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L. MANCHAN

2,345,982

CAPPING MEMBER

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Fig. 1

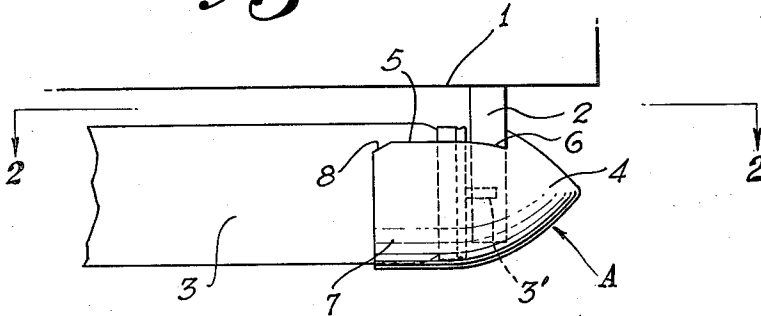


Fig. 2

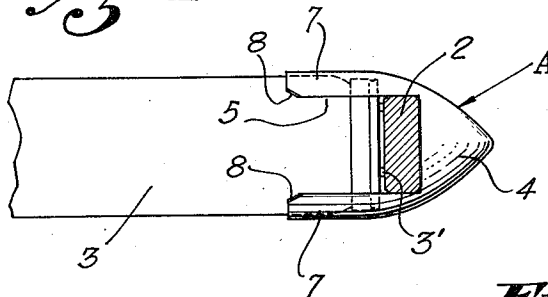


Fig. 4

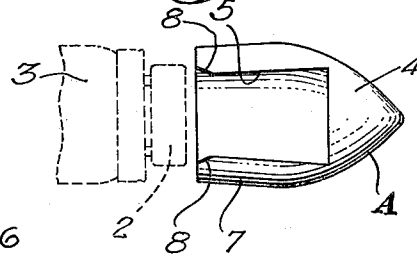
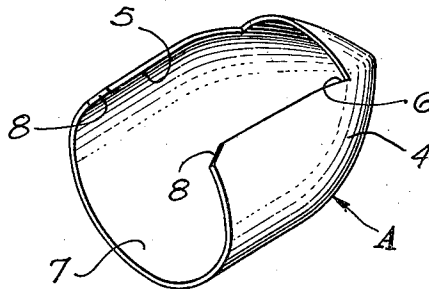


Fig. 3



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,345,982

CAPPING MEMBER

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4 Claims. (Cl. 173—328)

This invention relates to a novel accessory for electric light structures of the kind in which an elongated tubular light producing element is used, as in the so-called gaseous tube or fluorescent type, and in which the tubular element is mounted in a terminal bracket serving to mount and support the tubular lighting element, and also to establish the electrical contacts for the lighting element by the usual pin and spring contact arrangement.

The general object of my invention is to provide a simple and novel capping member for an electric light structure of the type described and which will improve the appearance of the structure, and also serve to materially keep dust and dirt out of the usual pin and spring contact arrangement of such structures.

An object of my invention is to provide a readily detachable and novel capping member for the end or ends of a structure of the kind described, and which is held in position by frictional engagement and which embraces and extends over the terminal bracket and a portion of the light element to provide a more pleasing and streamlined appearance for the assembly.

Another object of my invention is to provide a readily detachable and novel capping member for the end or ends of the lighting element in a structure of the kind described, and which capping member is held in position by frictional engagement, and that will substantially protect the pin and socket contacts carried by the lighting element and holder.

Simplicity of construction, cheapness and ease of manufacture, inexpensiveness, and ease and quickness of attachment and detachment to lighting fixture assemblies now in use, are advantages and objects of my invention.

The invention resides in the article of manufacture by itself, as well as its combination with the terminal bracket and lighting tube associated therewith.

Other objects, advantages and features of invention may appear from the accompanying drawing, the subjoined detail description and the appended claims.

The accompanying drawing illustrates the invention in a form I at present deem preferable.

Figure 1 is a side elevational view of my invention associated with one end of a lighting fixture employing a fluorescent lighting element, and a fragment of which element is shown.

Fig. 2 is a view taken on line 2—2, Fig. 1 and looking in the direction of the arrows.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged perspective view showing my novel capping member.

Fig. 4 is a top plan view of my capping member, analogous to Fig. 2 but in position to be forced into the light supporting terminal bracket and over the end of the fluorescent light tube.

In the form of my invention shown in the drawing the lighting fixture shown usually includes a backing 1, that is secured to a support such as the ceiling or the like and usually conceals the transformer, not shown, a terminal bracket 2 of insulating material depending therefrom and a tubular fluorescent light element 3 having the usual terminal pins 3' extending therefrom and into the bracket 2 where electrical contact is made, and all of which are of usual construction. Such lighting fixtures are in wide use in a variety of forms but a form very generally used in stores and other large roomed structures is of the kind shown in the drawing, the fixture being mounted in or suspended from the walls or pillars, either singly or in groups. In such fixtures as heretofore installed the tubular light is marred by the abrupt termination of the long lines of the light element by the substantially rectangular projection of the terminal brackets or light tube holders 2, and in addition to which the association of the lighting element with the holder is slightly spaced therefrom leaving a gap whereby the terminal pin and spring contacts are unprotected from dust and dirt, and leave an unsightly appearance that is further enhanced by the fact that the terminal bracket 2 is usually black in color, being in most instances made from a hard rubber or Bakelite molding. To remedy these shortcomings and stream-line and greatly enhance the appearance of the assembly, I have invented an end piece or capping member A which, in the form of the invention shown in the drawing, is designed to bring the parallel lines of the tubular lighting element 3 to a graceful point thus giving a more pleasing and streamlined appearance to the fixture, although I have shown the cap as being substantially bullet-shaped, many other forms may be given to the cap, as for example it may be rounded at the end instead of pointed, or fluted along the exterior, or a rosette or other decorative features may be added thereto. Further, while the cap A may be made of metal such as aluminum, copper and the like, and spun or formed as a single stamping; it may also be formed of plastics or other analogous materials or partly of metal and partly of other materials, and in various colors, sizes and designs. The caps A may be plated, painted,

stained or finished with lacquers or, crackle paint finishes. In all cases, however, the portion or skirt associated with the end of the tubular light preferably has sufficient resiliency to obtain a firm grip with the parts with which it engages to be firmly retained in position.

The cap A is shown for the purpose of illustrating my invention as being formed of spun aluminum or other suitable metal and as a unitary element. The cap A is provided with a body portion 4 that has a skirt portion 7 provided with an elongate slot 5, the longitudinal edge portions of which are given added resiliency by cuffing back the inner edge of the slot as indicated at 6 at the junction of the inner edge of the slot and the body 4. The outer ends of the skirt portion 7 adjacent the open end of slot 5 are bent slightly inwardly as shown in exaggerated form in Fig. 4 to obtain a resilient engagement of the capping member with the edges of the terminal bracket 2 when the cap is forced thereover, and for simplicity and ease in manipulation the form of the capping member shown in the drawing has proven very satisfactory in service. The material of the skirt 7 toward the open end thereof being sprung inwardly somewhat as indicated provides a firm grip of the edges of the slot upon the side walls of the bracket 2. The outer or free corners of the slot 5 are cut away to provide a slope 8 that affords a cam surface which engages with the outer edge of the holder 2 and opens out the end of the skirt to the right diameter to guide the skirt over the holder and lighting element 3. The skirt 7 and its slot 5 may be so proportioned that the cap may be retained by frictional engagement of the skirt 7 with the holder 2 and the inner end thereof slightly spaced from the outer diameter of the tube 3 or the cap may be in frictional engagement with the tube and spaced from the holder 2, or the cap may be in frictional engagement with both when the cap is mounted in association with the holder and tube, so as to make a close sliding fit with the tubular lighting element, or with the holder alone or with both the holder and tubular lighting element.

With this arrangement of the capping member it will be noted that the space or gap between the tubular lighting element 3 and the holder 2 is spanned or bridged by cap A, so that the same is reduced to a fraction of that usually present, and the portion not covered is on the top of the assembly and is practically invisible to an observer. Both the appearance and maintenance of the lighting structure are improved both by the covering of the joint or space between the lighting element and the holder and by the more finished contour of the structure.

It will be apparent from the foregoing that I have provided a simple, cheap, durable and satisfactory capping member for fluorescent type lighting structures that materially adds to and enhances the appearance of fluorescent and similar light fixtures, and whereby the fixture is given, by adding my cap thereto, a streamlined and decorative appearance.

In the event the capping member A is made of plastic, it may be made in various colors, and as such member overlies a portion of the illuminat-

ing tube 3, it will pick up light rays therefrom which may be transmitted through the plastic material so as to give the assembly an appearance of an illuminating tube that is illuminated from end to end and over the supporting means therefor. The plastic used in moulding the capping member A may have such characteristics as to carry the light rays from the illuminous tube and still substantially conceal the supporting bracket 2, that is to say shadow effects therefrom within the member A will be substantially eliminated.

I claim:

1. In combination with an electric lighting structure including a tubular lighting element and holding means therefor, an end capping member having a closed end and a cylindrical and inherently resilient skirt portion extending therefrom, and in which said resilient skirt portion is provided with a slot to receive the holding means and to pass over the holding means for the tubular lighting element, and a portion of the lighting element, the width of said slot being such that when the skirt member is slipped over the holding means into assembled relation, the skirt portion, securely retains the capping member in position by frictional and resilient grip of the edges of the slot against the holding means and by the frictional and resilient grip of the cylindrical skirt on the tubular lighting element.

2. An end capping member for use in combination with an electric lighting structure of the type having a cylindrical lighting element such as a fluorescent tube and holding means therefor, said capping member having an end portion and a resilient skirt portion provided with a slot to receive the holding means for the tubular lighting element, the longitudinal edges of the slots frictionally engaging the holding means, and the corners at the outer ends of the slot having an inclined surface facilitating sliding of said skirt portion into assembled relation with the tube and holding means, and expanding the said edges to receive the holding means.

3. An end capping member for use in combination with an electric lighting structure as set forth in claim 2 in which the portions of the material of the skirt member along the longitudinal edges of the slot in the skirt member are afforded additional resiliency by removing material toward the juncture of the inner ends of the edges of the slot and the body of the capping member.

4. The combination with an illuminating structure including a luminating tube and a depending supporting bracket therefor; of an elongate capping member having side walls and being closed at one end and open at its other end and provided with an elongate slot in one side wall thereof, said side walls adjacent said slot being of inherently resilient material, said member receiving said bracket in said slot and extending a short distance over the end of said tube, said member being retained in mounted position by frictional engagement of the side walls with said illuminating structure.

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