

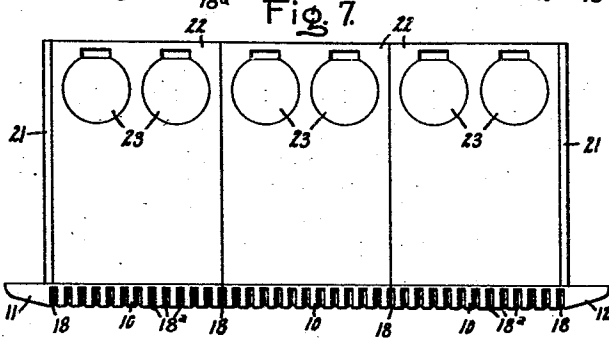
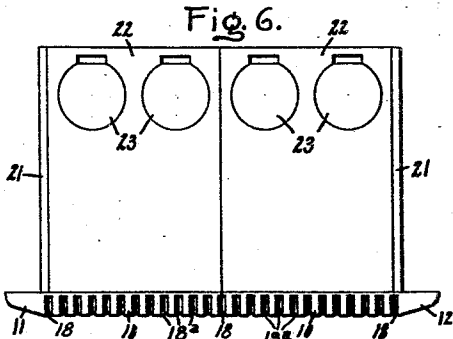
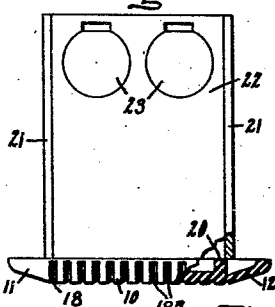
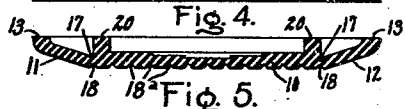
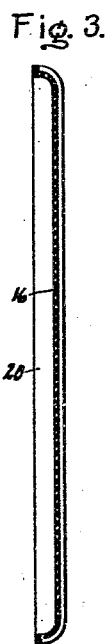
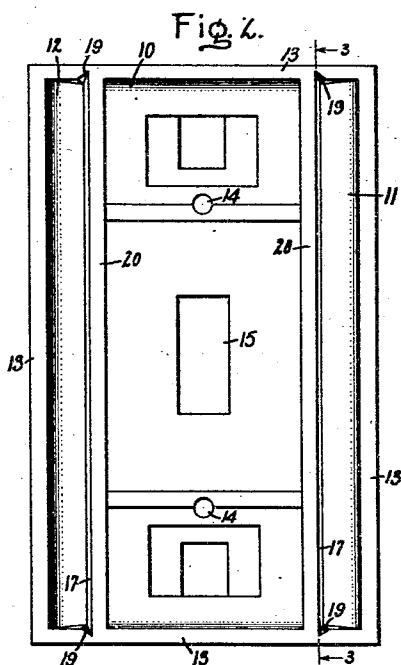
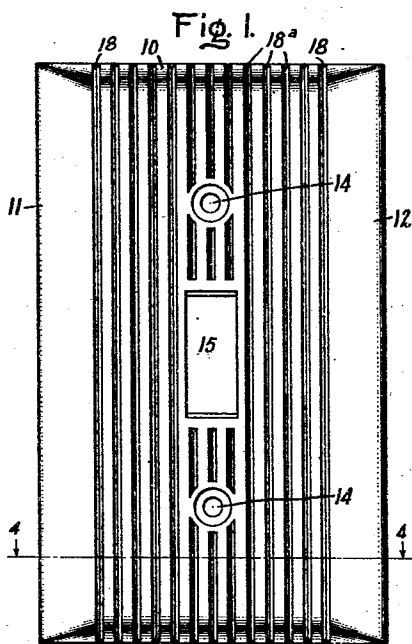
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FACEPLATE

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FACEPLATE

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The present invention relates to faceplates or covers for outlet boxes in which electrical wiring devices are mounted.

In wiring buildings a plurality of wiring devices are often mounted adjacent one another in a multi-gang outlet box with the devices arranged in any one of various possible combinations of switches and receptacles, or the like. The switches may be of the push button or toggle type, while the receptacles may be either single or double. To provide unitary multi-gang faceplates to accommodate all the possible combinations of devices that may be mounted in two, three and four gang boxes requires that the dealer carry a very large stock of plates and that the manufacturer make large expenditures for dies and other equipment necessary for the manufacture of such a large variety of plates. Accordingly, it is a primary object of the invention to provide single gang faceplates of standard size and of such construction that they may be combined to form a faceplate for an outlet box of any number of gangs having any combination of wiring devices mounted therein.

To this end, an important feature of the present invention consists in providing a faceplate having a central portion of substantially the width of the opening in a standard single gang outlet box and having marginal portions frangibly connected to each side thereof by a portion of reduced area. The marginal portions are of a size to bring the faceplate to standard dimensions.

For a further understanding of my invention, reference may be had to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawing in which Fig. 1 is a front view of a faceplate embodying the invention; Fig. 2 is a rear view of the faceplate of Fig. 1; Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken along the line 3—3 of Fig. 2; Fig. 4 is a sectional view taken along the line 4—4 of Fig. 1; Fig. 5 shows the faceplate of Fig. 1 mounted on a single gang outlet box, and Figs. 6 and 7 show faceplates embodying the invention combined to cover a two and three gang box respectively.

Referring to the drawing a faceplate, preferably molded of suitable insulating material, such as a phenolic condensation product, comprises a central portion or panel 10 and side or marginal panels 11 and 12. The sides and ends of the plate slope rearwardly from the front face of the plate and terminate in a peripheral bearing surface or rim 13. The plate is provided with openings 14 for the reception of the fastening

means employed for securing the faceplate in position on an outlet box and with an opening 15 through which a wiring device mounted in the box is accessible. In the plate illustrated in Fig. 1, the opening 15 is rectangular and is adapted to receive the operating handle of a toggle switch or an indicating jewel for a pilot lamp. It is apparent that the opening 15 may be made to accommodate any desired wiring device.

In accordance with the present invention, the side panels 11 and 12 are frangibly connected to the central portion of the plate in such a way that they may be broken off cleanly and easily when it is desired to use a plurality of the single gang plates to form a faceplate for a multi-gang box. The side panels are connected to the central panel 10 by webs 16 of reduced cross-section formed by co-operating grooves 17 and 18 which lie on opposite faces of the plate. The grooves 17 on the rear face of the plate extend into the rim 13 and terminate in notches 19. The notches weaken the rim 13 and aid in obtaining a clean break through the edges of the plate. The grooves 18 formed on the face of the plate have a substantially V-shaped cross-section and coincide with the edge of the central panel 10 which also means that they lie opposite the corresponding grooves 17 formed on the rear face of the plate. Rearwardly extending ribs 20 having their outside faces flush with the edge of the central panel reinforce the plate and form a rigid surface which facilitates the breaking off of the marginal panels and prevents the central panel from being broken during the operation. A plurality of similarly shaped grooves 18a extend longitudinally across the face of the plate and serve to give the plate a pleasing appearance and aid in concealing the break between the plates when they are assembled on a multi-gang box as shown in Figs. 6 and 7.

In Fig. 5, I have shown a faceplate embodying the invention mounted on a standard single gang outlet box comprising side panels 21 and a substantially U-shaped body section 22 provided with knockouts 23 which permit the introduction of the circuit wires into the box. The side panels are removably secured to the body section by any suitable means (not shown). As shown by the portion broken away, each of the reinforcing ribs 20 engage the ends of the box adjacent an outer edge thereof. In Figs. 6 and 7, faceplates embodying the invention are mounted on two and three gang outlet boxes respectively. In accordance with the usual practice, the multiple gang outlet boxes are formed by interlocking

single gang boxes which have had the necessary side panels removed. As shown in Fig. 6, a two-gang faceplate is formed by simply removing one marginal panel of each of two standard single gang faceplates and securing them in position over the open side of the box by means of suitable fastening means which pass through the openings 14 and engage openings in the wiring devices mounted in the outlet box. For the three-gang arrangement shown in Fig. 7, the plates covering the outside boxes are the same as those employed in a two-gang arrangement, while the plate covering the central box has both margin portions removed. It is apparent that the standard single plates may be selected with an opening 15 shaped to accommodate any desired wiring device, and that the complete multi-gang plate comprises portions of a plurality of standard plates which may be arranged in accordance with the requirements of the particular installation.

From the foregoing, it is seen that the invention makes it possible to form a cover plate for a multi-outlet box by selecting single gang plates having openings therein adapted to accommodate the desired wiring devices and breaking off the marginal portions as pointed out above. With this arrangement, it is necessary to manufacture only standard single gang faceplates for the different types of wiring devices instead of making up two, three and four gang plates having openings therein for accommodating wiring devices in various combinations. The particular construction disclosed insures a clean break between the central and marginal portions of the faceplate and a pleasing appearance of the multi-gang plate after the separate plates have been assembled on a multi-gang outlet box.

What I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States, is:

1. A faceplate for covering the open side of a single gang outlet box comprising a central portion having an opening therein for the reception of a portion of a wiring device and marginal side portions, at least one of said side portions being frangibly connected to said central portion and removable therefrom so that the remainder of said plate may form one section of a multi-gang faceplate.

2. A faceplate for covering the open side of a single gang outlet box comprising a central portion having a width substantially equal to the width of the open side of said outlet box and provided with an opening for the reception of a portion of a wiring device, and marginal side portions detachably connected to said central portion by a section of reduced strength and removable therefrom so that the remainder of said faceplate may form one section of a multi-gang faceplate.

3. A faceplate adapted to form a cover for one gang of a multi-gang outlet box comprising a central portion of substantially the width of the opening of a single gang outlet box, marginal side portions frangibly connected thereto by a section of reduced area, said plate being adapted to have at least one of said marginal portions broken away and the remainder mounted on a multi-gang outlet box adjacent a faceplate of similar construction; said plate having a plurality of spaced longitudinally extending grooves formed on the face thereof with one of said grooves lying along each of the connecting sections of reduced area whereby the joint between adjacent plates on a multi-gang box is obscured.

4. A faceplate comprising a central portion of substantially the width of a single-gang outlet box having a rearwardly extending rib adjacent each side edge thereof and a marginal portion extending from each side edge of said central portion, said marginal portion being connected to said central portion by a section of reduced area lying adjacent said rearwardly extending ribs so that either of said marginal portions may be removed by breaking along said section of reduced area.

5. A faceplate of molded insulating material having a central panel of substantially the width of a single-gang outlet box and a pair of marginal side panels, reinforcing ribs extending rearwardly from said central panel and along the opposite side edges thereof, said plate having grooves on the front and rear faces thereof adjacent the outer faces of said ribs co-operating to form a web of reduced cross-section for frangibly connecting said central and marginal panels.

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