

S. E. FLORSHEIM.  
NUMBER DISPLAYING DEVICE.  
APPLICATION FILED NOV. 14, 1908.

916,135.

Patented Mar. 23, 1909.

Fig. 1.

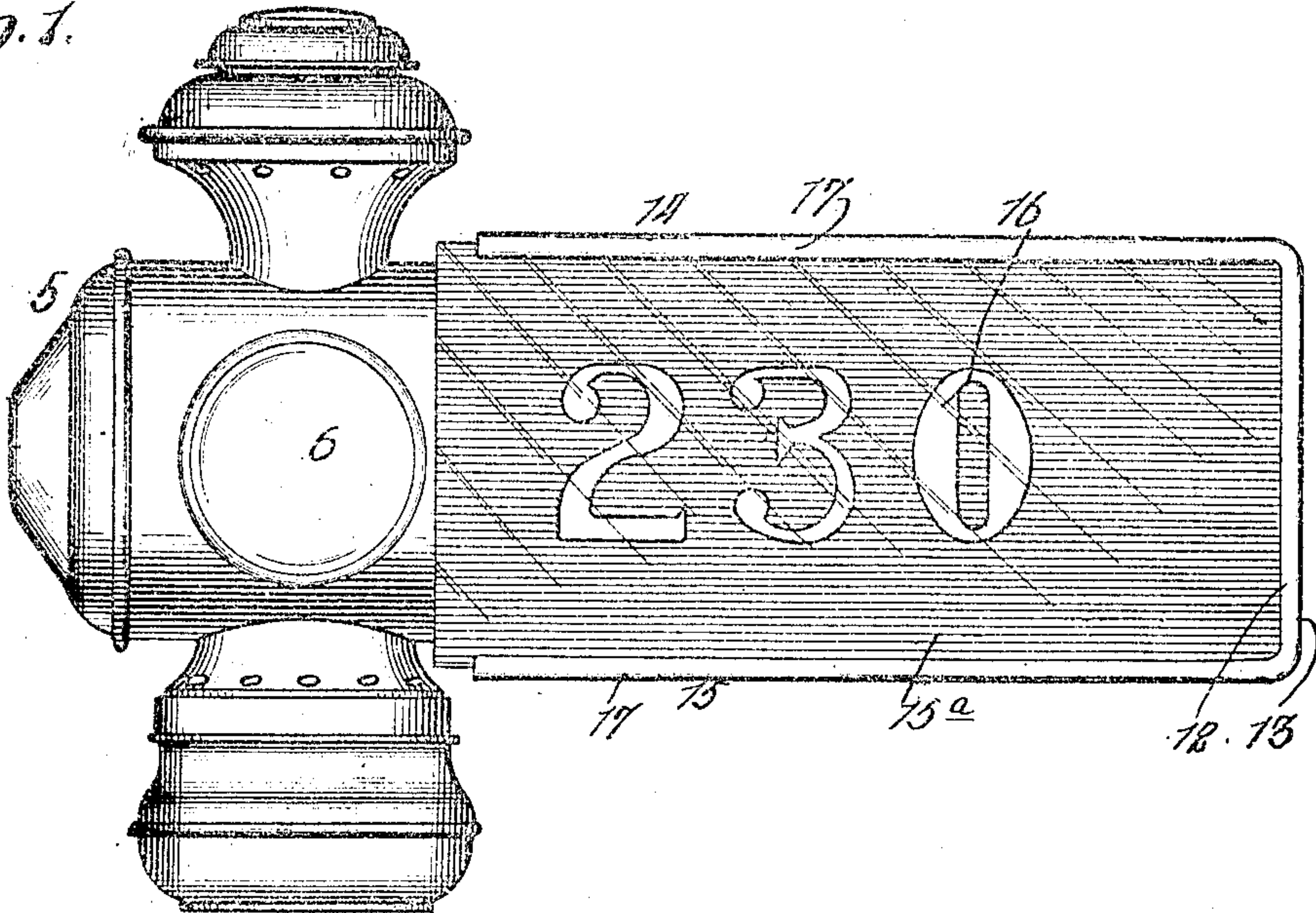


Fig. 2.

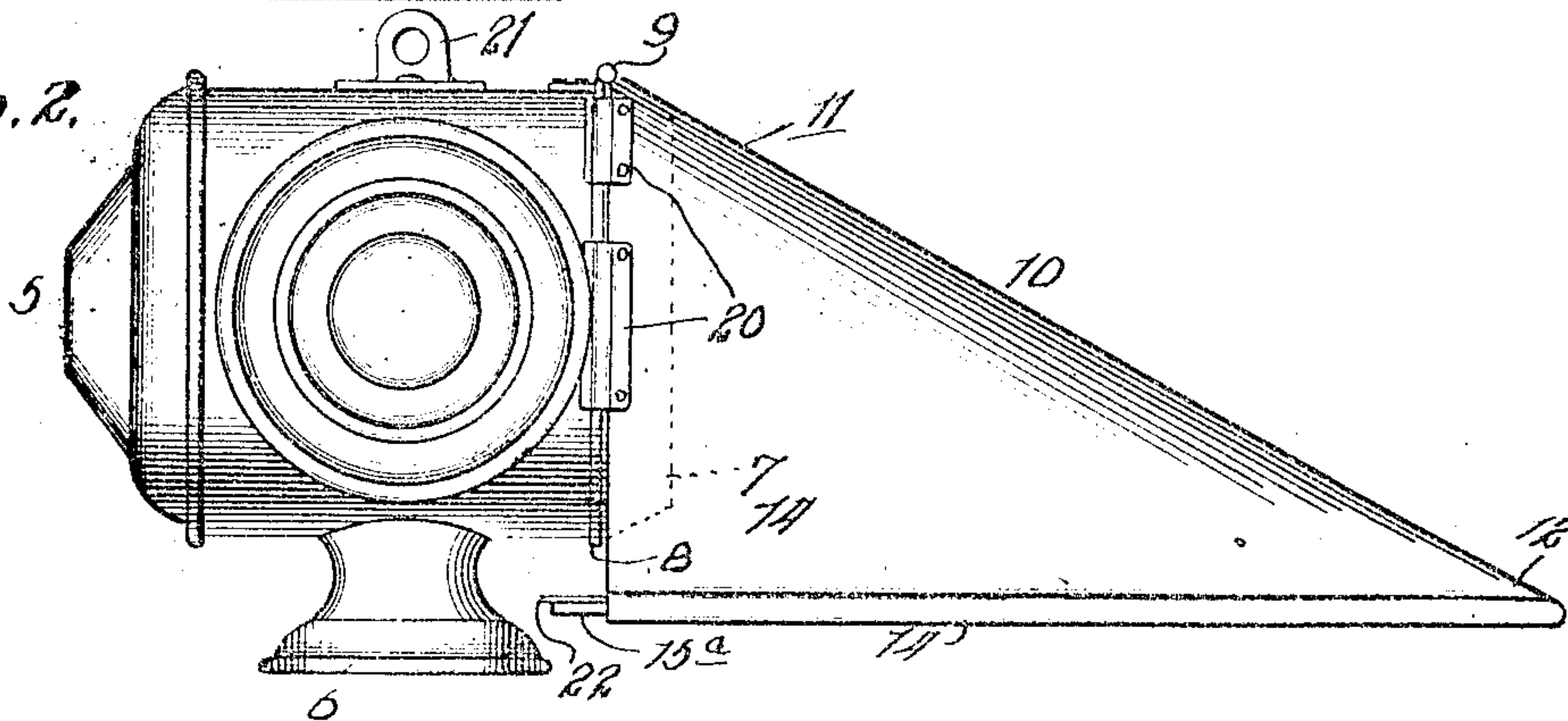


Fig. 3.

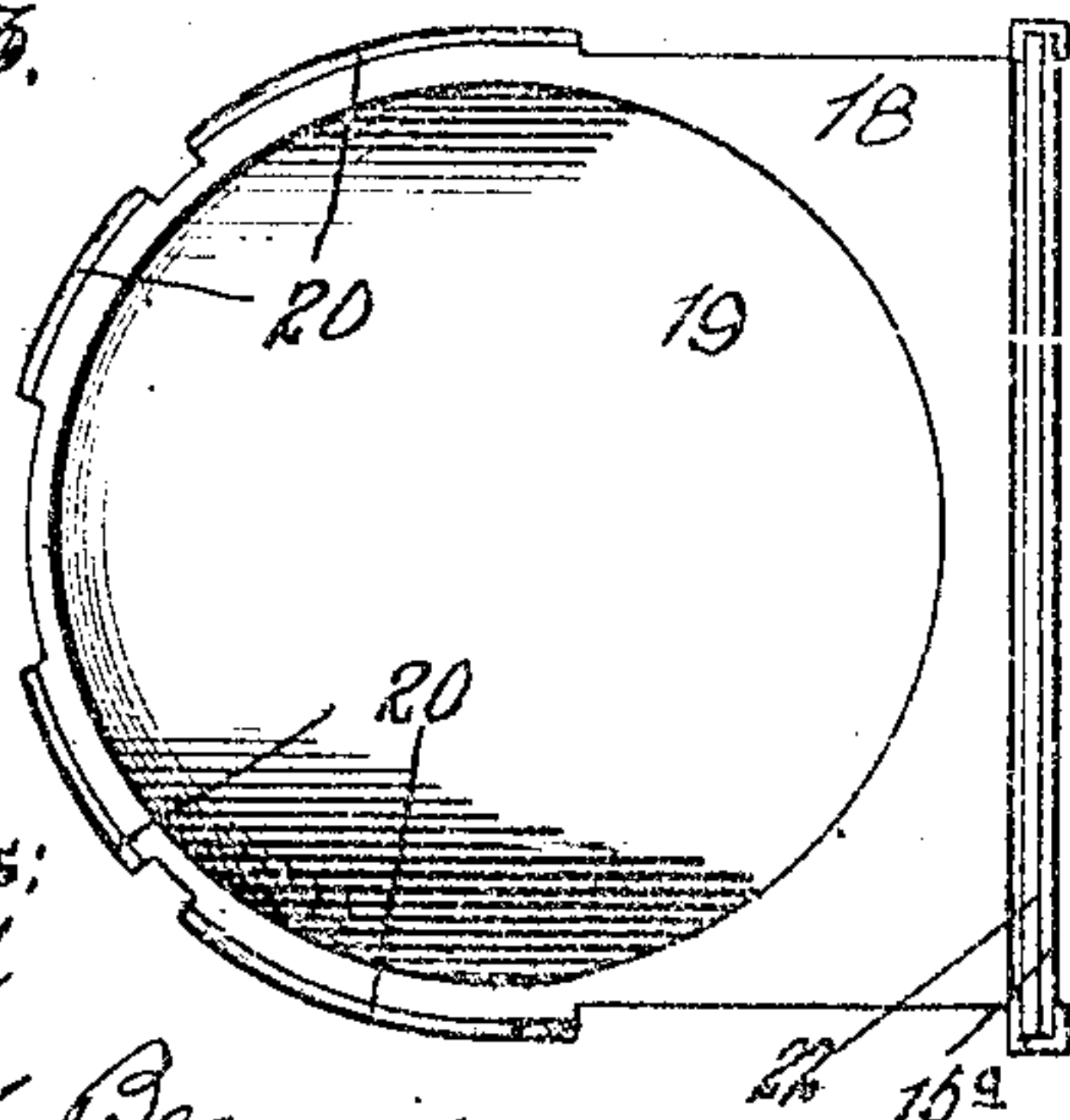
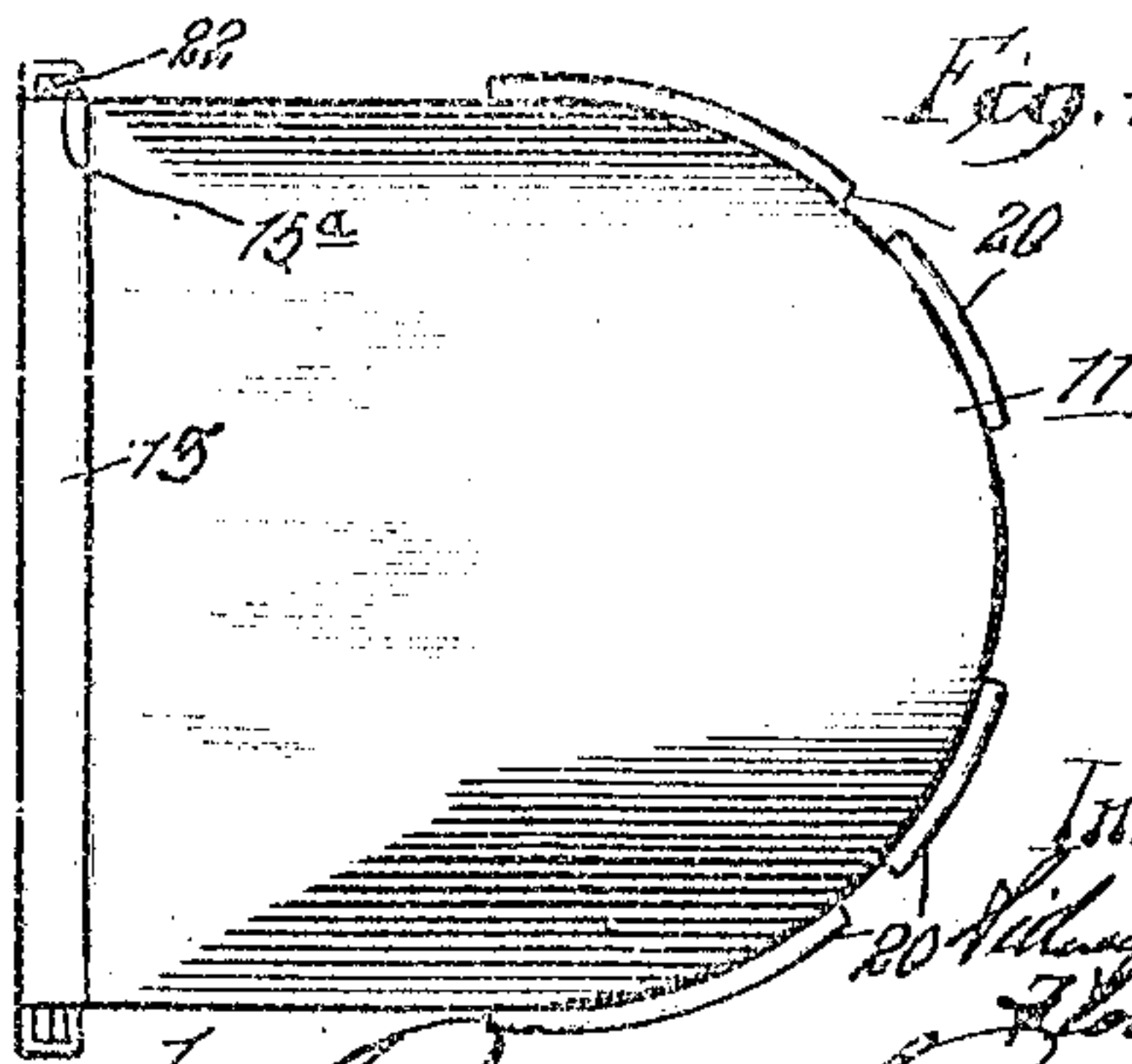


Fig. 4.



Witnesses:

*W. O. Bond*

*Pierce W. Manning*

Inventor

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*by [Signature]*



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

SIDNEY E. FLORSHEIM, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-FOURTH TO SIMON FLORSHEIM, ONE-FOURTH TO LEONARD S. FLORSHEIM, AND ONE-FOURTH TO NORMAN S. FLORSHEIM, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

## NUMBER-DISPLAYING DEVICE.

No. 916,135.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented March 23, 1909.

Application filed November 14, 1908. Serial No. 462,714.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, SIDNEY E. FLORSHEIM, a citizen of the United States, residing at Chicago, in the county of Cook and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Number-Displaying Devices, of which the following is a specification.

In most municipalities and other districts automobiles are required to carry license numbers conspicuously displayed on the rear of the machine, for purposes of identification, and hitherto it has been the customary practice to hang such number plates to a suitable portion of the framework of the machine and below the rear lights, the idea being to display the number in such a manner that it can be distinguished from the rear, which is particularly important in cases of accident or violation of the speed laws, in order to permit proper identification. Experience has shown that the numbers so displayed are usually indistinguishable at night for the reason that the light from the rear lanterns does not shine distinctly on the number plate, very frequently merely serving to dazzle the eyes of an observer, so that identification is impossible.

The object of the present invention is to provide an illuminating number plate so fitted to the rear lantern that the light therefrom will bring out the numbers or other indicating characters with such distinctness as to render identification easy and certain.

A further object of the invention is to so combine the number plate with the lantern that an easy and convenient mounting will be provided for the number plate, thereby obviating the necessity for providing additional attaching means for the number plate.

A further object of the invention is to so direct the light from the lantern that it will clearly illuminate the number plate without tending to dazzle the eyes of the observer, which permits the number to be distinguished at a very much greater distance than is ordinarily possible under present conditions.

Further objects will appear from a detailed description of the invention, which consists in the features of construction and combination of parts hereinafter described and claimed.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a front elevation of an automobile lantern, with the indicating device attached thereto; Fig. 2 a top or plan view of the same; Fig. 3 an inside end elevation of the indicating device; and Fig. 4 an outside end elevation of the same.

The invention is applied to an automobile lantern 5 of any usual and well known type, having a danger light 6, preferably red, which is intended to be displayed to the rear of the machine. The lantern is provided with a door frame 7, which is formed to have a bead or flange 8 around its inner edge, which frame is preferably secured to the lantern by means of a hinge 9 of the usual character.

The indicating device is in the form of a casing 10, the rear side of which is of substantially semi-cylindrical formation at its rear end 11, and extends diagonally forward therefrom toward its outer end 12, which outer end is of substantially flat formation, giving the casing a straight outer edge 13, which edge is in substantial alinement with the front side of the lantern, as shown in Fig. 2. In speaking of front and rear, it will be understood that these terms have reference to the display side of the indicating device and not to the position of the lantern as regards the automobile upon which it will ordinarily be carried. The curved rear side of the casing merges into substantially flat top and bottom walls 14 and 15 respectively, giving to the casing, as a whole, a substantially wedge shape formation flat on its front side and curved on its rear side. The front side of the casing, which is preferably composed of a shiny metal, like tin, is open to receive a number plate 15<sup>a</sup> which is preferably in the form of a glass plate opaqued by black paint or similar opaquing substance, except as to the numbers 16, or other indicating characters, at which points the glass is left clear. Obviously, a plate of metal or similar material having the numbers or characters cut therein, could be employed in place of a glass plate, although the glass is preferable for the reason that it prevents the ingress of mud, dirt or dust into the interior of the casing. The indicating plate is held in position on its top, bottom and end edges by means of flanged guideways 17, which are formed on or secured to the casing around the top, bottom and outer end thereof, per-



mitting the indicating plate to be slipped in from the inner end of the casing adjacent the lantern.

The inner end of the casing is provided with a flat end wall 18, which is cut away to provide a circular opening 19 of a size to permit the circular door frame 7 to be entered thereinto, and the casing, as a whole, is clamped onto the lantern by means of spring clips 20 which are adapted to be sprung over the flange 8 of the door frame, thereby tightly clamping the casing onto the lantern. The lantern is provided on its rear side with a socket 21 of the usual character; which is adapted to be slipped onto a suitable bracket, not shown, on the automobile.

In use, the lantern will be lighted and mounted in the usual manner, and the rays of the lantern will shine out through the door and direct against the curved inner surface of the casing, which is brightened or mirrored to serve as a reflector, and which, being set at an angle with respect to the projection of the rays of light, will reflect the light out through the transparent portions of the number plate, thereby serving to clearly bring out the numbers or other indicating characters thereon. The tapered formation of the casing is one which serves to reflect most of the light directed into the casing, so that the numbers will be brought out with great distinctness, and will be visible at a very considerable distance. The device is one which can be very easily fastened onto or removed from a lamp of the ordinary character, and which does not interfere with the use of the lamp in any way. The casing being clamped onto the door, can be opened and closed therewith, or entirely removed therefrom as occasion may require; and the casing is so arranged that the number plate can be easily removed for cleaning or substitution. Although the invention has been described for use in connection with automobiles, it is obvious that it can be used on other vehicles, or in places where it is desired to display numbers or other indicating characters.

Although the indicating device has been hitherto described for night service, it is intended to serve to display the license number of the automobile during the day time, so that it will not be necessary to provide additional number plates or other indicating devices. For day service, in order to secure the best results, it is desirable to provide a thin white backing plate 22, which is of a size and shape which adapts it to be slipped into the guideways behind the number plate,

in which position it will show through the transparent portions of the number plate, thereby showing such portions of the plate in their distinct contrast with the opaque portions of the plate and serving to bring out the indicating numbers with great distinctness. It is not intended however, to limit the invention to use with such a backing plate, since the reflecting surface behind the number plate will show through the transparent portions of the number plate with considerable distinctness. In speaking of transparent portions, it is not intended to limit the invention to complete transparency of the glass, since it may be desirable to render the glass only semi-transparent, as by frosting or similar means.

What I regard as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. In combination with a lantern, a number displaying device comprising a casing having an inner end wall open to receive the door frame of the lantern, and further comprising a rear wall extending obliquely with respect to the projection of the rays of light from the lantern, the casing being open at its front side, and a number plate removably mounted within the front side of the casing, substantially as described.

2. In combination with a lantern, a number displaying device comprising a casing having an inner end wall open to receive the door frame of the lantern, and further comprising a rear wall extending obliquely with respect to the projection of the rays of light from the lantern, the casing being open at its front side, and a number plate removably mounted within the front side of the casing, and lying in a plane substantially parallel with the projection of the rays of light, substantially as described.

3. In combination with a lantern, a number displaying device comprising a casing provided with an inner end wall having an opening of a size to receive the door frame of the lantern, the casing having a rear wall rounded at its inner end and flat at its outer end and projecting obliquely with respect to the door frame, said rounded wall merging into flat top and bottom walls, the casing being open at its front side, channel guideways on the front open side of the casing, and a number plate removably entered within the guideways, substantially as described.

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Witnesses:

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