B. B. BUCK.

AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC SIGNAL.

APPLICATION FILED APR. 13, 1916.

1,238,387. Patented Aug. 28, 1917.

Fig. 1.

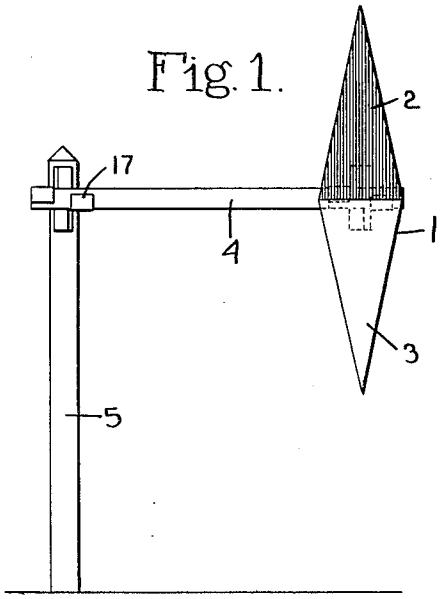


Fig. 2.

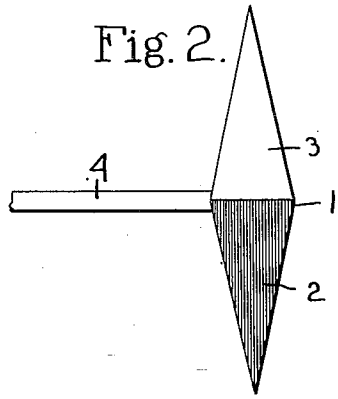


Fig. 3.

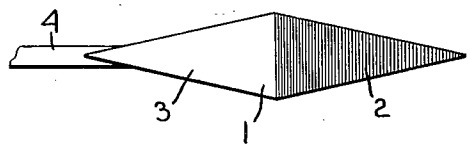


Fig. 4.

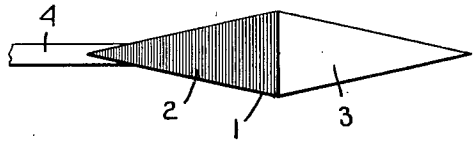


Fig. 7.

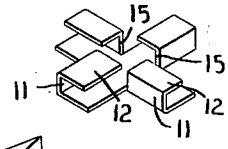


Fig. 5.

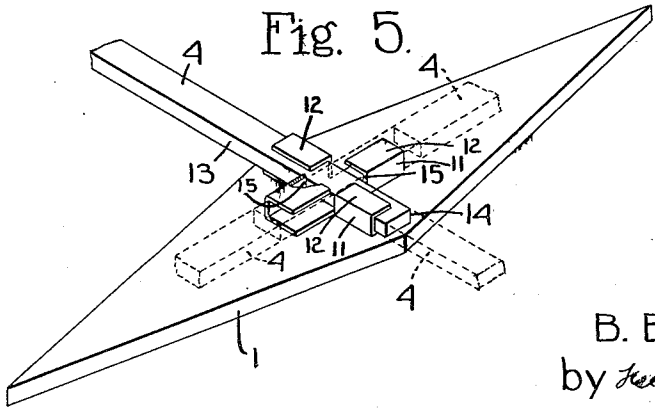
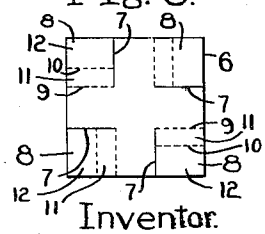


Fig. 6.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC-SIGNAL.

1,238,387. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Aug. 28, 1917.

Application filed April 13, 1916. Serial No. 90,828.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, BENONI B. BUCK, a citizen of the United States, residing at Newton, county of Middlesex, State of Massachusetts, have invented an Improvement in Automobile Traffic-Signals, of which the following description, in connection with the accompanying drawing, is a specification, like characters on the drawing representing like parts.

This invention relates to traffic signals for giving directions to automobilists and others traveling on highways. It is now the more or less common practice to place signs at various points along the principal automobile roads to indicate to the traveler that he is approaching a hazard so that he may be on his guard. These signs are usually printed signs situated at the side of the highway, the signs bearing such legends as "Dangerous curve ahead"; "Schoolhouse ahead"; "Cross street ahead"; "Railroad tracks ahead," etc. In order that the automobilist may obtain the information which these signs are intended to give it is necessary for him to read the legend thereon, and this is often a difficult thing to do from a swiftly-moving automobile, and especially where the lettering on the sign is small or the sign is weather-worn, or the legend is somewhat illegible from other causes. Moreover, where a printed sign gives indication that there is a dangerous curve ahead, there is no intimation as to whether the curve is on the right or on the left, and, therefore, the automobile driver is not as well prepared to meet any emergency which may be encountered on the curve as if he knew exactly whether the curve was toward the right or toward the left.

My present invention has for its object to provide a novel signal or sign, especially adapted for use along highways frequented by automobilists and by which a variety of hazards may be indicated by the different positions in which the sign or signal is placed. A signal or sign device embodying my invention comprises a sign member of some distinctive shape or contour, a supporting member, and means whereby the sign member may be detachably secured to the supporting member in any one of a plurality of different positions. The sign member is intended to indicate a particular hazard for each of its particular positions. In the illustrated embodiment of the invention the sign member is constructed to be placed in any one of four different positions. In one of these positions, it indicates a dangerous curve ahead on the right, in another position it indicates a dangerous curve ahead on the left; in another position it may indicate a schoolhouse ahead, and in the fourth position it may indicate railroad tracks or cross street ahead. With my improved sign, therefore, the automobilist merely has to notice the position in which the sign is placed, and from this he understands the nature of the approaching hazard. It is, therefore, not necessary for the automobilist to read any lettering or legend on the sign to gain the desired information therefrom.

In order to give an understanding of my invention, I have illustrated in the drawings a selected embodiment which will now be described, after which the novel features will be pointed out in the appended claims.

Figure 1 is a view of a sign embodying my invention;

Figs. 2, 3 and 4 are different views showing the sign member supported in different positions to indicate hazards of different characters;

Fig. 5 is a rear perspective view showing the manner in which the sign member is detachably secured to the supporting member;

Fig. 6 is a view of the blank from which the retaining member is formed;

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of the retaining member before it is applied to the sign member.

The sign member may have any suitable shape or configuration suitable for the purpose for which it is used. I have herein illustrated a sign member having a rhomb shape, as I believe that this particular shape will be most satisfactory. The sign member is shown at 1 and may be made of wood or metal or any suitable material. The acute-angled ends of the sign member are differently colored and in the preferred embodiment of my invention, I propose to make the sign with one end 2 thereof of a red color and the other end 3 of a white color or some other contrasting color. The two colors may conveniently be secured by merely painting the ends of the sign member. This sign member is designed to be detachably secured to a supporting member herein shown as a supporting arm 4. This sup-

porting arm may be secured to a post 5 or to a tree, or to any suitable object along the roadway, but preferably it will be secured to the post, tree or other object in a horizontal position shown in Fig. 1. Suitable means are employed for securing the sign member 1 to the supporting arm 4 in any one of four different positions indicated in the drawings. When the sign member 1 is secured to the supporting arm 4 in the position shown in Fig. 3 with the red end 2 directed toward the right, this will indicate a dangerous curve ahead on the right. If the position of the sign member is reversed so that it stands horizontally with the red end toward the left, then this will indicate the dangerous curve ahead on the left. If the sign is placed vertically, as shown in Fig. 1, with the red end pointing upwardly, this may indicate some hazard ahead, as, for instance, a schoolhouse, while if the sign member is placed vertically but in a reverse position with the red end pointing downwardly, this may indicate some other hazard straight ahead, as, for instance, railroad tracks or a cross street. I propose to make the sign of sufficient dimensions and proportions to be easily seen by persons in a swiftly-moving automobile. A mere glance at the sign is sufficient to indicate the position thereof, and from this the driver of the automobile knows instantly the character of the hazard which he is approaching.

In order to make my sign practical, it is desirable that some means be provided by which it can be readily secured to the supporting arm 4 in any one of the four positions illustrated. I have provided herein for this purpose a holder or retaining member which is firmly secured to the back side of the sign and which is adapted to be slipped onto the end of the supporting arm in any one of four different positions. The retaining member illustrated is made of sheet metal and cut from a blank 6, such as shown in Fig. 6. In making the retaining member from the blank, I first provide the latter with a slit 7 extending inwardly at right angles from each edge thereof, and then I bend each of the portions 8 formed by the slits 7 first on the dotted line 9 to bring the portion 11 between the dotted lines 9 and 10 at right angles to the main portion of the blank, and then bend the said portion 8 on the dotted line 10 so that the part 12 thereof between said line 10 and the edge stands at right angles to the part 11 and parallel to the body of the retaining member. In this way, a cruciate symmetrical retaining member is formed having the construction shown in Fig. 7. Each arm of the retaining member has a U-shape in cross-section, and the opposite arms are oppositely disposed. The supporting member 4 is of such cross-sectional shape that it will fit slidingly into the U-shaped arms of the retaining member, as shown in Fig. 4. Since the retaining member is symmetrical it may be slipped onto the end of the supporting arm 4 in any one of the four positions shown in full and dotted lines Fig. 5, thus giving the four different positions to the sign. When the retaining member has been slipped onto the end of the supporting arm, as shown in full lines Fig. 5, the two opposite U-shaped arms of the retaining member embrace the supporting arm and the opposite edges 13 and 14 of the supporting arm engage with the inner edges 15 of the other two U-shaped arms. The retaining member is thus firmly held on the supporting arm 4 and can only be removed by slipping it off from the end of the arm. Since all of the arms of the cruciate retaining member are similar, said retaining member can be slipped onto the end of the supporting arm in any one of the four positions illustrated. The retaining member will preferably be permanently secured to the back side of the sign member 1 centrally thereof, and this may be done by either nailing or screwing said retaining member in place. A sign made in this way is adapted to be used to indicate any one of four different hazards merely by the position in which it is supported. The operation of placing the signs along the highway is greatly simplified because it involves simply the securing of the supporting arm 4 in a horizontal position onto some suitable support at the location where the sign is to be placed and then slipping the sign onto the end of the supporting member in any one of the four positions, depending on the character of the hazard to be indicated. It is not necessary, therefore, that the signs for the different hazards should be especially made because the sign member is the same for all hazards and with the construction shown, it can be readily placed in any one of the four desired positions.

I have herein illustrated the supporting arm 4 as secured to the post 5 by means of a retaining member 17 similar to that used for securing the sign to the supporting arm, but the supporting arm 4 might be secured to the post in any suitable way without departing from the invention.

I claim:

1. In an automobile traffic signal, the combination with a supporting member, of a rhomb-shaped sign member having the two acute-angled ends thereof differently colored, and means rigid with the sign member by which the latter may be detachably secured to and retained firmly on the supporting member in any one of four different positions.

2. In a signal device, the combination with a horizontally-extending supporting arm, of a rhomb-shaped sign member having the two acute-angled ends thereof differently colored, and a retaining member rigid with the sign member and constructed to be detachably secured to and retained firmly on the supporting arm in any one of four different positions.

3. In a signal device, the combination with a horizontal supporting arm, of a rhomb-shaped sign member having the two acute-angled ends thereof differently colored, a cruciate retaining member permanently secured to the back side of the sign member and adapted to be applied to the supporting arm in any one of four different positions.

In testimony whereof, I have signed my name to this specification.

B. BENJAMIN BUCK.