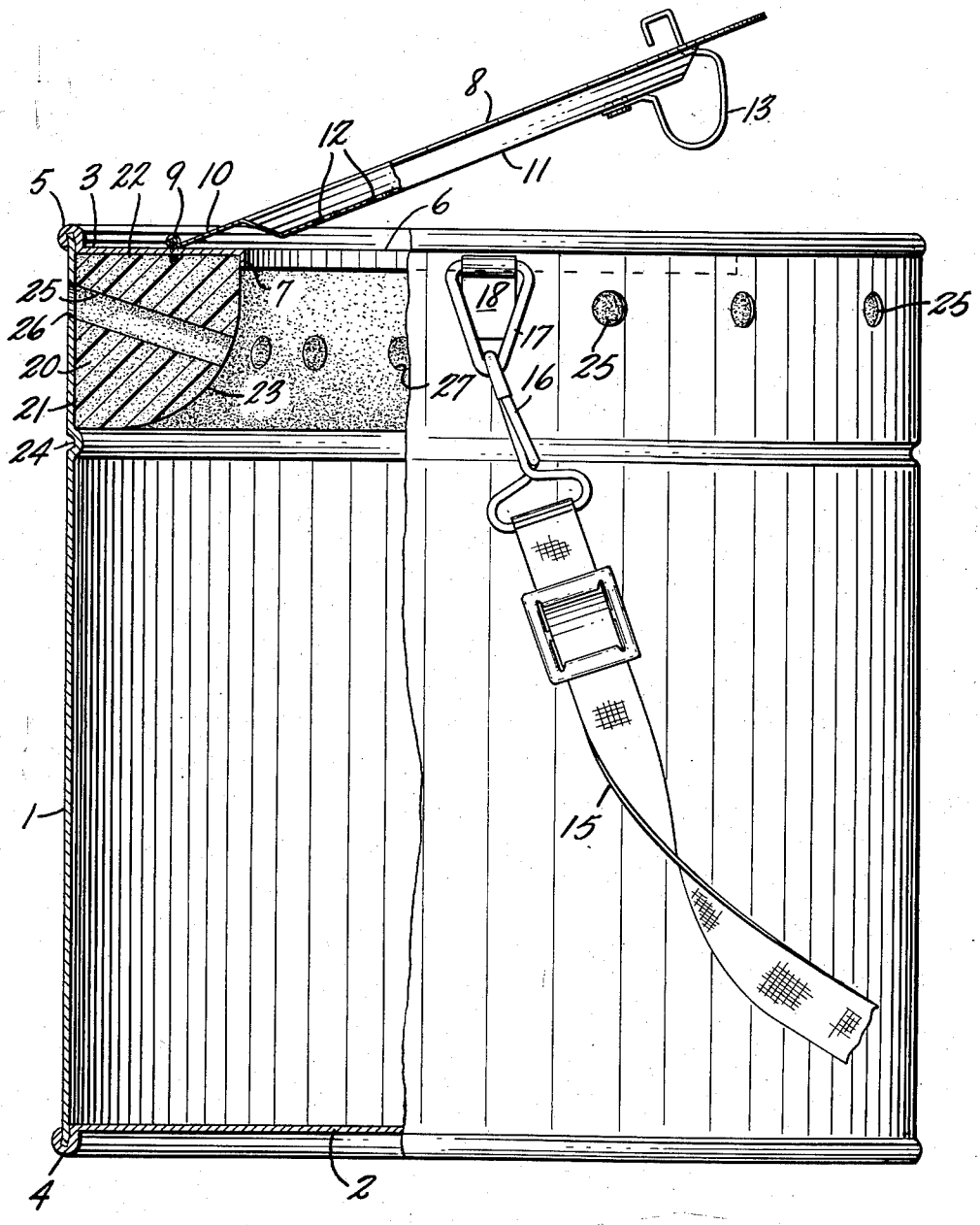
Jan. 24, 1961 R. G. WOOLWORTH 2,968,887

ONE PIECE FLOATING BAIT BUCKET

Filed Aug. 14, 1957



United States Patent Office 2,968,887 Patented Jan. 24, 1961

2,968,887

ONE PIECE FLOATING BAIT BUCKET

Richard G. Woolworth, Lancaster, Pa., assignor to Old Pal, Incorporated, Lititz, Pa., a corporation of Pennsylvania

Filed Aug. 14, 1957, Ser. No. 678,071

3 Claims. (Cl. 43—56)

The present invention relates to bait buckets and particularly to buckets for carrying minnows and other live bait.

The invention is directed to providing a one piece floating bait bucket. In contrast with conventional two piece buckets consisting of an inner perforated bucket or basket inside an outer bucket, the one piece construction in accordance with the invention is lighter weight, easier to use, more economical to manufacture and more compact for the same capacity. When lowered into the water, for example in a stream or lake, the bucket floats with its top substantially at water level. Holes in the bucket provide circulation when it is in the water to provide fresh water for the bait. With one piece construction, a problem arises in providing circulation when the bucket is in the water and yet providing water from spilling or slopping out when the bucket is being carried, for example by a shoulder strap. This problem is solved by the novel construction in accordance with the present invention.

The construction, characteristics and advantages of the one piece floating bait bucket in accordance with the invention will be understood from the following description and claims in conjunction with the accompanying drawing which shows in side elevation and partial section a bait bucket in accordance with the invention.

As shown by way of example in the drawing, the bucket has a side wall 1, a bottom 2 and a top wall 3. The bucket is formed of any suitable material for example sheet metal or molded plastic composition. In the embodiment shown in the drawing, the bucket is of sheet metal construction. The side wall 1 is shown as being substantially cylindrical, although it may be tapered upwardly or downwardly if desired. The circular bottom 2 is united to the side wall by a rolled seam 4 which also provides a downwardly projecting peripheral rim. The top 3 is similarly joined to the upper edge of the side wall by a rolled seam providing an upstanding peripheral rim 5. To provide access to the interior of the bucket, the top 3 is provided with a central restricted opening 6 bounded by a downwardly projecting rim 7. The diameter of the central opening 6 is preferably about one half to three quarters that of the top of the bucket. The opening is provided with a cover 8 which is connected to the top 3 by a hinge 9. The cover is dish shaped with a substantially flat rim portion 10, adapted to overlie an annular area of the top 3 surrounding the opening 6, and a depressed central portion 11 which extends down into the opening. The depressed portion 11 is perforated with spaced holes 12 distributed over substantially its entire area. A combined spring latch and handle 13 is adapted to engage the rim 7 and hold the lid or cover 8 releasably in closed position. The bucket is provided with a suitable bail or other means for carrying it. In the drawing there is shown a shoulder strap 15, the opposite ends of which are attached to diametrically opposite sides of the bucket by snap hooks 16, loops 17 and ears 18.

Flotation for the bucket is provided by a ring of buoyant material 20. While any suitable buoyant material may be used, it is preferable to form the ring 20 of foamed plastic material, for example polystyrene. Such material is highly water resistant and is of cellular construction so that it does not become water logged. The ring 20 fits into the corner between the side wall 1 and the top 3. It has a substantially cylindrical peripheral surface 21 engaging the side wall 1 and an upper surface 22 fitting the top 3 and extending from the side wall to the downwardly projecting rim 7. A free surface 23 is exposed inside the container and is preferably covered with a continuous shell or skin to present a substantially continuous smooth surface. In the preferred construction shown in the drawing, the free surface 23 of the ring 20 is curved so that in cross section the ring has approximately the shape of the quadrant of a circle. The ring 20 is suitably secured in place, for example by adhesive between the surfaces 21 and 22 and the side wall and top respectively of the bucket. The ring is also shown as being confined by the rim 7 and by an inwardly projecting rib or bead 24 formed in the side wall 1 of the bucket just below the ring. The density and volume of the ring 20 are selected to provide flotation slightly greater than the weight of the other parts of the bucket. When the bucket is lowered into the water and is full of water it floats with its top 3 approximately level with or slightly above the surface of the water.

When the bucket is floating in the water, circulation of water into and out of the bucket is provided by a plurality of passages 25 which extend through the flotation ring 20 and through the wall of the bucket. The passages 25 are spaced circumferentially from one another and are below the top 3. They are of sufficiently large diameter to provide free flow of water into and out of the bucket. Circulatory movement of the water can be increased by periodically pushing the bucket down into the water so that it is wholly submerged. As the bucket comes back up by reason of its flotation, water flows into the bucket through the holes 12 in the lid 8 and out through the passages 25 in the flotation ring 23.

When the bucket is lifted out of the water, a small amount of the water in the bucket is poured out or allowed to run out through the passages 25. It will be seen that the passages 25 are inclined inwardly and downwardly so that their outer ends 26 are higher than their inner ends 27. By reason of the length of the passages 25 through the flotation ring, water sloshing into the inner ends of the holes when the bucket is carried in ordinary use, for example by the shoulder strap 15, does not reach the outer ends of the holes and hence does not slop out. Moreover, water sloshing into the passages 25 tends to drain back into the bucket by reason of the inner ends of the holes being lower than the outer ends. Although the passages 25 may, if desired, be molded in the ring when the ring is formed, it is presently considered preferable to drill or punch the holes after the molding of the ring so that the surfaces of the holes are formed by cutting through the cellular material. The passages 25 are thus bounded by a multiplicity of small indentations or pockets formed by cutting through the cells. These small pockets tend to retard and trap any water that sloshes up into the passages 25. Moreover, any water sloshing into the holes and then flowing back into the bucket is aerated so as to increase the oxygen content of the water in the bucket.

While a preferred form of the invention has been shown by way of example in the drawings, it will be understood that the invention is in no way limited to the particular shape, proportions or materials of the embodiment shown and described.

What I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A floating bait bucket comprising a substantially cylindrical side wall having an inner face, a top with a lower face and a restricted central opening and a bottom joined to said side wall, a foraminous cover for said opening, a ring of cellular buoyant material surrounding said opening and fixed in position against the lower face of said top and the inner face of the adjacent portion of said side wall, said ring having a buoyancy slightly greater than the weight of the bucket so that when the bucket is in water and full of water it will float with the top near the water surface, and a plurality of circumferentially spaced passages extending from the interior of the bucket through said ring and the surrounding portion of the side wall and opening to the exterior of the bucket near to but spaced from the top so that the outer ends of said passages are below the water surface when said bucket is floating in water, the bottom and the portion of the side wall below said ring being imperforate and water-tight, said passageways being inclined upwardly and radially outwardly to inhibit water sloshing out through said passages when the bucket is being carried, while permitting the circulation of air into and out of said bucket and the circulation of water into and out of said bucket when said bucket is floating in water.

2. A bait bucket according to claim 1, in which said ring is approximately quarter circular in cross section with an upper face engaging said top, an outer face engaging said side wall and an inner face curving downwardly and outwardly from said upper face to said outer face, said passages opening at their inner ends in said curved inner face of the ring and the faces of said ring being continuous except for said passages.

3. A bait bucket according to claim 1, in which said passages are bounded by a multiplicity of small pockets formed by cells of said cellular material.

References Cited in the file of this patent

UNITED STATES PATENTS

359,311	Bateman	Mar. 15, 1887
521,244	Muncaster	June 12, 1894
846,864	Remsburg	Mar. 12, 1907
1,942,756	Howard	Jan. 9, 1934
2,600,826	Allen	June 17, 1952
2,717,469	Piker et al.	Sept. 13, 1955