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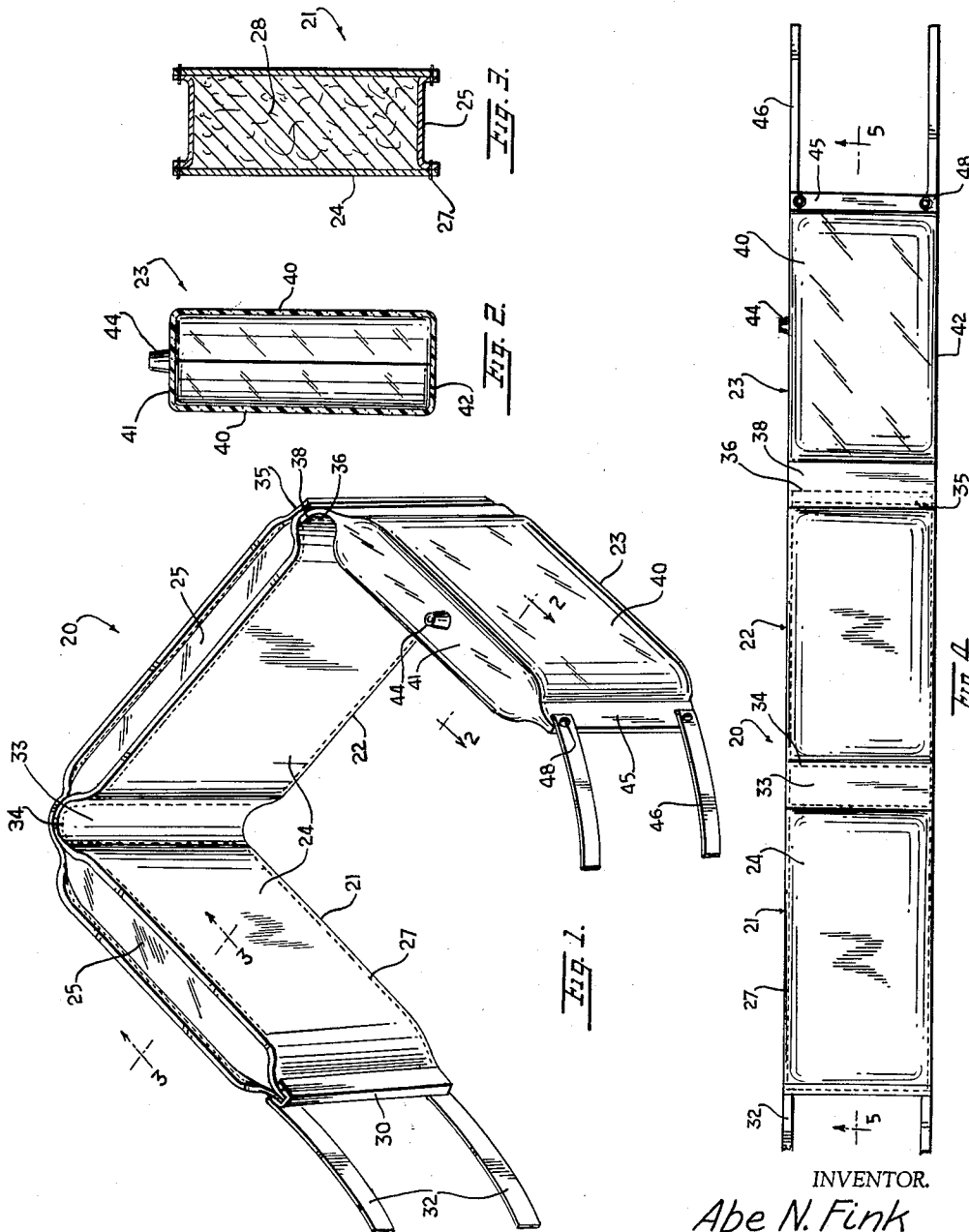
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3,137,870

VISUAL BUMPER GUARD FOR CRIB

Filed March 15, 1963

3 Sheets-Sheet 1



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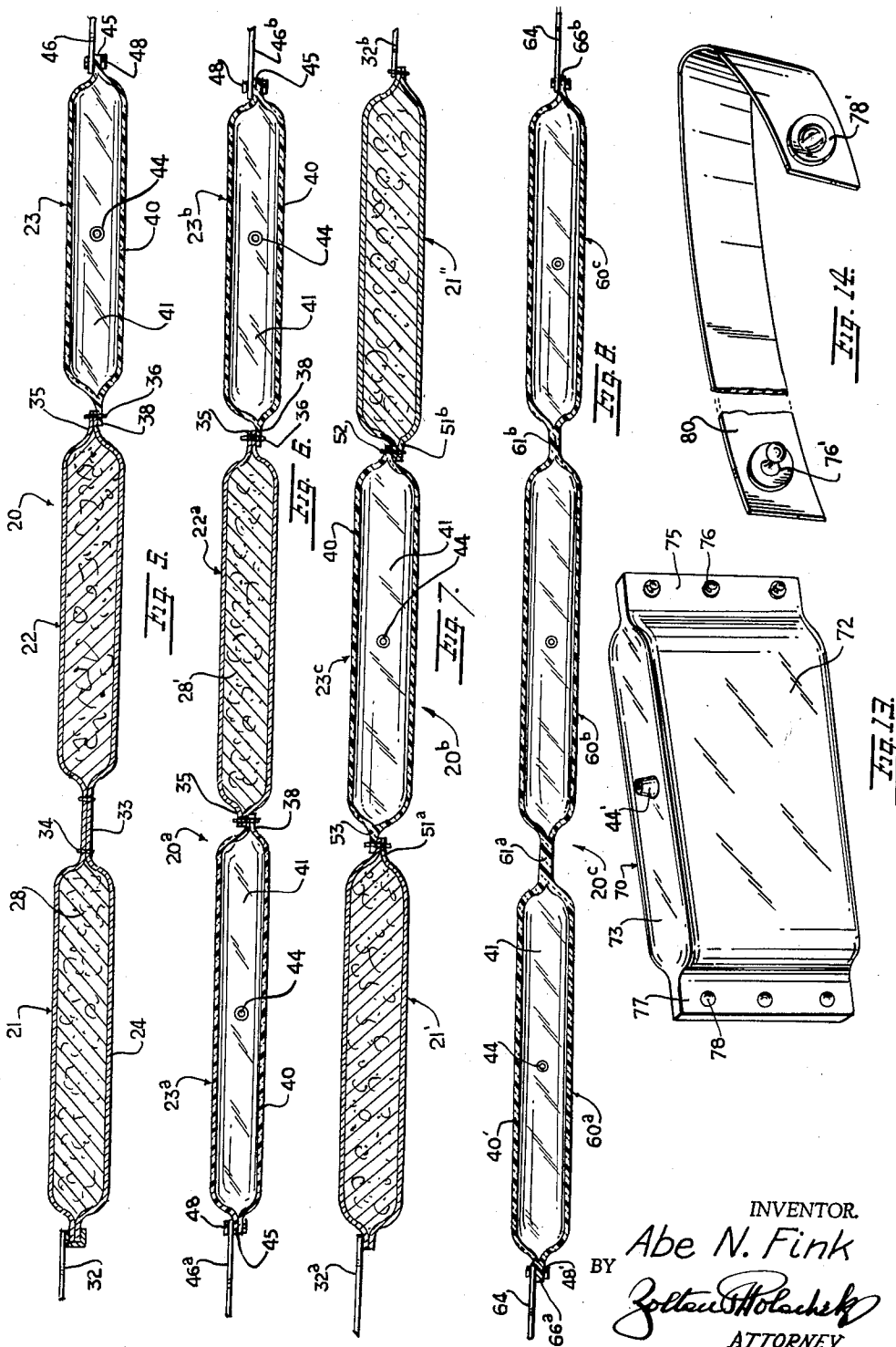
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VISUAL BUMPER GUARD FOR CRIB

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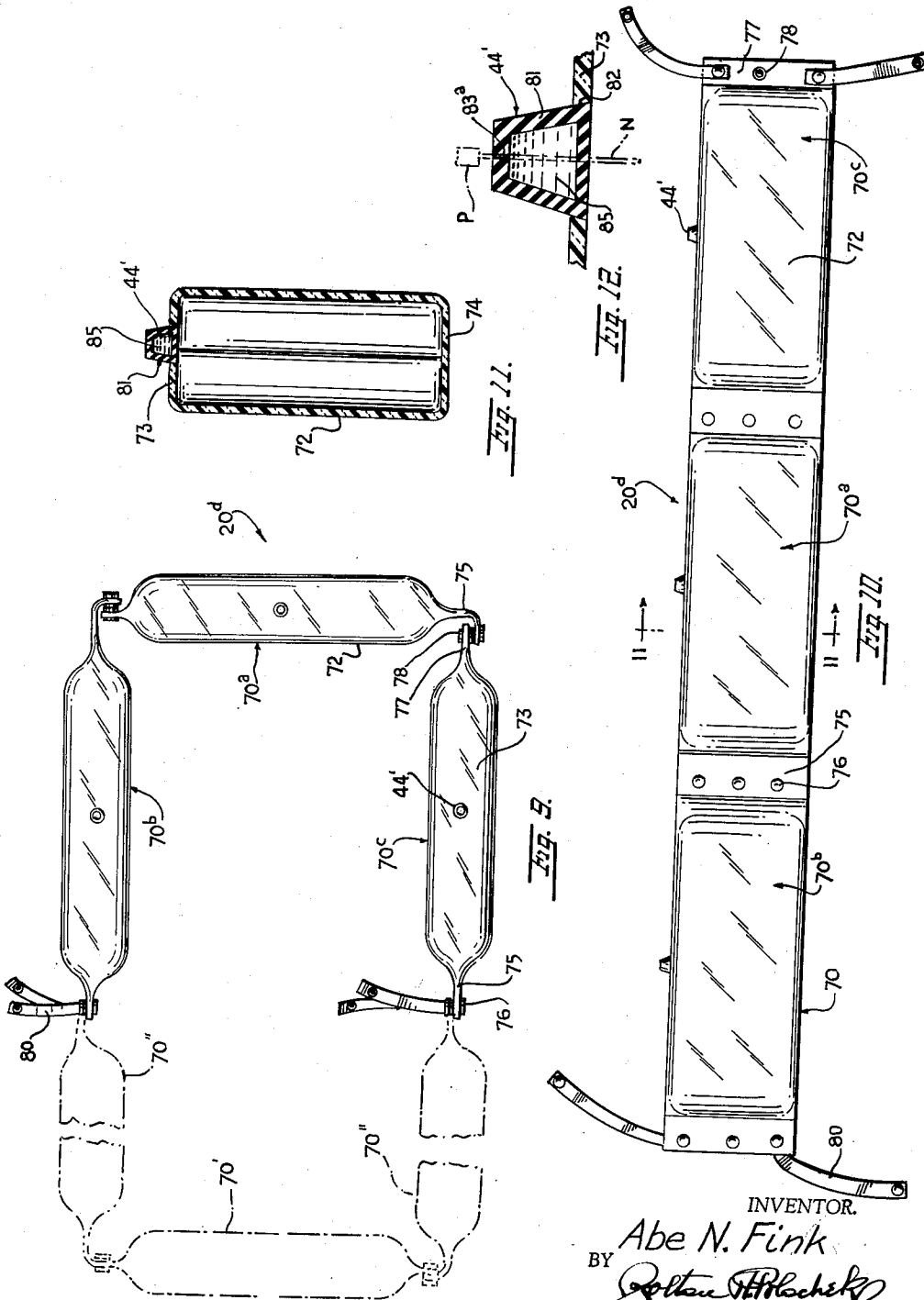
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VISUAL BUMPER GUARD FOR CRIB

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3 Sheets-Sheet 3



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VISUAL BUMPER GUARD FOR CRIB

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1 Claim. (Cl. 5—93)

This invention relates to a bumper guard for an infant's crib.

Conventional bumper guards employed in cribs generally have a series of pillows stuffed with compressible filler material and enclosed in opaque fabric or plastic pillow cases. When an infant is lying in a crib provided with such a bumper guard, the infant's head and upper part of its body is not visible through the opaque bumper guard to a parent, nurse or caretaker who may be sitting in a chair near the crib or lying on a bed near the crib. This is a most undesirable situation, since the person caring for the infant must get up frequently to inspect and observe the infant.

The present invention is directed at providing a bumper guard which has one or more transparent pillows so that an infant can be observed through the transparent portions of the bumper guard while enclosed therein.

A further object is to provide a bumper guard with detachable transparent inflatable pillows.

Another object is to provide a transparent, air filled inflatable plastic pillow for a bumper guard in an infant's crib.

For further comprehension of the invention, and of the objects and advantages thereof, reference will be had to the following description and accompanying drawings, and to the appended claim in which the various novel features of the invention are more particularly set forth.

In the accompanying drawings forming a material part of this disclosure:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a bumper guard embodying the invention.

FIG. 2 and FIG. 3 are sectional views taken on lines 2—2 and 3—3, respectively, of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a plan view of the bumper guard in extended position.

FIG. 5 is a longitudinal sectional view on an enlarged scale taken on line 5—5 of FIG. 4.

FIGS. 6, 7 and 8 are sectional views similar to FIG. 5 of other bumper guards.

FIG. 9 is a top plan view of another bumper guard embodying the invention.

FIG. 10 is a plan view of the bumper guard of FIG. 9 in extended position.

FIG. 11 is a sectional view on an enlarged scale taken on line 11—11 of FIG. 10.

FIG. 12 is a sectional view on a further enlarged scale of a portion of FIG. 11.

FIG. 13 is a perspective view of a bumper guard pillow.

FIG. 14 is a perspective view of a strap used with the bumper guard of FIG. 9, part being broken away.

Referring first to FIGS. 1—5, there is shown a bumper guard 20 having three pillows 21, 22 and 23. Pillows 21 and 22 have opaque pillow cases formed by pieces of cloth or fabric 24, 25 sewn together by stitching 27 to form rectangular enclosures for fibrous filling 28. The free end of end pillow 21 can be reinforced by a binding tape 30. All edges of pillows 21, 22 can be similarly reinforced. Two straps 32 are secured by stitching to opposite ends of the tape at top and bottom edges of the pillow 21 for tying to side bars of a crib.

The filling is omitted between pillows 21 and 22 to define a flexible web or gusset 33 outlined by stitching 34. A wide hem 35 is provided at the end of pillow 22 and to this hem is secured by stitching 36 a web or seam 38 formed at the end of pillow 23.

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Pillow 23, as shown in FIGS. 1, 2, 4 and 5, includes a hollow, transparent plastic casing with rectangular opposing side walls 40, and narrow rectangular opposing top and bottom walls 41, 42. An air valve 44 of conventional type is secured at the center of top wall 41. The casing can be inflated with air through valve 44 by a conventional manually operable air pump having a needle nozzle which can be inserted through valve 44. At its free outer end, pillow 23 has a seam or web 45 to which ends of two straps 46 are attached by eyelets 48 for tying to side bars of a crib.

The bumper guard can be arranged in a general U-shaped configuration when viewed from above in plan view for insertion in an infant's crib. The center pillow 22 will be located at the head end of the crib and the pillows 21, 23 will be disposed perpendicularly to pillow 22, and adjacent to the opposite sides of the crib. The straps 32 and 46 may be used to tie the ends of the bumper guard to bars usually provided at the sides of the crib.

The transparent air-filled pillow 23 provides a clear view of the area enclosed by the bumper guard through one side of the bumper guard. The pillow 23 is flexible and soft so that an infant's head and body is protected from contact with the bars of the crib. The other pillows 21 and 22 protect the infant also but are opaque.

In FIG. 6 is shown a modification of the invention in which two air filled, inflatable, transparent plastic pillows 23^a and 23^b are provided at opposite ends of the bumper guard 20^a. The center pillow 22^a is opaque and filled with a fibrous or feather stuffing 28'. Parts corresponding to those of bumper guard 20 are identically numbered. Straps 46^a, 46^b on seams 45 can be tied to side bars of the crib. Air valves 44 are provided at the top walls 41 of the plastic pillows. Seams 35 of pillow 22 are secured to seams 38 of pillows 23^a, 23^b.

In FIG. 7, bumper guard 20^b has two opaque pillows 21' and 21'' at opposite ends. Inner seams 51^a and 51^b of the pillows are secured by stitching 52 to seams 53 at opposite ends of inflatable, transparent plastic pillow 23^c. The transparent pillow 23^c forms the center pillow structure at the head end of the crib while the opaque pillows 21' and 21'' are at the sides of the crib. This arrangement provides a view of the infant through the head end of the crib and bumper guard. Straps 32^a, 32^b at opposite ends of the bumper guard can be tied to side bars of the crib.

In FIG. 8 bumper guard 20^c has three plastic pillows 60^a, 60^b and 60^c. Valves 44 are provided in the top walls 41. Webs 61^a and 62^a, integral with the side walls 40' of the pillow cases, join pillows 60^a, 60^b and pillows 60^b, 60^c. Straps 64 are secured by eyelets 65 to an end seams 66^a, 66^b of the end pillows by eyelets 48'.

The bumper guard 20^c can be fabricated from a single tubular piece of transparent, thermoplastic sheet material. The tubular material can be heat sealed or fused at the end seams 66^a, 66^b and at the inner webs 61^a, 62^a.

In FIGS. 10—14 is illustrated another form of the invention in which bumper guard 20^d is made up of three identical transparent plastic pillows 70. Each of the pillows is generally rectangular in both cross section and longitudinal section with flat opposing side walls 72 and flat opposing top and bottom walls 73, 74. Air valves 44' are located in the top walls 73. At one end seam 75 of each pillow is a row of spaced male snap fastener elements 76. At the other end seam 77 of each pillow is a row of spaced female snap fastener elements 78. The end seams of center pillow 70^a in the bumper guard has its snap fastener elements engaged with the mating snap fastener elements on the adjacent end seams of end pillows 70^b and 70^c.

Each of straps 80 has a male snap fastener element 76' and a female snap fastener element 78' at opposite ends, as best shown in FIG. 14, selectively engaging in one of the mating snap fastener elements on the end seams 75 and 77 of the end pillows 70^b and 70^c. The connected seams 75, 77 between the pillows are flexible so that the bumper guard can be arranged in the U-shaped configuration of FIG. 9 for insertion into an infant's crib.

FIG. 12 shows on an enlarged scale a type of air valve 44' which can be used for inflating the pillows 70. This valve has a generally conical rubber body 81 secured in a hole 82 in top wall 73 of a pillow. The rubber body has holes 83^a, 83^b at its top and bottom ends. The rubber body is filled with a self-sealing semifluid mastic material 85. The needle nozzle N of an air pump P can be inserted through holes 83^a, 83^b for inflating the pillow with air or for withdrawing air. After withdrawal of the needle the semifluid material 85 will seal the valve. This type of valve can be used for each of the transparent plastic pillows of all the bumper guards described above.

The bumper guard 20^a is wholly transparent so that a caretaker can have a view of an infant enclosed and protected thereby from head end and both sides of the crib. When not in use, the bumper guard can be collapsed to a very small size for storage by removing air from the pillows through valves 44'. Since all the pillows 70 are identical in structure, any one of the pillows can be removed for cleaning, replacement or even for use by itself as a sleeping pillow. If desired, more than three pillows 70 can be detachably attached together, end to end, to form a complete rectangular enclosure for a crib or playpen as indicated by pillows 70' and 70'' shown in dotted lines in FIG. 9.

The transparent plastic pillows in all the bumper guards described can be made of heavy gauge vinyl, polyethylene, or other transparent plastic material. The pillows can be formed by plastic extrusion or casting at very low cost on mass production plastic molding machinery. The end seams can be formed by electronic sealing machinery.

The pillows are readily cleaned, moistureproof, and very durable.

While I have illustrated and described the preferred embodiments of my invention, it is to be understood that I do not limit myself to the precise constructions herein disclosed and that various changes and modifications may be made within the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claim.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by United States Letters Patent is:

A bumper guard for an infant's crib, comprising a group of identical interconnected pillows, each of said pillows having a casing formed of transparent plastic material with opposing transparent side walls, and transparent opposing top and bottom walls, each casing having wide seams at its opposite ends, male snap fastener elements on the seam at one end and female snap fastener elements on the seam at the other end, the fastener elements on one seam of each pillow casing being engaged detachably with mating fastener elements on a seam of each adjacent pillow, and a valve on one of the walls of each casing for inflating the same with air, a plurality of straps for tying the pillows to bars of said crib, a male fastener element at one end of each strap and a female fastener element at the other end of each strap, one of the fastener elements of each strap being engaged with a mating fastener element on one of the end seams of the end pillows in the interconnected group.

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