

Aug. 28, 1928.

1,682,201

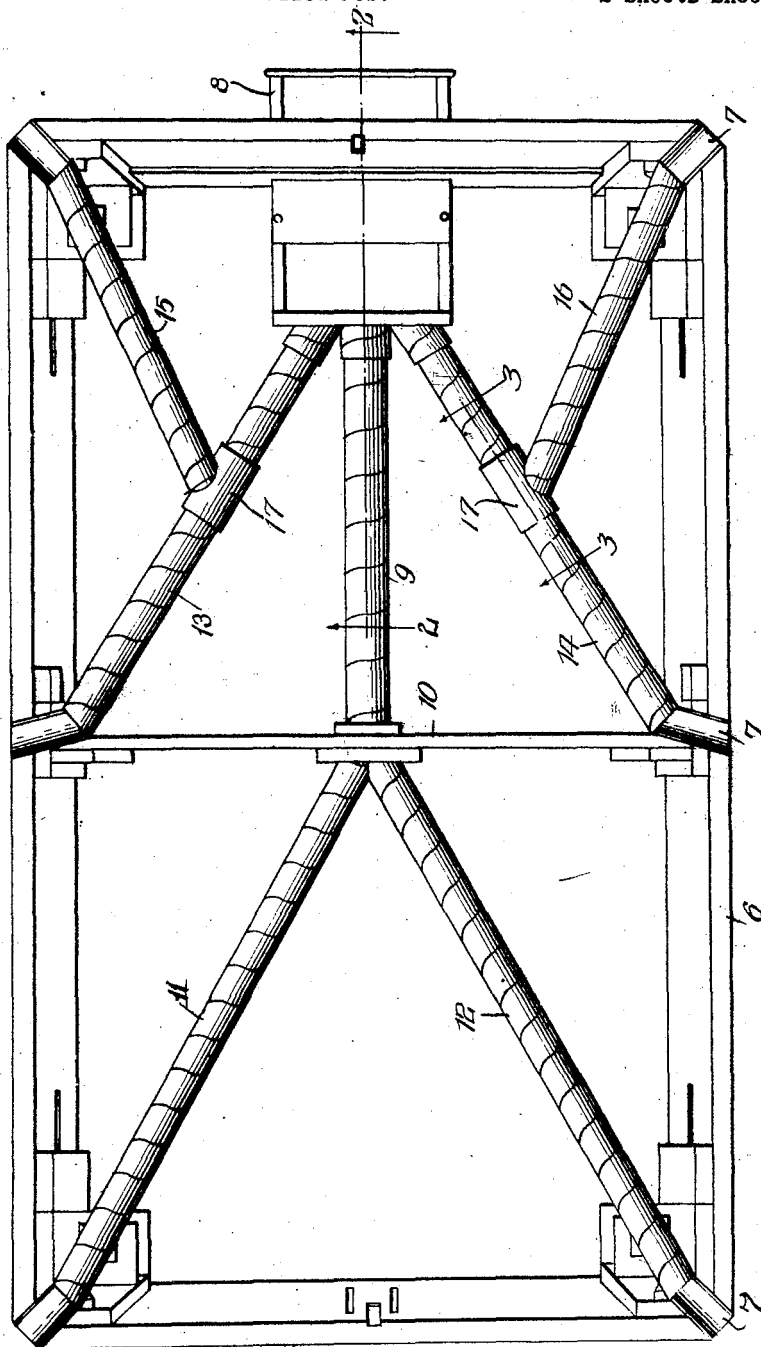
G. L. THOMPSON

GULLEY FOR POCKET BILLIARD TABLES

Filed Feb. 7, 1920

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1



Inventor
G. L. Thompson
By W. H. Bell

Aug. 28, 1928.

1,682,201

G. L. THOMPSON

GULLEY FOR POCKET BILLIARD TABLES

Filed Feb. 7, 1920

2 Sheets-Sheet. 2

Fig. 2

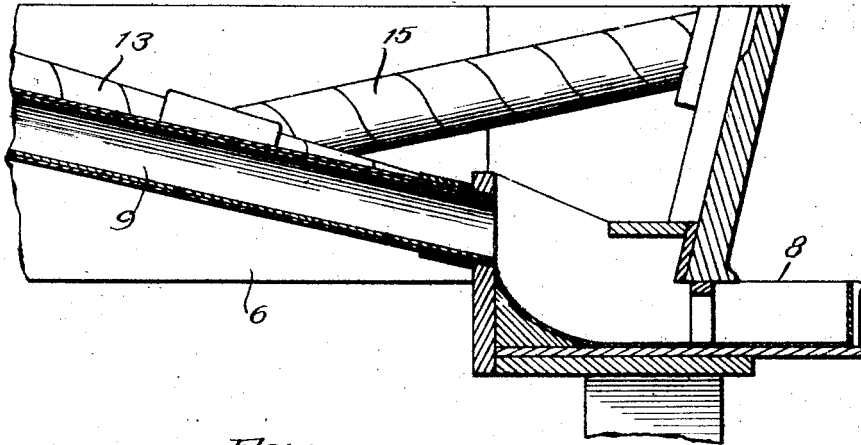


Fig. 3

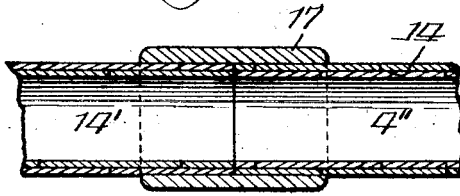


Fig. 4

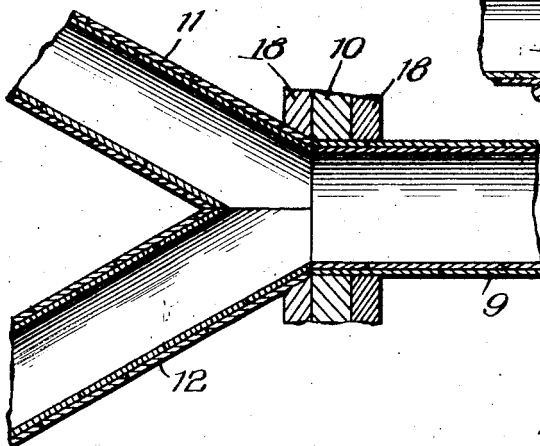
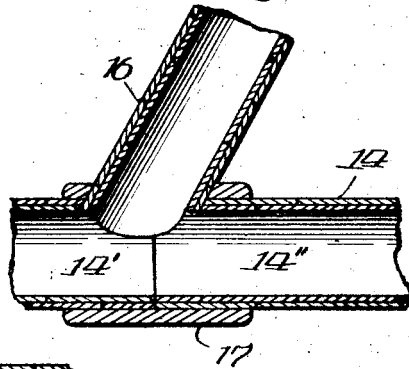


Fig. 5



Inventor
G. L. Thompson
By W. S. Bell
Att'y

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GEORGE L. THOMPSON, OF NEW YORK, N. Y., ASSIGNOR TO THE BRUNSWICK-BALKE-COLLENDER COMPANY, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, A CORPORATION OF DELAWARE.

GULLEY FOR POCKET-BILLIARD TABLES.

Application filed February 7, 1920. Serial No. 356,875.

This invention relates to pocket billiard tables, and more particularly to novel improvements in gulleys for receiving balls from the usual pockets and delivering them to a conveniently disposed receptacle in which the balls are collected from all of the pockets of the table. Heretofore it has been the custom commercially to provide open or skeleton gulleys made of wood or metal. The wood gulleys have been most commonly employed and they are usually open at the top and permit the accumulation of dust and dirt which impedes the travel of the balls in the gulleys. Furthermore, some dirt adheres to the balls and not only spoils their appearance but tends to cause them to roll unevenly or irregularly on the table. Metal gulleys have been proposed and used to some extent but have never been commercially successful for various reasons. The skeleton metal gulleys which have been proposed will, to a very considerable extent prevent the accumulation of dust and dirt in the gulleys, but it has been found difficult to produce a skeleton metal gulley which will not injure the balls and which can be satisfactorily produced and maintained at a reasonable cost. Sometimes chalk or other articles are accidentally dropped into the pockets and find their way into the gulleys with the result that the gulleys, and particularly the commonly used wood gulleys, are frequently choked because the chalk or other articles will not slide freely down the gulleys. It then becomes necessary for an attendant to get under the table and remove the obstruction, the presence of which is generally unobserved until a number of balls have been stalled in the gulley and the game thereby delayed, or some ball has been forced out of the gulley and drops upon the floor.

Quite a number of gulleys of different constructions have been proposed in the past but have never advanced much farther than the experimental stage largely, I believe, because the general public regards it as very simple and therefore easy of accomplishment to deliver the balls from the pockets to the receptacle, but this conception of the situation is far from correct and is due to a lack of knowledge of the conditions to be met. It is well known that pocket billiard tables are provided with six pockets located at the ends and at the sides of the table. It very frequently happens that balls will enter the gulley from more than one pocket at or about the same time, and provision must be made to prevent them from interfering with each other in their travel to the receptacle as well as to insure the prompt delivery of the balls to the receptacle and in a clean and undamaged condition. To this end it is highly desirable to avoid bends in the gulley as much as possible and particularly sharp, angular bends which may produce corners in which the balls will sometimes stick. It may seem to those who have not made a study of the subject that a pocket billiard ball would always travel uninterruptedly along an inclined, grooved gulley, but experience has shown that the balls will stick even in gulleys that appear to be in the very best condition. This may be due to the presence of dirt in the gulley or on the ball, or to some irregularity which is hardly noticeable to the eye, or simply to the manner in which the ball happens to roll. It is also very desirable that the balls should roll from the pockets freely to the receptacle without producing any noise or other disturbance which might be noticed by the players and interfere with the shots.

While the gulleys now in commercial use have answered their purpose with a measure of satisfaction in the past, I have produced a gulley of simple construction which will overcome the disadvantages and shortcomings of gulleys known to the art at the present and which can be inexpensively produced and installed on new tables or on tables now in actual use.

My improved gulley consists of a plurality of tubes leading from the respective pockets and discharging into the ball receptacle. The entire gulley is completely closed except for the ball entrances at the pockets and the ball discharge ends at the receptacle, and the tubular construction of the members of the gulley insures the free and uninterrupted travel of the balls to the receptacle. Since the gulley is open only at the pockets and at the receptacle, only such dust and dirt as may enter at these points can accumulate in the gulley, and this is relatively little and can be easily removed by applying air pressure to the gulley entrances at the pockets.

The gulley is made of paper board tubes which are cut or sawed to proper length and shape and suitably joined together to form smooth and uninterrupted tracks for the

travel of the balls. I use the term "paper board" broadly to include pasteboard of sufficient strength and any other kind of paper board made by the union of thin layers of
 5 paper pulp or by pressing paper pulp into molds or in any other suitable way, and also including such other materials as fiber board for example, which may not be strictly paper board but which may be used as the equivalent therefor in practicing my invention.

I have illustrated the invention in one selected form in the accompanying drawings in which

15 Fig. 1 is a plan view of a pocket billiard table frame without slate bed, cushion rails and pocket attachments but embodying the invention.

Fig. 2 is an enlarged sectional view on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

20 Fig. 3 is an enlarged sectional view on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

Figs. 4 and 5 are enlarged sectional views showing different joints in the gulley.

Referring to the drawings, 6 designates 25 generally the frame of the table which, in the form illustrated, is provided with grooves or throats 7 at the sides and corners to receive the balls rolling from the table into the pockets (not shown). A ball receptacle or gulley box 8 of any suitable shape and construction is conveniently located at one end of the table in the usual manner to receive the balls. The gulley consists of a centrally disposed tubular member 9 which extends from the receptacle 8 back to a terminus at or about the middle of the table where it is supported by the cross-piece 10. This central member is connected with members 11, 12 which diverge therefrom to the throats at the corners of the table remote from the receptacle. The side throats are connected by tubular members 13, 14 directly to the receptacle and have their discharge ends located on opposite sides of the discharge end of the central member 9. The throats at the corners of the table adjacent the receptacle are connected by tubular members 15, 16 to the side pocket members 13, 14 between their ends so that balls entering these corner pockets will roll down through the members 15, 16 into the members 13, 14 and thence into the receptacle.

The gulley members are made of paper board or equivalent material and in any desired size, in tubular section, and they may be cut and fitted to the table from standard commercial lengths if preferred, or the tubular members may be made up of sections suitably jointed as by means of sleeves 17 made of wood, paper board or other suitable material. The sleeve 17, as shown in Fig. 5, may be employed not only to hold together in proper alinement two sections 14', 14'' of the tubular member 14, but also to form a rigid connection for the tubular member 16 which projects through the sleeve and discharges
 65

into the tubular member 14. The cross-piece 10 may be provided with blocks 18 to cooperate therewith to form a support for the ends of the members 11 and 12 which are connected by a miter joint and discharge directly into the member 9, as shown in Fig. 4.

My invention provides a gulley which possesses all the necessary strength and lasting qualities to be desired and which, at the same time, provides a smooth and unobstructed track along which the balls may roll freely and uninterruptedly from the pockets to the ball receptacle. I prefer to coat the tubes with shellac interiorly and with varnish exteriorly to better preserve them and provide a smooth enclosed track for the balls which is thereby made impervious to moisture and which will last indefinitely. It may be satisfactory to dispense with the coatings for some installations, but for the best results I prefer to coat the tubes inside and out as described, or with some other suitable materials. Various means may be employed for connecting or jointing the members or the sections of which they are composed, and while I prefer to provide sleeves or collars like those illustrated, or substantially the same, I have found that such joints may be made with reasonable effectiveness by the application of ordinary adhesive tape. While this is measurably satisfactory, I do not recommend it for permanent installations because of the possibility that the tape may in time give way and permit the gulley to become distorted.

While I have more particularly referred to the advantages of the tubular construction of the gulley, I wish to emphasize also the advantages which result from the use of tubular members made of paper board or its equivalent. This not only provides a gulley which is light in weight, but one which can be produced at very low cost because the tubes can be purchased in commercial sections of a proper length for the purpose, and they can be easily cut and assembled in a completed gulley. In addition to this, the paper board gulleys are practically noiseless and in practice it has been found that the balls will roll in the gulley smoothly, evenly and freely, and to all intents and purposes, noiselessly, which are results highly desirable in pocket billiard table gulleys.

I am aware that it may be desirable to make various changes in the form, construction and proportion of parts to meet different conditions and for different installations, and I therefore reserve the right to make all such changes as fairly fall within the scope of the following claim:

I claim:

The combination of a pocket billiard table frame having a plurality of throats disposed at its corners and at its sides for the usual pockets of the table, a receptacle at one end
 130

of the table, and a plurality of tubular gulley members connecting the throats with the receptacle, said members comprising a centrally disposed member extending back from the receptacle and terminating at a point substantially at the middle of the table, a pair of members diverging from the central member to the throats at the corners of the table remote from the receptacle, a pair of members directly connecting the side throats with the receptacle, and a pair of members each of which directly connects one of the throats at the end of the table adjacent said receptacle to one of the members connected to the side throats. 10

GEORGE L. THOMPSON.