

P. SCHULZE.  
SELF CLOSING AND CHANGEABLE CASE FOR POSTAL BOXES.

APPLICATION FILED DEC. 6, 1902.

NO MODEL.

Fig. 1.

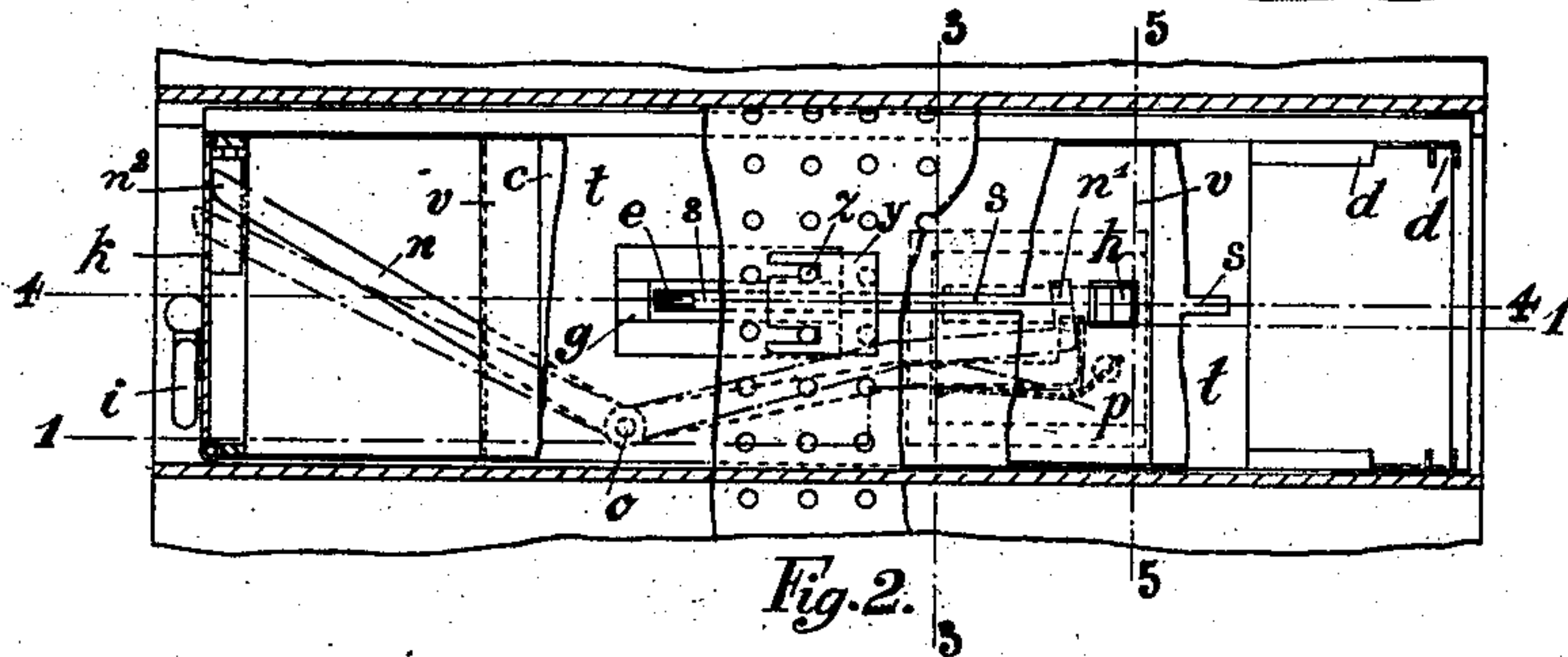
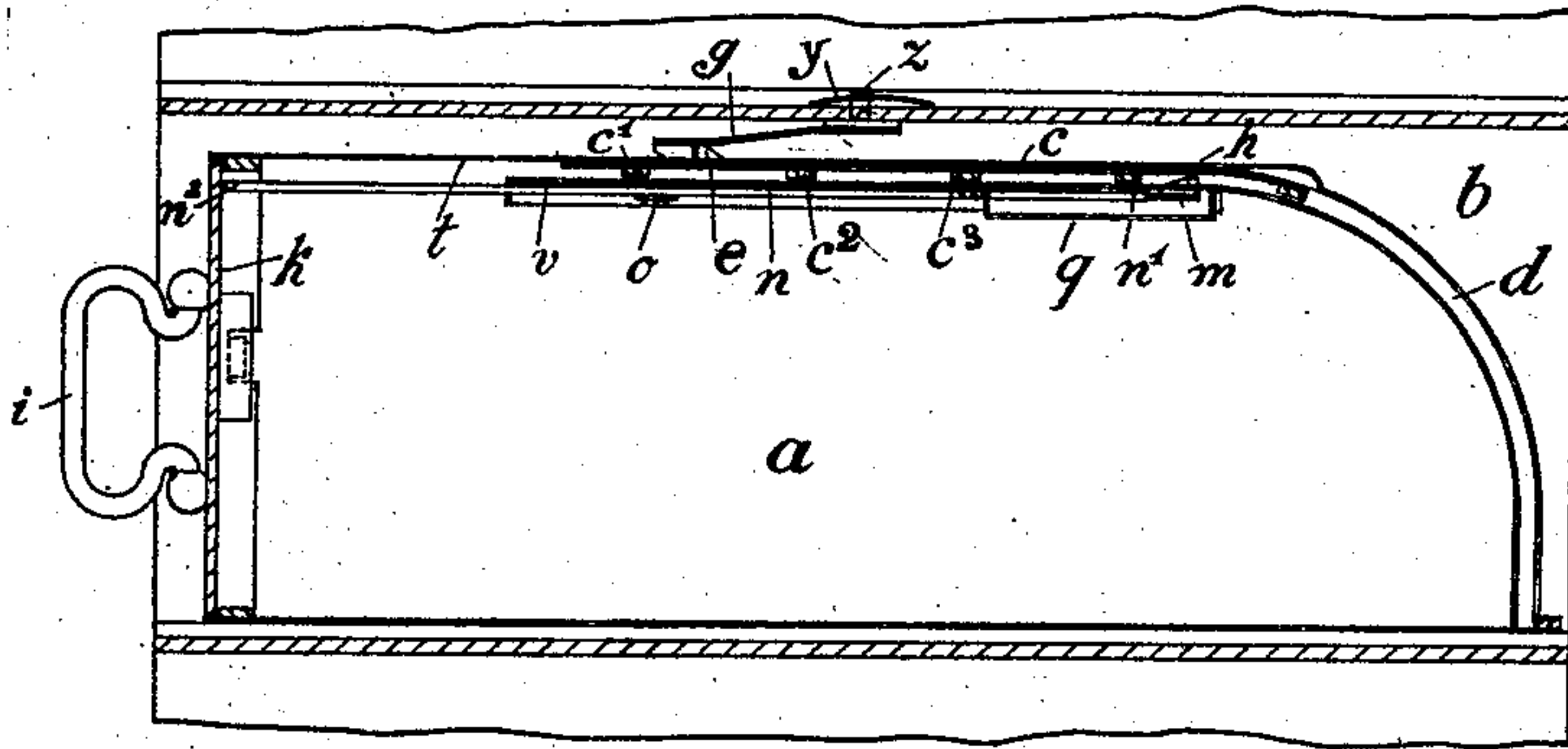


Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

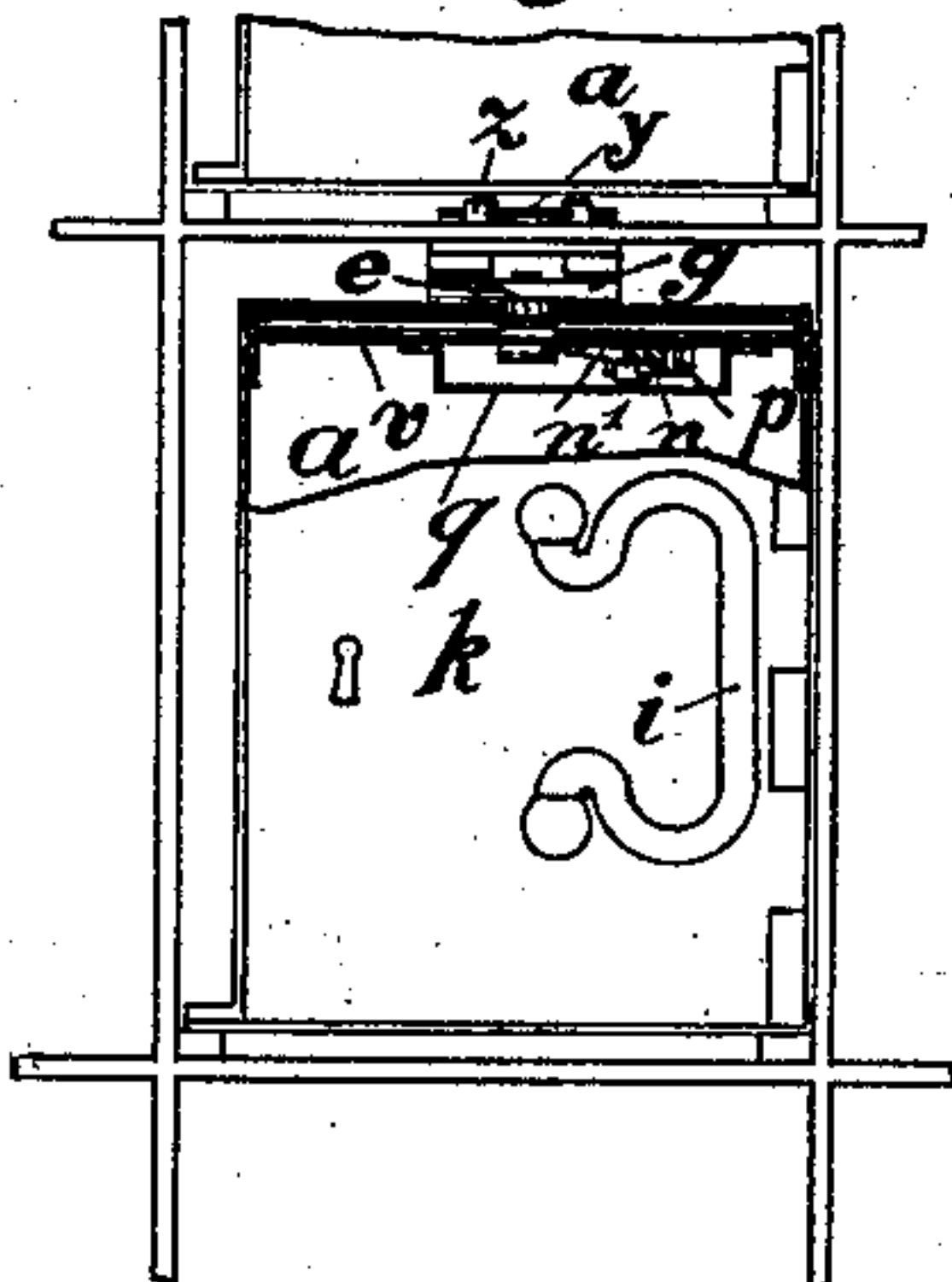


Fig. 4.

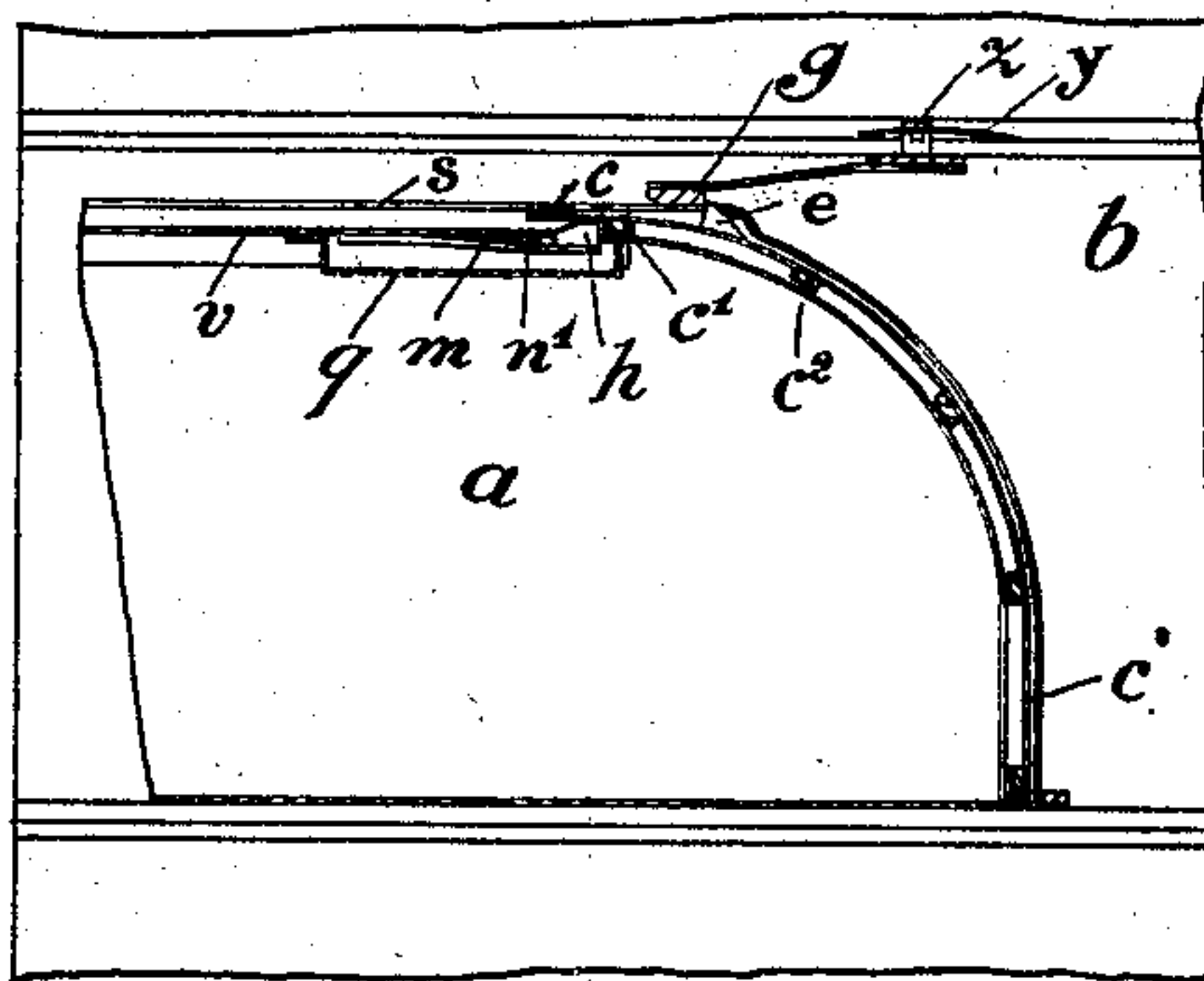


Fig. 5.

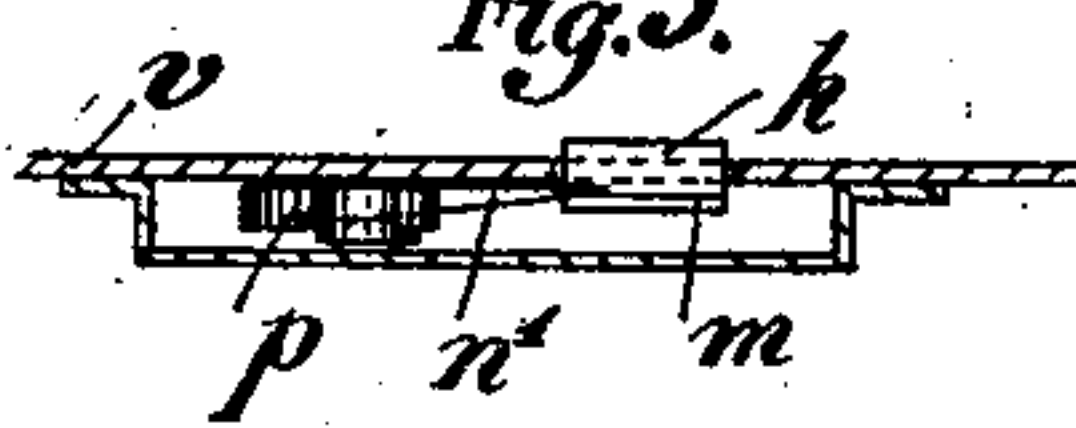


Fig. 6.



Witnesses.

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Att'y.



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

PAUL SCHULZE, OF ERFURT, GERMANY.

## SELF-CLOSING AND CHANGEABLE CASE FOR POSTAL BOXES.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 741,724, dated October 20, 1903.

Application filed December 6, 1902. Serial No. 134,221. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, PAUL SCHULZE, merchant, of 46 Augerstrasse, Erfurt, Germany, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Self-Closing and Changeable Cases for Postal Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to improvements in self-closing and changeable cases for postal boxes, and has for its object to provide a postal box which shall prevent letters or mail which may be retained in such for collection from being lost by carelessness or from other causes by the messengers, a further object being to prevent any unauthorized examination of the contents. For this purpose a box or casket is provided which can be shifted into the post-office box which is set apart for the mail of the various firms.

In order that this invention may be more readily understood and carried into practical effect, reference is hereby made to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a longitudinal section of my improved box upon line 1 1 of Fig. 2. Fig. 2 is a plan view, partly in section, thereof. Fig. 3 is a front elevational view, partly in section, upon line 3 3 of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a longitudinal section upon line 4 4 of Fig. 2, the postal box being in a particular position in use, while Figs. 5 and 6 illustrate, upon an enlarged scale, an important detail of the invention and are sectional views upon line 5 5 of Fig. 2.

Referring to the drawings, wherein like letters of reference indicate corresponding parts throughout, *a* represents the box, which is placed with its open back into the opening *b* provided for its reception and ready to collect the mail. A flexible closure *c* is arranged to lock this open part, and this closure is made of flexible sheet-steel covering the whole width of the box and traveling on both sides of it in mortises *d*. On the lower side of this flexible closure *c* cross-bars *c'* *c*<sup>2</sup> are fitted for strengthening purposes. Fixed on this closure a projecting catch *e* is arranged, which projects through a slot *s* in the top *t* of the box. In order to prevent any letters dropping or being taken out through this slot *s*, a false bottom *v* is provided immediately below it. As long as the box is open the flexi-

ble closure aforesaid rests between this false bottom and the cover of the box. (See Fig. 1.) Corresponding to the projection *e* on closure *c* a spring-catch *g* is fixed on the cover of the compartment, which engages with the projection when the box is pushed into the opening intended for its reception. The fixing of the spring-catch *g* on the cover of the compartment is easily effected if cover and bottom of the compartment are constructed of perforated tin plates in the following manner: On catch *g* two pins *z*, corresponding in thickness with the holes, are fixed at such a distance from each other that they can be put through two corresponding holes in the cover of the compartment. These pins *z* have on the sides facing each other notches which are used for fixing purposes in such a way that a small resilient piece of sheet metal *y* is pushed into them.

If the box is taken out of the compartment by pulling on handle *i*, the flexible closure before mentioned is prevented from following this motion, because its projection *e* engages with the catch *g*. Consequently the closure moves toward the box a relative distance to the right and is guided by the curved mortises *d* in such a manner that it locks up the back of the box. Nearly at the end of this motion that part of the closure which carries a projection *e* enters into the bent mortises *d*, with the effect that the projection *e* is lowered so far that the catch *g* at last slips off from it and offers no more resistance now to the entire removal of the box.

In order to prevent any opening of the box on the part of the messenger or clerk fetching the mail, it is necessary to secure the closure in its locking position. For this purpose a catch *h* is provided, which is affixed to a spring *m* on the lower side of the false bottom *v*, and this catch projects through a square hole in the false bottom *v* over it. (See Fig. 4.) This catch is beveled on its forward side, and thus allows a locking motion of the closure; but supposing that the closure is locked no opening is possible, because the cross-bar *c'*, which has moved behind the catch *h*, engages therewith.

To render an opening of the box possible, catch *h* must be pulled back. This may be done by means of an angular lever *n*, which has



its center of motion at  $o$  and whose one end,  $n'$ , is bent into a rectangular shape and formed like a wedge. By turning this lever to the left in the position marked in Fig. 2 by dotted lines the wedge  $n'$  moves below spring  $m$  and lifts it down from the bottom  $v$ , which movement also insures that the catch  $h$  is pulled back beneath. (See Fig. 6.) A spring  $p$  tends to turn the lever in this direction, but is stopped on account of the other end,  $n^2$ , of the lever  $h$  being in contact with the front closing door  $k$  of the box. If this door is now opened by a principal who is in possession of the key, the working of the lever is left to the effect of spring  $p$  and the catch  $h$  recedes again into its position as described before. Consequently the closure is free and can now be pushed up. If door  $k$  is going to be closed again, the lever  $n$  must be turned back. Catch  $h$  then again occupies its locking position, and the box can be deposited anew into the compartment.

To prevent any disturbances in the distribution of letters at the post-office, it is necessary that each firm should own two of these boxes, one of which always remains in the compartment and is only exchanged with the other, which has been cleared in the meanwhile.

Having now particularly described and ascertained the nature of my said invention and in what manner the same is to be performed, I declare that what I claim is—

1. In combination with a compartment for a mail-box, a mail-receptacle adapted to fit in said compartment having an open end for receiving mail, a flexible slidable closure for said open end and means whereby said closure will be slid into closed position when the receptacle is withdrawn from the compartment.

2. In combination, a compartment, a mail-box adapted to fit in said compartment, having one end open, a flexible, slidable cover for said open end, means for sliding said cover into closed position as the box is withdrawn from the compartment and means for automatically locking the cover in closed position.

3. A mail-box, a flexible steel cover for said box, grooves with which said cover engages, a lug or projection  $e$  on said cover, a slot in said box for said lug, a casing or compartment for said box, and a spring-catch on said casing to engage said lug  $e$  to slide said cover into closed position.

4. A mail-box, a flexible steel cover for said box, a lug on said cover, a slot in said box through which said lug projects, a casing, a spring-catch on said casing to engage said lug, a second spring-catch in said box to engage said cover to lock it in closed position and means for releasing said lock-catch to open said cover, substantially as described.

5. A box-compartment, a mail-box adapted to fit in said compartment, a flexible steel closure for one end of said box, a lug on said closure, a catch in said compartment adapted to engage said lug when the box is withdrawn, a spring-lock in said box to lock the closure in closed position, a spring-pressed pivoted lever for releasing said lock, and a lock-door in the other end of said box, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification, in the presence of two subscribing witnesses, this 3d day of July, 1902.

PAUL SCHULZE.

Witnesses:

ROBT. KNAUF,  
WILHELM MENSING.