

[54] **BOARD GAME APPARATUS**  
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[51] Int. Cl. .... **A63f 3/00**  
[58] Field of Search ..... 273/130, 131, 134, 137

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A playing board is divided up into a number of discrete areas or squares. On each of two opposite sides a fortress area is provided. Each of two players has a set of playing pieces one of which is a standard to be defended in the fortress. Each player has three strong-points movable about the board and capable of enhancing the strength of the areas of the board which they cover each of said strongpoints consisting of a flat, square member having nine through openings, each of a size to fit over any one of said playing pieces, whereby said member can be placed over any selected group of board areas, irrespective of whether or not there are playing pieces on one or more of said areas. By movement of playing pieces and strong-points the tactics employed in the besieging and defence of fortresses is simulated.

7 Claims, 12 Drawing Figures

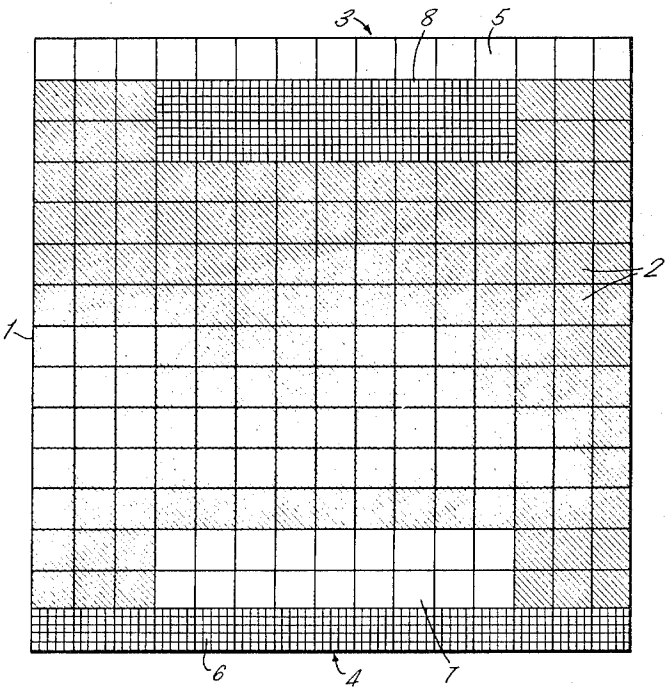
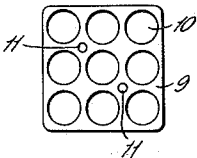
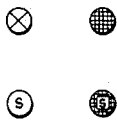


FIG. 1.

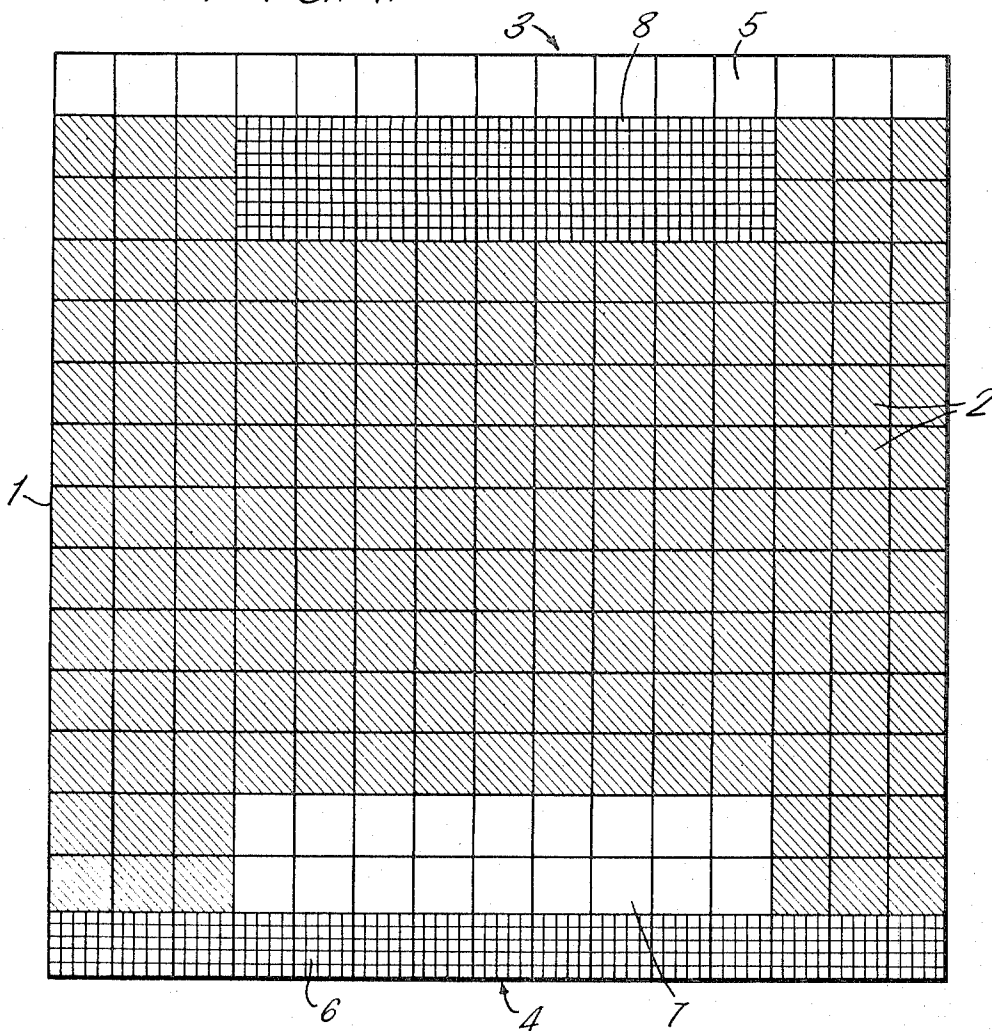


FIG. 2.

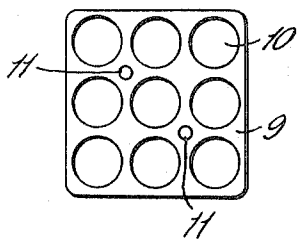


FIG. 3.

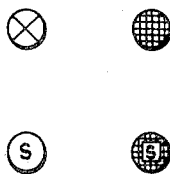


FIG. 4.

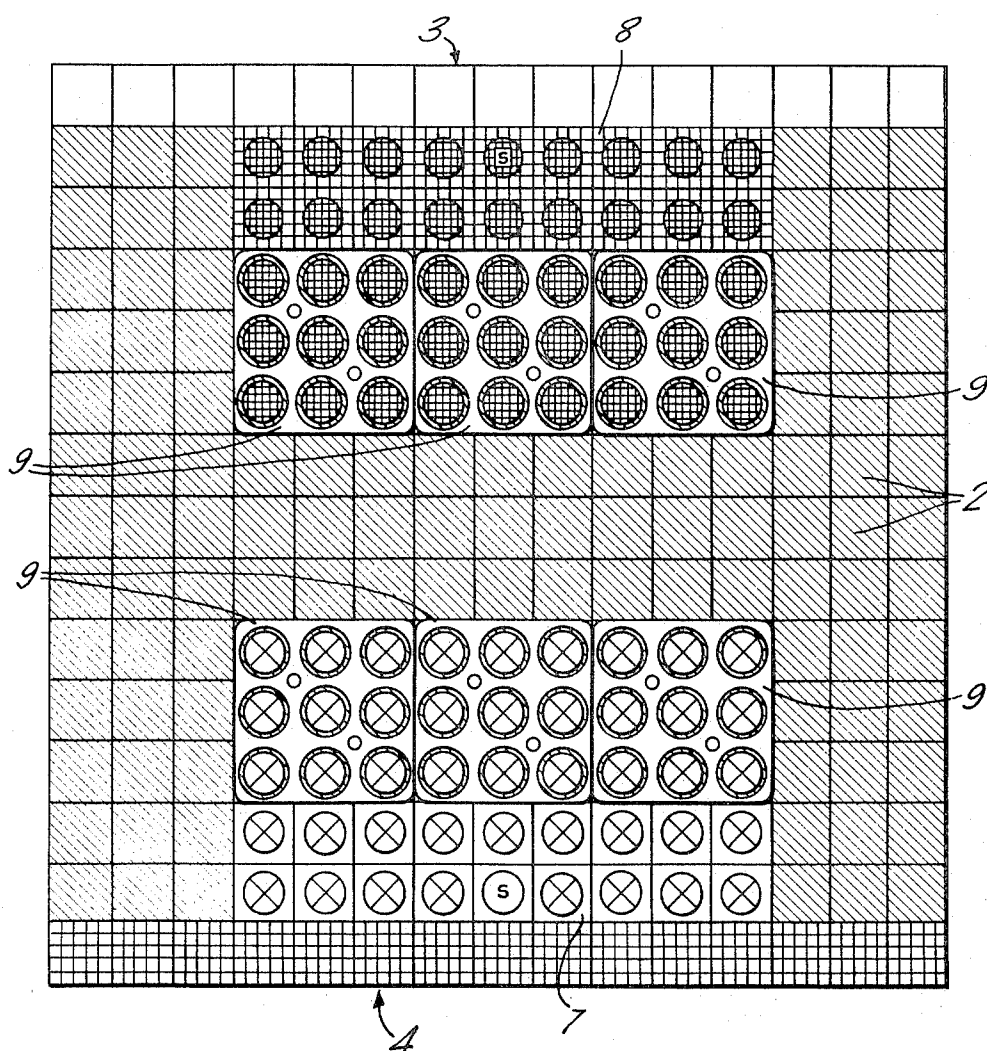


FIG. 5.

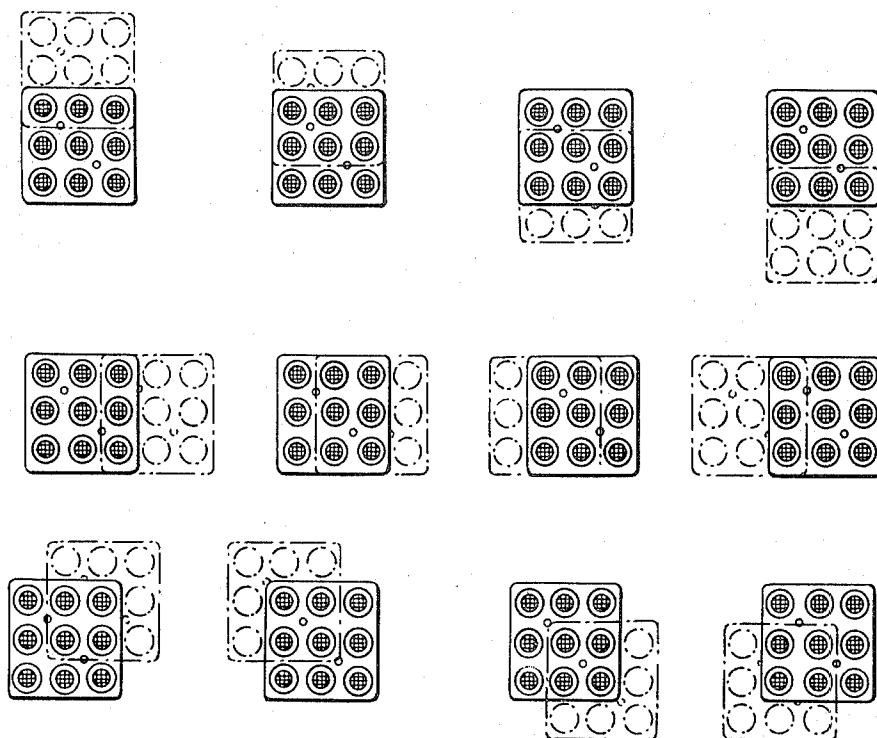


FIG. 6.

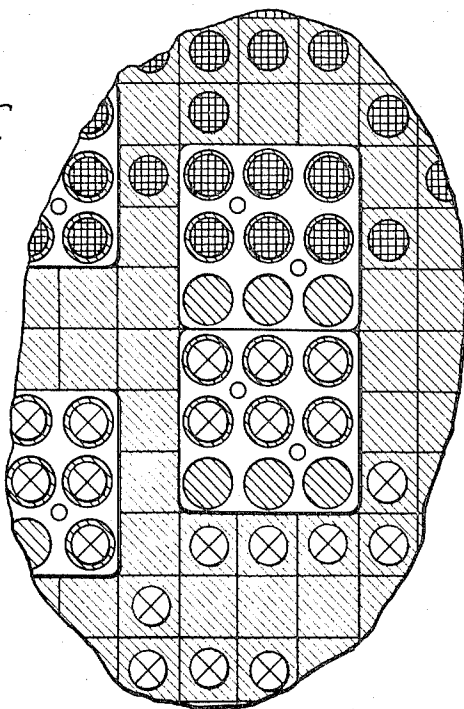


FIG. 7.

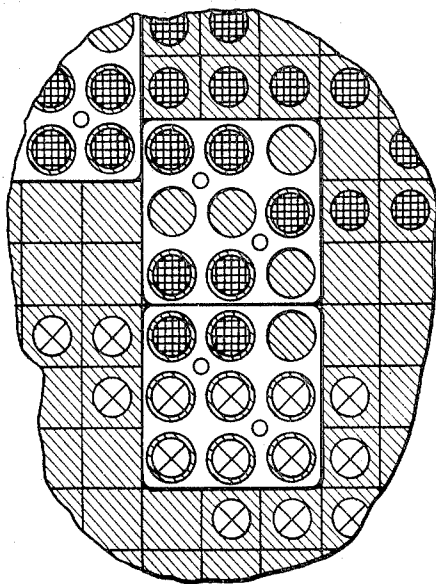


FIG. 8.

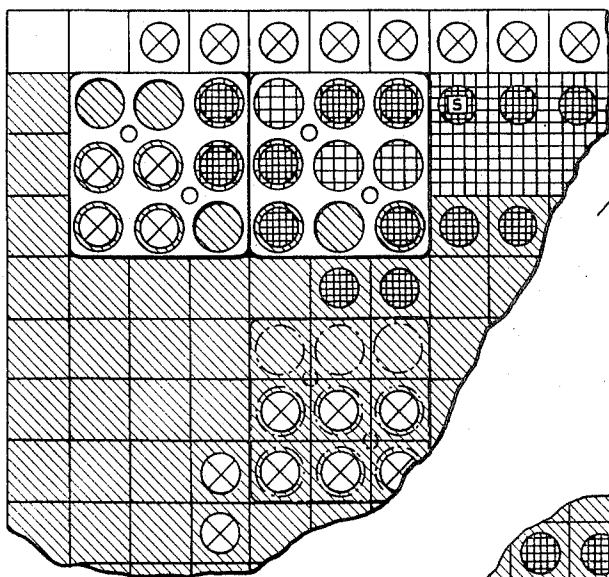
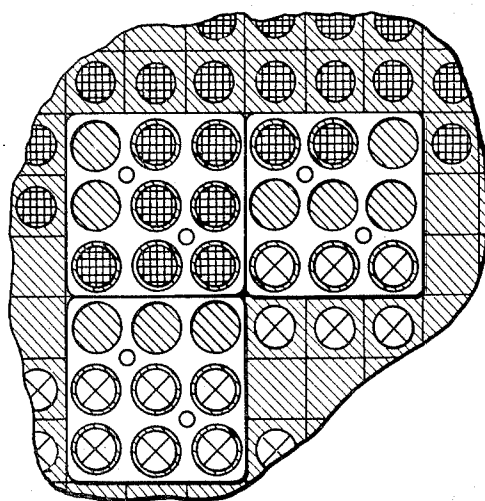


FIG. 9.



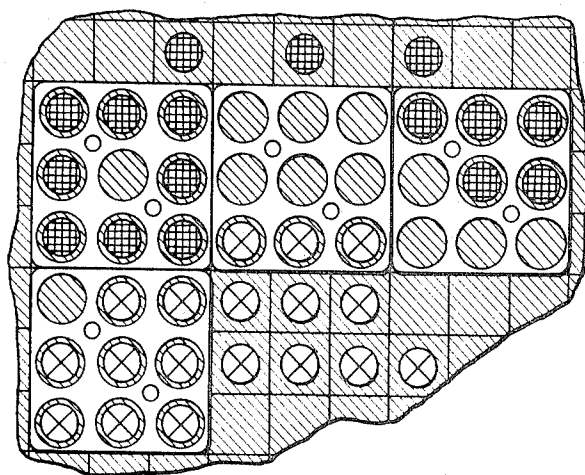


FIG. 10.

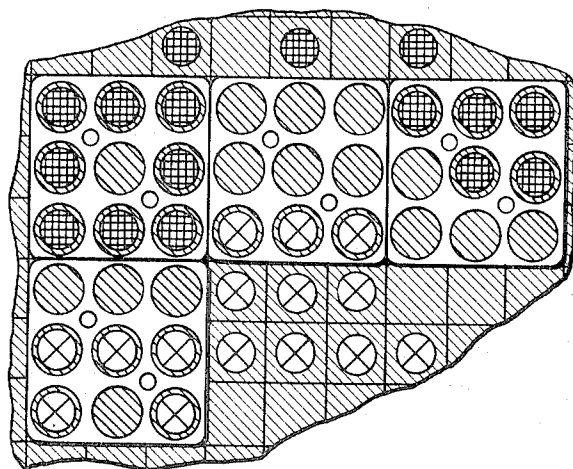


FIG. 11.

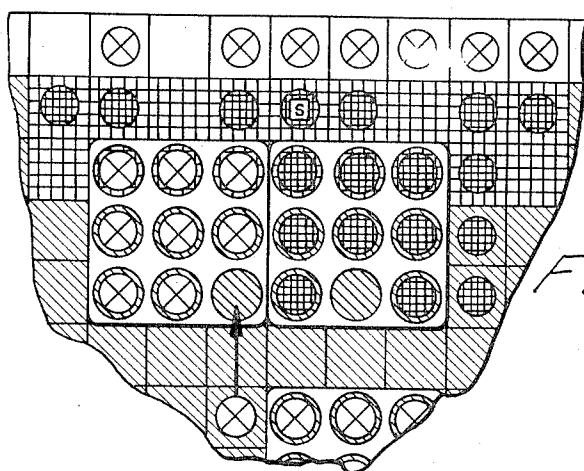


FIG. 12.

## BOARD GAME APPARATUS

This invention relates to board games.

One object of the present invention is to provide a board game for two people which is broadly based on the concept of a battle between the two players. The manner in which the game is played, to be described hereinafter, is intended to be consistent with typical battle situations and the tactics used in dealing with those situations.

Thus in accordance with the present invention there is provided apparatus for playing a game comprising a playing surface divided into a plurality of discrete areas, two mutually distinguishable sets of playing pieces which are movable from area to area during play, and a playing member which is movable about the playing surface during play so as, in association with the playing pieces, to select and enhance the strength of certain of said areas.

The playing pieces may thus represent the men fighting the battle, while the playing surface represents the battle ground. The said playing surface is preferably a board of wood, cardboard, plastics or other substantially rigid material although it can if desired be of flexible sheet material.

The game is intended for two players who each control one set of playing pieces and references hereinafter to "one side" and "the other side" should be construed accordingly.

The said playing member may be in the form of a framework which is movable to cover a selected area or areas as aforesaid. Thus the playing member may be "held" by one side only, with the possibility that the other side may capture the member and use it as their own. For the sake of clarity the aforesaid playing member will hereinafter be referred to as a "strongpoint."

The strongpoint may be designed to cover any number of said discrete areas which is practicable, having regard to the size of the playing surface. However, it is preferred to make the strongpoint in the form of a square, covering nine of said discrete areas.

The manner in which the strength of the areas selected is enhanced will be laid down by a set of rules. For example the rules may direct that the playing pieces of the side not holding the strongpoint are not allowed to enter the areas so selected. Further they may direct that the side holding the strongpoint is allowed greater freedom of movement within the areas selected by the strongpoint than outside them.

At the commencement of play each player may be provided with one or more strongpoints.

In order to enhance the correlation between a real battle and the board game according to the invention each side may be provided with a fortress. The fortress may comprise a predetermined number of said discrete areas and is fixed throughout the game. The areas thus allocated will, like the areas covered by the strongpoints, be enhanced in strength. Thus the playing pieces of each side will be able to move freely within their own fortress while pieces of the opposite side are prohibited from entry except under special circumstances.

The rules may also provide for playing pieces to be "killed" or "captured" by the opposite side. Hence, under certain circumstances, a playing piece may be "killed" and irretrievably removed from the board, whilst under other circumstances the piece may merely

be captured, whence it is removed from the normal playing surface to a further playing surface, or prisoner-of-war camp, from whence it may be released under special circumstances.

Preferably one of the playing pieces of each side is distinguishable from the remainder. This latter playing piece will be hereinafter referred to as the "standard." Thus the first person to kill or capture the other side's standard in accordance with the rules of the game is the winner.

In order that the invention may be better understood, one embodiment thereof, together with a set of rules therefor, will now be described by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings in which

FIG. 1 shows diagrammatically a plan view of a playing surface suitable for use with the board game of this invention;

FIG. 2 shows diagrammatically a plan view of a strongpoint;

FIG. 3 shows representations of the playing pieces and standards which will be used in the remainder of the Figures;

FIG. 4 shows diagrammatically a plan view of the playing surface set up at the commencement of play;

FIG. 5 shows the 12 different moves which can be made by the strongpoint of FIG. 2 which, before the move, contains 9 playing pieces of one side; and

FIGS. 6 to 12 show diagrammatically plan views of part of the playing surface illustrating different situations which can arise during play.

As shown in FIG. 1 the playing surface comprises a square board 1 the upper surface of which is divided into a number of discrete areas or squares 2. If desired, each square may be provided in the centre thereof with an aperture extending downwardly into the board 1. The playing pieces may then be provided with cooperating projections which will enable easy location of the playing pieces in the desired positions.

The game is played with the two players normally facing the respective ends 3 and 4 of the board. The rows of squares 5 and 6 adjacent the ends 3 and 4 of the board are non-playing areas which are used only to house those playing pieces which have become prisoners. The manner in which the prisoners are taken will be described hereinafter.

Each side is also provided with a fortress 7, 8 which is fixed throughout the game. The fortress has the effect of enhancing the strength of those squares 2 which it covers. This effect will be described in greater detail hereinafter.

The remainder of the squares 2 of the playing surface represent the field of battle.

FIG. 2 shows in plan a strongpoint 9. This is a playing member which is movable during play to "cover" nine squares 2 of the board. The nine squares so covered are enhanced in strength in a similar manner to that of the fortresses. The strongpoint consists of a sheet of planar material, for example of wood or plastics, in which are provided nine apertures 10 extending therethrough. The diameter of each aperture 10 is chosen so that a playing piece may be passed through, and the spacing between the apertures is also chosen to suit the size of squares 2. A handle 11 is provided on strongpoint 9 in order that it may be lifted easily.

FIG. 3 shows the representations of the playing pieces which will be used hereinafter to illustrate the

various rules of the game by giving typical situations. It will be assumed that, for the purposes of describing the game, the two sides are respectively White and Black. Thus in the upper part of FIG. 3 is shown a representation of a White playing piece on the left and a Black playing piece on the right. In the lower part of FIG. 3 the standard is represented. The standard on the left is the White standard, that on the right the Black standard.

For convenience the playing surface is coloured to indicate the side to which the various squares belong. Thus, in this case for example, the fortresses 7 and 8 may be coloured White and Black respectively. The "prisoner-of-war" area 6 belonging to the White fortress 7 will then be coloured Black since it will house Black playing pieces when they become prisoners of White. Similarly the row 5 will be coloured White. The remainder of the playing surface, representing the field of battle, may be coloured with a colour suitable to the type of battle which the game is intended to represent, for example green.

FIG. 4 shows the game as set up for play and before any moves have been made. Each player is equipped with three strongpoints 9, each of which encloses nine playing pieces of the appropriate side. In addition to this each player has the squares of his own fortress filled with his own playing pieces, hereinafter referred to as "men," numbering 17. The remaining square of the fortress is occupied by the standard.

FIGS. 5 to 12 of the drawings are described with reference to a set of rules for this game which now follows. It is to be emphasised that these rules are exemplary only, and have been devised as being the best manner for putting the novel features of this game into practice. For the sake of convenience the rules will be numbered consecutively from 1 to 24.

1. A move shall consist either of moving a man or of moving a strongpoint in accordance with the rules.
2. The move of a man may be from any position within the limits of the playing surface over any number of squares in a straight line forward, sideways or backward, but not diagonally, to any unoccupied square within the limits of the playing surface provided that:
  - a. he does not jump over any other man of either side,
  - b. he does not enter or pass through any enemy strongpoint,
  - c. except as provided by rules 18 and 19 he does not enter any enemy fortress.
3. Subject to the limitations of rule 2 a man may be moved either:
  - a. to enter or leave his own strongpoint,
  - b. to enter or leave his own fortress,
  - c. to leave the enemy fortress,
  - d. to pass through his own strongpoint,
  - e. to pass through his own fortress.
4. Subject to the limitations of rule 2 a man may be moved to land on a square occupied by a man of the enemy whereupon the enemy man is "killed" and irretrievably removed from the board.

5. A man commencing a move from within his own strongpoint may land on any unoccupied square within that strongpoint whether or not the move is in a straight line and whether or not he jumps over other men.
6. A man commencing a move from within his own fortress may land on any unoccupied square within his fortress whether or not the move is in a straight line and whether or not he jumps over other men provided that no square within his fortress is occupied by an enemy man or covered by an enemy strongpoint. When the enemy does so occupy or cover any square of the fortress, all moves shall be in a straight line in accordance with rules 2, 3 and 4.
7. A standard may not be moved outside of its own fortress at any time. Within its own fortress the standard has the value of a man and rules 5 and 6 govern its moves over the squares within its own fortress.
8. When the rules provide for prisoners to be taken such prisoners are removed from the playing surface and straightway positioned in the relevant prisoner-of-war camp on unoccupied squares to the captor's choice, but once so positioned prisoners may not thereafter be moved by the captor. Prisoners must be positioned in the prisoner-of-war camp whenever unoccupied squares are available, but prisoners taken at a time when all squares in the relevant prisoner-of-war camp are already occupied become dead and are irretrievably removed from the board.
9. A strongpoint may be moved from wherever it stands to any other position within the playing area provided that:
  - a. before it is moved it contains at least three of its own men.
  - b. in its new position it contains at least three of its own men.
  - c. in its new position it contains a greater number of its own men than men of the enemy.
  - d. no squares in the new positions are already covered by any other strongpoint either occupied or abandoned.

Rule 9 is illustrated with reference to FIG. 5 which shows the 12 alternative moves which can be made by a strongpoint which contains a full complement of nine men. As shown no move may be made which would cause the strongpoint to contain less than three men of the side making the move. Obviously if the strongpoint contains fewer than nine men the number of alternative moves which may be made will be reduced.

10. When a strongpoint is moved to a position where rule 9(c) applies, as part of that move the enemy men contained by the strongpoint are taken prisoner.
11. A strongpoint becomes abandoned when, for any reason, it contains less than three men of one side. Whilst abandoned it may not be moved by either side and may be played over by both sides as if it were open battlefield. By normal moves either side may position three men within an abandoned strongpoint and take it over and thereafter use it as a normal strongpoint. If, at the moment of entry of the third man of one side the strongpoint already contains one or two men of the enemy, these men are taken prisoner as part of that move.

12. When a strongpoint is moved to a position where it abuts an enemy strongpoint on three squares, a front is made, and the number of men in each strongpoint determines its strength for the purpose of rules 15, 16 and 17. In any subsequent move either side may convert a front to a siege as defined by rule 13.
13. When two strongpoints of one army make fronts on two sides of one enemy strongpoint, a siege is laid. The total of men in the two besieging strongpoints is matched against the number of men in the besieged strongpoint to determine strength for the purpose of rules 15, 16 and 17. A siege may be converted to a countersiege as defined by rule 14.
14. When two strongpoints of each army are positioned to form a complex of four strongpoints within which each army is besieging an enemy strongpoint while at the same time having one of its own strongpoints besieged, a countersiege is set up where the total of men in both strongpoints of each army are matched against each other to determine strength for the purpose of rules 15, 16 and 17.
15. A player moving a strongpoint to a position where it completes a front, siege or countersiege where he has the greater strength has threatened an opposing strongpoint but no prisoners may be taken from such front, siege or countersiege as part of that move except as may be possible under rule 10, and the opponent may as his next move remove a threatened strongpoint to a safer position under rule 9 or increase the strength of a threatened strongpoint by moving in an extra man under rules 2 and 3.
16. Once the move resulting in a front, siege or countersiege has been completed, at the commencement of any subsequent move thereafter by either side should the player about to move find he has the greater strength in the front, siege or countersiege he will:
  - a. in the case of a front, take prisoner all men within the enemy strongpoint,
  - or
  - b. in the case of a siege or countersiege, take prisoner all men within one enemy strongpoint to his choice, and that enemy strongpoint will become abandoned before he makes his move.
17. When a front, siege or countersiege exists wherein the strength of both armies is equal, neither side may take prisoners from that position while equality continues, but if one side moves a man into or out of one of the strongpoints involved the situation shall be as though that front, siege or countersiege had just been completed by that side and rules 15 and 16 become immediately effective.

Rules 12 to 17 may be illustrated with reference to FIGS. 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11. It will be appreciated that rules 12, 13 and 14 relate to the formation of a front, siege and countersiege respectively while rules 15, 16 and 17 relate to the action which should be taken under various situations occurring when a front, siege or countersiege has been so formed.

Thus FIGS. 6 and 7 illustrate the action taken when a front is formed as defined by rule 12. The situation posed in FIG. 6 is that White has made a front in which both strongpoints each house six men, and thus, by rule 17, no prisoners can be taken while the equality contin-

ues. The next move is to be made by Black. Black should anticipate that White will take advantage of the position that enables him to move an extra man into the White strongpoint on each of his next three moves whereas Black needs two moves per man. Black can move one man forward ready to enter the Black strongpoint to ultimately equalise White's seventh man, but cannot hope to equalise an eighth man in time. Black would hence be wise to move his strongpoint to the left, right or backwards.

The situation posed in FIG. 7 is that White has made a front of six White against five Black. To complete this move White now takes prisoners the two Black men enclosed by his strongpoint (Rule 10) Black can then move an extra man into the Black strongpoint to establish equality at six men each, but thereafter White can move a seventh man into his strongpoint in one move whereas Black needs two moves for his seventh man.

The Black strongpoint can retreat one line and the White strongpoint will not follow as this would make a front of three White against six Black, but White could take two more prisoners by moving his strongpoint one line to the left and one line forward.

If the Black strongpoint moves one line to the right White could either follow to make a new front of six White against four Black, or move two lines left and one line forward to take one more prisoner.

A siege position as defined in rule 13 may be illustrated with reference to FIG. 9 in which White had made a front of six White to six Black. Black then moved in a seventh man and White countered by moving his right strongpoint forward to lay a siege. To complete this move White now takes two prisoners (Rule 10) from his right strongpoint and leaves a siege of nine White against seven Black. Black is now forced to move his strongpoint or allow White, under Rule 16, to take seven prisoners and leave the strongpoint abandoned (see Rule 11).

Rule 14 defining a countersiege may be illustrated with reference to FIGS. 10 and 11. The situation shown in FIG. 10 is that a front existed of eight White against eight Black when White moved his right-hand strongpoint to lay a siege of 11 White against eight Black. Black then moved his second strongpoint to a position on the right of the siege where it enclosed five men and converted the siege to a countersiege of 11 White against 13 Black. White is now the weaker party and he can take no prisoners from the position he originally established. White cannot, in one move, equalise his strength with Black, but under rule 15 he may move his strongpoint containing three men back one or two lines to safety and leave a front of eight against eight. If, perhaps for tactical reasons, White makes a move elsewhere on the board and allows the countersiege to continue, then before making his next move Black will have the choice of taking either three prisoners from the right-hand White strongpoint or eight from the White left-hand strongpoint, whichever best suits Black's plan of campaign, and that strongpoint will become abandoned. (Rule 16).

The situation shown in FIG. 11 is that Black made a front of eight Black against five White and White countered by moving his right-hand strongpoint forward to lay a siege of eight against eight where White could thereafter increase his strength by three extra men in three moves whereas Black can only add one man in two moves. To combat this threat Black moved his sec-

ond strongpoint to a position on the right of the siege where it contains five men and completes a countersiege of 13 Black against eight White. White is now in difficulties and cannot avoid losing one strongpoint. If White's lefthand strongpoint is moved to safety there remains a siege of 13 Black against three White, if White's righthand strongpoint retreats there remains a front of eight Black against five White, and if White makes any other move which leaves the countersiege standing rule 16 will allow Black a choice of from which strongpoint he will take prisoners and leave that strongpoint abandoned before making his next move.

18. When a strongpoint is positioned so that it covers any square or squares of the enemy fortress

a. a man already within that strongpoint may move in a straight line into the fortress subject to the limitations of rule 2(a) and 2(b) and with the benefit of rule 4.

b. a man may pass through his strongpoint into the fortress subject to the limitations of rule 2(a) and 2(b) and with the benefit of rule 4.

19. When an abandoned strongpoint covers any square or squares of a fortress, men may pass through that abandoned strongpoint into the enemy fortress subject to the limitations of rule 2(a) and 2(b) and with the benefit of rule 4.

20. A man already positioned within the enemy fortress may make straight line moves in that fortress subject to the limitations of rule 2(a) and 2(b), and all benefits of rules 3(a), 3(c), 3(d) and 4.

21. Prisoners may be released from the prison-of-war camps as part of any normal move when:

a. a man lands in the line immediately adjacent the prisoner-of-war camp at the enemy's end of the board (see FIG. 1) on a square abutting a square in the prisoner-of-war camp which contains a prisoner. Release is effected as part of that move by the prisoner leapfrogging over that man in a straight line into the next adjacent line at the enemy's end provided that the square on which he should land is not covered by an enemy strongpoint when his escape is blocked, but if the enemy strongpoint is subsequently moved while the man remains in the releasing position, the prisoner may then escape before the next move thereafter is made. Under this rule a prisoner may leapfrog to an unoccupied square of his own strongpoint which covers the square on which he should land and he may land on a square occupied by an enemy man when the enemy man is "killed" as in rule 4.

b. a strongpoint is moved to a position where any of its squares cover squares in the line immediately adjacent the prisoner-of-war camp at the enemy's end of the board abutting squares in the prisoner-of-war camp which contain prisoners, when all such prisoners may escape as part of that move by moving one square in a straight line into unoccupied squares of that strongpoint. In this method of escape a prisoner may not jump over other men, and if the square in the strongpoint on which he should land is already occupied, then his escape is blocked, but if the strongpoint remains in the releasing position and in a subsequent move the square on which the pris-

oner should land is unblocked, as part of that move the prisoner may escape.

Rule 21(b) may be illustrated with reference to FIG.

8. The situation is that White has moved a strongpoint from the dotted position to the new position to enclose four White and two Black men. To complete this move White will now take the two Black men prisoner and then release two White prisoners from the prisoner-of-war camp.

When the move is complete White will have laid a front of six White against five Black, and as the White strongpoint now covers squares on two lines of the Black fortress, once the Black strongpoint is moved, two lines of White men can leave their strongpoint and move on normal straight-line moves in the Black fortress.

22. When a player moves a strongpoint into a new position he may not as his next move thereafter replace the strongpoint in the position from which it was last moved.

23. A standard is captured when:

a. a man of the opposing side moves in accordance with rules 18, 19 or 20 to land on the square occupied by the standard.

b. an opposing strongpoint is positioned under rule 9(c) so that it contains the standard.

c. the standard is positioned in a strongpoint involved in a front, siege or countersiege and prisoners are taken in that strongpoint under rule 16.

24. When a standard is captured the game ends with victory to the side making the capture.

Rules 23 and 24 may be illustrated with reference to FIG. 12. The situation shown enables White to capture the Black standard within four moves.

White's first move is to position an extra man in his strongpoint as shown by the arrow. Black cannot get a ninth man into his strongpoint on his next move and will therefore move his strongpoint, and the most likely move would be one line back to enclose and protect his standard.

White's second move is his strongpoint one line forward when he takes two prisoners and then release two of his own men from the prisoner-of-war camp as part of this move. There now exists a front of eight against eight.

If Black moves a ninth man into his strongpoint White's third move will be to move his right-hand strongpoint forward two lines to lay a siege of 11 White against nine Black. Black can now only move his strongpoint to the right as he is blocked in other directions. If he moves one line to the right his strongpoint will contain nine men and the White strongpoint would contain five White men only if it followed by moving one line to the right.

White would, however, have a choice for his fourth move, as he could move his strongpoint under the rules one line to the right where it would enclose five White men and three Black, and as part of this move he would take the three Black men prisoner, and since one of the three men captured is the Black standard, this is the end of the game. Alternatively, by moving the top right-hand White man (a newly released prisoner) one square to the right he 'kills' the standard.

What I claim is:

1. Apparatus for playing a game comprising a playing surface divided into a plurality of discrete areas, said playing surface further including means defining two

mutually distinguishable fortress areas of equal size arranged on opposite sides of the playing surface, two mutually distinguishable sets of playing pieces which are movable from area to area during play, and a playing member which is movable about the playing surface during play so as, in association with the playing pieces, to select and enhance the strength of certain of said areas, said playing member being in the form of an open framework movable to cover a selected number of said discrete areas, the construction of the framework being such that it can be moved onto and away from an area occupied by a playing piece without the need to move such playing piece separately.

2. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said framework is square.

3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said framework is arranged to cover nine discrete areas.

4. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of

said sets of playing pieces has the same number of playing members.

5. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4 wherein each set comprises three playing members for each player.

6. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein means define an area on each of two opposite sides of the playing surface, in addition to said mutually distinguishable areas, designated a prisoner of war camp whence captured playing pieces of an opponent are transferred.

7. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of the two sets of playing pieces includes one piece having identifying means thereon whereby it is distinguishable from the others of the same set, capture of the distinguishable playing piece of an opponent constituting an object of the game.

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