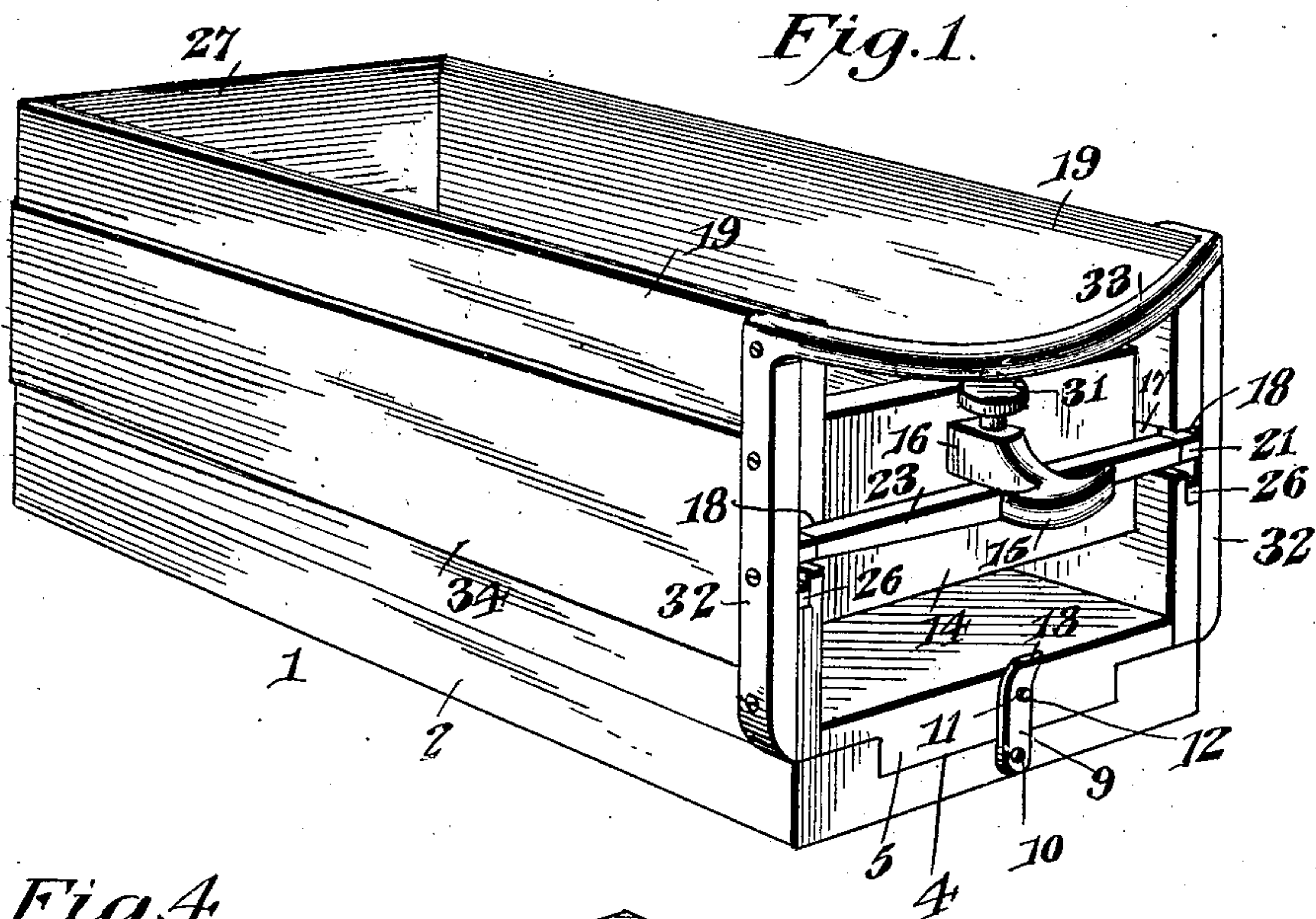


No. 865,706.

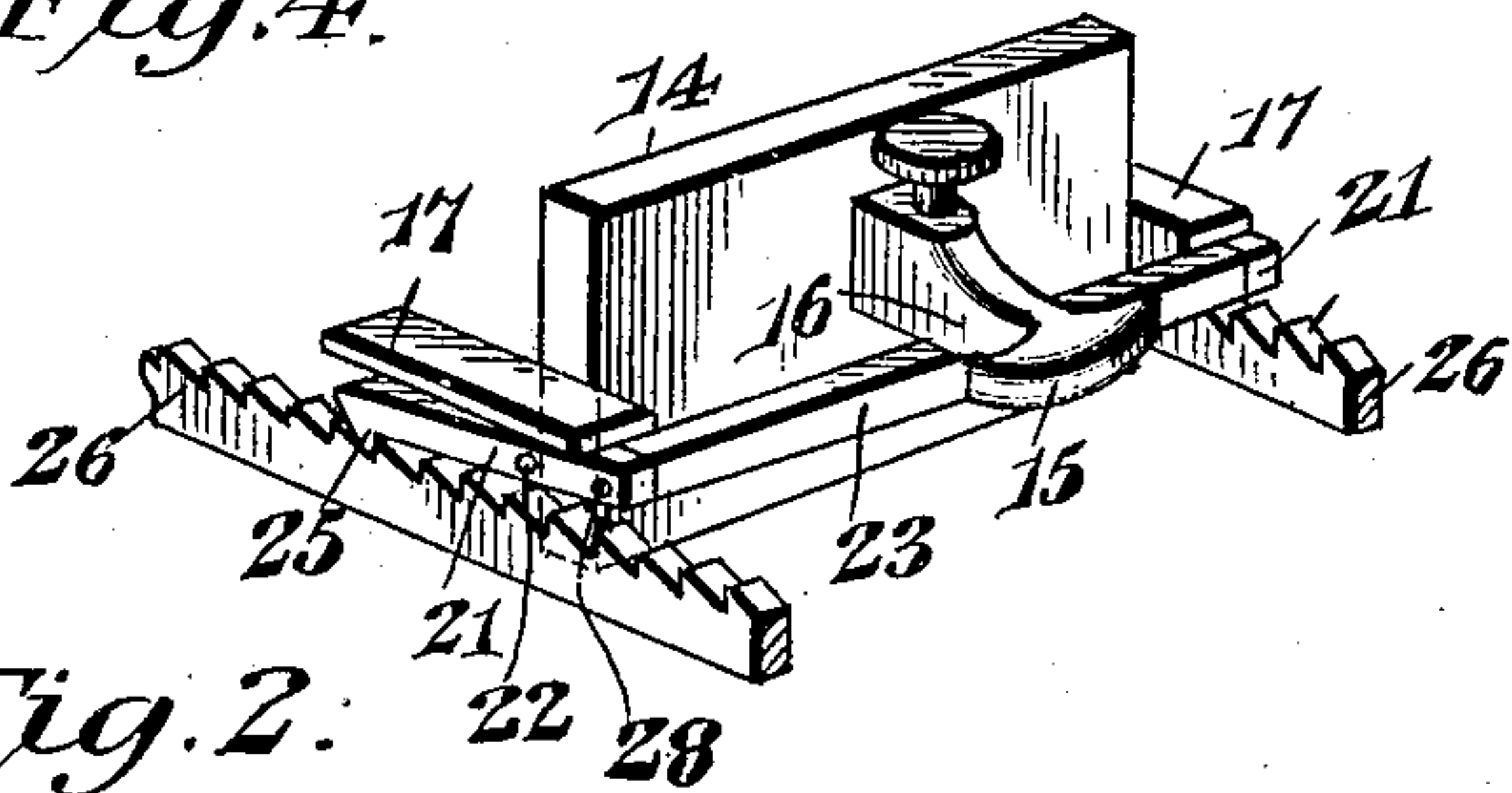
PATENTED SEPT. 10, 1907.

E. F. HUTCHINS & J. J. SALA.  
RURAL MAIL CARRIER'S BOX.

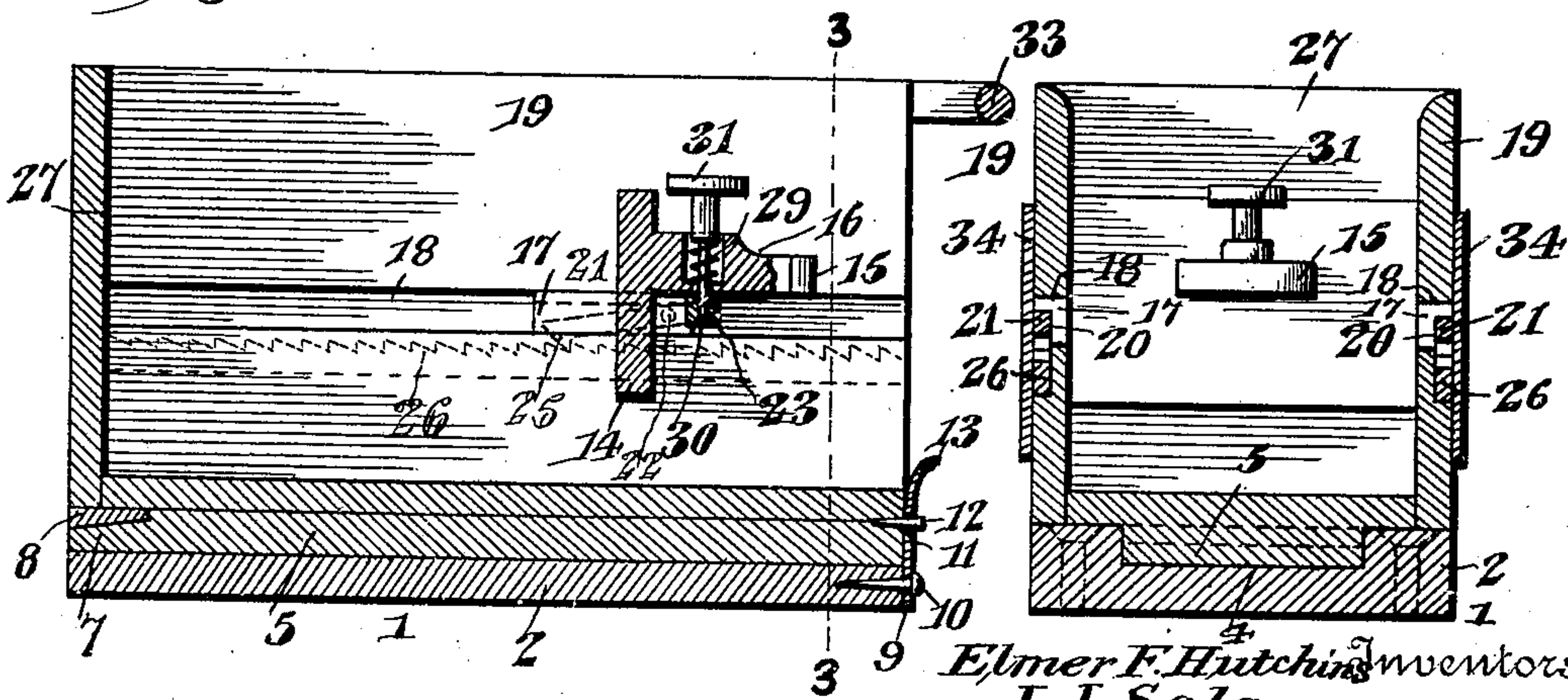
APPLICATION FILED MAY 23, 1906.



*Fig. 4.*



*Fig. 2.*



*Fig. 3.*

Elmer F. Hutchins Inventors  
J. J. Sala,

By

*E. G. Figger*

Attorney

Witnesses  
*Jas. E. McLaughlin*  
*J. F. Riley*



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ELMER F. HUTCHINS AND JACOB J. SALA, OF LOYAL, WISCONSIN.

## RURAL-MAIL-CARRIER'S BOX.

No. 865,706.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Sept. 10, 1907.

Application filed May 23, 1906. Serial No. 318,369.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that we, ELMER F. HUTCHINS and JACOB J. SALA, citizens of the United States, residing at Loyal, in the county of Clark and State of Wisconsin, have invented a new and useful Rural-Mail-Carrier's Box, of which the following is a specification.

The invention relates to a rural mail carrier's box.

The object of the present invention is to provide a simple, inexpensive and efficient box or case designed particularly for use by rural mail carriers, but adapted for general use as a file box or case, and capable of facilitating and expediting the handling of mail matter.

A further object of the invention is to provide a mail box designed to be mounted on a suitable support within a buggy, or other vehicle, and adapted to enable mail to be quickly packed and held in a perpendicular position, and capable of being quickly removed and of being conveniently carried in the hand, while depositing the mail in the stationary mail boxes along the route.

The invention also has for its object to provide a mail box having an adjustable follower adapted to be readily moved in either direction with one hand, so as to leave the other hand free for placing mail matter in and removing the same from the box.

With these and other objects in view, the invention consists in the construction and novel combination of parts hereinafter fully described, illustrated in the accompanying drawing, and pointed out in the claims hereto appended; it being understood that various changes in the form, proportion, size and minor details of construction, within the scope of the claims, may be resorted to without departing from the spirit or sacrificing any of the advantages of the invention.

In the drawing:—Figure 1 is a perspective view of a mail carrier's box constructed in accordance with this invention. Fig. 2 is a longitudinal sectional view of the same. Fig. 3 is a transverse sectional view on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a detail perspective view of the follower and the means for locking the same against backward movement.

Like numerals of reference designate corresponding parts in all the figures of the drawing.

1 designates a mail box or case open at the top and at one end and detachably mounted on a base 2, which is provided at intervals with perforations for the reception of screws, or other suitable fastening devices for securing the base to a suitable support. The box may be constructed of any desired size, and in practice a mail wagon or other vehicle will be equipped with a plurality of such boxes. The base is designed to be mounted in a buggy, wagon, or other vehicle, and it is provided with a longitudinal recess 4, which receives a depending bar or member 5, secured to the lower face of the bottom bar of the box 1 and extending longi-

tudinally of the same. The projecting or depending portion or member 5 of the bottom is provided at one end with a beveled tongue 7, formed by cutting away the projecting portion or member 5, and detachably interlocked with a cross piece 8 of the base. The cross piece 8, which is arranged at the rear end of the base, spans the recess, and is spaced from the bottom thereof to form an opening for the tongue 7, and is provided with an inclined or beveled lower face for engaging the beveled upper face of the said tongue. By this construction the rear end of the box is slidably interlocked with the base. The projecting portion or member 5 of the bottom of the box is of the same width as the recess 4, and fits snugly within the same, as clearly shown in Fig. 3 of the drawing.

The front end of the mail box is detachably secured to the base by means of a pivoted catch 9, consisting of a piece of spring steel, or other resilient material, secured at one end to the front end of the base, by means of a screw 10, or other suitable fastening device, and provided adjacent to its other end with a perforation 11, which is adapted to receive a projection 12. The catch is of a length to extend a short distance above the bottom of the box, when it is in engagement with the projection 12, and the upper end 13 of the catch is curved outwardly to form a grip or handle portion to enable it to be readily grasped by the operator. The resilient catch is adapted to be drawn outward to disengage it from the projection 12, and it may then be swung downwardly to a horizontal position to arrange it out of the way and to also release the mail box. The mail box may then be readily lifted from the base.

The letters and other mail matter are engaged and clamped in a perpendicular position by means of a follower 14, preferably constructed of metal, and extending transversely of the box 1, as clearly shown in Figs. 1 and 2 of the drawing. The follower, which extends entirely across the mail box 1, has a flat vertical inner face, and it is provided at its outer face with a horizontal projecting handle or grip consisting of a head 15 and a stem 16. The head 15, which is arranged horizontally, extends laterally from opposite sides of the stem, which is preferably cast integral with the follower. By this construction the handle or grip is adapted to be readily grasped between two of the fingers to enable the thumb to be conveniently used for operating the locking mechanism, which secures the follower in its adjustment. The follower is provided at opposite sides with horizontal slides 17, preferably formed integral with the follower 14, and extending in advance and in rear of the same, but the said slides 17, which operate in horizontal guides or ways 18 of the sides 19 of the box, may be constructed in any other preferred manner. These slides, which consist of horizontal and vertical flanges, are substantially L-shaped in cross section



and form lower longitudinal recesses 20 for the reception of pivoted pawls or dogs 21. The pawls or dogs 21 are pivoted by rivets 22, or other suitable fastening devices to the vertical flanges or portions of the slides 17, and the pivots 22 are located adjacent to the outer ends of the pawls or dogs 21. The pawls or dogs 21, which are substantially housed within the guides 17, consist of levers and have short outer arms, which are connected by a transverse bar 23. The inner ends of the pawls or dogs are provided with heads or teeth 25 for engaging horizontal ratchet bars 26.

The horizontal ratchet bars 26, which are provided at their upper edges with teeth, are mounted in the grooves or ways 18 of the sides 19 of the box 1. The grooves or ways, which extend from the front of the box to the rear wall 27, have upper and lower horizontal gliding edges, and the sides are recessed at the bottom of the grooves or ways to provide spaces for the horizontal ratchet bars, which are located below the bottom gliding edges of the grooves or ways. The teeth of the ratchet bars are beveled at their outer sides or faces, and are provided at their inner sides or faces with shoulders arranged to be engaged by the heads of the pivoted pawls or dogs, whereby the follower is locked against backward or outward movement.

The outer arms of the pivoted pawls or dogs are connected to the ends of the transverse bar 23 by means of terminal pivots 28, which are mounted on the ends of the bar 23 and which are arranged in suitable perforations of the short outer arms of the pivoted pawls or dogs. The long inner arms of the pivoted pawls or dogs are of sufficient weight to maintain the heads 25 normally in engagement with the ratchet bars. The action of the pivoted pawls or dogs is rendered positive by a coiled spring 29, disposed on a shank 30 of a vertical movable operating device 31, which is provided at the upper end of the shank 30 with a suitable head, adapted to be depressed by the thumb of the mail carrier or other person for lifting the heads or engaging portions of the pawls or dogs out of engagement with the ratchet bars. The shank 30, which is guided in an opening of the stem 16 of the handle of the follower, is secured at its lower end to the bar 23 and has a reduced portion, forming a shoulder against which the upper end of the coiled spring 29 abuts. The lower reduced end of the stem pierces the bar 23, being suitably fastened in a perforation thereof, as clearly indicated in Fig. 2 of the drawing. The opening of the stem 16 is enlarged to form a socket for the coiled spring 29, which rests upon the bottom of the enlarged portion or socket of the opening of the stem 16. The handle or grip of the follower and the operating device 31 are adapted to be readily grasped between the thumb and fingers of the operator, for enabling the locking mechanism and the follower to be simultaneously adjusted with one hand, so as to leave the other hand of the operator free for removing the contents of the box or for placing mail or other matter within the same.

The mail box, which may be constructed of any suitable material, is preferably reinforced at the front end of the sides 19 by vertical cleats or bars 32, and it is provided at its front with a transversely disposed handle 33. The handle 33, which is arranged in a horizontal position, is curved outwardly, and its terminals are connected to the upper ends of the cleats or bars 32,

being preferably cast integral with the same. The cleats or bars 32 are secured by screws or other suitable fastening devices to the exterior of the box. The grooves or ways 18 of the sides 19 of the box may be conveniently formed by slotting the sides, or by constructing the sides of upper and lower spaced members, the open slots or spaces being covered by exteriorly arranged plates 34 in the manner shown. These plates cover the slots or openings, and brace the upper and lower sections or members of the sides. The vertical cleats 32 and the handle 33 brace the box, and assist in providing a structure of great strength and durability.

It will be seen that the device is exceedingly simple and inexpensive in construction, that it will take up but a small amount of space within a vehicle, and that it is easily operated and not liable to get out of order.

Having thus fully described our invention, what we claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is:—

1. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with ratchet bars, a follower slidably connected with the box and having a grip or handle for adjusting it, locking means mounted on the follower for engaging the ratchet bars to lock the follower against outward or backward movement, and means mounted on the handle or grip of the follower for operating the locking means. 85
2. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box, a follower slidable on the box and having a grip or handle, locking means for securing the follower against backward or outward movement, and an operating device mounted on the grip or handle of the follower and connected with the said locking means. 90
3. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box, a follower slidable within the same and having a grip or handle, opposite ratchet bars arranged at the sides of the box, pawls or dogs mounted on the follower at the opposite side of the box for engaging the ratchet bars, and an operating device mounted on the handle or grip of the follower and connected with the pawls or dogs. 95
4. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided with opposite ratchet bars, a follower operating within the box and having a grip or handle, pivoted pawls or dogs carried by the follower for engaging the ratchet bars, a cross bar connecting the pawls or dogs, and an operating device mounted on the grip or handle of the follower and secured to the connecting bar. 100
5. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with guides, ratchet bars secured to the sides of the box, a follower provided with slides operating in the guides, pawls or dogs pivotally mounted on the slides for engaging the ratchet bars, and means mounted on the follower at a point between the sides of the box for operating the pawls or dogs. 105
6. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with guide grooves, ratchet bars mounted in the guide grooves, a follower provided at opposite sides with horizontal slides operating within the grooves, said follower being provided between the slides with a grip or handle, pawls or dogs mounted on the slides and engaging the ratchet bars, and means mounted on the grip or handle of the follower for operating the pawls or dogs. 110
7. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with guides, ratchet bars mounted on the sides of the box, a follower provided with slides operating in the guide, said slides being substantially L-shaped in cross section and having longitudinal recesses, pawls or dogs mounted in the recesses of the slides and engaging the ratchet bars, and means carried by the follower for operating the pawls or dogs. 115
8. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with guides, ratchet bars mounted on the sides of the box at the said guides a follower provided with slides operating in the guides and 120



extending in advance and in rear of the follower, pawls or dogs extending longitudinally of the slides and arranged within the same for securing the follower in its adjustment, and means carried by the follower for operating the

5 pawls or dogs.

9. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with ratchet bars, a follower slidable within the box and having a grip or handle, pawls or dogs pivotally mounted on the follower

10 at opposite sides of the box and engaging the ratchet bars, a transverse bar extending entirely across the box and connecting the pawls or dogs, and an operating device having a shank or portion movably mounted on the grip or handle and connected with the transverse bar.

15 10. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with ratchet bars, a follower slidable on the box and provided with a grip or handle, pawls or dogs pivotally mounted on the follower at opposite sides of the box and engaging the ratchet

20 bars, a transverse bar located beneath the grip or handle and connected to the pawls or dogs, an operating device having a shank or portion piercing the grip or handle of the follower and connected with the transverse bar, and a

spring housed within the grip or handle of the follower and engaging the operating device for holding the pawls or dogs in engagement with the ratchet bars. 25

11. In a device of the class described, the combination of a box provided at opposite sides with guides, ratchet bars mounted on the sides of the box, a follower provided at an intermediate point with a handle or grip and having 30 slides at its ends operating in the guides of the box, pawls or dogs pivoted at an intermediate point to the slides to form inner and outer arms, the inner arms being provided with means for engaging the ratchet bars, a cross bar connecting the outer arms of the pawls or dogs and located 35 beneath the grip or handle, and an operating device mounted on the grip or handle and connected with the cross bar for operating the pawls or dogs.

In testimony, that we claim the foregoing as our own, we have hereto affixed our signature in the presence of two 40 witnesses.

ELMER F. HUTCHINS.  
JACOB J. SALA.

Witnesses:

NICK KLASSEN,  
H. HASLETT.