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ROAD GUARD

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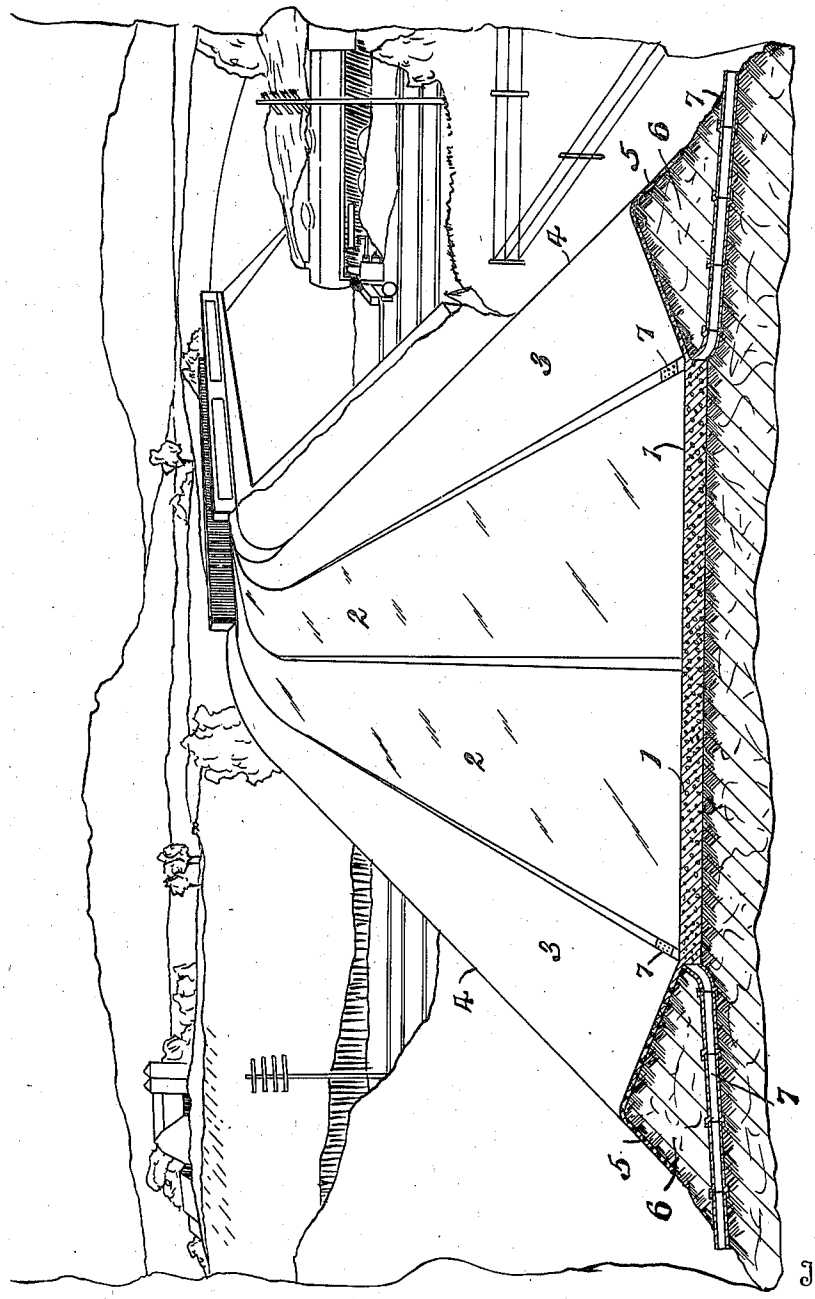

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ROAD GUARD

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5 Claims. (Cl. 94—31)

This invention is directed to an improvement in road guards designed particularly to minimize the liability of automobile accidents when traveling on the road by creating in the mind of the driver operating near the shoulder of the road a feeling of safety; by automatically guiding or assist in guiding the vehicle passing beyond the edges of the road back to the roadbed; and by actually arresting the vehicle passing over the guard by failure to follow the roadbed and guard for any reason.

The usually perfect road surface of the present day tends to high speed, and as the usual roadbed has abrupt shoulders leading to comparatively soft surfaces on and beyond such shoulders, the average driver avoids the extreme side of the road, being well aware of the loss of control and almost certain accident when riding over the shoulders or onto its soft surface. Thus when compelled to approach the extreme side of the road the usual driver is under the mental hazard incident to the usual conditions, and is thus more liable to an accident. In many places abrupt upstanding guards have been placed beyond the road shoulders to stop an automobile leaving the road, but these are generally the direct cause of more serious results rather than of protective influence. So far as is known no real attempt has been made to safeguard the present road side construction against the continually recurring, casual and oftimes serious accident.

The road guard of the present invention is of one piece with the roadbed proper, or may be separated by suitable joints, presents not the slightest obstruction between the roadbed and guard; provides in the guard a smooth and firm surface rising at an appropriate inclination and for an appropriate width to a crest materially above the plane of the roadbed proper; and finally provides an area descending from the crest, preferably of less width than the rising side and at a somewhat steeper angle.

The invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawing, presenting generally a perspective view of a roadbed provided with the improved guard, the figure also showing at one end a transverse section of the roadbed and guard.

The roadbed 1 is of any usual or preferred construction having the conventional types of surface 2. The improved guard includes a rising area 3, leading directly from the plane of the roadbed 1, and inclining upwardly to a crest 4. The crest, which is of course relatively narrow and rounded, is materially above the plane of the roadbed 1, and while the inclination of the rising area is not great, it is intended to be sufficient to discourage its general use as a roadbed.

From the crest 4, the guard inclines downwardly in a so-called descending section 5, the width of which is less than that of the rising area, with, however, a somewhat greater inclination than the rising area. The guard thus presents an inverted V-construction, arranged immediately at the side of the roadbed proper, merging into the roadbed proper without surface obstruction.

The surface of the guard is constructed of the surface of the roadbed, that is of the same material, preferably, however of less thickness. Or, it may be of any suitable surface. The foundation material 6 of the guard, may be the same as the foundation material of the roadbed, though as the guard is not subjected to the continual wear and tear of the roadbed, the foundation material 6 may be appropriately sufficient for the purpose and need not necessarily be the expensive roadbed foundation construction.

The guard may be simply and inexpensively constructed during the building of the roadbed, or may be installed at any time after completion of the roadbed. The guards may be provided at any road locations in appropriate lengths to protect a particular road section or sections, or may be installed as continuous factors in important and much traveled highways. The cost of installation is obviously inexpensive, and the installation readily lends itself to any suitable drainage provisions at the extremes of the roadbed, as indicated at 7.

When driving close to the extreme edge of the roadbed, the driver sees the gradually rising slope of the guard as a continuation of the road bed, and thus the fear of leaving the roadbed onto a rough or soft surface is not present and a mental hazard of present road driving is removed. If the front wheels of the vehicle ride at an angle less than 90 degrees from point of tangency onto the rising area of the guard accidentally or otherwise, the tendency of the inclination is to change the center of gravity of the vehicle and thus to turn such wheels toward the road bed, and if the angle of approach of the vehicle is too great for this automatic control, the front wheels ride over the crest and onto the descending section causing the under portions of the chassis to contact and bear on the crest and thus so materially decrease vehicle speed as to minimize danger of injury to the occupants of the vehicle.

The guard is in no sense an abrupt obstruction and thus is not liable to damage in use.

It presents in fact a direct continuation of the roadbed proper, which may be used as such in an emergency for direct vehicle travel for a short distance, without danger to the vehicle or damage to the guard. When approached at an extreme angle, the guard presents merely a sharply-inclined rise over which the front wheels travel and on the crest of which the vehicle is more or less suspended, with the result of raising the traction wheels above ground contact, to prevent further driving action.

As an installation during road building the guard may be easily and simply constructed of the same or other suitable road material, and where made a separate installation, any appropriate cement or like material may be employed. The inclinations of the rising area and descending sections may be of varying degree in accordance with the particular requirements, except that the inclination of the descending section should be greater than that of the rising area, and the widths of the inclined portions of the guard may also vary as desired.

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

1. A guard for road beds comprising an inverted V-form section rising from the level and at the side of the road bed, one leg merging into the road bed surface, and the legs meeting at a comparatively sharp crest, both legs being inclined to the road bed.

2. A guard for road beds comprising an inverted V-form section rising above and at one side of the road bed, the legs meeting above the road bed in a sharp crest, with the inclination of one leg varying from that of the other.

3. A guard for road beds comprising an inverted V-form section rising above the level and at one side of the road bed, one of the legs of the section merging into the surface of the road bed, the legs being at relatively different inclinations to the road bed and meeting at a crest defining a relatively sharp upper limit for the guard.

4. A guard for road beds including an inverted V-form section, the legs of which are of different inclinations, one of the legs rising from substantial coincidence with the road bed, the legs meeting above the road bed in a sharp crest the surface of which merges into the surfaces of the legs.

5. A guard for road beds including an inverted V-form section, the legs of said section being of different widths transversely of the guard and of relatively different inclinations, the leg of greatest width being of least inclination, the legs meeting above the road bed in a sharply-defined merging crest affording no traction support for the wheels of a vehicle.

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