

May 16, 1944.

A. G. SHERMAN

2,348,859

LIFE CRAFT

Filed July 14, 1943

3 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1

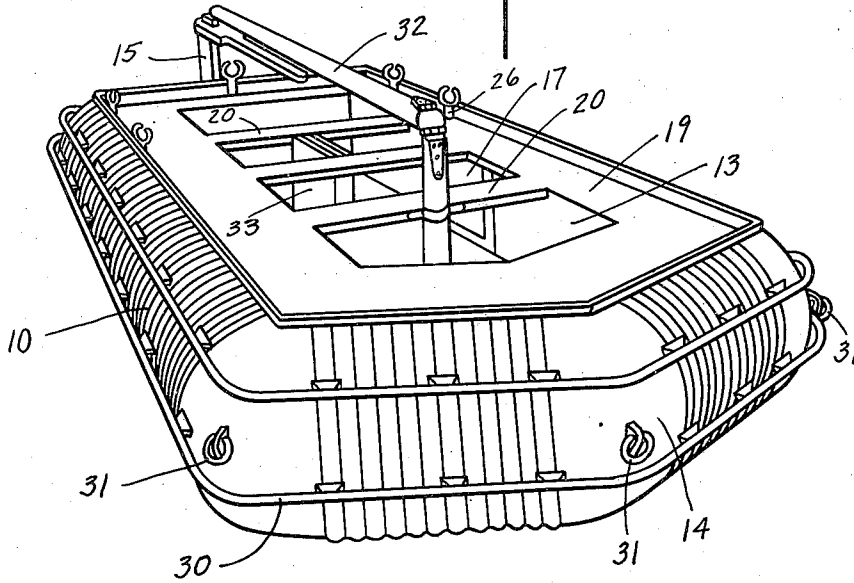
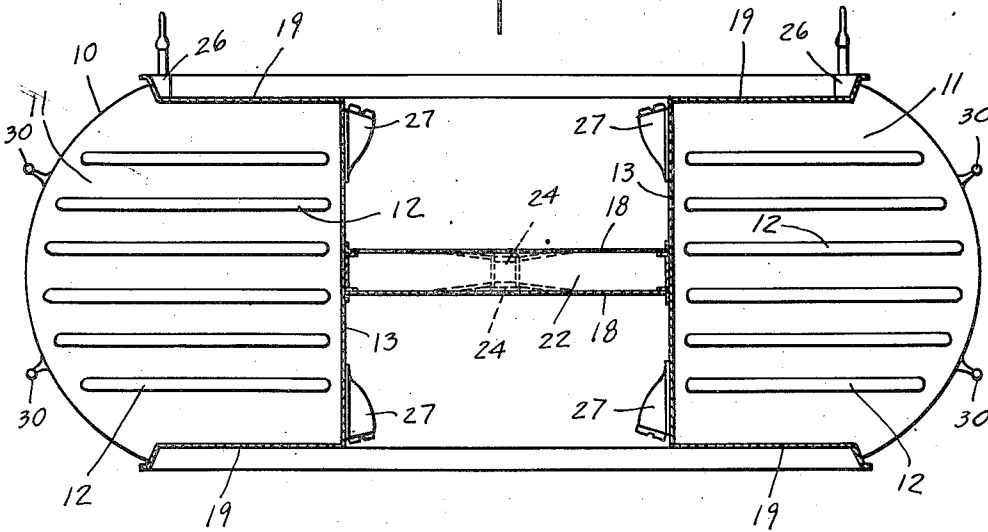


FIG. 4



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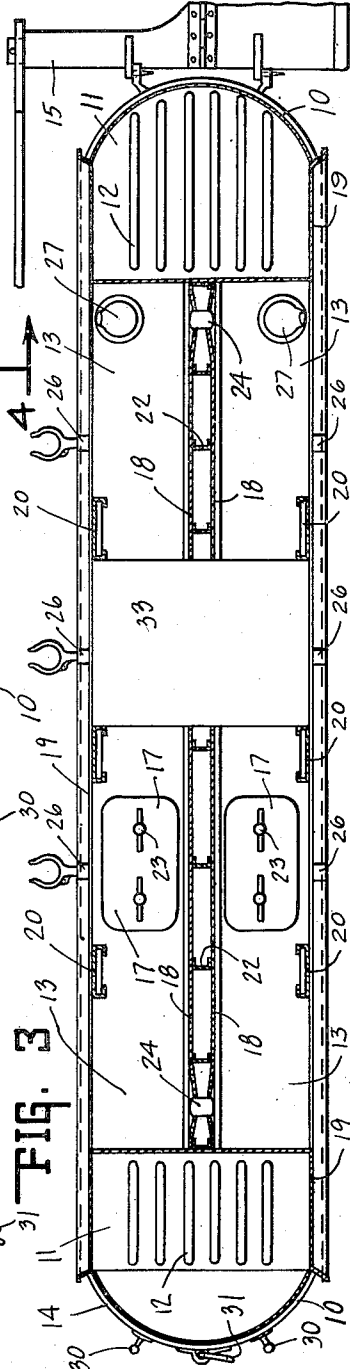
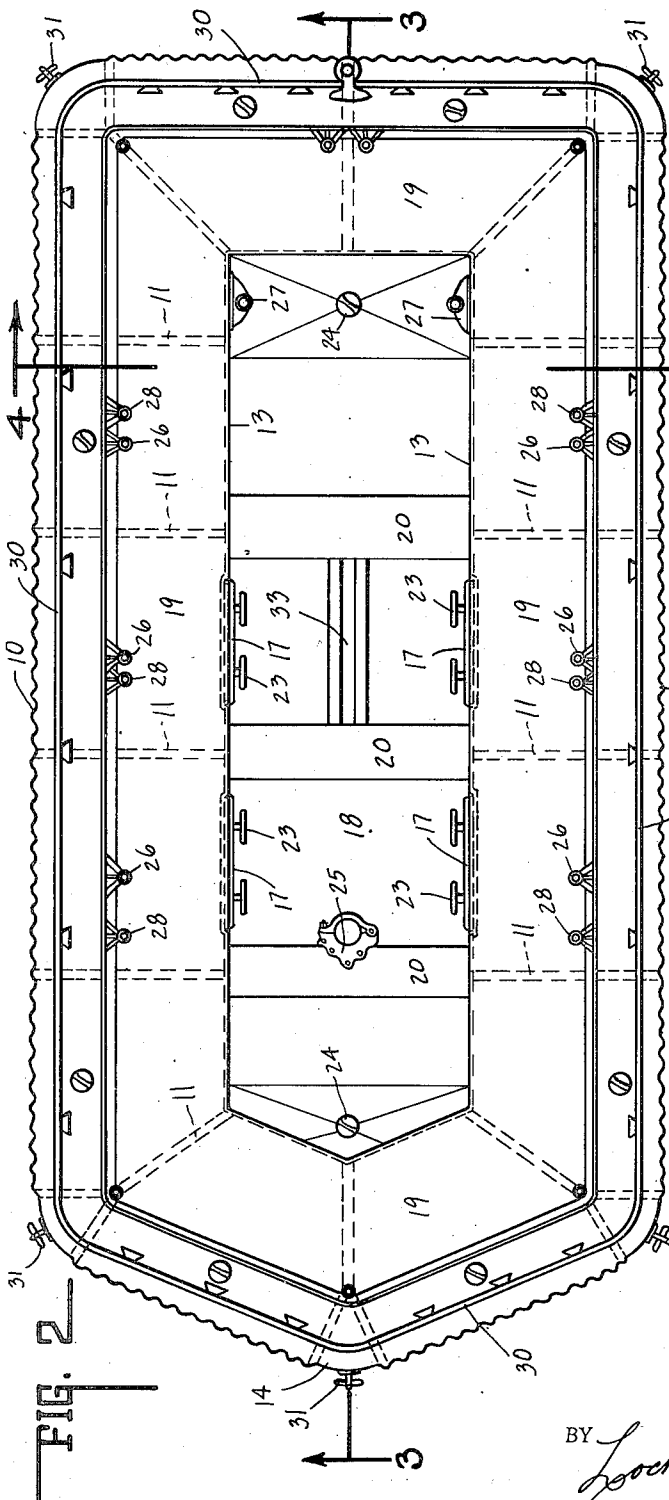


FIG. 3

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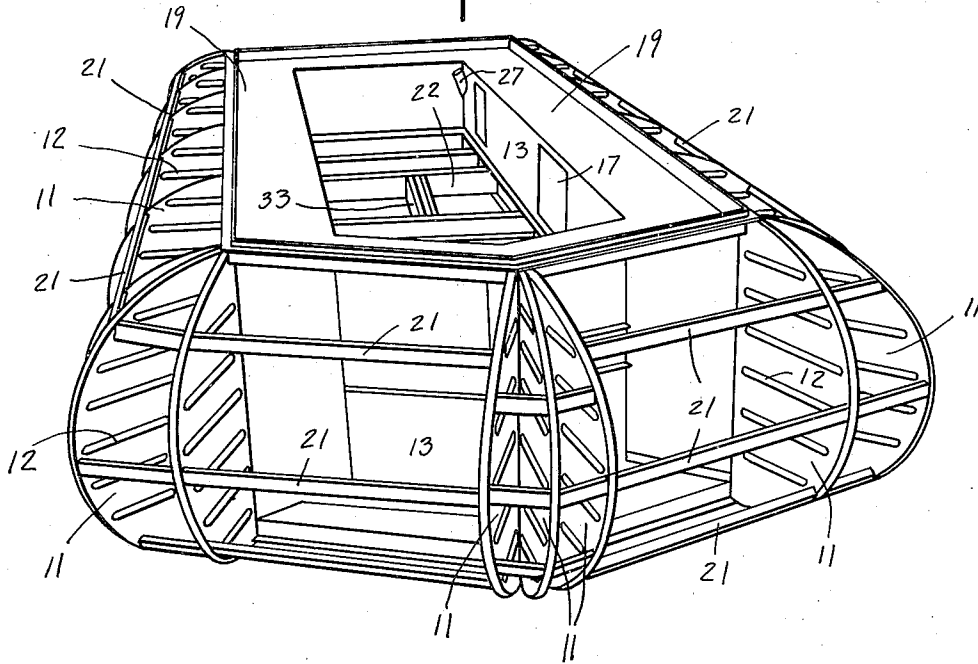
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3 Sheets-Sheet 3

FIG. 5



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,348,859

LIFE CRAFT

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Application July 14, 1943, Serial No. 494,608

6 Claims. (Cl. 9—11)

This invention relates to the construction of a life saving craft to be carried by ships at sea and capable of being dropped overboard in event the ship is abandoned.

The object of this invention is to produce a life saving craft having the advantages of the usual life raft, as well as many advantages of the usual life boat. As in a life raft it may be hastily dropped into the sea without the necessity of being lowered, open side up, as in the case of a life boat. As distinguished from a life raft, however, it is so constructed as to withstand the impact with the water when dropped from a substantial height, while carrying in water tight compartments the necessary equipment and provisions to sustain and protect life and make headway in safe delivery, to substantially the same extent as in the case of a well equipped life boat. It further distinguishes from the usual life raft in being so constructed as to provide a dry cock pit and afford protection from the elements to substantially the same extent as a life boat.

As distinguished from a life boat, but while having most of the advantages thereof as above mentioned, it is not necessary to lower it open side up, but, on the other hand, it may be hastily released and dropped into the sea. There is no danger or possibility of it capsizing, since it makes no difference which side comes up.

The invention, therefore, has to do with such a craft, as distinguished from a life raft and a life boat, and whereas most of the advantages of both are combined and most of the disadvantages of each are eliminated.

The invention further involves the construction of such a craft which is self-bailing, is fire proof, and surrounded by reinforced bulk heads to provide an endless series of water tight compartments, embracing opposed cock pits, one on each side of the craft separated by spaced flooring, said compartments providing stowage lockers accessible from either cock pit, whereby it becomes immaterial as to which side is uppermost when launched, all as will be hereinafter more fully set forth and described.

The full nature of the invention will be understood from the accompanying drawings and the following description and claims:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the life saving craft. Fig. 2 is a plan view thereof with the mast removed. Fig. 3 is a central vertical section taken on the lines 3—3 of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a cross sectional view taken on the lines 4—4 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 5 is a perspective view with the outer plating removed.

In the drawings there is shown a life saving craft of sheet metal construction comprising a plurality of water tight bulk heads suitably reinforced which define a series of water tight compartments surrounding a pair of opposed cock pits. The outer shell plating of the craft comprises a series of corrugated sheet metal plates 10 which are riveted or welded to the bulk heads to form the hull. Said corrugated plating is secured about and reinforced by the spaced bulk heads 11, having horizontally extending ribs 12 and inner plates 13 to provide a series of water tight compartments surrounding the craft. The bow of the craft is somewhat pointed; the end plates 10 extend at an angle to meet with the center bulk head shell 14. The stern is squared off and provided with suitable fittings to receive a rudder 15.

Certain of the water tight compartments provide stowage lockers for storing equipment, foods and supplies. Said stowage lockers are accessible through water tight locker doors 17 provided in the plates 13, one on each side of the spaced flooring 18 which divides the opposed upper and lower cock pits. Surrounding the cock pits are raised side and end benches 19 supported by the bulk heads and duplicated on both sides of the flooring 18, the side benches being joined by a plurality of thwarts 20.

The structural reinforcement includes the channel cross bars 21 for reinforcing the bulk heads 11 and shell plating 10, and interiorly the floor is supported and reinforced by channel cross beams 22.

Whereas the stowage lockers of the compartments are of the full depth of the craft, the dual water tight doors 17 make it possible to have access to the entire depth of the locker from the top side. Said doors are suitably secured in water tight sealed position by bolts and wing nuts 23. Thus, it is immaterial as to which side of the craft is uppermost when it is launched, since the stowage lockers are accessible from either side.

The structure is so designed that when loaded it will ride with the flooring above the water level, and wherein it may ship water upon launching or otherwise, suitable drains 24 are provided at each end of the flooring to permit drainage of the cock pit, said drains being equipped with plugs which may be applied from either side of the flooring. Similarly, all equipment, such as the mast step 25, oar lock sockets 26 and water tank filler necks 27, are duplicated on both sides of the craft so as to

be accessible from whichever becomes the top side upon launching.

The gunwale, in addition to being fitted with the oar lock sockets 26, is provided with hood rod sockets 28 on each side of the craft for receiving supporting rods for a protective canopy or hood. Also, communicating with the water tight compartments there are provided plugs 29, on each side thereof, to give access thereto for a bilge pump in event of leakage from any cause.

Surrounding the hull plating 10 there is a pair of spaced grab rails 30 which not only provide hand holds about the craft, but also serve as steps suitably spaced for boarding. Also, suitable tow rings 31 are secured exteriorly of the hull forward and aft.

By reason of the above described construction the locker compartments are so arranged as to give the maximum of storage space for considerable equipment, such as generally carried in life boats. Oars and a hinged mast 32 may be lashed to each side of the craft and a center board opening 33 is provided so that the craft may be sailed as well as rowed.

Also, by reason of the structure as herein disclosed, the craft is buoyant and designed to ride sufficiently high to keep a dry cock pit in a normal sea, and is inherently safe from capsizing. However, perhaps the most advantageous feature of the structure resides in its strength against impact upon launching and the fact that it is immaterial which side is uppermost, since the equipment and supplies are equally accessible from either side, and are fully protected from damage.

The invention claimed is:

1. A life craft comprising a surrounding shell of sheet metal side plates, a plurality of spaced bulk heads secured within said plates to provide an endless series of water tight compartments about the craft, double spaced flooring secured within said series of compartments intermediate the top and bottom thereof to provide upper and lower cock pits respectively, certain of said compartments providing stowage lockers extending beyond both of said flooring and common to both of said cock pits, and means for sealing said lockers in respect to the lower cock pit and rendering them accessible from the upper cock pit.

2. A life craft comprising a surrounding shell of sheet metal side plates, a plurality of spaced bulk heads, secured within said plates to provide an endless series of water tight compartments about the craft, flooring secured within said series of compartments intermediate the top and bottom thereof to provide upper and lower cock pits, and reinforcing bars extending transversely of said bulk heads and secured thereto in spaced parallel relation to each other to lie adjacent and reinforce said side plates.

3. A life craft comprising a surrounding shell of corrugated sheet metal side plates, a plurality of spaced bulk heads secured within said plates to provide an endless series of water tight compartments about the craft, each of said bulk heads being formed of sheet metal plates reinforced transversely thereof, a series of reinforcing bars extending transversely of and secured about the edges of said bulk heads adjacent said side plates for reinforcing the same, and a flooring secured within said series of compartments intermediate the top and bottom thereof for providing upper and lower cock pits, said flooring being formed of spaced plates supported by intermediate cross beams and so related to said compartments that at least one set of flooring plates will lie above the water line when the craft is afloat.

4. A life craft comprising a frame structure to include a continuous series of spaced bulkheads about double opposed cockpits, said bulkheads being outwardly curved to provide a substantially semi-circular edge portion, inner plates secured to said bulkheads defining said cockpits and a plurality of corrugated sheet metal side plates secured over and about the said curved edges of the bulkheads to form a continuous surrounding outer shell and with said inner plates and bulkheads provide a plurality of water tight compartments about said cockpits.

5. A life craft formed of a series of sectional frames surrounding and defining an inner cockpit, each of said sectional frames having an outwardly curved bulkhead plate forming the end wall support therefor, an inner closure plate, a series of structural reinforcing bars extending transversely of each frame structure and a series of sheet metal plates secured about the curved edges of said bulkheads and extending over and against said reinforcing bars to provide a continuous surrounding outer shell and form each of said frame sections into water tight compartments.

6. A life craft formed of an endless series of frame structures surrounding and defining a pair of inner and oppositely disposed cockpits, said frame structures comprising a plurality of spaced outwardly curved bulkheads, a series of corrugated sheet metal side plates secured about the outer curved edges of said bulkheads to provide a surrounding shell for said craft, a series of bench plates secured over the inner portions of the upper and lower edges of said bulkheads to reinforce the same and provide a surrounding bench for each of said cockpits, and inner plates secured over the inner edges of said bulkhead plates to form water tight compartments therebetween in association with said side plates and bench plates.

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