Oct. 23, 1934. G. H. LACKNER 1,978,023

SIGN

Filed Nov. 10, 1932

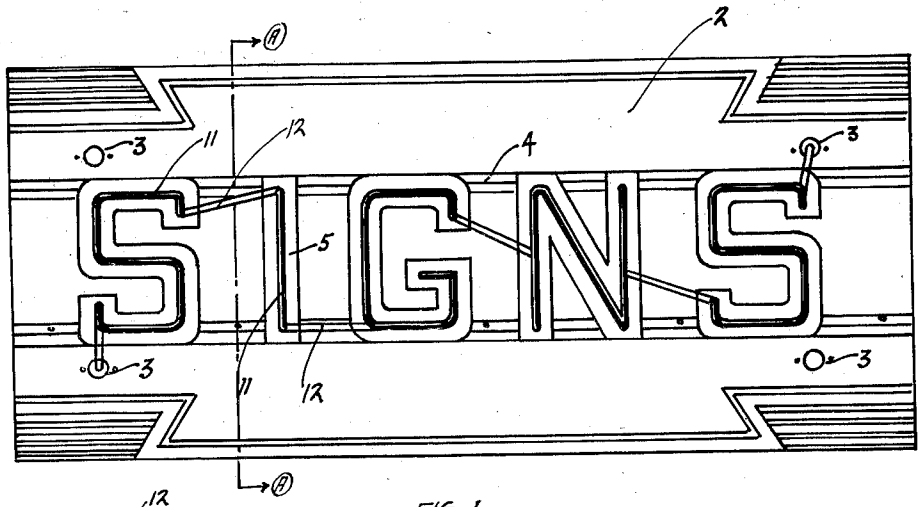


FIG 1

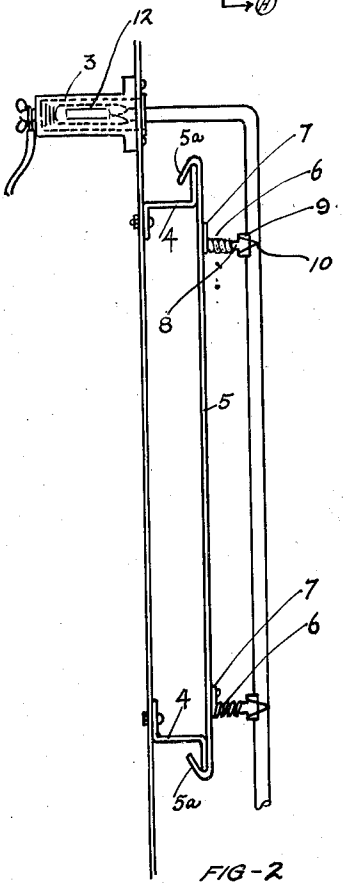
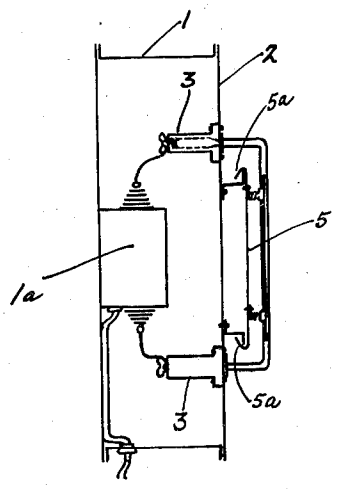


FIG-2



SECTION A-A

FIG-3

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

1,978,023

SIGN

George H. Lackner, Cincinnati, Ohio, assignor to The Lackner Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, a corporation of Ohio

Application November 10, 1932, Serial No. 642,069

1 Claim. (Cl. 40—130)

My invention covers double-face and single-face signs, usable day or night, utilizing neon tubes or a like illuminated tube arrangement superimposed over the lettering upon the faces of the sign box.

In connection with the production of signs, one of my objectives is to provide a simple and attractive sign in which the letters may be changed, and in which the letters are spaced away or raised from the panel forming the background of the sign.

My invention is particularly adapted to that kind of sign known as an outdoor sign, being used flat against the exterior of a building or projected from the building.

Another object of my invention is to provide for a way of supporting in superposed relation to a changed letter type of sign an illuminated tube arrangement congruent with the lettering.

Another object of my invention is to provide for a sign consisting of lettering or sign characters with superposed illuminated tubing means, with the lettering or sign characters spaced or elevated in such a manner that shadows cast by the lettering or sign characters proper, when illuminated by the tubes, will result in making the contour of the letters or sign characters stand out more sharply against the shadowed background. Full advantage is taken of the shadows which are cast by the letters or sign characters to increase the contrast between the letters or sign characters and the background of the sign on which they are placed; consequently, there is obtained decidedly increased separation between the luminosity diffused on the letters or sign characters and the shadowed background of the sign, the light being directed on the letters or sign characters rather than on the background of the sign.

In the ordinary neon illuminated letter sign where the neon tubes are superimposed over the letter, a red or other brilliant colored glow from the tubes entirely obscures the main letters in the sign, which is a defect avoided by my invention.

I accomplish my invention by that certain construction and arrangement of parts of which an example is illustrated in the drawing, and the novel features of which are set forth in the claim that follows.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is an elevation of the sign.

Figure 2 is an end elevation on a larger scale through the panel of the sign, as on the line A—A.

Figure 3 is a section taken through the entire sign, and of the same scale as Figure 1.

Reference is made to the claim for stating the essentials of the invention, a detailed description of which follows:—

The type of sign that I have illustrated is composed of a box 1 having a decorative front panel 2. This front panel has secured to it the bushings or housings 3—3 for receiving the terminals of a neon tube arrangement. I have illustrated four of these bushings 3, two of which are not employed in the particular sign illustrated, but which are provided to accommodate some other lettering in which the unused bushings of the illustrated embodiment might be more convenient for use. If the sign were a larger one requiring a number of different illuminated tube arrangements, there would be more bushings provided. The bushings provide sockets exposed at the face of the panel 2.

Mounted on a panel in this instance so as to extend across the main body, are formed Z-shaped pieces of metal 4—4, each turned so that the flanges having openings by which the letters are attached are away from such flange of the other and the flanges which are attached to the sign face or panel are extended toward each other. These pieces of metal need not be extended horizontally and there may be more than one set of them in the sign, depending entirely on the amount of copy to be employed.

Instead of Z-shaped pieces, other shaped metal strips such as channel shaped pieces may be employed, the important point being the outer flange spaced away from the panel of the sign.

The individual letters 5 are preferably made of sheet metal suitably decorated in paint, Duco or porcelain enamel, the finish to be employed having a brilliant reflecting surface. It will be understood, however, that any light-reflecting material other than decorated metal but having characteristics whereby the effects produced by the present invention are obtained may be employed.

Each letter or sign character is an individual detachable, changeable unit, having its upper and lower portions equipped with return flanges or lips 5a which are attached or hooked over the outer webs of the two Z's 4. With this arrangement any lettering or sign characters desired can be slid over the Z's so that the sign will carry any message or sign characters desired. Such letters can be made in quantities and the letters or sign characters may be changed without al-

tering the main faces, panels or background of the sign.

Leaving out of consideration the illuminated tube arrangement, a sign formed of a background with the letters arranged as shown makes an attractive and novel appearance, and is a decidedly economical way of providing signs to the public through the possibility of reuse of each installation, and also of the possibility of changing the message appearing on the signs without removal of the sign from its support.

It will be understood that the shadows formed by superposing, projecting or elevating letters or sign characters over the face or body of the sign proper, is to more sharply and more boldly bring out the contour of the letters or sign characters against the background, particularly when the sign is illuminated. The face of the letters or sign characters constitute a reflector for light and at the same time deflect light from the background of the sign directly in back of the letters, thereby accentuating visibility.

In order to mount and adequately support the illuminated tube arrangement, I provide the letters themselves with mounting devices. This is convenient and practical because in a tube sign it is definitely known where the superposed tubing will come with relation to each letter, so that in a change letter sign the mounting devices for the tube structure can always be in the proper place if mounted on the letters themselves. To that end I equip letters with mountings which may be of any desired variety, the illustrated ones consisting of a spring 6 having a tail 7 secured to the face of the letter. Screwed into the end of the spring is a glass plug 8 having a semi-circular socket 9 at the end of it. A piece of thin wire 10 is wrapped around the tube, and the socket piece, thus holding the tube against the socket.

I have illustrated a tube sign formed of tubing 11 in which the portion to be illuminated is shown dark, and the opaque portion, which is not visible at night, shown without shading at 12. The tubing is inexpensive to make up, and when a sign is changed it will be necessary only to bend up some tubing for the new sign. The terminal or socket portions 12 of the tubing are thrust into the convenient bushings 3, and the lettering superimposed over whatever letters are used in the sign, so that the portions of the tubes which overlie the center line of the lettering will rest against the sockets in the mounting devices. Thereupon pieces of wire are wrapped around the mounting sockets and the tubes, and the sign is complete.

The securing of the letters to the tubes keeps the letters together in proper spaced relationship, and the securing of the tubes to the letters holds the terminals of the tubes in the respective sockets or bushings in contact, so as to receive electric current from the transformer 1*a* in the box 1.

At night when the sign is illuminated, the lettering 5 will stand out, due to the shadow cast against the background of the sign by the tubes against the raised letters.

My plan enables the utilization of the sign box faces of the sign as well as the letters or sign characters, obviating the necessity for replacing the body or face of the sign, re-surfacing or re-covering the faces of the sign, repainting or re-finishing the faces of the sign, in the event the sign is repossessed. This plan also makes possible a change of message on the sign without removing the sign from its erected position. This plan is also particularly advantageous in creating changes of copy which may be desired for—announcements, special sales, change of ownership, change of business and other similar requirements.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is:—

In an advertising sign the combination with a panel, of letter mounting plates thereon having webs extending away from the panel, and terminal flanges at an angle thereto, and individual letters or symbols having body portions and return bent flanges to slidably engage over the mounting plate flanges, whereby a change letter sign is provided having letters thereon spaced away from the main panel thereof, mounting means carried by the letters or symbols for securing neon or like illuminating tubing in superimposed relation thereto, and sockets for the tubing terminals in said panel.

GEORGE H. LACKNER.