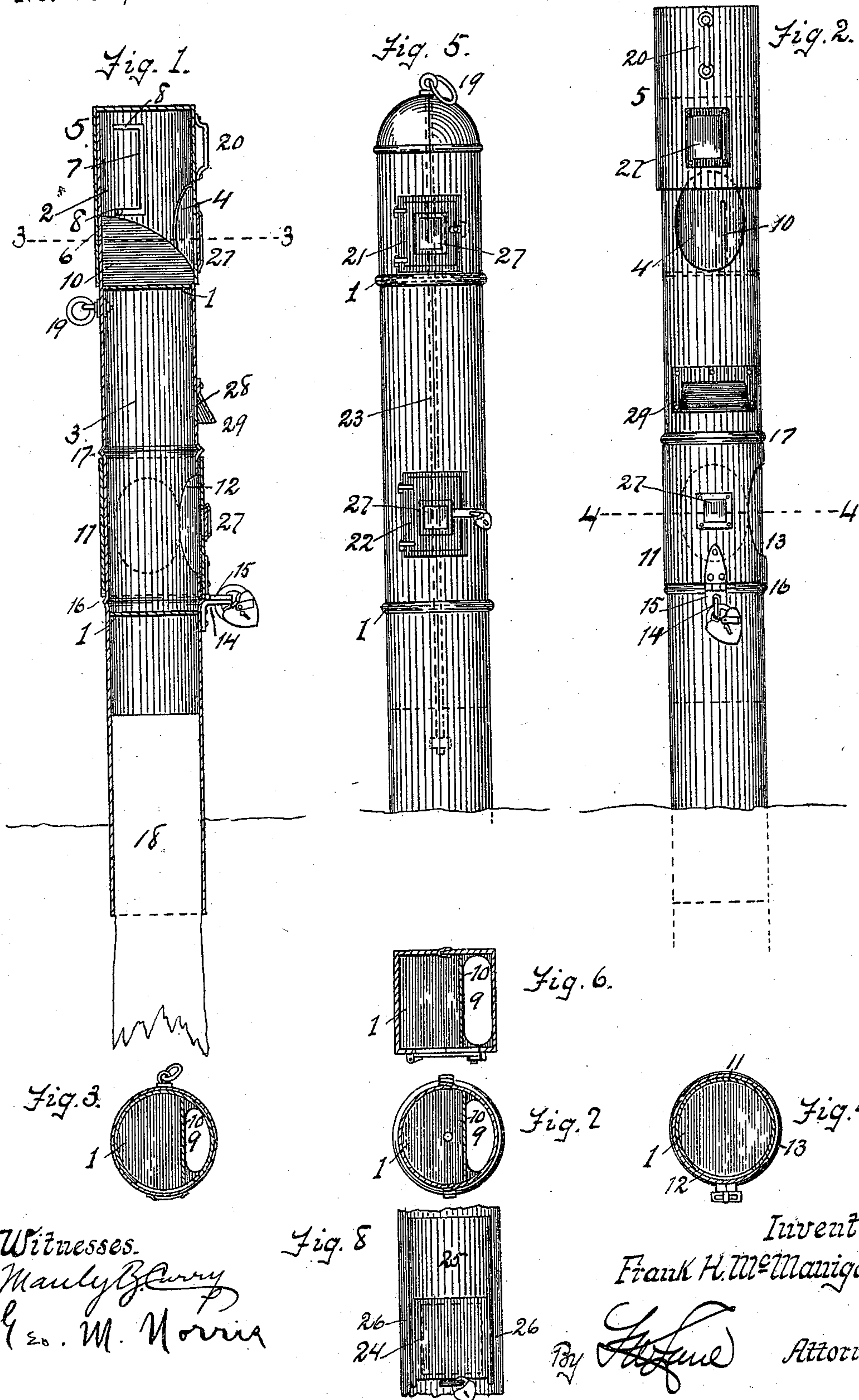


(No Model.)

F. H. McMANIGAL.
LETTER BOX.

No. 493,177.

Patented Mar. 7, 1893.



Witnesses.
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FRANK H. McMANIGAL, OF ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA.

LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 493,177, dated March 7, 1893.

Application filed July 11, 1892. Serial No. 439,702. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FRANK H. McMANIGAL, a citizen of the United States, residing at St. Paul, in the county of Ramsey and State of Minnesota, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in a Combined Hitching-Post and Mail Receiving and Delivery Box; 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 figures of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

This invention relates to a combination hitching post and receptacle for mail matter, newspapers, and the like, which may be delivered by carrier or placed within easy access of the carrier to be placed in the mails by him.

The object of the invention is to provide a cheap and convenient means for this purpose having a receptacle which can only be opened by the proper parties, as persons of the household provided with a key, for the reception and preserving of mail matter, letters, newspapers or packages, delivered by carrier without the necessity of ringing the door-bell and waiting for his call to be answered, this receptacle being so arranged as to be protected from rain, snow, and dust. There is also provided a receptacle accessible to the carrier in which may be placed mail matter to be taken by him and carried to the central office for mailing.

The device consists of a hollow post, cylindrical or square, or of other desired form in cross section, which may be set upon the top of a short wooden post set in the ground, or set in the ground by itself, or fixed in any convenient manner to a fence or part of a building, and provided with a ring or other device to which a hitching strap may be attached. The interior of the post is divided into two compartments by floors or partitions, to which compartments access is had by openings in the side of the post normally closed by doors or slides of any desired form. The upper compartment is intended as a receptacle for mail to be taken by the carrier, and is usually only so closed as to afford protection to the contents from the elements and which

may be readily opened. The floor of this receptacle has an opening therethrough for the passage of delivered mail into the lower compartment, the opening being guarded in such a manner as to prevent the accidental dropping of mail matter intended to remain in the upper compartment. The lower compartment is normally closed by a locked door or slide which can only be opened by members of the household having possession of a key.

The invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which

Figure 1 is a vertical sectional view of my improved mail post; Fig. 2, a side elevation of the same; Figs. 3 and 4, cross sections respectively taken upon the lines 3—3 and 4—4 in Figs. 1 and 2; Fig. 5, a side elevation of a modified form of post; Figs. 6 and 7, sections respectively of a rectangular and cylindrical post of the style shown in Fig. 5; and Fig. 8, a modified form of door or slide for the lower or delivery compartment.

The post may be constructed of any suitable material either cast, wrought or sheet metal, and of any suitable diameter and height as required under varying circumstances. In Figs. 1 and 2, I have shown it as constructed of sheet metal having floors or horizontal partitions 1, 1, dividing the interior into two compartments, 2 and 3. The upper compartment has an aperture 4 entering therein through the side of the post, which aperture is normally closed by a cap, 5, secured in place by means of a pin 6 secured in the cap and passing through a vertical slot 7, which slot has also horizontal extensions 8 at top and bottom into which the pin may slide upon turning the cap, to retain it in its raised position, as shown in Fig. 2 or to prevent the raising of the same when lowered without at the same time turning the cap. In the floor 1 of the compartment 2 is formed an aperture 9 through which mail matter may be passed to the lower compartment 3. This aperture is guarded by a vertical partition 10, or equivalent device, to prevent mail left in the compartment 2 from falling or being accidentally thrown through the aperture. It is intended that mail to be taken by the carrier shall be left in the compartment 2 and that mail left by him shall be deposited in the compartment 3 through the aperture 9 in the floor. It is

therefore necessary only that the cap shall be raised and slightly turned by the carrier, in which position it remains while he is taking and depositing mail. The matter left by him is retained in the compartment 3 until the latter is opened by some person having a key thereto.

The compartment 3 may be closed either by a sliding thimble or sleeve 11, mounted upon or in the post around the aperture 12 communicating therewith. In the sleeve is a corresponding aperture 13, which when turned to register with the opening through the wall of the post affords access thereto, but when the sleeve is turned part way round in either direction the aperture is closed. In some convenient position of the sleeve such that the two apertures do not register, a staple 14, or similar device is secured to the post and a hasp or its equivalent 15 is secured to the sleeve and adapted to close over the staple. The parts may then be secured by a padlock and thus securely protect the contents of the compartment from being meddled with in any way by unauthorized persons, or being damaged by animals, or by rain, snow or dust.

The sleeve 11 may be retained in vertical position upon the post by means of a bead or ledge 16 formed upon or secured to the body of the post below the sleeve and upon which the latter rests, and a similar bead or ledge 17 above the sleeve performs a like office, and further protects the contents of the compartment by acting to shed rain that may run down the post.

The post may conveniently be set in the ground a sufficient depth for security or may receive within its lower part the top of a wood post 18 which is set in the ground. Near the top of the post is provided a hitching ring, 19 while a handle 20 affords a convenient means for manipulating the cap 5.

In Fig. 5 is shown a convenient form of the post when made of cast metal. In this case the interior of the post is constructed substantially as heretofore described, but a hinged door, 21 corresponds in function with the cap 5, and a similar door 22, capable of being locked by padlock or otherwise, is substituted for the sleeve 11. The post may be cast in parts secured by tongue and groove, as shown in Figs. 6 and 7, and if desired may be made more secure by being anchored by a longitudinal bolt 23, having at its upper extremity a hitching ring or the like.

As a substitute for the turning sleeve 11, or the hinged door 22, a vertically sliding door

24 in Fig. 8 may be employed. This is protected and guided by means of a plate 25 behind which the door slides and by guides 26 extending downwardly therefrom on each side. The slide may be locked in any convenient manner.

The compartments 2 and 3 are preferably provided with windows 27, in order that it may be readily ascertained without opening whether there is anything in the compartment. These windows may be placed in the doors, as shown, and the carrier may readily see whether there is any matter to be taken by him, and the residents may ascertain without unlocking the door whether any mail has been left by the carrier. In case there is no mail left in the upper compartment, and it is therefore not necessary to open the cap or upper compartment door, a side opening 28, guarded by an overhanging plate 29 is provided, through which opening mail matter may be placed in the compartment without the necessity of touching any other part of the apparatus.

This device is especially adapted for use in suburban districts for the reception, mailing and delivery of ordinary mail matter, or newspapers ordinarily delivered by carrier. Not only is the article convenient as a hitching post, but is the source of a great saving of time for the carrier, while the matter left therein is fully protected from injury. The capacity of the receiving compartment will ordinarily be sufficient, even in case of several days' or weeks' absence of parties entitled to access thereto. The post may conveniently be located at the edge of the side walk, in the yard, or against or attached to the porch or house wall.

I claim as my invention—

A combined hitching post and mail receptacle, consisting of a hollow post divided horizontally into upper and lower compartments each having an opening from the outside of the post, the partition between said compartments having an opening therethrough, an upright guard at one side of said opening, and doors or slides for closing said apertures from the outside, substantially as and for the purpose herein specified.

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

FRANK H. McMANIGAL.

Witnesses:

F. W. LANE,
JOHN E. JAKES.