

W. E. WILLIAMS.
 SIGNAL ATTACHMENT FOR LETTER BOXES.
 APPLICATION FILED AUG. 2, 1910.

984,502.

Patented Feb. 14, 1911.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

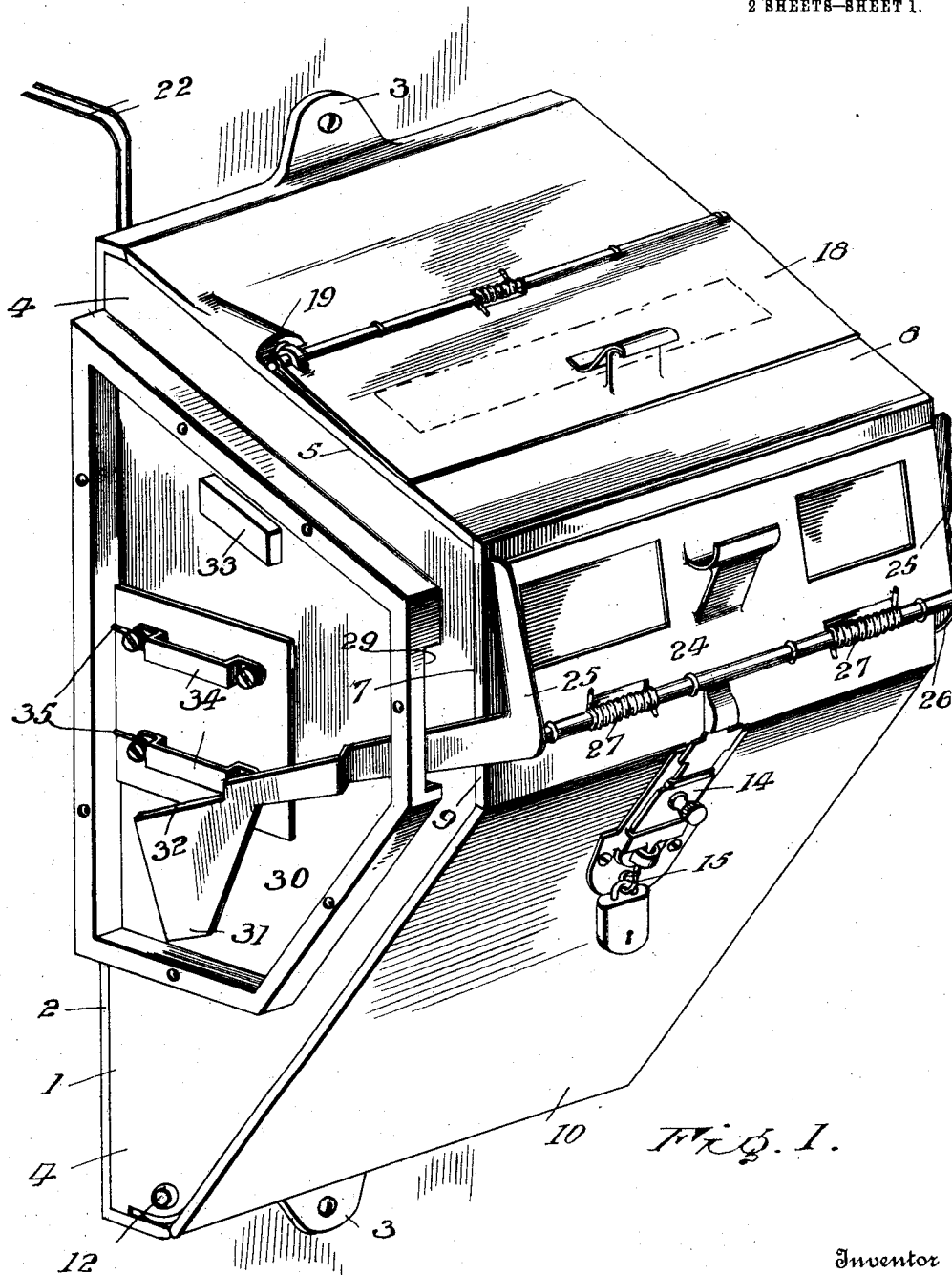


Fig. 1.

Inventor
 W. E. Williams.

Witnesses
 W. H. Woodson—
 Jane M. Fallon—

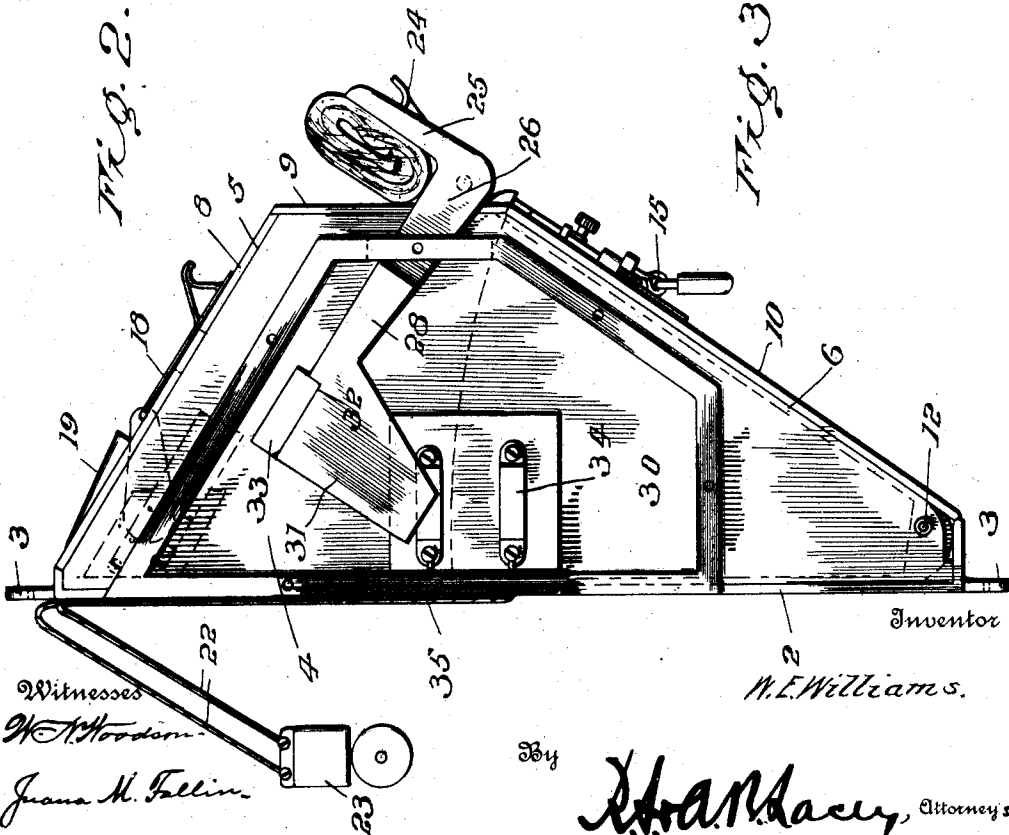
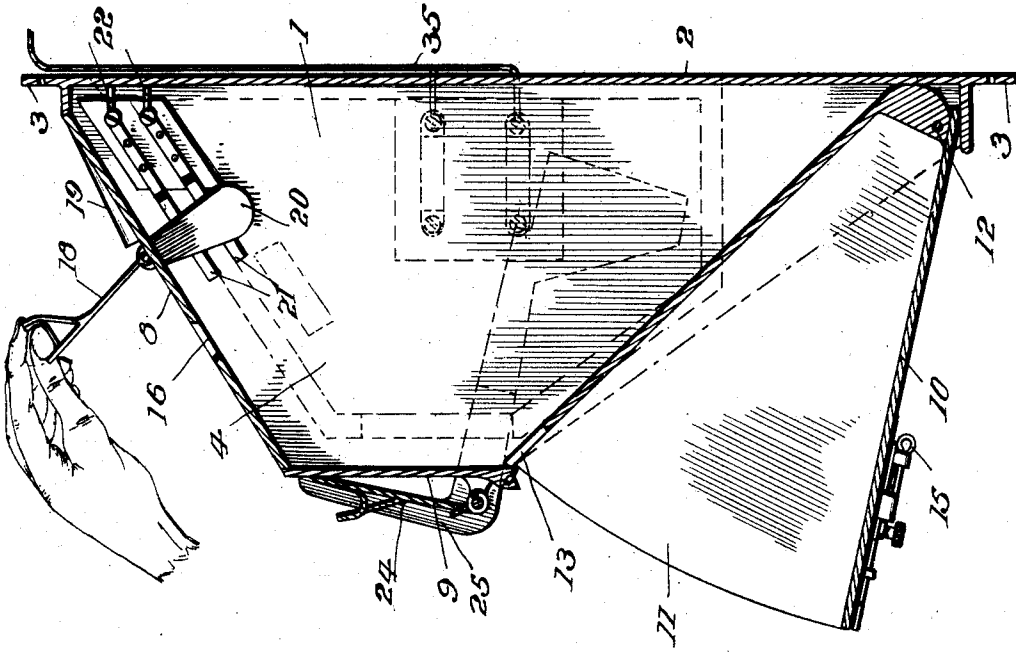
By *W. H. Woodson*, Attorney.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILLIAM E. WILLIAMS, OF WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA.

SIGNAL ATTACHMENT FOR LETTER-BOXES.

984,502.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Feb. 14, 1911.

Application filed August 2, 1910. Serial No. 575,148.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM E. WILLIAMS, citizen of the United States, residing at Wilkes-Barre, in the county of Luzerne and State of Pennsylvania, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Signal Attachments for Letter-Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

This invention comprehends certain new and useful improvements in letter boxes and has for its primary object an improved construction of letter box, designed particularly for household use and for rural free delivery service where the house is often set back some distance from the road, whereby the occupant of the house may be apprised by an audible signal ringing in the house of the insertion of either a letter or similar mail matter, within the box or the attachment of newspapers, packages or the like to the box, so as to avoid any unnecessary trips to and from the house to ascertain whether or not mail has been left by the carrier.

With this and other objects in view as will more fully appear as the description proceeds, the invention consists in certain constructions, arrangements and combinations of the parts that I shall hereinafter fully describe and claim.

For a full understanding of the invention, reference is to be had to the following description and accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a mail box constructed in accordance with my invention; Fig. 2 is a side elevation thereof, the cover for the side casing of the device being omitted in both of these views; and, Fig. 3 is a vertical transverse sectional view.

Corresponding and like parts are referred to in the following description and indicated in all the views of the drawings by the same reference characters.

My improved mail box comprises a body portion 1 which may be of any desired form, the same being arranged for substantially vertical position, attached to a post or similar support and embodying a back 2 provided at top and bottom with attaching ears 3, sides 4 which are preferably formed with oppositely inclined top and bottom edges 5 and 6 and vertical front edges 7, an inclined top 8 secured to the inclined upper edges 5 of the sides 4, and a front 9 which is secured to the front edges of the sides, the front terminating substantially flush with the lower

extremities of the front edges 7, leaving an opening which is normally closed by the front 10 of the mail receptacle 11. The mail receptacle 11 is substantially of inverted pyramidal form and is hinged at its bottom, as indicated at 12, so as to swing within the body portion 1 to catch the mail as it is inserted through the top 8, the mail being extracted by swinging the receptacle 11 outwardly and downwardly, as clearly illustrated in the drawing. Preferably, the outward and downward movement of the receptacle 11 is limited by a lug 13 which is formed on the back of the receptacle and which is designed to abut against the rear side of the front 9 of the body portion 1. The receptacle 11 may be held in closed position by any desired means, such as a latch 14, the latch being held locked by means of a pad-lock or the like inserted through a loop 15 forming part of the latch casing.

The top 8 is formed with a transversely extending letter receiving slot 16, the same being normally closed by a hinged lid 18 spring held in closed position, as shown. In addition to the slot 16, the top 8 is formed near one side edge with a longitudinally extending slot 19 and the lid 18 is formed in the rear of its pivot or hinge with a switch blade 20 which is accommodated in said slot and which works underneath the top 8 into and out of engagement with spring circuit terminals 21. In the normally closed position of the switch blade 18, the blade 20 is out of contact with the terminals 21, but when the lid is raised to insert letters or the like into the receptacle 11 through the slot 16, the swinging of the lid will cause the switch blade 20 to bridge the terminals 21 and thereupon close a single circuit of which the terminals form a part, the circuit being indicated by the wires 22 which lead from the box to the house where a bell 23 of any desired or conventional type may be located so as to sound the alarm when the lid is raised, and thereby indicate to the occupants of the house that the letter carrier has arrived and deposited letters or postals or the like within the mail box.

In order to adapt the signal devices to a mail box of the character herein shown and described, where it is customary to attach newspapers or similar bulky mail to the box by a clip instead of attempting to force it through a relatively narrow opening designed particularly for letters, I provide a

paper holding clip 24 which is in the form of a plate extending across the front 9 of the box and provided at its side edges with strengthening flanges 25 which are extended at one end to form pintle ears 26 by which the blade is hingedly connected at one edge to the front of the box. Springs 27 are wound around the pintle rod and serve to normally hold the plate or clip 24 pressed against the front of the box so as to effectually retain papers or the like inserted between the box and plate.

The pintle ear 26 at one side edge of the clip 24 is extended laterally to form an arm 28 which passes through a slot 29 formed in a relatively shallow casing 30 mounted on one side of the body portion 1. The arm 28 is formed at its extremity with a switch blade 31 which is recessed at its rear edge, at 32, to engage an abutment 33 in the casing 30 so as to serve the function of limiting the outward and downward movement of the clip. This switch blade 31 is designed to bridge contact members 34 which are embedded in the inner wall of the casing 30 and to which wires 35 are connected, these wires being connected to the other wires 22 leading to the bell 23. Hence it will be understood that when the clip 24 is swung outwardly so as to insert between it and the front of the body portion 1, the newspapers or similar relatively bulky articles designed for the owner of the box, the switch blade 31 will bridge the contact members 34 and close the circuit and sound the alarm.

From the foregoing description in connection with the accompanying drawing, it will be seen that I have provided a very simple and efficient signaling mail box which will indicate to the occupants of a house no matter how far the house may be from the mail box, the insertion of letters or the like in the box or attachment of papers or more bulky articles thereto, so that the owner of the box will not be required to make unnecessary trips to see whether or not mail has been left by the carrier on his route.

While the device is primarily intended for the rural free delivery service, it is, of course, understood that it is equally applicable for use on the front doors of city or other houses and that it will be found especially desirable where the postal regulations prohibit or at least render it unnecessary for the letter carrier to ring the bell of the house, to climb stairs to directly deliver mail to occupants of upper compartments, or to wait in any event for the house holder to come to the door so as to receive the mail matter.

It is also to be understood that the invention is not limited to the construction or design of the mail box as hereinbefore described and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, but that various changes may be made in the details of construction and arrangement of the proportions of the parts without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

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

1. In combination with a mail box, a plate hingedly connected thereto and adapted to hold newspapers or the like against the box, the plate being formed at its side edges with flanges, the flanges being extended to form ears by which the plate is hinged to the box, one of said ears being extended laterally and rearwardly to form an arm movable along the side of the box, the box being formed at said side with a casing into which said arm extends, a switch blade formed on the arm, an electrically actuated signal including an electric circuit, and terminals for said circuit in said casing arranged to be bridged by the switch blade.

2. The combination with a mail box provided at one side with a casing, the casing being formed at its front with a slot, a plate hingedly connected to the front of the box and having an arm extending rearwardly through the slot into the casing, a switch blade carried by said arm, the casing being provided with an abutment adapted for engagement by said switch blade to limit the movement of the plate in a direction away from the front of the box, an electrically actuated signal including an electric circuit and terminals in the casing in the circuit and arranged to be bridged by the switch blade.

In testimony whereof, I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

WILLIAM E. WILLIAMS. [L. S.]

Witnesses:

HARRY GROW,
THOMAS GOST.