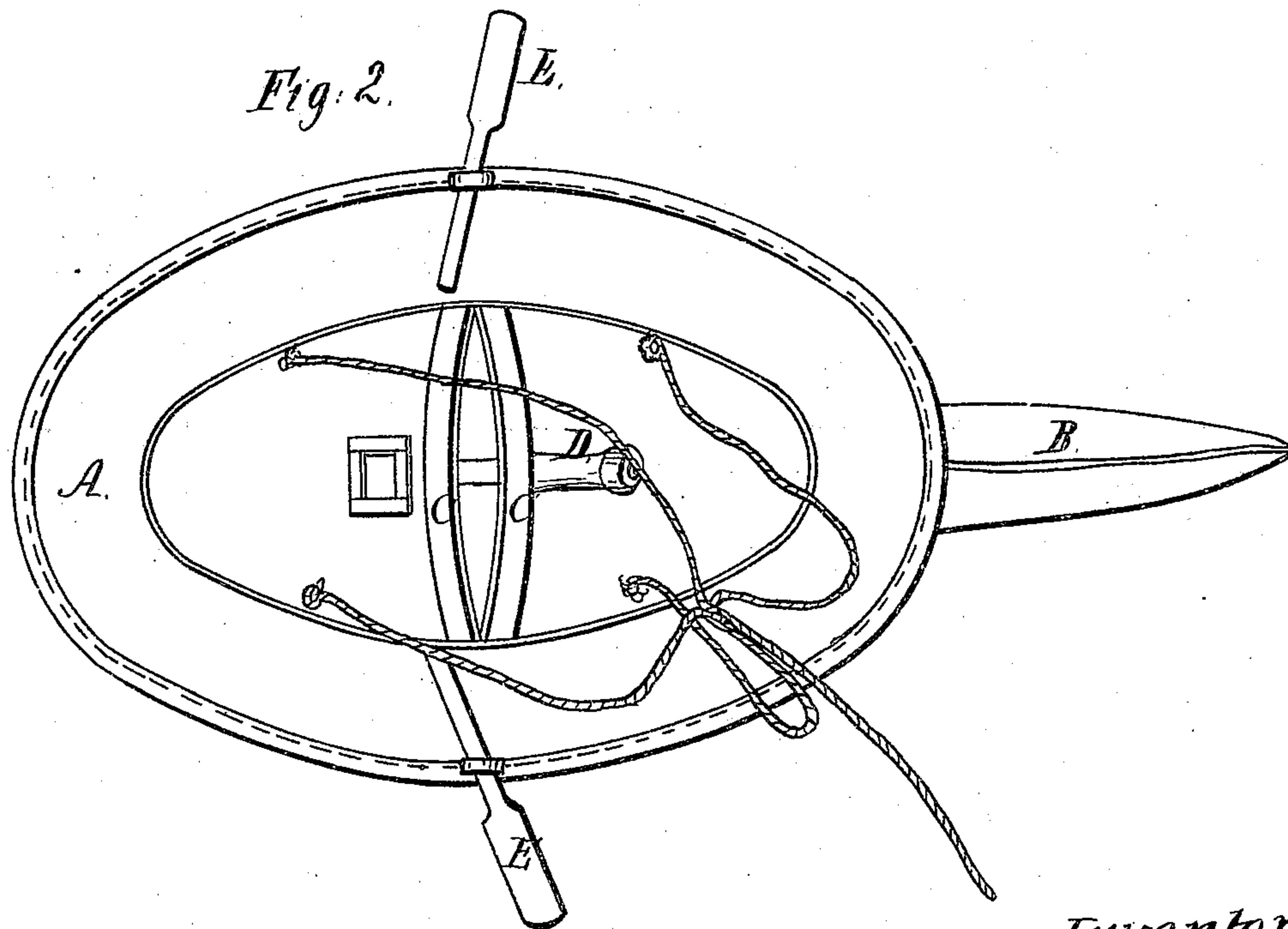
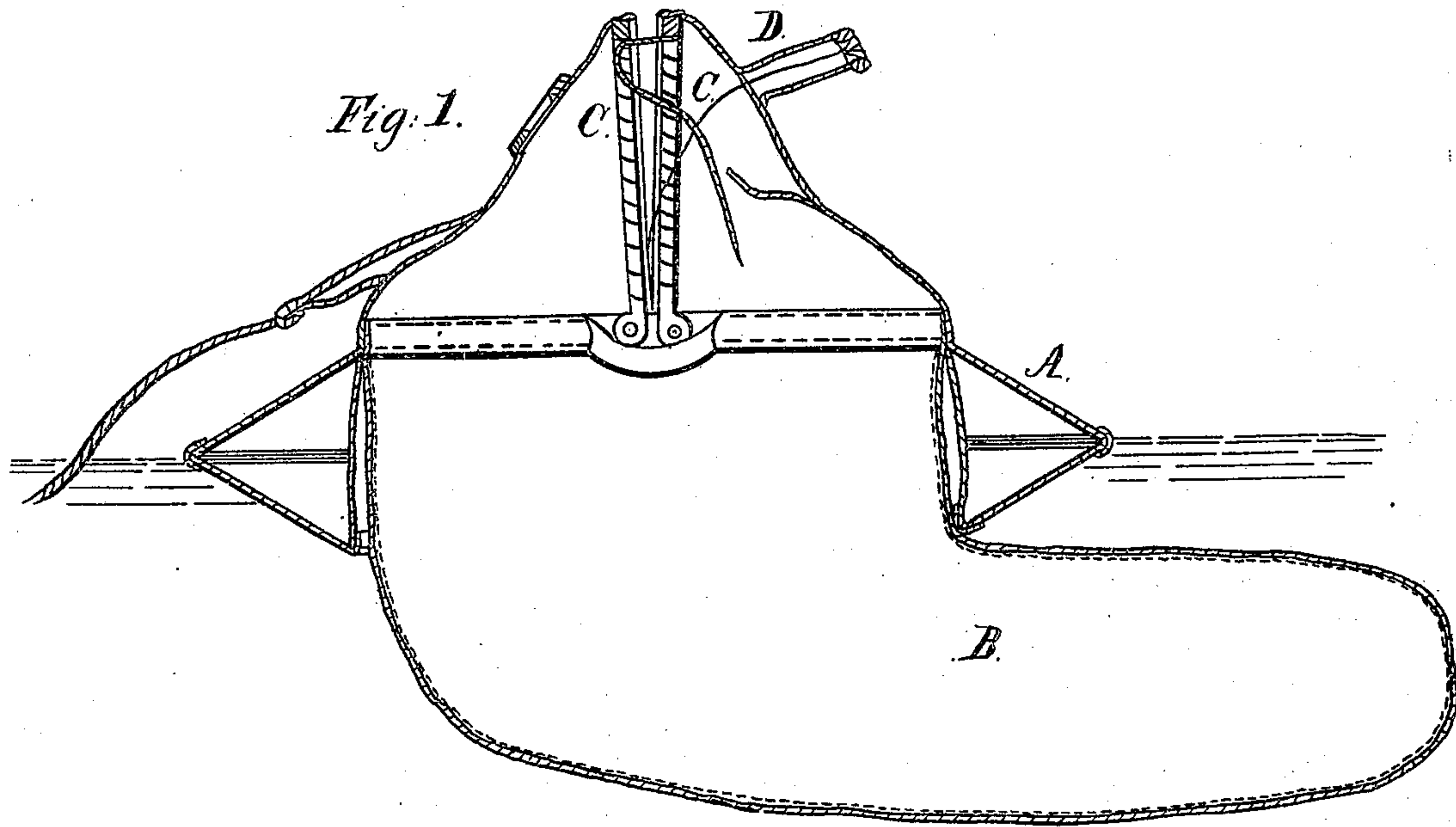


J. M. Billhofer

Life Preserver.

N^o 64,939.

Patented May 21, 1867.



Witnesses:

Geo. F. Southern
Gustav Berg

Inventor.

John M. Billhofer
by
Nas Southwood & Hauff
Atto

United States Patent Office.

JOHN M. BILLHOFER, OF IRVINGTON, NEW YORK.

Letters Patent No. 64,939, dated May 21, 1867.

IMPROVED LIFE-PRESERVER.

The Schedule referred to in these Letters Patent and making part of the same.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Be it known that I, JOHN M. BILLHOFER, of Irvington, in the county of Essex, in the State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improved Life-Preserver; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, which will enable those skilled in the art to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawing forming part of this specification, in which drawing—

Figure 1 represents a longitudinal vertical section of this invention.

Figure 2 is a plan or top view of the same.

Similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts.

This invention relates to a life-preserver which is constructed of a stout, double, cone-shaped frame of metal or other suitable material, from the bottom of which extends a bag, which is intended to receive the legs of the person or persons occupying the life-preserver, and which also serves as a keel and fin to steady the life-preserver in the water and to assist in steering the same. The top of the cone-shaped frame is covered by two jaws, which can be opened or closed, and which when closed protect the person or persons in the life-preserver against the waves or the inclemencies of the atmosphere.

A represents a frame made in the form of a double truncated cone of sheet metal or of any other suitable material. From the base or bottom of this frame extends a bag, B, which is made of some flexible but water-proof material, so that when the apparatus is not used said bag can be turned in, and the whole device stowed away in a small compass; but when the apparatus is to be used the bag is extended, and in this case it forms a receptacle for the legs of the person or persons sitting in the interior of the frame, and at the same time it forms a fin or keel, which steadies the frame in the water, and which may also be used in steering and propelling the apparatus in any desired direction. From the top of the frame A rise two jaws, C, which are made of some water-proof but flexible material, so that they can be readily opened and closed. When they are closed they form a semi-spherical enclosure or cap, which protects the person or persons in the interior of the apparatus against the waves or against the inclemencies of the atmosphere, and in that case light is admitted to the interior of the apparatus through one or more windows, and fresh air is admitted through a pipe, D, which is provided with a check-valve, so that it can be closed, and the entrance of water prevented in case of an emergency. If the sea is smooth and the weather fine the jaws C are opened, and the apparatus is propelled by means of paddles, E, which are secured to the sides of the frame A. The interior of the frame A is provided with several bags or receptacles to receive valuables or papers, or such articles which the passengers desire to save, and the whole apparatus is to be made of such a size that it is capable of containing one or more persons. When not used the apparatus is suspended from a rope or chain in such a position in or about the vessel or ship that the same can be conveniently lowered into the water whenever it may be required; and in sea-going vessels carrying large numbers of passengers, a sufficient number of such life-preservers ought to be kept on hand to afford room for all the passengers, and if this rule should be strictly adhered to many lives would be saved which, under the present system or want of system, are unavoidably lost.

My apparatus is light, it takes comparatively little room, and when lowered in the water it is not liable to be capsized or swamped in the roughest sea, and the passengers occupying the same can easily protect themselves against the waves or against rain, and they are enabled to propel their miniature vessel in any desired direction, so that they stand a good chance to fall in with a vessel, even if they should be shipwrecked in mid-ocean.

What I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

The double cone-shaped frame A provided with the bag B and jaws C, substantially as and for the purpose shown and described.

JOHN MICHAEL BILLHOFER.

Witnesses:

W. HAUFF,
G. BERG.