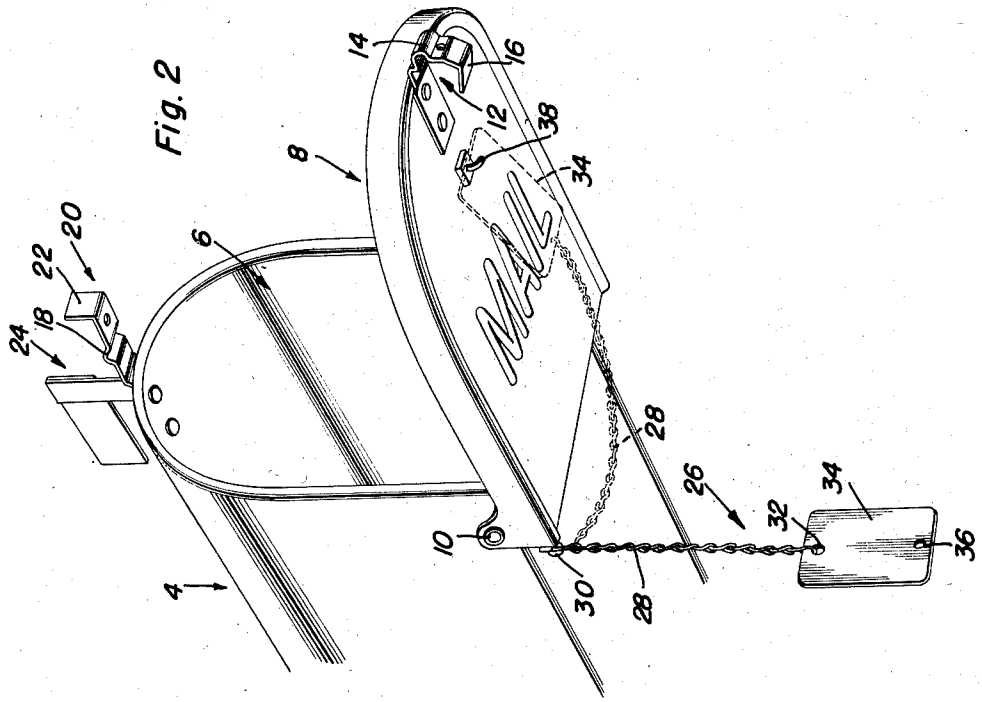
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RURAL MAILBOX SIGNAL MEANS

Filed May 18, 1951

Fig. 2



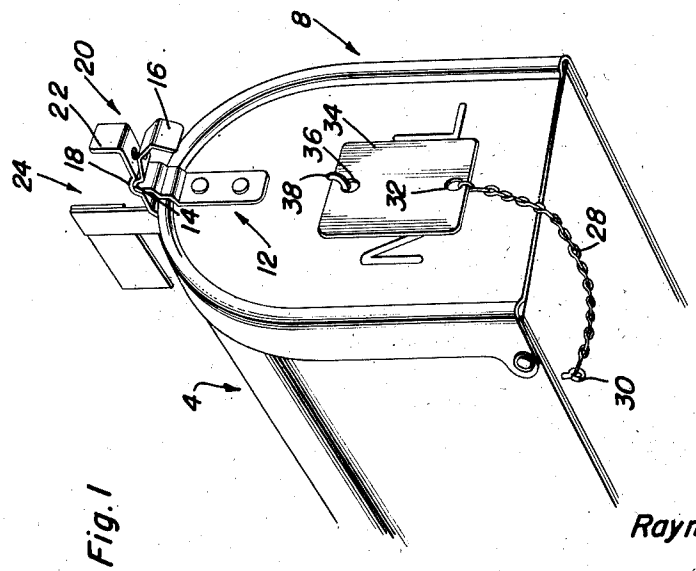


Fig. 1

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RURAL MAILBOX SIGNAL MEANS

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2 Claims. (Cl. 116—114)

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The present invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in rural mailbox constructions and has more particular reference to what may be identified as an added or auxiliary signal, that is, one which is used in addition to the regularly provided signalling flag and which will be of great benefit to the owner of the box in assisting him in assuring himself that the mail carrier has been to the box to either pick up mail or to deliver incoming mail, as the case may be.

Rural mailboxes having dual signalling devices to assist in mail collection and delivering activities are, of course, not new. However, and despite the fact that others have attempted to solve the problem of systematically handling outgoing and incoming mail, the problem does not seem to have been amply and satisfactorily solved. It is therefore the purpose of the instant invention to structurally, functionally and otherwise improve upon prior art constructions.

Another somewhat general objective is to improve upon and reduce the number of parts entering into the combination, thereby not only increasing the efficiency of the structure as a whole, but rendering the same less costly to manufacture and to otherwise simplify factors of assembling and sale.

What is more, it is an object to make no alterations in the present box or the present flag signalling means but to simply add thereto the extra signal and, in so doing, to more satisfactorily meet the requirements and needs of manufactures and users.

Then, too, it is an object of the invention to provide an auxiliary owner pick-up signal which is clearly visible from a point distant from the position of the mailbox and which is automatic in operation in that as soon at the mail carrier opens the door or lid to place mail in the box, the auxiliary signal comes into play without requiring any attention whatsoever on the part of the mail carrier.

Other objects and advantages will become more readily apparent from the following description and the accompanying sheet of illustrative drawings.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a fragmentary perspective view of a rural mailbox of the conventional type with the improved auxiliary mail pick-up signal attached and in use.

Figure 2 is a view based on Figure 1 showing the lid or door swung open and down and with the pick-up signal in its ready-to-serve signalling position.

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Referring now to the drawings by reference numerals and accompanying lead lines, the mailbox is denoted by the numeral 4 and is conventional and the open end 6 thereof is closed by a lid or cover 8 hinged on the front end of the box as at 10. This is a downwardly and outwardly swinging cover or lid such as is commonly employed. The upper crown portion of the lid or cover is provided with a catch 12 which has a detent 14 and a finger piece 16. The detent is adapted to snap into a keeper seat 18 provided in the fixedly mounted catch 20. The latter also includes a finger piece 22. The numeral 24 designates the customary signalling flag which is used, almost invariably, on conventional-type rural mail delivery boxes. It is understood that the parts so far described are conventional.

The invention has to do with the auxiliary signalling means 26 and this comprises a flexible chain or the like 28 which is fastened to an eye or equivalent bracket 30 on the bottom of the box and which has its other free end attached by way of an aperture 32 to a relatively rigid indicating or signalling tag or plate 34. The latter is painted some vivid color so that it can be seen from a distance. It has been thought of painting it yellow. The free end portion of the tag has a hang-up hole or keeper 36 and this adapted to be releasably engaged with a keeper or suspension hook 38 rigidly mounted on the central outer surface portion of the lid 8. The bill of the hook is such that it will release the tag and allow same to drop off the hook by the forces of gravity.

The suspension or keeper hook 13 is a simple rigid bracket fastened and placed in the position shown with the shank of the hook at right angles to the door or cover and the bill of the hook upturned slightly. By detachably engaging the keeper hole 36 of the tag or signal 34 on the hook in the manner shown in Figure 1, the signal is set and ready for use, obviously. This is the normal position since, when mail is in the box to be collected or picked up by the mail carrier, the door is closed and the signalling flag 24 is up. When the mail carrier delivers the mail and opens the door this operation permits the signalling tag or plate 24 to drop off on its own accord, this under the influences of the forces of gravity. What with the signalling plate or tag 24 hanging down by way of the suspension chain 28, the owner will know either one or two things that the carrier has been to the box and collected mail which was left therein for transmission through the mail services; or that incoming mail has been deposited in the

box by the mail carrier. It is obvious therefore that the home owner will be relieved of much guesswork and also relieved of the frequent needless trips that he otherwise makes to the mailbox only to find out that there is no incoming mail for him. What with the regularg flag and this auxiliary signalling chain held plate 34, the over-all functions of the box will be such as to meet the full needs and requirements of manufacturers, mail carriers and owners of rural delivery mailboxes.

A careful consideration of the foregoing description in conjunction with the invention as illustrated in the drawings will enable the reader to obtain a clear understanding and impression of the alleged features of merit and novelty sufficient to clarify the construction of the invention as hereinafter claimed.

Minor changes in shape, size, materials and rearrangement of parts may be resorted to in actual practice provided no departure is made from the invention as claimed.

Having described the invention, what is claimed as new is:

1. In a rural mailbox construction of the class described, in combination, an open ended box, a closing door for said open end, the lower end portion of said door being pivotally mounted on the bottom of said box and said door being adapted to swing outwardly and downwardly relative to said open end, a chain secured at one end to said bottom, a signalling plate secured at one end to the free end of said chain, and means for releasably mounting said plate on the exterior surface of said door embodying a suspension hook fixedly secured to a central portion of said door, said plate being positioned

against the exterior of said door and having a keeper hole releasably engageable with said hook, whereby when said door is swung open, said plate automatically falls off of said hook and hangs down, by way of said chain, to a clearly discernible signalling position.

2. In a rural mailbox construction, in combination, a conventional-type rural-type mailbox closed at one end and open at the opposite mail-inserting and removing end, a closing door for said open end, the lower end portion of said door being pivotally mounted on the bottom of said box and said door being adapted to swing outwardly and then downwardly to uncover the open end, a suspension hook fixedly secured to the central exterior side of said door, a signalling plate having an apertured end portion suspended on said hook, and a chain attached at one end to said signalling plate and attached at its opposite end to said mailbox whereby, when the door is swung open, said signalling plate automatically disengages itself from said door and drops from a non-signalling position on the door to a chain suspended signalling position below said box.

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