

(No Model.)

H. J. WITTE.
LETTER BOX.

No. 533,518.

Patented Feb. 5, 1895.

Fig. 1.

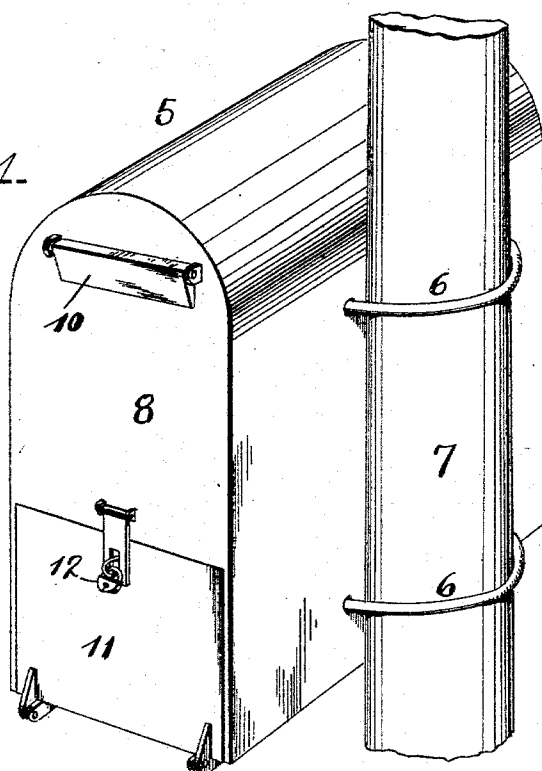
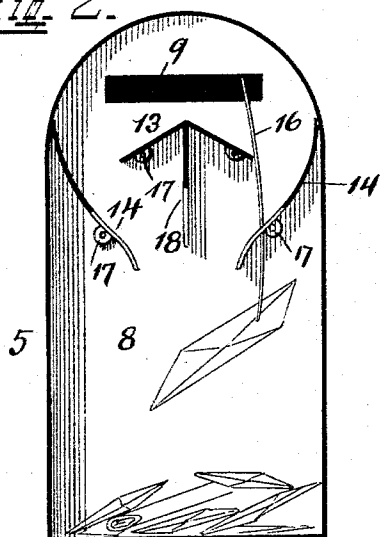
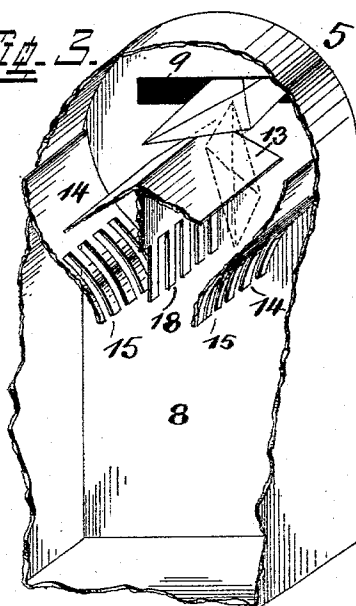


Fig. 2.



Attest
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Fig. 3.



Inventor
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HERMAN J. WITTE, OF CINCINNATI, OHIO.

LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 533,518, dated February 5, 1895.

Application filed May 7, 1894. Serial No. 510,269. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HERMAN J. WITTE, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Cincinnati, Hamilton county, State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Letter-Boxes; and I do declare the following to be 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, attention being called to the accompanying drawings, with the reference-numerals marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

This invention relates to improvements in letter-receiving boxes such as are disposed for general public use on street-corners, public buildings, &c. The object is to prevent them being tampered with for the purpose of extracting through the receiving opening mail after deposited therein.

To this end my invention consists of a construction whereby this object is accomplished and which is described and pointed out in the following specification and claim, together with its operation, parts and construction, the latter being also illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1, shows in a perspective view, a letter-box such as here in consideration, in position. Fig. 2, shows a vertical cross-section of the same, and Fig. 3 shows in a fractional perspective view the interior of the box near the receiving end.

5, is a letter-box of customary form and affixed by means of bands 6, to a lamp-post 7. In one of the ends 8, and near the top, is located the receiving opening 9, normally closed by a swinging flap 10, principally intended to keep rain out and which is lifted up when a letter is to be introduced after which it drops again by its own weight.

11, is the door through which the mail is extracted by an authorized collector who carries a key to the lock 12, by which the door is kept closed.

It is a comparatively easy matter to rob such boxes of their contents, by inserting through the receiving opening a point or hook, carried by a wire or weight on a string, or an object covered by an adhesive substance carried in a similar manner. The insertion of such means cannot be completely prevented in a

practical manner because any means which would do such effectively would more or less interfere either with the convenient and quick introduction of a letter, or very likely after inside, cause them to clog or stick and thereby become an obstruction for further depositing. I therefore devised my protective construction not so much with a view to prevent such insertion, which it nevertheless impedes, but principally with a view to prevent a letter, even if it becomes once attached to one of these inserted implements, from being carried out by it. At the same time the construction interferes in no way with the free passage of letters down into the lower part of the box. For such purpose I provide first a dividing ridge-piece 13, centrally disposed below the inlet-opening and running from end to end lengthwise through the box. It is upon the upper edge of this part that a letter first drops when arriving inside and whereby its drop is guided and corrected in a manner that it may clear properly and as intended, any of the parts below and which are thereby prevented from becoming an obstruction to its further progress. These parts below consist substantially of two inclined shelves 14, the lower edges of which approach each other below the ridge-piece, extending from the sides of the box inwardly beyond the lower edge of such ridge-piece. These lower edges are also denticulated so as to form substantially a comb with teeth 15. A letter, no matter how introduced, when reaching the ridge-piece will turn upon it flatwise so that by the time it reaches one of the shelves, it will do so edge first and readily slide off and pass on below. A lodgment across the space between shelves 14 is prevented by a vertical comb 18.

Any implement inserted may perhaps, by skillful manipulation, succeed in reaching a letter, but when its withdrawal is attempted it will most likely pass between two of the teeth 15, which will strip such letter off again and thereby frustrate the attempt after all. The edges of the ridge-piece and the ones of the shelves below have the same effect as to stripping off a letter and these lower edges might therefore be used without teeth, but I prefer the use of the latter because they facilitate the introduction of a wire 16 for instance, without improving its chances to be

retracted with a letter thereon and thereby prove deceptive to the manipulator.

Ridge-piece and shelves may be secured in any suitable way. They are preferably provided with flanges 17, whereby they are secured to the sides of the box.

It will be observed, that while my construction is devised with a particular view to accomplish the desired object, I have also paid due attention to the free passage of the letters and especially obviated any cumbersome attachments at the outside of the receiving slot which many persons do not readily understand to manipulate and whereby the use of such boxes becomes inconvenient.

Having described my invention, I claim as new—

In a letter-box having its receiving-opening in one of its upright ends, the combination therewith of a ridge-piece 13, running centrally through the box from end to end, being below the receiving-opening and at right angles thereto, inclined shelves 14, extending from the long sides of the box inwardly with their lower edges below and under the ridge-piece and a vertical comb depending from the latter into the space between the inclined shelves.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature this 11th day of March, 1894.

HERMAN J. WITTE.

Witnesses:

WM. KRAMER,
C. SPENGLER.