

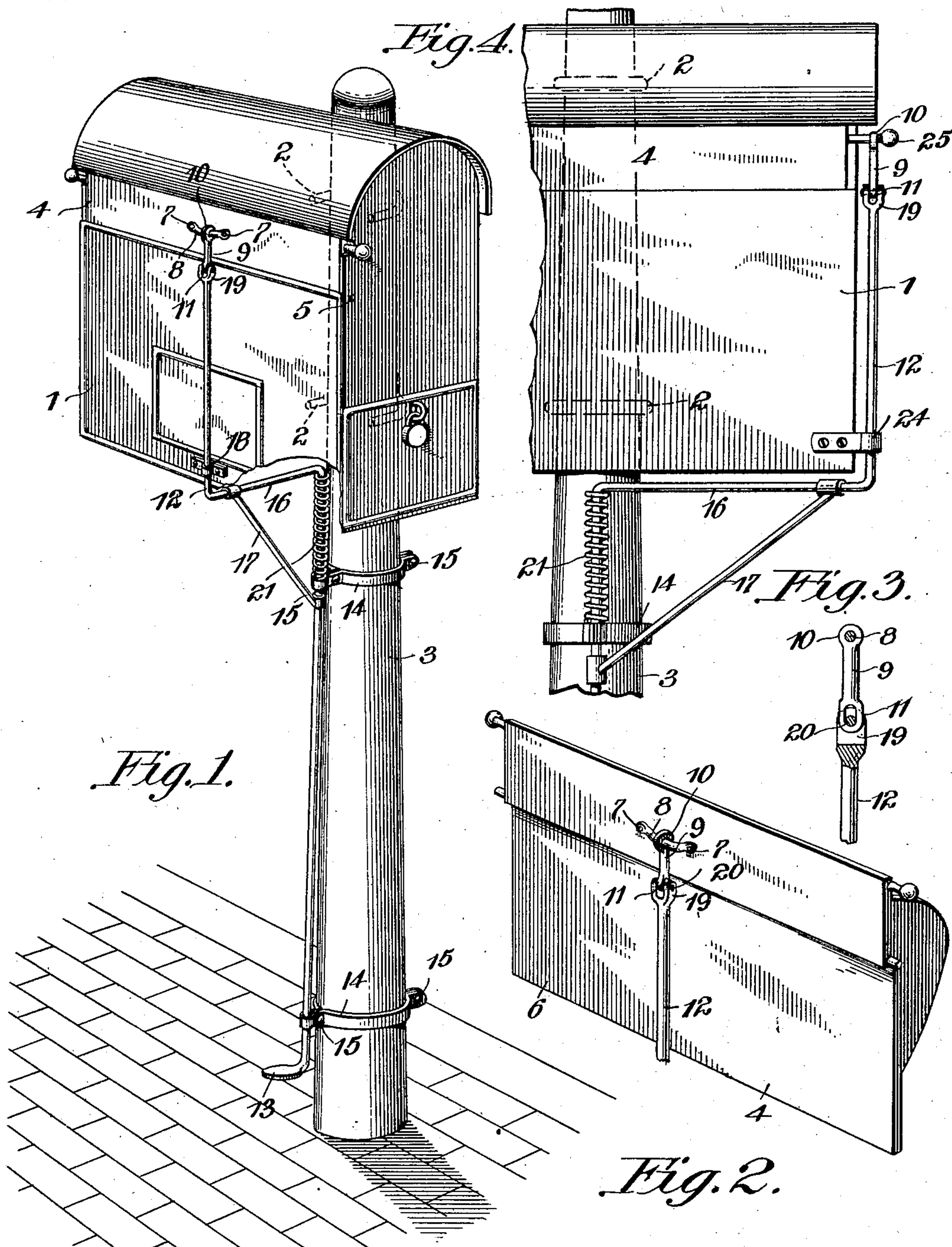
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G. E. BENTON.
LID OPERATING DEVICE FOR LETTER BOXES.

APPLICATION FILED FEB. 4, 1903.

NO MODEL.



Witnesses
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GEORGE E. BENTON, OF EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK.

LID-OPERATING DEVICE FOR LETTER-BOXES.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 728,839, dated May 26, 1903.

Application filed February 4, 1903. Serial No. 141,917. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, GEORGE E. BENTON, a citizen of the United States, residing at East Hampton, Long Island, in the county of Suffolk and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Lid-Operating Device for Letter-Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in letter-boxes, and more particularly to an attachment for opening and closing the lid or drop thereof to facilitate the insertion of mail-matter, and has for its object to provide a simple, inexpensive, and efficient device of this character capable of application to the ordinary form of letter-boxes and by means of which a person although having both hands encumbered may readily uncover the orifice through which the mail-matter is introduced.

A further object of the invention is to provide a foot-operated lever connected by suitable mechanism to the lid or drop of the letter-box, so that when the lever is depressed it will cause the mailing-orifice to be exposed and upon being released automatically close the same.

A still further object is to provide means whereby the lid or drop may be opened independently of the foot-operating mechanism, so as to permit the introduction of mail in the ordinary manner.

The invention consists in the construction and novel combination and arrangement of parts hereinafter fully described, illustrated in the accompanying drawings, and pointed out in the claims hereto appended, it being understood that various changes in form, proportion, and minor details of construction may be resorted to without departing from the spirit or sacrificing any of the advantages of this invention.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of a letter-box having the attachment constructed in accordance with my invention applied thereto. Fig. 2 is a detail perspective view of the lid or drop, showing the manner of connecting the foot-operated rod. Fig. 3 is a vertical-sectional view of the operating-rod connecting-link; and Fig. 4 is a front elevation of a letter-box, showing a different manner of attaching the foot-operated lever.

Similar numerals of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures of the drawings.

1 designates a mail-box of the usual construction secured in any suitable manner, as by straps 2, to a pillar or post 3. The mail-box is provided with an outwardly and downwardly swinging lid or drop 4, pivoted as shown at 5, for closing the mail-receiving orifice and provided with the usual counterweight 6 for closing the drop after the mail has been introduced. Secured to the lid or drop 4 in any suitable manner, as by rivets 7, is a staple or loop 8, and loosely mounted on the loop is a link 9, one end of which is provided with an eye 10, adapted to receive the loop, the opposite end thereof extending downwardly and terminating at a point even with the pivoted line of the lid 4 in an elongated loop or eye 11, which forms one-half of a hinged connection between the lid and the foot-operating mechanism, as will be explained more fully hereinafter.

A rod 12, one end of which is bent at right angles thereto to form a treadle or foot-lever 13, is secured to the pillar or post 3 by means of clamps 14, which encircle the post and rod, the end of the clamp members being secured together by means of bolts and nuts 15. The rod 12 is provided with an arm 16, which extends beneath the letter-box and lies parallel with the bottom thereof, being supported by a diagonally-disposed brace-bar 17, and the end of the rod projects upwardly, passing through guides 18, secured in any suitable manner to the front of the box. The upper end of the rod 12 is bifurcated, as shown, forming a pair of forked arms 19, connected by a cross-bar 20, which passes through the loop or eye 11 of the link 9, and thus forms a loose connection between the lid and the rod, permitting said lid to be opened by hand independently of the foot-lever. The connection between the end of the rod 12 and the link 9 is arranged, as before stated, parallel to and coincident with the line of juncture of the lid or drop 4 and the body of the box and as close as possible to the pivotal point of the lid, so as to permit said lid to be operated by hand in the usual manner and without affecting the foot-operating mechanism, the loops or eyes allowing for any slight play

of the link as the lid is being opened. A coiled spring 21 is mounted on the lower portion of the rod 12 and has one end resting on the guiding-clamps 14 and its opposite end bearing against the arm 16 to return the rod to its normal position after being depressed and automatically close the lid.

From the foregoing description the operation of the device will be readily understood and is as follows: A person desiring to deposit a letter or other mail-matter in the box and burdened with packages or having both hands otherwise engaged may readily uncover the mailing-orifice by depressing the foot-lever, which causes the rod to exert a downward pull on the lid or drop, opening the same and permitting the mail-matter to be introduced, and upon releasing the foot-lever the spring will automatically return the rod to its normal position, closing the orifice. The lid or drop may be opened independently of the foot-lever by swinging the lid or drop outwardly by hand, the hinged connection permitting the drop to be opened in the ordinary manner without affecting the foot operating mechanism, the lid being automatically closed by the counterweight.

In Fig. 4 I have shown a different manner of attaching the rod. In this case the rod projects upwardly parallel with the corner of the box, passing through suitable guides 24, secured thereto, and the link instead of being attached to the front of the lid or drop is loosely connected to the knob 25, the hinged connection in both cases permitting the lid to be operated independently of the foot-lever.

Although I have shown the attachment applied to a mail-box, it is obvious that it may be used with equally good results on receptacles in general or for various other purposes.

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

1. In a device of the class described, the combination with a receptacle, of a pivoted lid or cover, a foot-operated rod or lever pivotally connected to the lid for opening the same, means carried by the rod for automatically closing the lid and a hinged connection

between the rod and the lid whereby the lid may be operated independently of the foot-operated mechanism.

2. In a device of the class described, the combination with a receptacle, of a pivoted lid or cover, a foot-operated rod or lever for opening and closing the lid, and a link one end of which is pivotally connected to the lid, and its opposite end to the rod.

3. In a device of the class described, the combination with a receptacle, of a pivoted lid or cover, a rod slidably secured to the receptacle, and having one end pivotally connected to the lid the opposite end of said rod being bent at right angles, passing beneath the receptacle and thence extending downwardly being provided with a pedal, a loose pivotal connection between the lid and the rod, means for slidably securing the rod to a support and a spring for returning the rod to its normal position after being depressed.

4. In a device of the class described, the combination with a receptacle, of a pivoted lid or cover, a foot-operated rod or lever slidably connected to the receptacle and having a bifurcated upper end, a cross-bar extending through the link and connecting the bifurcated arms of the rod, a guiding-clamp for the rod and a spring for returning the rod to its normal position after being depressed.

5. In a device of the class described the combination with a receptacle, of a pivoted lid or cover, a foot-operated rod or lever slidably secured to the receptacle and pivotally connected to the lid or cover, a guiding-clamp for slidably securing the rod to a support, a spring for returning the rod to its normal position and a loose pivotal connection between the lid and the rod at a point adjacent to the lid-pivots whereby the lid may be operated independently of the foot-operated mechanism.

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

GEORGE E. BENTON.

Witnesses:

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MARY M. SWAIN.