

Allen & Reitz,
Letter Box.

No. 107586.

Patented, Sep. 20. 1870.

Fig. 1.

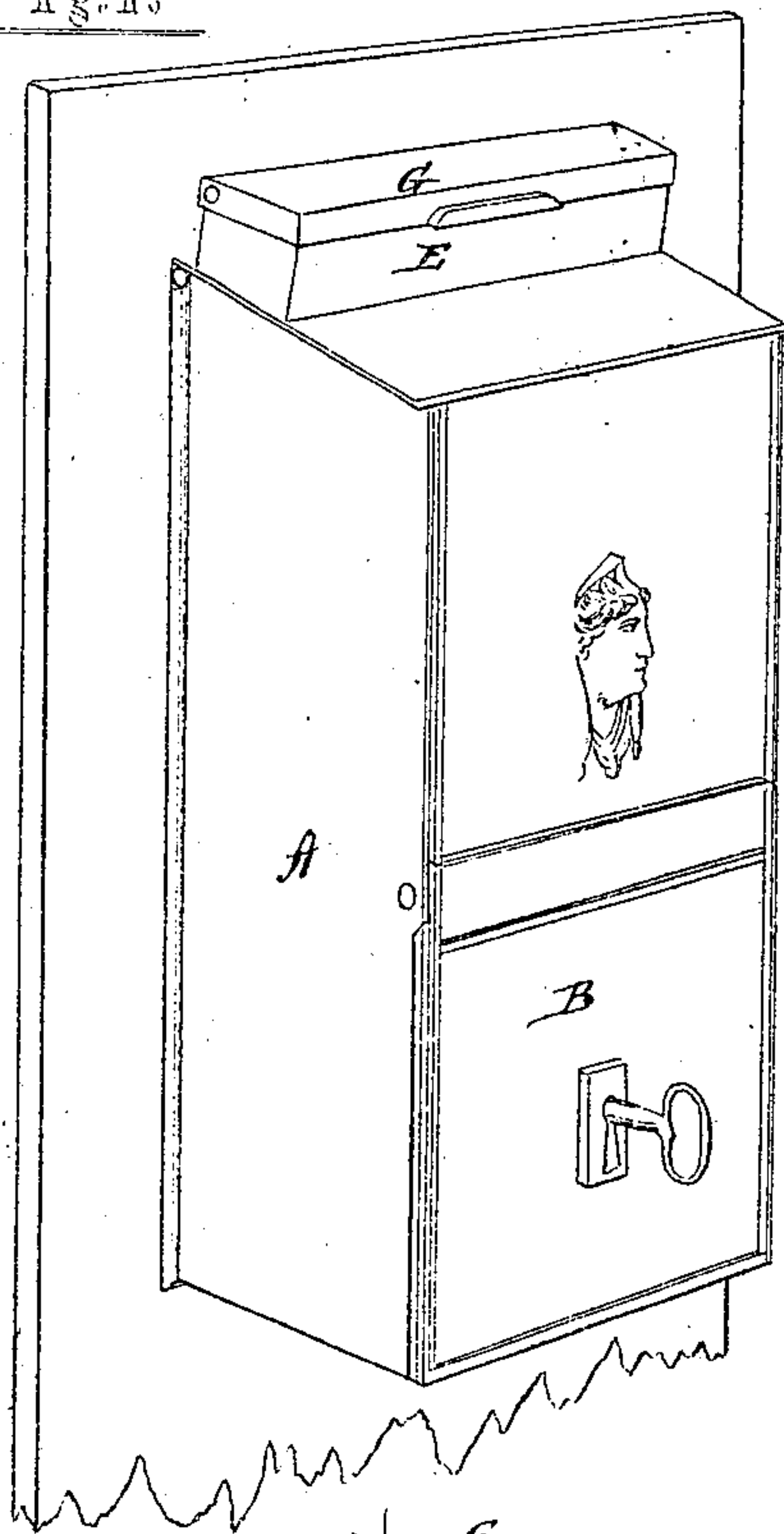


Fig. 2.

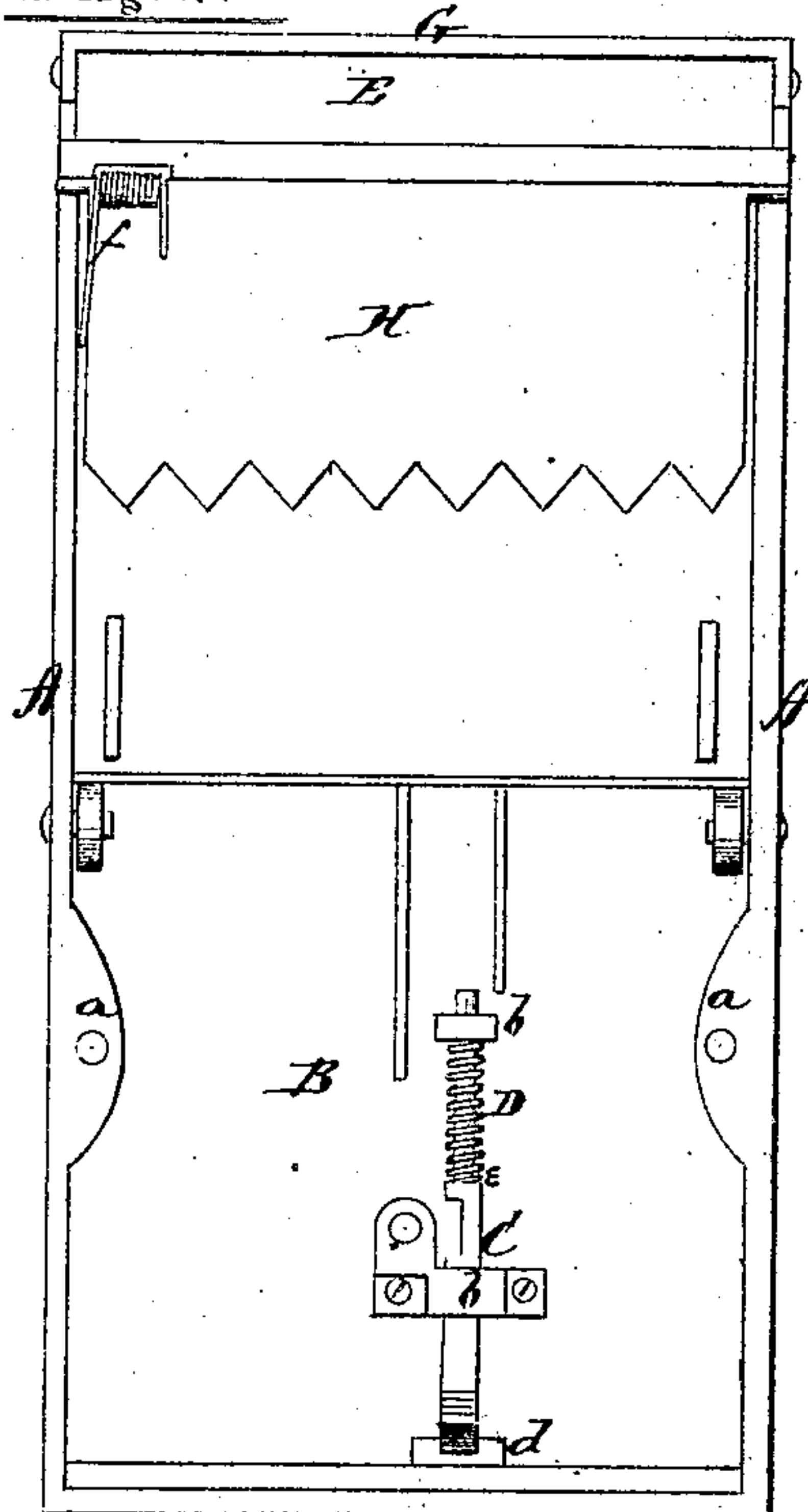
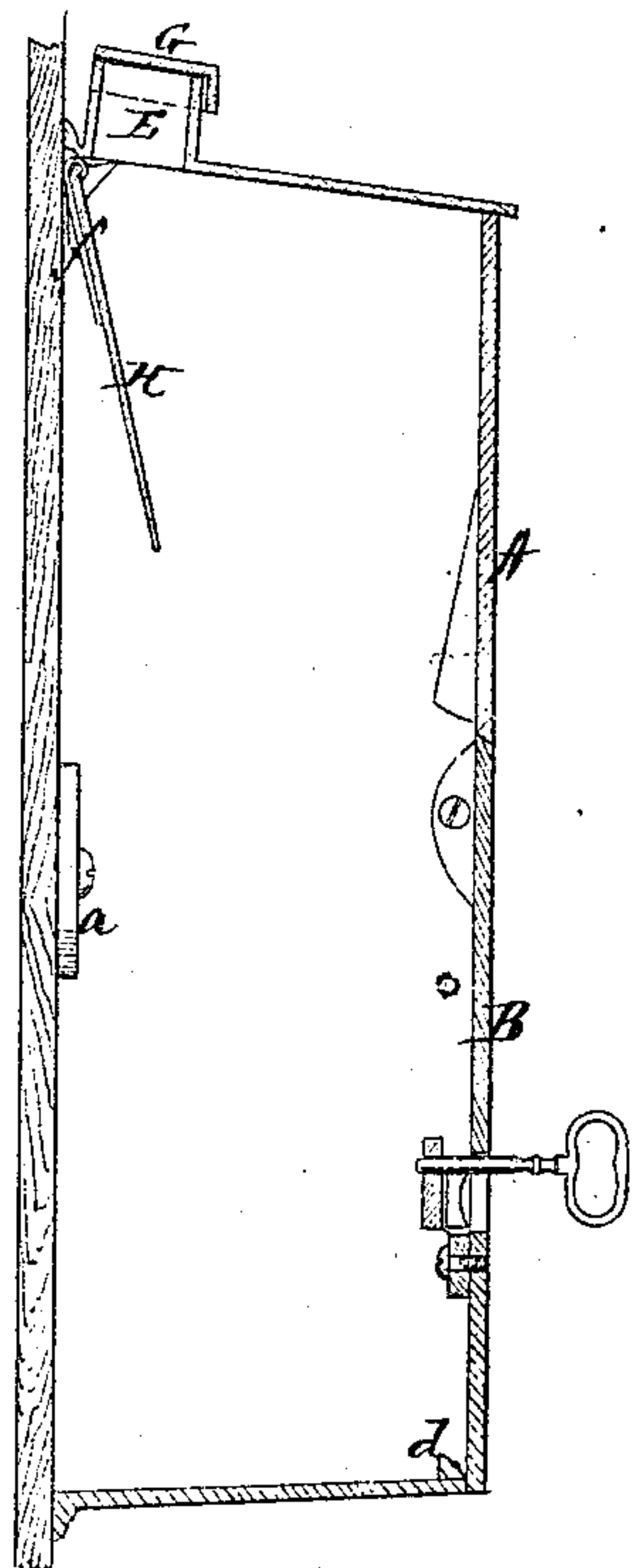


Fig. 3.



Witnesses.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

AUSTIN W. ALLEN AND CHARLES REITZ, OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

IMPROVEMENT IN MAIL-BOXES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **107,586**, dated September 20, 1870.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, AUSTIN W. ALLEN and CHARLES REITZ, of Indianapolis, in the county of Marion and State of Indiana, have invented a new and valuable Improvement in Mail-Boxes; and we do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the construction and operation of the same, reference being had to the annexed drawings, making a part of this specification, and to the letters and figures of reference marked thereon.

Figure 1 of the drawings is a representation of our mail-box in perspective. Fig. 2 is an inside view, and Fig. 3 a transverse vertical section, of the same.

The nature of our invention consists in the construction and arrangement of a mail-box for private offices and residences, to be fastened to door-facings, gate-posts, &c., as will be hereinafter fully set forth.

In order to enable others skilled in the art to which our invention appertains to make and use the same, we will now proceed to describe its construction and operation.

In the accompanying drawings, A represents the box, provided on its front side, at the lower end, with a door, B, which is hinged at its upper edge, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3. The box A is open at the back, and its sides are at their rear edge provided with lugs *a a*, through which screws are passed to fasten the box to the door-facing, gate-post, or any other place where it is desired to attach it. These screws are inserted from the inside of the box, and cannot be reached except through the door B. The door is provided with a lock composed of only two pieces—namely, the bolt C and spring D. The bolt C, which moves in guides *b b* on the inside of the door B, is at its lower end so constructed as to catch on a lug, *d*, on the upper or inner side of the bottom of the box A. The upper end of the bolt is formed round, with a shoulder or offset, *e*, and the spring D surrounds this round portion, between the shoulder *e* and the upper guide *b*, so as to press the bolt downward. The bolt is raised by means of a key from the outside. The top of the box A, which is inclined forward, is near its rear edge provided with an opening surrounded by an upward-projecting box-like flange or collar, E,

forming the throat or mouth to the box. The mouth E is provided with a lid, G, having a downward-projecting flange around the ends and front side. The lid G is hinged to the mouth E by merely passing a pin or rivet on each side through the rear end of the flange on the lid, and through the side of the mouth.

H represents a plate arranged on the inside of the box A, near the top, and is held in position by its two upper corners projecting and extending through holes in the sides of the box, as shown in Fig. 2. The lower edge of the plate H is thrown in an angle toward the front by means of a spring, *f*. Its purpose is to feed the mail-matter from the back of box toward the front in such a manner as to keep the opening clear, and to keep the papers from crowding on top of each other, and to enable a larger amount of mail-matter to be placed in the box, it being pressed by the spring into a smaller compass. The plate springs down by the pressure of mail-matter upon it, and allows the same to pass into the box easily. When the mail has passed in, the plate springs up and toward the front again, and, in addition to feeding and pressing the mail to the front, it serves as a protection against mail-matter being drawn out at the entrance on top.

The leading and paramount object of our invention is to provide means for packing a large quantity of miscellaneous mail-matter within a small compass. If the box be filled with small letters only, none of which are of sufficient length to reach from the bottom to the serrated edge of the plate, the process of packing is only partially accomplished; but when newspapers and large packages are passed through the throat of the box the lower ends thereof rest upon the bottom, while their upper ends are pressed firmly against the side of the box opposite the throat by means of the plate H, operated by its spring *f*. As every additional large piece of mail-matter is passed downward between the edge of the plate and the large package last inserted, it follows that the whole number of large packages placed in the box are compressed as above stated. In the meantime the small letters usually become pressed between the large packages in an upright position, and thereby all the available area of the box is utilized.

Having thus fully described our invention, what we claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

In a mail-box, the arrangement herein shown and described, of the feed and protection plate H and spring *f*, when constructed substantially as described, for the purpose of guiding and holding the mail-matter, as specified.

In testimony that we claim the above we have hereunto subscribed our names in the presence of two witnesses.

AUSTIN W. ALLEN.
CHARLES REITZ.

Witnesses:

W. F. MEDSTER,
H. H. TAYLOR.