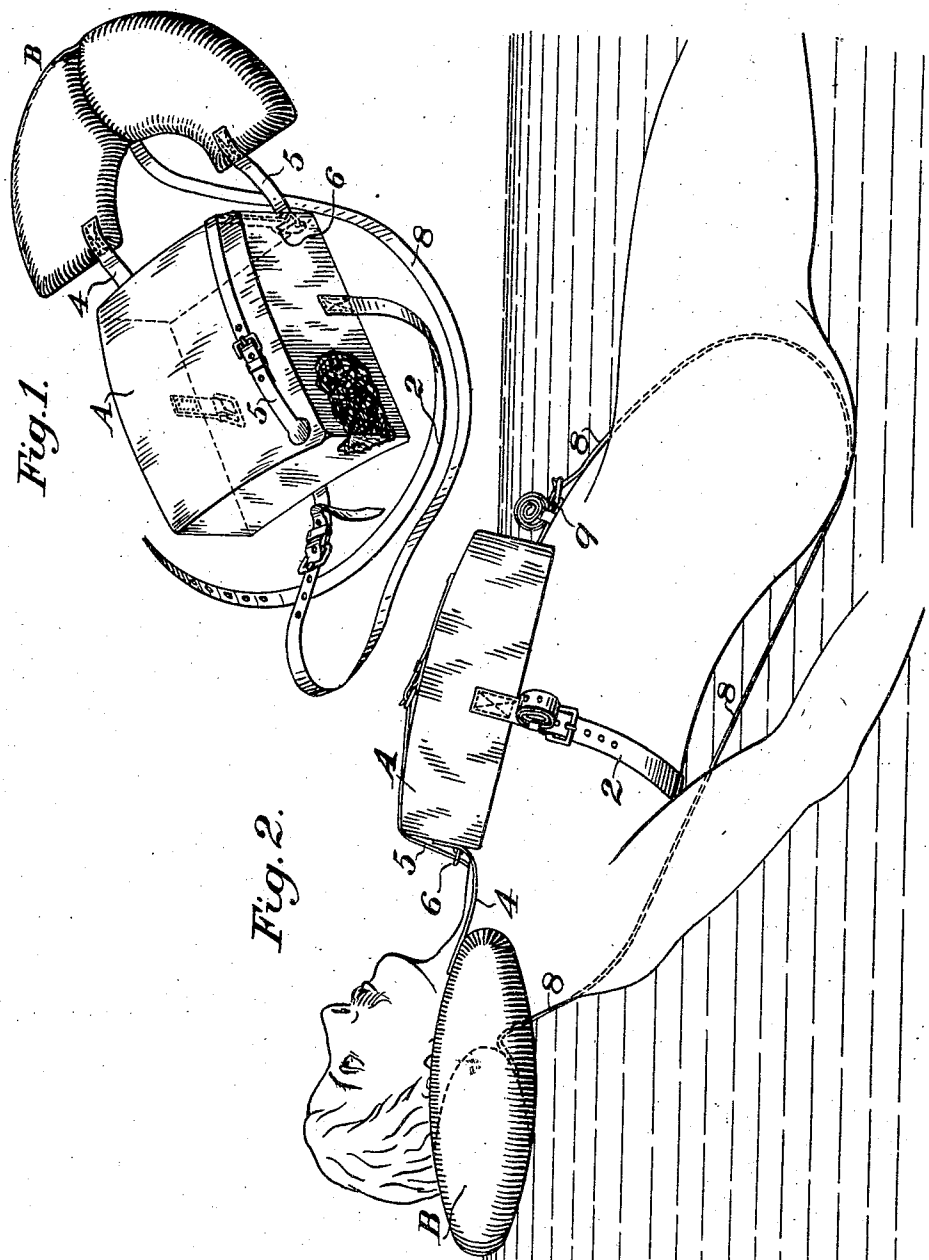
No. 715,938. Patented Dec. 16, 1902.

J. E. ARMSTRONG.

LIFE PRESERVER.

(Application filed Aug. 19, 1901.)

(No Model.)



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN E. ARMSTRONG, OF SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA.

LIFE-PRESERVER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 715,938, dated December 16, 1902.

Application filed August 19, 1901. Serial No. 72,502. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN E. ARMSTRONG, a citizen of the United States, residing at Santa Cruz, county of Santa Cruz, State of California, have invented an Improvement in Life-Preservers; and I hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the same.

My invention relates to an apparatus which is especially designed for saving or preserving the lives of people in the water.

It consists of an arrangement of floats and connections by which they are applied to the body in such a manner that the body is automatically positioned and turned with the face upward and the head and face so supported that the latter is above the surface of the water, and the person is prevented from being strangled and drowned.

My invention also comprises details of construction, which will be more fully explained by reference to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of my invention. Fig. 2 is a side view showing application of my invention.

It is the object of my invention to automatically position the body of the wearer of the apparatus in the water with the face upward and lifted out of the water; and this is done without any volition on the part of the wearer. It is effected by the combination of floats A and B, the float A being a comparatively narrow one fixed upon the breast of the person, so that if the body be submerged this float will act to turn it with the face upward. In connection with this float is a second float B, which is so disposed with relation to the first-named one that it lies beneath the back of the head and forms a pillow or rest and support for the head when the body is in the position above specified—that is, with the face upward. If the body is in the water with the face downward, this cushion or support being partially or wholly out of water will not counteract the action of the float A; but when the float A has performed its office the float B will then lie upon the surface beneath the head and form a support therefor. This float B is preferably made either in two pieces or having a seam or flexible central portion, so that the sides will rise slightly upon each side of the neck of the wearer. The float A is secured to the body by means of a strap 2, which passes around the body beneath the arms, and the float B may be connected with the float A, so as to be easily moved sufficiently to allow the head to pass between the two parts of the apparatus, after which they may be drawn into their normal position and secured with relation to each other by a suitable strap, as shown at 5. The strap 5 may be slidable through a ring or guide, as at 6, and this allows the collar or head-support to be moved about the permanent flexible connection at 4 on the opposite side. As shown in the drawings, the collar or head-support is segmental in form, having the inner curvature of sufficient size to easily pass around the neck of any person to whom it is to be applied. When the two parts are thus adjusted, they are firmly secured upon the body by means of a strap 8, having one end attached to the upper back portion of the float B and the other end adapted to pass down the center of the back line, thence up between the legs, and it may then be buckled to the lower end of the float A, as shown at 9.

The floats A B may be made of any suitable air-tight material and inflated, or they may be filled with cork or fiber of any sort which is open and cellular in structure and which is not liable to absorb water if the casings become leaky. Cork, hair, excelsior, prepared wool, or cotton may be used or fiber which is made from cocoanut-husks and often used for ropes, because it will float, the object being in any case to provide a cellular filling which will keep the floats distended and provide a sufficient air-space in the interstices of the filling to make them buoyant without the necessity of especially inflating them. The floats are thus maintained of approximately their normal size and shape without collapsing and at all times containing a sufficient amount of air to make them buoyant. Not being rigidly inflated, they are soft and easily packed.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A life preserver or buoy including a narrow breast-float and a segmental float to be positioned back of the head, and means for

adjustably attaching the floats said floats capable of automatically positioning the body face upwardly while in the water.

2. A life preserver or buoy consisting of a narrow float, means for attaching it to the breast of the wearer, a second float in the form of a segmental collar fitting the neck and back of the head, straps by which said floats are adjustably connected together and straps by which they are attached to the body.

3. A life preserver or buoy, consisting of a narrow float, with means for attaching it upon the breast of the wearer, a second float in the form of a segmental collar adapted to fit the back of the head and neck, and having a flexible central seam, straps by which said collar is adjustably connected with the breast-float, and a strap connecting with the rear portion of said collar extending down the back between the legs of the wearer and connected with the bottom of the breast-float.

4. The combination in a life-preserver of two floats to be positioned upon opposite sides of the body one of said floats of segmental form and capable of receiving the back of the neck of the wearer, and adjustable means for attaching the floats to each other and to the body.

5. A life-preserver consisting of a narrow float fitted longitudinally to the breast and made deep outwardly from the body, and an independent segmental collar flexibly connected therewith and fitting beneath the back of the head, and a connection between the floats by which the latter may be attached to the body.

6. A life-preserver consisting of a deep narrow float adapted to extend longitudinally along the breast, a centrally-divided independently-buoyant collar formed of segmental sections fitting the back of the neck, and adjustable connections securing the front float and collar.

7. A life-preserver consisting of a deep narrow float fixed to the breast, a collar fitting the back of the neck and composed of two independent buoyant sections of segmental form flexibly connected at the center, and flexible straps by which said collar is loosely connected with the breast-float, and a strap to extend between the floats and lengthwise of the body, for attaching the floats thereto.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand.

JOHN E. ARMSTRONG.

Witnesses:
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IDA C. POLLEY.