

Nov. 24, 1931.

T. C. PROUTY

1,833,498

ILLUMINATED CHARACTER

Filed Sept. 3, 1929

Fig. 1.

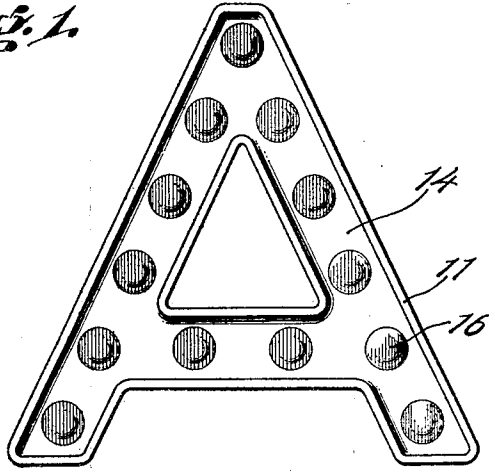
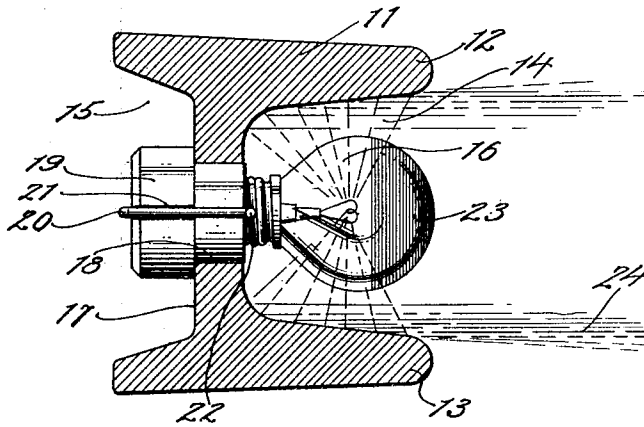


Fig. 2.



BY

INVENTOR
Theodore C. Prouty
John Flam
ATTORNEY

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

THEODORE C. PROUTY, OF HERMOSA BEACH, CALIFORNIA, ASSIGNOR TO METLOX CORPORATION, LTD., OF MANHATTAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA, A CORPORATION OF CALIFORNIA

ILLUMINATED CHARACTER

Application filed September 3, 1929. Serial No. 390,145.

This invention relates to illuminated signs formed by individually illuminated characters, and especially to such characters that are illuminated by incandescent electric lamps.

It is now well-known to form an illuminated character by the aid of a number of incandescent lamps, which form isolated bright spots defining the configuration of the character. Such a system, however, has serious drawbacks. One of them is that the letters or characters appear blurred, especially when viewed at a little distance. This I believe is due to the way in which the direct light from the lamps is emitted, whereby the rays are quite diffused.

It is accordingly one of the objects of my invention to provide an illuminated character that presents a sharp, definite outline.

It is another object of my invention to improve in general, illuminated characters of the kind discussed.

Preferably, I employ a ceramic character as a support for the lamps; this results in the advantage of securing a good looking daylight sign; and furthermore, it provides a highly glazed surface that can be so arranged with respect to the lamps as to impart the desired bright and sharp luminescence to the character.

My invention possesses many other advantages, and has other objects which may be made more easily apparent from a consideration of one embodiment of my invention. For this purpose I have shown a form in the drawings accompanying and forming part of the present specification. I shall now proceed to describe this form in detail, which illustrates 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 an elevation of a character embodying my invention; and

Fig. 2 is an enlarged sectional view taken through the letter.

In the present instance, I show a letter A as embodying the features of my invention.

This letter is made from a ceramic product 11, such as clay or porcelain, having a webbed or channelled section, as shown most clearly in Fig. 2. Thus the side flanges 12, 13 define a groove or channel 14 that forms a visible outer surface of the character. A corresponding groove 15 at the back of the letter serves to accommodate the wiring, sockets, and other elements needed for supplying current to lamps such as 16 disposed in channel 14.

The central web 17, separating the channels 14 and 15, can conveniently serve as a support for the lamp sockets. Thus a series of spaced apertures 18 can be provided in the web 17, into each of which can be fastened a socket member 19. This socket member is made from insulation material and formed to be inserted from the back of the character 11. It is held in place in any appropriate manner, as by a strap 20 extending alongside the socket in grooves 21 and through aperture 18. This strap is made from a stiff wire, so that by bending its ends over the edge of the aperture 18, as indicated at 22, it can hold the socket 19 in the position shown.

The channel 14 is purposely made so deep that globe 16 does not substantially extend beyond the flanges 12, 13. Furthermore, the surface of the channel 14 is preferably glazed so as to act as a reflecting surface. The exposed upper end 23 of globe 16 is painted or frosted preferably with the same color as that of the glaze in channel 14, and in such a way that some light nevertheless passes through the tip. However, the glowing filament does not form any annoying bright spot.

Most of the light is thrown into the channel 14, and is reflected from the surfaces thereof. The reflected rays pass out somewhat as indicated at 24, and there is little diffusion. This results from the fact that there is little opportunity for any direct light to extend beyond the edges of the flanges 12, 13.

The effect of this type of character illumination is novel, as it presents a clear cut outline even at a distance. The character is perfectly legible and distinct. I attribute this to the manner in which I confine the direct

bright rays to the channel 14, and permit only reflected light or diffused light from tip 23 to proceed from the character.

I claim:

5 1. An illuminated character comprising a ceramic support having a glazed channel forming a reflecting surface, said channel conforming to the form of the character and formed by a pair of flanges and a connecting
10 web, and a series of electric lamps in the channel and supported by the aid of the web so as to extend outwardly with respect thereto, each of the lamps having its tip portion painted with a material having a color sub-
15 stantially similar to the glaze whereby direct bright rays will be emitted only from the unpainted portion of the lamps, and said channel being deep enough so that the lamps are substantially entirely disposed therein where-
20 by the lamps emit direct bright rays only toward the reflecting surface.

2. An illuminated character comprising a support having a glazed channel forming a reflecting surface, said channel conforming to
25 the form of the character and formed by a pair of flanges and a connecting web, and a series of electric lamps in the channel and supported by the aid of the web so as to extend outwardly with respect thereto, each of
30 the lamps having its tip portion painted with a material having a color substantially similar to the glaze whereby direct bright rays will be emitted only from the unpainted portion of the lamps, and said channel being
35 deep enough so that the lamps are substantially entirely disposed therein whereby the lamps emit direct bright rays only toward the reflecting surface.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set
40 my hand.

THEODORE C. PROUTY.

45

50

55

60

65