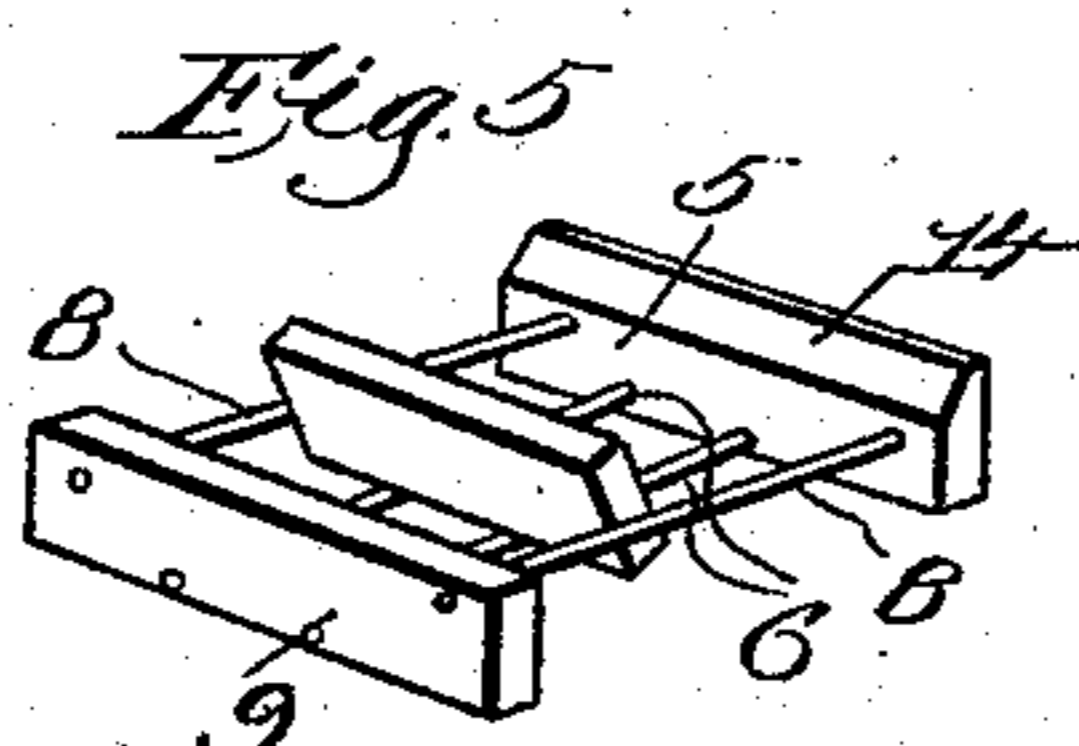
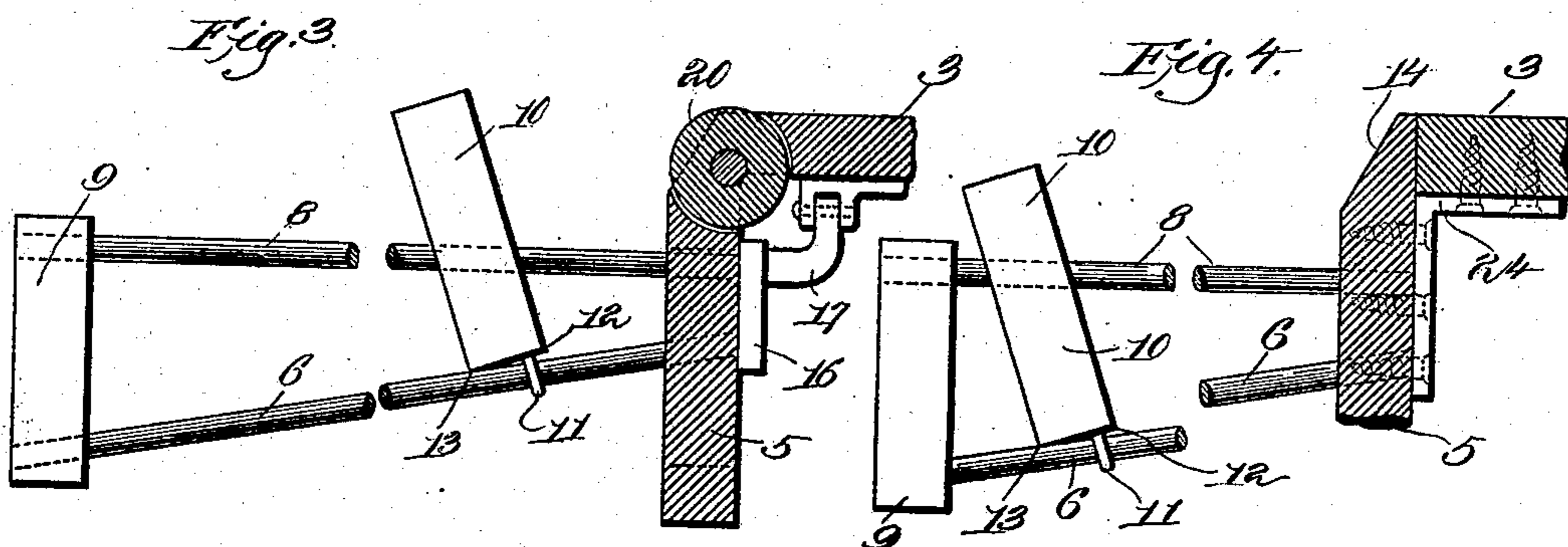
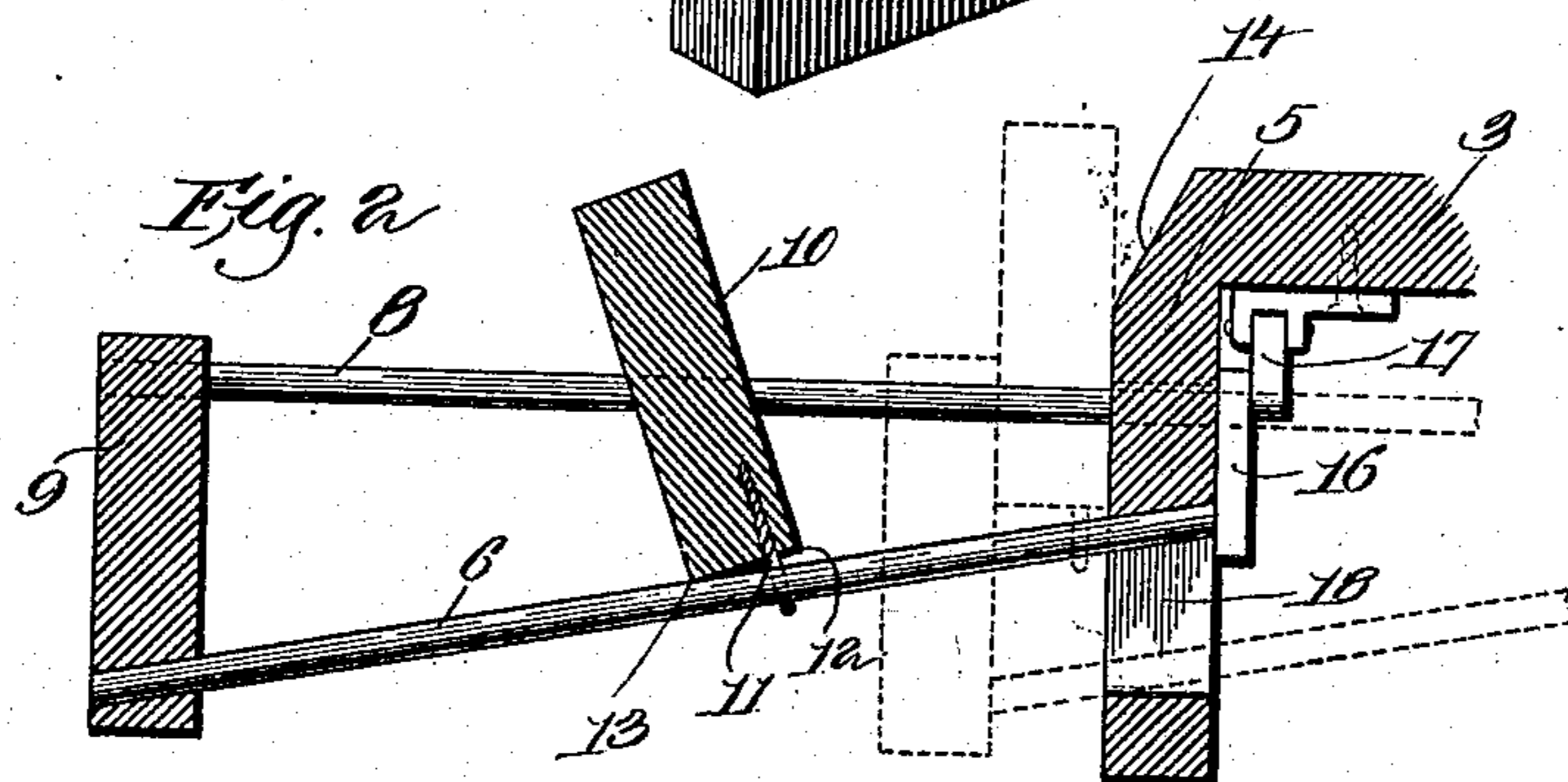
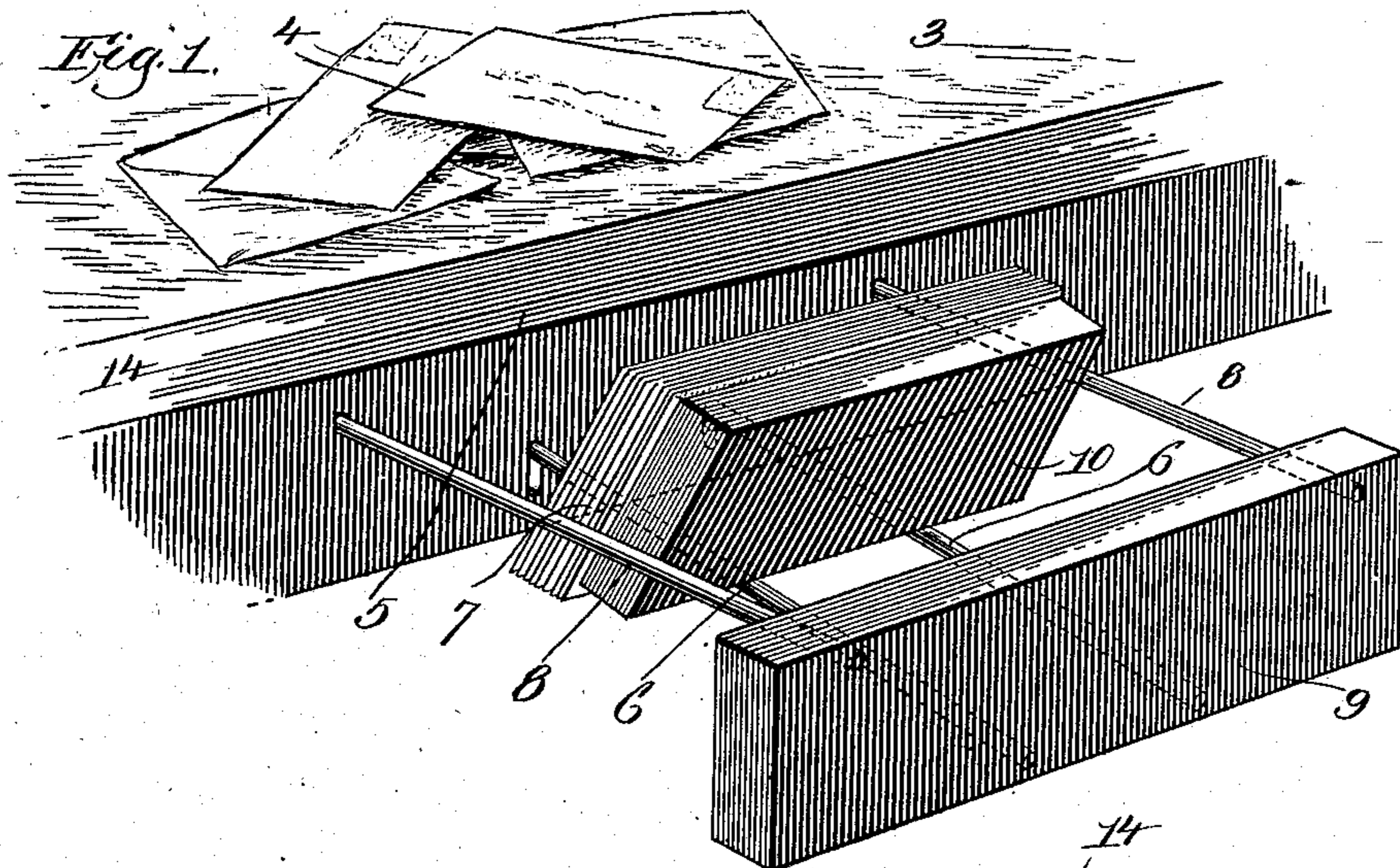


M. S. FIELD.
LETTER FACING TRAY.
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911,711.

Patented Feb. 9, 1909.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MARCELLUS S. FIELD, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

LETTER-FACING TRAY.

No. 911,711.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Feb. 9, 1909.

Application filed October 12, 1903. Serial No. 176,609.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MARCELLUS S. FIELD, a citizen of the United States, residing at Boston, county of Suffolk, and State of Massachusetts, have invented an Improvement in Letter-Facing Trays, of which the following description, in connection with the accompanying drawings, is a specification, like letters on the drawings representing like parts.

This invention relates to a device which I have termed a letter facing tray, and the object of the invention is to provide a novel device which will greatly facilitate the operation of facing mail.

One of the first operations which is performed upon mail matter after it reaches the post-office is generally the cancellation of the stamps thereon, but before this is accomplished either by canceling machines or by hand, it is customary to "face" the mail, that is to arrange the letters and other mail matter with the stamp side all one way. This facing of the mail is now done entirely by hand, the employee using one hand to support the growing stack of faced mail, and the other hand to pick up the individual letters and properly face them by placing them in the stack or pile of faced mail. The use of one hand to support the faced letters on edge leaves the employee only one hand with which to work upon the mass of unfaced matter. It is obvious that if a proper tray or device were devised for the purpose of holding the faced mail, and receiving the mail as it is faced, the employee would have both hands free with which to sort and work upon the unfaced mail, and could face a quantity of mail very much quicker than if he had only one hand with which to pick up the letters and face them. It is also a well known fact among post-office employees that mail can be faced off from the edge of a table very much quicker than on a horizontal surface, because in the former case those unfaced letters which happen to be right side up can merely be slid off from the table and do not have to be picked up and turned over, while where the facing is done on a horizontal surface each individual letter has to be picked up.

It is the object of this invention to provide a suitable device into which the letters can be faced and which will properly hold

the stack of faced letters, thus leaving both hands of the operator free to work upon the unfaced mail.

Another object of the invention is to provide a device of this character which can be attached to the edge of a table so that the letters can be faced off from the edge of the table into the device.

I have shown in the drawings some forms in which my invention may be embodied.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of one form of a device attached to the edge of a table; Fig. 2 is a vertical section through the table and facing tray, shown in Fig. 1; Figs. 3 and 4 are side views of different forms of my invention; and Fig. 5 is a perspective of another modification of the invention.

The device may be made so as to be permanently attached to the table or may be constructed entirely independent from the table, and merely held in place by the operator. In Figs. 1, 2, and 3 I have shown it as permanently secured to the table, so arranged that it can be slid under the table when it is not in use; while Fig. 4 shows it as fixedly secured to the table, and Fig. 5 shows a device which is entirely independent from the table.

In the forms of the invention herein shown the tray comprises a facing block over which the mail is faced, means to sustain the bottom edges of the letters, and an end rest for the end of the stack of faced mail supported in the tray. The rest and the facing block are movable relative to each other, so that they can be separated from each other as the faced mail accumulates in the device.

In Fig. 1, 3 designates a suitable table having a pile 4 of unfaced mail thereon. At the edge of the table is a facing block 5, and projecting from said block are a plurality of rods 6, on which rest the bottom edges of the faced mail 7. Other rods 8 also project from the facing block, said rods being situated slightly above the rods 6, and constituting the sides of the tray between which the letters are received, as best shown in Fig. 1. The outer end of the rods 8 and 6 are secured to a suitable head 9 which serves to hold the rods properly positioned.

10 designates an end rest for the stack of faced mail, the space between the end rest and the facing block constituting that into which the mail is placed as it is faced. The

facing block and the end rest have a relative movement toward and from each other, and in the preferred form of my invention I make the end-rest movable with relation to the facing block. As a simple and effective way of thus movably supporting the end rest I have secured to the lower edge of the same ordinary screw-eyes 11 through which the rods 6 pass. Said eyes are secured to the end-rest near its inner edge 12, and thus raise said edge slightly from the rod 6, the weight of the said end-rest bringing the other edge 13 against said rod, so that the rest normally stands in the inclined position shown.

The facing block 5 has the beveled edge 14 to facilitate the sliding of the mail off from the table into the space between said block and end-rest 10.

In the operation of the device the rest 10 is first moved into close proximity to the facing block, and the operation of facing the mail is begun, the operator having both hands free for picking up the letters and facing them, or sliding them from off the table over the rounded or beveled edge of the facing block into the space between said block and the end-rest 10. As the faced mail accumulates the end-rest slides along the rods 6, the friction between the edge 13 and said rods preventing said rest from moving too rapidly. When the tray is full and the rest 10 has been moved clear out to the head 9, the stack of faced mail can be removed from the tray and canceled either by a cancellation machine or by hand, and upon returning the rest to its initial position the tray is ready for use again.

In the form of the invention shown in Figs. 1 and 2 the facing block 5 is made rigid with the table, and if desired may be made a part of the table. The tray is also constructed to be slid under the table when not in use, and for this purpose the rods 6 and 8 pass loosely through the facing block and are secured at their inner ends to a head or cross-bar 16. The tray is held in its extended position by any suitable means such as a pivoted catch or dog 17. By swinging the catch out of the way of the head 16, the end 9, and the rods 6 and 8 may be slid through the facing block into the dotted line position, see Fig. 2, the facing block being provided with the slots 18 to accommodate the rods 6.

In Fig. 3 the facing block instead of having the beveled or rounded edge 14 is provided with the roll 20, which may be either positively driven or free to move. The object of the roll is to facilitate the movement of the letters off from the table into the tray or receptacle. In other respects the device shown in Fig. 3 is the same as that shown in Figs. 1 and 2.

In Fig. 4 the facing block is shown as

separate from the table but rigidly secured thereto, and the rods 6 and 8 are rigidly secured at one end to the end or head 9 and at the other end rigidly secured to the facing block 5. Said block 5 provided with the beveled edge 14 is rigidly secured to the table 3 in any suitable way as by the angle bracket 24.

In Fig. 5 the device is shown in which the rods 6 and 8 are rigid with the head 9 and facing block 5 respectively, as in Fig. 4, but said block is entirely detached from the table. This device can be either fastened to the table as shown in Fig. 4 or merely held in place between the edge of the table and the body of the employee or operator, by the operator leaning slightly against the head 9.

It has been my aim to provide an efficient device for facing mail which shall be extremely simple and inexpensive to manufacture, and hence I have adopted the form shown. My invention is not limited to this precise form nor to the way in which the rest 10 is mounted, as it is only essential that the device have a facing block of some description, an end rest, and means to support the faced letters between the block and rest, said block and rest having a movement relative to each other.

It will be obvious that many changes may be made in the form and proportion of the various parts without departing from the spirit of the invention expressed in the appended claims.

Having fully described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:—

1. A tray or holder for use in facing mail comprising a facing-block having a beveled edge over which letters can be faced, an end-rest for the stack of faced letters, one of said parts being movable relative to the other, and means to support the stack of faced letters between said parts.

2. A tray or holder for use in facing letters comprising a bottom to support the bottom edge of the faced letters, a facing block rigid with the bottom at one end thereof, and an end-rest movable toward and from the facing block.

3. A tray for facing letters having a bottom to sustain the letters on edge, guides between which the stack of faced letters is received, a facing block at one end of said tray, and an end rest for the stack, said rest having a frictional sliding engagement with the bottom.

4. In a device for facing mail, a facing block means to hold said block against the edge of a table, means to support the mail being faced, and a sliding end-rest for the stack of faced letters, movable toward and from the facing block.

5. In a tray for facing mail, a facing block adapted to be supported at the edge of

a table, rods projecting from said block and forming the bottom and side of the tray, and an end-rest slidably mounted on certain of said rods.

- 5 6. In a tray for facing mail, a facing block adapted to be supported at the edge of a table, rods projecting from said block and forming the bottom and side of the tray, and an end-rest slidably mounted on the rods

forming the bottom of the tray and having 10 frictional engagement therewith.

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

MARCELLUS S. FIELD.

Witnesses:

LOUIS C. SMITH,
GEO. W. GREGORY.