Feb. 23, 1954 D. A. LEWIS, JR 2,669,784

SKY LOOKOUT SUPPORT

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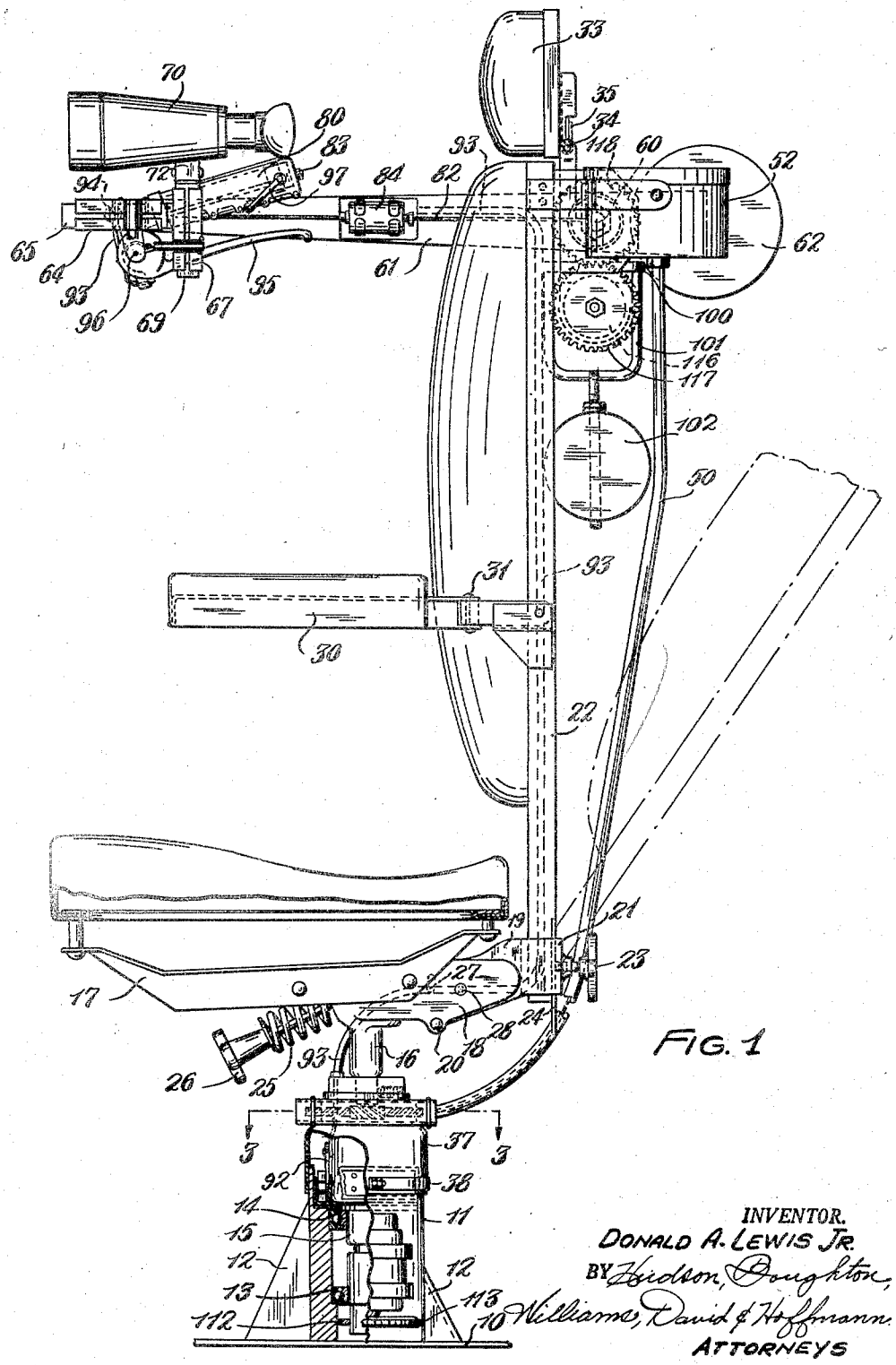


FIG. 1

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SKY LOOKOUT SUPPORT

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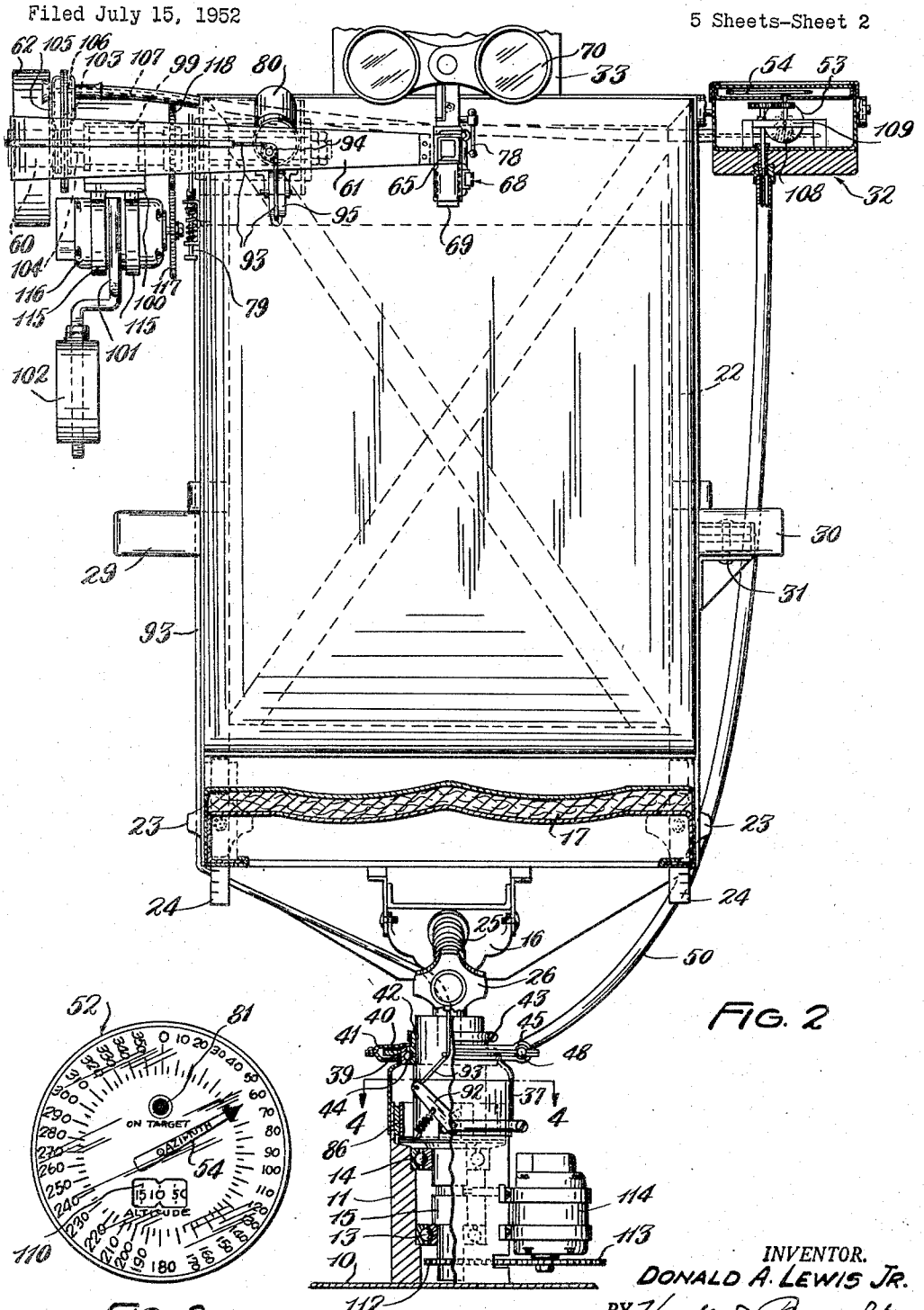


FIG. 2

FIG. 8

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SKY LOOKOUT SUPPORT

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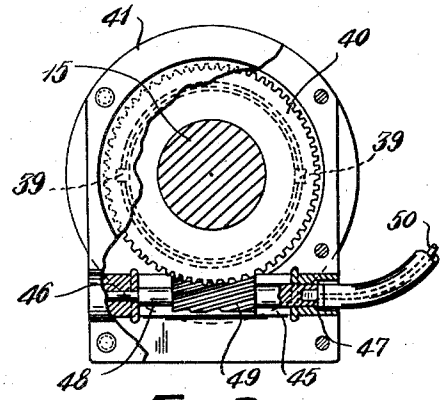


FIG. 3

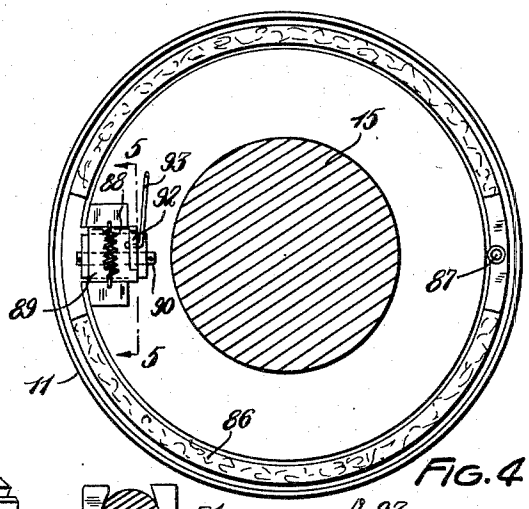


FIG. 4

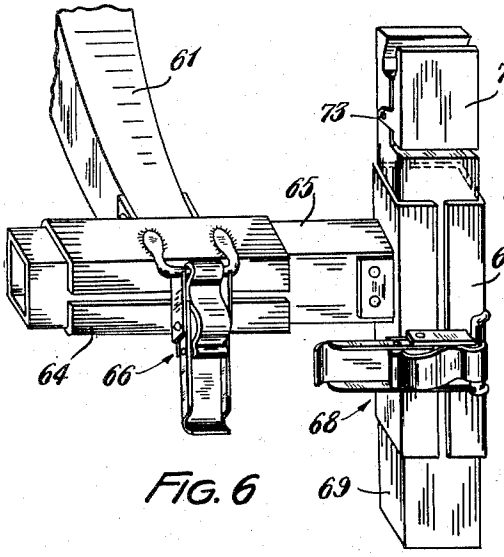


FIG. 6

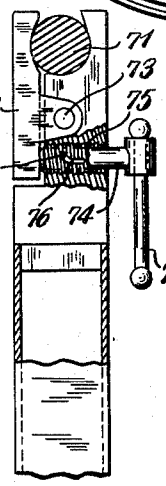


FIG. 7

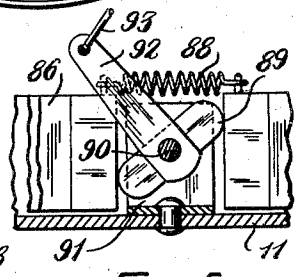


FIG. 5

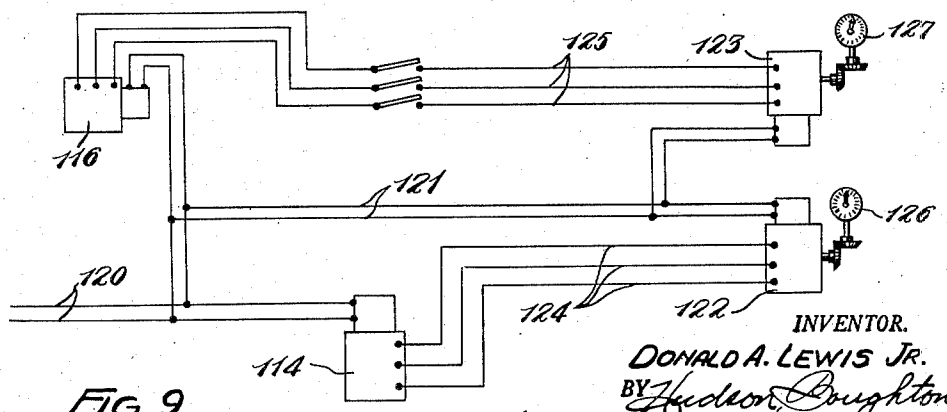


FIG. 9

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SKY LOOKOUT SUPPORT

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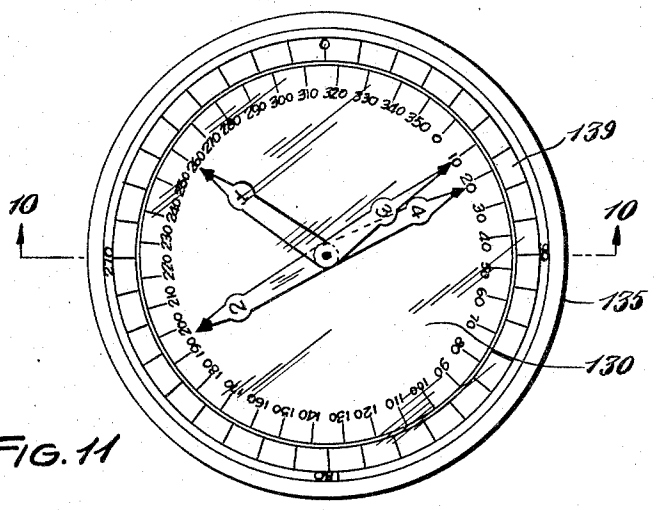


FIG. 11

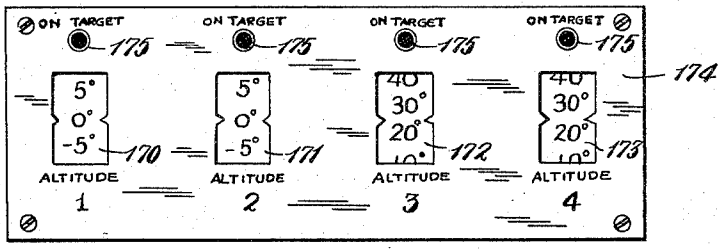


FIG. 12

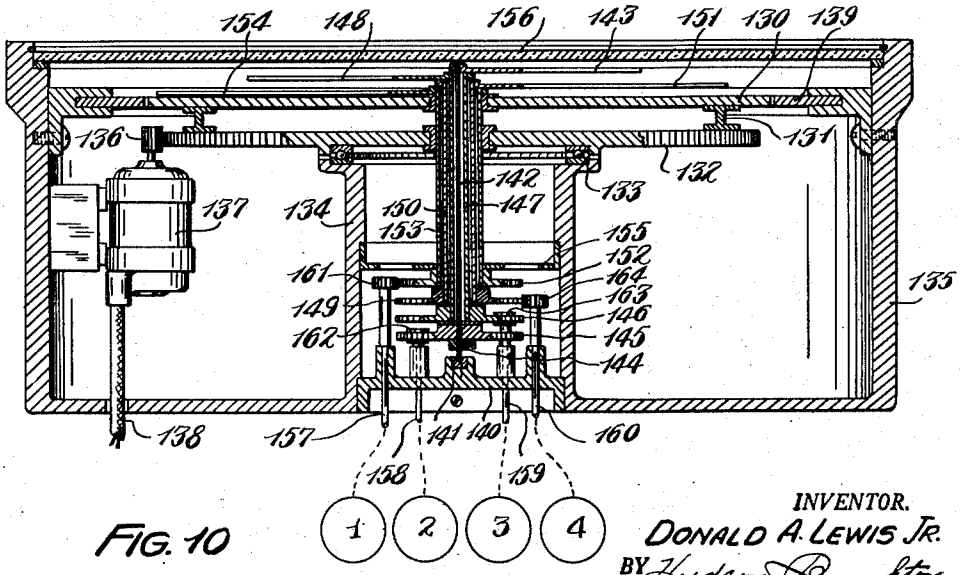


FIG. 10

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SKY LOOKOUT SUPPORT

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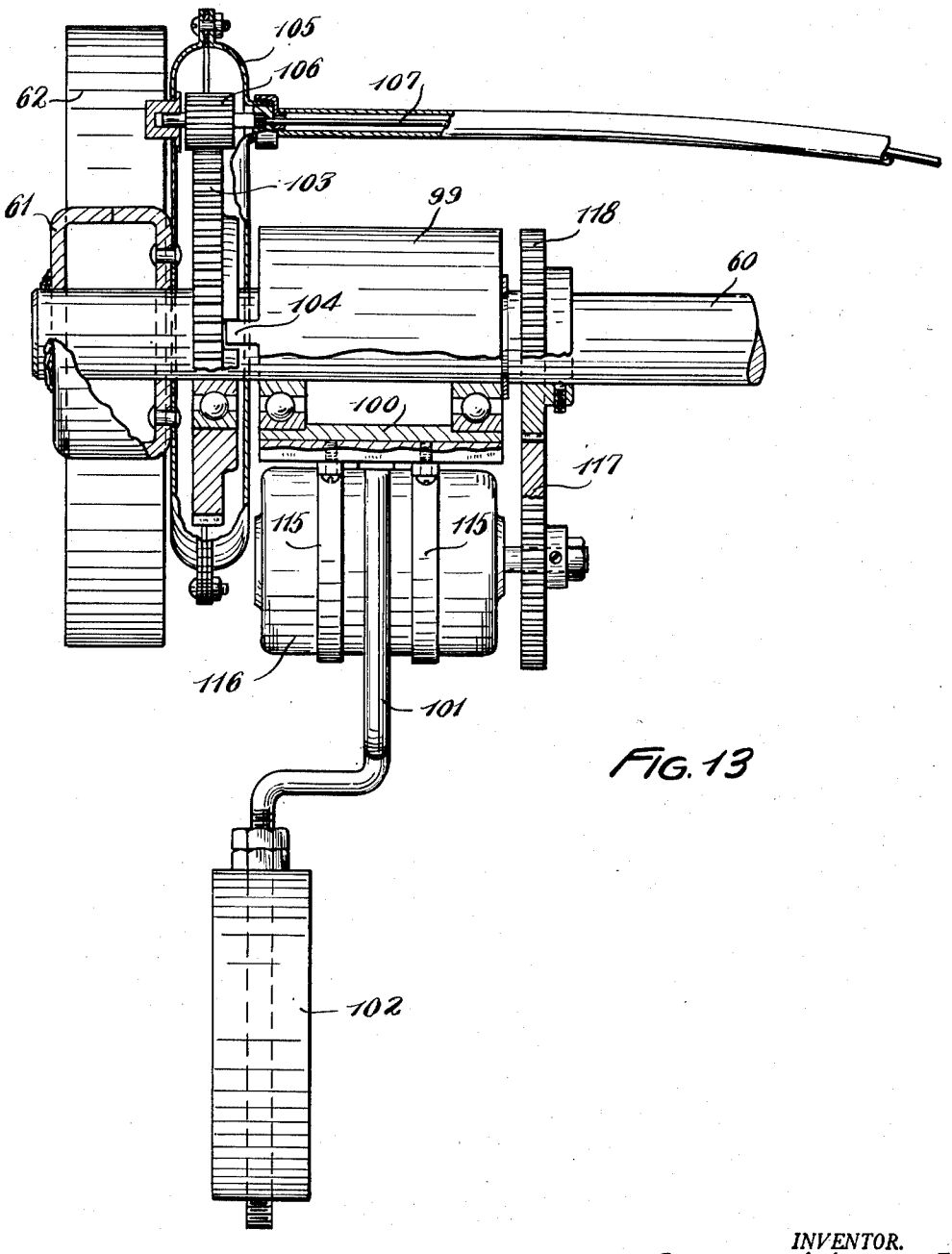


FIG. 13

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Patented Feb. 23, 1954

2,669,784

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,669,784

SKY LOOKOUT SUPPORT

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Application July 15, 1952, Serial No. 299,047

6 Claims. (Cl. 33—69)

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This invention relates to improvements in sky lookout supports, such a support comprising a swivel chair adapted to be bolted to the deck of a ship and carrying binoculars which may be trained upon an airship or other object in the sky, or any object in the water together with means for recording the altitude and azimuth of the operator's line of sight when the binoculars are on target.

One of the objects of the invention is the provision of improved means for obtaining the desired readings and communicating them either through an observer or automatically to the fire control station of the ship, or to the pilot, navigator or other officer.

Another object is the provision of means adapted to be actuated by one hand of the operator for locking the chair against horizontal rotation when the binoculars are on target, for swinging the binoculars in the vertical plane to bring them on target in that plane and for operating an on-target signal, leaving his other hand free to perform other duties.

Another object is the provision of means for taking altitude readings that are related to the horizon rather than to the deck of the ship.

Another object is the provision of means for causing the binocular mounting to move with the chair back as the operator tilts it rearwardly, thus maintaining the binoculars always in the correct position with respect to the operator.

Another object is the provision of means for adjusting the binoculars relative to the chair back in order that they may be placed in the most comfortable and convenient position for individual operators.

Another object is the provision of comfortable supporting means for the operator's body and head for the purpose of promoting efficiency.

A further object is the provision of means for registering on a single instrument the altitude and azimuth of the target to facilitate reporting its location to the fire control station.

Still another object is the provision of Selsyn motor means for reporting automatically to a fire control or other station the location of the target both with respect to true bearing and to the ship's course.

Other objects and features of novelty will appear as I proceed with the description of that embodiment of the invention which, for the purposes of the present application I have illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which

Fig. 1 is a side elevational view of the support.

Fig. 2 is a front elevational view of the same.

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Fig. 3 is a plan view on a larger scale, the view being partially in section on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1, illustrating actuating means for the azimuth indicator.

Fig. 4 is a horizontal sectional view on a larger scale taken substantially on the line 4—4 of Fig. 2 and illustrating a braking mechanism which may be employed for locking the support in a given azimuth position.

Fig. 5 is a detail sectional view taken substantially on the line 5—5 of Fig. 4.

Fig. 6 is a detail perspective view of a binocular mounting means which may be employed in connection with the invention.

Fig. 7 is a rear view of the adjustable clamping post of Fig. 6.

Fig. 8 is a plan view of the instrument for registering altitude and azimuth.

Fig. 9 is a wiring diagram.

Fig. 10 is a vertical sectional view through a gyro repeater compass equipped with means for registering azimuth readings transmitted by Selsyn motor means from four different sky lookout supports or chairs.

Fig. 11 is a plan view of the same on a somewhat smaller scale, and

Fig. 12 is an elevational view of a board on which is registered altitude readings transmitted by Selsyn motor means from four different lookout supports or chairs.

Fig. 13 is a fragmental elevational view partly in section looking toward the rear and showing on a larger scale the means for actuating the altitude indicating mechanism.

In the drawings there is illustrated a base plate 10 adapted to be bolted to the deck of a ship, and upon which is mounted a vertical casing 11. Braces 12 may be welded to the plate 10 and the casing 11 in order to insure rigidity. The casing 11 may have internal shoulders for supporting the outer races of ballbearings 13 and 14 adapted to take thrust as well as radial load. In these bearings there is mounted a post 15 which extends upwardly beyond the top of casing 11 and carries at its upper end a casting 16 upon which the seat 17 of a swivel chair is fixed.

Casting 16 comprises parallel side members 18 between which is mounted a stamping 19 that is adapted to swing through a limited angle about a pivot 20 carried by the casting. In the stamping 19 there are transversely spaced brackets 21 in which the side stiles 22 of the chair back are mounted for adjustment up and down. Clamping screws 23 at each side of the chair hold the back in selected positions of adjustment to promote

comfort of the operator. Gauge plates 24 on the stiles assist in determining when the adjustment on the two sides is even.

A counterbalance spring 25, the effect of which may be varied by an adjusting wheel 26, tends to hold the chair back in the vertical position, but yields to permit the operator to lean rearwardly until the chair back assumes the angle substantially as shown in broken lines in Fig. 1. Rearward tilting beyond this angle is prevented by suitable means, as for example by bosses 27 on the stamping engaging opposed pins 28 mounted in the side members 18 of the casting.

The side stiles 22 of the chair back carry arm rests 29 and 30, and in order that the operator may leave the chair quickly if occasion demands the arm rest 30 is mounted on a vertical pivot 31 whereby it may be swung outwardly. Spring means, not shown, yieldably holds the arm rest in the illustrated position.

At the upper end of the chair back there is a headrest 33 shown only in Fig. 1, which is mounted on a horizontal pivot 34 and yieldably held parallel to the chair back by a spring indicated at 35. When the chair back is tilted rearwardly the operator's line of sight may be further elevated by tilting his head to swing the headrest backwardly beyond the tilt of the chair back. The combined back and headrest tilts enable the operator to bring his line of sight up to the zenith if necessary.

Azimuth indication. At the top of the casing 11 there is a sheet metal cover 37 which is clamped to the casing by a band 38 or other suitable means. This cover has opposed prongs 39 which enter notches in the inner periphery of a horizontal spiral gear 40, by which means the gear is held stationary. This gear is enclosed by an annular sheet metal housing 41 provided with a flange 42 that bears against the post 15 and is clamped thereto by a ring 43. A ballbearing 44 is interposed between the annular gear 40 and the post 15. The housing 41 at one side is provided with a transverse cylindrical cavity 45 that receives bushings 46 and 47 in which is journaled a spindle 48 that carries an integral spiral pinion 49 which meshes with the spiral gear 40. Cable 50 is operatively connected with one end of the spindle. The operator seated in the swivel chair with his feet resting on the deck may kick the chair around to any desired position. When this occurs the housing 41 of course moves with the post 15, which causes the spindle 48 with its pinion 49 to travel around the fixed gear 40. This results in turning the cable 50.

Cable 50 extends upwardly into an instrument 52 which is attached to the chair back, preferably by means of gimbal rings. The shaft of cable 50 extends upwardly into the interior of instrument 52 where, by means of a pair of small gears 53, a gauge hand pointer 54 is rotated to indicate the azimuth of the chair and hence the azimuth of the line of sight of the operator.

Altitude indication. At the rear of the chair there is mounted in suitable bearings a horizontal transverse shaft 60, to one end of which is pinned or otherwise secured an arm 61 which extends forward along one side of the chair and then curves around in front of the chair back at a convenient distance therefrom to a point substantially midway between the sides of the chair back. To counterbalance this arm a weight 62 is also pinned to the arm and extends rearwardly of the shaft. Means for disposing a pair of binoculars at the best position for the operator is

illustrated particularly in Fig. 6. This mounting involves a split sleeve 64 of preferably rectangular cross section secured by suitable means to the extremity of arm 61. The sleeve 64 receives a bar 65 that is preferably made hollow in order to conserve weight. Bar 65 may be adjusted lengthwise of sleeve 64 toward or away from the chair back, and means are provided for contracting the sleeve after the adjustment is made and holding it in contracted condition in order to lock the bar against accidental movement. A spring clamp 66 of substantially conventional form may be employed for this purpose. To the inner end of bar 65 I attach a second split sleeve 67 provided with a similar spring clamp 68 which receives and holds in selected vertical adjustment a post 69 upon which the upper end of a pair of binoculars 70 is mounted.

Any suitable means for releasably gripping the binoculars may be employed. In Fig. 7 for this purpose I have shown the upper end of the post formed in two parts notched out to receive between them the hinge pin 71 of the binoculars. One of these parts consists of a block 72 pivoted at 73 to the post proper. A quick acting bolt 74 extends through a bushing 75 that is threadably mounted in a hole in the post. An angular slot 76 is milled into the bushing and a pin 77 is inserted through the slot 76 and driven into a hole in the bolt 74. Handle 78 is attached to the outer end of bolt 74. When these parts have been assembled the bushing is threaded into the hole to the position illustrated. In the use of the clamp the bolt may be pushed in and turned so as to travel in the cam portion of the slot to bear against the lower end of block 72 for quickly setting the clamp against the hinge pin 71. The reverse operation of course quickly releases the hinge.

At a short distance from the binocular mounting a handle 80 is secured to the arm 61, this handle being thus conveniently disposed to be grasped by the right hand of the operator. By movement of this handle up and down the operator may swing the arm 61 upon its shaft 60.

In the instrument 52 there is a small lamp signal, indicated at 81 in Fig. 8, which is connected by an electric conductor 82 with a push-button switch 83 in the rear end of the handle convenient to the operator's thumb, a small electric battery 84 being mounted on the arm and disposed in the circuit for supplying the necessary small current. When the operator has brought his line of sight onto the target he can operate the switch to indicate to an observer watching the instrument 52 the instant at which altitude and azimuth readings should be taken for transmission to the fire control station.

A brake for holding the chair in a given azimuth position is provided. This brake is disposed in the casing 11. In the embodiment illustrated it consists of a pair of internal expanding shoes 86, Fig. 4, hinged together at 87. A coil spring 88 tends to draw the free ends of the shoes toward each other and away from the brake drum, the latter consisting of an internal cylindrical surface at the top of casing 11. The shoes can be expanded into braking condition by means of a cam member 89 pivotally mounted at 90 in a U-shaped bracket 91 attached to the post, the cam member being provided with an operating arm 92. A cable 93 extends from this arm and is guided upwardly along one of the side stiles of the chair back to the arm 61, over a pulley 94 carried by the arm and partially

around a curved hub of a lever 95, to which it is firmly secured. This lever is pivotally mounted at 96 to a bracket depending from the arm. The rear end of the lever is disposed beneath and close to the handle 80 so that the fingers of the operator's hand may be extended underneath the lever. When the operator pulls upwardly on the lever a pull is exerted on the cable 93 which swings the operating arm 92 of the brake into brake setting position. A bail 97 pivotally mounted on the arm may be swung around beneath the lever 95 to hold it in brake setting position if desired. It will be observed by reference to Fig. 1 particularly that the cable 93 is guided along the chair back to the top thereof and makes an easy curve around the hollow arm 61. Hence when the arm 61 swings on its shaft 60 the cable is not stressed and the brake is unaffected.

It will be noted therefore that the operator with one hand may swing the arm 61 to a desired elevation, may apply the brake and may operate a signal switch without removing his hand from the handle 80. In order to hold arm 61 against movement except when desired by the operator I provide a manually operable spring detent 79 mounted on the chair back and adapted to take into a notch in a disk fixed to the shaft 60 and adapted preferably to hold the arm in a plane at right angles to the chair back.

A bushing 99 is rotatably mounted on shaft 60. This bushing carries a bracket 100 from which depends a U-shaped member 101. A weight 102 hangs from this U-member. The force of gravity acting upon weight 102 serves to hold the bushing 99 against rotation with the shaft.

Surrounding the shaft 60 there is an annular gear 103 which is also held against rotation relative to the vertical by means of a key 104 attached to the bushing. An annular gear casing 105 surrounds gear 103 and is fastened to arm 61. Hence it turns with shaft 60. In this casing there is journaled a spindle carrying a pinion 106 which meshes with gear 103, and to this pinion there is secured one end of a cable 107 which extends behind the chair back over to the instrument 52 where it carries a worm 108 that drives a worm gear 109 fixed to the shaft of a drum 110 upon which are engraved degrees of arc from zero to 90°.

When the operator tilts the chair back rearwardly the weight 102 and associated parts move bodily with the chair back, but gravity maintains them in the vertical position. Consequently the pinion 106 running over the periphery of gear 103 turns cable 107 and produces a reading on the altitude drum 110. The azimuth pointer 54 may be made of transparent material in order not to conceal the drum when the pointer moves over it.

In addition to the mechanical means for registering the azimuth and altitude of the operator's line of sight, I provide electrical means which may be employed for registering directly in the fire control station. For this purpose the rotatable supporting post 15 may carry a gear 112 which meshes with a gear 113 fixed to the shaft of a Selsyn motor 114 that is fixedly mounted on the casing 11. Hence as the post 15 turns with the chair the rotor of motor 114 is correspondingly turned.

From the bracket 100 and attached bushing 99 there is supported by means of metal straps 115 a Selsyn motor 116, on the shaft of which is keyed a gear 117 which meshes with a gear 118 that is keyed to shaft 60. Consequently when the chair back is tilted rearwardly from a vertical position gear 117 is turned counterclockwise as viewed in Fig. 1, and also when arm 61 is swung upwardly toward the zenith, gear 117 is turned counterclockwise. Both of these actions combine to turn the rotor of motor 116 through an angle which is the sum of the two angles resulting from the tilting of the chair back and the upward swinging of the arm 61. The weight of motor 116 of course tends to hold bushing 99 and gear 103 in the vertical position, but the addition of weight 102 with a relatively long supporting arm is advantageous.

In the wiring diagram, Fig. 9, the Selsyn motors 114 and 116 are shown connected to line wires 120 of a ship's electrical system using 110 v. A. C. 60 cycle current. Power from the same line wires is taken by conductors 121 to Selsyn generators 122 and 123 which may be located in the fire control station of the ship or wherever else desired, motor 114 being connected with generator 122 by conductors 124 and motor 116 being connected with generator 123 by conductors 125. The rotor of each of the generators is connected by gearing with instruments schematically illustrated at 126 and 127 to give readings of azimuth and altitude.

The operator after making the necessary adjustments in the height of the chair back and mounting means for the binoculars to best suit his own proportions seats himself in the chair, and when an airplane or other target appears in the sky he kicks the chair around to the approximate azimuth angle and makes a preliminary application of the brake. He then leans back or swings the arm 61, or both, until his line of sight is at the altitude approximately of the target. He then proceeds more slowly and more or less simultaneously to change both zenith and altitude adjustments until his line of sight is precisely on the target, whereupon he depresses pushbutton 83 to indicate to the observer watching the instrument 52 that the readings are to be taken and reported to the fire control station. In case the Selsyn motor operated instruments 126 and 127 are being relied upon the operator when he is on target may signify that fact to the fire control station by telephone or otherwise.

The equipment illustrated in Figs. 10, 11 and 12 may be employed not only to give bearings on targets in the air or in the water but also for the purpose of assisting in the navigation of the ship by providing true azimuth bearings on buoys, lighthouses or landmarks taken from a plurality of sky lookout stations, which bearings can be used in connection with the known distance between lookout stations on the ship to determine by computation the distance of the ship from the said navigational aid.

This equipment comprises a compass card 130 carried upon a ring 131 which is fixed to a gear 132 that is mounted for free rotation on a bearing ring 133 supported in a cylindrical housing 134 which constitutes part of the casing 135 of a gyro repeater compass. This gear is driven by a pinion 136 on the shaft of a Selsyn generator 137 which is connected by on electric conductor 138 with a Selsyn motor operatively associated with the ship's gyro compass, not shown. In the same plane with the compass card 130 there is a fixed circumscribing ring or dial 139 having the usual compass divisions, with the zero mark pointing to the bow of the ship.

Within the housing 134 there is a base plate 140 in the center of which is mounted a jewel 141 which supports the lower extremity of a slender post 142 which extends up through center holes in the gear 132 and card 130 and carries at its upper end a pointer 143 which is adapted to turn over the compass card, thus indicating direction both with respect to the card and to the dial 139. A collar 144 secured to post 142 supports a gear 145 that is secured to the post and by means of which the post may be rotated. Above gear 145 there is a second gear 146 to which is secured a tubular shaft 147 that surrounds post 142 and extends up to a level just beneath the upper end of the post, where it carries a pointer 148 that is likewise adapted to swing above the surface of the compass card. A third gear 149 bears upon gear 146 and has a tubular shaft 150 secured thereto which surrounds shaft 147 and terminates just below the top of that shaft where it carries a pointer 151. A fourth gear 152 bears upon gear 149 and has a tubular shaft 153 attached thereto which terminates just beneath the upper end of shaft 150 directly above compass card 130, where it carries a pointer 154. A disk 155 mounted in housing 134 is disposed just above the hub of gear 152 and functions to prevent any appreciable movement of the gears upwardly during severe motion of the ship. A glass 156 mounted in the casing protects the compass card and the various pointers.

Let it be assumed that the ship is provided with four sky lookout supports, two on each side of the ship spaced apart a measured distance, as for example 100 feet. Each of these lookout supports has a Selsyn motor like motor 114 previously described, from which a conductor, not shown, extends to a Selsyn generator associated with the casing 135 and indicated diagrammatically in that figure as one of the circles numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4, these numbers corresponding to numbers assigned to the different lookout support stations. The rotary shafts of these generators, shown at 157, 158, 159 and 160, are rotatably mounted in bearings in the base plate 140. They carry pinions 161, 162, 163 and 164 meshing with the gears 152, 145, 146 and 149 respectively, by means of which the post 142 and the different tubular shafts are rotated to register by means of the pointers 143, 148, 151 and 154, the azimuth bearings taken at the stations of the four lookout supports. The pointers 143, 148, 151 and 154 are differently colored or bear numbers, so that the lookout station from which they are driven may be readily identified.

In Fig. 12 there is shown an altitude board having four drums 170, 171, 172 and 173 visible through windows in board 174. These drums are driven by Selsyn motor means embodying Selsyn motors at each of the four stations corresponding to the motor 116 of Fig. 2, the drums being operatively connected with four Selsyn generators, not shown, the arrangement and operation of which will be obvious to those skilled in the art.

In the board 174 above each drum there is an electric lamp signal 175, each of which signals may be energized by the observer at one of the four lookout stations, as for example by means of push buttons 83. This board 174 may be located on a wall adjacent to the gyro repeater instrument 135 so that the altitude as well as the azimuth of a target viewed from two or more different lookout stations may be communicated simultaneously to a central point of the ship.

In the illustration stations 3 and 4, which may be on the same side of the ship, show azimuth readings of 10° and 20° respectively from due north or about 54° and 64° to the right of the ship's course. The corresponding altitude readings are 25° and 28° respectively. The lookout stations on the opposite side of the ship are assumed to be idle, the altitude readings being zero and the azimuth readings being incidental to the position of the two chairs when the operators left them.

By the application of the Selsyn motor means of Figs. 10, 11 and 12 the readings taken at two or more lookout stations, especially if the binoculars attached to the chairs of those stations be equipped with cross hairs, may be used to determine the true bearings of a navigational aid as well as the bearings of a target.

It should be understood of course that even though a ship is equipped with Selsyn motor means such as described herein, it is nevertheless highly desirable that the mechanical means herein disclosed for registering the altitude and azimuth of a target be provided in addition for emergency use in the event that the ship's electric power system should be disabled.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. In a sky lookout support, a seat post mounted to turn about a vertical axis, an operator's chair fixedly mounted on the upper end of said post, a housing surrounding and fixed to said post for rotation therewith, a spindle journaled in said housing, operative connections between said post and said spindle for causing the spindle to rotate as the housing turns with said post, a cable attached to said spindle, an azimuth registering instrument operatively connected with the other end of said cable, and means for mounting said instrument on said chair, whereby the relative angular positions of said housing and said instrument remain the same in all positions of said post.

2. In a sky lookout support, a swivel chair, a transverse shaft journaled in bearings carried by the chair back, an arm pinned to said shaft extending around in front of the chair back and adapted to receive and hold binoculars, an annular gear loosely surrounding said shaft, gravity means for holding said gear against turning on its axis, a pinion meshing with said gear carried eccentrically by said shaft and bodily rotatable therewith, a cable attached to said pinion and an altitude registering instrument operatively connected with the other end of said cable.

3. In a sky lookout support a swivel chair, a transverse shaft journaled in bearings carried by the chair back, an arm pinned to said shaft extending around in front of the chair back and adapted to receive and hold binoculars, an annular element loosely surrounding said shaft, gravity means for holding said element against turning relative to the horizon, a housing carried by said shaft and rotatable therewith, a spindle journaled in said housing, operative connections between said shaft and said spindle for causing the spindle to rotate as the housing turns with said shaft, a cable attached to said spindle, and an altitude registering instrument operatively connected with the other end of said cable.

4. A sky lookout support as defined in claim 3, wherein said chair back is pivotally mounted at its lower end for movement in a vertical plane, whereby the altitude registering instrument is affected by the inclination of the chair back as well as by the angular position of said shaft.

5. In a sky lookout support, comprising a seat post, a chair back pivotally mounted thereon, spring means tending to hold said back in a vertical position but yieldable to permit the back to swing downwardly and rearwardly, stop means for limiting the angle of backward tilt, a headrest at the upper end of the chair back pivotally connected with the back for rearward and downward movement, a horizontal transverse shaft journaled at the top of said chair back, a binocular supporting arm attached to said shaft arranged to support binoculars in front of said headrest, a gear loosely surrounding said shaft, gravity responsive means for holding said gear against rotation, a housing carried by said shaft, a pinion carried by said housing and meshing with said gear, whereby rotation of the shaft turns said pinion, an altitude measuring instrument mounted on said chair, a cable attached at one end to said pinion and at the other end to said instrument, whereby an altitude reading on said instrument results from the tilting of said chair back and a further altitude reading is superposed upon said first reading by the swinging of said arm to direct the binoculars onto a target, whereby the operator may adjust his body rearwardly to cause his line of sight to approach the necessary angle when the target is at a relatively low altitude and whereby he may tilt his head further backwardly and downwardly against said headrest to bring his line of sight to the necessary angle when the target approaches a vertical position.

6. In a sky lookout support, a swivel chair, a transverse shaft journaled in bearings carried by the chair back, an arm pinned to said shaft extending around in front of the chair back and adapted to receive and hold binoculars, a gear keyed to said shaft, a bushing surrounding and loose upon said shaft, a Selsyn motor depending from said bushing, a gear on said Selsyn motor meshing with said shaft gear, a Selsyn generator, electrical connections between said motor and generator, and altitude registering means operated by said Selsyn generator.

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