July 6, 1948. N. A. CRITES 2,444,695

PLAYHOUSE

Filed Aug. 4, 1945

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

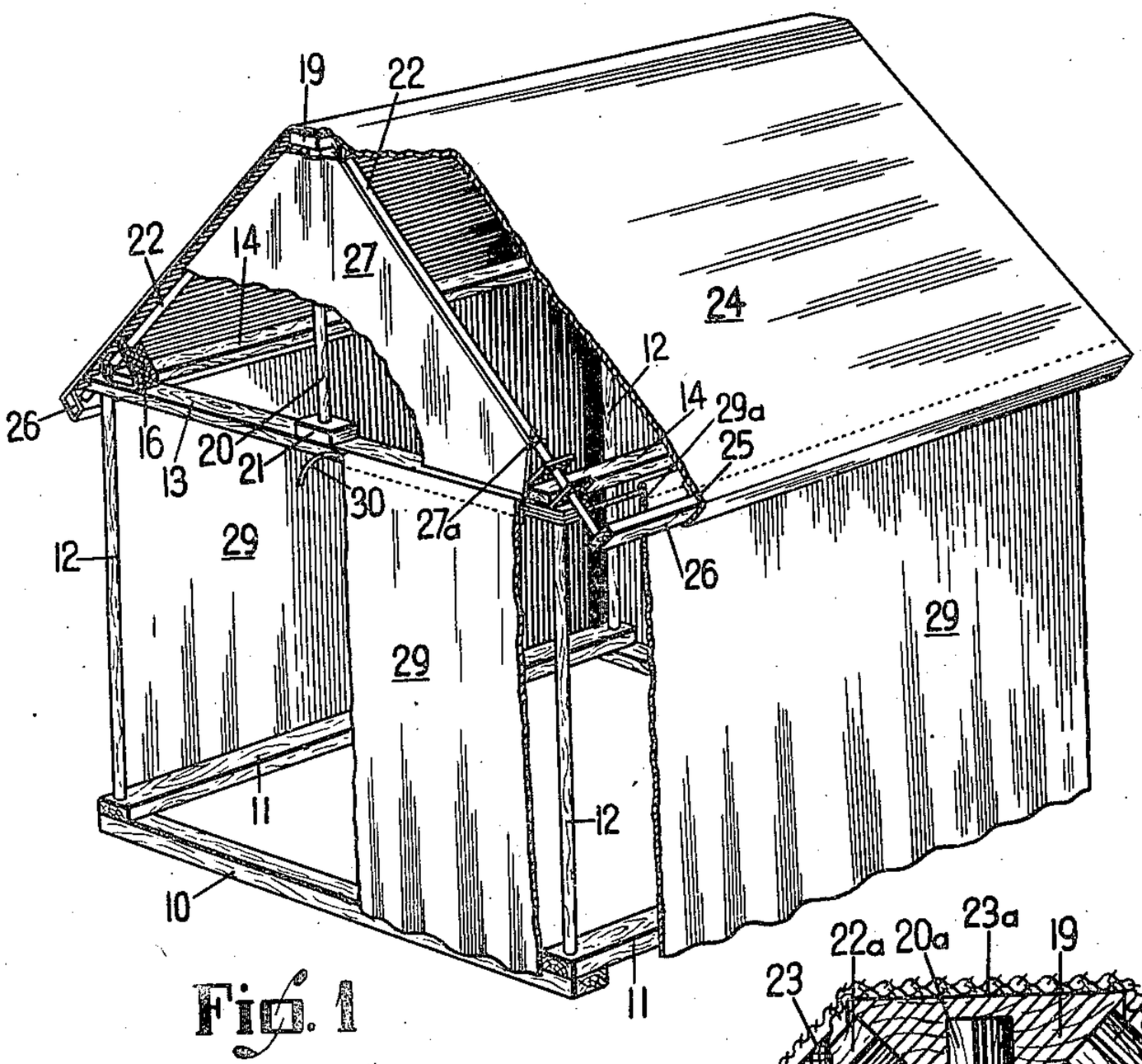

Fig. 1

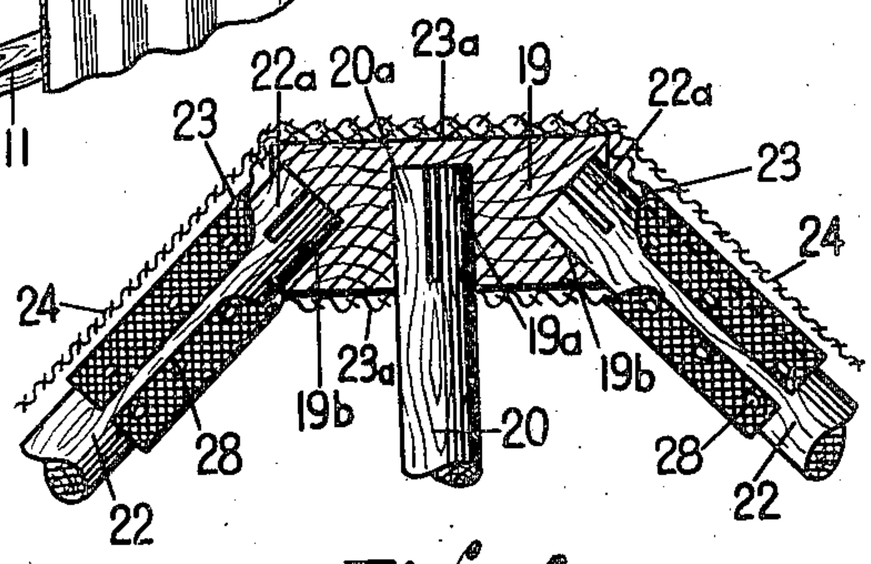

Fig. 4

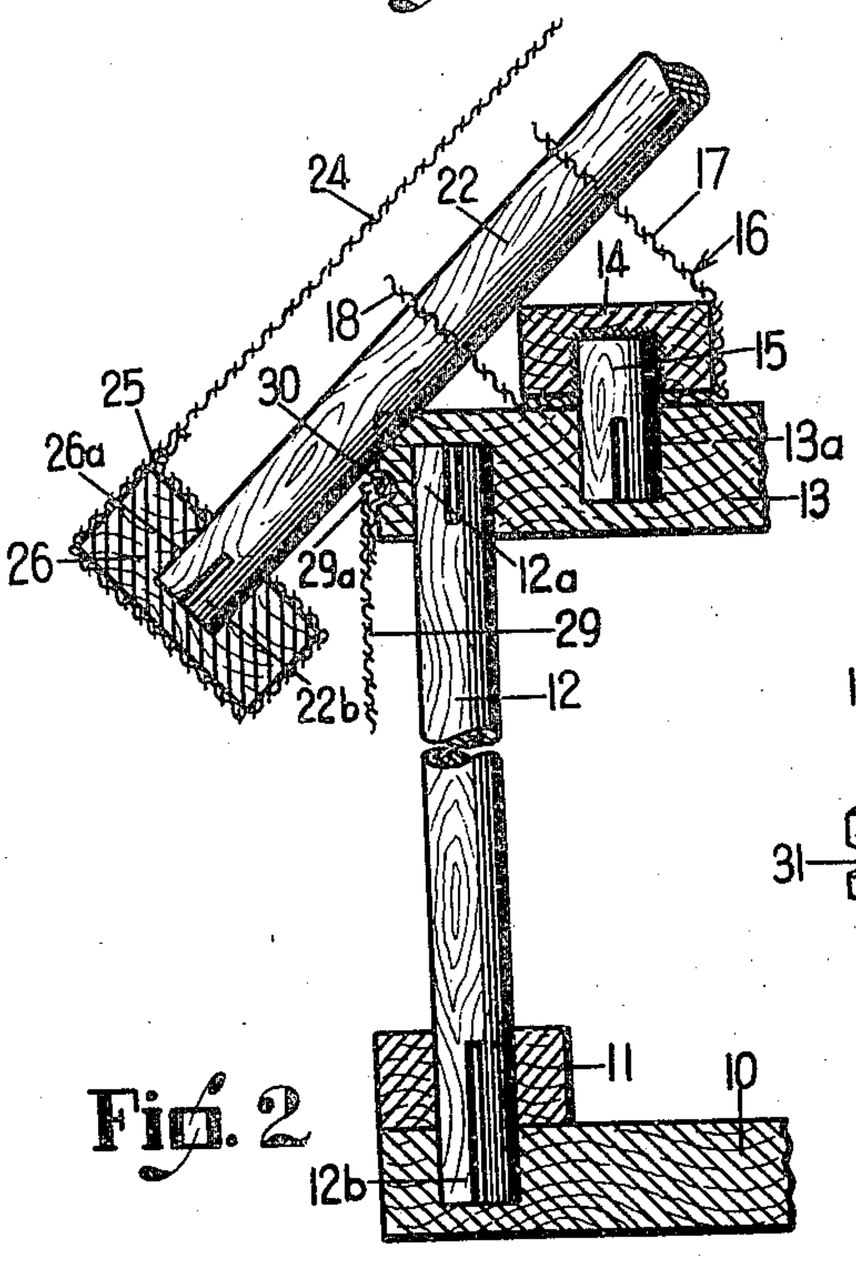

Fig. 2

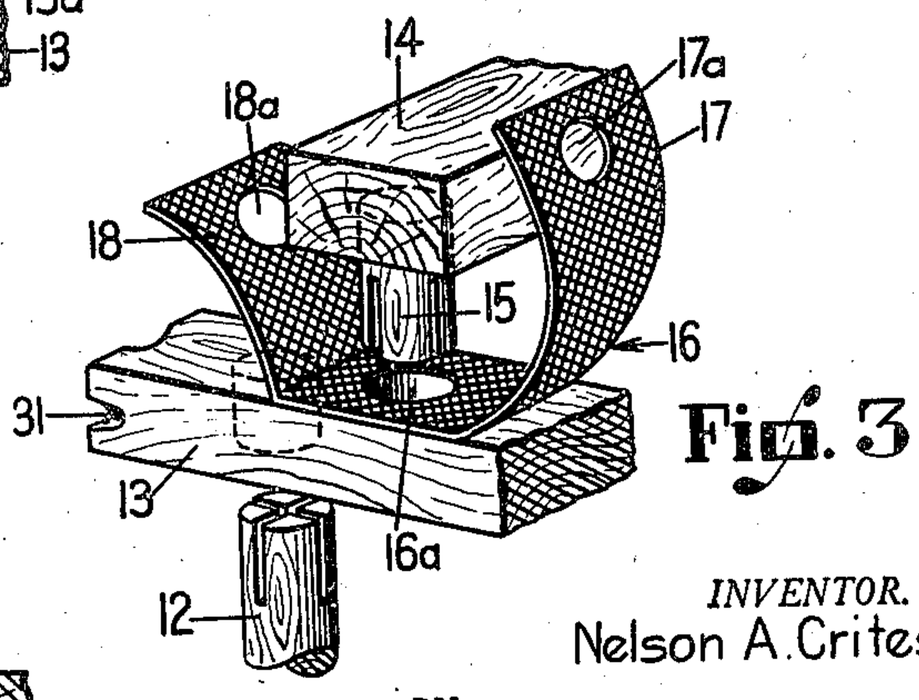

Fig. 3

INVENTOR.
Nelson A. Crites

BY
Corbett, Mahoney & Miller

ATTORNEYS

July 6, 1948. N. A. CRITES 2,444,695

PLAYHOUSE

Filed Aug. 4, 1945 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

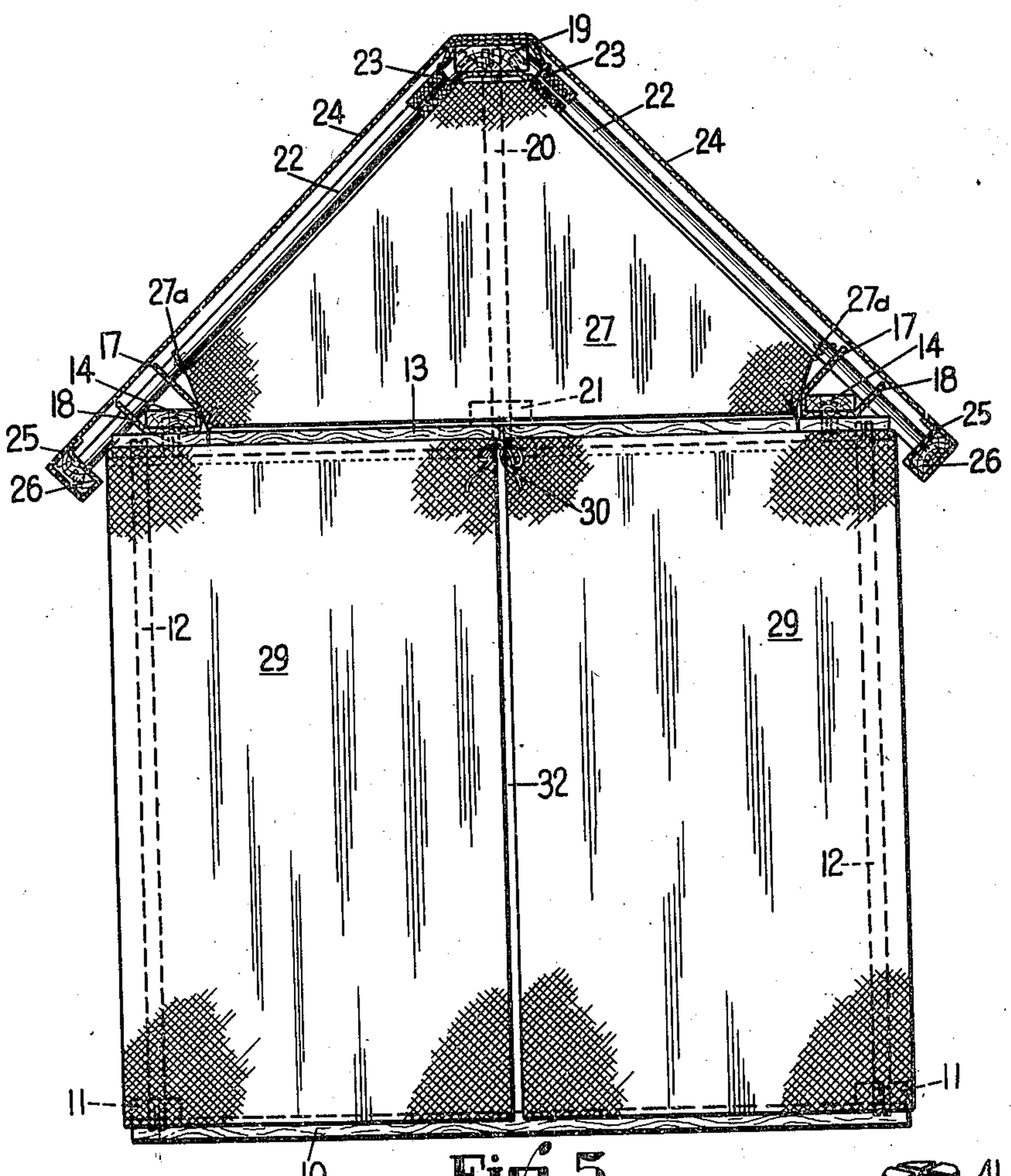

Fig. 5

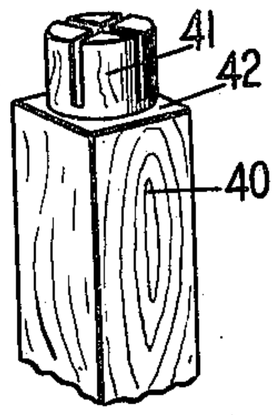

Fig. 7

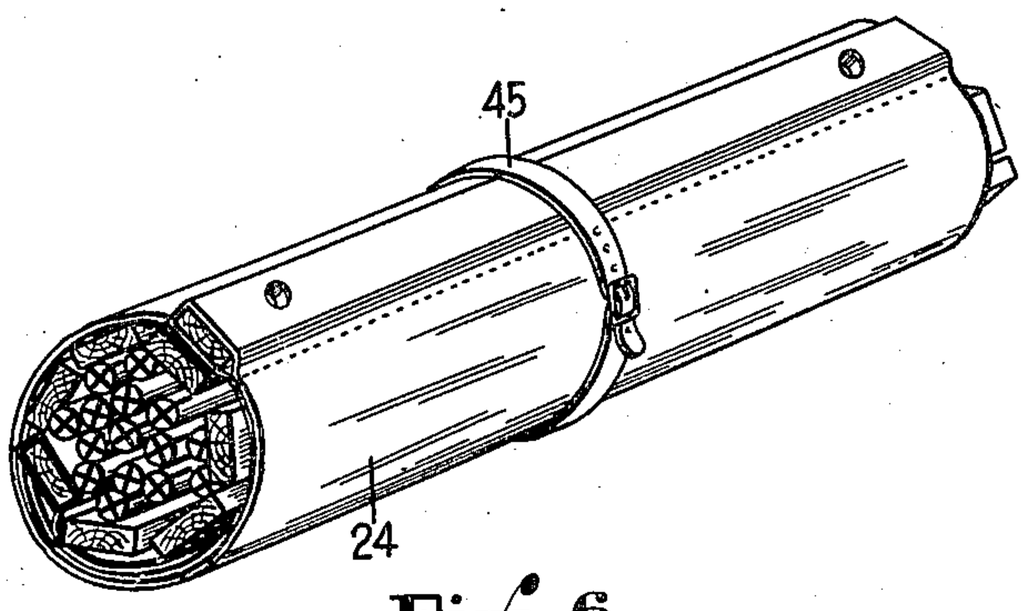

Fig. 6

INVENTOR.
Nelson A. Crites.

BY Corbett, Mahoney & Miller

ATTORNEYS

Patented July 6, 1948

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,444,695

PLAYHOUSE

Nelson A. Crites, Columbus, Ohio

Application August 4, 1945, Serial No. 608,908

6 Claims. (Cl. 135—1)

1

The present invention relates to playhouses. It has to do particularly, although not exclusively, with playhouses for children for indoor and outdoor use capable of being assembled or disassembled with ease and facility. Playhouses embodying the invention are of the knockdown type capable of being formed into a relatively small and compact bundle for transportation and storage purposes.

One of the objects of the present invention is to provide an improved playhouse of the foregoing character which may be easily and quickly assembled or disassembled without the use of tools.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an improved playhouse of the knockdown type which is constructed entirely without the use of metal parts which might serve to cause injury to children playing within and about the playhouse.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved knockdown type of playhouse having a roof and walls formed from waterproof fabric, such as canvas, duck, or the like.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved playhouse, or the like, which is of relatively simple construction and which may be produced at a relatively low manufacturing cost.

The foregoing and other objects and advantages of the present invention will appear from the following description and appended claims when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein like reference characters designate corresponding parts in the several views.

In said drawings:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a playhouse embodying the invention, partly broken away to reveal portions of the frame structure.

Fig. 2 is an enlarged detail vertical sectional view, broken away, of one corner of the playhouse looking toward the front thereof in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a detailed perspective view of certain of the parts shown in Fig. 2 and illustrating the method of assembly of these parts.

Fig. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary detail vertical sectional view of the ridge pole and associated parts.

Fig. 5 is a front elevational view of a playhouse embodying the invention as shown in the preceding views.

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of the playhouse in knockdown form and bundled for shipment or storage purposes; and

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary perspective view of a

2

modified form of corner post embodying the invention.

Before explaining in detail the present invention it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and arrangement of parts illustrated in the accompanying drawings, since the invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or carried out in various ways. It is to be understood also that the phraseology or terminology employed herein is for the purpose of description and not of limitation, and it is not intended to limit the invention herein claimed beyond the requirements of the prior art.

Referring now particularly to the drawings, especially Figs. 1 to 5, inclusive, thereof, there is shown one form or type of knockdown playhouse or similar structure embodying the present invention. As shown in Figs. 1 and 5, the playhouse of the present invention comprises a rectangular skeleton base frame portion having transverse wood cross-frame members 10 and longitudinal wood side members 11. The overlapping ends of the members 10 and 11 are provided with vertical openings or sockets to receive and support corner posts 12, four such being employed in the present structure. Each corner post, as shown, is of round cross section, merely by way of illustration, whose opposite or upper and lower ends terminate in doweled portions 12*a* and 12*b* respectively. The upright corner posts 12 provide means for supporting an upper rectangular skeleton frame portion which consists of transverse or cross-frame wood members 13, one such being shown, and longitudinal side frame wood members 14. The cross members 13 are socketed and adjacent opposite ends to receive and fit over the dowels 12*a* of the corner posts 12. The opposite ends of the longitudinal members 14 are likewise socketed and are provided with dowels 15 which seat in sockets 13*a* formed adjacent the opposite ends of the cross-frame members 13 and spaced slightly inwardly from the sockets receiving the dowels 12*a*.

The dowels 15, as are the dowels 12*a* and 12*b*, are provided with crossed slots or kerfs to allow for expansion and contraction. The dowels 15 also serve to maintain in place between the members 13 and 14, see particularly Figs. 2 and 3, flexible connecting members 16 which are formed from fabric, or the like material, the base of the member 16 having an opening 16*a* formed therein in registry with the socket 13*a* so as to allow the dowel 15 to pass through it and hold the member in position. The member 16 is provided

with two spaced free or movable end portions 17 and 18, each having a hole or opening 17*a* and 18*a*, respectively, formed adjacent its free end for a purpose to be described.

A roof frame of the gable type is detachably mounted upon the upper skeleton frame portion comprising the members 13 and 14. The roof frame portion comprises a longitudinal center member or wood ridge pole 19 provided adjacent opposite ends with sockets 19*a* in its under face, and in its lower side faces, adjacent opposite ends, with a pair of angularly disposed sockets 19*b*, see Fig. 4. The ridge pole 19 is supported adjacent its opposite ends by kingposts 20 whose lower ends extend through an opening in a supporting block 21 and are doweled to fit into a socket formed in each of the upper cross-frame members 13.

On opposite sides of the ridge pole 19 there are disposed two pairs of rafters 22 whose upper adjacent end portions are doweled at 22*a* to fit within the ridge pole sockets 19*b*. Each pair of rafters 22 is secured together by means of a double strap-like fabric hinge member 23 whose upper and lower portions 23*a* are spaced apart so as to be slipped over the end portions of the ridge pole 19 and to thus embrace the ridge pole. The outer ends of the double strap-like fabric hinge 23 receive and embrace the upper end portions of the rafters 22 and are preferably secured to the rafters by means of tacks or the like 24. The lower outer ends of the rafters 22 are provided with doweled end portions 22*b* for a purpose to be described.

In assembling the roof frame structure with the remaining structure, the kingposts 20 are secured in position upon the cross members 13, the double strap-like hinges 23 with their pairs of rafters 22 are slipped over the ends of the ridge pole 19. The lower ends of the rafters 22 are then inserted in the openings 17*a* and 18*a* of the flexible connecting members 16 and the ridge pole is moved down into engagement with the kingposts until the doweled upper ends 20*a* of said kingposts are received in the sockets 19*a* of the ridge pole. The entire gable-like roof frame structure will now be supported in the position in which it is shown in Figs. 1 and 5.

The roof frame structure is provided with a fabric covering which, as shown, is in the form of a single piece of fabric, such as canvas or duck 24, which is provided along its opposite side edges with hems 25. For the purpose of reinforcing the roof fabric. For the purpose of reinforcing members 26 are held within these hems 25. These reinforcing members 26 are provided adjacent opposite ends with sockets 26*a* to receive and fit over the doweled ends 22*b* of the rafters 22, see Fig. 2.

The gabled ends of the roof structure are preferably closed by substantially triangular pieces 27 of fabric which are provided at their three corners with tie members 27*a* to permit the pieces to be releasably secured to the adjacent frame members of the structure to hold them in place as clearly seen in Fig. 5.

The sides and the front and back ends of the playhouse are enclosed by a single piece of fabric, such as canvas or duck 29 which has a hem 29*a* at its upper edge to receive a pull cord or rope 30. As seen in Figs. 2 and 3, the cross-frame members 13 in their opposite end edges are provided with grooves or notches 31 to permit the pull cord 30 to hold the canvas 29 in position. It will be understood that the one piece

canvas covering 29 provides the side walls and the front and back walls for the playhouse, the ends of the fabric coming together at the front of the structure, as shown at 32, Fig. 5. Since the cord 30 is preferably tied at the middle of the front wall, the fabric covering 29 may be slipped along the cord to increase or decrease the front opening at 32.

If desired, as seen in Fig. 7, a somewhat modified form of corner post may be employed instead of the posts 12 of the preceding figures. In Fig. 7 the corner post 40 is of rectangular or square cross section and is provided at its opposite ends (one end only being shown) with dowels, such as the slotted dowel 41. By virtue of this structure, a shoulder 42 is provided upon which the cross-frame members 13 of the upper skeleton frame portion may rest. Such posts may provide some additional strength to the structure.

In Fig. 6 of the drawings there is shown the improved playhouse of the present invention in knockdown form and in a bundle whose covering is the fabric roof section 24 of the playhouse. A strap or the like 45 may be employed to hold the bundle together and compact for shipping and storage purposes.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim is:

1. In a knockdown playhouse, a rectangular skleton base frame portion, an upper skeleton frame portion spaced above the base frame portion, vertically disposed corner posts having doweled end portions detachably connecting the two frame portions together, a roof frame portion detachably mounted upon said upper skeleton frame portion and comprising a ridge pole, detachable vertically disposed kingposts connecting the ridge pole and upper skeleton frame portion, and rafters detachably connecting the ridge pole, kingposts and upper frame together, flexible means for connecting adjacent upper ends of the rafters together and providing sockets for receiving and supporting the ridge pole, said rafters having doweled upper end portions adapted to detachably fit within sockets formed in said ridge pole, and flexible means for detachably connecting the lower end portions of the rafters to said upper skeleton frame.

2. In a knockdown playhouse, a rectangular skeleton base frame portion, an upper skeleton frame portion spaced above the base frame portion, vertically disposed corner posts having doweled end portions detachably connecting the two frame portions together, a roof frame portion detachably mounted upon said upper skeleton frame portion and comprising a ridge pole, detachable vertically disposed kingposts connecting the ridge pole and upper skeleton frame portion, and rafters detachably connecting the ridge pole, kingposts, and upper frame together, flexible means for connecting adjacent upper ends of the rafters together and providing sockets for receiving and supporting the ridge pole, said rafters having doweled upper and lower end portions adapted to detachably fit within sockets formed in said ridge pole, flexible means for detachably connecting the lower end portions of the rafters to said upper skeleton frame, and a detachable fabric roof cover for said roof frame portion having hems formed along its longitudinal side edges and a reinforcing wood member located in each of said hems whereby to provide means for detachably connecting the fabric roof cover to the lower ends of the rafters, said re-

inforcing wood members having sockets to detachably receive said doweled lower end portions.

3. In a knockdown playhouse, a rectangular skeleton base frame portion, an upper skeleton frame portion spaced above the base frame portion, vertically disposed corner posts having doweled end portions detachably connecting the two frame portions together, a roof frame portion detachably mounted upon said upper skeleton frame portion and comprising a ridge pole, detachable vertically disposed kingposts connecting the ridge pole and upper skeleton frame portion, and rafters detachably connecting the ridge pole, kingposts and upper frame together, said kingposts having doweled upper and lower ends, said ridge pole and said upper skeleton frame portion having sockets for receiving the doweled upper and lower ends, respectively, of said kingposts, flexible means for connecting adjacent upper ends of the rafters together and providing sockets for receiving and supporting the ridge pole, flexible means for detachably connecting the lower end portions of the rafters to said upper skeleton frame, said rafters having doweled upper and lower end portions, said ridge pole having sockets to detachably receive said doweled upper end portions, and a detachable fabric roof cover for said roof frame portion, said roof cover having hems formed along its longitudinal side edges and a reinforcing wood member located in each of said hems whereby to provide means for detachably connecting the fabric roof cover to the lower ends of the rafters, said reinforcing wood members having sockets to detachably receive said doweled lower end portions.

4. Structure according to claim 1 wherein the flexible means for detachably connecting the lower end portions of the rafters to said upper skeleton frame comprises strips which are attached to the frame and have free ends provided with openings through which said rafters pass.

5. Structure according to claim 1 wherein the upper skeleton frame comprises longitudinal and transverse members connected together by dowel pins carried by certain of said members cooperating with sockets in other of said members.

6. Structure according to claim 2 wherein the upper skeleton frame comprises longitudinal and transverse members connected together by dowel pins carried by certain of said members cooperating with sockets in other of said members, and wherein the flexible means for detachably connecting the lower end portions of the rafters to said upper skeleton frame comprises strips which are attached to the frame members which have the sockets formed therein, said strips having free ends provided with openings through which said rafters pass and having openings in the intermediate part attached to the frame members registering with the sockets formed therein for receiving the dowel pins carried by other frame members.

NELSON A. CRITES.

REFERENCES CITED

The following references are of record in the file of this patent:

UNITED STATES PATENTS

Number	Name	Date
514,726	Ormsby	Feb. 13, 1894
837,802	Dalton	Dec. 4, 1906
1,458,563	Walker	June 12, 1923
1,777,028	Berbeck	Sept. 30, 1930

Certificate of Correction

July 6, 1948.

Patent No. 2,444,695.

NELSON A. CRITES

It is hereby certified that errors appear in the printed specification of the above numbered patent requiring correction as follows:

Column 3, lines 53 and 54, strike out the words and period "For the purpose of reinforcing the roof fabric."; line 54, after "reinforcing" insert *the roof fabric, longitudinal wood reinforcing*;

and that the said Letters Patent should be read with these corrections therein that the same may conform to the record of the case in the Patent Office.

Signed and sealed this 9th day of August, A. D. 1949.

[SEAL]

THOMAS F. MURPHY,
Assistant Commissioner of Patents.