

F. L. BRIGGS & G. MORRIS, JR.  
ILLUMINATING IDENTIFICATION DEVICE.  
APPLICATION FILED APR. 6, 1908.

997,960.

Patented July 18, 1911.

Fig. 1

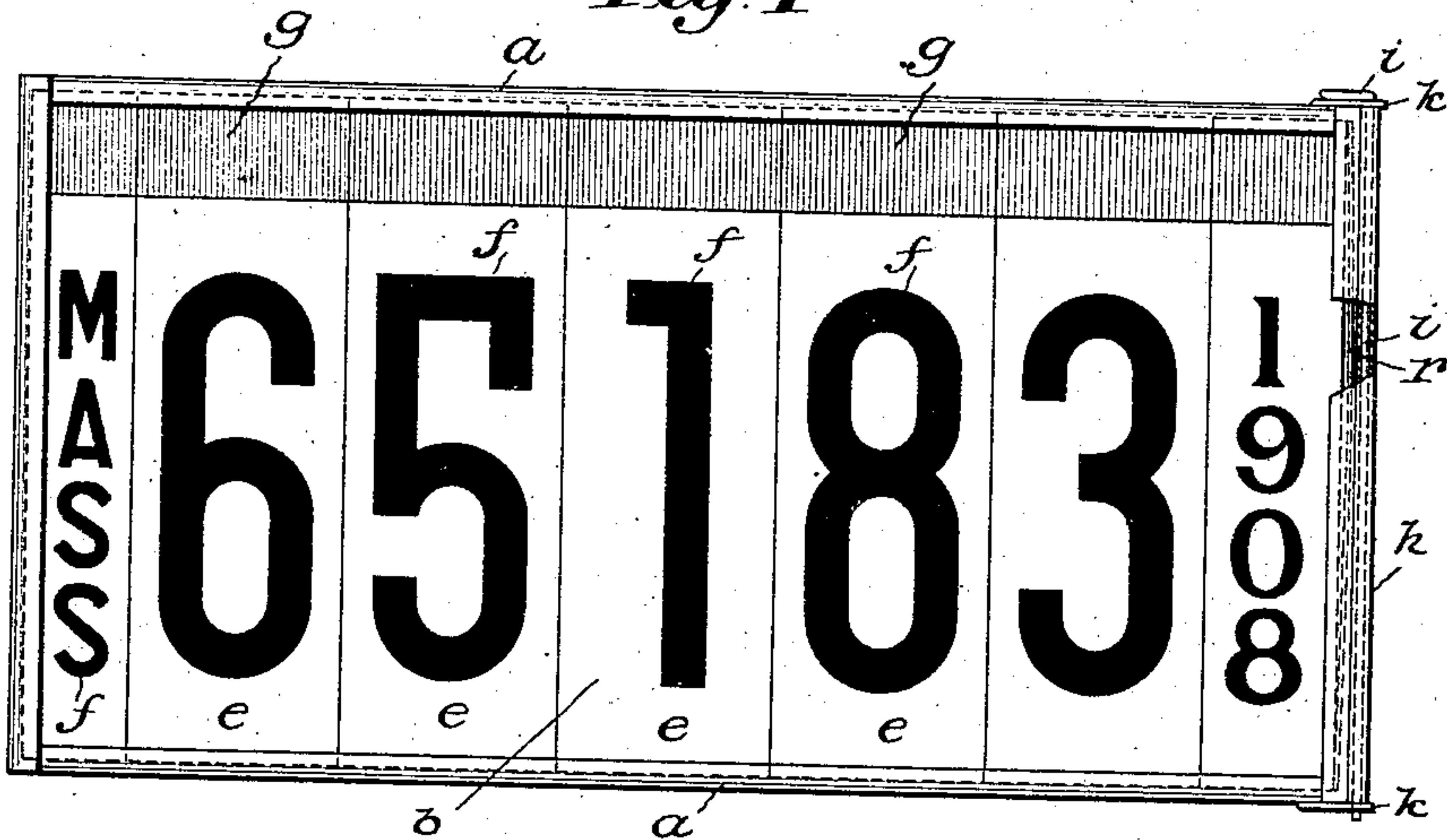


Fig. 2

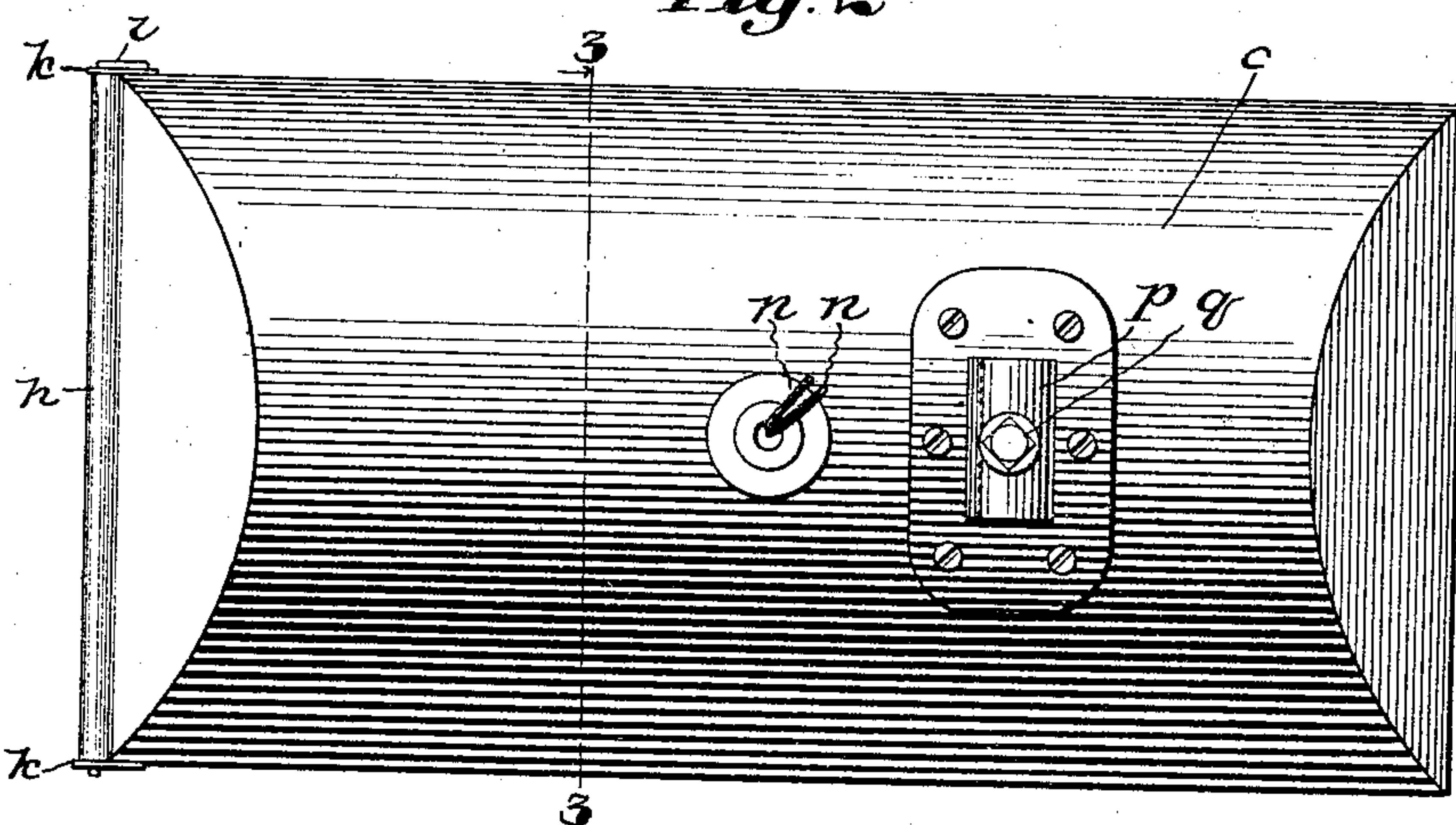


Fig. 3

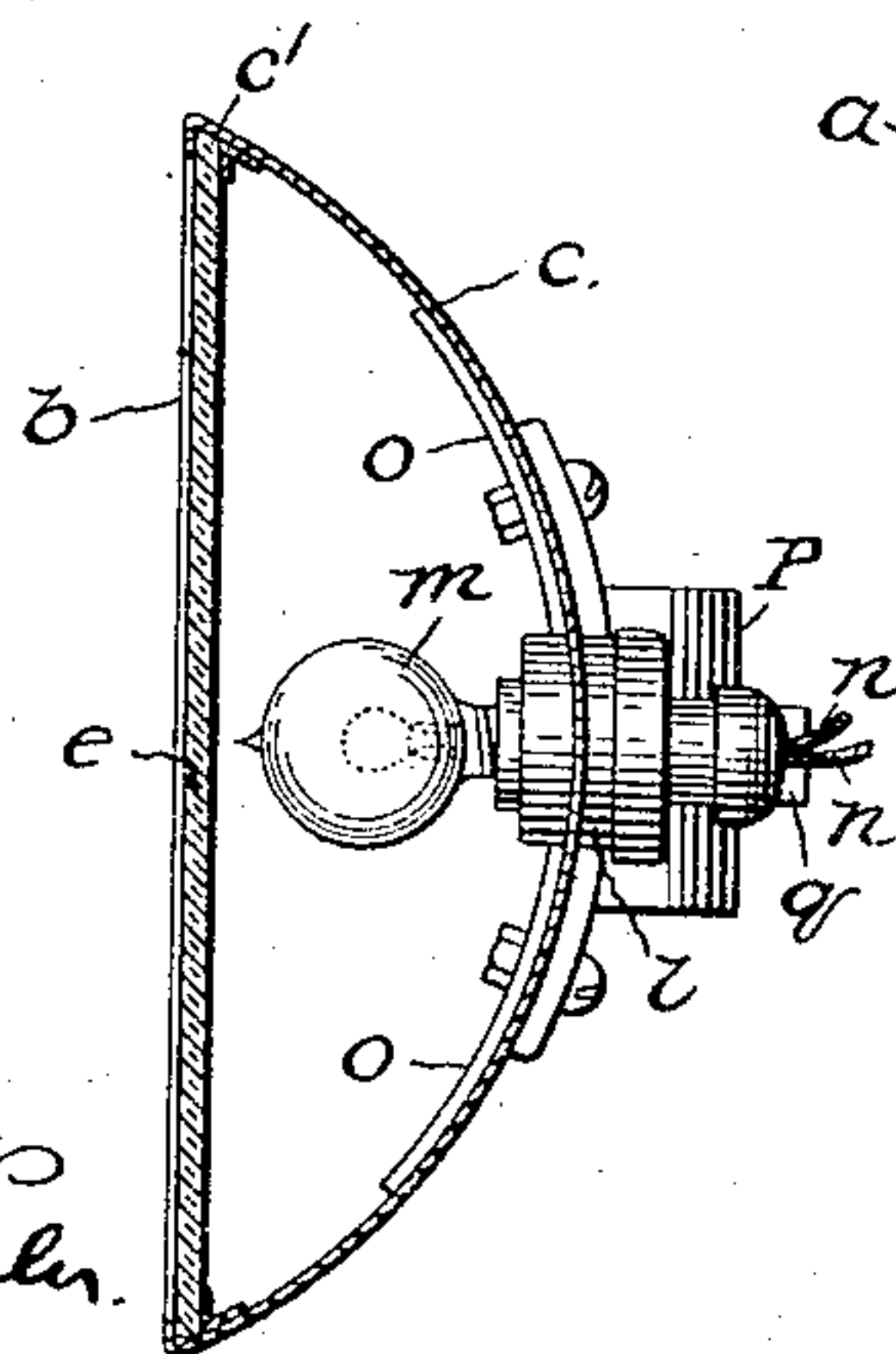
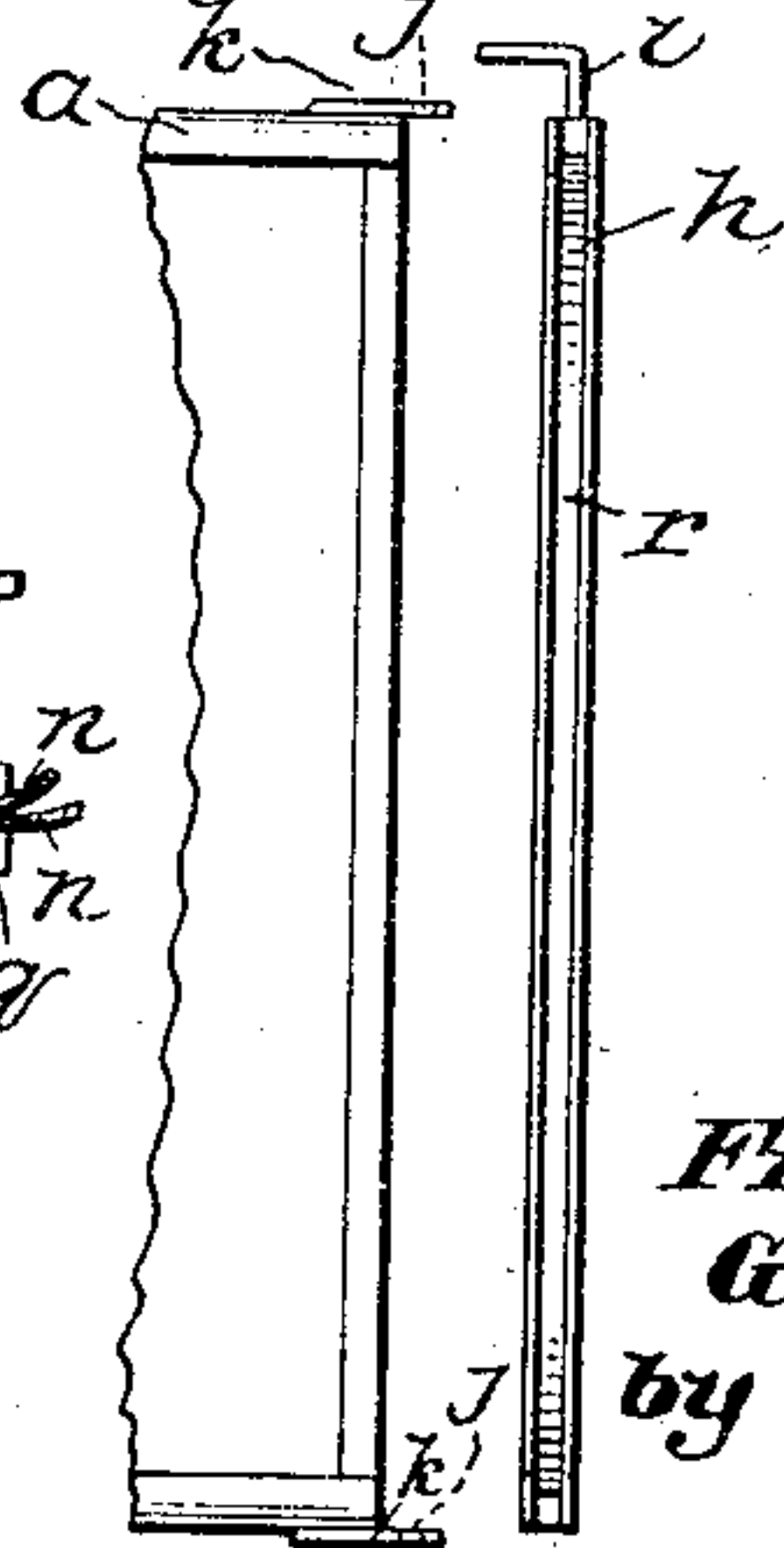


Fig. 4



Witnesses:  
Horace A. Crossman  
Robert H. Kammeler

Inventors:  
Frederick L. Briggs  
George Morris, Jr.  
by Emory & Booth  
Attys.



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FREDERICK L. BRIGGS, OF BROOKLINE, AND GEORGE MORRIS, JR., OF BOSTON,  
MASSACHUSETTS.

## ILLUMINATING IDENTIFICATION DEVICE.

997,960.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented July 18, 1911.

Application filed April 6, 1908. Serial No. 425,499.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that we, FREDERICK L. BRIGGS, of Brookline, in the county of Norfolk and State of Massachusetts, and GEORGE MORRIS, Jr., of Boston, in the county of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts, both being citizens of the United States, have invented an Improvement in Illuminating Identification Devices, of which the following description, in connection with the accompanying drawings, is a specification, like letters on the drawings representing like parts.

Our invention relates to lanterns and more particularly to lanterns for use upon carriages, automobiles and other vehicles or cars.

It is customary, in the above connection, to use lanterns to display certain information such as the license number, owner's name or other designation and, in addition thereto, to display a colored light in connection with or in lieu of a white light.

The laws of practically all the States now require that automobiles be provided with a sign bearing the license or registration number, year thereof, and jurisdiction or State of registration, and a red light upon the rear of the car. Moreover, it is usually required that the sign be suspended from the rear axle for convenience in reading the same in the daytime, and, also that a lantern be secured to the car at night at such point that it will throw such a light upon the sign as will cause it to be visible a certain distance, usually about sixty feet, more or less. As a matter of fact it is practically impossible to so mount a separate lantern that it will illuminate the sign upon the axle sufficiently for it to be read at night except under the most favorable circumstances.

Our invention aims to provide a lantern adapted to display not only the desired danger light, in this case the usual red light, but adapted also to illuminate the sign bearing the license or registration number, the jurisdiction and year or other particular information desired, so that it may be readily seen at night.

In the particular embodiment of our invention illustrated herein,—Figure 1 is a front view of the lantern; Fig. 2, a rear view of the same; Fig. 3, a vertical section on the line 3—3, Fig. 2; and Fig. 4, a detail

view of one end of the lantern and the removable grooved end piece and locking pin therefor.

Referring to Figs. 1 and 3 the lantern comprises, in this instance, an inclosing case *a*, having a flat face *b*, a curved back *c*, and is somewhat longer than it is high. The case is preferably constructed of one piece of metal or other suitable material, provided at the front edge with a groove *c'* or said edges may be provided with other suitable means for holding a plurality of glass or other transparent plates *e*, *e* comprising the front or flat face *b*, referred to, one or more of said transparent plates bearing characters or symbols *f*, *f* of the desired significance. In addition thereto, the face plates *e*, *e* have, in this instance, a red or colored area or strip *g* across one end thereof, either applied to or arranged in juxtaposition to the white glass, or the glass itself may be colored.

In the present illustration the first face plate, at the left, displays the abbreviation "Mass.", denoting the jurisdiction; the succeeding plates display one or more figures comprising the registration number and the opposite end plate, at the right, the year of the registration of the car. Across the tops of the plates the combined colored areas *g* constitute in effect a continuous red strip which serves for the customary rear danger signal. This strip is preferable to the commonly used bull's-eye red lantern, inasmuch as it is distinguishable therefrom; and while the common red or bull's-eye lantern is ordinarily used to warn travelers from all kinds of obstructions and dangers, such as heaps of materials in the road and excavations therein, this lantern serves to distinguish the car or carriage from the obstructions referred to. After the face plates *e*, *e* have been placed in position in the grooves, the substantially U-shaped end grooved piece *h* is adjusted across the end of the lantern face and, by means of a pin *i* inserted through holes *j*, *j* in the ears *k*, *k* on the top and bottom of the case, is locked in position effectually to secure the face plates in place. At its rear the lantern is provided with a lamp socket *l*, secured in an opening in the back wall of the case and adapted to receive a suitable incandescent lamp bulb *m*, and the electric wires *n*, *n* therefor which, in turn, may be connected to a bat-



tery placed in a convenient position in the car, or connected by suitable means to the battery providing motive power for the car. The inside walls of the case may be  
5 polished or enameled to serve as a reflector for the light.

Supporting strips *o, o* may be secured to the inside of the back wall of the case if desired. There is also provided a socket  
10 piece *p*, having a set screw *q*, at the back of the lantern case by means of which the case may be secured to the ordinary post provided therefor upon the car or carriage. A leaf spring *r* is secured in the groove of  
15 the end piece *h* and, if desired, in the corresponding groove at the other end of the case. When the end piece *h* is in locked position this spring will exert pressure upon the edge of the first face plate and thus  
20 force the face plates closely together edgewise, and prevent any tendency to rattle or vibrate.

If any one or more of the transparent plates be broken it may be easily and  
25 quickly removed and a new one substituted therefor. If the car be traveling through a new jurisdiction and it is desired to display the registration number and title thereof the face plates may be  
30 readily removed and new and proper ones, displaying the new number and title, substituted therefor, even while the lamp is lighted. In this way any number of sets of face plates may be easily and economically  
35 provided and carried on hand and displayed when needed.

By our invention the identifying char-

acters are always visible when the lantern is lighted.

#### Claims:

1. An identification device comprising a one-piece casing having a convex rear wall and beveled ends, removable interchangeable information bearing members having each a semi-transparent area constituting in  
40 interchangeable combination, a constant additional information imparting means of substantially the length of said casing, the edges of the casing disposed to receive said information bearing members, illuminating  
45 means therefor, a detachable locking member for attachment to said casing and provided with a tension member to securely lock said information bearing members in  
50 position. 55

2. An identification device comprising an open-sided casing, lighting means therein, interchangeable information, symbol bearing members, holding means therefor in the top and bottom edges of the open side of  
60 said casing, a detachable locking member secured to said casing at one end of said open side and yielding means in said locking member to retain said information bearing members against rattle. 65

In testimony whereof, we have signed our names to this specification, in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

FREDERICK L. BRIGGS.  
GEORGE MORRIS, Jr.

#### Witnesses:

EVERETT S. EMERY,  
ROBERT H. KAMMLER.