

No. 728,401.

PATENTED MAY 19, 1903.

S. S. LANGFORD.
MAIL BOX.

APPLICATION FILED JAN. 26, 1903.

NO MODEL.

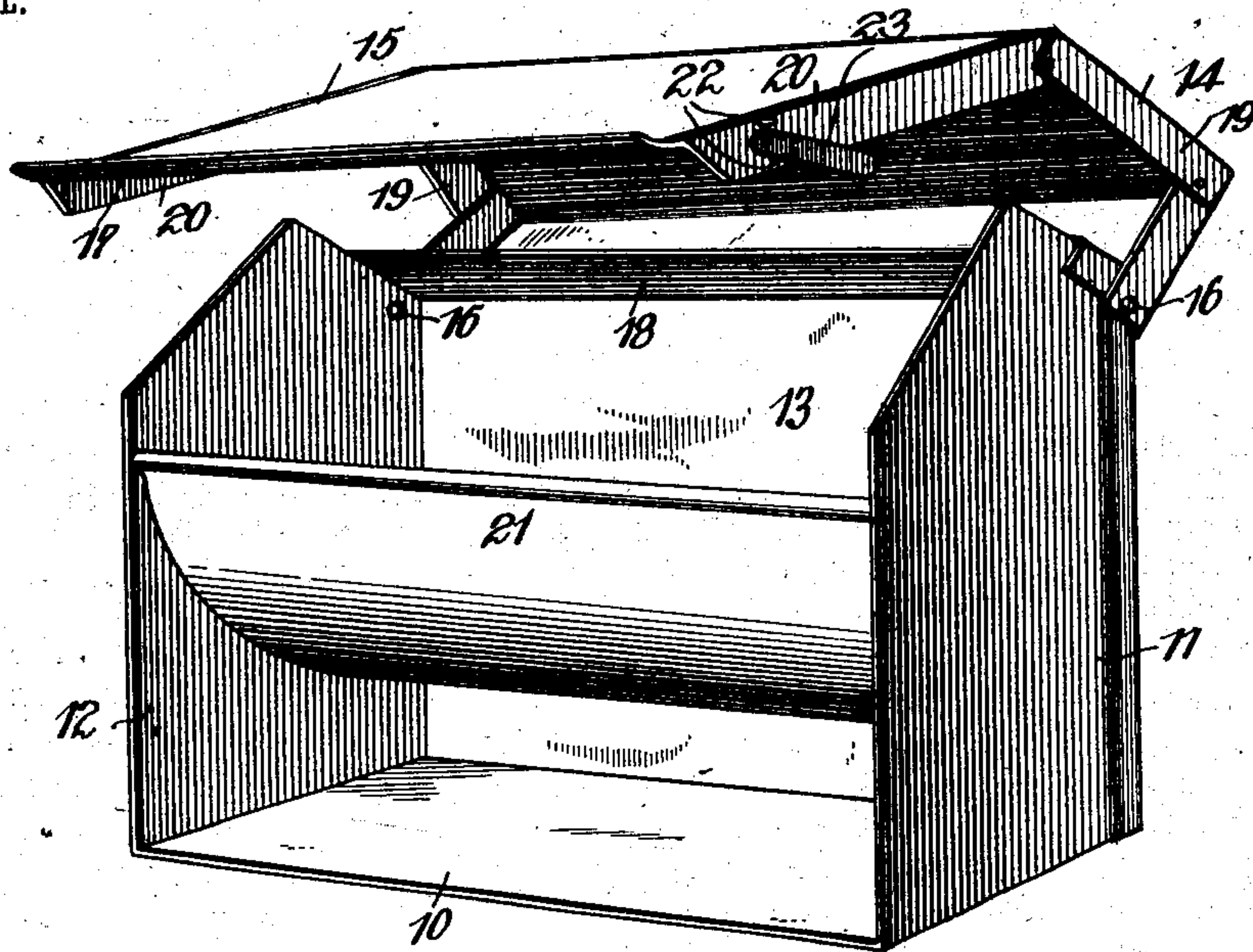


Fig. 1.

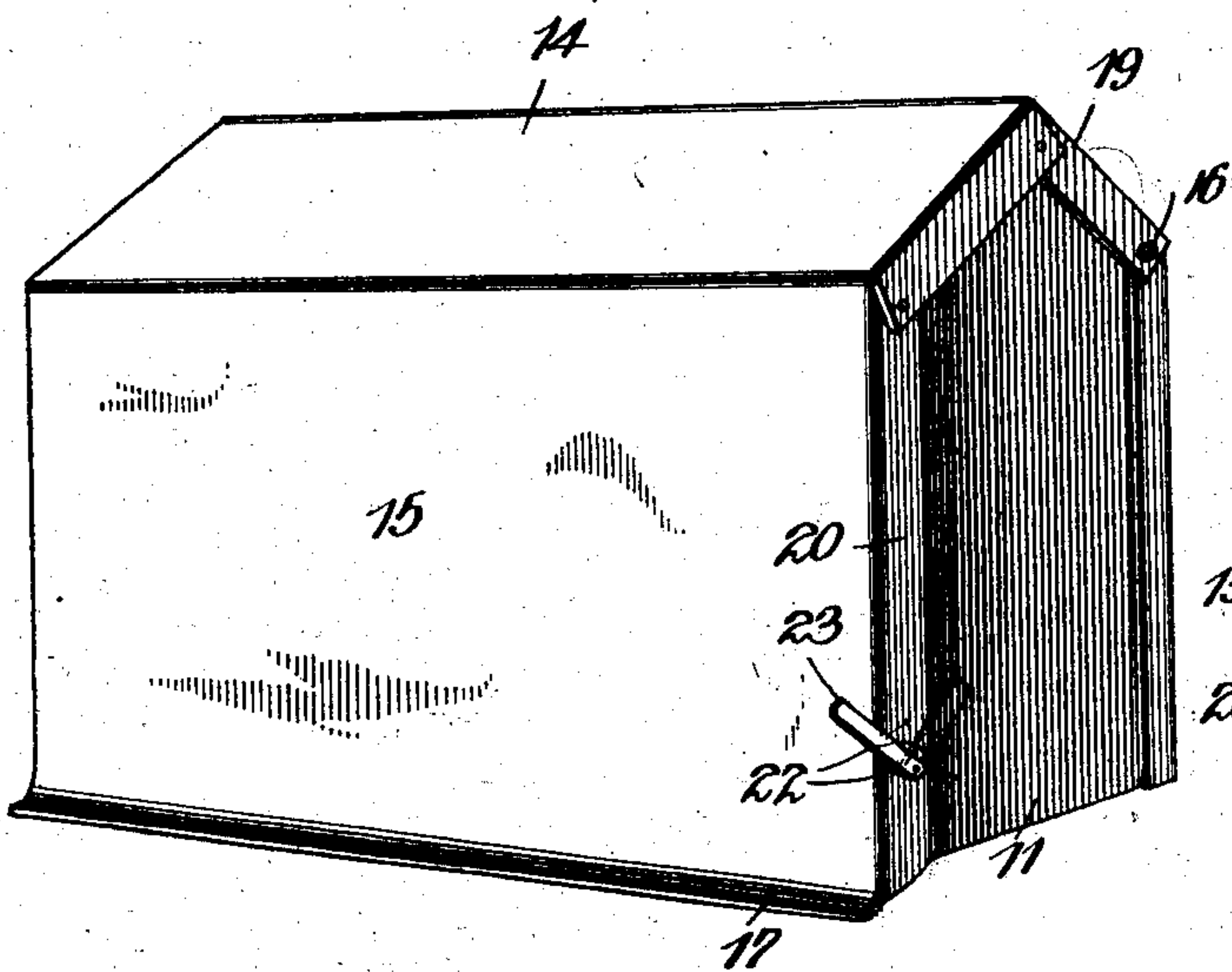


Fig. 2.

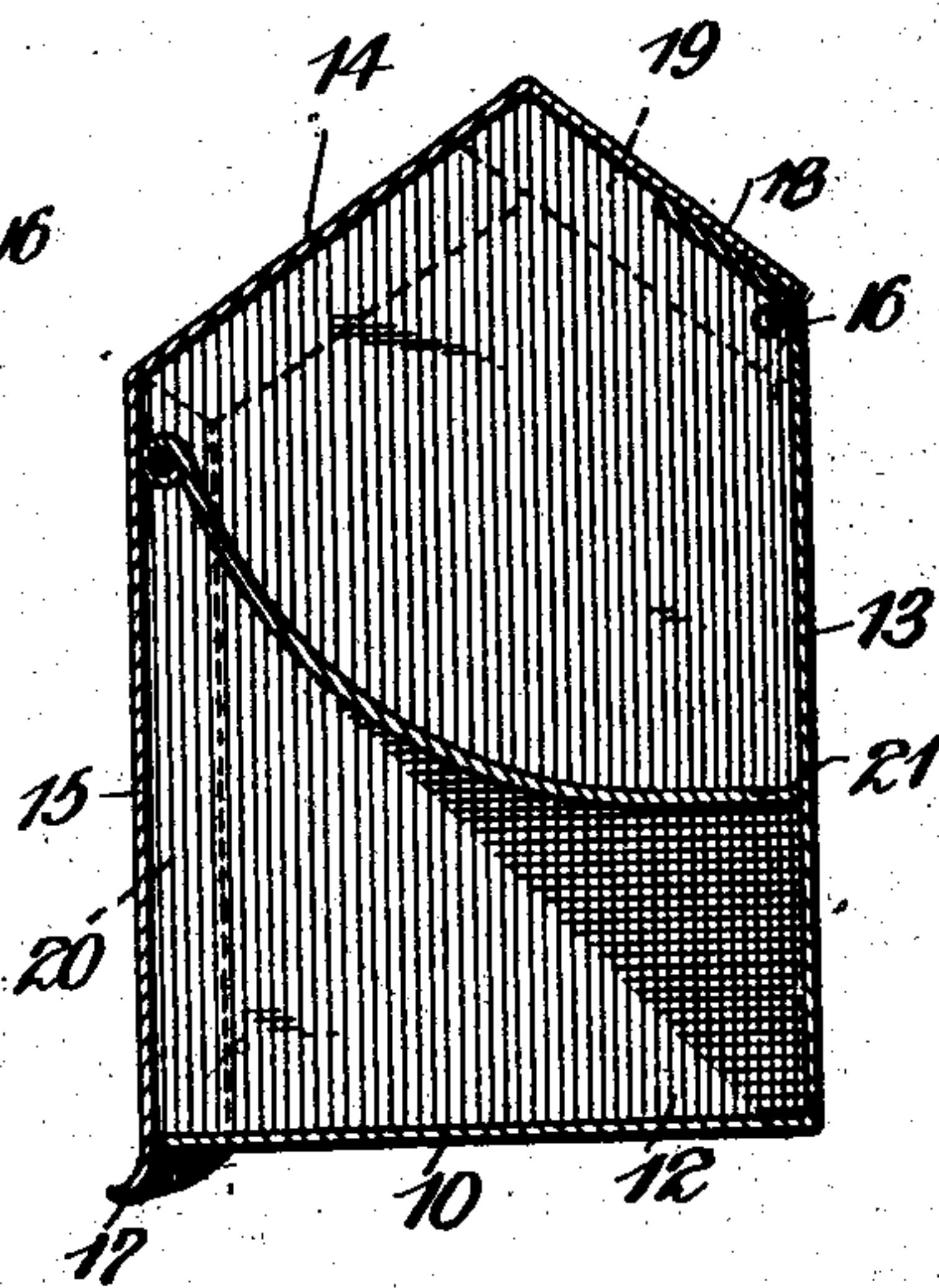


Fig. 3.

Witnesses
E. H. Stewart
G. H. Woodward.

S. S. Langford, Inventor.
by C. A. Snow & Co.
Attorneys

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

SAMUEL S. LANGFORD, OF CRAIG, NEBRASKA.

MAIL-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 728,401, dated May 19, 1903.

Application filed January 26, 1903, Serial No. 140,531. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, SAMUEL S. LANGFORD, a citizen of the United States, residing at Craig, in the county of Burt and State of Nebraska, have invented a new and useful Mail-Box, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to mail-boxes for the delivery and collection of mail, more particularly for use in connection with the rural free-delivery service, and has for its object the production of a simply constructed and operated device which will enable the carrier to open the box, place the mail to be delivered in the receptacle, and remove the mail to be collected with one hand and without removing the hand or forearm from engagement with the box; and the invention consists in certain novel features of construction, as hereinafter shown and described, and specified in the claims.

In the drawings illustrative of the invention, in which corresponding parts are denoted by like designating characters, Figure 1 is a perspective view of the box open. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the box closed. Fig. 3 is a transverse sectional elevation.

The box may be of any required size or capacity and may be employed for the collection and delivery of mail-matter in any required locality, but is more particularly applicable for use in connection with the rural free-delivery system, and when thus employed will generally be about eighteen inches long, six inches wide, and eleven inches high at the highest point; but these dimensions may be varied to any desired extent, and I do not, therefore, wish to be limited in any manner thereto.

The bottom member 10, end members 11 12, and rear member 13 are formed, preferably, of a single sheet of metal of suitable strength bent to shape and preferably coated or protected, both exteriorly and interiorly, with the joints riveted, soldered, or otherwise firmly secured to render them moisture-proof. The material employed for the construction of the box will preferably be galvanized iron or steel of suitable gage.

The cover member 14 and front member 15 are preferably formed in one single piece of sheet metal of the same gage as the remainder of the box and united movably, as by

hinges 16, to the rear member 13 and with the lower edge 17 of the front member extended below the front edge of the bottom member 10, as shown.

The free edge 17 of the front member 15 will preferably be curved outwardly, as shown, or rolled around a wire in the usual manner to not only stiffen and strengthen the structure, but to likewise form a rounded lower edge to reduce the tendency to abrade the hand of the collector when opening the box, as hereinafter explained.

The cover member 14 will be arched or formed with inclined faces to shed water, and the upper edge of the rear member 13 will be formed with an inclined flange 18, underlapping the rear edge of the cover member, as shown in Fig. 3, to form an overlapping joint, which will prevent the entrance of moisture, and the cover member 14 and the front member 15 will be provided, respectively, with flanges 19 20, bent therefrom and forming shields or guards to the joints at the ends to prevent the entrance of moisture. The contents of the box are thus thoroughly protected from moisture when the box is closed.

Within the box is arranged a curved diaphragm 21, extending from end to end and connected to the rear member 13 and forming an upwardly-opening curved-bottom receptacle within the box, as shown in Fig. 3.

The receptacle formed by the curved partition 21 is for the reception of the mail to be delivered to the box, while the mail to be collected is placed upon the bottom member 10 beneath the partition 21 and the space beneath the partition being of sufficient capacity to hold the largest packages or the smallest letters.

The receptacle formed by the partition 21 is also of ample capacity and will hold the largest packages and will also hold packages larger than the receptacle, as the cover and front members will afford protection to the contents even when not fully closed, as the depending flanges 19 20 will shield the contents of the receptacle with the cover partially raised.

This construction of box possesses many advantages and enables the carrier to open the box, deposit the mail to be delivered, and remove the mail to be collected with one hand

and without removing the hand until the mail to be collected is grasped thereby. This is a very important feature of the invention and results in a very material saving of time and greatly reduces the labor required in the delivery and collection.

In operating the device the collector gathers the mail to be deposited in one hand and raises the united front and cover member by passing the back of the hand, holding the mail beneath the extended front edge 17, and this action will enable him to drop the mail-matter in the receptacle with the front and cover members resting on the wrist or forearm. Then the mail to be collected, which rests upon the bottom member 10, can be swept into his pouch or grasped by the same hand which opened the box and without removing the hand except to carry the collected mail with it. By this means the whole action is accomplished with one inward and one outward or return movement of one hand, the united front and cover member returning by gravity to its closed position and the signal-lever likewise returning to its withdrawn position, as hereinafter described.

It will be noted that when the operator raises the united front and cover members the whole interior of the box is exposed, so that he can clearly see not only the size, shape, and nature of the mail to be collected, but also whether or not any money has been deposited for postage. It will also be noted that by reason of the unobstructed front edge of the bottom member 10 all the contents of the lower receptacle can be swept off into a pouch or other receptacle without the necessity for picking it up, and in cold weather this is a very great advantage, as the collector can both deliver and collect the mail without removing his gloves or mittens, as no matter how cumbersome the mittens may be they will not prevent him from grasping a bundle of mail and dropping it into the upper receptacle or sweeping the contents from the lower receptacle, including small coins which may have been deposited therein for postage.

Another great advantage gained by this arrangement is that the contents of the box are fully protected during the deposit and removal of the mail during rain or snow storms, as the mail may be deposited or removed by only partially raising the cover, as will be obvious.

Movably attached by one end, as at 22, to the front member 15 is a signal-lever 23, the lever adapted to lie either projected, as shown in Fig. 2, or withdrawn, as in Fig. 1.

The lever 23 is designed to be thrown outward when the owner of the box places mail therein for collection to denote to the carrier that mail is in the box for collection, so that he will know whether it is necessary to visit the box.

When the united cover and front members are raised in opening the box, the signal-lever will be thrown over by gravity into its withdrawn position, as shown in Fig. 1, whereby the act of opening the box will necessarily close the signal-lever, so that the carrier may not be misled at his next trip by neglect to reverse the signal. This is an important feature of the invention and adds materially to the value and usefulness of the device.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim is—

1. A mail-box formed with closed rear, end and bottom members, and with the front and cover members connected together and movably united to said rear member, said front member extending below said bottom member, substantially as described.

2. A mail-box formed with closed rear, end and bottom members, and with the front and cover members connected together and movably united to said rear member, said united front and cover members having flanges overlapping said end members and said front member extending below said bottom member, substantially as described.

3. A mail-box formed with closed bottom, end and rear members, and with the front and cover members connected together and movably united to said rear member, and a signal-lever movably connected by one end to said front member and adapted for projection from said front member when said front member is closed and returnable to its inoperative position by gravity when the united front and cover member is opened, substantially as described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

SAMUEL S. LANGFORD.

Witnesses:

A. L. MCPHERSON,

E. J. MARTIN.