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J. M. REED

2,179,199

ELECTRICAL SWITCH PLATE

Filed May 10, 1937

Fig. 1.

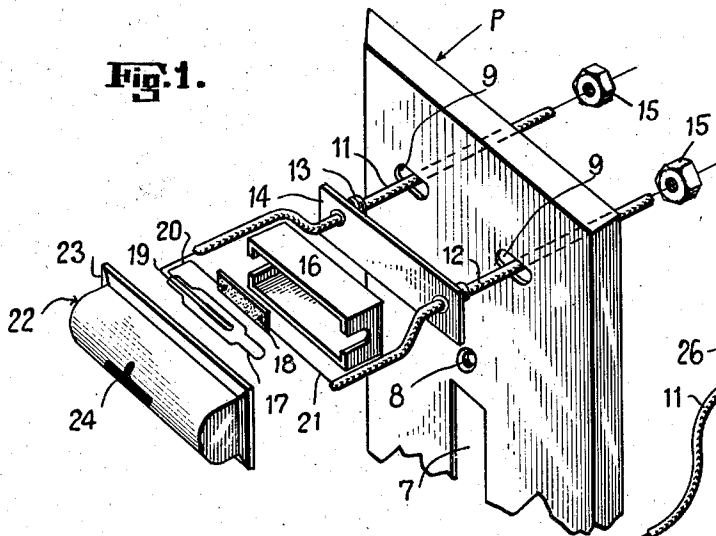


Fig. 2.

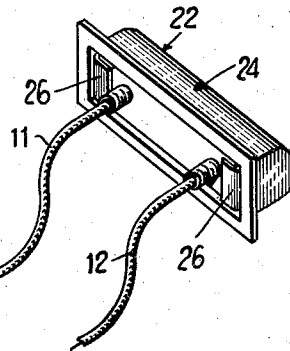


Fig. 3.

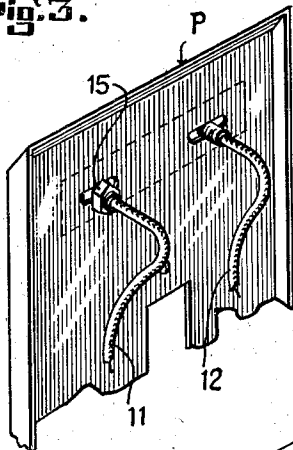


Fig. 4.

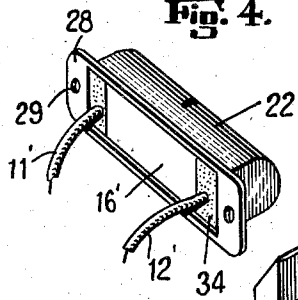


Fig. 5.

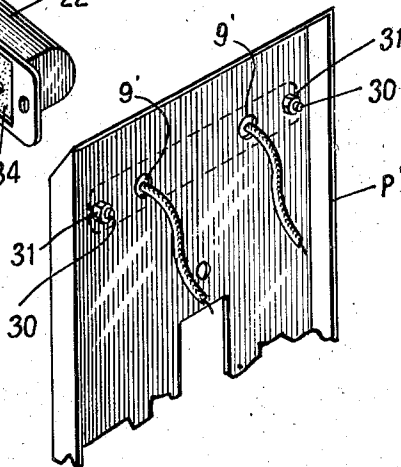
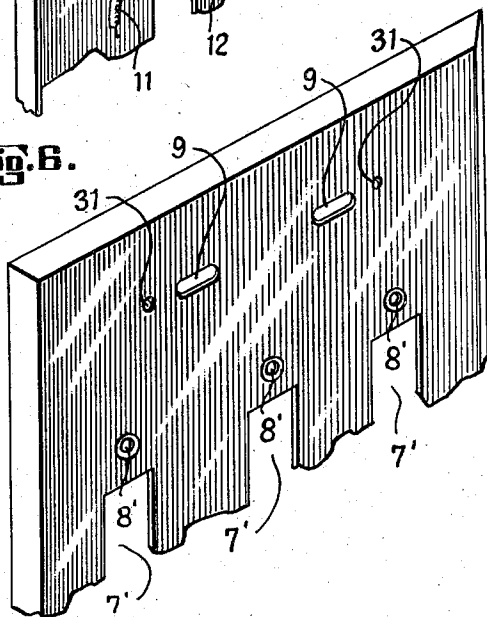


Fig. 6.



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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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## ELECTRICAL SWITCH PLATE

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Application May 10, 1937, Serial No. 141,728

1 Claim. (Cl. 200—167)

My present invention relates to switch plates, particularly to switch plates used in connection with electric light apparatus.

The principal general object of my present invention is to provide an attachment readily adaptable and connectible to switch plates of the wall type to indicate the location of the switch, especially when the room in which the switch is located is not illuminated.

The invention is generally similar in purpose to my copending application, in which the illuminating or indicating element is incorporated in a part of the structure of the plate itself.

The principal general object of the present invention is to provide an attachment which contains the indicating element, and which attachment may be applied as a unit to switch plates of standard and known construction, for the purpose above mentioned.

In the accompanying drawing:

Fig. 1 is a perspective exploded view showing a fragment of the usual switch plate and attachment with all parts in perspective;

Fig. 2 is a rear perspective view of one form of attachment embodying the present invention;

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary perspective view of a switch plate showing from the rear the attachment applied thereto;

Fig. 4 is a view similar to Fig. 2 showing a modification of the invention;

Fig. 5 is a rear perspective view showing the embodiment of Fig. 4 applied to a switch plate; and

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of a fragment of a gang switch plate to which the embodiments of the invention shown in Figs. 2 and 4 may be applied to indicate the location of the plate.

Referring to the drawing, the numeral P designates generally a switch plate such as usually attached to a wall of a room to accommodate a switch which may be operated either by a toggle or by pushbuttons. Such switch plates are usually attached or secured to the wall by conventional means, and, of course, the switch boxes with the connections to the terminals of the power line are located within the wall behind the switch plates. The plates may be made of any known or suitable material, and the usual construction is such as to provide for fastening elements or means to secure the plate in proper position on the wall over the boxes.

The usual type of switch plate, as generally described above, provides no means or element to indicate the location of the switch or switch plate in a dark room. This has been explained in

my said prior application, but the present invention provides a visible indicating element attachable to switch plates of existing types and structure, and providing the appearance of a unitary structure.

A special feature of the present invention resides in the applicability of the visible indicating element to switch plates of known construction by various means of attachment as presently pointed out, whereby the attachment may be made to afford the foregoing advantages to existing types of switch plates.

Referring to Fig. 1, the plate P which may be of any known or usual construction, is shown as provided with a slot 7 to accommodate the usual toggle switch, although the invention may be applied to plates regardless of the switch operating means. Practically all switch plates have openings 8 to receive screws to secure the plate in position when the screws engage in the box, not shown.

The plate P is shown provided adjacent its top, and above the slot 7, with two elongated transverse openings 9. I wish it to be understood that the openings 9 may be made in existing switch plates regardless of the material from which they are made, to permit application of the indicating attachments about to be described, and that switch plates may be especially made to receive attachments embodying the invention.

The openings 9 are adapted to receive lead wires 11 and 12 which extend through screw threaded bosses 13 carried by plate 14. The screw threaded bosses 13, when the parts are assembled, as shown in Fig. 3, extend through the openings 9 to receive nuts 15 to hold the parts in assembled relation.

As in my said copending application, a housing 16 of insulating material receive the indicating bulb 17 and resistance unit 18. The lead wire 11 is connected to one terminal of bulb 17 by wire 19. Another wire 20 is connected to the other terminal of the bulb 17 and to one end of the resistance unit 18. Wire 21 connects the other end of the resistance unit 18 to the lead 12. The function and operation is the same as explained in the said copending application, it being understood that the wires 11 and 12 are connected to the terminals in the switch box, not shown in the present application, to complete a circuit through the bulb 17 and illuminate the same when the main switch is off.

A housing or shell, which may be of any desired shape and dimension suitable for application to the face of the plate P, is adapted to re-

ceive the bulb 17, resistance unit 18, shell 16, and to be closed at its rear by the plate 14, which fits within the open end of the housing.

In the present embodiment of the invention the housing is designated generally by the numeral 22, and has lateral flanges 23 adapted to fit flushly against the front of the plate P beyond the openings 9. The rounded face of the housing 22 is provided with a sight opening 24 of any desired shape and extent, and through which the light emitted by the bulb 17 is clearly visible. If desired, transparent or translucent materials of any desired color, may be applied over or under the opening 24.

The interior of the housing or shell 22 has secured thereto by any suitable means or formed as a part thereof clips 26, which, as shown in Fig. 2, may be bent over the ends of the plate 14 after the elements 16, 18, and 17 have been assembled within the shell or housing 22 to form a substantially unitary structure or unit. This unit constitutes the attachment which may be readily applied to any switch plate having openings 9 to receive the threaded bosses 13.

In Fig. 3 I have shown one of the nuts 15 threaded on one of the bosses 13 and bearing against the inner face of the plate P to clamp and firmly hold the indicating attachment in proper position. The openings 9 are preferably elongated to permit adjustment of the indicating element relative to the plate and transversely thereof. It will be understood that the indicating element may be made and furnished as a unit as shown in Fig. 2 with the lead wires 11 and 12 for connection with the terminals of the switch box.

In Figs. 4 and 5 I have illustrated a modification of the invention especially in respect to the means for attaching the indicating element and its housing to the switch plate. In said figures the shell or housing 22', which corresponds to the housing or shell 22 of Fig. 1, has relatively wide end flanges 28 each provided with an opening 29 to receive screws 30 which extend also through openings 31 in the plate to receive screws 30 to firmly clamp the attachment or housing 22' and the parts contained therein to the switch plate. Lead wires 11' and 12', corresponding to lead wires 11 and 12 of Fig. 1, are connected to the bulb as described in connection with Fig. 1. Insulating shell 16', corresponding to the shell 16 of Fig. 1, substantially closes the rear of housing 22'.

Obviously, in the construction of Figs. 4 and 5, the housing 22' may be removed from the switch plate upon removal of the screws 30, and a new indicating bulb may be inserted in the shell 16', and then the parts may readily be reassembled. However, if desired, a filling composition of any suitable character may be inserted between the ends of the shell 16' and the ends of the housing 22' as indicated by the numeral 34 in Fig. 4.

Inasmuch as the connection between the housing 22' and plate P' in Fig. 5 is made by direct connection between the flanges of the housing and aligned openings therein and in the plate, it is not necessary to have the openings 9', through which the lead wires extend, elongated.

As previously mentioned Fig. 6 illustrates a gang switch plate having a plurality of toggle switch openings 7' and screw openings 8' corresponding to the openings 7 and 8 of Fig. 1, with provision of elongated openings 9 to receive the lead wires and threaded bosses as in the construction of Fig. 1. It also illustrates the use of openings 31 to accommodate the embodiment of the invention shown in Fig. 4. In other words the invention may be applied to any type of switch plate regardless of the number of switch boxes which the switches control.

#### I claim:

An indicating attachment for electrical switch plates comprising a housing open at its rear, the front of said housing being provided with a sight opening, lateral flanges bordering said open rear face and adapted to flushly engage against the front face of a switch plate, means accessible from the open rear face of the housing for detachably holding an illuminating bulb or element within said housing in substantial alignment with said sight opening in the front of the housing, said means comprising an insulating shell to hold said bulb or element and to cover the opening in said rear of the housing, said shell having its front face apertures in alignment with said side opening, and means to hold said shell in fixed position enclosing said bulb within the housing, said last means including means provided with elements adapted to secure said attachment as a unit to said switch plate, said securing elements extending from within the housing to the exterior thereof and being tubular in form whereby to provide means for leading electrical conductors into the housing for attachment to said bulb.

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