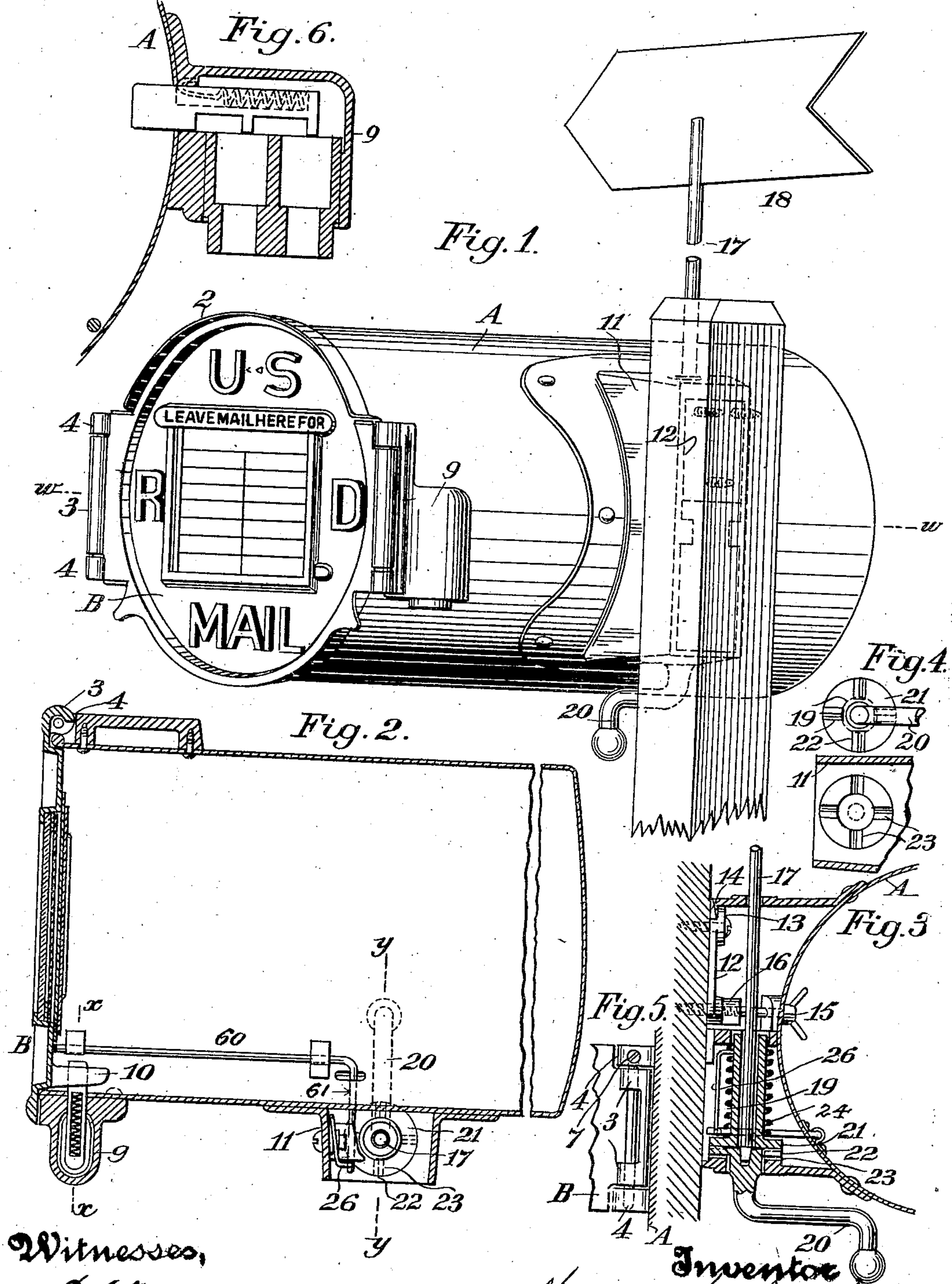


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M. S. NORTON.
RURAL DELIVERY MAIL BOX.
APPLICATION FILED DEC. 30, 1901.

NO MODEL.



Witnesses,

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RURAL-DELIVERY MAIL-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 720,279, dated February 10, 1903.

Application filed December 30, 1901. Serial No. 87,738. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MASON S. NORTON, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city and county of San Francisco, State of California, have invented an Improvement in Rural-Delivery Mail-Boxes; and I hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the same.

My invention relates to an apparatus for facilitating the delivery or collection of mail-matter, and especially with reference to such delivery and collection in rural districts.

It consists in a novel construction of a receptacle for mail-matter, a means for securing it to the post or support where it is attached, a hinged door by which the receptacle may be closed or the entire diameter opened for the reception or removal of the contents, and means for protecting the door-opening.

My invention further comprises an indicator and means for locking it in either position, whereby the position cannot be changed except when the door has been opened.

My invention also comprises details of construction, which will be more fully explained by reference to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of my invention. Fig. 2 is a horizontal section on the line *ww*, Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a transverse section on the line *yy*, Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a view of the lower face of the upper disk and a top view of the lower disk. Fig. 5 is a view of the door-hinge. Fig. 6 is an enlarged vertical section on the line *xx*, Fig. 2, of the door-lock.

It is the object of my invention to provide a mail-box of such contour as to give the greatest capacity and resistance to injuries with the most economical construction and means by which it is readily opened to its fullest extent or locked and hermetically sealed against the elements when closed.

In carrying out my invention I have shown the box A, made cylindrical in form and preferably of sufficiently heavy galvanized or otherwise protected metal, so as to resist the action of the elements and be little liable to injury from exterior attack. One end is permanently closed and the other is left open and provided with a door B, adapted to swing

upon a hinge located at one side of the open end of the cylinder. The inner portion of the door is adapted to close into the end of the cylinder, and it has a flange projecting outwardly, which closes flush against the mouth of the cylinder. A projecting hood 2, fixed to the top of the cylinder, overhangs the upper periphery of the door-flange and serves to prevent water from entering between it and the end of the case and to direct any water which may fall upon it down upon each side, so that it is delivered away from the door and there is no danger of its entering the box. The hinge consists of a projecting lug or lugs 3 upon the door, fitting between the corresponding lugs 4, secured to the side of the case and entirely exterior to its periphery. The part attached to the door fits between the lugs fixed to the case, and the pintle 6 is fitted into these lugs. The upper part is closed at top, so that no access can be had to it when the door is closed. This pintle is secured by a set-screw, as at 7, or equivalent means to which no access can be had until the door is opened, thus preventing this portion from being tampered with. From the opposite side of the door-opening is the lock. This lock I prefer to construct with a spring-forced engaging bolt for locking and with two vertical passages, with downward openings unlike each other, for two keys unlike each other for unlocking to open the door. One key used in its respective holes by the postman would unlock all the boxes in his circuit, while the other key, unlike the first, operated in its respective hole by the person to whom a box is appropriated, will unlock his particular box only. This lock is contained within a rain-proof housing 9, which is secured to the side of the box, opposite to the hinge, and its bolt projects inwardly through the periphery of the box, so that when the door is closed the keeper 10, which projects from the inner face of the door, passes the bolt, which being spring-actuated will be retracted to allow the keeper to pass and immediately spring out and engage the keeper, so as to prevent the door from being opened until the bolt has been retracted by the use of a key in its respective hole.

In order to mount the apparatus, I have

shown a saddle 11, one part of which is curved to fit the periphery of the box, and it is secured near the center to the side of the box by screws, bolts, or rivets, so that it cannot be removed from the outside.

All parts—such as the hinges, the lock, casing, and the saddle—may be riveted or preferably secured by screws or bolts from the inside, so as to be only accessible for removal when the door is opened.

The saddle here described is hollow, and it may be conveniently attached to a post, tree, or any structure convenient for its support by means of a plate 12, which is bolted upon the structure and has lugs 13 projecting outward and adapted to engage with an overhanging lip 14 in the upper part of the saddle, which projects sufficiently from the side of the cylinder for this purpose. A hole is made through the cylinder, passing through the interior of the saddle, and a screw 15 may be introduced through this hole and into a screw-threaded projection 16 upon the plate, so that when the lip of the saddle has been hooked over the lugs 13 and this screw introduced, the device is strongly secured in place, but can be easily removed by disengaging the screw and lifting it from the plate. This saddle also serves for the support of the vertical shaft 17, upon the upper end of which is fixed the metallic indicator or direction-plate 18. This shaft extends down through a hole made vertically in the top of the saddle and into a sleeve 19, which is turnable in guides within the saddle by means of a crank 20, projecting below the saddle or equivalent device. The shaft may be secured in the sleeve by a set-screw or other convenient means, so as not to be removable except by removing the box from its support, so as to obtain access through the rear open side of the saddle. The sleeve has upon its lower end a disk 21, from the lower face of which project radial V-shaped lugs 22, and the bottom of the interior of the saddle has a corresponding raised disk, with radial slots 23, which receive the lugs 22 when the latter are in line with them. These slots correspond with different positions which it is desired to give to the indicator at the top of the shaft. Thus if the indicator is to stand parallel with the length of the box, with the point in one direction and the tail in the opposite, the lugs 22 will correspond with the slot 23 and may be forced into them by means of a spring 24, which surrounds the sleeve 19, in which the shaft is carried, and this spring will force the lugs and slots into engagement whenever they stand in line with each other. If the indicator is to be turned to the opposite direction, the lugs are lifted out of the slots and will ride upon the disk until they reach the next set of slots, into which they will drop unless moved still farther. The lugs and slots being V-shaped, a moderate pressure upon the crank or turning device will force them out of engagement, and they will as easily drop into en-

gagement when they arrive in proper position. The indicator may in like manner be set transversely of the axis of the box, these different positions being understood to show whether there is mail-matter to be collected by the carrier or whether there is matter in the box which is to be collected by the occupants of the house or place to which the box is appropriated, and the indicator is turned by the carrier or by the occupants of the house, as the case may be, so that the carrier without dismounting can inspect the box at a considerable distance from his path, and the people at the house can in like manner determine whether anything has been left for them without opening the box. In order to lock the indicator when thus set to prevent its being changed by mischievous or malicious persons, I have shown a rod 60, guided and movable and slidable within the box and having an arm 61, bent at right angles, projecting through a slot in the side of the box and entering a chamber in the saddle which contains the locking parts above described. This arm serves to engage the disk on the sleeve which carries the shaft of the indicator and prevent its being lifted out of engagement with the corresponding grooves, which prevent its turning. When the arm is withdrawn from above the disk, the latter can be lifted and the shaft and indicator turned, as above described. This rod, with its arm, is normally pressed out of engagement with the disk by a spring, as at 26. The end of the rod contiguous to the mouth of the box lies in such a position that when the door is closed it will press against the end of the rod, thus forcing the arm to a position above the disk, which is then locked, so that the shaft and indicator cannot be turned from the outside. As soon as the door is unlocked and opened the spring will force the arm away from the disk and leave it and its indicator free to be turned by the person who has opened the box, so as to give any new indication that may be desired; but as soon as the door is closed it again forces the arm forward and locks the indicator in place.

The door has a tablet, where appear the names of those whose mail is to be left in that box. This tablet may be changed from the inside only, where also changes of address may be noted. A very convenient construction is to make an opening of the desired size and shape through the door and fit a glass to the front and a metal plate to the back, between which the cards carrying the names may be placed.

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

1. A mail and delivery box, means for removably securing it consisting of a saddle fixed to the side of the box having a lip in the upper part, a plate fixed to the support having lugs adapted to be engaged by the lip, a screw-socket upon the lower part of the plate

and a screw adapted to enter said socket from the interior of the box.

2. A mail-box made cylindrical in form, a saddle fixed to and projecting from the side of the box having a lip in the upper part, a plate fixed to the support having lugs adapted to be engaged by the lip, a screw-socket upon the lower part of the plate, a screw adapted to enter through the interior of the box and secure the latter in place and an indicator-standard vertically supported above the saddle.

3. A mail-box, a support and means for securing it thereto, a hollow saddle having a disk in the bottom with transverse radial grooves, a hollow sleeve having a disk at the lower end with radial lugs corresponding with the grooves and adapted to interlock with either when in line therewith, and a vertical shaft or standard fixed within the sleeve projecting through the top of the saddle having an indicator carried upon the upper end and turnable therewith whereby the position of the indicator may be fixed.

4. An indicator for mail-boxes and a vertical turnable standard upon which it is carried, a sleeve within which the lower end of the standard is fixed, a disk carried by the sleeve having radial lugs, a corresponding fixed disk having grooves corresponding with the lugs, means by which the disks are normally forced together and caused to interlock when the lugs and grooves coincide.

5. An indicator for mail-boxes and a vertical turnable standard upon which it is carried, a sleeve within which the lower end of the standard is fixed, a disk carried by the sleeve having radial lugs, a corresponding fixed disk having grooves corresponding with

the lugs, a means by which the disks are normally forced together and caused to interlock when the lugs and grooves coincide, and a locking device to prevent their being disengaged.

6. An indicator for mail-boxes having a vertical and turnable standard, a socket in which the lower end is fixed, interlocking disks, one of which is carried upon the standard, means by which the disks are caused to interlock when the lugs and grooves coincide, an arm by which the parts are retained in engagement, said arm being actuated by the closing of the door, and means by which it is released when the door is opened.

7. A mail-box indicator having a vertical turnable standard, interlocking disks by which the standard and indicator are retained in any desired position, a lock by which the indicator is prevented from turning, an arm extending from the lock into the path of the door whereby the lock is actuated when the door is closed, and means by which the lock is released when the door is opened to allow the position of the indicator to be changed.

8. A mail-box indicator having a revolvable standard, interlocking disks by which the position of the indicator is maintained, a lock therefor and means actuated by the closing of the door to cause it to engage means whereby it is released when the door is opened, and a lever-arm whereby the disks and indicator are turnable when released.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand.

MASON S. NORTON.

Witnesses:

S. H. NOURSE,

JESSIE C. BRODIE.