A. C. GILBERT.

PLAYHOUSE.

APPLICATION FILED FEB. 26, 1916.

1,315,628.

Patented Sept. 9, 1919.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

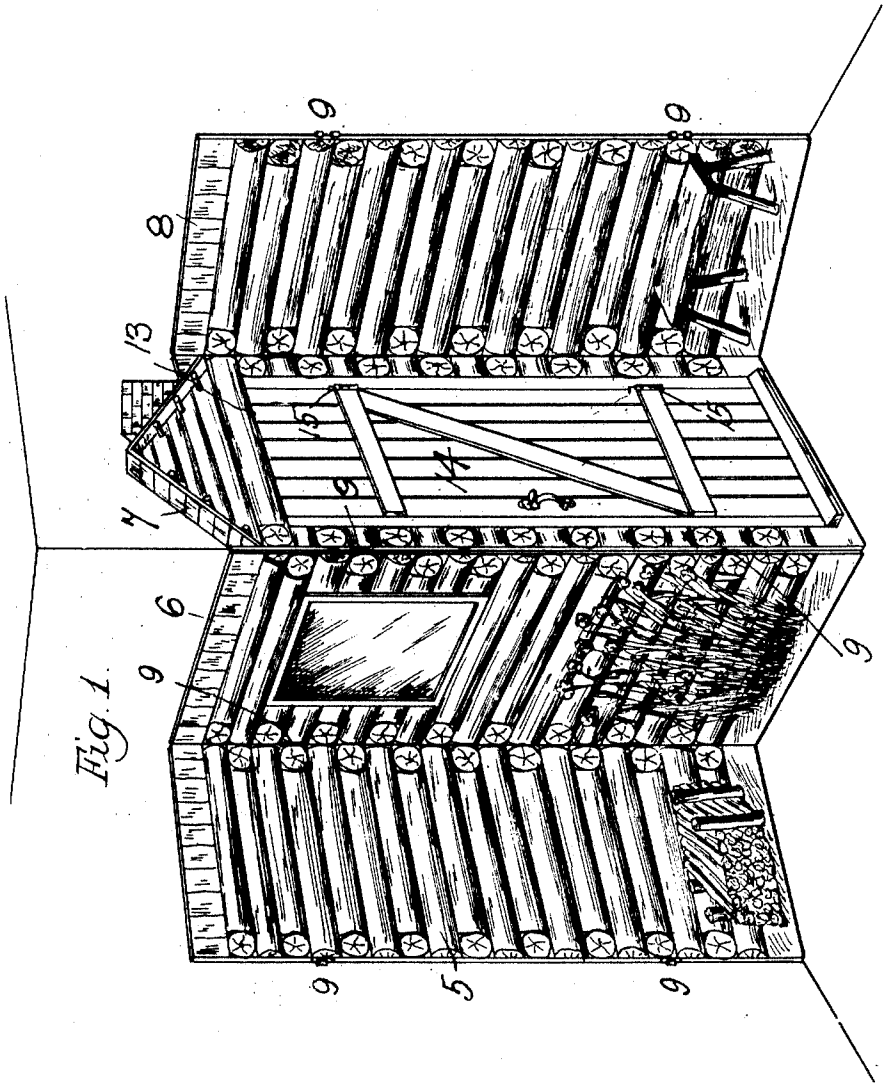


Fig. 1.

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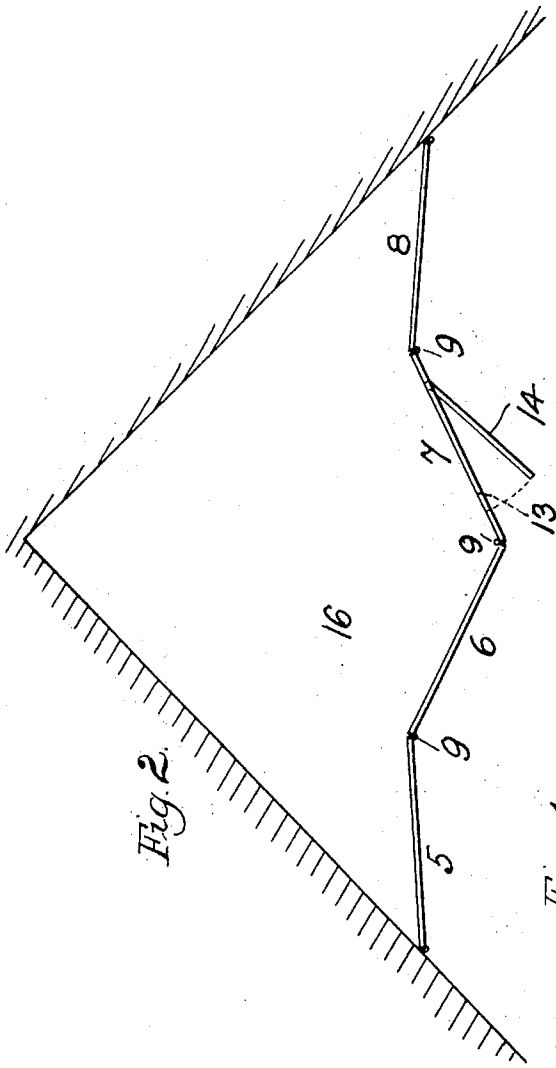


Fig. 2.

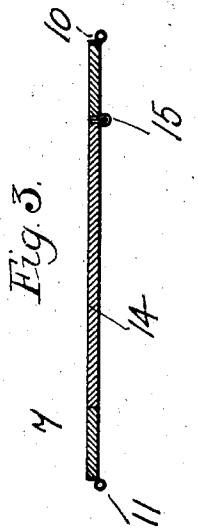


Fig. 3.

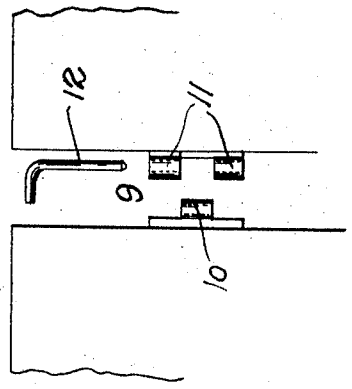


Fig. 4.

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PLAYHOUSE.

1,315,628. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Sept. 9, 1919.

Application filed February 26, 1916. Serial No. 80,708.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ALFRED C. GILBERT, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city and county of New Haven and State of Connecticut, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Playhouses, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

This invention relates to play houses for children, and the primary object which I have in view is the provision of a play house structure which is easily portable and which can be readily stored away in a small space when not in use. Some of the miniature houses which are now used by children for playhouses are of fairly light weight, but the several parts are intended to be permanently assembled, and it is impracticable to take down the structure for the purpose of storing it away when it is not in use. A play house of this kind takes up a considerable amount of space at all times.

By my invention, I aim to provide a play house structure which can be readily collapsed when not in use, whereby it may be stored away in a very small space. More particularly it is proposed to furnish a structure comprising a plurality of hinged panels, which can be very conveniently folded together when the play house is not in use. The improved structure can be advantageously used in the corner of a room, or the corner of a yard, for example, so as to utilize the walls of a room, fence or the like, and thereby avoid the necessity of forming a complete inclosure from the panels or sections of my device. However, provision is made for readily separating the panels or sections and adding new sections, and therefore, if desired, a complete inclosure can be made from the panels or sections. It will be understood, therefore, that the improved play house structure can be readily adapted to many different conditions of use, and it is an attractive article which is greatly appreciated by children.

To these and other ends, the invention consists in the novel features and combinations of parts to be hereinafter described and claimed.

In the accompanying drawings,

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a play house structure embodying four panels or sections set up in the corner of a room;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the parts shown in Fig. 1, with the wall of the room in section, showing the door of the play house structure in the open position;

Fig. 3 is an enlarged horizontal section through the panel or section having the door; and

Fig. 4 is a detail of one of the separable hinges.

In the present application, I have illustrated a play house structure, comprising a plurality of hinged panels or sections, which are particularly adapted for inclosing the corner of a room, a yard or the like, as shown. In the particular example illustrated, there are four panels 5, 6, 7 and 8, but obviously the number may be varied as desired. Each one of the panels or sections is preferably formed of thick cardboard or similar material, combining light weight with the requisite strength. The cardboard presents a good surface for painting or decorating the exterior of the structure, and the panels will preferably be painted, lithographed or otherwise decorated in order to simulate the appearance of a building of some kind. In the particular example illustrated, the panels are so painted that they represent in conjunction the exterior walls of a log cabin, and at the top of each panel it is preferably painted in order to simulate a roof of some kind. In the form shown, the panel 7 is cut away at the top to represent a sloping roof and chimney, whereas the panels 5, 6 and 8 are cut horizontally along the top and are merely painted to represent shingles, but obviously many changes in these respects may be adopted.

Each panel is preferably hinged to its neighbor by means of suitable hinges 9, which may be constructed in the manner shown in Fig. 4. In order that the panels may be readily separated from each other if desired, the hinge should be readily separable, and in the particular example shown each hinge comprises a perforated knuckle 10 on one panel adapted to be interposed between perforated knuckles 11 on the adjacent panel and swiveled between them by means of a detachable pintle 12. In the particular case selected for illustration, the panels 5, 6 are adapted to fold together by swinging them forwardly, while the panels 6, 7 are adapted to fold together by swinging them rearwardly, and so on, but if de-

sired, double acting hinges may be used which will permit two adjacent panels to be swung in either direction relatively to each other.

At least one of the panels should be provided with a door; for example, the panel 7 which is provided with an opening 13, in which a door 14 is swingingly mounted on hinges 15. This door 14 is painted to simulate the door of a building, and permits the children to pass into the inclosure wholly or partly formed by the panels. The panels may also be provided with open windows or similar openings, if desired.

Reverting to the hinges for interconnecting the panels, it will be observed from Fig. 3 that each panel or section is provided at one side with hinge sections 10, and at the other side with hinge sections 11. Preferably all of the panels will be provided with hinge sections or leaves of this type, and therefore the panel structure can be extended at either end and new panels can be interpolated at any point if desired. In Figs. 1 and 2, I have shown the panel structure extending across one corner of a room so as to create an inclosure 16. This is not covered over at the top, and therefore the children have ample head room; nevertheless, the wall formed by the panels effectively simulates a miniature house or other building. The construction described permits two walls of a room or other inclosure to be utilized for the play house, entrance being effected through a door in one of the panels. The children can have ample room in the inclosure, and then when they are through playing the panel wall can be readily collapsed and stored away. When collapsed, it occupies very little space, and each panel folds flatwise on its neighbor. When it is desired to use the play house again, the panels may be quickly unfolded and set up in the desired position.

Owing to the fact that the panels can be made of heavy cardboard or some suitable paper or similar composition, they can be furnished at a low cost. If desired, a sufficient number can be used to form a complete inclosure by themselves without utilizing the walls of a room or the like, in which case the play house can be set up in the center of a room or yard. When a sufficient number of panels is furnished a child, he may obviously set them up to form structures of various kinds in various locations. This adds to the attractiveness of the play house, because the child may exercise his judgment and initiative in setting it up as well as in using the same.

It will be obvious that the panel structure will stand on the floor by itself without the necessity of having a special base or other support when the several panels are arranged in zigzag formation. The structure is adapted, as above described, to form either wholly or partially an inclosure of such size that one or more children may play therein, and the improved device is clearly distinguished in this and other features from small paper or cardboard houses, which correspond in size with paper dolls.

Without limiting myself to the construction illustrated, I claim:

1. A structure such as described adapted to form wholly or partially a play house inclosure for one or more children, comprising a plurality of panels hinged together at their lateral edges and adapted when arranged in zigzag formation to stand upright on the floor or ground, one of said panels having an opening therethrough for the entrance and exit of the children, a door hinged upon said panel to one side of said opening for closing said opening, the exterior of said structure being decorated to simulate the exterior of a building having an entrance in which said door is mounted and one or more of said panels having a configuration similar to the end view of a building; substantially as described.

2. A structure such as described adapted to form wholly or partially a play house inclosure for one or more children, comprising a plurality of panels hinged together at their lateral edges and adapted when arranged in zigzag formation to stand upright on the floor or ground, one of said panels having an opening therethrough for the entrance and exit of the children, and a door hinged upon said panel for closing said opening, the hinges interconnecting the panels having separable pintles, and the end panels carrying hinged sections at their free edges so that additional panels may be added if desired; substantially as described.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand on the 18th day of February, 1916.

ALFRED C. GILBERT.

Copies of this patent may be obtained for five cents each, by addressing the "Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D. C."