38 extend through the clamping strap 34 and clamping strap portion 30 with one end having a head and the other end a threaded nut. A compression coil spring 40 encircles each bolt 38 to retain the strap 34 biased toward

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strap portion 30 in order to resiliently grip a projecting pin 42 on the edge of the door 16. The clamp strap 34 and clamp strap portion 30 are equipped with recesses for engaging the pin 42 for more secure gripping of the pin 42.

A stop pin 44 is mounted on the mail box 12 in a position to limit the downward swinging movement of the arm 22 to a generally horizontal position. A similar pin may be provided to limit the forward pivoting of the arm 22 to a substantially vertical position so that the flag 20 will swing rearwardly when released.

The tripping device 10 does not require the person operating it to exert a relatively large force to release the flag and the flag 20 can just as easily be moved to the set position when mail is to be picked up from the box by the carrier. The mail carrier will no longer have to manually lower the flag thus saving time and eliminating possible injury from manually moving the flag to its lowered position.

The tripping device may be constructed of readily available material such as sheet metal, plastic or the like and may be incorporated into or added onto a mail box with very little alteration thereof.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

In combination with a mail box having a moveable closure door, a gravity operated signal flag, an arm supporting said flag for pivotal movement about an axis to swing the signal flag in a vertical plane, and means interconnecting the door and signal flag for retaining the signal flag raised when the door is closed and releasing the signal flag when the door is opened, said mail box including stop means thereon to limit the pivotal movement of said flag; said means including a projecting member on said door, and clamp means attached to the signal flap arm and being detachably engaged with the projecting member, said clamp means including a pair of opposed clamp straps, one of said straps being pivotally attached to said arm, said strap being pivotally attached at an intermediate place on said arm between said flag and said axis, spring means interconnecting said straps to bias the straps toward each other, and each of said straps having an outwardly flared end and an offset portion to enable reception and gripping of said projecting member.

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