

(No Model.)

C. E. BUTLER.
GAME APPARATUS.

No. 567,218.

Patented Sept. 8, 1896.

Fig. 1.

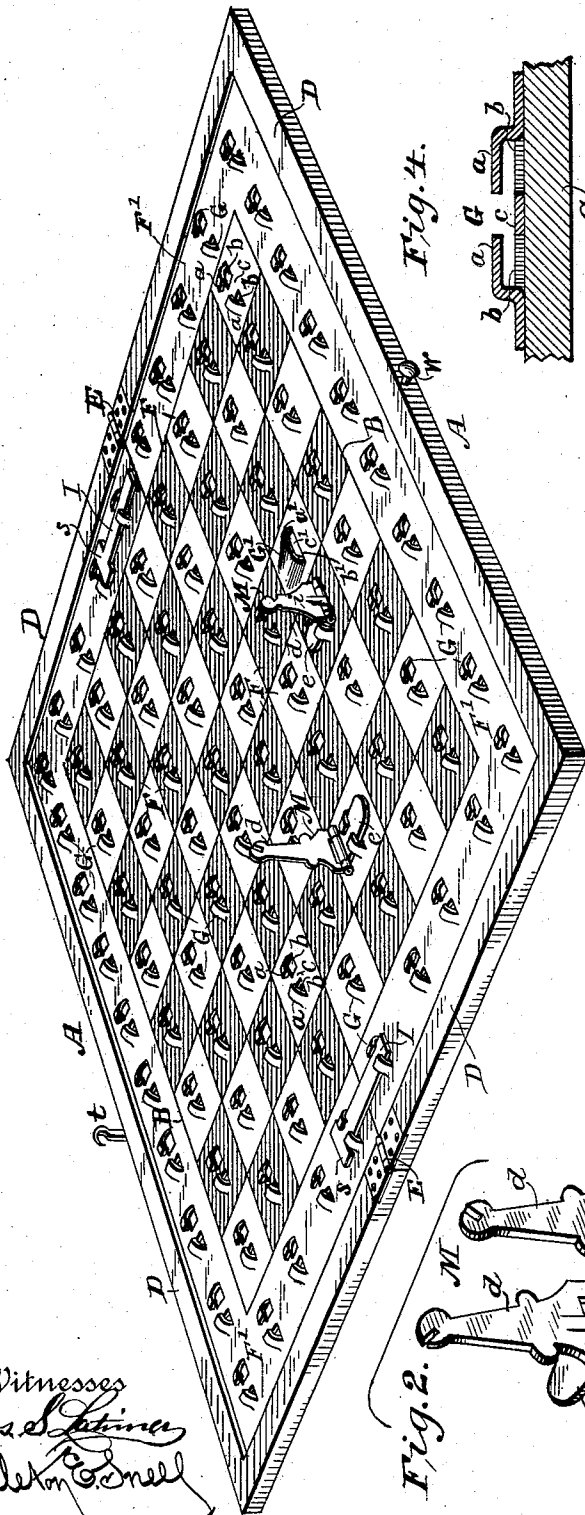


Fig. 4.

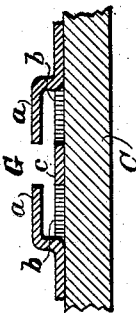


Fig. 5.

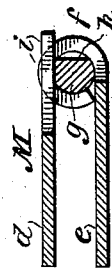
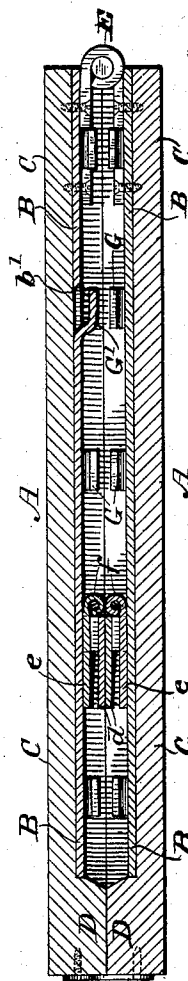


Fig. 3.

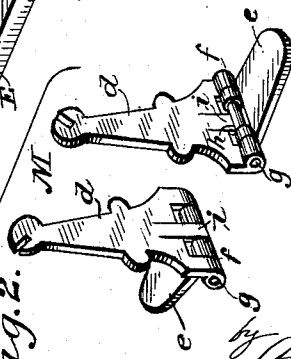


Inventor

Charles E. Butler

Witnesses
Joel S. Linton
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Fig. 2.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES E. BUTLER, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

GAME APPARATUS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 567,218, dated September 8, 1896.

Application filed June 20, 1895. Serial No. 553,418. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES E. BUTLER, of the city, county, and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Game-Boards and Men Therefor, of which the following is a specification.

The objects of my invention are to provide a folding chess or game board which can be conveniently carried in the pocket, and to provide in connection therewith folding men capable of being removably connected with the game-board, so that they may be folded up inside the game-board without disturbing their position on the board.

The improved folding board and folding men are illustrated in the accompanying drawings, showing the improvements as applied to the game of chess, wherein—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the chess-board open and ready for use, two of the chessmen being shown upon the board. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of one of the chessmen. Fig. 3 is a cross-section of the board folded and closed, two of the men being shown folded and inclosed within the folded board. Fig. 4 is a longitudinal section through one of the squares of the board. Fig. 5 is a longitudinal section of one of the chessmen. Figs. 2, 3, and 4 are on a larger scale than Fig. 1.

The chess-board is composed of two like halves or sections A A, hinged together after the manner common to chess-boards. Each section comprises a face-plate B, a backing C, and a rim D on its three outer sides or edges, said rim projecting above the face-plate B. The two sections are pivoted together by hinges E E, which are secured to the rims D D.

The face-plates B B are preferably of sheet metal, and aluminium is the metal preferably employed on account of its lightness, appearance, and other well-known properties. The backing C and rims D may be made of any material that taste and fancy may dictate, leather or wood being the preferable materials. As thus far described, however, the only features which are of importance to the present improvements are the folding character of the board as a whole and the projections of the rims above the face of the face-plates.

The middle portion of the face-plates is

marked off into sixty-four squares F when intended for use as a checker or chess board, said squares being appropriately designated or colored in the manner common to chess-boards to distinguish the different squares. Surrounding (preferably on all four sides, but not necessarily) the sixty-four squares is a border F', constituting a portion of the face-plates for the reception and retention of captured pieces. This border is not marked off into squares, but may be distinguished from the squares by appropriate coloring or otherwise. In case the game-board is to be used for any other game than chess or checkers, such as backgammon, "parchesi," &c., the face-plates will be appropriately marked. Hence in the subjoined claims when "squares" are referred to it is to be understood that reference is made to the positions which men or pieces are to occupy in the progress of the game, and when "border" is referred to it is to be understood that reference is made to the portion of the game-board intended for the reception of captured pieces or those which are not in play. Since, however, chess is the principal and most generally popular game of this character, and the one wherein the most frequent occasion arises for maintaining the pieces or men in their positions for a considerable length of time, (as in the case of problems, correspondence games, &c.,) the present improvements have been invented having the particular requirements of the game of chess in view, and hence a chess-board and chessmen are illustrated and particularly described and claimed.

Each square F is formed or provided with a "man-holder" G, the preferred construction of which is shown in Fig. 4, wherein the man-holder is shown composed of two lips a a, which are cut out of the sheet metal of which the square is made by incisions on three of its sides, and the lips are then bent up above the surface of the square and then bent over, so as to overhang the apertures b b left in the square where it was cut out, which thus constitutes a retaining-channel c. This is a convenient and the preferred construction, because the face-plate B can be quickly and economically stamped out to form the man-holders, and the lips a a thus formed possess elasticity. A modified man-holder G' is also

shown in Figs. 1 and 3, wherein a single cross-incision b' is made in each square F and the metal is then bent so as to provide an arched hood a' , the space c' beneath which constitutes a retaining-channel. The essence of the invention in this respect resides in the face-plate being provided with men-holders, or means for holding and retaining the men, as well as in the preferred construction shown in Fig. 4. Likewise the border F' is provided with a plurality of men-holders G , similar in construction to those in the squares to receive and hold captured men. For the game of chess there should be, preferably, twenty-nine of the men-holders G in the border.

Each man M is a folding man composed of two parts or members d and e , jointed together by hinge f . Each member d e is of sheet material, such as sheet metal, and preferably of aluminium. The men are colored or otherwise distinguished as is common with chessmen to designate the opposing forces. The head member d of each man is appropriately shaped to correspond with the conventional shapes of the kings, queens, rooks, bishops, knights, and pawns. The foot member e is appropriately shaped to slide and fit into the men-holders G , the foot members of all of the men being alike in size and shape. Preferably also when the men-holders G are constructed with overhanging lips a a , as shown in Fig. 4, the side edges of the foot e converge slightly, thus making the foot wedge-shaped, in order that it may, when thrust under and between the lips a a , be wedged in place and thus be tightly held. Since all of the men-holders G are just alike, each man can be held in place on any one of the squares or at any place in the border F . When held in place in a holder G , the foot e lies flatly on the face of the face-plate, and the head member or head d may then occupy either of its two operative positions; that is to say, the head may either stand erect as when in play, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, or it may be folded flatly down on top of the holder G , as when captured or when the board is folded, as shown in Figs. 3 and 5. The head d , it will be noted, is of sheet material, and hence when folded down upon the holder G it is parallel with the foot e , and hence occupies but little space. The combined thickness of the foot, head, and lips a a of the holder is no greater (and preferably slightly less) than the height to which the rims D project above the face of the face-plates B B , so that their presence (when the heads of the men are folded down) does not prevent the close contact of the rims D on opposite sections when the board is closed. The erect position of the head d of a man is its proper position when in play, so that the men have the same appearance in perspective during the progress of the game as with ordinary chessmen, an advantage which the chess-player readily understands and appreciates. The friction at the hinge f between the two members d e of the man

ordinarily suffices to maintain the head d erect when in play. To insure this erect position, a "snap-hinge" may be employed, and hence the pintle g of the hinge is shown (see Fig. 5) with a squared section h , against the upper and outer faces of which a spring-tongue i on the head d engages to maintain the head in its two positions. The tongue i also constitutes a stop coming into contact with the face of the face-plates B when the head d is erect to prevent the backward tilting of the head, and this stop may be employed when the tongue is not a spring-tongue and the hinge is not a snap-hinge. Each holder G is located at the middle of its square, and, preferably, the height of the head d of the highest man is such that when folded down it does not quite reach to the hinge of a man held in the holder of an adjacent square, so that one man does not fold down upon a man occupying an adjacent square. This contributes to the compactness of the board when folded. This type of playing man or piece is applicable to any game wherein pieces are used which stand erect, such as "Halma," and hence, in the subjoined claims, when the expression "chessman" is employed it is to be understood as designating any game-piece which when in play stands erect.

To prevent the accidental folding or collapsing of the board when in use, means are provided for holding it open. As shown in Fig. 1, a sheet-metal slide I is carried by one section A on its border F' , located and sliding in one of the holders G , beneath and between the lips a a thereof and prevented from disengagement therewith by a head s . When the board is opened, this slide is projected across the joint between the two sections and its free end enters the adjacent holder G , thus holding the two sections A open. If desired, there may be two of the slides at opposite sides of the board, but one ordinarily suffices.

To hold the board shut, any suitable catch or fastener may be employed, such as the hook t and knob w .

I am aware that heretofore pocket chess boards and men have been used. One such known device consists in a folding board having holes similar to a cribbage-board, the men having corresponding pintles on their lower ends, but such boards cannot be folded without first removing the men. In another known device the playing-face is made of pieces of paper joined together so as to leave slits, into which flat strips of pasteboard representing the chessmen are inserted; but this device is awkward to play with and becomes quickly torn, mutilated, and destroyed. Another disadvantage of this second known device is that the chessmen all face one way and must all be inserted in one direction, which is awkward for one of the players, whereas in my improved game-board, where the lips a a are employed, the men can be inserted in either direction, and in any event the head mem-

bers are alike on both faces, so that it makes no difference which way they face. I disclaim these known devices, since there is no conflict between them and my invention.

5 I claim as my invention—

10 A folding chess-board having sheet-metal face-plates provided with squares and a border, and with men-holders for each square and for the border, each of said men-holders being composed of projecting lips or hoods integral with the metal of the face-plate and cut out and bent up therefrom, and said board having also a marginal rim projecting above its face and above the men-holders, and

means for holding said chess-board open, in 15 combination with folding chessmen, each composed of two members jointed together, having a stop to limit their relative movement when at right angles to each other, and the attaching member of said chessmen being 20 wedge-shaped.

In witness whereof I have hereunto signed my name in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

CHARLES E. BUTLER.

Witnesses:

C. R. COMES,
OWEN WARD.