July 18, 1950 T. J. BENNETT 2,515,818

SIGN FOR HOUSE NUMBERS AND THE LIKE

Filed Feb. 14, 1949

Fig. 1

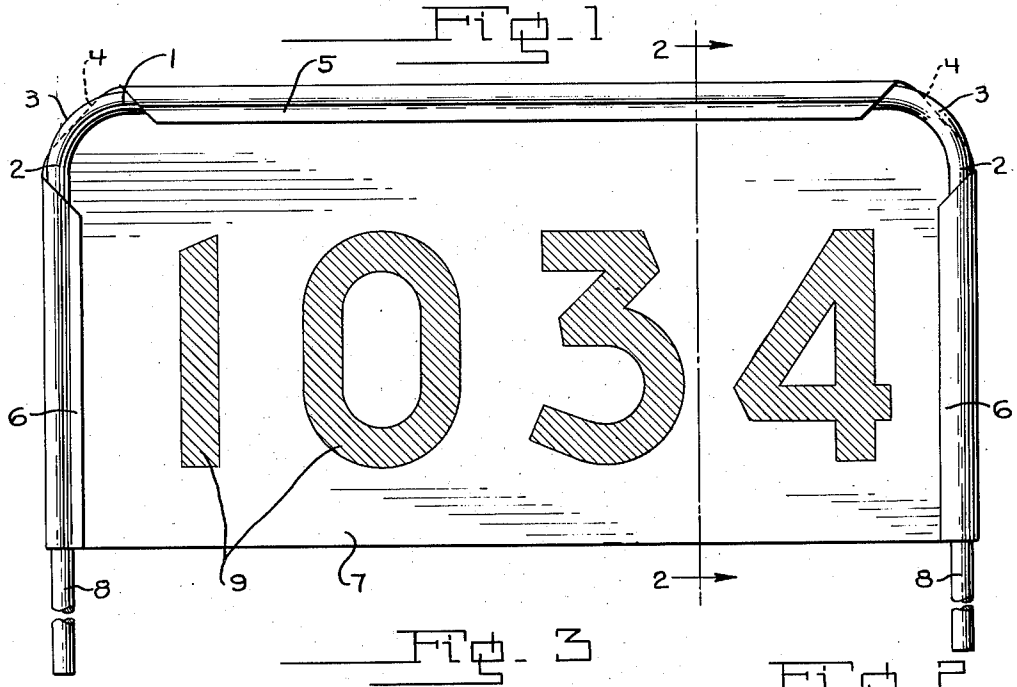


Fig. 3

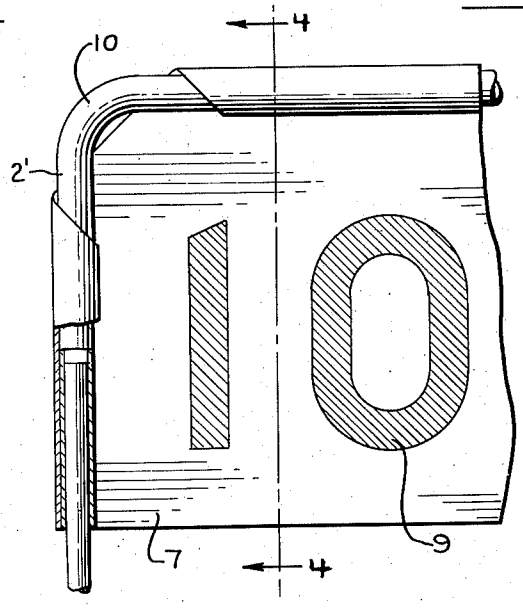


Fig. 2

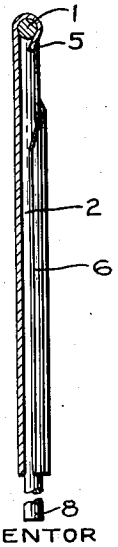
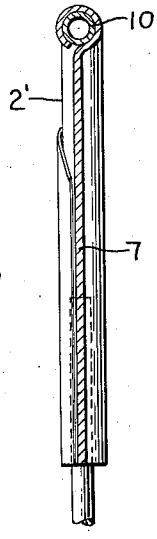
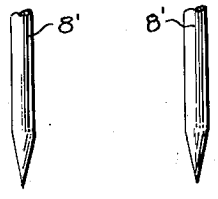


Fig. 4





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SIGN FOR HOUSE NUMBERS AND THE LIKE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 40—125)

1

My invention relates to signs for house numbers and the like.

It has been the practice for many years to apply house numbers directly to some part of the house. Since individual taste or idiosyncrasy determines the location and size of the number, it is frequently difficult for the passerby to find the number. For the automobile driver who must keep an eye on the road, and perhaps at the same time on traffic, the location of a house number under the aforesaid conditions is frequently very troublesome. Hence, the practice has grown up of putting the house number on an object near the curb or to provide a sign which may be planted in the lawn on the parkway next to the curb, where it may readily be seen by day, and may be illuminated by the driving lights of an automobile going along the curb. This type of sign is sometimes called a curb sign.

The sign of my invention is particularly useful for the latter type of use. It may be used for other purposes, such as "Keep off the Grass" or to convey other information or warning, being particularly useful on lawns or along walks and the like, as will be understood from the description appearing below.

The problem confronting me was as follows: A sign set permanently in the lawn, as by driving a pipe into the ground or setting the stem in a concrete footing, shortly becomes a disfigurement of the lawn. This is mainly because the grass adapts itself to the permanent sign and grows long about the sign, due to the fact that the lawnkeeper cannot cut close with the lawn mower. The untrodden area close to the sign shows a difference in grass texture, and the result is a distinct marring of the lawn. I conceived that what was needed is a good inexpensive sign inherently strong and rigid, which could be firmly and rigidly set in the lawn without disfiguring or injuring the lawn, and at the same time could be readily taken up and readily reset at any time without showing any injury or disfigurement of the lawn, and I conceived a structure for meeting that need.

The structure which I conceived to answer this need involves an inverted generally U-shaped frame having a pair of parallel legs preferably of rod stock, of a diameter small enough to be readily forced down into or pulled out of the ground without marring the lawn, and a plate of an outline corresponding to the outline of the frame with its margins folded or curled around the three sides of the frame, namely, at the top and the two sides. Numerals or letters are to be disposed on the plate in any preferred manner. They may be painted or fastened on the plate in any way that is suitable. Reflecting material may be placed directly on the plate, or it may be put on numerals or letters which then

2

may be attached to the plate in any desired manner. The intention is to use simple, inexpensive materials, simply put together with resulting strength and neatness at a low cost.

Now in order to acquaint those skilled in the art with the manner of constructing and operating a device embodying my invention, I shall now describe, in connection with the accompanying drawings, the preferred embodiment of the same.

In the drawings:

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

Figure 2 is a cross section, taken on the line 2—2 of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary side elevation, partly in section, of a modification; and

Figure 4 is a cross sectional view taken on the line 4—4 of Figure 3.

The preferred form of the invention shown in Figures 1 and 2 involves two main parts, namely, an open rectangular frame consisting of a round rod of iron of about one quarter inch diameter stock and a sheet metal plate 7. This rod, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, is a continuous piece. The frame should be stiff and strong enough to resist the bending and twisting stresses to which it is subjected in use. The frame for the plate consists of a top bar 1 which is disposed in a generally horizontal position, joined to the two vertical side portions 2—2 by bending at the corners 3, 3 at a suitable radius. These bends are preferably rounded, so as not to weaken the stock by too sharp bending, and also to provide a suitable grip or bearing surface for the hands of the user for forcing the sign into the ground. The plate 7 consists of a piece of sheet metal of generally rectangular outline with its top corners cut off as shown at 4, 4. The margins of the sheet are turned or curled over at the top 5 and the sides 6, 6 to grip the corresponding parts of the open frame. The top bar 1 and the side portions 2, 2 are thereby gripped by the bending or turning over of the margins of the plate 7 for the purpose of mounting the plate and for the purpose of reenforcing the structure. The side portions 2, 2 continue on down to provide the integral parallel legs 8, 8, which are adapted to be thrust into the ground. By way of illustration, a sign of this character may be made up of quarter inch rod for the frame and legs, and a piece of heavy sheet iron of approximately .012" thickness for the plate. The plate may, before being applied to the frame, be approximately 6" x 12", and the frame may be approximately 10¾" wide outside and about 16" overall height.

Upon each face of the plate 7 suitable indicia, such as a house number 9, may be placed. The indicia may obviously be anything desired, and

may be applied in any preferred manner. The indicia may be painted directly on the background which the plate presents, or separate numerals faced with a high light reflecting or refracting material may be bonded to the face of the plate, or may be detachably applied or otherwise fastened if desired. The plate may be provided with slots and the numerals with ears at the upper and lower ends for entering the slots to be clinched over for securing numerals in place. This is optional.

It is desirable to avoid the use of screws or rivets in an outdoor sign of this character. Such parts always tend to have parts that catch on clothing or tear the hands and often have raw metal which when exposed to the weather becomes rusted or corroded and spoils the appearance of the sign.

The construction of this sign is unusually simple. The frame is bent into shape, the rectangular plate with the corners cut off is laid over the frame and the edges bent or curled over the frame to fasten the two parts together mechanically. Where plain iron parts are used, the plate and frame may be dipped or japanned separately, or may be dipped after assembly. Any other rust resisting treatment may be employed. The numerals are applied preferably after the main parts are assembled. If numerals of paper or the like covered with light reflecting material are to be utilized, they may be attached by means of an adhesive to the face of the plate on one or both sides.

To place the sign, the sign is held at the corners by the two hands, and pushed down by the weight of the operator, until the legs 8, 8 have penetrated into the ground to the desired depth. It is usually satisfactory to leave a space of about 3 or 4 inches between the bottom edge of the plate 7 and the grass or surface of the earth. The sign thus placed is conspicuous and readily legible. The legs being thin, and preferably painted dark in color, are unobtrusive. If the operator desires to mow the lawn where the sign is located, he needs but pull the sign up, and this is readily accomplished by grasping the sides 2, 2, or even the bottom edge of the plate, and pulling on the same.

The small diameter of the legs leaves no appreciable mark in the lawn, and the sign may be replaced in the same location or put in a nearby location without marring the lawn or showing any evidence of its former location. This gives the sign an appearance of freshness which is attractive.

The structure is simple, inexpensive and strong. The beading or curling of the plate over the edges of the frame strengthens the frame particularly against spreading and against twisting. No rough projecting parts or pins, and no sharp corners which might injure a person accidentally bumping into the sign are present.

To push the legs 8—8 into the ground, considerable pressure may be required. In the event the ground is hard or gravelly, it is necessary to bear rather heavily upon the bar 1 preferably adjacent the rounded corners 3—3. If only the open frame were employed, there would be a tendency to bend the top rod 1 downwardly in the middle and deform the frame. Also, if one leg 8 encountered greater obstruction than the other, the applied pressure would tend to wrack the frame to the right or to the left in the plane of the frame, and to deform or even collapse the same. However, the curling of the margins 5

about the top bar 1 stiffens the cross bar, first, by the additional metal in the curled portion embracing the cross bar 1, and, second, and more important by the edgewise reenforcing value of the plate 7 which acts like the web of a girder to rigidify the frame. This rigidifying or strengthening of the frame acts not only to hold the bar 1 straight horizontally even under a very considerable load, as when the legs 8—8 are thrust into the ground, but also braces the frame diagonally because of the curling of the side edges about the adjacent vertical frame portions 2—2, so that under uneven loading, the frame so reenforced will not collapse diagonally in the plane of the frame. The plate also tends to reenforce the frame against a tendency of the legs to spread apart or bow together when the legs are thrust into the ground by pressure applied to the top bar 1. Thus the plate provides the oppositely facing display surfaces required, and at the same time serves as an efficient reenforcement for the frame which otherwise would be subject to bending out of shape or even collapsing.

The ends of the legs 8, 8 may be pointed, or, in view of the small diameter of the rods, may be left as cut from the continuous length of the stock.

In Figures 3 and 4 I have shown a modification in which the frame for the plate 7 is made out of tubular stock 10 to form the top and sides to which the plate 7 is attached. The plate 7 in this case is shown as disposed substantially in the median plane of the frame, and the edges drawn and curled over accordingly, as illustrated in Figure 4. This is optional. The legs 8' are inserted in the lower ends of the tubular side pieces 2' and may be secured therein either by pinching of the tube upon the leg or by other attaching means. Welding is suitable.

The plate 7 may be welded to the frame at suitable spots, but that is optional. The strength, simplicity, high degree of utility, and low cost of the sign are obvious.

I claim:

A sign of the class described comprising an open rectangular frame of relatively small diameter rod stock consisting of a substantially horizontal top bar and vertical side bars integral with and disposed at the ends of the top bar, said bars lying in a common plane, a sheet metal plate of substantially rectangular outline applied to and contacting said frame, said plate having its top and side margins folded around the top and side bars to embrace the same, said side bars having extensions below the lower edge of the plate constituting legs which are adapted to be forced into the ground to support the plate in vertical display position, said plate reenforcing said frame in the plane thereof against distortion when pressure is applied to the top bar to force the legs into the ground, and said plate providing a display surface on front and back.

TOM J. BENNETT.

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