No. 692,814. Patented Feb. 11, 1902.

J. M. BALL.

MAIL BOX.

(Application filed Apr. 9, 1901.)

(No Model.)

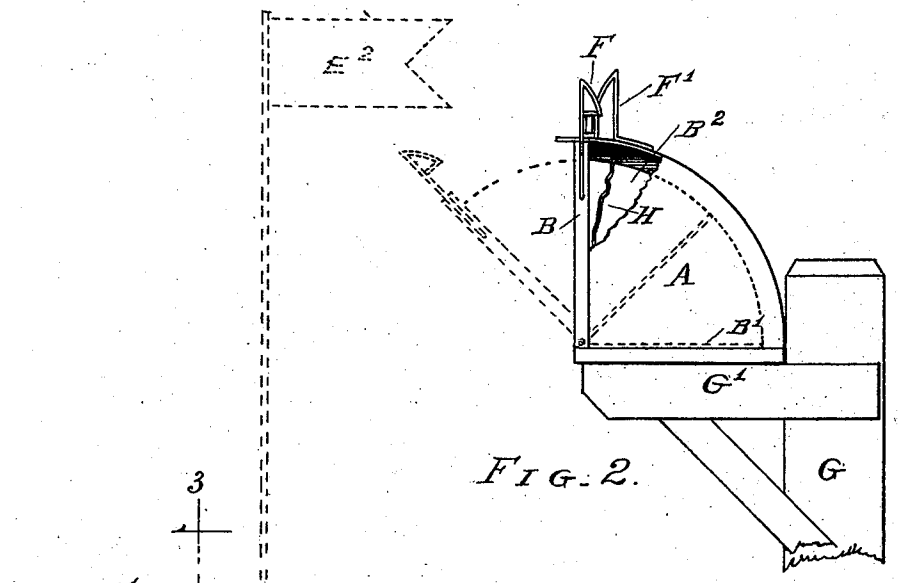


FIG. 2.

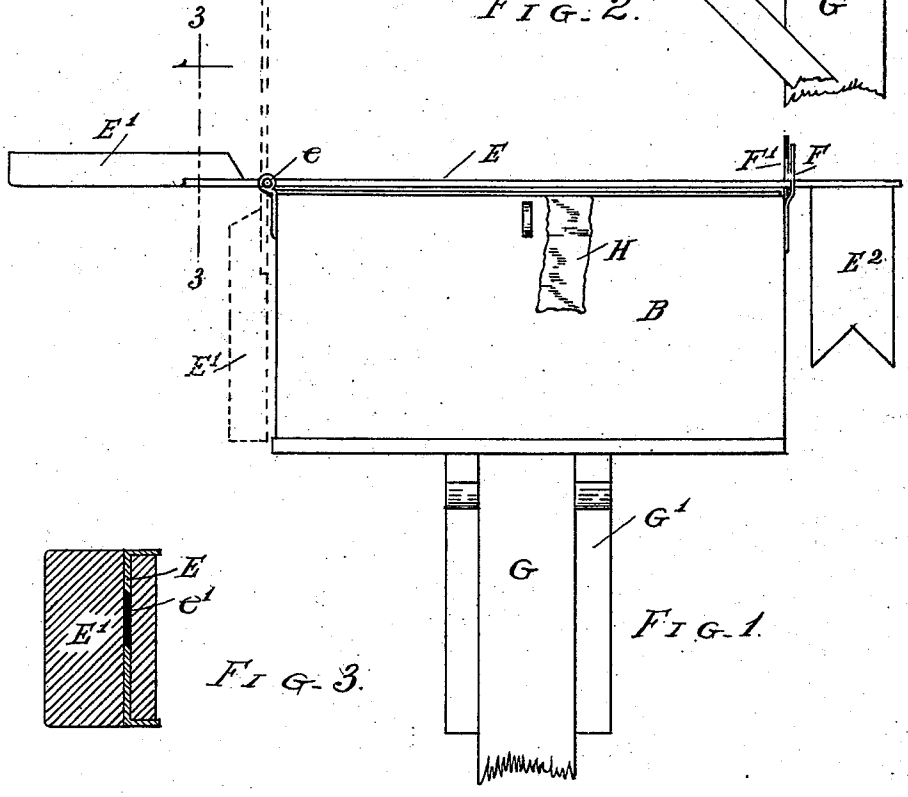


FIG. 1.

FIG. 3.

Witnesses.
F. W. Maxwell
Julia Tarrent.

Inventor.
JOHN M. BALL.
By Atty N. DuBois.

THE NORRIS PETERS CO., PHOTO-LITHO., WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN M. BALL, OF AUBURN, ILLINOIS.

MAIL-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 692,814, dated February 11, 1902.

Application filed April 9, 1901. Serial No. 55,042. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN M. BALL, a citizen of the United States, residing at Auburn, in the county of Sangamon and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Boxes, of which the following is such a full, clear, and exact description as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use my said invention.

My invention relates to mail-boxes such as are commonly used on rural routes; and the purposes of my invention are to provide, in connection with the mail-box, a signal which when the box is opened will gravitate to an upright position, to provide a latch of improved construction, to provide a simple and effective signal to indicate that the box contains matter to be taken up by the carrier, and to provide simple and effective means for supporting the box in an accessible position.

With these ends in view my invention consists of the novel features of construction and combinations of parts shown in the annexed drawings, to which reference is hereby made, and hereinafter particularly described, and finally recited in the claim.

Referring to the drawings, Figure 1 is a front elevation of the mail-box. Fig. 2 is a right-hand end elevation of the box and its supporting-bracket. Fig. 3 is an enlarged vertical transverse section on the line 3 3 of Fig. 1.

Similar letters of reference designate like parts in all of the views.

The main structure of the box is preferably made of galvanized sheet-iron and consists of a body part A, having an arch-shaped top, and a door B, hinged to turn downward, as clearly indicated in Fig. 2. A bottom plate B′, at right angles to the door B, is secured thereto by segmental end plates B^2. A rod E turns on a pivot *e*, secured on one end of the box, and carries a detachable weight at one end of the rod and a flag E^2 or equivalent device at the other end of the rod. A latch member F is secured at one end of the door, and a curved guide F′ is secured at one end of the box contiguous to the latch F. The arm E is preferably of trough-shaped cross-section, as shown in Fig. 3, and fits in a cut *e′* in the weight E′, so that the weight may conveniently be placed on or removed from the arm.

A suitable post G, planted in the ground, supports the box on the bracket G′, secured to the post, so that the box projects outward from the post at such height above the ground that the box will be readily accessible to the mail-carrier while mounted on horseback or seated in a vehicle.

A strip of cloth H or other flexible material has one end secured on the inside of the box and is of such length that the free end of the strip will hang down in front of the door, as shown in Fig. 1. The strip H when displayed signifies to the carrier that there is in the box mail-matter to be taken out. If the strip is not displayed, the carrier is thereby apprised that there is no mail to be taken up and need not stop unless he has mail to be deposited in the box.

In case mail is to be deposited in the box the carrier opens the door, thereby releasing the latch F and permitting the arm to gravitate to the upright position, (shown in dotted lines in Fig. 2,) thereby indicating to the owner of the box that mail has been deposited.

I am aware that signaling devices operated by the opening of the mail-box have heretofore been used. I therefore do not claim that feature broadly.

What I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

In a mail-box, the combination of a box, a door on said box hinged to turn downward and adapted to gravitate to a closed position, a latch on said door, an arm pivotally supported on said box and carrying a signal, a weight detachably connected with said arm and gravitating to raise the arm to a vertical position to display the signal when the door is opened, and a guide on said box adapted to guide said arm into engagement with said latch, said arm being released by the opening of said door, as set forth.

In witness whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name, at Springfield, Illinois, this 27th day of March, 1901.

JOHN M. BALL.

Witnesses:
E. E. BONE,
W. J. KNOTTS.