

(No Model.)

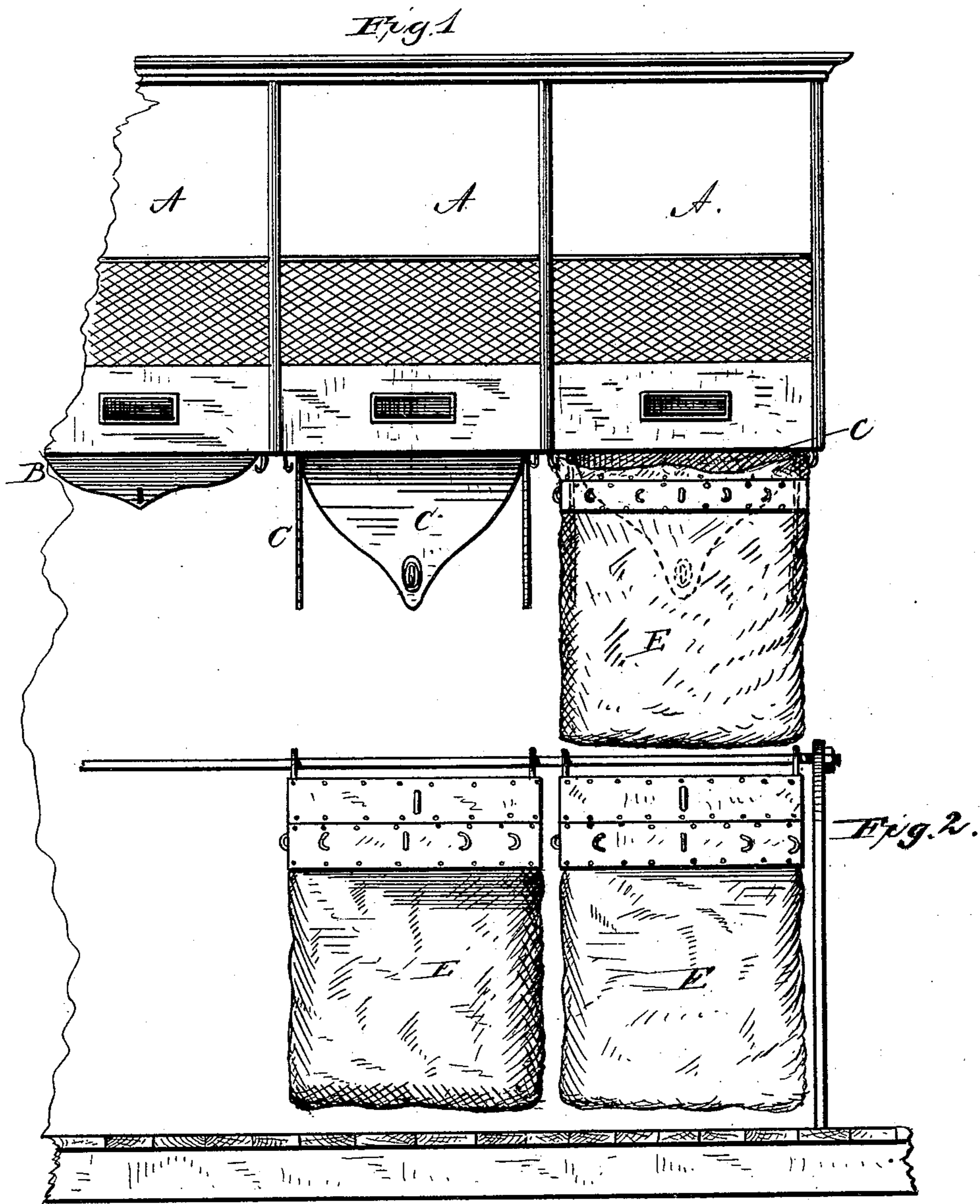
2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

E. R. MEEKER.

MAIL BOX.

No. 246,901.

Patented Sept. 13, 1881.



Witnesses,
Frank L. Ouraud,
Wm. L. Speiden.

Inventor
Ellis R. Meeker,
per his attorney,
W. H. Doolittle

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 2.

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Fig. 3. A

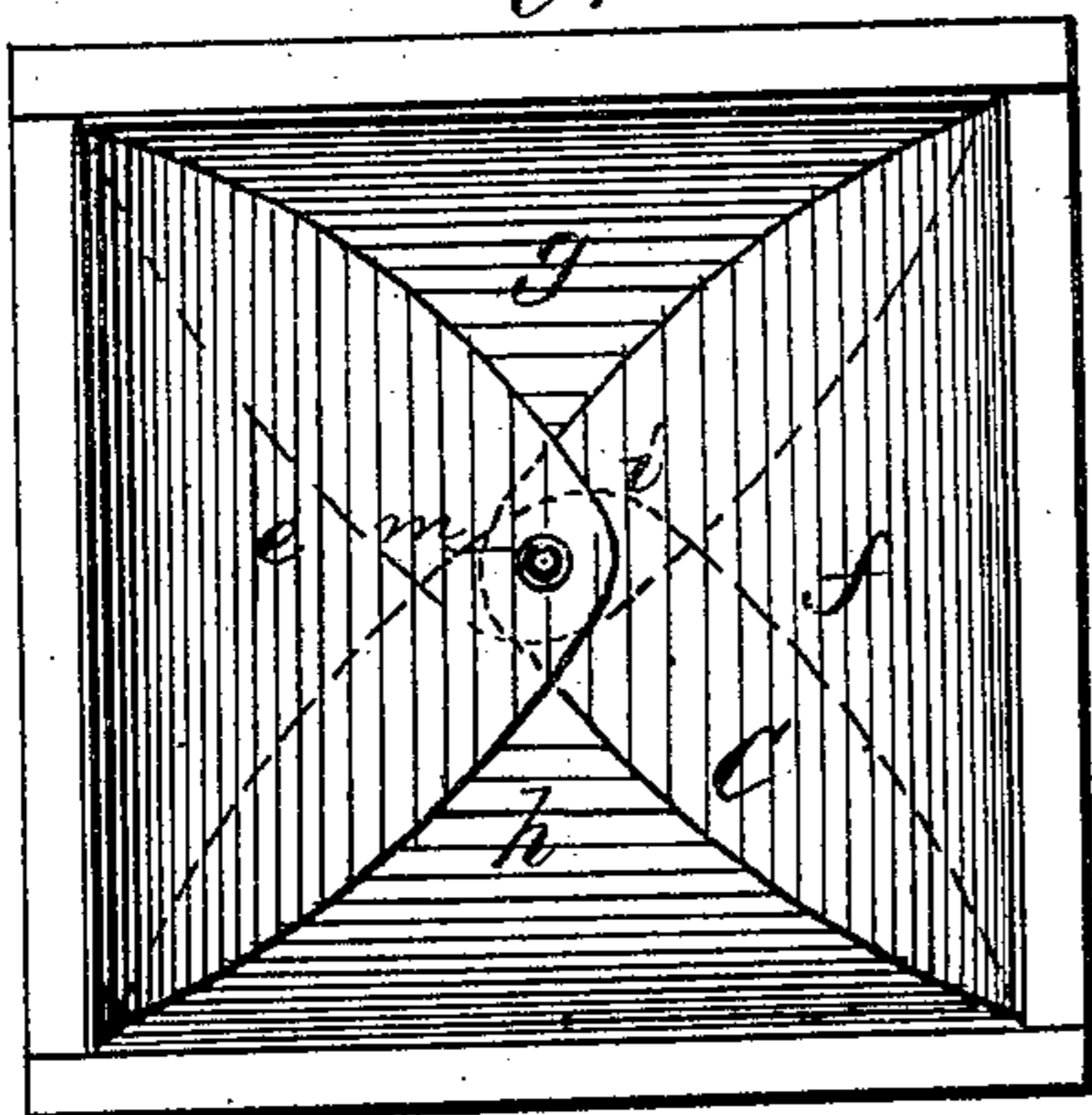


Fig. 6.

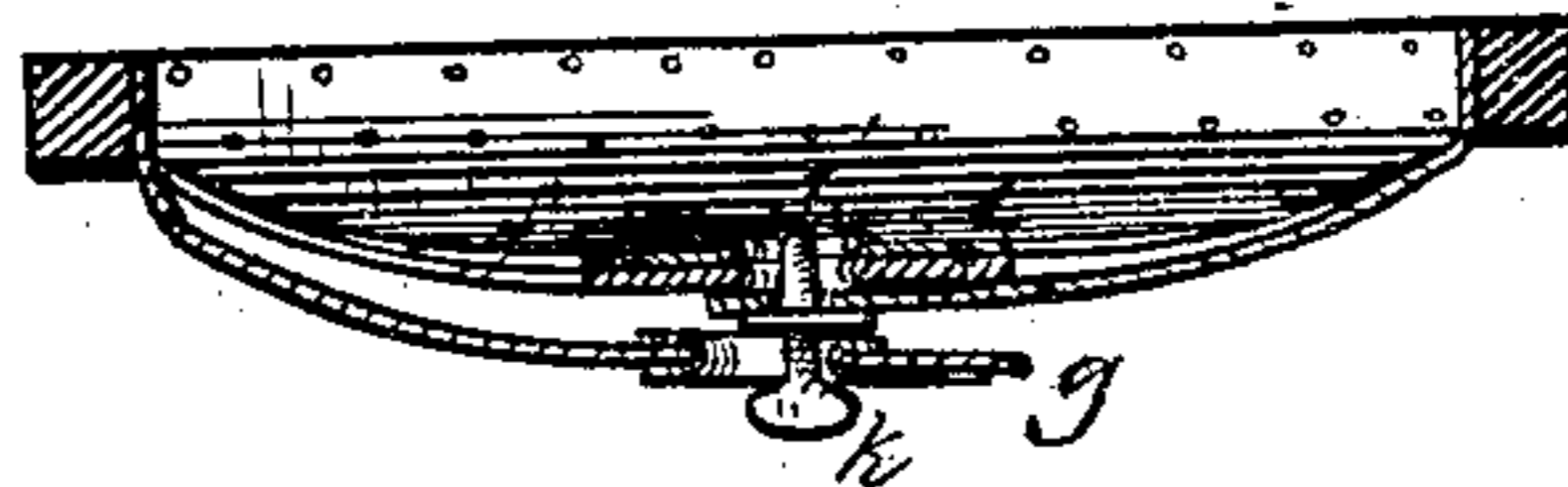
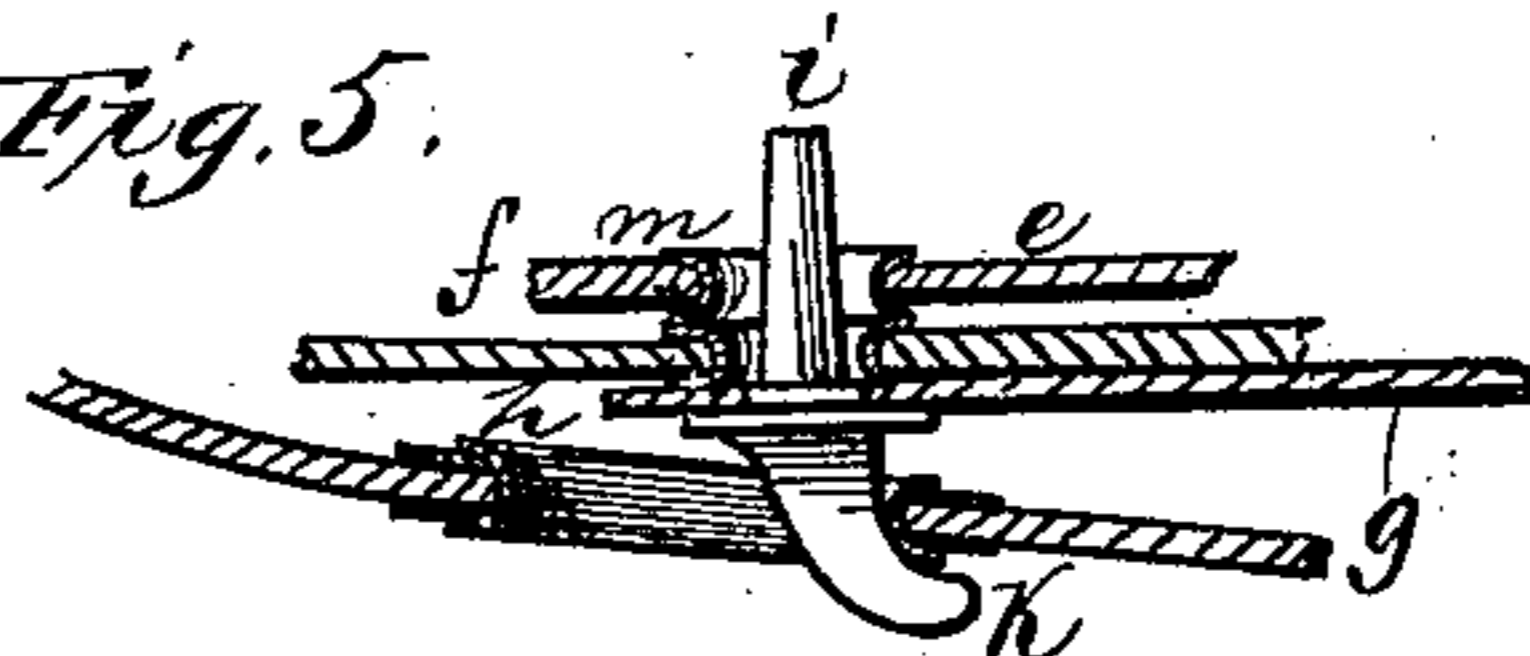


Fig. 5.



A Fig. 4.

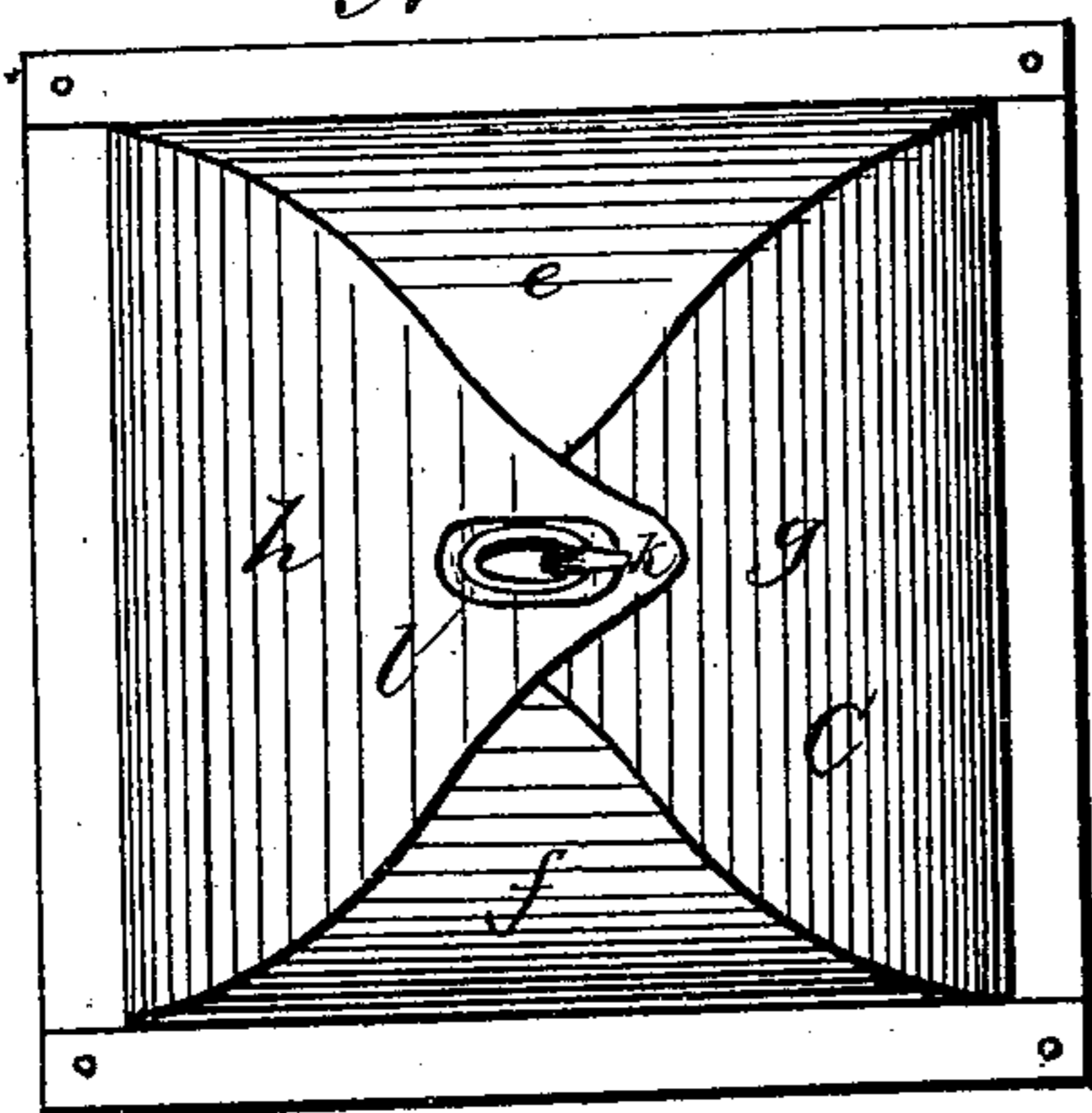


Fig. 7.

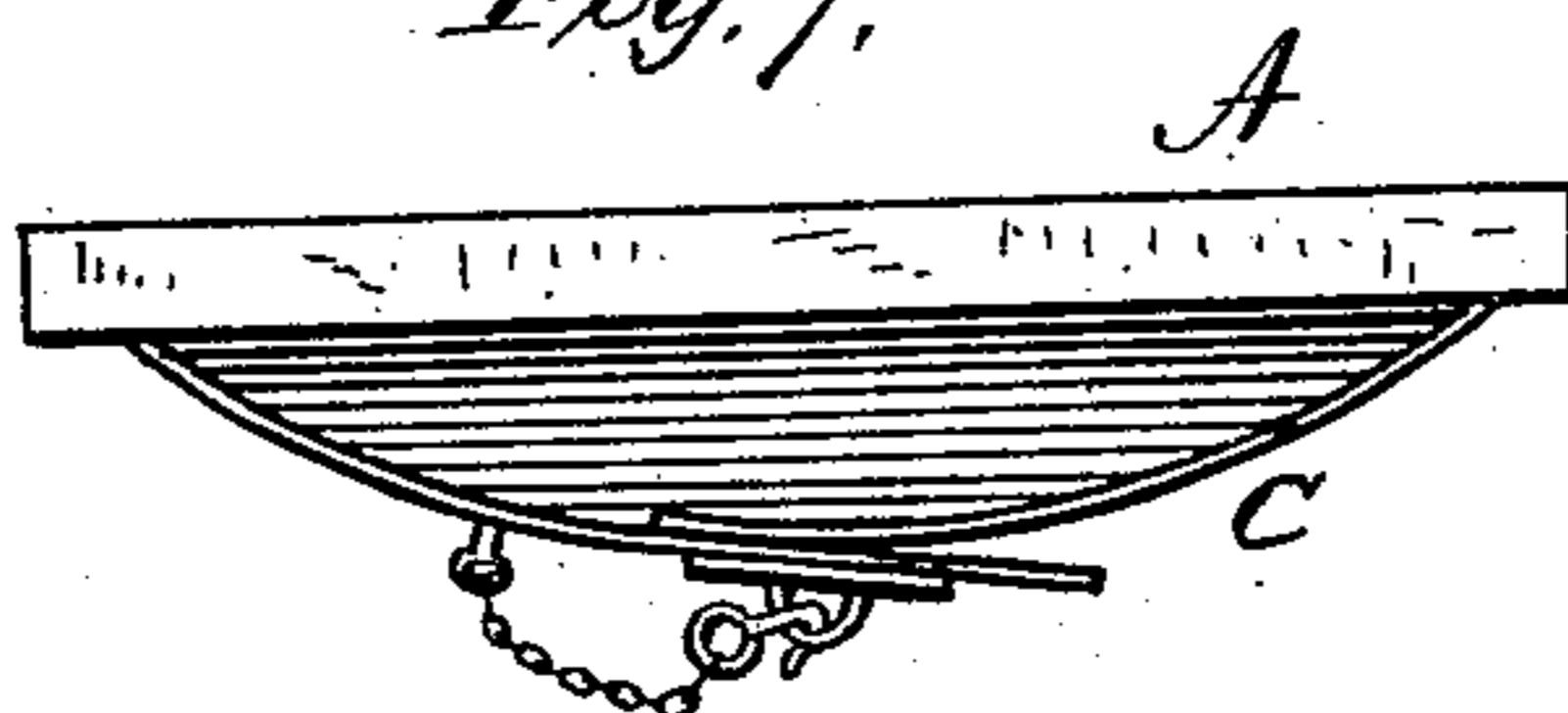
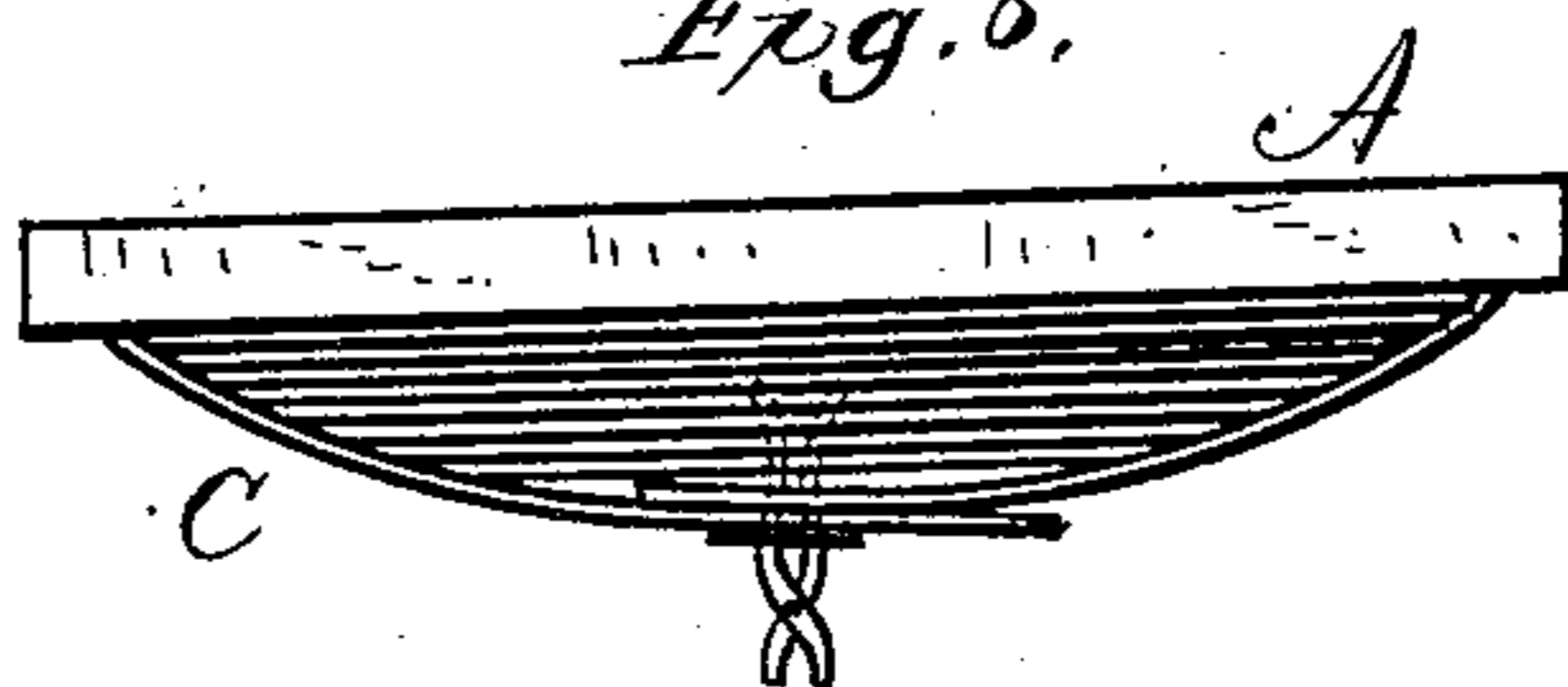


Fig. 8.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ELLIS R. MEEKER, OF ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY.

MAIL-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 246,901, dated September 13, 1881.

Application filed June 25, 1881. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ELLIS R. MEEKER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Elizabeth, in the county of Union and State of New Jersey, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Boxes for Postal-Cars and Post-Offices; and I do hereby 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 or figures of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

My invention relates to improvements in the attachments of mail-boxes in postal-cars and post-offices; and its object is to effect a quick, convenient, and easy delivery and drawing off of the mail-matter distributed in said boxes to the mail bags and pouches, which, in postal-cars, are to be left at the various stations along the line of the road and at the terminus of the route. Heretofore this operation has been rendered ineffective and annoying by the use of hinged doors which constitute the bottoms of the distributing-boxes, and which, when unfastened to permit the descent of the mail into the bags, have the effect to partially throw the mail out into the room over the top of the bag, and which, also, to facilitate their operation and to gain access to the bag, have to be held aloft by an attendant.

To remove all these disadvantages and at the same time construct a cheap and durable device, I have devised an improvement which consists of an arrangement of flaps composed of leather or other suitable material, fastened to the bottom sides of each distributing-box, and held together at their ends by suitable means, to form the bottom of said box, and which device I term a "center-drop."

This improvement is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which Figure 1 is a view, in elevation, of a portion of the interior side of a postal-car or post-office, showing the distributing-boxes and my improvement attached thereto. Fig. 2 is a view of the mail-bags attached to a rod directly beneath the said boxes and center-drop. Fig. 3 is a plan view, showing the top of the center-drop. Fig. 4 is a plan view, showing the bottom of said improvement and one means of holding the

flaps together. Fig. 5 is a view, in detail, of a hook and center post, the means for uniting and holding the flaps together, as indicated in Fig. 4. Figs. 6, 7, and 8 are modifications of the fastenings.

Similar letters refer to similar parts throughout the several views.

A A A represent the distributing-boxes, attached to the side of a postal-car or of a room in a post-office, and into which the mail-matter is thrown before drawing off the same into the mail-bags E.

B represents the center-drop in position, attached to the bottom of one of the distributing-boxes.

C shows the center-drop with the flaps open, to permit the mail to fall in a mail-bag below.

E represents a mail-bag attached to the under side of the box A, and in position to receive the contents of the box through the center-drop, as shown by the flaps in dotted lines.

The center-drop, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4, and constituting the bottom of each distributing-box, consists of flaps *efgh*, made of leather, canvas, wood, or other suitable material, their inner ends nailed or otherwise fastened to the inside of boxes A, and their other ends pointed and made to meet at the center, and there overlap each other. The two upper flaps, *e* and *f*, are provided with eyelets *m* at their points. The third flap, *g*, is provided with a hook, *k*, and center post, *c*, and the bottom flap, *h*, is provided with slot *l*.

When it is desired to close the center-drop the two upper flaps, *e* and *f*, are folded over each other, the center post, *c*, of the third flap inserted through the eyelets of the former flaps, and the bottom flap brought up and held and made to support the others by the hook *k*, inserted in slot *l*.

When it is desired to unfasten the center-drop the bottom flap is raised slightly to free the hook from its slot.

The weight of the mail-matter, which is distributed equally over the surface of the center-drop, aids to hold the hook in place, so that said hook can be made with a very short curve that will facilitate the operation of opening the drop, and at the same time the drop is prevented from being opened by shocks and jars.

The construction and arrangement of hook and center post, which may be made in one

piece, are shown in detail in Fig. 5. It is provided with a flange, and is riveted to the third flap, *g*, or it may be attached thereto in other ways; but in place of a hook a thumb-piece
5 may be used, as shown in Fig. 6, or a hook and staple, the hook being carried by a chain fastened to one of the flaps, or spring-nippers with fingers, as shown in Fig. 8, or any other known equivalent means. The number of flaps, also,
10 may be varied, and the means of holding them together, without materially departing from the nature of my invention.

By my improvement a light close bottom to a distributing-box is formed, one from which
15 the mail-matter will not escape while fastened nor lodge therein when opened, and which can be operated quickly to discharge the entire contents of the box into the bags beneath.

It is obvious that my improvement can be
20 used for other purposes, and wherever it is desirable to attach to the bottom of a holding-receptacle a device of that kind, by which ma-

terial held above it can be easily and quickly discharged into proper receptacles beneath.

Having thus described my invention, what 25 I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A mail-box or other similar receptacle having a bottom composed of flaps which are provided with a center post, hook, and eyelets, 30 by which means the said bottom is closed and opened at its center to hold or discharge the contents of the receptacle, substantially as described.

2. A box, *A*, provided with flaps *e f g h*, having eyelets, hook, center post, and slot, by which the said flaps are opened or closed, as desired. 35

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

ELLIS R. MEEKER.

Witnesses:

WM. H. HINCHMAN,
F. D. MORSE.