

Jan. 29, 1963

W. L. DODGE

3,075,771

BOARD GAME APPARATUS

Filed Nov. 24, 1959

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

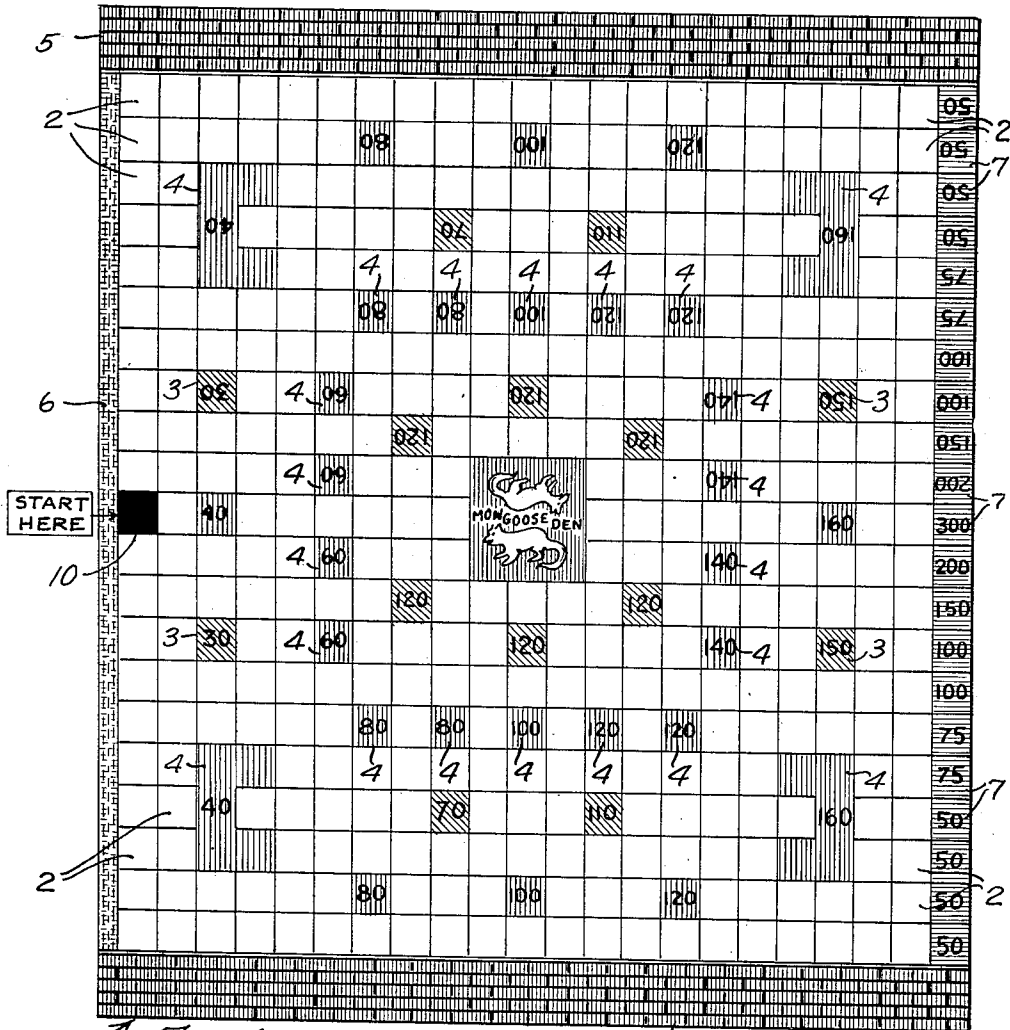
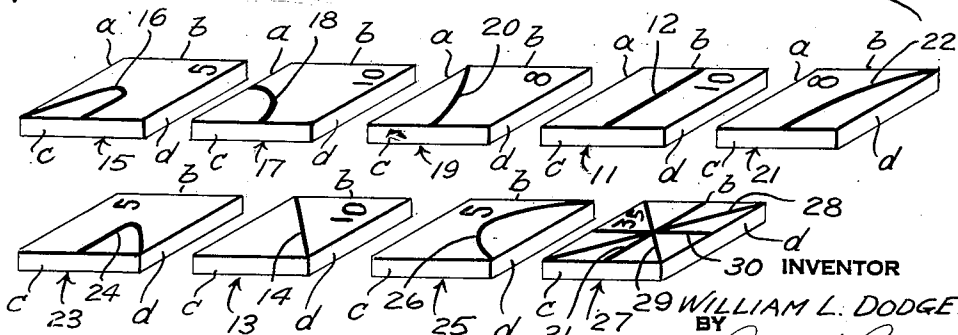


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

5a



INVENTOR
BY WILLIAM L. DODGE.
BORAT & BORAT
ATTORNEYS

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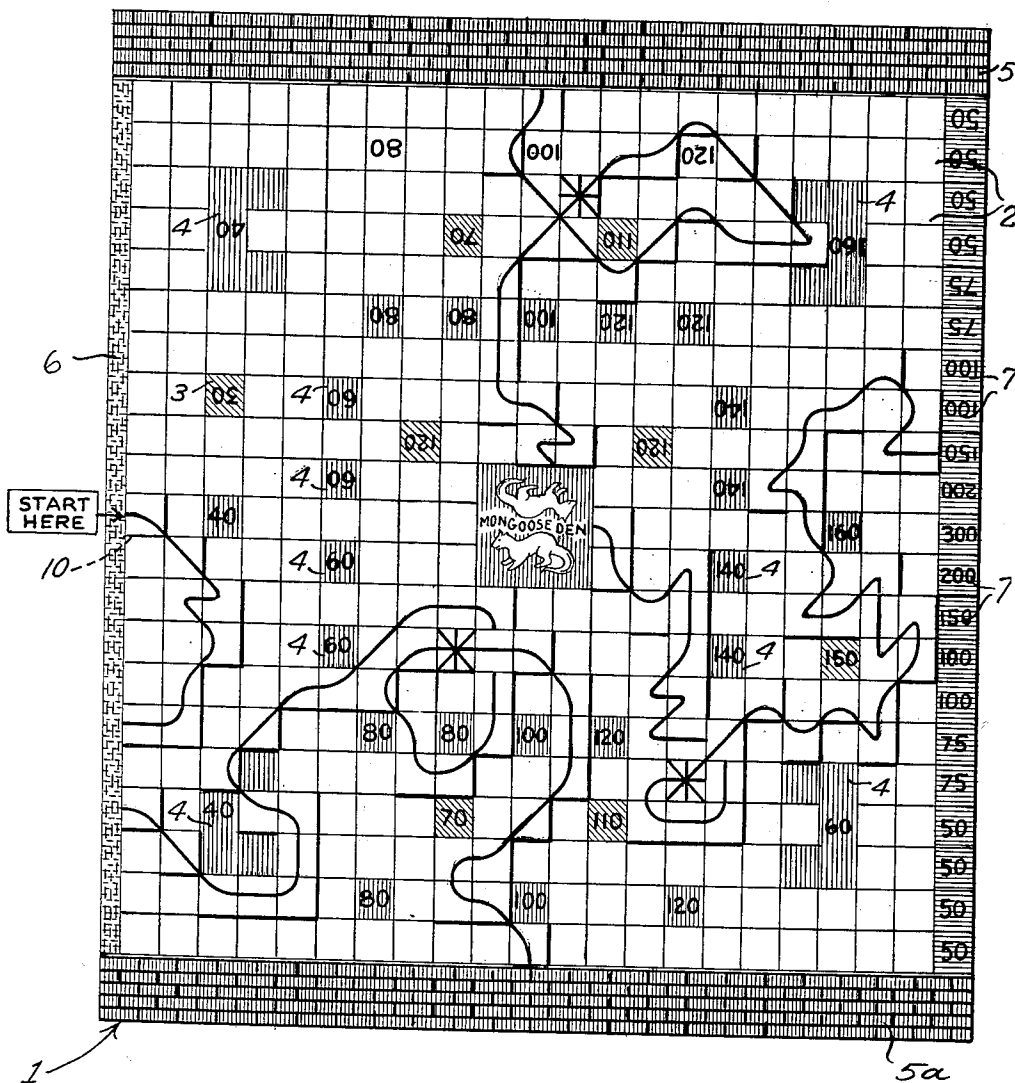
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INVENTOR
WILLIAM L. DODGE

BY *U Borst & Borst*
ATTORNEYS

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BOARD GAME APPARATUS

William L. Dodge, 1680 York Ave., New York, N.Y.

Filed Nov. 24, 1959, Ser. No. 855,061

3 Claims. (Cl. 273-130)

This invention relates to games, generally and more specifically to games played on a board with movable pieces of a definite character. A typical board game provides squares critically arranged over substantially the entire surface area of the board and movable pieces designed to move in the squares. Except for such limitation on the individual pieces as is imposed by the rules of the game, the pieces may be moved in any direction, the competing players establishing separate paths of play which begin and normally end at different points on the board. Another general type of board game which has had some vogue employs movable pieces and a board which provides a definite and prescribed path of play for the pieces. The play is begun for all players at a single location on the board and continues for each player along the same path from start to finish of the game.

According to the present invention there is provided a game board which combines the advantages of the two classes of games generally described above. That is to say, just a single line of play is established during the game which is begun at a designated location on the board, this line being confined, however, to no prescribed path. To the end that these advantages of play may be assured, the game board provides a single starting location which is used by only the starting player, each succeeding player beginning his play where the previous player has finished. In addition, the board is marked into playing squares in checkerboard fashion thus affording great latitude to the players in directing the line of play which is thereby governed principally by the character of the playing pieces and the functional limitations imposed thereon by the rules of the game. The pieces are employed by the players to establish the line of play and are variously configured to afford possibilities of a wide choice of direction for the line which is exercised according to the strategy of play and yet to segregate the pieces into distinct playing groups with the competence of each piece, and hence its functional limitations as decreed by the rules, determined by the group of which it is a part so that in actuality the choice of play confronting each player in turn is dependent on the chance of his draw. Also, the game board embodying the invention contains bonus areas and penalty areas which further influence the players' selection of direction bearing pieces.

At least one of the incidental benefits of playing the game is the appearance of the board as the game progresses. The many different types of playing pieces and the many pieces of each type permit the single line of play to be visible for the entire game, the line being constructed in a seemingly random fashion which has been found by experience to appeal to the creative imagination and aesthetic sensibility of many players.

The character of the game and the physical nature of its components may be better understood on reading the following detailed description which is taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which

FIG. 1 is a plan view of the game board showing the position of scoring areas within its boundaries and its single, designated starting point,

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the nine different types of scoring pieces which can be drawn by the players during the game for use in play, and

FIG. 3 is a plan view of the playing pieces arranged on the board showing game in play.

Referring to the drawings, the board 1 may be formed

2

of any suitable material, and may be of the folding type used commonly for checkers and chess. The board 1 is square and is marked with a large number of areas 2 which for convenience I shall refer to as "squares" although it is to be understood that the term "squares" is one of broad description and includes any suitable area having straight sides. The total number of squares in the present embodiment of my invention is 441. As shown, there are numerous scoring areas in the central or squared region of the board. The scoring areas and the marginal areas outside the squared region which will be described below, are represented in distinctive colors according to the chart for the draftsman in the Patent Office Rules of Practice. The scoring areas are separately designated bonus squares 3 and penalty squares 4. Point evaluation for bonuses and penalties are indicated in squares. In the center of the board is a square region having three squares on each side which is designated "mongoose den."

Outside the squared area of the board is a symbolic wall region 5 disposed on one opposite side thereof and a second wall region 5a disposed oppositely thereto. A free zone 6 is located on a third side of the board and an end zone 7 containing bonus squares is disposed in the marginal region opposite to the free zone.

In the middle of the side of the board adjacent the free zone is a square 10 selective as the starting point for play of the game. There is no other location on the board having a corresponding similar square and, as will be seen below, the rules provide that this is the only square on which play may be begun.

The playing pieces are of nine different types there being preferably provided, with one exception noted below, ten or more pieces of each type, see FIG. 2. Each piece bears on its face a directional line of different shape and direction. The piece 11 has a directional line 12 running across the piece half way between two of its sides *a* and *b*. A playing piece 13 has oblique directional line 14 extending from one corner of the piece to an opposite corner thereof. A playing piece 15 has a directional line 16 extending from one corner bounded by the sides *a* and *c* to the mid point of the side *c* while playing piece 23 contains a directional line 24 extending from the mid point of the side *c* to the corner formed by the sides *c* and *d*. The playing piece 17 is provided with a curved directional line 18 extending between the mid points of two adjacent sides of the piece. A playing piece 19 has a directional line 20 extending from one corner bounded by the sides *a* and *b* to the mid point of a side *c* opposite thereto while a playing piece 21 has a directional line 22 extending from a corner bounded by the side *b* and a fourth side *d* and extending to the mid point of the side *c*. A playing piece 25 is provided with a curved directional line 26 which extends between the two corners which are partially formed by one of its sides and lastly a universal playing piece 27 which includes from a functional standpoint all the directional lines contained on the other eight pieces, one of these lines 28 connecting two opposite corners of the piece, another line 29 connecting the other two opposite corners of the piece, a horizontal line 30 connecting the mid points of two sides of the piece, and a vertical line 31 connecting the mid points of the other two sides of the piece. The number of universal pieces should preferably be limited to four or five. Each type of playing piece discloses on its face a numerical designation for scoring as well as its directional line.

The playing of the game is governed by the following simple rules.

The game may be played by two, three, four or more players. The first player begins the game by placing a playing piece in the starting square 10 and then the

players take turns in placing the pieces on the board to form a continuous, serpentine line. The pieces may be played side by side or corner to corner providing the directional lines on adjoining pieces abut. In this connection, it should be noted that pieces from one set which, for example, contain directional lines extending from mid side to mid side and pieces from a second set which contain directional lines extending from corner to corner cannot be played in immediate sequence which necessitates the employment of pieces whose directional lines extend from corner to mid side for continuation of the line of play. Choice of pieces is further limited by a requirement that playing pieces must be disposed in corner to corner relation so that their sides are not in contact if their direction lines abut at their corners. The winner is the one who has arranged his pieces for the highest score by the end of the game. Players win points by (1) placing the pieces in the squares on the board and receiving the point evaluation appearing thereon, (2) hitting the bonus squares and (3) playing into the end zone. Players are penalized or eliminated by their opponents from the game by (1) being forced into a penalty square, (2) being encircled and unable to continue play and hence having to turn in their pieces and accepting a penalty determined by the total point evaluation of the squares turned in, and (3) being forced into the mongoose den. Because the universal playing piece 27 is representative of any one of the other eight playing pieces, it can, of course, be used in many different ways to aid its possessor in directing the line of play into a bonus square or escape penalty squares and encirclement. In addition, it must be used if the player wishes to cross the line. Where the line is caused to run into a square adjoining one of the brick walls, say 5a, play continues by the next player from the corresponding square adjoining the opposite brick wall 5. If the line is caused to run into a square adjoining the free zone 6, the next player may reenter the playing area of the board from any unused square along the free zone. Any player who leads the line into the mongoose den is eliminated from the game and must deduct a 150 point penalty from his score. The game ends for all players when the line has been led into the end zone 7 or all the squares have been used which are possible to play under the rules of the game.

Thus my invention provides a game which is direct in its objective and simple in its rules governing its play. The structural simplicity and low cost of manufacture are apparent. The simplicity of the game, however, in no way departs from the fact that skill can play in the game.

It is understood that the character of the game including the physical structure of its component parts may be modified without necessarily departing from the principle of the invention, one illustrative embodiment of which has been set forth above. The scope of the invention is to be limited solely in terms of the claims which are appended.

What is claimed is:

1. A game comprising a board having playing squares which extend substantially over the entire board, means for designating one only of said playing squares as a starting point which designation distinguishes said one square from every other square displayed on the board, said board having a symbolic wall region adjacent the squares on two sides thereof, an end zone on a third side thereof and a free zone adjoining the side containing said single starting point, said board having in addition a centrally located penalty square characterized by a color designation contrastingly different from that of the starting square, a plurality of bonus squares proximate and surrounding said penalty square, each of said bonus squares having a color designation contrastingly different from that of the starting square and also from that of said penalty square and at least one additional penalty square larger in area than any one of said playing squares and colorably similar to the first-mentioned penalty square, said additional penalty square containing one free play square adjacent to one of said playing squares and visually similar thereto, in combination with a plurality of sets of direction designating playing pieces, each playing piece being designed to be supported within any one of the squares on the board and having a functional direction line disposed on its surface, one of said sets of pieces having directional lines on each piece extending from corner to corner, a second set of pieces having directional lines on each piece from one mid side to a second mid side and a third set having directional lines extending from one corner to one mid side, at least one of the pieces in said third set having a directional line extending from a corner defined by two adjacent sides to a mid point of one of said adjacent sides.

2. A game as claimed in claim 1 comprising a fourth set of playing pieces each piece of which has all the direction line characteristics as have the pieces in said first, second and third sets.

3. A game as claimed in claim 2 wherein there are at least ten playing pieces in each of the first, second and third sets whereby the path of play from the beginning of play will be continuously visible through the game.

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