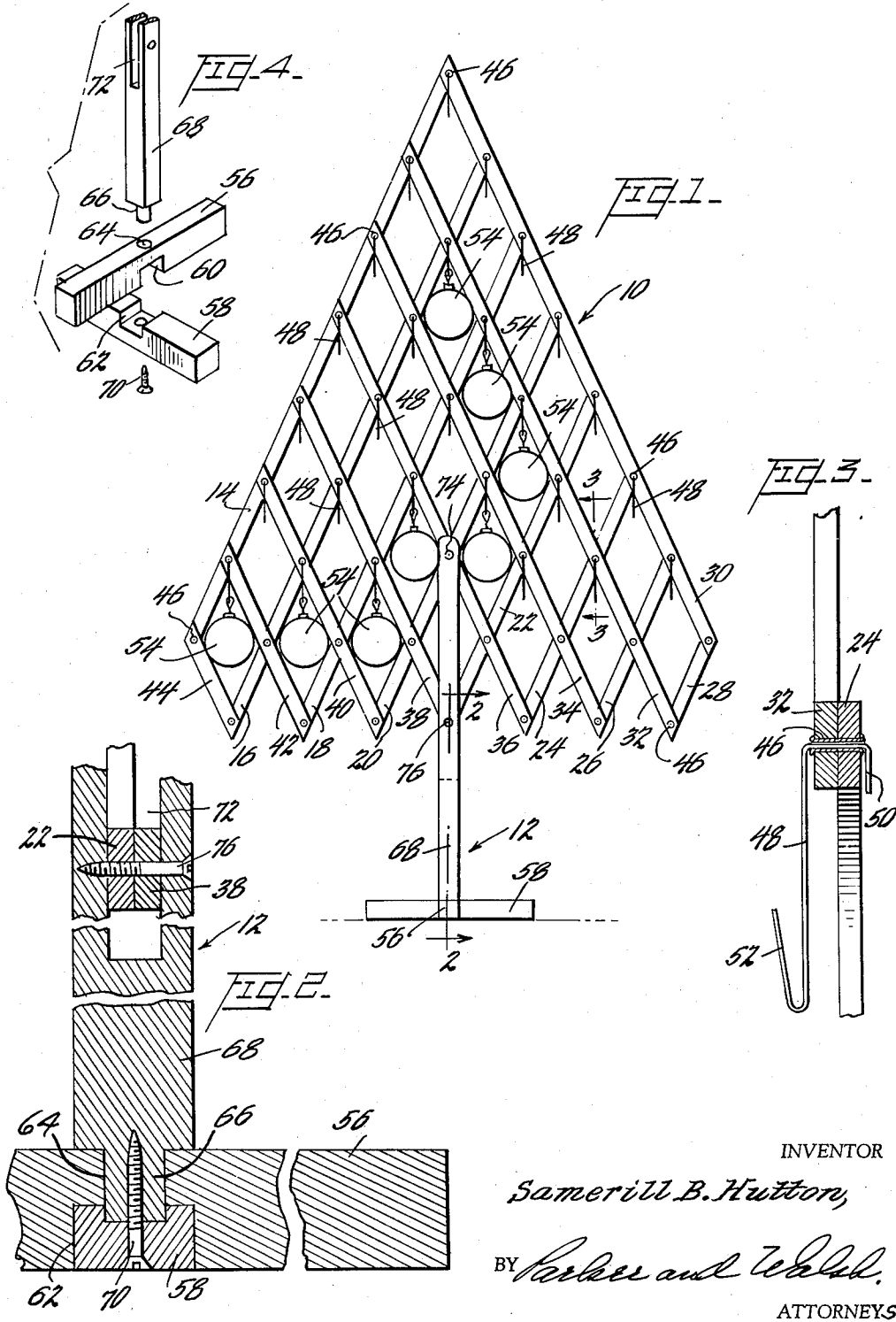


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SIMULATED CHRISTMAS TREE

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SIMULATED CHRISTMAS TREE

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3 Claims. (Cl. 41-15)

The present invention relates generally to decorative devices and is more particularly concerned with a simulated Christmas tree so constructed that it may be readily folded for storage and subsequent reuse year after year.

While it is perhaps true that most of those who celebrate the Christmas holidays prefer to employ a freshly cut evergreen tree which may be decorated with innumerable types of ornaments of all shapes and sizes, there are still many occasions where a simulated Christmas tree of mechanical construction may actually be preferred. For example, where it is desired to employ one or more trees for the purpose of outdoor decoration, a simulated tree may be more easily handled, is less subject to disarrangement or damage by the elements, and provides uniformity and symmetry unobtainable with natural trees. In addition, where space is at a premium as in so many modern urban dwellings, a simulated tree may be preferred to the natural object and may, in fact, offer a decor unobtainable with the latter.

It is, accordingly, a principal object of the present invention to provide a simulated Christmas tree of the type described which is relatively light in weight and which may be inexpensively constructed but at the same time is rugged and durable for reuse year after year.

Another object of the invention is to provide a decorative device of the type described in which the entire assembly is readily collapsible and may be folded and stored away or shipped in a relatively small space or package.

A further object of the invention is to provide a decorative device of the type described in which that portion of the assembly simulating the main body of the tree is formed as a pantograph type lattice which may be expanded into substantially triangular configuration and which may be secured in such configuration by means of spaced fastening elements attached to opposite corners of one of the parallelograms of the assembly.

An additional object of the invention is to provide a decorative device of the type described in which hollow rivets are employed in a dual function serving both as the pivotal connections between the various strips of the lattice and also as the hanging points for the various ornaments or other decorations.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide a simulated tree of the type described in which the overall size of the device may be readily varied over a relatively wide range by merely adding or subtracting any desired number of strips to or from the lattice.

A still further object of the invention is to provide an ornamental device of the type described which may be used either indoors or outdoors and which may be decorated in a wide variety of ways to achieve a modern, stylized treatment.

The foregoing together with other and further objects and advantages of the invention will become more readily apparent to those skilled in the art from a consideration of the following detailed specification taken in conjunction with the accompanying figures of drawing in which:

FIGURE 1 is a front elevational view of a simulated Christmas tree in accordance with the present invention showing the same in fully assembled and partially decorated condition;

FIGURE 2 is a vertical cross-sectional view taken substantially along the line 2-2 of FIGURE 1 and illustrating a portion of the interior construction of the base or support;

FIGURE 3 is a vertical cross-sectional view taken

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substantially along the line 3-3 of FIGURE 1 and illustrating a detail of one of the hollow rivet connectors and its associated ornament hangers; and

FIGURE 4 is an exploded perspective view illustrating the manner in which the base of the tree, in accordance with the present invention, may be assembled.

Referring now in somewhat greater detail to the various figures of the drawing, and in particular to FIGURE 1 thereof, the simulated Christmas tree in accordance with the present invention is seen to comprise an upper portion of generally triangular configuration designated generally by reference numeral 10 and a lower portion designated generally by reference numeral 12 which serves as a base or support for the portion 10 and simulates the trunk of a tree. As shown in this figure, the main tree body 10 is seen to comprise a plurality of relatively long and narrow strips which are pivotally interconnected at evenly spaced points to form a collapsible pantograph type lattice. A first set of strips designated by reference numerals, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 28 is arranged with the strips in parallel coplanar relation and it will be noted that the strips 14 and 16 at the left side are substantially equal in length while the remainder of the strips 18-28 uniformly and progressively decrease in length toward the right by an amount substantially equal to the length of the last strip 28 at the right side of the set. A second set of parallel coplanar strips identical to the first set just described overlies the latter, the strips of this set being designated by reference numerals 30 to 44 inclusive. It will be noted, however, that the second set of strips 30-44 decreases in length in a direction opposite to that in which the first set decreases, namely, from right to left, the strips 30 and 32 being substantially equal in length and the remaining strips 34-44 uniformly and progressively decreasing in length by an amount substantially equal to the length of the last strip 44 at the left side of the assembly.

As shown in FIGURE 1 and also in FIGURE 3, the overlying strips of the two sets referred to above are pivotally interconnected at evenly spaced points by means of hollow rivets 46. It will thus be apparent that the entire assembly of the upper portion 10 of the simulated tree is in the form of a collapsible pantograph type lattice, the evenly spaced rivets 46 serving to define a plurality of parallelograms so that, in the absence of any restraining force, the entire upper section 10 may be expanded or contracted at will. It will be particularly noted that, as shown in FIGURE 3, the hollow rivets 46 serve as supporting points for a plurality of hangers 48 which are preferably formed of wire of a suitable size to extend through the hollow rivets 46 with a downwardly bent portion 50 at the rear serving to retain the hanger in position and an upwardly bent portion 52 at the bottom of the front of the hanger on which may be supported the desired type of ornament such as those indicated by mirrored balls 54. While only a limited number of ornaments 54 has been illustrated in FIGURE 1, it will be understood that all of the parallelograms may be similarly occupied or that the size, shape and number of ornaments may be varied to suit the individual taste of the user.

As indicated above, the lower portion 12 of the assembly is intended to simulate the trunk of the Christmas tree and is illustrated in detail in FIGURES 2 and 4. As shown in these views, the simulated trunk includes a ground engaging base formed by a pair of crossed members 56 and 58 suitably notched as indicated by reference numerals 60 and 62, respectively, so that they may be assembled flatly together. The member 56 is suitably bored as indicated by reference numeral 64 to receive the rounded end 66 of a vertical member 68. The members 56, 58 and 68 are preferably held in assembled position by means of a single screw 70 which passes upwardly through the member 58 at the slot 62 and is firmly secured

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in the rounded end 66 of the member 68. It will be noted that a single screw 70 thus serves to rigidly secure together all three members of the base 56, 58 and 68.

The upper portion of the vertical member 68 is slotted as indicated by reference numeral 72 and, as shown in FIGURES 1 and 2, the lattice or upper portion 10 of the simulated tree is received within the slot 72 when the device is assembled for use. The lattice is securely held in position within the slot 72 of the vertical support 68 by means of two screws 74 and 76 which pass through opposite corners of the bottom center parallelogram of the lattice. It will be understood that these opposite corners of the center parallelogram at the bottom of the lattice are not provided with hollow rivets 46 so that the screws 74 and 76 will pass directly through the strips 36 and 20 and 38 and 22, respectively. It will also be understood that when the complete device is assembled as indicated in FIGURE 1, the screws 74 and 76 need only to engage a single parallelogram of the entire lattice structure in order to hold the lattice in a generally triangular configuration.

From the description thus far, it will be apparent that the entire assembly is held in position as indicated in FIGURE 1 entirely by means of the three screws 70, 74 and 76 and may be completely disassembled by simply removing these three screws. Upon disassembly, the members 56, 58 and 68 of the base may be arranged in a flat package after separation as indicated in FIGURE 4 and, after removal of the ornaments, the entire lattice or upper portion 10 of the tree may be collapsed into a relatively small package for storage or shipment. It will also be apparent that the overall dimensions of the lattice may be varied within any desired limits simply by adding or removing strips from the assembly and, while I prefer to use wooden strips, it will be clear that the same may also be constructed from other suitable materials such as light weight metal, plastic, or the like. In the preferred embodiment of the device as illustrated and described herein, I have employed an even number of strips in each of the two sets so that the vertical support 68 may be located centrally to achieve a symmetrical effect although it will be clear that asymmetrical or other arrangements may also be achieved.

While I have shown and described herein a preferred embodiment of the invention for the purpose of illustration, it will be obvious that numerous modifications, alterations and deviations, as well as various substitutions of materials, will occur to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.

I claim:

1. A simulated Christmas tree comprising a first even numbered set of relatively long and narrow wood strips arranged in parallel coplanar relation, two adjacent strips at one side of said set being substantially equal in length and the remainder of said strips uniformly and progressively decreasing in length in one direction by an

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amount substantially equal to the length of the last strip at the opposite side of said set, a second even numbered set of parallel coplanar strips identical to said first set and overlying the latter but decreasing in length in the opposite direction, hollow rivets pivotally interconnecting overlying strips of said sets at evenly spaced points to form a collapsible pantograph type lattice, a ground engaging base including a slotted vertical member simulating a tree trunk, screws holding said lattice within said slotted member and passing through opposite corners of the bottom center parallelogram of said lattice to hold the same in generally triangular configuration, and hangers extending through said rivets for supporting ornaments on said lattice.

2. A simulated Christmas tree comprising a first even numbered set of strips arranged in parallel coplanar relation, two adjacent strips at one side of said set being substantially equal in length and the remainder of said strips uniformly and progressively decreasing in length in one direction by an amount substantially equal to the length of the last strip at the opposite side of said set, a second even numbered set of parallel coplanar strips identical to said first set and overlying the latter but decreasing in length in the opposite direction, hollow rivets pivotally interconnecting overlying strips of said sets at evenly spaced points to form a collapsible pantograph type lattice, a base including a vertical member simulating a tree trunk, means releaseably securing opposite corners of the bottom center parallelogram of said lattice to said member to hold the same in generally triangular configuration and hangers extending through said rivets for supporting ornaments on said lattice.

3. A simulated Christmas tree comprising a first set of strips arranged in parallel coplanar relation, two adjacent strips at one side of said set being substantially equal in length and the remainder of said strips uniformly and progressively decreasing in length in one direction, a second set of parallel coplanar strips identical to said first set and overlying the latter but decreasing in length in the opposite direction, hollow rivets pivotally interconnecting overlying strips of said sets at evenly spaced points to form a collapsible pantograph type lattice, a support, means releaseably securing said lattice to said support to hold the same in generally triangular configuration, and hangers extending through said rivets for supporting ornaments on said lattice.

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