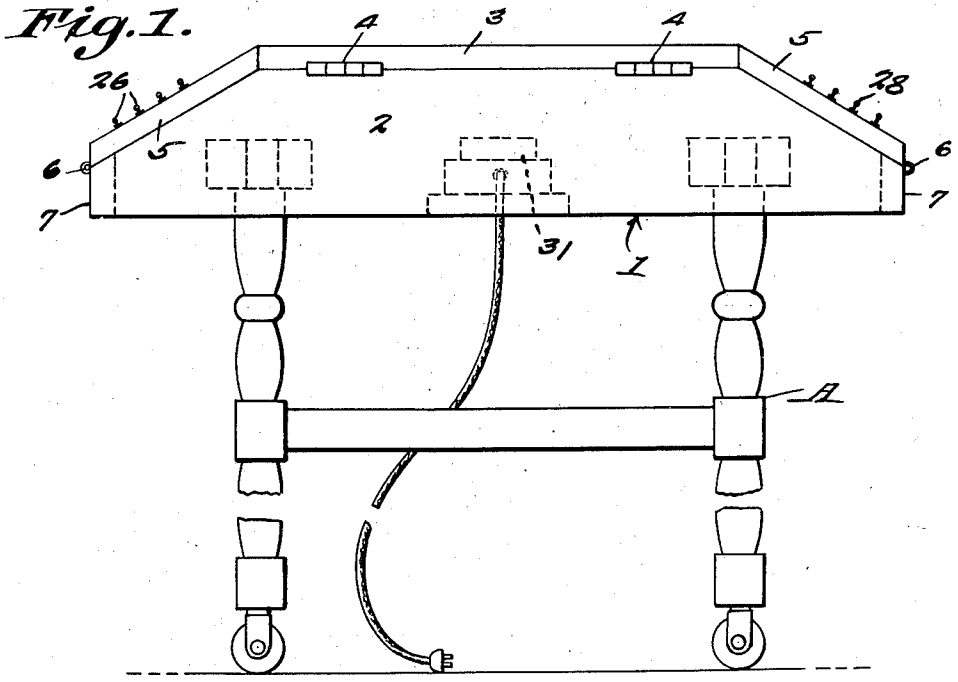
Aug. 15, 1944. L. B. HOUSEHOLDER 2,356,057

GAME APPARATUS

Filed April 5, 1943 3 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.



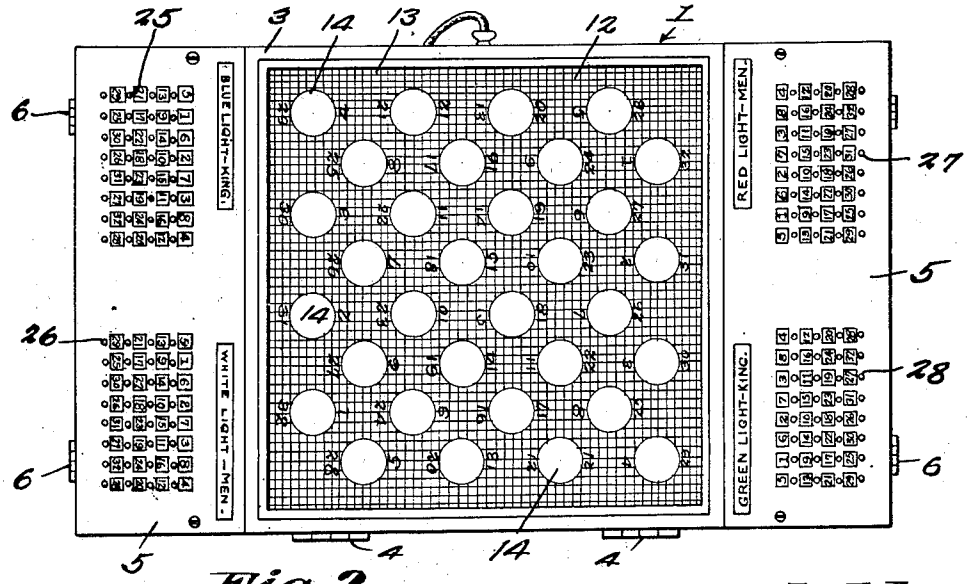


Fig. 2.

L. B. Householder

INVENTOR.

BY

C. A. Snow & Co.

Aug. 15, 1944. L. B. HOUSEHOLDER 2,356,057

GAME APPARATUS

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Fig. 3.

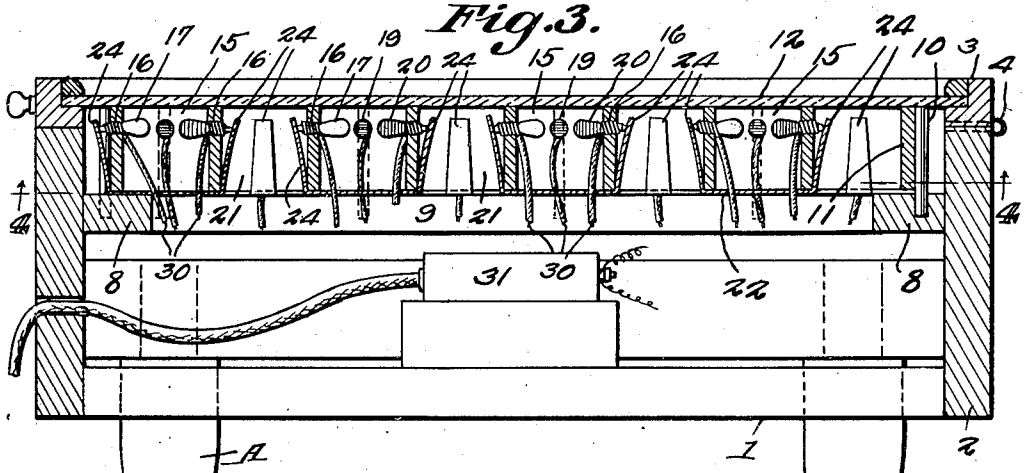
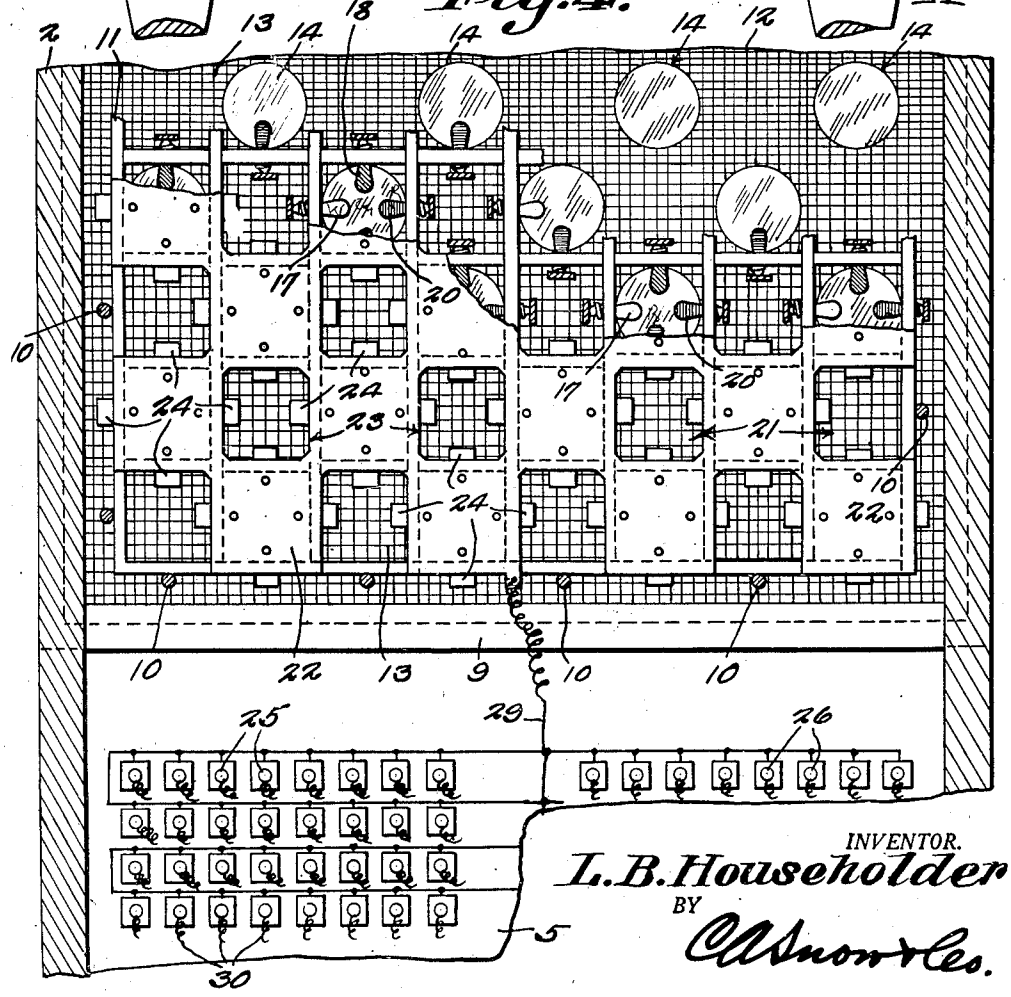


Fig. 4.



INVENTOR.
L. B. Householder
BY
Munn & Co.

Aug. 15, 1944. L. B. HOUSEHOLDER 2,356,057

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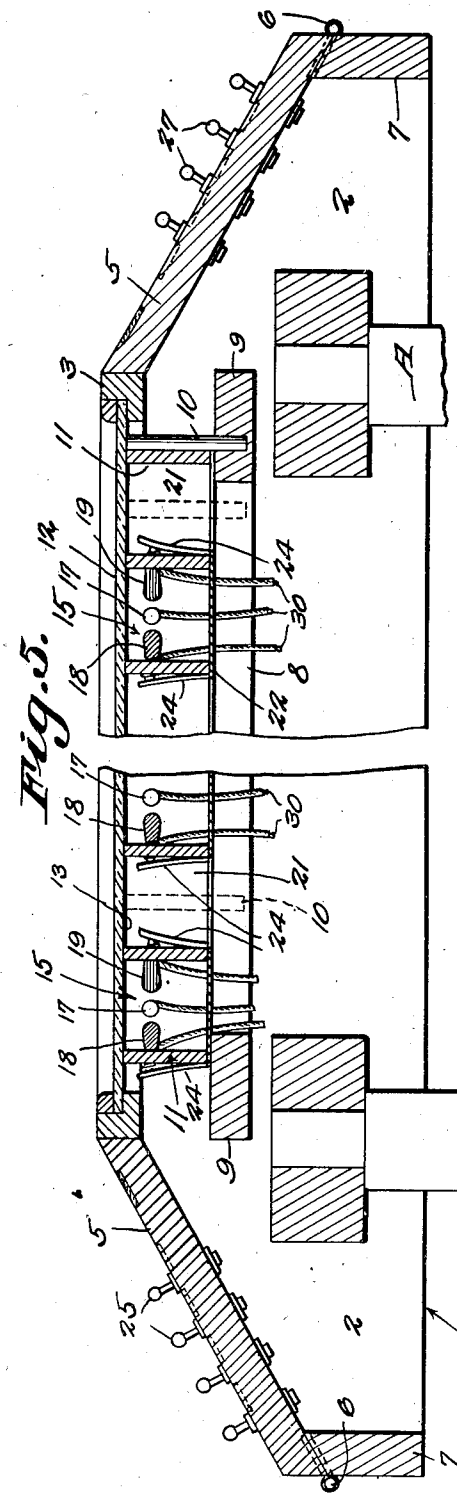


Fig. 5.

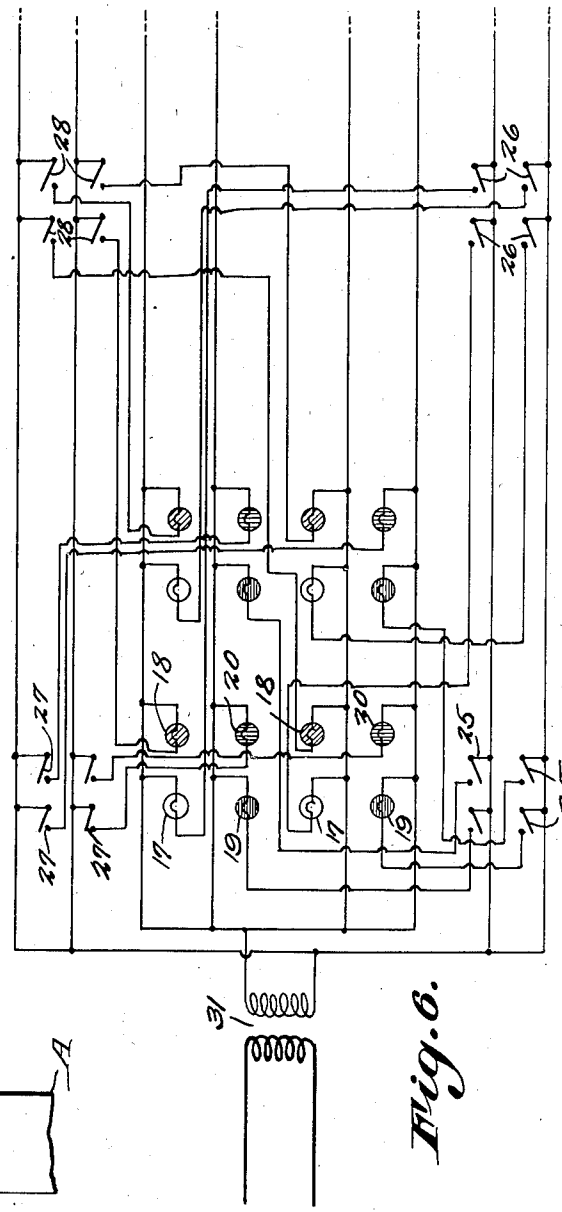


Fig. 6.

L. B. Householder

INVENTOR.

BY Clsworth & Co.

Patented Aug. 15, 1944 2,356,057

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,356,057

GAME APPARATUS

Lawrence Byron Householder, Wellsville, Ohio

Application April 5, 1943, Serial No. 481,924

2 Claims. (Cl. 177—384)

This invention relates to game apparatus and more especially to apparatus for use in playing the game of checkers. An object of the present invention is to provide a game board simulating a checker board in the arrangement of the playing areas but having a playing surface under which lamps of different colors are located whereby, by the selection and actuation of keys in keyboards provided for the players, lights of the colors representing the game pieces of the players can be produced in selected areas of the game board to indicate positions and moves.

A further object is to provide a game apparatus by which the game of checkers can be played without the use of game pieces such as commonly employed and without actually moving the game pieces from place to place so that the less expert players are enabled to learn quickly the different moves and variations of the game by the use of numbers designating the various locations.

A still further object is to provide a game apparatus the use of which tends to increase the pleasure and interest in the game as compared with games played with the old style game pieces and checker board.

With the foregoing and other objects in view which will appear as the description proceeds, the invention consists of certain novel details of construction and combinations of parts hereinafter more fully described and pointed out in the claims, it being understood that changes may be made in the construction and arrangement of parts without departing from the spirit of the invention as claimed.

In the accompanying drawings the preferred form of the invention has been shown.

In said drawings

Figure 1 is a side elevation of the complete apparatus, portions of the supporting structure being broken away and the parts being in position for use.

Figure 2 is a top plan view of the apparatus.

Figure 3 is an enlarged vertical transverse section.

Figure 4 is a section through a portion of the apparatus taken substantially on the line 4—4, Figure 3, and in the direction indicated by the arrows.

Figure 5 is a vertical section through the apparatus taken from end to end with portions broken away, this section being at right angles to Fig. 3.

Figure 6 is a view showing in diagram a portion of the electric circuits employed in the apparatus.

In a selectively-operable means for illuminating an annunciator in a game of the checkers type, and referring to the figures by characters of reference, 1 designates a casing formed of any desired material and of any preferred shape, this being mounted on a suitable supporting structure A. It is preferred to make the casing or housing of the form illustrated, that is to say, with flat side panels 2, a flat lid 3 constituting the playing surface of the apparatus and hingedly joined to one of the side walls as indicated at 4, and end panels or supports 5 which converge upwardly toward opposite edges respectively of the lid 3 and are hingedly connected, as at 6 to end walls 7 connecting the side walls 2, it being understood that these end and side walls are so shaped as to provide tight contacts with the lid and panels when they are closed.

Supporting cleats 8 are mounted on the inner surfaces of the side walls 2 and the ends of these cleats are connected by cross-strips 9 so that a rectangular supporting frame thus is provided the area of which is substantially the same as that of the lid 3. Centering pins or dowels 10 are extended upwardly from the supporting frame 9 at any points desired and serve to center on the frame 8—9 a cellular frame 11 having rows of rectangular cells therein equal in number and arrangement to the squares found on the playing surface of a checker board.

The lid 3 includes, as the main portion thereof, an annunciator plate 12 formed preferably of glass and presenting a display surface. This glass can be provided with an opaque coating on its undersurface as indicated at 13. This coating is removed above those cells corresponding with the squares ordinarily used for playing a game of checkers, it being preferred to leave circular spaces 14 which are transparent and which are in the positions where the black squares of a checker board usually are located. These different openings are all numbered as shown particularly in Fig. 2, the numbering being in accordance with that used when the players are located at points remote from the board. One set of numerals associated with the playing areas are oppositely disposed to the other set of numerals and the two sets are provided for the respective players.

It is to be understood of course that instead of providing the glass or other plate 12 with an opaque coating, it could be made of an opaque material with transparent or translucent portions located to designate the "squares" on which the moves are to be made. It is preferred to make the areas 14 of translucent glass or the like and

not of transparent material so as to permit light rays to pass therethrough without, however, exposing to view the interiors of the cells thereunder.

Each wall of each of the active cells, these being the cells 15 located beneath the areas 14, has an opening therein. In other words four openings 16 are provided. In one of these openings is located the threaded shank portion of a white incandescent lamp 17. In another opening is located the threaded shank portion of a green incandescent lamp 18. A blue incandescent lamp 19 has its threaded shank portion extended into a third opening while a fourth incandescent lamp, which is red, is inserted into the fourth opening, as shown at 20. The end contacts of all of these lamps are extended into the adjacent intermediate cell 21 which is one of the cells located between the cells 15. The cells 15 and 21 are arranged in rows.

A plate 22 of material which will conduct electricity, is supported on the frame 8—9 and extends under the cellular frame 11. This plate has openings 23 therein beneath the respective intermediate cells and from the walls of each of these openings are extended contact fingers 24 one of which is provided for each of the lamp contacts supported in said cell. These contact fingers 24 are so located that when the several lamps are inserted into the openings 16 provided therefor, their end contacts will engage the adjacent finger 24. This is shown clearly in Figs. 3 and 4.

Each of the end panels 5 is provided with two sets of depressible keys indicated at 25, 26, 27 and 28 respectively. The sets 25 and 26 are located on one panel while the sets 27 and 28 are located on the other panel. The number of keys in each set corresponds with the number of squares used in playing a game of checkers, namely 32 and the keys of each set are located in parallel rows of eight each. The keys of the first row carry the numbers as they appear in staggered succession adjacent to the first two rows of squares on the game board. This arrangement is followed throughout the extent of the board so that the four rows of eight keys each carry the numbers of all of the playing areas representing the eight rows of four each. The supports 5, which form part of the casing 1 are located immediately adjacent to the annunciator member 12, and the keys have the staggered relation referred to. Stated differently, the number of keys in each row equals the number of cells in a plurality of cell-rows, thereby to minimize the width of each key-group, measured in the direction of the opposite key-group, and to bring key-manipulators (operators) within each inspection distance of the annunciator. One set of keys is designated "Blue light—King." The second set on the same panel is designated "White light—Men."

On the other panel one set is designated "Green light—King" and the second group of keys carries the designation "Redlight—Men." In other words each player is provided with two sets of keys controlling lights of different colors.

Every key constitutes a switch for closing a circuit to one of the lamps and for the purpose of simplifying the circuit, one contact of every key is electrically connected, as at 29 to the plate 22 so that this plate is included in one side of the circuit to all of the lamps. Individual leads 30 are connected at one end to the threaded shanks of the respective lamps and at their other ends to one contact of the particular key designed to control the circuit to that lamp. In other words a lead connected to one of the red lamps will be connected to a contact of the "Red" key representing the particular playing square in which that lamp is located. This arrangement is followed throughout and it thus will be seen that when any one of the "Red" keys is depressed, the corresponding playing area will be illuminated. It is to be understood of course that the circuit including the several keys and lamps can be supplied from any suitable source, such as a transformer 31, a battery, etc.

Each key can be of any well known construction whereby it will remain in either of two positions so as to maintain a closed circuit or to maintain an open circuit, according to the desires of the player. At the start of the game each player closes the circuits to his "Men" lamps located under the playing areas on which the game pieces usually are placed at the beginning of the game. By then selecting the proper keys in regular turn by energizing the correct lamp in the area to which a move is made and breaking the circuit to the lamp in the area from which the play was made, the course of plays across the board can be indicated, one color designating the men of one player while another color designates the men of the other player. When a player obtains a "king," he changes the color, for example, from red to green or from white to blue so that one color will designate the "king" or "kings" of one player while another color will designate the "king" or "kings" of the other player. It will be obvious that with this arrangement the game of checkers can be played on the board without moving any game pieces and as the various playing areas are designated by numerals, the players will soon learn the positions by number so that the game can be played in the same manner as professionals from remote points if desired. Furthermore this method of playing the game lends interest and pleasure which would not otherwise be attained.

It is to be understood of course that various changes can be made in the arrangement of the parts and the material used all of which will be within the scope of this invention as claimed.

Obviously access can be had readily to the interior of the apparatus simply by raising the hinged lid or the hinged panels which will move about their hinges.

What is claimed is:

1. In a selectively-operable means for illuminating an annunciator in a game of the checkers type, a casing having alternating active and intermediate cells arranged in rows, and to correspond in number and positions with the squares of a conventional checker board, an annunciator member covering the cells and having a display surface constructed to exclude light-rays from the intermediate cells and to permit passage of light rays from the active cells, oppositely-disposed supports forming part of the casing and located immediately adjacent to the annunciator member, a set of lamps of different colors in each active cell, the colors of the lamps in each of said cells being the same as in the other active cells, a conductor plate positioned across the active cells and having contacts extending into the intermediate cells, the lamps being detachably engaged with the contacts, separate groups of keys on the supports, each group being provided for the lamps of one color, and the number

of keys in each group corresponding with the number of lamps of the color associated with said group, and electrical circuits including at one side the respective lamps and at the other side the conducting plate, each key constituting a switch for one of the circuits, the keys of each group being located in substantially parallel rows, the number of keys in each row equalling the number of active cells in a plurality of cell-rows, thereby to minimize the width of each key-group measure in the direction of the opposite key-group, and to bring key-manipulators within easy inspection distance of the annunciator.

2. In a selectively-operable means for illuminating an annunciator in a game of the checkers type, a casing having alternating active and intermediate cells arranged in rows, and to correspond in number and positions with the squares of a conventional checker board, an annunciator member covering the cells and having a display surface constructed to exclude light-rays from the intermediate cells and to permit passage of light rays from the active cells, oppositely-disposed supports forming part of the casing and located immediately adjacent to the annunciator member, a set of lamps of different colors in each cell, the colors of the lamps in each of said cells being the same as in the other active cells, separate groups of keys on the supports, each group being provided for the lamps of one color, and the number of keys in each group corresponding with the number of lamps of the color associated with said group, and electrical circuits in which the respective lamps are located, each key constituting a switch for one of the circuits, the keys of each group being located in substantially parallel rows, the number of keys in each row equalling the number of active cells in a plurality of cell rows, thereby to minimize the width of each key-group measured in the direction of the opposite key-group, and to bring key manipulators within easy inspection distance of the annunciator, each of the intermediate cells being positioned to house the contacts of lamps in the next adjoining active cells.

LAWRENCE BYRON HOUSEHOLDER.