

# SUNDAY NEWS

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## 'Down To The Sea' In Buckets

*Wandering On Lake Bottom Is World's Most Unique Hobby*

**But Fire Bucket and Garden Hose Make Adequate Diving Suit for Treasure Hunter**

WHEN the Mother Goose rhymes are brought up to date and new situations are substituted for the old, the story of the three men who went to sea in a tub will be thrown out.

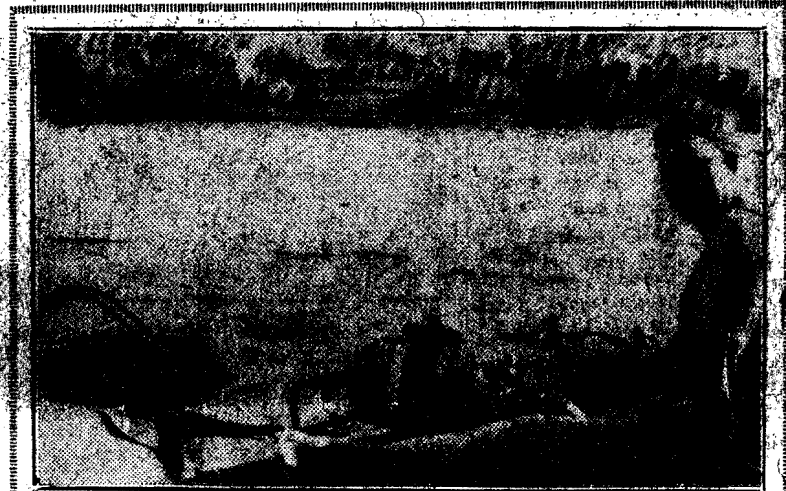
In its place will go the story of Alvin Lodge, assistant mechanical superintendent of the Hamilton Watch Company, who explores the bottoms of lakes and rivers in his spare time in a discarded fire bucket.

Not that Lodge actually climbs into the bucket as did the three men in the tub. He pulls it over his head, upside down and then wades right in.

Inventing diving helmets for his personal use out of everything from fire pails to auto top material are among the first of a long series of appliances constructed by this inventive young man. To his credit is an alarm clock which wakes him with music, mechanical devices which



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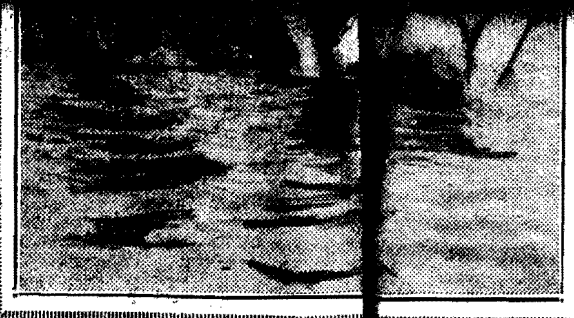
**Just For Convenience**

But most of his inventions are matters of convenience. The diving helmets are all in fun, so quite naturally he likes them best. Diving, he finds, is a lot of fun, although the bottom of the average lake is very disappointing to the fellow who's looked at pictures of marine life in the movies. There's nothing on them but sticks and stones to say nothing of considerable mud.

Lodge's first helmet was invented years ago when a youngster on the shores of Eagle Lake, N. Y., where his family maintains a summer home. There has always been stories that no end of treasure lies somewhere at the bottom of the lake. It's an old yarn which goes back to the days of Fort Ticonderoga, located nearby, but it's good enough to capture the fancy of any youthful resident. Lodge decided that the only way to recover the treasure was to get some diving gear and look around for it. The best and easiest way to get it, he found was to make it himself.

How successful the first helmet was doesn't matter. The important fact is that it opened up a new and surprisingly unique hobby for him and that he has built a half dozen helmets since then, the fire bucket being the latest and yet an exact copy of the first one.

The professional diver would no more put on Lodge's rig than try to swallow his own highly polished brass



Alvin Lodge, inventor of the fire-pail diving helmet is pictured on the shores of Eagle Lake, N. Y., making minor adjustments to the home-made equipment. The other view shows him beginning a dive. G. Edwin Shubrooks is manning the pump. And that thing suspended from his neck is actually a boat anchor.



Going to sea in a firepail may have its thrills. Here is Lodge, going down for the 100th time, and not yelling for help either.

helmet. It's a thing to jump away from.

In the first place, there's no suit under it. There was at first. Lodge made a regular canvas diver's suit, but he found it impractical and inconvenient. When something went wrong with his equipment, as something usually does, he doesn't want to be hampered by a suit.

**Keeps Deck Cleared**

He's cut the suit off so that now the helmet has only a bib of canvas front and back to keep the water from flooding him out. It's very much more practical in its present form, for after all, when the pumper gets tired, he can always swim up to the surface and do his own breathing. It's a funny thing however, he finds, that when he leaves the helmet in such emergencies, he forgets that he has left his air supply too, and usually makes the error of taking one deep breath—but only one. Water in the lungs has a powerful way of reminding a fellow to keep his mouth shut.

One of the earliest and greatest difficulties he experienced was the buoyancy of his outfit. It took a long time to overcome the habit his diving suit had of leaving him. As soon as the air began to be forced into the dome-topped bucket, it shot surface-ward without so much as an apology. This was overcome finally by welding a series of heavy iron discs on either side, which

**TREASURE TROVE FISH HOOKS**

Lodge's diving equipment was capable of functioning at depths five feet greater than its present limitations, the inventor feels it would be profitable instead of merely fascinating.

Sunk in about 30 feet of water a short distance off of the shore of Eagle lake is an old barge which was used for swimming and diving until a few years ago. Now it's so deep under water no one can move it, but it's near enough to the surface to foul troll lines of passing fishermen.

Lodge thinks if he could just get down to it, he could probably reclaim enough fancy bait and tackle to off-set the cost of the helmet and stock his own tackle box for the balance of his life.

added much to the professional appearance of the bucket and at the same time made it stay put.

**Anchors Aweigh**

However, Lodge's next trouble was to lay down himself, for the human body has a certain amount of buoyancy and he found that no matter how hard he tried, sooner or later he would discover that he was treading water, instead of walking around as he wished to do. Since he dives in a bathing suit, there was danger of hanging too much on the rather fragile garment, and a possibility that if he did, pumps would have to work in shifts till some one found him and gave him a new one. But weight was necessary so he tried tying an anchor around his neck and jumping overboard, a system which

has been used with astonishing success as a method of keeping the body under water, for a great many years.

This presented trouble, too, for when the anchor was hung in front the diver landed on his stomach and couldn't get up. When he hung it in the back he fell over backwards and likewise was forced to remain prone until he deserted the weight. How to remedy the situation? Very simple, Lodge thought it out with practically no trouble at all.

He got another anchor and tied one in front and one in the back and everything was jake. He carries a round iron ball, attached to a rope, in his hand and uses this for additional mooring to his under sea anchorages.

**Garden Air-Hose**

Trifling matters like air hose and

hand lines which cause professional divers more anxiety than any other part of their equipment mean practically nothing to him. They are more or less in the class of necessary evils to be dismissed quickly and lightly. The family clothes line, serves very nobly as a life line and a brand new garden hose, purchased for the benefit of the lawn serves, as the air conductor.

The pump, which was manned this summer by G. Edwin Shubrooks, chief chemist at the watch factory, isn't any more regulation than the helmet itself. It was taken off of an old steam launch and in its earlier days served the dual purpose of hurrying the fires a little bit to get steam up and blowing the whistle when the steam wasn't up. Despite its age it's still a very good pump—but it has its limitations and they of course automatically become the limitations of the whole equipment.

As the diver goes deeper into the water the pumper has to overcome a greater pressure on the airline. At about 25 feet the pressure becomes so great that the biggest pumper Lodge has been able to find, Shubrooks, included, can't man the pump any longer.

The diver either has to retreat very promptly to shallow water or else leave the equipment. The "life line" attached to the helmet has no practical value so far as pulling the diver to the surface is concerned. Its chief value is to recover equipment after the diver has come home under his own power.

There's only one great concern to diving, so far as Lodge is concerned. He just can't understand how professional divers can get a little window into the world from steam