No. 730,806. PATENTED JUNE 9, 1903.

E. N. SWORD.

MAIL BOX AND SUPPORT.

APPLICATION FILED MAR. 20, 1902.

NO MODEL.

Fig. 1.

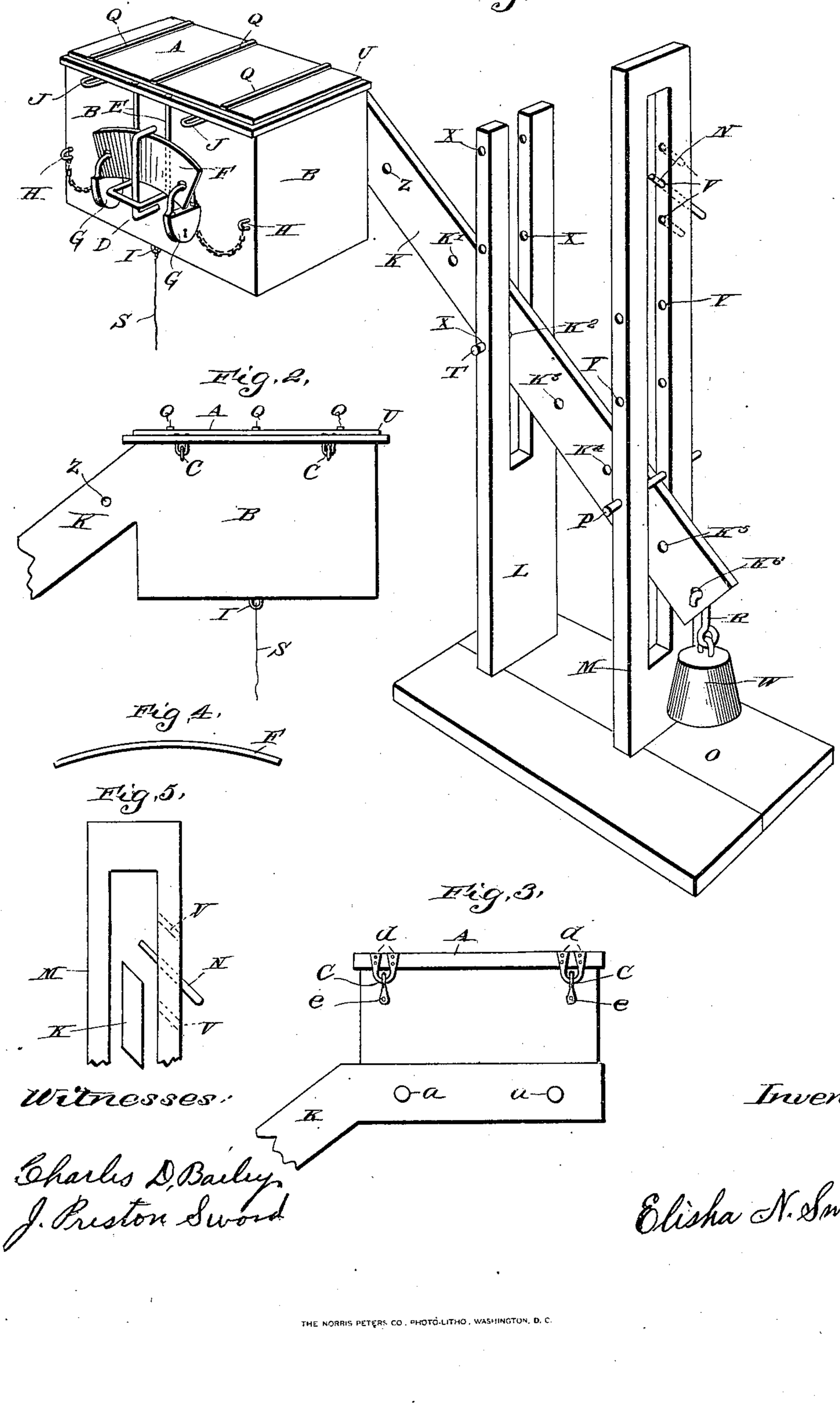

Fig. 2.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

Fig. 3.

Witnesses:

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No. 730,806. Patented June 9, 1903.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ELISHA N. SWORD, OF FIG, VIRGINIA.

MAIL-BOX AND SUPPORT.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 730,806, dated June 9, 1903.

Application filed March 20, 1902. Serial No. 99,236. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ELISHA N. SWORD, a citizen of the United States, residing at Fig, in the county of Lee and State of Virginia, have invented a new and useful Mail-Box and Support, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to mail-boxes and their supports heretofore used inconveniently near the roads or requiring the postman to use long cumbersome handles for the manipulation of the boxes, also to the covers, hinges, locks, and signals of the boxes; and the objects of my invention are, first, to secure and protect the contents of the box; second, to afford a cheap hinge for lids and shutters; third, to adapt the lock to the double purpose of locking and signaling; fourth, to provide for the use of boxes and their supports, respectively, at a convenient vertical and horizontal distance from the roads, and, fifth, to furnish means to attach, adjust, support, and operate the boxes and their appendages. I attain these objects by the mechanism illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a detail perspective view of the entire device; Fig. 2, a rear view of the box with a part of the supporting-beam broken away and showing the combination of the hinges with a horizontal lid or shutter; Fig. 3, a rear view of a box, illustrating the preferred manner of attaching the hinges, locks, and staples to a metallic box and lid. Fig. 4 is an edge view of the lock and signal-slide. Fig. 5 is a plan of the upper end of the post M and containing an end view of the beam K.

Similar letters refer to similar parts throughout the several views.

The projecting wooden lid A, having two or more strips Q Q nailed or fastened across its top to prevent suncupping and a groove or strips V on its under side around the outside of the top of the box B to prevent water leakage into the said box, is attached to the top of the rear of the said box or to the beam K, Fig. 1, by the staple-hinges C C, composed of two staples each, one staple of each hinge being passed through the back edge of the said lid and clenched or secured on the opposite side and the other staple through the former staple and into or through the rear side of the said box and clenched or secured as shown in Fig. 2. The wooden box B, of which the end of the beam K forms the rear side, is attached to the said beam by nails or otherwise, Figs. 1 and 2; but the box, made of wood or other material, of any size or suitable form desired, may be attached to the said beam by the bolts *a a* or otherwise, and when a metallic box and cover are used the cover may be fitted over the edges of the box, and the hinges C C, hasp E, staples D, H H, I, and J J may be attached by such bolts as *d d* and *e e* in Fig. 3.

To secure and protect the contents of the box and dispense with the signals now in use, a cheap lock for the double purpose of locking and signaling is provided, in which the hasp E, bent outward at its bottom, is passed into or through the front edge of the lid A and clenched or otherwise secured and slitted, so as to admit the staple D, which being passed into or through the front of the box B and clenched or otherwise secured admits the lock and signal-slide F. The slide F is slightly curved sidewise throughout its length and is also curved edgewise, so that its ends when the slide is in place will project downward and forward to prevent the locks from rubbing the box, to give it greater ease of action as a lock-slide than that possessed by U-shaped fastening devices, and to adapt it to novel use as a signal-slide, which admits, through an aperture in each of its ends on different sides of the staple D, a padlock or other suitable lock that cannot be drawn through the said staple. These locks, arrangeable so that the postman and box-owners on a mail route can each use but a single key unlike the keys of each other, are adapted to use as signals. Let a designated end of each signal-slide F on a mail route carry a common lock known as the "postman's lock," while the other lock is changeable at the option of its immediate owner. The party who deposits mail in the box can draw one of the locks (say the postman's) until it swings down to indicate the presence of mail. The other lock, drawn by the operator until it swings down, indicates no mail in the box.

The staples J J, secured to the front edge of the lid A, are supports for weather-signal flags.

The staples H H, holding chains or cords long enough to allow the operation of the

slide F and attached one to each of the locks G G to support the said slide and locks when the box is unlocked for use, and the staple I, holding the cord S for lowering the said box, are secured the former to the front and the latter to the bottom of the said box. The eye Z in the beam K, placed so as to admit the pivot-pin T through the mortise of the support L, secures the use of the box at an ordinary height. In the mortise of the support L, a post or other support secured to the sill O or in the ground or otherwise, the beam K is secured by placing the pivot-pin T simultaneously into any one of the eyes $x\ x\ x$ and mortise in the said support and any one of the eyes $K'\ K^2\ K^3$ in the said beam that will secure for the box a convenient vertical and horizontal distance from the road, the said beam, together with the said box, being rendered both vertically and horizontally adjustable by the said eyes. The post M, secured to the sill O or in the ground or otherwise at a convenient distance from the support L, is provided in its rear with the eyes V V V, in any of which the pin N is placed, so as to catch and retain the said beam in position to hold the said box and its appendages in place for convenient operation. In the mortise of the post M as a guide works upward and downward as a lever on the pivot-pin T in the support L as a fulcrum, alternately elevating and lowering the box B and the weight W, the beam K, having near its end opposite to its end to which the box is attached the weight W, attached by the suspender R in any one of the eyes $K^4\ K^5\ K^6$ in the said beam (which eyes render the said weight adjustable) that will cause the said weight by its own depression to elevate the said box and the contents it will possibly receive. The eyes Y Y Y in the front of the post M admit the pin P above the said beam to hold the box in an elevated position when not in use. The proper action of the said beam is facilitated by giving its top edge a slight inclination to the front and beveling the back of its top edge and the front of its bottom edge where it passes through the mortise in the post M. At a convenient distance from the post-road and at or nearly at right angles thereto is leveled and secured to the ground the sill O, having the support L next to the road and the post M both secured to it. The said sill is dispensed with by securing in the ground the said post and support, to which the beam K may be so adjusted and attached that the box B when elevated will be above the heads of travelers over a point at or near the edge of the road. The pin P having been left out the operator lowers the box by pulling the cord S until the beam K catches on the pin N, unlocks the lock designated, removes the slide F, opens the box, receives and deposits contents, relocks, sets the signals as indicated, moves the box horizontally until the said beam is free from the pin N, and lets the box reëlevate.

The box being elevated and out of the way of travelers is not so apt to be tampered with as a box at an ordinary height. Hence it gives greater security not only to its contents, but to itself and its appendages. If the beam K is of proper length, the support L may be at such a distance from the road as to cause no danger or inconvenience to the traveling public. Nearly all of the machine can be home-made, and it is easily and quickly operated.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States, is—

1. The combination with a suitable support of a beam pivoted on said support, a beam-guiding post through which said beam projects, a weight on one end of said beam, a mail-box at the other end of said beam, a lid for said box, staples for hinging said cover on said box, an adjustable locking device for said lid adapted by its position to indicate whether or not mail is in the box, and a lowering-cord connected to said box, substantially as described.

2. The combination with a suitable support of a beam pivoted on said support, a weight at one end of said beam, a mail-box at the other end of said beam and a lowering-cord connected to said box, substantially as shown.

3. The combination with a mail-box of a beam having two or more eyes, K', K^2, &c., a suitable support having two or more eyes X; a pivot-pin adapted to be used in either of said eyes, by which said beam is pivoted to said support; and a beam-guiding post having one or more eyes V, and a mortise or slit; whereby a mail-box is supported and rendered horizontally and vertically adjustable, substantially as described.

4. The combination with a suitable sill of a suitable support secured to said sill, a beam-guiding post secured to said sill, a beam pivoted on said support and projecting through said beam-guiding post, a weight on one end of said beam, a mail-box at the other end of said beam, and a lowering-cord connected to said box, substantially as set forth.

5. The combination with a suitable support of a beam pivoted on said support, a beam-guiding post through which said beam projects, a weight on one end of said beam, a mail-box at the other end of said beam, and a lowering-cord connected to said box, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

ELISHA N. SWORD.

Witnesses:

ROBERT E. SWORD,

DAVID W. LOCKHART.