

Feb. 27, 1934.

W. O. PROUTY
MARQUISE STRUCTURE

1,948,768

Filed May 4, 1931

4 Sheets-Sheet 1

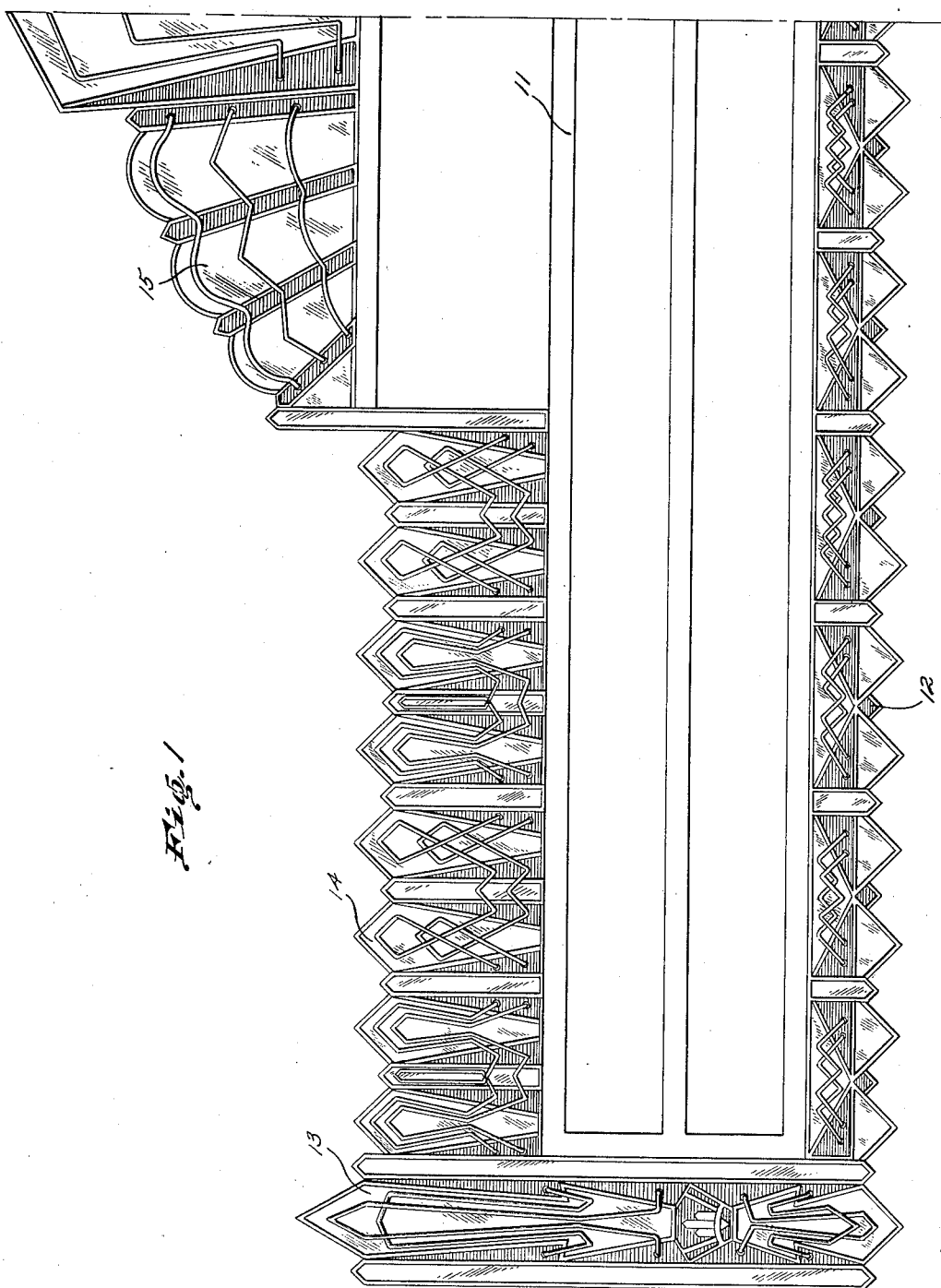


Fig. 1

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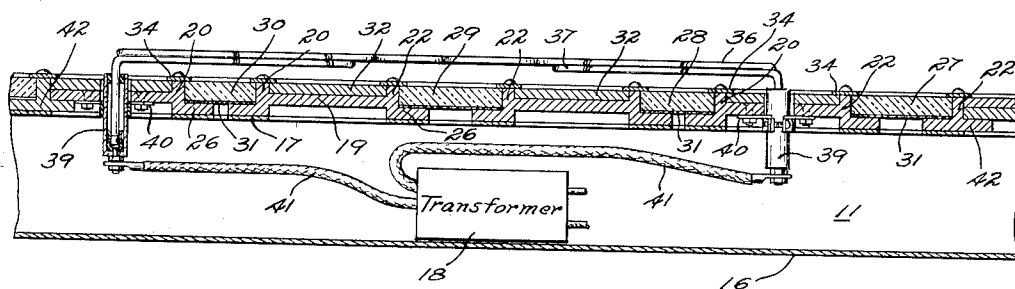
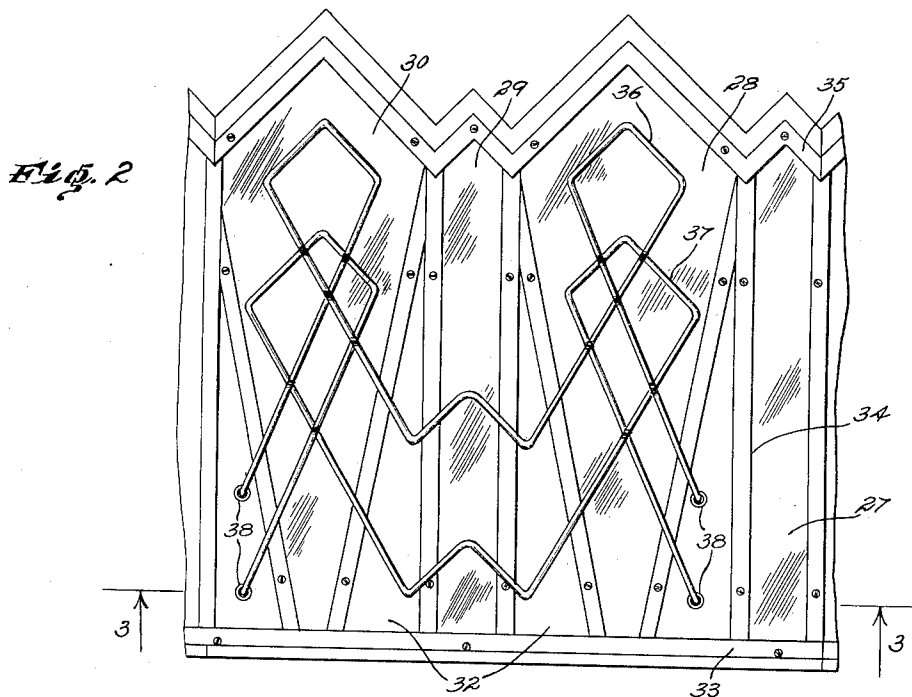
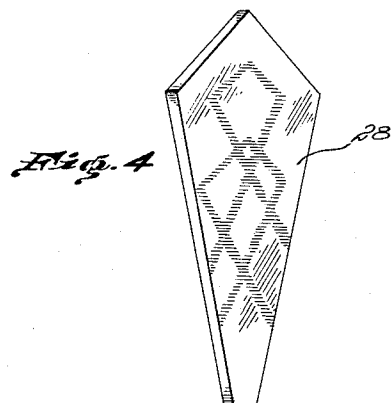


Fig. 3



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4 Sheets-Sheet 3

Fig. 5

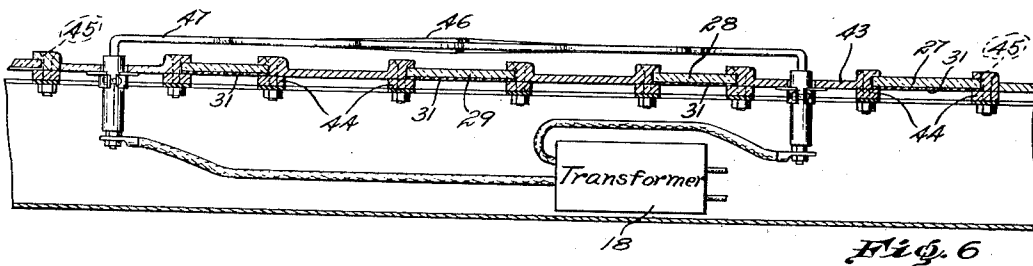
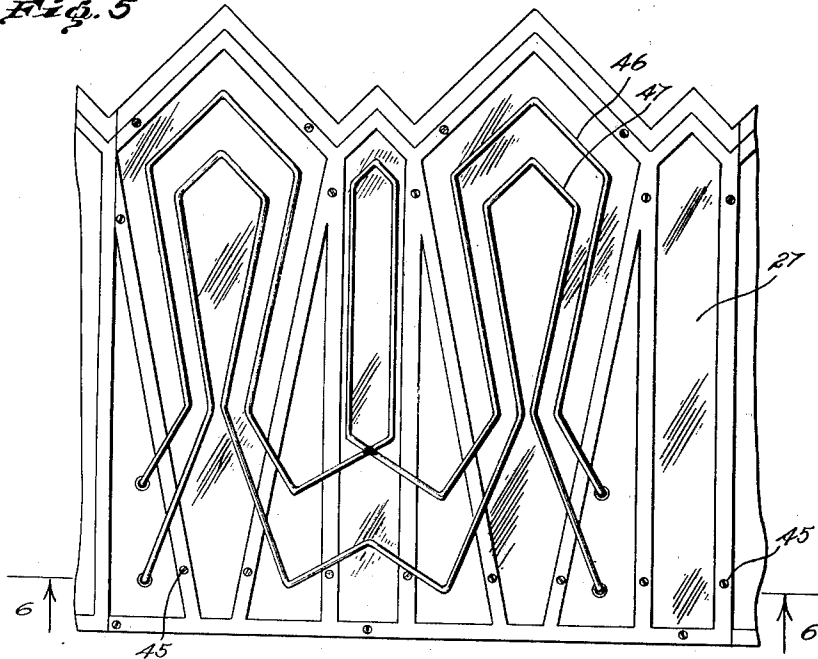


Fig. 6

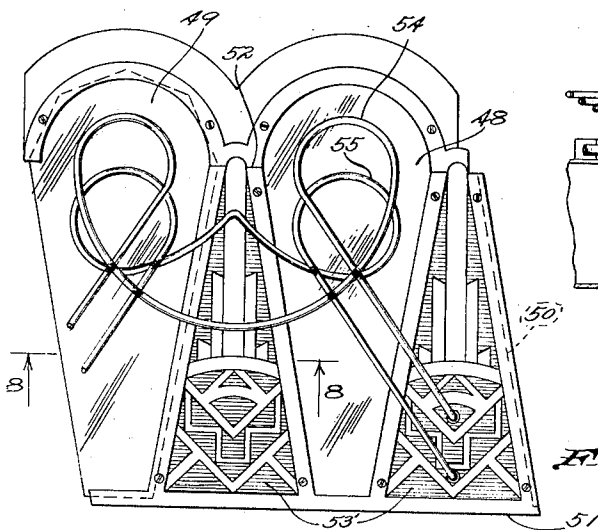


Fig. 7

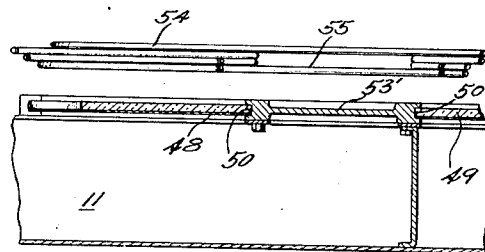


Fig. 8

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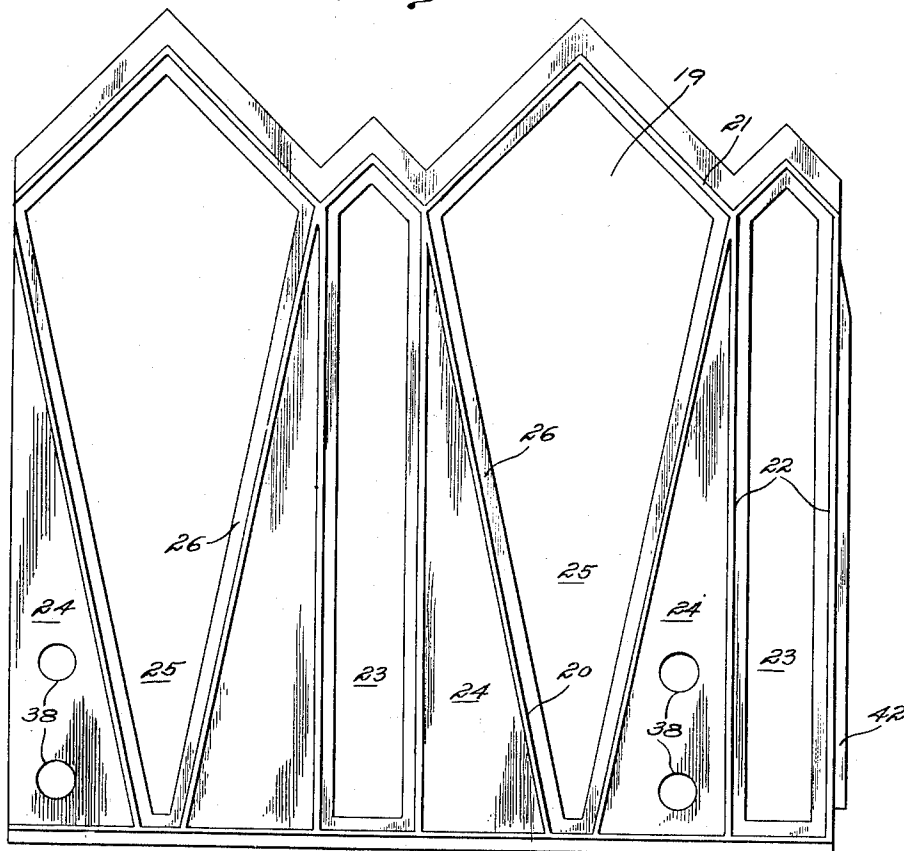
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4 Sheets-Sheet 4

Fig. 9



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

1,948,768

MARQUISE STRUCTURE

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Calif., a corporation of California

Application May 4, 1931. Serial No. 535,024

4 Claims. (Cl. 240—10)

This invention relates to a marquee structure, such as for theaters, store fronts, or hotel entrances.

In my prior application, entitled "Theatre marquee", filed November 1, 1930 and having Serial No. 492,780, I describe a marquee structure that provides a striking effect by the aid of reflecting surfaces and luminous tubing. The present invention relates to the same general type of structure, and has for one of its objects, to provide a simple and inexpensive structure.

In sign constructions of this character, luminous tubes of various brilliant colors are used, these tubes having a filling at pressures of a few millimeters of mercury of one or more of the noble monatomic gases, such as neon, helium or argon. The tubulations, supported above the sign front are formed into border patterns and into designs that can be flashed in any desired manner. In order to energize these tubes, a high potential transformer is used. It is advantageous to be able to use a standardized transformer capable of energizing any tube up to a maximum length. For this purpose the lengths of each individual tube unit should be maintained at substantially the same value. It is another object of my invention to provide a construction such that the type and style of the tubulations can be varied within wide limits to produce different designs, while the supporting structure can be maintained substantially the same, and the same size transformers can be used for all variations.

In this way, it is possible to replace tubulations at will on a sign structure to alter its appearance radically, without any further changes. Also, a standard underlying design can be made for a number of installations, which when installed present nevertheless, individual and characteristic appearances. For this purpose, standard sectional supporting structures are utilized.

It is another object of my invention to provide a sectional construction that permits ready access to the wiring in the sign casing; and also that permits ready replacement or repair of various panels of decorative form on the sign. These panels, as in my previous application, can be glass of various colors, phenolic condensation product materials, vitrolite or the like. These are well adapted for surface ornamentation or finish to give a wide variety of effects, either by reflection or by ornamentation.

In the use of a mirrored glass for some of the panels, it is essential to keep the mirror coating free of moisture. In my prior application a waterproof coating is used over the back of the

mirror, which is supported on a solid backing. In my present invention, the entire structure is made lighter by providing a skeleton frame supporting the glass only at its edges, the waterproofed back surface being exposed. In this way, no moisture can be trapped on the waterproof coating, as it can dry readily, and therefore a durable structure is provided.

My invention possesses many other advantages, and has other objects which may be made more easily apparent from a consideration of several embodiments of my invention. For this purpose I have shown a few forms in the drawings accompanying and forming part of the present specification. I shall now proceed to describe these forms in detail, which illustrate the general principles of my invention; but it is to be understood that this detailed description is not to be taken in a limiting sense, since the scope of my invention is best defined by the appended claims.

Referring to the drawings:

Figure 1 is a front elevation of a portion of a display device embodying my invention;

Fig. 2 is an enlarged view of a section of the device shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is an enlarged section, taken along plane 3—3 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a detail perspective view of a panel capable of being used in the sign structure;

Fig. 5 is a view similar to Fig. 2, but illustrating a different form of tubulation and a slightly different type of supporting structure;

Fig. 6 is a detail section taken along plane 6—6 of Fig. 5;

Fig. 7 is a view similar to Fig. 2 of a further modification;

Fig. 8 is a detail section taken along plane 8—8 of Fig. 7; and

Fig. 9 is a front elevation of a frame section used in connection with the form illustrated in Fig. 2.

In Fig. 1, the marquee structure is shown as including a can 11 of sheet metal or the like, leaving spaces where removable letters can be provided. Along the edges and the sides, structures such as 12, 13, 14, 15 are provided, supporting luminous tubing to provide an ornamental effect. Figs. 2, 3 and 4 illustrate one manner of constructing these ornamental elements.

Thus can 11 has a back 16 and a front 17. A transformer 18 is shown as supported in the can 11 for supplying current to one of the tubulations. A plurality of frames 19 (Figs. 3 and 9) of skeleton form are supported directly on the

front of structure 11. These form sections which are appropriately bolted or screwed down, and provide a series of raised ribs or flanges, such as 20, 21, 22. These ribs form spaces 23, 24, 25 for panel inserts. Some of these spaces, such as 23, 25 can be open, there being only a flange 26 around the edge of the space to provide a rest for the edge only of the panel insert, which may be of glass, or vitrolite or the like.

The panel inserts are shown in Figs. 2, 3, and 4. For example, the inserts or panels 27, 28, 29, 30 can be placed in spaces 23, 25, and can be made from glass or other vitreous material. If a mirrored surface is used, the mirror coating can be protected by a layer 31 of rubber cement or the like. The casing or can 11 can be cut away back of all the panels to facilitate wiring and to permit an air circulation over the backs of the mirrors.

The other spaces such as 24, can accommodate non-vitreous elements or panels 32, made from metal, bakelite or the like, and properly polished or ornamented. Furthermore, all of these panels can be kept in place as by retaining strips 33, 34, 35, screwed onto the top surface of flanges 20, 21, 22 and overlapping the edges of the panels. These retainers can be made from bright stainless material; and frame 19 can be cast from light metal, such as aluminum.

In the form shown in Figs. 2 and 3, there are two tubulations or lengths of tubes for each section, which overlie each other. These tubulations 36, 37 can be altered in form, two different types being alternated on the design of Fig. 1. Both are of about the same length, and their ends extend through apertures 38 in spaces 24, and into sockets or receptacles 39, which provide a detachable contact for the ends of the tubes. In this way, the glass or vitreous panels 27, 28 need not be machined, as explained in my prior application. The panels 32 are of course drilled to pass the sockets, which are held as by clamps 40 to the inner surface of the frame 19. Connections from transformer 18 can be made to the sockets 39 as by heavily insulated cables 41. The tubes can be readily removed from or inserted into sockets 39.

Since the back of each of the sections including the frame 19 and its panels provide large open spaces, and the casing 11 is also cut away, it is a simple matter to install the permanent wiring just prior to the insertion of the panels, by reaching through these openings. Furthermore, the same sockets 39 can be used for any other kind of tubulations as desired.

The lower edge of the structure shown in Fig. 1 can also have a series of sections 12 constructed the same as sections 14. Each section can overlap the adjacent ones, as by the provision of a flange 42 at one side of frame 19, which extends below a filled space 24.

Other ways of holding the panels in place can be devised. For instance, in Figs. 5 and 6 a frame 43 of substantially the same structure as frame 19

is shown, but in this instance the retaining strips 44 are located on the back side of the frame 43. The panels 27, 28, 29, are inserted from the back of this frame, and screws 45, having heads flush with the surface of the frame are used for attaching the strips 44. The tubulations 46, 47 are also different, to show that it is possible to interchange them as desired, and yet utilize the same size of transformers.

In Figs. 7 and 8, panels 48, 49 of vitreous material or glass are retained in grooves such as 50. This can be accomplished by making the frame 51 in two parts, an upper and a lower part, to permit assembly. A split is shown by line 52. Here the general configuration is slightly changed, the alternating panels 53' being shown as all metal or some other thin material upon which appropriate ornamentation is provided. Each half of the frame 53 is independently fastened to the casing 11. A somewhat different type of tubulations 54—55 is also indicated. The parts 53' can fill the entire space between the glass panels 48, 49, thus eliminating the center rectangular glass panel such as 29 of Fig. 2.

I claim:

1. In a display device, a casing having a series of panel apertures, a frame supported on the casing and having apertures corresponding to the apertures in the casing, said frame defining a series of panel spaces, removable panels in the spaces, the panels closing the apertures, whereby the backs of the panels are exposed in the interior of the casing, and luminous tubes supported over the panels by means of supports on the frame.

2. In a display device, a casing having a series of panel apertures, a frame supported on the casing and having apertures corresponding to the apertures in the casing, said frame having a series of flanges defining panel spaces, removable panels in said spaces, and closing the apertures, retainers for the panels, and luminous tubes supported by the frame and over the panels.

3. In a display device, a casing having a series of apertures, a frame supported on the casing and having apertures corresponding to the apertures in the casing, said frame defining a series of panel spaces, panels in the spaces, the panels closing the apertures, whereby the back of the panels is exposed in the interior of the casing, luminous tubes supported over the panels, and a waterproof coating on the back surface of the panels, said panels having a mirror surface protected by the coating.

4. In a marquee structure, a series of similar skeleton frame structures, a can for supporting said structures, removable panels supported on said structures, sockets attached to the structures and extending into the can, one or more transformers connected to the sockets, and tubulations having contacting ends accommodated in the sockets, said tubulations overlying the fronts of one or more panels.

WILLIS O. PROUTY.