July 3, 1956 J. H. CLARKE ET AL 2,752,977

CONTAINER FOR INFLATABLE LIFE RAFTS

Filed Jan. 7, 1954

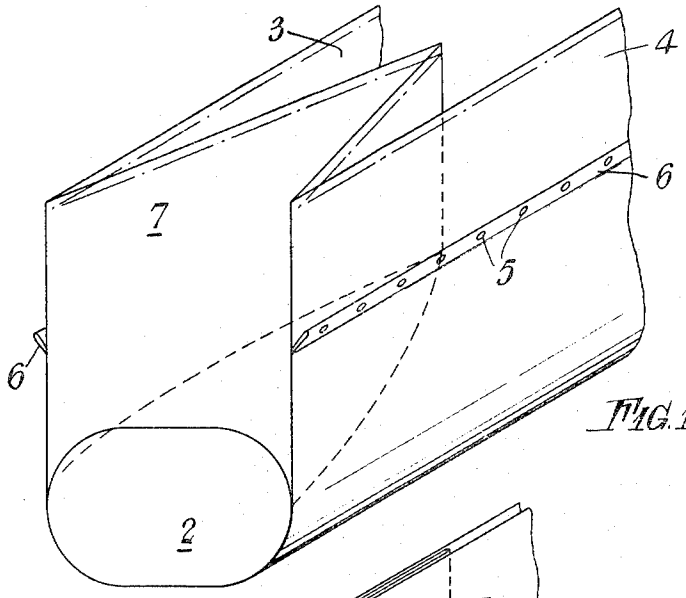


FIG. 1.

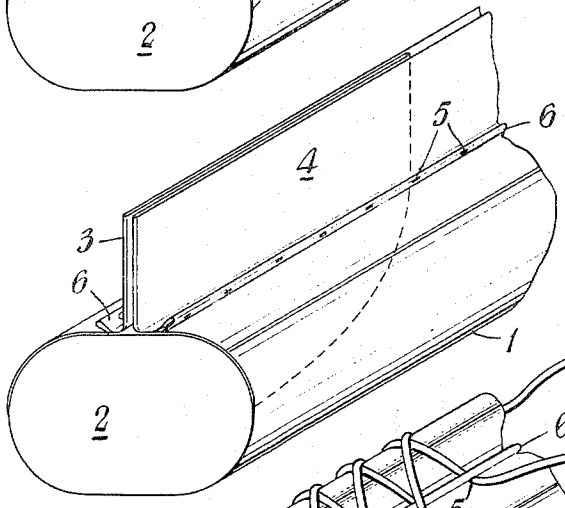


FIG. 2.

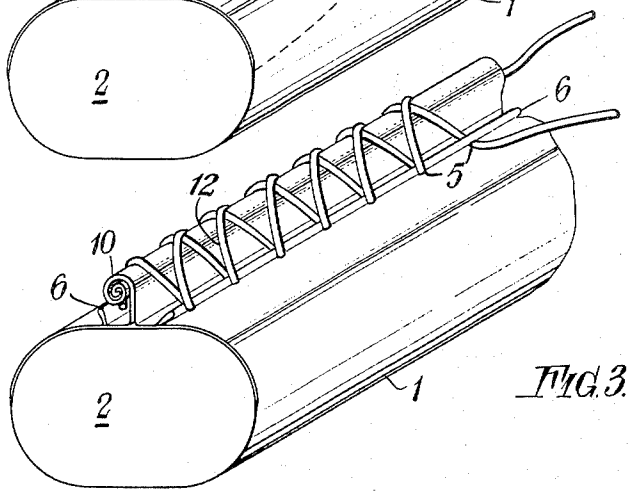


FIG. 3.

United States Patent Office

2,752,977

Patented July 3, 1956

2,752,977

CONTAINER FOR INFLATABLE LIFE RAFTS

James Henry Clarke and John Godfrey,
Llwynypia, Rhondda, Wales

Application January 7, 1954, Serial No. 402,681

Claims priority, application Great Britain
January 15, 1953

2 Claims. (Cl. 150—52)

This invention relates to containers and is concerned with containers formed from flexible material and intended to enclose an article or articles in such manner as to protect the latter against the effects of adverse weather or other deleterious conditions.

The invention is particularly applicable to containers for inflatable life rafts, the container then taking the form of a valise which can be readily opened to permit removal of the life raft in a deflated condition or in a condition of initial inflation.

In accordance with the invention, there is provided a container for an article, particularly a life-raft of inflatable type, said container being formed from a main body portion having end panels at each extremity, there being mouth flaps associated with the main body portion, which mouth flaps are effectively integral with mouth flaps associated with the end panels, the arrangement being such that the mouth flaps may be folded into and between one another, so that they may be brought together and rolled down towards the main body portion.

For a better understanding of the invention and to show how the same may be carried into effect, reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows in perspective one end of a valise at an initial stage of closing the mouth thereof;

Figure 2 is similar to Figure 1 but shows a second stage in the closing of the mouth of the valise, and

Figure 3 is also similar to Figure 1 but shows a further stage in the closing of the valise.

In the illustrated embodiment, the valise is made from a strong canvas material. There is a main body portion 1 to which there is attached at either end a panel 2 (only one panel shown in the drawings). The body portion 1 has extended mouth portions 3 and 4 separated from the body portion by a row of eyelets 5. The eyelets 5 are placed in a fold 6 of the material which constitutes the body portion 1 and which continues to form the extended mouth portions 3 and 4. The folds 6 are stitched either side of the row of eyelets 5 to impart strength to the construction.

Each end panel 2 has an extended mouth portion 7 which is shown in Figure 1 as being folded inwardly between the two facing mouth portions 3 and 4. It will be appreciated that the inward folding of the mouth portion 7 is not effected until the contents have been placed in the valise. The mouth portion 7 is effectively integral with the mouth portions 3 and 4 and also with the end panel 2. Likewise the latter is connected

with the body portion 1 so as to be effectively integral therewith.

In Figure 2 there is shown the way in which the mouth of the valise is brought to a preliminary closing position. The mouth portions 3 and 4 have been brought together so as to sandwich between them the end panel mouth portions 7. As appears from Figure 3, the contiguous mouth portions are rolled down upon the body portion 1. The roll 10 is in fact continued until there is a tight roll between the two folds 6, the roll then lying upon the immediate exterior of the valise. A cord 12 may now be laced through the eyelets 5 so as to draw the folds 6 over the roll therebetween.

The valise described above serves to contain a life raft of inflatable type. The lacing cord is preferably made so as to break at a predetermined relatively low stress figure. If the inflatable life raft is complete with inflating means, such inflating means can be released whilst the raft is still within the valise. Thereupon the inflating pressure will cause the lacing cord to break, and the raft in an initial state of inflation will be disgorged from the valise. It will be appreciated that if desired the lacing cord could be broken by hand and the contents of the container then removed therefrom.

As appears from Figure 1, the portions 3 and 4 may be drawn apart from one another beyond the position where they are in prolongation with the body of the valise. The portions 7 are, in fact, so shaped that the side portions 3 and 4 can be drawn away from one another towards a coplanar position thereby affording a relatively large mouth for the escape of the contained raft.

We claim:

1. A valise for an inflatable life raft, comprising a sheet of flexible material forming the body of the valise, lateral mouth flaps extending integrally from the sides of said sheet, flexible end panels closing the ends of said body, and end mouth flaps extending from said end panels and laterally joined with said lateral mouth flaps, the shape of said end flaps being chosen to ensure that in the closing of the sides they can be folded into and between said lateral flaps for forming a roll closure, whilst in the opening of the valise, said lateral flaps may be drawn apart beyond a position where they lie in prolongation of the sides of the body portion towards a position where they are substantially co-planar, thereby forming a relatively large mouth for the withdrawal of a life raft from the valise.

2. A valise as claimed in claim 1, wherein the lateral mouth flaps of the body are separated from the body by a fold in the material of the valise formed between the flaps and the body, there being a row of eyelets in each fold, which eyelets may be laced through with a cord when a roll has been made in the flaps, to hold the roll in position.

References Cited in the file of this patent

UNITED STATES PATENTS

917,124	Peirson	Apr. 6, 1909
1,510,815	Adams	Oct. 7, 1924
1,736,383	Waggoner	Nov. 19, 1929
1,767,770	Olsen	June 24, 1930
2,582,286	Schenck	Jan. 15, 1952