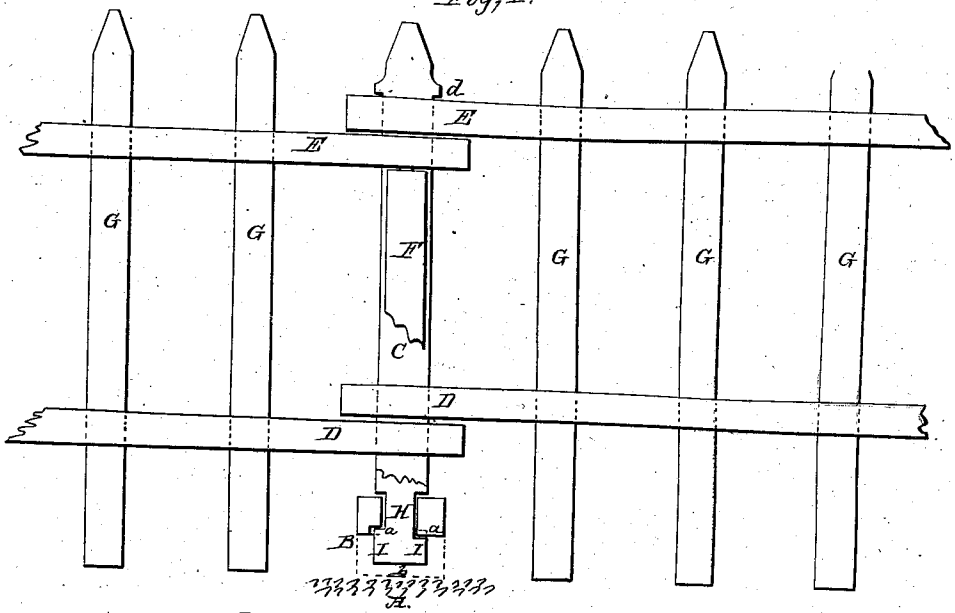
May & Godfrey,

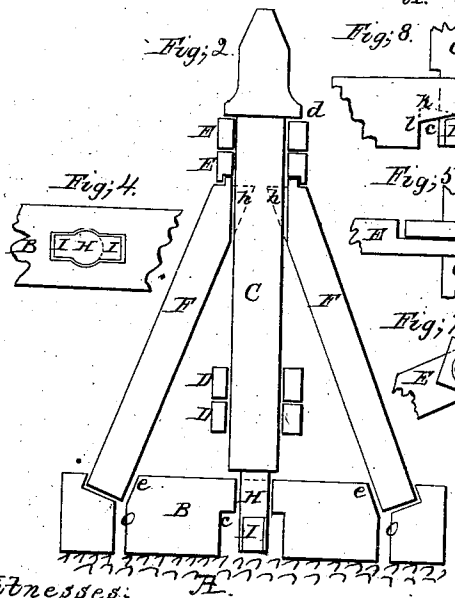
Portable Fence,

No. 48,701. Patented July 11, 1865.

Fig; 1.



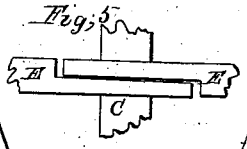
Fig; 2.



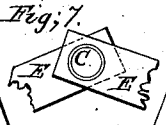
Fig; 8.

Fig; 4.

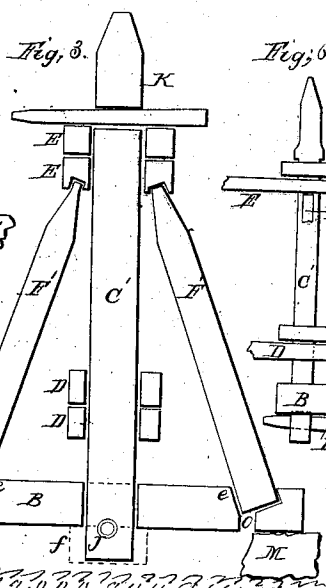
Fig; 5.



Fig; 7.



Fig; 3.



Fig; 6.

Witnesses;
Lyon & Lash
S. A. Hudson

Inventors.
John M. May
Edwin B. Godfrey

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN M. MAY, OF JANESVILLE, AND EDWIN B. GODFREY, OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN.

IMPROVEMENT IN PORTABLE FENCES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **48,701**, dated July 11, 1865; antedated June 23, 1865.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, JOHN M. MAY, of Janesville, Rock county, and State of Wisconsin, and EDWIN B. GODFREY, of Oshkosh, Winnebago county, in the said State of Wisconsin, have invented a new and useful Improvement in a Stationary and Portable Fence for Farm and other Purposes; and we do hereby declare the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, reference being had to the annexed drawings, making part of this specification, the same letters of reference indicating corresponding parts in each figure.

The nature of our invention consists in making a portable or stationary fence with a support that dispenses wholly with nails or spikes, the picket or piece that joins the panels or lengths of fence together being at the same time a kind of key that binds the parts of the fence and its supports firmly together. By removing the picket-key the panels of the fence and their supporting-pieces fall apart, and the fence may be readily removed; also, in so constructing a portable or stationary fence that the picket or piece that joins together the panels of the fence also serves as a pivot to form a kind of hinge or joint to allow the fence to be made in a curved or circular form, or in a straight line, without altering the manner of constructing the fence or its supports; also, in so forming the picket or piece that holds the panels of the fence together that when the joints of the fence become loose from the shrinking of the wood of which the fence is made they are made tight and firm by turning the picket in a horizontal direction, by which movement it acts as a key or wedge.

Figure 1 is an elevation or view of a part of two panels of fence put together, with a part broken away to show the manner of its construction. Fig. 2 is a vertical section at right angles with Fig. 1, showing the braces and base cut through their centers, the picket that connects the panels being left entire. Fig. 3 is a vertical section similar to Fig. 2, showing an equivalent mode of fastening the panels or rails together. Fig. 4 is a top view of a part of the base or sill that receives the picket that holds the panels together. Fig. 5 shows the ends of the rails halved together instead of being placed one above the other, as shown in Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 6. Fig. 6 shows another equivalent mode of making the key-picket. Fig. 7 is a top view, showing an angle at the junction of the rails, and a section of the picket that is used in forming the pivot or joint. Fig. 8 represents a portion of the base at right angles with Fig. 1 and a portion of the picket that with the base forms a wedge or key that holds the fence together.

A in Figs. 1, 2, and 3 represents the ground on which the fence stands.

B is the base or sill that receives the lower end of the picket C, and D D are the lower and E E the upper rails that receive the pickets G G G G G, which rails and pickets form the panels of the fence. Three rails instead of two rails to each panel may be used, every alternate picket passing through the middle and lower rails only in the usual manner.

F F are the braces that, with the picket C and base B, when all are in their places, hold the fence firmly in a perpendicular position. The perforations O O at the bottom of the recess that receives the foot of the braces are to allow water to drain away from the foot of the braces and prevent decay. The upper end of the braces F F in Figs. 1 and 2 are made concave on the part next to the picket C to fit the picket, as indicated by dotted lines at *h h*, and the top of the brace fits the under side of the rail E, as shown; or the upper end of the brace may be made tapering, as F′ F′, to fit corresponding recesses in the rail E, as shown in Fig. 3; or other safe equivalent mode may be adopted to unite the upper ends of the braces to the rails.

In Fig. 1 the base B and lower end of picket C are represented as cut through their centers longitudinally with the fence, showing the neck or wrist H and bits or projections I I of the picket. These parts are also shown in Figs. 2, 4, and 8. The upper portions of the bits I I that come in contact with the base are beveled to form a kind of wedge, as shown in Figs. 2 and 8, and by dotted lines at *a a* in Fig. 1. Fig. 8 also shows the beveled part of bit I, and also the bevel or inclined plane from *j* to *l* in the notch *c* in the base B, while the dotted line from *k* to *m* shows the corresponding wedge

form in the farther side of the notch *c* in the base, to fit the corresponding bevel of the bit I on the opposite side of the picket. Now, as the picket C is turned in a horizontal direction one way the shoulder *d* of the picket C and the base B are drawn toward each other, griping and holding firmly braces F F and rails E E, thus making a firm support for the fence. By turning the picket C in the opposite direction and withdrawing it from the base and the rails the parts are separated, so that they can be readily transported. By this plan of building a fence, either permanent or portable, the use of nails or spikes, and also posts, is wholly dispensed with. It may be observed that the beveled part of the base B, that comes in contact with bits I I or the beveled parts of the bits I I, may be omitted; but both should be beveled, adding thereby greater efficiency to the wedge or key principle, applied as herein described; also, that, the neck H of the picket C being of greater thickness than the bits I I, the picket is kept centrally in place as it is turned, as is shown in Fig. 4; and also that one bit only may be used, but will not impart as much strength as when two are used.

The dotted lines at *b* in Fig. 1 show the shape of the base at right angles with its length when not cut away to form the notch or gain to make room for the bits I I. This notch is also shown at *c* in Figs. 2 and 8.

The picket C also serves as a pivot for the rails and panels at their ends when the fence is needed to be built in another direction than a straight line, as is shown in Fig. 7, and is useful in making stack-yards, small inclosures, and whenever a deviation from a straight line is desired, whether as a field-fence or otherwise.

Fig. 3 shows a mode of keying the base B and rails E E and braces F′ F′. These braces are tapered at their upper ends to fit corresponding holes or sockets in the rail, as shown. Pins J and K in Fig. 3, inserted in draw-bore holes in picket C′, one pin pressing base B and the other pin pressing the upper rail, E, serve substantially the purpose as that of the bits I I and shoulder *d* in Fig. 1. Also, the red dotted lines in Fig. 3 show that a head or shoulder underneath base B may be used instead of the pin J, while in Fig. 6 the picket has a shoulder at *g*, and the pin L underneath base B, to serve the same purpose; but the key-picket C in Figs. 1 and 2 is deemed much the best, being but one piece, instead of three pieces, and the liability to get broken or lost diminished in the same or in a greater ratio.

In Fig. 3 the ends of the base B rest on blocks of wood or stones M, making room for the lower ends of the pickets, also keeping it and the base from the ground. Base B in Figs. 1 and 2 may be arranged in the same manner.

Fig. 5 shows the rails halved together, instead of one being placed on the other, as in the other figures. Either, as desired, may be used.

This fence is deemed of especial benefit on the prairies for subdividing temporary large inclosures having different kinds of crops, also in securing sheep at night where the pasturage is the open prairie, or where pastures are frequently changed. This style of fence is, moreover, very readily manufactured by machinery.

We are aware that panels of picket-fence have been made self-supporting by placing the panels in a zigzag position, the corners fastened together by a picket; but this fence would not stand in a straight line, and we do not claim that or analogous devices to support a fence.

We are also aware that portable fences have been made with a base placed at right angles with the line of the fence and having an upright or piece to receive the boards, and also with braces spiked to the base and upright that receive and hold the boards, the board lapping each other at their ends, where they are held by the upright, thus making it necessary to make the fence straight; and we do not claim a fence constructed with these devices or devices substantially like them; but

What we do claim as our invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. Picket C, or its equivalent, when used in constructing a fence, substantially as and for the purpose described.

2. Braces F F, or their equivalent, when made substantially as described and used in combination with picket C, or its equivalent, and base B, substantially as and for the purposes described.

3. A hinge or joint, when formed by means of picket C, or its equivalent, and the perforated ends of rails and supported by base B and braces F F, substantially as and for the purpose described.

JOHN M. MAY.
EDWIN B. GODFREY.

Witnesses:
JEFFERSON NASH,
S. A. HUDSON.