(No Model.)

H. L. JOHNSON.

LETTER BOX.

No. 524,637. Patented Aug. 14, 1894.

Fig. 1.

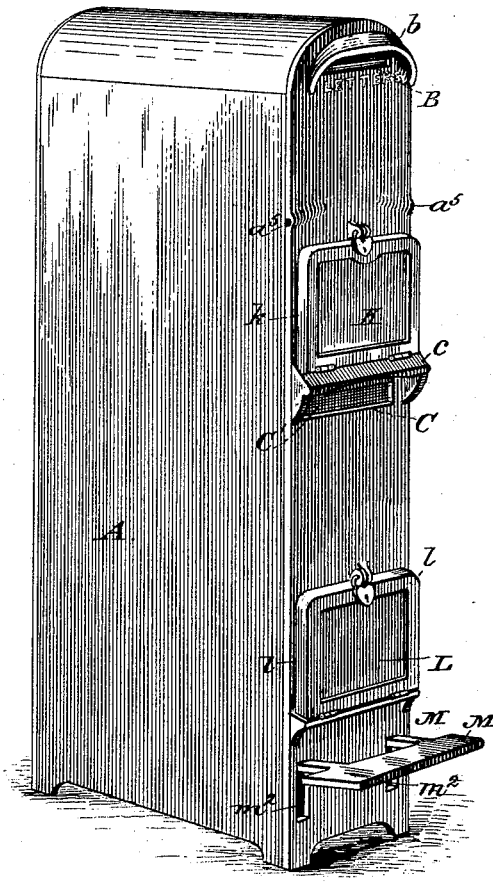


Fig. 2.

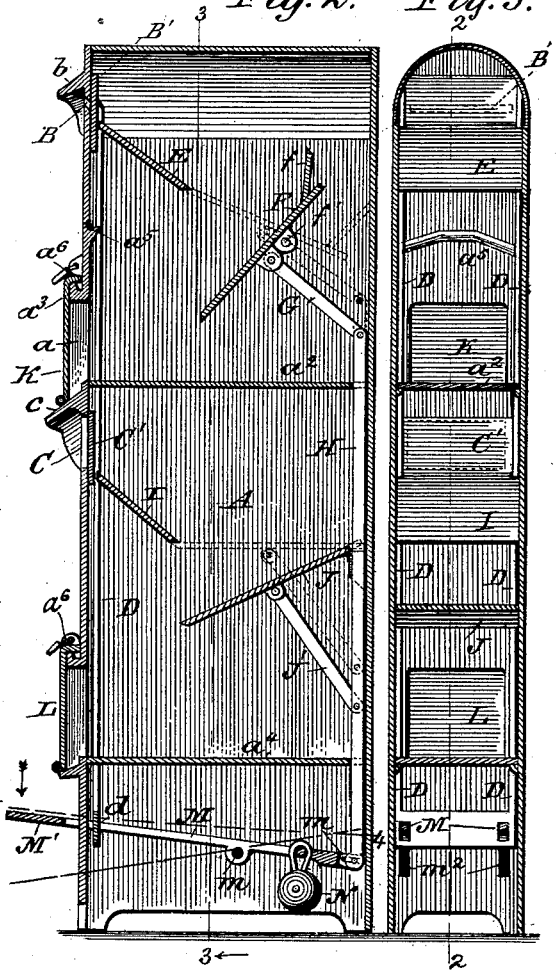


Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

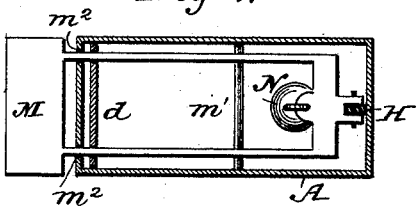
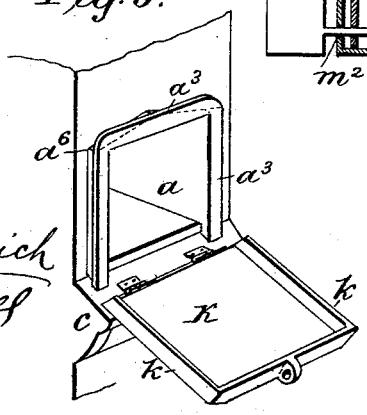


Fig. 5.



WITNESSES:

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LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 524,637, dated August 14, 1894.

Application filed March 7, 1894. Serial No. 502,652. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HENRY L. JOHNSON, a citizen of the United States, residing at Washington, in the District of Columbia, 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, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

My invention relates to letter-boxes such as are placed upon the side-walks, and in other public places, in towns and cities, and an object thereof is to facilitate the insertion of mail-matter in said letter-boxes, so that, even though a person may have both hands engaged, the orifice through which the mail-matter is to be introduced, can be readily uncovered.

A further object is to render the mail-box safe, so that the mail-matter therein can be extracted only by an authorized collector.

A still further object is to protect the mail-matter from injury by rain or snow.

The invention consists of the means hereinafter fully described and claimed, whereby these objects are accomplished.

Referring to the drawings Figure 1 represents in perspective a mail-box provided with two compartments, one for letters and one for papers and parcels. Fig. 2 shows a vertical sectional view of the same box, taken on the line 2—2 of Fig. 3. Fig. 3 shows said box in section, the said view being taken on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 represents a horizontal sectional view taken on the line 4—4 of Fig. 2. Fig. 5 represents a fragment of the mail-box, one of the doors through which mail-matter is removed, being shown as open.

A is a box of suitable height, which is divided into an upper, and a lower compartment by a horizontal partition a^2, and which has the necessary, and usual bottom a^4. This bottom is situated a short distance above the lever-end of the box so as to leave a space in which may be placed certain devices hereinafter described. The box is furnished with two openings B. and C. communicating respectively, with the two compartments thereof, the one opening C. being somewhat larger than the other opening B in order that the papers and packages may be passed therethrough. Over these openings are ordinary hoods *b* and *c*, which guard them from rain and snow, and inside the box are sliding covers B′. and C′, which normally close the openings. A gutter a^5 is situated below the opening B and extending to the outside of the box provides for the escape of any water that may enter the opening. These covers are guided by inclined partitions E and I between which and the inner face of the box the covers slide, the said partitions serving also as chutes for the mail-matter and as means to prevent the introduction of an instrument to the compartment below for the purpose of filching the contents.

The covers B′ and C′, are united and actuated by rods D which extend through the partitions a^2 and a^4 and enter the lower compartment already mentioned, where they are merged into a cross-piece *d* through which are perforations for the reception of the lever M. This lever M is fulcrumed at m' and the two side-bars thereof pass through slots m^2 in the front of the box and terminate in a foot-piece as shown. The lever extends rearward from the fulcrum and is there connected with a rod H which extends upward through the partitions a^4 and a^2. To it also is attached a weight N, if in the construction the rod H does not give the required weight.

F and J are plates which are respectively pivoted at f' and hinged at f^2 and to which are secured levers G and J′ that are pivoted to the rod H in such relation thereto, that when the rod is in its lowermost position, the plates rest at an inclination as shown. The plate F has at its rear end a flange *f* that prevents letters from falling upon and interfering with the movement of lever G or falling behind the upper end of the rod H. The plate J. has no such flange, as it does not need it for bulky matter, and the said plate is hinged at its rear end instead of at a pivot midway its length, as in the case of plate F. Both the plates, when in a raised position, match with the plates E. and I as shown by dotted lines, and when in this position, as they always are when the covers B′. and C′, are open, they completely cut off access to the compartments for

the mail. This fact renders the box safe from the depredations of thieves. The relative movements of the covers B′ and C′, and the plates F and J, are occasioned by the way in which they are connected with the lever M as will be readily understood.

The openings *a*, *a′* for extracting the mail are closed by doors K and L which have flanges *k* and *l* that shut against the face of the box and keep out the rain, and the face of the box itself is provided with flanges a^3 turned outward from the openings *a* and *a′* so as to form a groove a^6 in order to further insure the exclusion of moisture.

The construction of the invention having been divulged, its utility and operation are obvious, and need no lengthy explanation.

When a person desires to deposit a letter or parcel, he has only to press his foot upon the lever M and thereby uncover the openings B. and C. at the same time closing the plates F and J. He may then, even if one hand is engaged in holding bundles or an umbrella, easily insert the piece of matter that is to be mailed. Or if both hands are occupied, or if he is a person who has lost both hands, he may seize a letter with his teeth and insert it in the opening B, the intention being to construct the box of such height that the average person may so use it. The weight of the lever renders the closing of the covers B′. and C′ automatic.

Having thus fully described my invention, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The combination of a letter-box having an opening for the insertion of mail-matter, of a movable cover for such opening, a movable plate as F within the box for closing the mail compartment therein, and a foot lever situated within the box and accessible from the outside thereof connected with the cover and plate, and arranged to move the one to an open position, and the other to a closed position, substantially as described.

2. The combination of a box having two compartments, each provided with an opening for the insertion of mail, and having also a third compartment at the base thereof, covers for the said openings, a lever situated in the third compartment chutes, or inclined plates within the chambers extending rearwardly and downwardly from the openings, movable plates adapted to swing into contact with the chutes so as to close the mail compartments, the said plates, and covers being so connected with the lever that when the covers are closed the plates are moved out of contact with the chutes, substantially as described.

3. The combination of a letter compartment having an opening, a plate or chute extending rearward from the lower edge thereof, a pivoted plate adapted to swing against the plate or chute and having a flange at its rear-edge, a rod connected with the pivoted plate so that the pivotal point thereof will be between it and the flange aforesaid, and a lever for operating the rod substantially as described.

4. The combination of a letter-box having an opening provided with a marginal flange around the same, the said flange extending for a short distance at right angles to the face of the letter box and having its edge bent away from the opening thus forming between itself and the said face a groove a^6, of a door for said opening having a flange adapted to surround the outwardly turned flange when the door is closed substantially as described.

5. A letter-box having an opening for the introduction of mail-matter and provided below said opening with a gutter a^5 situated on the inner wall of the box and communicating with the exterior thereof substantially as described.

6. A box provided with a compartment for mail, with a space in the lower portion thereof, and with an opening for the introduction of mail-matter in a wall of the compartment in combination with a movable cover for said opening, a foot lever situated within the said space and having a part thereof accessible from outside the space, and means for connecting the foot lever and the movable cover, substantially as described.

7. In combination with a letter box having a plurality of vertically arranged compartments for mail each of which is provided with a slit or opening in one of its walls, movable covers for the slits or openings, rods attached to the ends of the covers and extending downward within and through the said compartments, and a foot lever situated below the compartments and connected with the rods, substantially as described.

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

HENRY L. JOHNSON.

Witnesses:
THOMAS C. HOMILLER,
HOWARD BEALL.