

(No Model.)

A. SMITH.  
HOUSE DOOR LETTER BOX.

No. 492,564.

Patented Feb. 28, 1893.

Fig. 1.

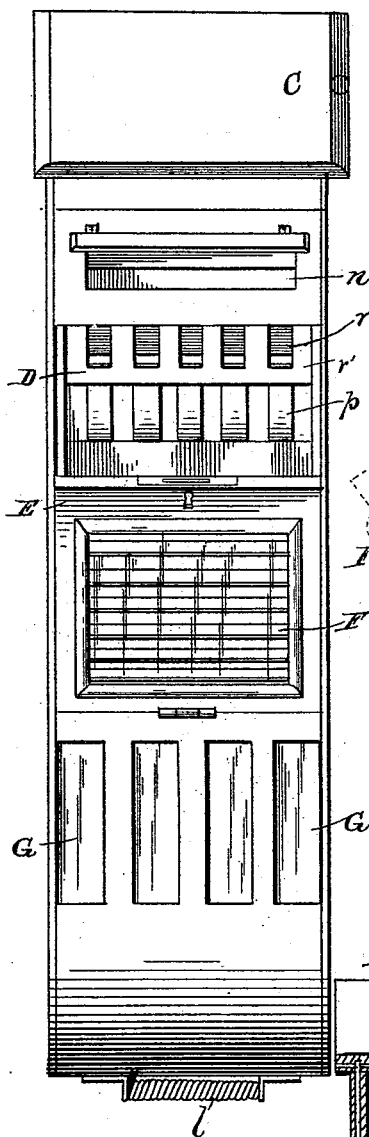


Fig. 2.

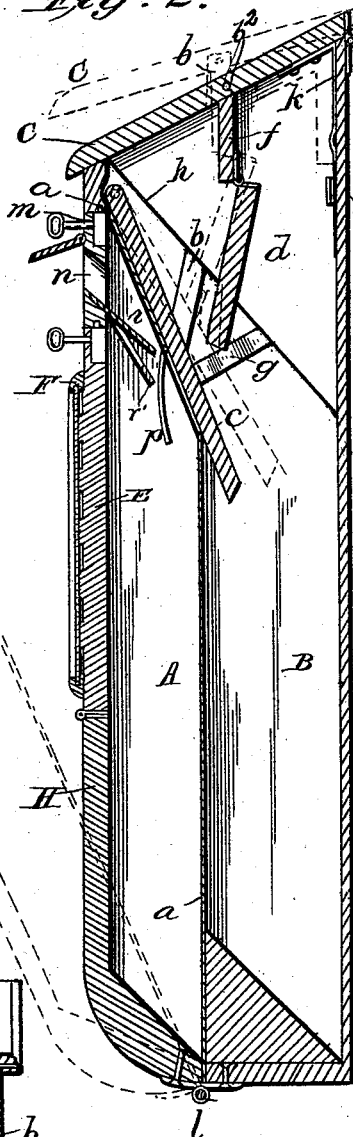
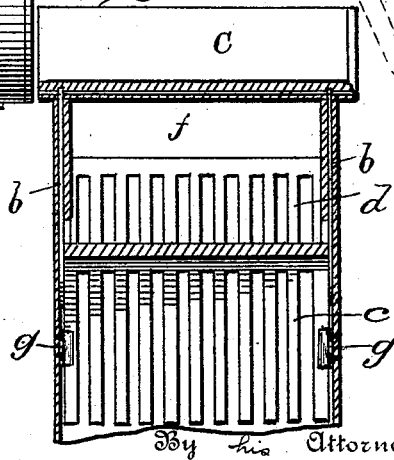


Fig. 3.



Witnesses

A. J. Schwartz

C. J. Davis

Inventor

Albert Smith

By his Attorney

Geo. C. Bollinger

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALBERT SMITH, OF WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

## HOUSE-DOOR LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 492,564, dated February 28, 1893.

Application filed June 12, 1891. Serial No. 396,006. (No model.)

### *To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ALBERT SMITH, a citizen of the United States of America, residing at Washington, in the District of Columbia, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Letter-Boxes, of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

My invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in letter boxes for the reception of and the security of letters, parcels and other mail matter, and which may be used in connection with residences, offices and other buildings, and is preferably secured to or near a door or door casing, or wall near the door pull being so constructed as to prevent the abstraction of the mail matter by means of the hand or a wire, and enable the same to be reached only through a locked opening.

I am aware that safety letter boxes have been made heretofore, but their construction is such that when the lid is only partially open the parts are so arranged as to permit the abstraction of the mail matter by the insertion of a hand or wire; and therefore the object of my invention is to provide a device in which the contents are secure at all times, and in all positions of the lid or cover.

A further object of my invention is to provide a letter box which shall have two compartments each separate and distinct; one for the delivery of mail matter, and the other for the reception of same intended to be collected for delivery.

My invention consists further in certain details of construction and arrangement which will be fully described hereinafter in connection with the accompanying drawings, and specifically pointed out in the claims.

Referring to the drawings, Figure 1, is a front view showing the box partly open for the collection of mail matter. Fig. 2, is a vertical sectional view of the box closed, also showing in dotted lines the position when open. Fig. 3, is a detail view.

The letter box is composed of two compartments A, B, which I call the collection and delivery part, respectively, dividing the box into two separate and distinct compartments for the reception of mail matter. The back of the letter box forms the back of part B, and

the front of the box the front of part A. The back of part A, is made of sheet metal, preferably steel, and forms the partition between the two compartments when the box is closed. Part B, is designed to receive the mail matter when delivered, and is provided in its upper part with the lid or cover C, to which is attached the link *b*, connecting the lid and rack *c*, the said cover having sides or cheeks *h* upon its under surface, entering the top of the compartment B, whereby it is guided in its movements, the said links *b*, being by preference of strap metal, and having their upper ends pivoted upon the rod *b*<sup>2</sup> passing through the cover from side to side.

To the lid or cover inside the box is rigidly fastened the vertical piece *f*, to the lower edge of which is hinged the second rack *d*, being intended to swing freely with rack *c*. When the lid is closed down the rack *c* drops, allowing the mail matter deposited to fall to the bottom of the box, and upon slightly raising the lid the rack *c*, is drawn into the position shown by the dotted lines in Fig. 2, and coming in immediate contact with rack *d*. If a wire be now inserted to abstract the mail matter it must pass between the two racks, which converge and the teeth of which work upon each other, and the teeth of rack *c*, extend some distance below the end of rack *d*, as shown in Fig. 3, so that the wire when withdrawn must necessarily pass between the teeth of either rack, thus preventing the withdrawal of the mail matter which may happen to be attached to the wire. When the lid is fully raised the rack *c*, is drawn upward until its free end strikes the back of the compartment, thus closing it until the lid is again lowered.

*g*, is a bow spring secured to the side of the box, and designed to press against rack *c*, during the raising of the lid. After the lid is up the rack is caught by the spring and retained in its position, and by this means supports the lid keeping it open while mail matter is being deposited. Also attached to the lid on the inside of the box is the device *k*, designed to ring a bell and thus give an alarm when the lid of the box is raised, and the said device consists of an upright having one end rigidly secured to the cover or lid and

extending downward along the back of the box when the lid is down. When the lid is raised the free end draws away from the back of the box, and this movement may be made use of either to ring an ordinary mechanical bell, or to form an electrical connection whereby an electric bell situated within the building to which the letter box may be attached, is rung. Compartment A, occupies the front portion of my letter box, and serves as a cover or door to compartment B, the two compartments being hinged together at their lower ends at *l*. The delivery part B, is closed securely by locking part A, at *m*, and part A, is accessible through the door E.

The sheet metal forming the back of the collection part A, opposite the opening *n*, through which mail matter is deposited is cut as shown at D, Fig. 1, and the tongues formed thereby are bent forward as at *p*, Fig. 2. Along the lower edge of the opening *n*, is placed a shelf or ledge, also of sheet metal cut and bent in a similar manner; the tongues *r* formed therefrom projecting toward those formed in the back of the compartment. Mail matter deposited passes between these tongues, and having once been deposited cannot be abstracted except through the locked door E.

If a wire be inserted through the opening *n*, it necessarily passes down between the tongues in the metal either of the ledge or back part of the compartment, and any mail matter adhering is raked off as the wire is withdrawn. To further facilitate this, and also to prevent mail matter from blocking the entrance to either the collection or delivery part of the letter box, the bottom of each compartment slants upward from the back so that mail matter falling to the bottom is at once thrown forward, and thus enables the box to be more completely filled.

Situated on the front of the letter box is the frame F, containing a series of grooves in which cards or plates may be placed bearing the names of the occupants of the building to which the letter box may be attached.

G, G, are windows in the lower part of the front of the box for the purpose of detecting, without opening the box, the presence of mail matter.

The letter box may be made either of wood or metal, or both combined in any approved manner, but to insure strength and security the whole is constructed preferably of sheet steel, and may be attached to lamp posts or

other supports, and used entirely as a collection box; and can be attached to buildings or other supports by means of screws or bolts through the back.

Having now described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In a letter box, having a rearwardly hinged lid opening outwardly, a rack *c*, pivoted within the upper forward portion of the said box, a link connecting the said rack and lid, a piece *f*, rigidly secured to the under surface of the said lid, and a rack having its upper end pivoted to the lower edge of the said piece *f*, and having its lower end normally bearing upon the said first named rack, substantially as described.

2. In a letter box, having an apertured front and rear and side walls, the said side walls being vertically divided and having their front portion connected by a vertical transverse sheet metal partition, the said partition having an outwardly inclined outer end and forming with the front wall a collection compartment and with the rear wall a delivery compartment, the said partition and front wall and forward portion of the sides being secured together and hinged to the bottom of the delivery compartment, the tongues projecting inwardly from the aperture in the front, the said partition having tongues cut therefrom and bent forward opposite the said aperture, and a cover for the said delivery compartment, substantially as described.

3. In a letter box, having a hinged lid opening outwardly, of a rack *c*, pivoted within the upper interior portion of the said box, a link connecting the said rack and lid, and a rack *d*, having its upper end pivotally hung from the said lid and its lower end free to swing, substantially as described.

4. In a letter box, having a hinged lid opening outwardly, of a rack *c*, pivoted within the upper interior portion of the said box, a link connecting the said rack and lid, a spring retaining the said rack in a raised position, and a rack *d*, having its upper end pivotally hung from the said lid and its lower end free to swing, substantially as described.

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

ALBERT SMITH.

Witnesses:

B. CHAMBERS,  
ABEL HART.