

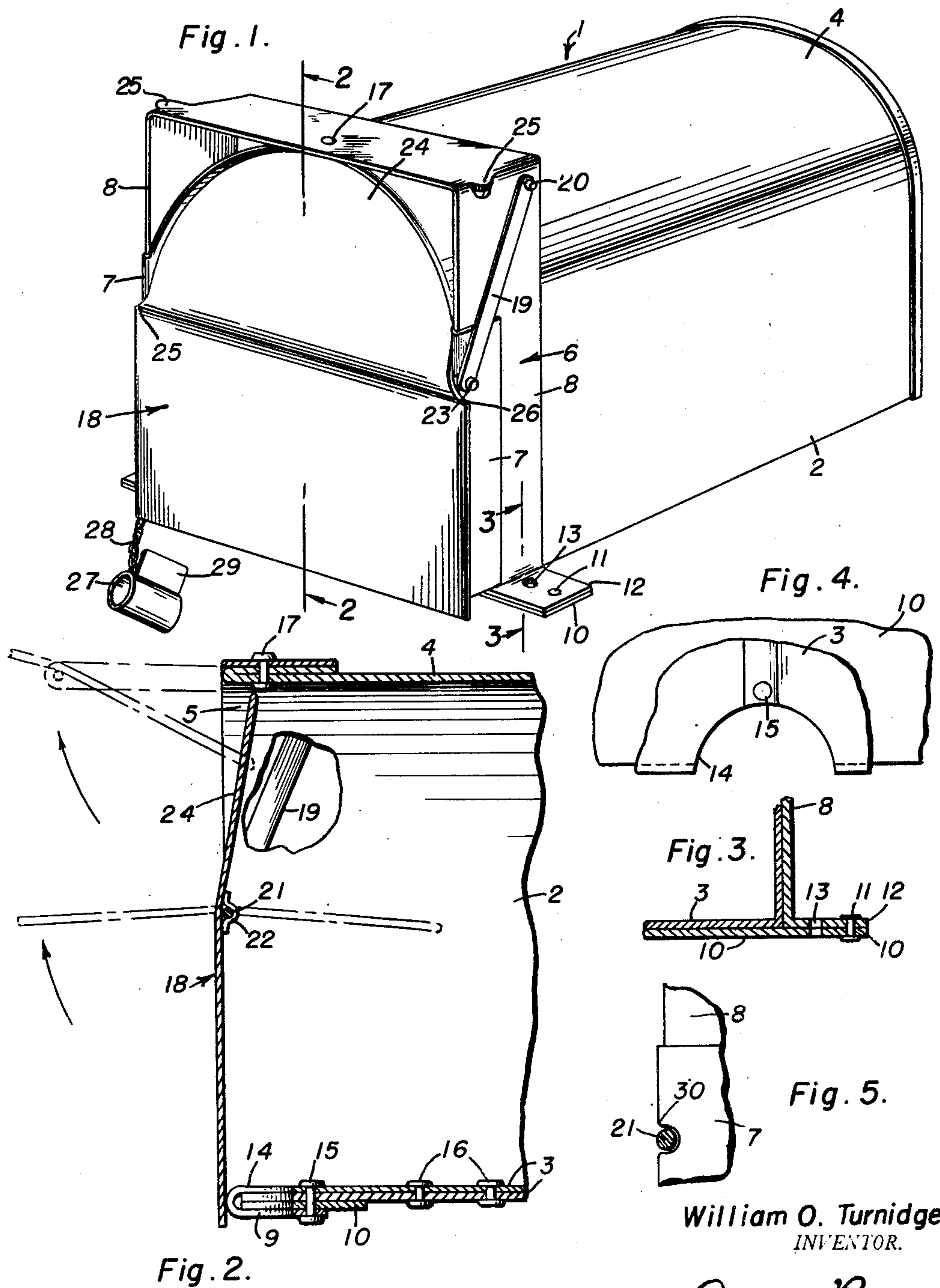
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SUSPENDED CLOSURE FOR MAILBOXES

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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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## SUSPENDED CLOSURE FOR MAILBOXES

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2 Claims. (Cl. 232—17)

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My invention relates to improvements in suspended closures for mailboxes of the type commonly used in rural mail delivery for receiving mail and deposit of mail therein for collection.

The primary object of my invention is to provide a self-closing closure for such boxes especially designed to render the box storm proof and proof against being blown open and which is of simple, practical construction and not liable to get out of order from prolonged use.

Other and subordinate objects, within the purview of my invention, together with the precise nature of my improvements will be readily understood when the succeeding description and claims are read with reference to the drawing accompanying and forming part of this specification.

In said drawing:

Figure 1 is a view in perspective of a mailbox equipped with my improved self-closing closure in a preferred embodiment thereof;

Figure 2 is a fragmentary view in vertical longitudinal section taken on the line 2—2 of Figure 1 and drawn to a larger scale;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary view in section taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 1 and drawn to a larger scale;

Figure 4 is a fragmentary view in plan of the bottom of the box and frame illustrating the notch therein; and

Figure 5 is a fragmentary view in side elevation, partly in transverse section, illustrating one of the side notches in the box for seating the mounting rod of the closure flap.

Referring to the drawing by numerals, 1 designates one conventional type of mailbox to which my invention is shown applied, for illustration purposes, the box being formed with straight sides 2, a flat bottom 3, a transversely rounded top 4, and an open front end 5.

According to my invention, the box 1 has its front end 5 fitted in a rectangular, flat metal, closure carrying frame 6 adapted to be attached in upright position to a suitable support, not shown, so as to hold the box 1 by said end in horizontal position on the support. The front end 5 of the box 1 is suitably provided with side edge flaps, as at 7, bent around and over the front edges of the sides 8 of said frame 6 and flattened against said sides, said flaps being coextensive with the flat sides 2 of said box. A front edge flap 9 on the bottom 3 of the box 1 is similarly bent over and around the bottom 10 of the frame 6 which is separate from the rest of the frame for assembly purposes and has its end

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riveted, as at 11, to bottom, lateral ears 12 on the sides 8 of the frame 6. The bottom 10 of the frame 6, and the ears 12 are apertured, as at 13, for securing, by bolts, not shown, to the before-mentioned support. A central, front edge notch 14 is provided in the bottom 3 of the box 1 and in the bottom 10 of said frame 6 for a purpose presently clear. Rivets, as at 15, extend through the bottom 3 of the box 1 and through the bottom end of the frame 6. The rivets shown in Figures 2 and 4 and designated 16 are for securing a seam in the bottom 3 of the box 1 together and which forms no part of my invention. A rivet 17 extends through the top 4 of the box 1 and the top of the frame 6.

A closure flap 18 of the same shape as the cross sectional shape of the box 1 is provided for the front end 5 of the box 1. The closure flap 18 is pivotally mounted at opposite sides thereof, slightly above its horizontal center, in free ends of a pair of suspension links 19 disposed at the sides 8 of the frame 6 and having the other ends thereof pivoted, as at 20, to said sides 8 adjacent the top of the frame 6 so that said links 19 are swingable forwardly and upwardly of said box, or downwardly and rearwardly to swing the closure flap 18 upwardly and downwardly therewith away from and toward said end 5 of the box 1, respectively.

The pivotal mounting for the closure flap 18, on the links 19, comprises a horizontal rod 21 in the rear of said flap 18 extending through keepers 22 on said flap and having ends suitably journaled in said links 19 and upset, as at 23, to prevent endwise play of the rod in said links. Side notches, as at 30, in the front end 5 of the box 1 and said sides 8 seat the ends of the rod 21 to limit downward swinging of the links 19 and the closure flap 18 therewith. The pivotal mounting of the closure flap 18 on the links 19 being above the horizontal center of said flap, provides for that portion of said flap below said pivotal mounting overbalancing said flap 18 to close into vertical position when the rod 21 is seated at its ends in the notches 30, said flap swinging about a horizontal axis to seat the portion thereof below that axis against the front end 5 of the box 1, as shown, for instance, in Figure 2.

The closure flap 18 is provided with an upper rounded portion 24 fitting in the end 5 of the box 1 whereby said flap may be grasped at its lower edge by the hand and swung about said horizontal axis into substantially horizontal position, as shown in broken lines in Figure 2, with the curved



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portion 24 extended into the box 1. The described notch 14 facilitates insertion of a finger of the hand upwardly behind the closure flap 18 for so swinging said flap.

Below its horizontal axis of swinging movement on the links 19, the closure flap 18 overlaps the front end 5 of the box 1 and fits against the same to seal said end. The portion 24 of the closure flap 18 slants inwardly, in the vertical closing position of the closure flap 18, and projects into the end 5 of the box 1 so that said end sheds rain and the like outwardly of said portion 24 above the horizontal axis of swinging movement of said closure flap on the links 19. A pair of lateral stop lugs 25, on the sides 8 of the frame 6, limit upward swinging of the links 19 into outstanding, substantially horizontal position, as shown by broken lines in Figure 2.

As will now be seen, the closure flap 18 is swingable on the down-swung links 19 into substantially horizontal position about a horizontal axis to open the end 5 of the box 1 above and below substantially the horizontal center of the box. When so opened, mail may be removed from the box 1 from above or below the open closure flap 18 and similarly deposited in said box 1. Such swinging of the closure flap 18 may be accomplished either by pushing against the portion 24 above the horizontal axis of swinging movement of said closure flap on the links 19, or, by pulling outwardly on the lower edge of said flap. Obviously, as soon as the closure flap is released in this open position, it will swing into vertical closing position and remain so closed. To remove or deposit large-size mail, the closure flap 18 may be pulled outwardly by its bottom edge to pivot on the links 19 and swing said links upwardly into the described limit of movement thereof, thereby causing said flap to be swung bodily forwardly and upwardly, as shown in broken lines in Figure 2, into a position at the top of the front end 5 of the box 1 in which the front end 5 of the box 1 is completely open for depositing large-size mail therein or withdrawing such mail therefrom. Obviously, when the closure flap 18 is released in this position, said links 19 and said flap will drop under the influence of gravity and the closure flap will swing on the links 19 into vertical closing position and against the front end 5 of said box, in the manner previously described. If desired, shoulders 26 may be provided on the closure flap 18 at opposite sides thereof for engaging the front end 5 of the box 1 to limit swinging of the closure flap into horizontal opening position, as shown in Figure 2 in broken lines.

A receptacle 27 for postage is attached by a

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chain 28, in any suitable manner, in the box 1 to be hung by said chain outside said box for the deposit of postage therein for collection. A flag or signal panel 29 on the receptacle 27 signals that mail has been deposited in the box 1 for collection and/or that postage has been deposited in the receptacle 27.

The foregoing will, it is believed, suffice to impart a clear understanding of my invention, without further explanation.

Manifestly, the invention, as described, is susceptible of modification, without departing from the inventive concept, and right is herein reserved to such modifications as fall within the scope of the appended claims.

Having described the invention, what is claimed as new is:

1. A closure structure for a mailbox having a completely open front end comprising a frame straddling and fixed to said front end, a pair of links having corresponding ends pivoted to opposite sides of said frame for swinging of the other ends of the links upwardly and forwardly of said front end and downwardly toward the same, a rod connecting said other ends of said links for swinging in unison and engaging said frame to limit downward swinging of said other ends of the said links, said rod having its ends journaled in said links, and a manipulative closure flap fast on said rod between said links for upward swinging with said other ends of said links to completely open said front end, said flap in the limit of downward swinging movement of said other ends of the links pivoting on said links under the influence of gravity into closing position and being manually swingable in said limit of downward movement of said other ends of the links into substantially horizontal position to open said front end above and below the flap.

2. The combination of claim 1 with stops on said sides of the said frame for limiting upward swinging of said other ends of the links.

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