R. M. WATTS.

BUOYANT BELT.

APPLICATION FILED JAN. 16, 1919.

1,341,529.

Patented May 25, 1920.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1.

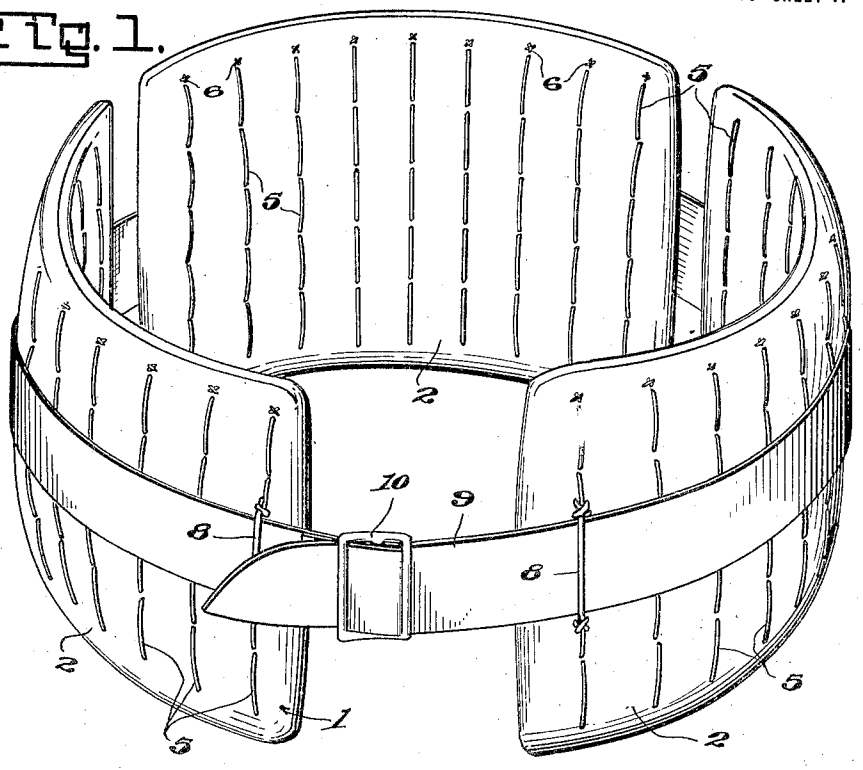
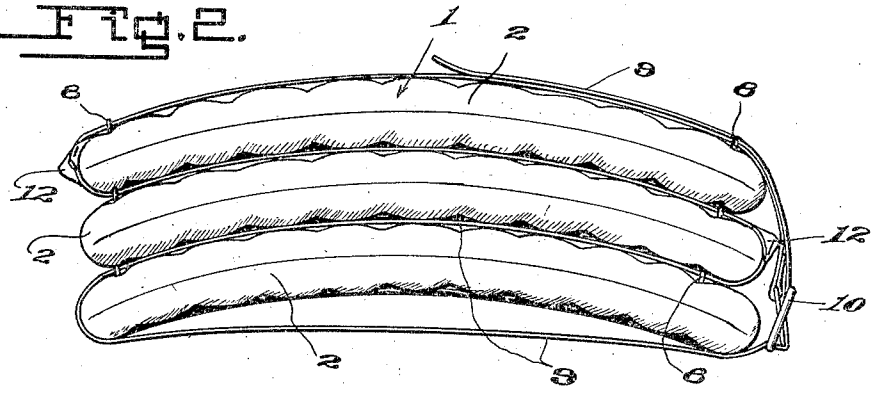


Fig. 2.



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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 3.

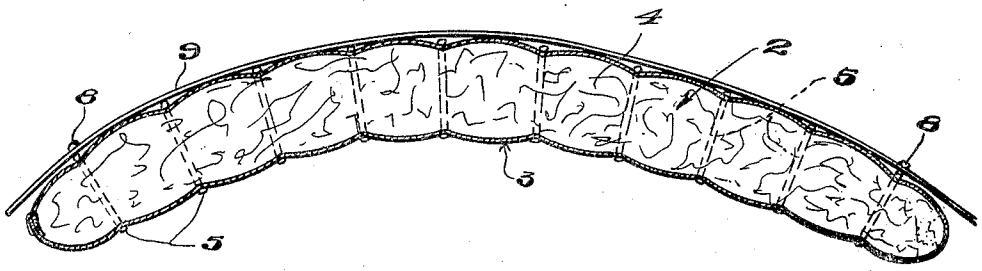


Fig. 5.

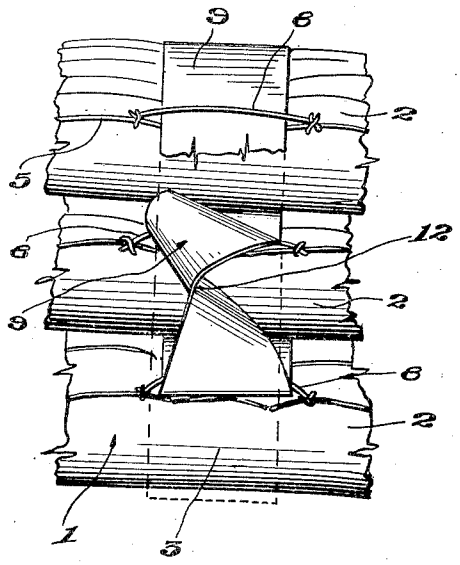
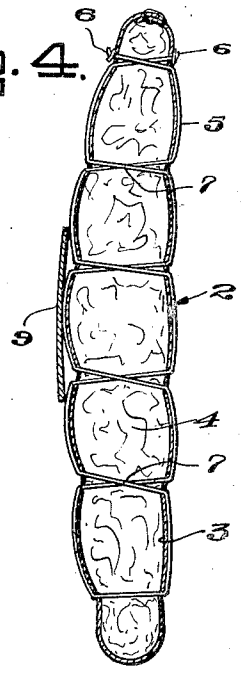


Fig. 4.



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ROBERT MILTON WATTS, OF ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

BUOYANT BELT.

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Application filed January 16, 1919. Serial No. 271,399.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ROBERT M. WATTS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Rock Island, in the county of Rock Island and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Buoyant Belts, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to a buoyant belt particularly designed for use by swimmers or persons first learning to swim, and an object of the invention is to provide a belt composed of a plurality of sections made up of buoyant material and adjustably connected by a strap adapted to clamp them about the body of the wearer, preferably at his waist, or directly thereabove; and one wherein the sections are relatively thin, being composed of highly buoyant material, so as to support a relatively great weight and which sections are further curved to conform to the curvature of the body, for snugly fitting the body and to permit the buoyant belt to be worn beneath the bathing suit of the wearer.

Another object of the invention is to provide a buoyant belt as specified, which would serve as a support or life preserver for a person in the water, which buoyant belt may be folded into a relatively compact structure for storage or conveyance.

Other objects of the invention will appear in the following detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings and in which drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the buoyant belt in operative position.

Fig. 2 is an end elevation of the buoyant belt in a collapsed position.

Fig. 3 is a longitudinal section through one of the buoyant sections of the belt.

Fig. 4 is a transverse section through one of the buoyant sections of the belt, and

Fig. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary end view of the belt in a collapsed position.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, 1 indicates an improved buoyant belt as an entirety which is composed of a plurality of buoyant sections 2. Any desired number of the sections 2 may be employed in the belt structure depending upon the weight and size of the person wearing the belt. Each of the sections 2 will support a pre-determined weight in the water and this fact being known, the proper number of sections may be assembled to properly support the weight of the person wearing the belt.

These sections 2 are made up of a fabric covering 3, preferably oil cloth or analogous material and in forming the sections, the coated or impregnated surface of the fabric is positioned inwardly. The fabric covering 3 is stuffed with fiber indicated at 4, such as "kapok" or the fiber from ordinary milkweed pods, both of which are known to be highly buoyant, especially when in the compact form. The sections 2 are pressed or formed in a suitable press or form structure, imparting a longitudinal curvature thereto and a slight transverse curvature, so as to cause the sections to snugly fit the body of the wearer. As will be seen in Fig. 4 of the drawings, the inner surfaces of the sections 2 are practically straight while the outer surfaces bulge. When the section is in its compressed form in the mold (not shown) used for properly shaping, it is stitched as shown at 5 and the stitches radiate from the center of the longitudinal arc of the section as shown in Fig. 3 of the drawings, to maintain the section in its proper spaced relation. The cord with which the stitching is made is first knotted on one end as shown at 6 and passed through the section, and downwardly along the inner surface thereof for a short distance, being again passed through the section, this manner of stitches being followed out throughout the entire width of the section 2 after which it is returned, the portions of the cord which pass through the section being crossed as shown at 7 in Fig. 4, and these crossed portions extend radially from the axis of center of the longitudinal curvature of the sections 2 as above specified, thereby securely holding the fiber 4 in its compressed stage as well as maintaining the section 2 in its proper shape. Loops 8 are attached to the stitching at each end of the sections 2 on their outer surfaces and a strap 9 is passed through these loops for connecting the various sections 2. The strap 9 has an ordinary buckle 10 on one end which is adapted to receive the free or inserting end of the strap to hold the buoyant belt tightly about the body of the wearer. By using "kapok" or the fiber of milkweed, the sections 2 may be made relatively small and still provide sufficient buoyancy to support the weight of an ordinary person, thus enabling the buoyant

belt to be made relatively small, which together with the peculiar shaping of the same to fit the body of the wearer will enable the belt to be worn beneath a bathing suit so as to allow the user free use of his hands, arms and legs, for swimming.

When the buoyant belt is in its collapsed condition, the various sections 2 are placed so that they will nest one against the other or so that the outer convexed surface of one section will fit in the concaved surface of the section next thereabove, as shown in Fig. 2 of the drawings and when the sections 2 are thus placed, the strap 9 which is preferably formed of fabric is twisted as shown at 12 to allow the sections 2 to snugly fit one another.

The folded or nested sections are then connected by passing the free end of the strap 9 through the buckle 10 as shown in Fig. 2.

Changes in details may be made without departing from the spirit of this invention, but;

I claim:

1. In a buoyant belt, the combination, of a plurality of buoyant sections each comprising a casing of water-proof fabric, buoyant material packed within said casings, stitching extending through said casings and buoyant material to maintain the casings in a body fitting condition, and a flexible strap connecting said sections.

2. In a buoyant belt, the combination, of a plurality of buoyant sections, each comprising a fabric casing, buoyant material within said casing, said casing being curved longitudinally to fit a wearer's body, stitching extending through said casing and buoyant material in transverse rows radially of the axis of the arc of the said sections, the inner surfaces of said sections being substantially straight and the outer surfaces of the sections bulging outwardly toward the longitudinal center of the sections.

3. In a buoyant belt, the combination, of a plurality of buoyant sections, each comprising a fabric casing, buoyant material within said casing, said casing being curved longitudinally to fit a wearer's body, stitching extending through said casing and buoyant material in transverse rows radially of the axis of the arc of the said sections, the inner surfaces of said sections being substantially straight and the outer surfaces of the sections bulging outwardly toward the longitudinal center of the sections, loops attached to the center of the endmost transverse rows of stitching of these sections and a flexible strap passing through said loops for connecting said sections.

4. In a buoyant belt, the combination, of a plurality of buoyant arcuate sections scribed on the same arc arranged to be placed one upon the other when the belt is in collapsed position, and a flexible strap slidably carried by the sections, permitting the sections to be adjusted in relation to each other when the same is in its inoperative and operative positions.

ROBERT MILTON WATTS.