April 19, 1938. W. G. PREDDEY 2,114,639

MARQUEES

Filed April 25, 1936 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

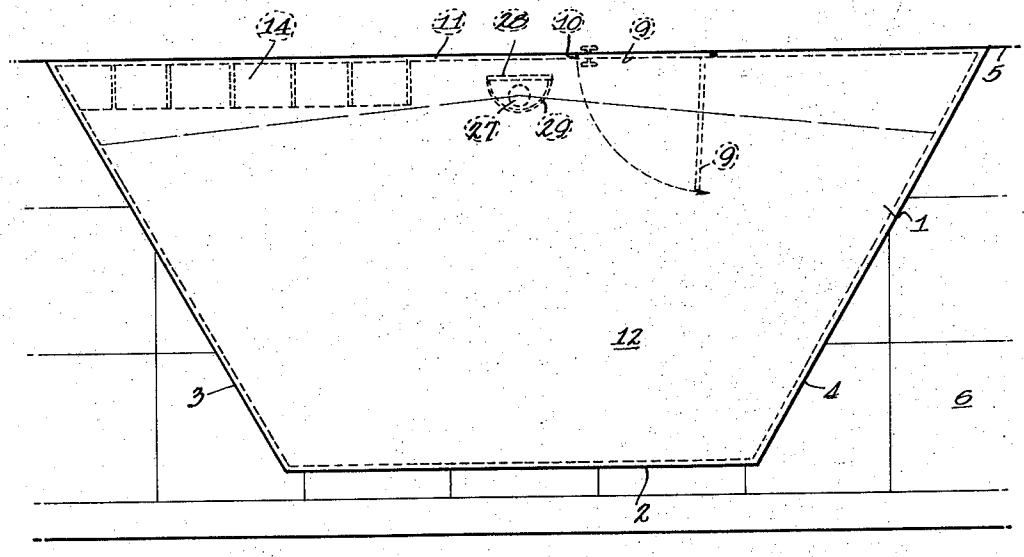
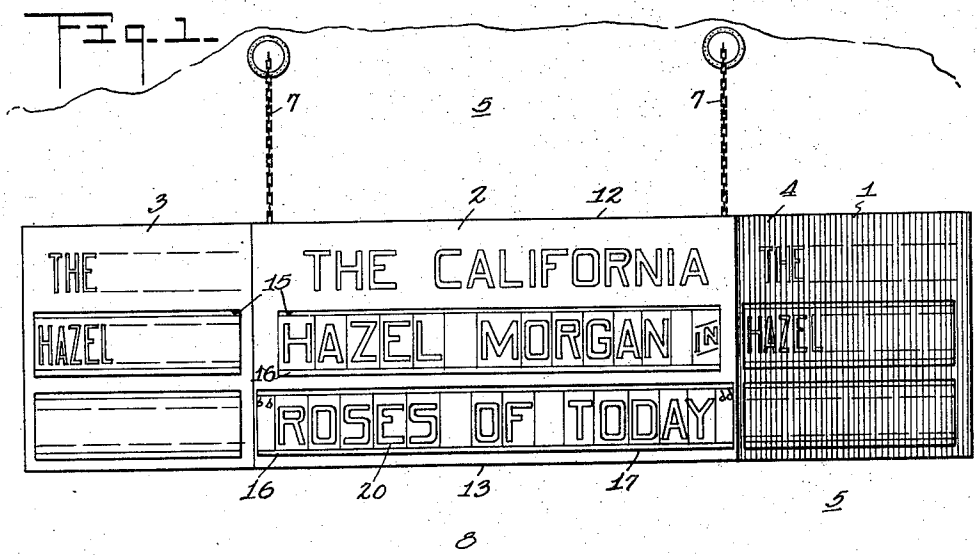


Fig. 1.



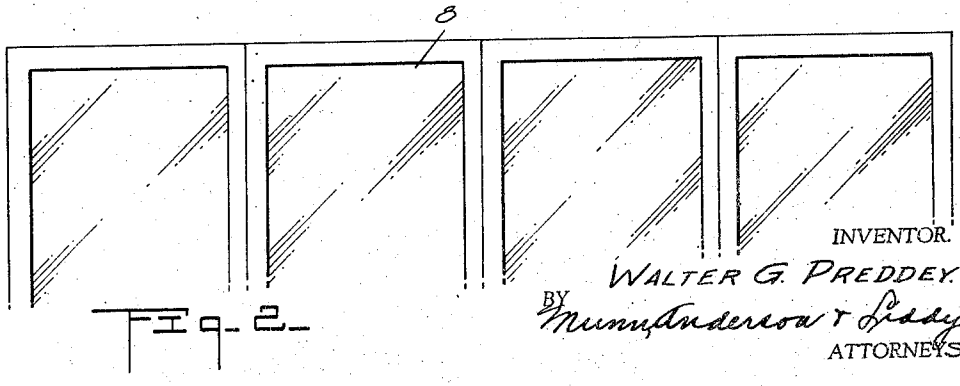


Fig. 2.

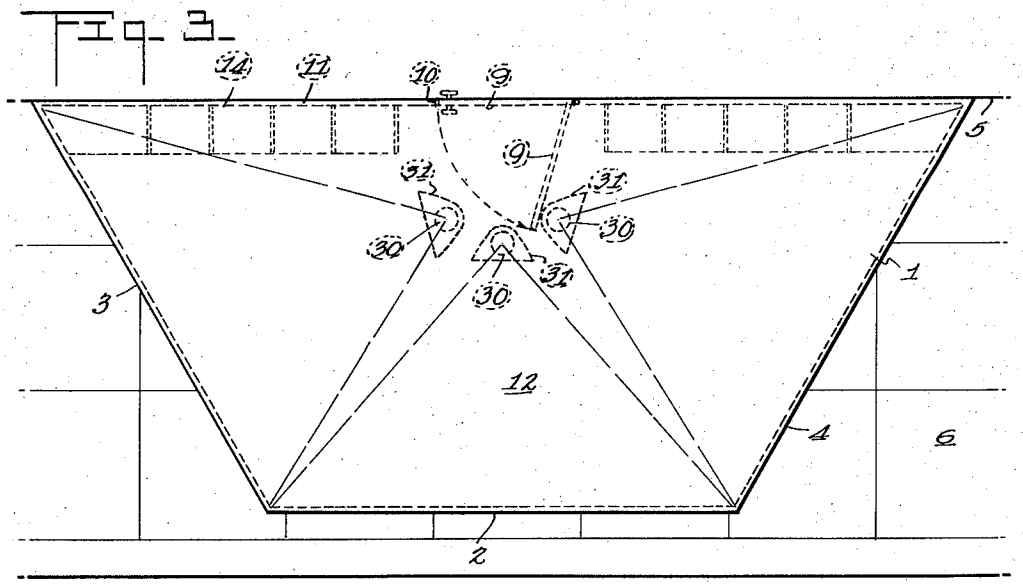
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MARQUEES

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FIG. 3.



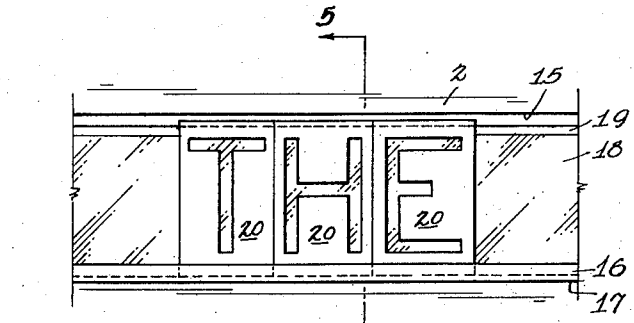


FIG. 4.

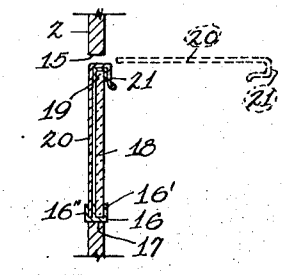


FIG. 5.

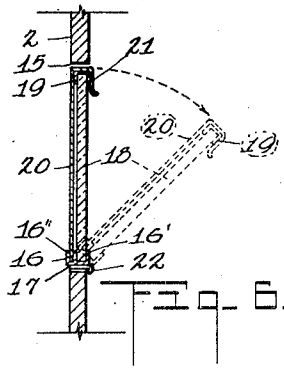


FIG. 6.

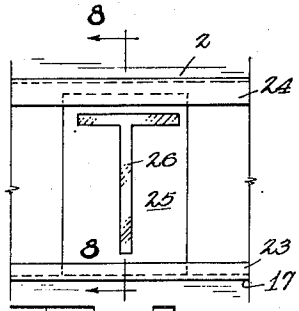


FIG. 7.

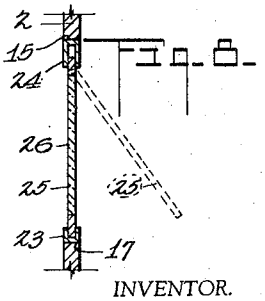


FIG. 8.

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MARQUEE

Walter G. Preddey, San Francisco, Calif.

Application April 25, 1936, Serial No. 76,482

6 Claims. (Cl. 40—130)

My invention relates to improvements in marquees, and it consists of the combinations, constructions and arrangements hereinafter described and claimed.

In the standard marquee the letters can be changed only from the outside and this necessitates an employe of the theater to use a ladder and this interferes with the free use of the sidewalk or street. Furthermore it is necessary to carry the metal letters to and from the sidewalk in making the change, and frequently letters are dropped and broken, and sometimes strike passersby. The ladders sometimes are struck by automobiles, or the public has walked into them, knocking the employes down. The danger and inconvenience is further aggravated when the letters are changed during rain or snow.

The letters are usually stored in a suitable place on the premises, such as in the lobby or side passageway, and take up considerable room; and further necessitate the carrying of the letters from the storage place to the marquee. The interior of the present marquee is not accessible for making repairs in wiring, etc., and any changes made are therefore costly and inconvenient. Incandescent lamps are usually placed in back of the letters, and this requires a great deal of electric current and provides a spotty appearance to the sign.

The principal object of my invention is to provide a marquee in which access may be had to the interior of the marquee for the purpose of changing letters, this change being accomplished from the inside of the marquee. This does away with the necessity of using a ladder in making the changes from the outside of the marquee. Furthermore, the interior of the marquee may be used for storage space for the unused letters, thus obviating the disadvantage of finding other storage space on the premises and carrying the letters to and from such space.

I further make use of a single light for lighting all of the letters, or can provide a separate light for each side of the marquee. This light will give uniform illumination to all of the letters and will materially reduce the cost of lighting. Also the incandescent lamp used for illumination may be quickly changed should it burn out. Different colored shades may be used with the light to give various color effects, and the color combinations may be continuously moved to increase the attractive appeal of the sign.

Other objects and advantages will appear in the following specification, and the novel features of the device will be particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

My invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings forming a part of this application, in which

Figure 1 is a top plan view of the marquee;

Figure 2 is a front elevation of the marquee shown operatively applied to the front of a theater;

Figure 3 is a top plan view of a slightly modified form of marquee;

Figure 4 is a front elevation of the letters and associate parts used in the marquee;

Figure 5 is a section along the line 5—5 of Figure 4;

Figure 6 is a section similar to Figure 5, but showing a slightly modified form of the device;

Figure 7 is a front elevation of another modified form of the device; and

Figure 8 is a section along the line 8—8 of Figure 7.

Although I have illustrated a marquee in the drawings it is to be understood that the invention embraces signs or other types of transparencies that make use of changeable letters in connection with theaters, halls, auditoriums, skating rinks, pavilions, public buildings, markets, cafes, restaurants, stores, amusement parks, etc. Any type of wording may be applied, such as advertisements, announcements, notices, attractions, programs, etc.

In Figures 1 and 2 I show a marquee indicated generally at 1. This marquee has a front panel 2 and two side or end panels 3 and 4, these latter panels preferably being inclined in the manner shown. The marquee is shown extending from the front of a building 5, such as a theater, and projecting over a sidewalk 6. In Figure 2 I illustrate any suitable supporting means for the marquee, such as chains 7, and I further show the marquee disposed above entrance doors 8 to the building 5.

One of the principal objects of the invention is to provide access to the interior of the marquee preferably from the inside of the theater. For example, in Figure 1 I show a door 9 normally closing a door opening 10 disposed in the inner wall 11 of the marquee. This door may open in either direction, and in the drawings I show the door opening inwardly into the interior of the marquee. In the standard marquee there is generally sufficient space between the roof 12 and the bottom 13 to permit a person to gain access to the interior. If it is impossible to place a door

in the inner wall 11, a man hole could be provided in the roof 12 or the bottom 13.

As stated in the first part of the specification, it is the usual practice in standard marquees to store the interchangeable letters in any convenient space in the theater. In Figure 1 I show the inner surface of the rear wall 11 of the marquee provided with racks or shelving 14, and this shelving may be divided off into compartments for receiving letters and numbers, these being stacked alphabetically and numerically if desired. This permits the employee to obtain any letters desired from the space within the marquee, and then change the sign from the inside of the marquee. Time is saved by storing the letters within the marquee and the letters are not so readily broken as when applied to the sign from the outside of the marquee. Moreover, danger to the public is obviated and danger to the employe is prevented also because a ladder need not be used when changing the letters.

In Figures 4 to 8 inclusive I show three different types of interchangeable letters, and in each one the letters may be changed from within the marquee. In Figures 4 and 5 the front wall 2 of the marquee is indicated, and this wall is provided with a slot 15 which may extend throughout the entire length of the front wall or any portion thereof. This slot is greater than the height of a letter, and is provided with a double channel 16 along its lower edge 17. The glass 18 is disposed in the inner channel 16' and this glass may extend throughout the entire length of the slot 15 or extend through a portion of the slot. The upper edge of the glass 18 may be protected by a channel 19, and the channel 19 is spaced a slight distance below the upper edge of the slot 15.

In Figure 4 I show three interchangeable letters 20 spelling the word "The". Each letter is preferably made from sheet metal and is provided with a hook-shaped top channel 21. Figure 5 illustrates how each letter may be disposed in place. The dotted line position illustrates how the letter is held while being passed through the space between the upper edge of the slot 15 and the channel 19. The letter is moved horizontally until the hook-shaped portion 21 reaches the channel 19, whereupon the latter may be permitted to drop by gravity, and will assume a vertical position. The lower edge of the letter is then moved into the channel 16''. The letter is now securely held against accidental movement, and at the same time may be moved laterally along the slot 15 into the desired position.

Each letter is in reality a stencil, that is, the letter itself is cut out of the metal. It will be seen that when the glass 18 is illuminated by a means hereinafter described, the stenciled letters also will be illuminated.

A slightly modified form of the interchangeable letters and associate mechanism is illustrated in Figure 6. In this figure the front wall 2 of the marquee is provided with the slot 15, and the double channel 16 is hingedly secured at 22 to the lower edge 17 of the slot. This permits the glass 18 to be swung inwardly as indicated by the dotted line position when the letters 20 are changed. Any means for securing the glass 18 in vertical position after the letters have been changed may be used, none being illustrated.

In changing the letters in this form of the invention the employe first swings the glass 18 inwardly, and then removes those letters not needed and substitutes others. The hook-shaped tops 21 of the letters permit the letters to be supported in proper position, and also permit them to be removed laterally if desired. In all other respects this form of the invention is identical to that shown in Figures 4 and 5, and therefore further description need not be given.

In Figures 7 and 8 I illustrate a third form of interchangeable letter. The slot 15 in the front wall 2 of this form of the device is provided with a single up-turned channel 23 on its lower edge 17, and a single downwardly turned channel 24 extending from its upper edge. The channel 24 is deeper than the channel 17. The letter 25 has a glass 26 covering the opening in the metal, and therefore the glass 18 is dispensed with. Figure 8 illustrates how the letter 25 is inserted in the channels. The letter first is held in the dotted line position, and then is swung into a vertical position, while being moved upwardly into the channel 24. This will permit the lower edge of the letter to clear the channel 17. When the lower edge of the letter registers with the channel 17 the letter is lowered into the channel. The letter now will be held between the two channels 23 and 24, and may be moved laterally.

Other types of interchangeable letters may be used without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. The principal feature is the changing of the letters from the inside of the marquee instead of from the outside. For example, the letters may be secured to the glass by vacuum cups not shown, or they may be supported by a thin piano wire suspended along the upper edge of the glass 18.

The means for illuminating the three sides of the marquee is shown in Figures 1 and 3. In Figure 1 I show a single incandescent lamp 27 of sufficient power to illuminate all three sides of the marquee. This light is spaced preferably a considerable distance away from the three sides, and may be used in combination with a reflector 28. Since the light is of high power, and is disposed a considerable distance away from the letters, it will be seen that the letters will be uniformly illuminated. This does away with the disadvantage of providing a number of small lamps disposed directly in back of the letters which is now the practice. The small lamps not only cause the sign to appear spotty, but also require far more electric current than the single lamp 27. It is possible to place a shield of colored gelatin 29 in front of the light 27 and this will color the three signs. Although the drawings do not illustrate a movable color screen, it is possible to provide such a screen and to cause it to continuously move so long as the light is illuminated, and in this way to increase the advertising appeal of the sign.

In Figure 3 I show the three sides of the marquee as each being separately illuminated by an incandescent lamp. The lamps are shown at 30, and each is provided with a reflector 31, for directing all of the light toward a single side of the marquee. It is obvious that colored sheets of material may be placed in front of these lights for changing the general appearance of the sign.

The cutting down of the large number of lights to one or three lights reduces the cost of wiring to a minimum. Also repairs can be more readily made. Should a light burn out it may be replaced readily from a position within the interior of the marquee.

It will be seen from the foregoing that I provide

a marquee or other sign that will offer no obstruction to the street, and will provide a greater safety to the public and to the employe. The device also will save considerably in the cost of electric current for illuminating the sign, and the lighting effect will be more even than is possible where a number of lights are used. The marquee also offers a storage space for the letters, and this cuts down the breakage of the letters during the changing of the sign. The visibility of the sign is increased due to the uniform lighting effect, and the entire arrangement offers many novel color changes. The glass **18** preferably is frosted, or made translucent, and the glass **26** forming the letters in Figure 7 is also made translucent.

It should be noted that the storing of the letters within the interior of the marquee and the changing of the letters by a person positioned therewith, not only obviates the inconvenience and hazard of changing the letters from the outside, but it also results in a considerable saving of time in the actual changing of letters because the marquee itself provides its own storage space.

The permanent lettering and design effects on the marquee may be illuminated with neon lights. A flasher, not shown, is usually used in connection with these neon lights and it is customary to place it on the roof of the marquee where it is subject to weather conditions, dirt and dust. The flasher requires attention, needs to be oiled, and the brushes must be changed from time to time. It is possible to place the flasher within the marquee where it will be protected from the elements and where it will be more convenient to service it.

The interior wall of the marquee may be painted white and this will act as a reflecting surface for the light rays. This will greatly increase the illumination of the letters. It is obvious that the letters can be illuminated by lights disposed directly in back of them as is now the practice instead of providing a single illuminating means or three different sources of illumination. The principal features of the invention are the changing of the letters by a person positioned within the marquee, and the storing of the letters within the interior of the marquee.

While I have shown only the preferred forms of my invention, it should be understood that various changes or modifications may be made within the scope of the appended claims without departing from the spirit of the invention.

I claim:

1. A marquee extending from a building and overhanging a pedestrian thoroughfare, said marquee being provided with a hollow interior large enough to receive a person and a floor extending from the building to the walls of the marquee, interchangeable letters disposed along the walls and being viewable from the outside, said letters being changeable by a person positioned within the marquee, the interior of the marquee also providing space for storing the unused letters.

2. A marquee extending from a building and overhanging a pedestrian thoroughfare, said marquee being provided with a hollow interior large enough to receive a person and a floor extending from the building to the walls of the marquee, interchangeable letters disposed along the walls and being viewable from the outside, said letters being changeable by a person positioned within the marquee, the interior of the marquee also providing space for storing the unused letters, and a single illuminating means for uniformly lighting all of the letters on all of the sides.

3. A marquee extending from a building and overhanging a pedestrian thoroughfare, said marquee being provided with a hollow interior large enough to receive a person, the sides of the marquee being provided with slots, letters movable through the slots by a person within the marquee, and means for supporting the letters while disposed on the outer surfaces of the sides.

4. A marquee extending from a building and overhanging a pedestrian thoroughfare, said marquee having an interior large enough to receive a person, the sides of the marquee having hinged, letter supporting, sections adapted to be swung inwardly when a person positioned within the marquee desires to change the letters, and a plurality of letters removably securable to the hinged sections.

5. A hollow marquee overhanging a pedestrian thoroughfare provided with sides and an entrance to the interior of the marquee, the interior of the marquee being large enough to receive a person, interchangeable letters disposed on the sides of the marquee and being changeable by a person from a position within the marquee, and storage space for the unused letters provided within the marquee, whereby the person while still within the marquee may remove letters from or add letters to the storage space.

6. In combination, a supporting surface provided with a slot, a glass section covering the slot with the exception of a slight space near the top, said glass having its lower edge swingably secured to the lower edge of the slot, and letters carrying supporting means attachable to the glass when the glass is swung out of the plane of the supporting surface.

WALTER G. PREDDEY.