

(No Model.)

M. B. WESSON.
LETTER BOX.

No. 455,373.

Patented July 7, 1891.

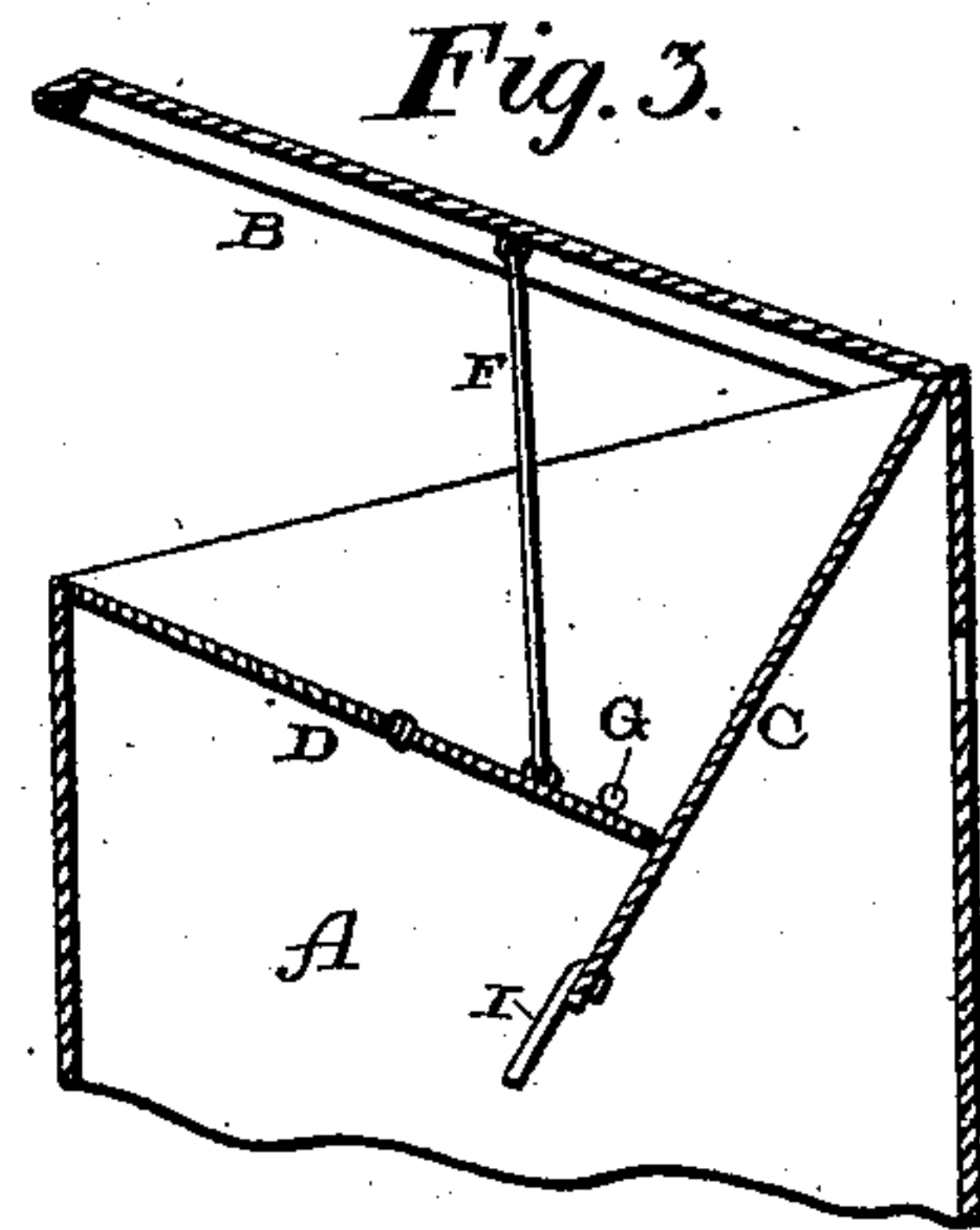
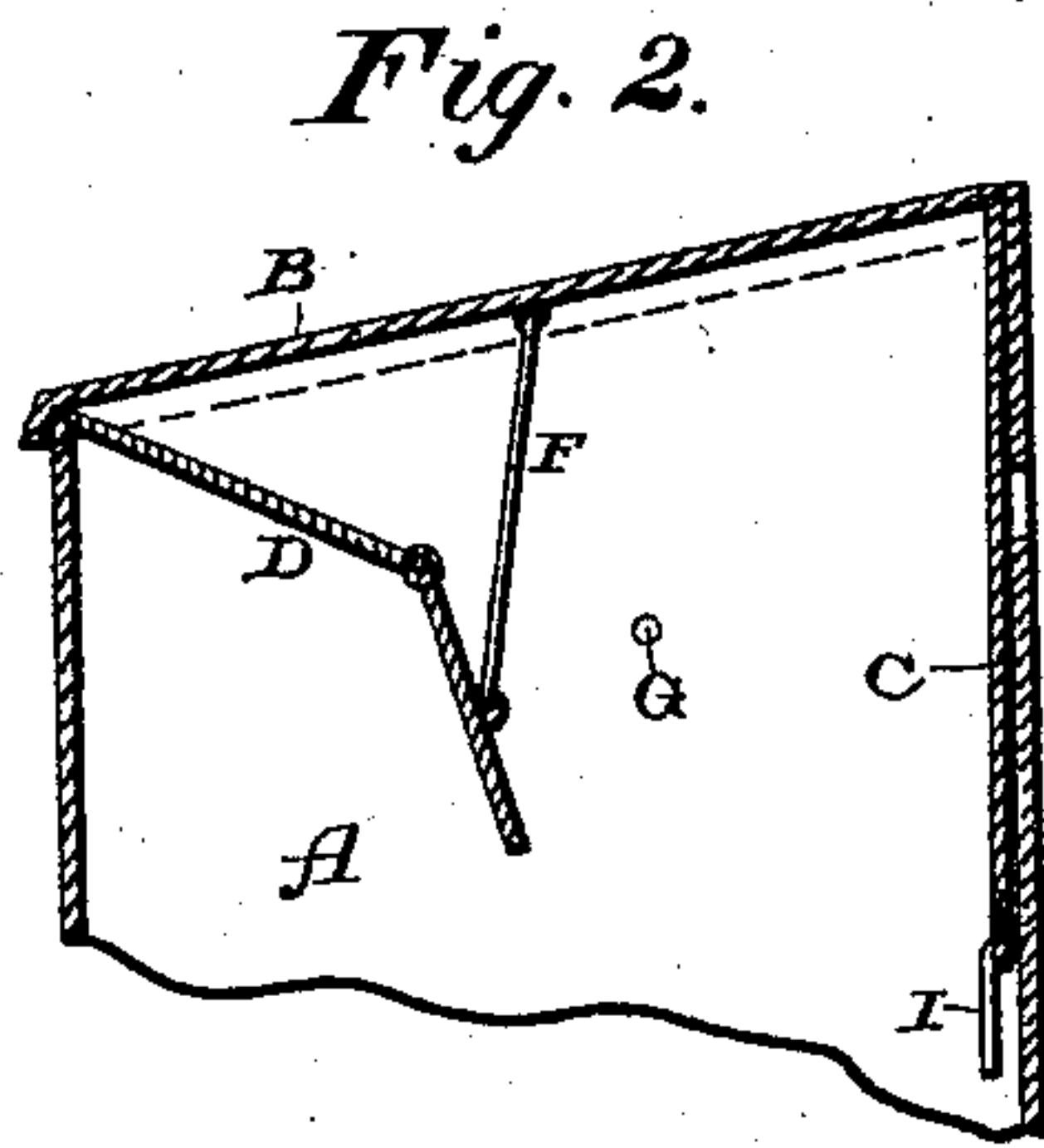
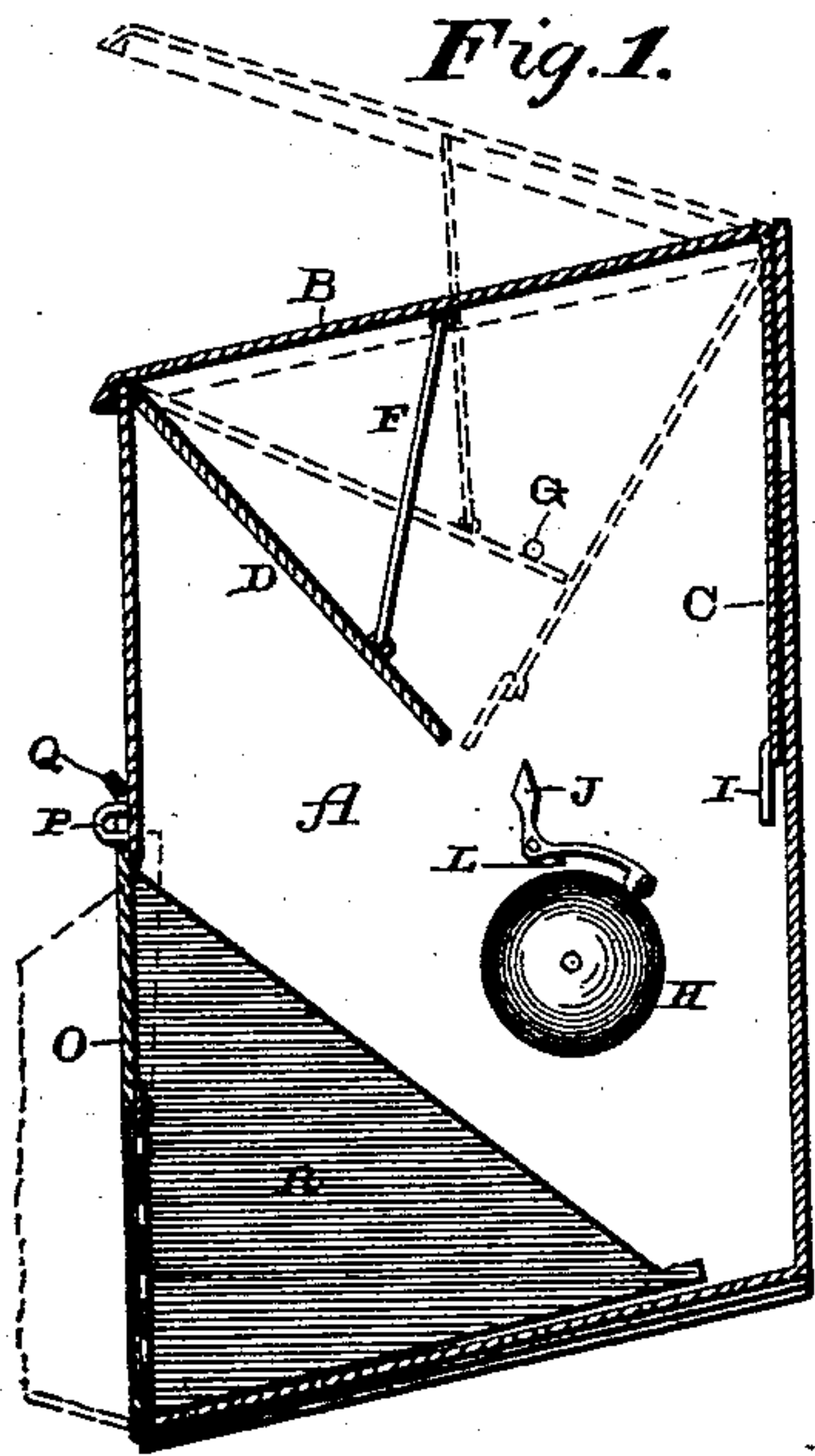
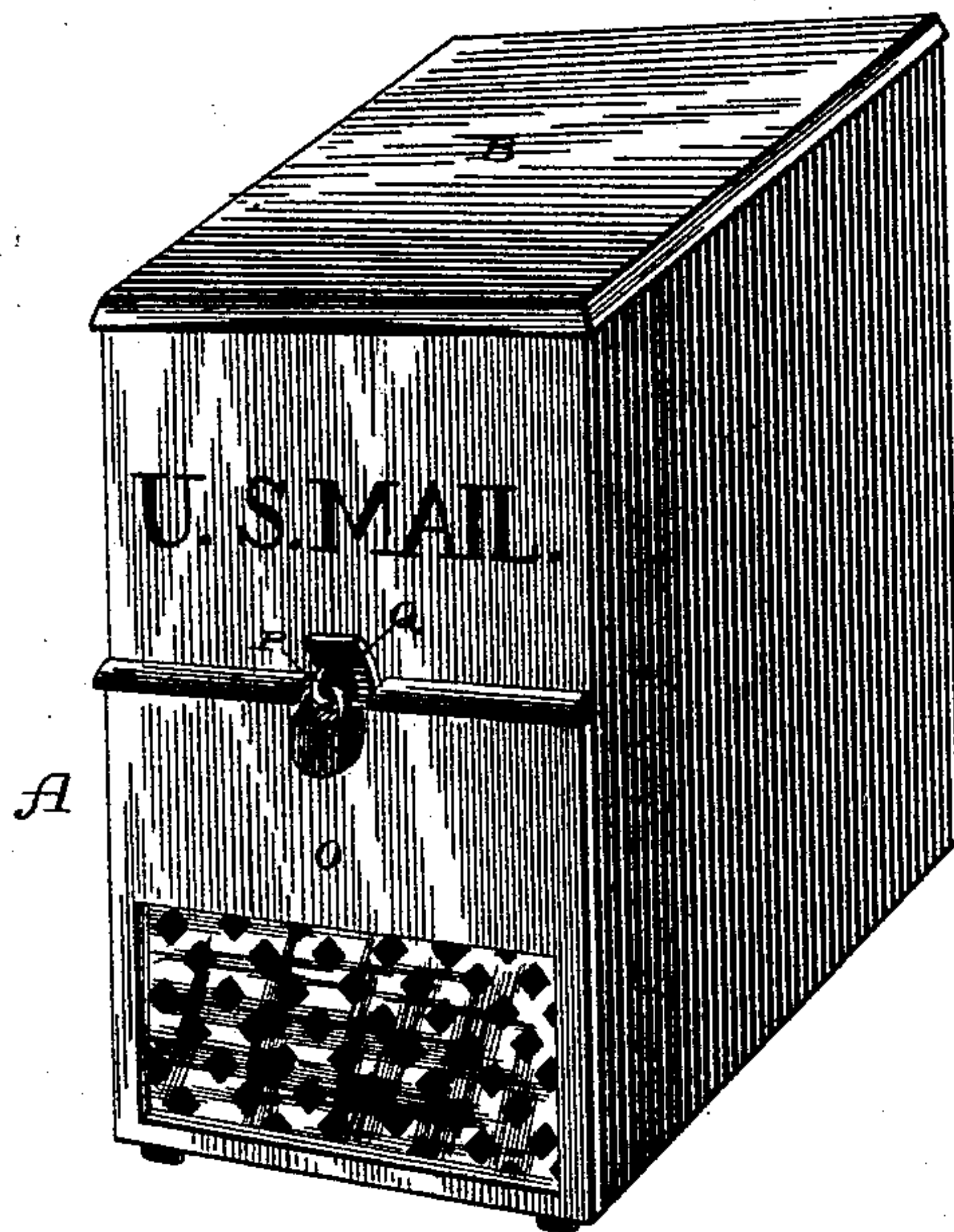


Fig. 4.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 455,373, dated July 7, 1891.

Application filed August 27, 1890. Serial No. 363,214. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MILEY B. WESSON, of Fort Worth, in the county of Tarrant and State of Texas, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mail-Boxes; 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 pertains to make and use it, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, which form part of this specification.

My invention relates to an improvement in mail-boxes; and it consists in the arrangement and combination of parts, which will be more fully described hereinafter.

The objects of my invention are to place inside of a mail-box a movable partition which is raised by the cover or lid so as to receive the mail and then drop it into the box as soon as the lid is closed, to attach to the lid an apron which rises in the box so as to make connection with the inner edge of the partition when the lid is raised to deposit mail-matter, and thus prevent any possibility of the contents of the box from being abstracted when the cover is raised, and to provide a mail-box which is adapted for all ordinary purposes and which will allow bundles, papers, and other such objects to be freely inserted therein without any danger of the box being robbed.

Figure 1 is a vertical section of a mail-box which embodies my invention, the parts being shown in one position in solid lines and in another position in dotted lines. Figs. 2 and 3 are sections of the upper part of the box, showing modifications of the movable partition. Fig. 4 is a perspective of the box complete.

A represents the letter-box, which may be made of metal or any other suitable material, and which may be stamped, cast, or otherwise molded in a single piece or formed of a number of separate pieces, which may be fastened together in any suitable manner. The top and bottom of this box are inclined downward and forward at any suitable inclination, the top being inclined so as to shed the rain and snow and the bottom to cause any moisture which may get into the box in any way to move down toward the front edge of the box, and thus prevent the mail-matter from

becoming injured. The bottom of the box may be made corrugated, so as to prevent the mail-matter from coming in contact with any moisture which may get into the box at any time.

The lid B of the box is hinged or pivoted in any suitable manner to the box at its rear upper corner, and is provided with flanges upon two or more of its edges, so as to prevent any rain, snow, or dust from beating into the box during storms. Secured to, cast with, or otherwise formed with the lid B is the inside apron C, which moves with the lid when it is opened and closed, and which apron extends down any desired distance into the box. When the lid is raised this apron rises in the box, so as to make a close connection with the inner edge of the movable partition, but when the lid is closed this apron rests against the back of the box, as shown.

An opening is made through the rear of the box to deposit letters, and this apron closes and opens the opening, so that nothing can be dropped into the box except when the lid B is raised so as to move the lower end of the apron forward and upward in the box, and thus leave the hole uncovered.

Placed in the upper front corner of the box is the partition D, which may be stationary, but which I prefer to be movable either wholly or in part. If it is desired that the entire partition shall be movable, it may be pivoted either at its upper outer edge; or a portion of the partition may be made stationary and incline downwardly in the box at any desired angle, and then a narrow partition be pivoted, jointed, or hinged at the inner edge of this stationary part, and this movable portion of the partition be connected to the lid B by a suitable connecting rod or wire F at each end. A movable partition is preferred to a stationary one, for the reason that when the lid or cover B is closed the partition sinks downward into the box and not only causes the mail-matter delivered upon it to drop down into the box, but enables a newspaper or a package or bundle to be deposited into the box the same as a letter, something that cannot be done where a stationary partition is used for want of room between the inner edge of the partition and the apron C, which would prevent anything larger than

a letter from being deposited into the box. Where the partition is made movable any letter, paper, or package placed upon it at once falls into the bottom of the box as soon as the lid is closed, and for the reason that the partition drops from under it, as shown. This partition may have pivots formed upon its upper outer corners to catch in corresponding recesses in the ends of the box when it is being put together, and it may have studs or projections formed near its inner corners and over which studs or projections the loops upon the lower ends of the rods or wires F will catch. The upper ends of the rods or wires may either be made to catch over projections formed on the under side of the cover or made to catch over loops formed on the cover, or in any other way that may be preferred. These rods or wires must loosely connect with both the cover and the partition, so that when the cover is raised the inner edge of the partition will be also raised and come in contact with the apron C, so as to close the entire top of the box in such a manner that no wire or other device can be inserted into the box for the purpose of robbing it. The partition D and the apron C both being movable, larger packages can be inserted in the box because a greater space is left between the inner side of the apron and the inner edge of the partition when the lid B is closed, and the partition being movable any article deposited upon it will be dropped into the box when the partition descends with the cover. Where the partition D is stationary and only the apron C is movable, it is possible to insert bent wires between the edge of the partition and the apron, and thus abstract the contents of the box; but where the partition is made movable, as here shown, it is impossible to insert bent wires or other tools into the box for the purpose of abstracting its contents. The distance that the partition D and cover B shall be raised is limited by small studs or projections G, which are cast or otherwise formed upon the inner sides of the end pieces of the box.

In order to sound an alarm each time that the cover or lid B is raised there is attached to the lower corner of the apron C a dog I, which, when the apron is being raised as the lid is opened, strikes against the spring-actuated gong-lever J, and thus causes the lever to strike the gong H, but which dog I, as the apron moves back into position, turns loosely upon the partition and passes by the upper end of the lever without operating it. Projecting from the end of the box upon which this lever J is pivoted is a stop or projection L, against which the lever strikes, and which serves to hold the lever out of contact with the gong, so that it cannot deaden its sound. The elasticity of the lever causes its lower end to strike the gong H after the lever has encountered the stud or projection L, and then it rebounds so as to leave the gong free to vibrate. I prefer to make the dog I of a

thin strip of metal, which has its upper end bent so as to catch through two little slots in the partition; but I do not limit myself to any particular construction in this connection, for any other form of dog that will answer the same purpose may be used. The sounding of an alarm gives notice to the owner of the box that its lid is being raised, and hence he or she can be on the lookout either for the mail that is deposited therein, or to prevent the box from being robbed.

Hinged to the lower front corner of the box is the door O, through which the mail is removed from the box, and which door has formed through it at any suitable point or points an opening which is covered over by glass or mica, and back of which there is any suitable lattice-work to prevent access to the box in case the glass or mica is broken. This opening through the door serves as a window to allow the box to be examined to see whether there is any mail therein, and thus prevent the necessity of having to open the lid for this purpose.

Projecting from the front of the box above the door is a staple P, and projecting from the upper edge of the door is the hasp Q.

Before access can be had to the box the lock must be opened, and then the door can be turned down to a horizontal or nearly a horizontal position. At each end of the door is formed a triangular-shaped flange R, which extends into the box when the door is closed, and which when the door is opened both serves to prevent it from dropping below a certain point and forming side walls to prevent the mail-matter from dropping off from the ends of the door. The extreme inner points of these triangular flanges catch against the inner side of the box and limit the downward and outward movement of the door.

For the sake of security the screw-holes, by means of which this letter-box is to be secured to a post, door, or other support, are made through the back of the box, and the screws passed through them must be inserted when the door O is opened. This construction prevents the fastenings being removed and the box stolen. If the box is to be applied to a lamp-post or other similar metallic support, the ordinary fastenings will be used, and the ends of the fastenings, if so desired, will be passed through the back of the box.

If so desired, there will be connected to the lid of the opening through the back of the box an alarm mechanism, so that when the box is placed inside of the residence or office the raising of the lid to deposit mail-matter will cause an alarm to be sounded.

Having thus described my invention, I claim—

1. In a mail-box, the combination of the box, a cover hinged thereto at its upper inner edge, a depending apron rigidly secured to the hinged end of the said cover, a hinged partition extending downward and inward from

the upper outer portion of the said box, and a connecting-rod loosely fastened at its ends to the said cover and partition, whereby the movable partition and the depending rigid apron of the cover engage when the cover is raised, for the purpose shown and described.

2. In a mail-box, the combination, with the box having an opening in its rear side, of a cover which is hinged to the upper rear edge of the box and a depending apron rigidly secured to the hinged end of the cover and which rests against the inner rear wall of the box and overlaps the said opening when the cover is closed, substantially as set forth.

3. In a mail-box, the combination, with the box, of a cover having a depending apron secured to its hinged end and an alarm secured to the inner side of the box, having an oper-

ating-lever which extends into the path traveled by the said apron when the cover is opened, whereby the lever is operated by the apron and an alarm sounded, substantially as shown.

4. In a mail-box, the combination of the cover, an apron secured thereto, a dog loosely attached to the apron, a pivoted lever placed inside of the box, a stop for limiting the movement of the lever, and the gong, substantially as described.

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

MILEY B. WESSON.

Witnesses:

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C. L. OMBERG.