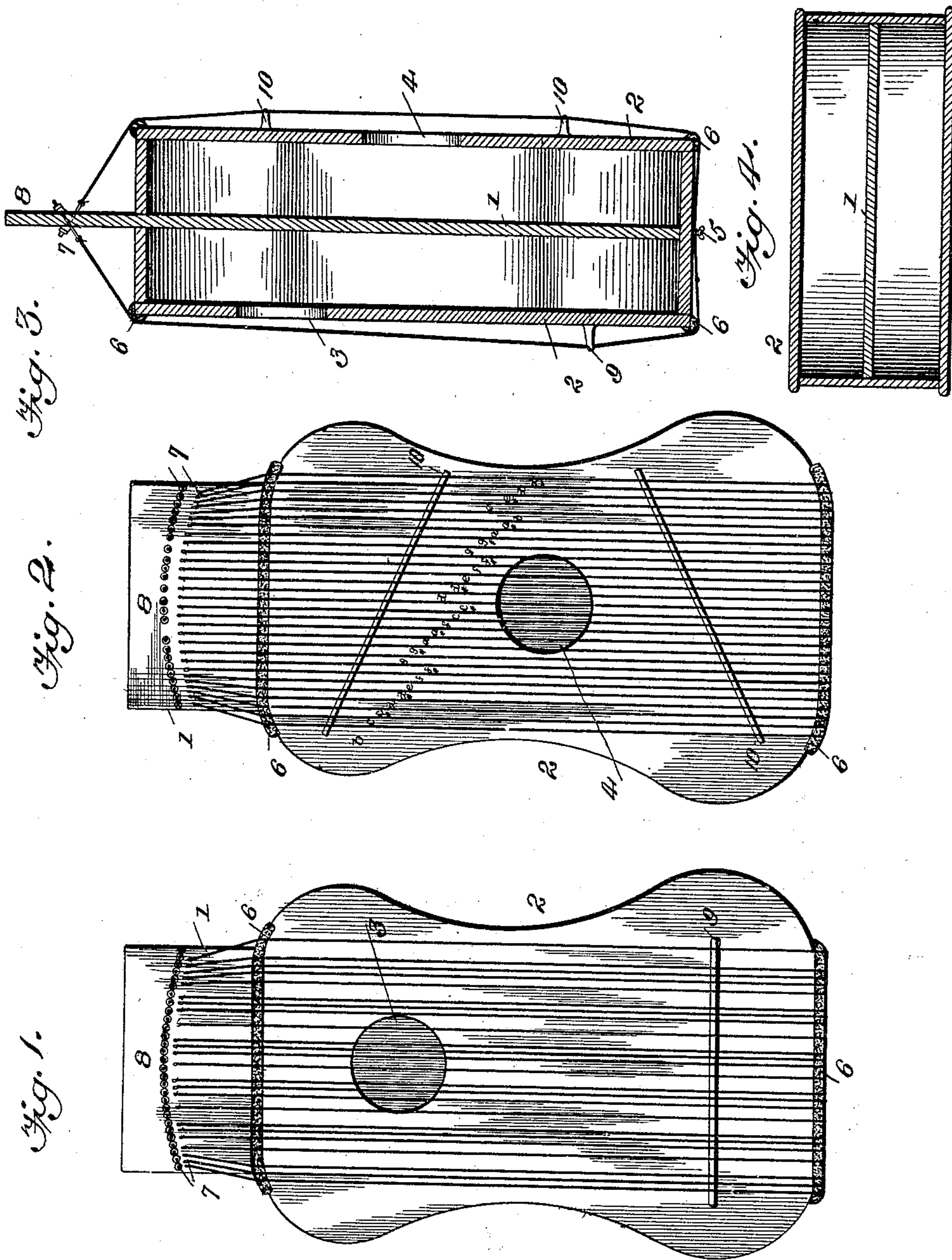


(No Model.)

E. J. BABBITT.  
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

No. 546,374.

Patented Sept. 17, 1895.



Witnesses  
*Johnnie*  
*W. E. Clendaniel.*

Inventor  
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Attorney



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ELWIN J. BABBITT, OF DEFIANCE, OHIO, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO FRANK SUMMER, JR., OF SAME PLACE.

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 546,374, dated September 17, 1895.

Application filed June 4, 1895. Serial No. 551,619. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ELWIN J. BABBITT, a citizen of the United States, residing at Defiance, in the county of Defiance and State of Ohio, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Musical Instruments, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings.

This improvement is designed to provide an instrument with two sets of strings between which is a sounding-board common to both sets, by which the air and accompaniment of a song can be played on different sets of strings; and the invention consists in the peculiar construction, arrangement, and combinations of parts hereinafter more particularly described, and then definitely claimed at the end hereof.

In the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 is a plan of the left or accompaniment side. Fig. 2 is a plan of the right or air side. Fig. 3 is a central longitudinal section. Fig. 4 is a transverse central cross-section.

Referring now to the details of the drawings by figure, 1 represents the sounding-board, on each side of which is built up a body 2, somewhat similar to a guitar, having on the accompaniment side a circular opening 3, near the upper end, and on the air side a similar opening 4 in the center. Along the bottom buttons 5 are arranged, to which the strings are attached, the latter passing over notched ribs 6 at top and bottom to keys 7, set in a keyboard 8, formed of an extension of the sounding-board. On the accompaniment side is a movable bridge 9, and on the opposite side are two fixed bridges 10. The strings on the accompaniment side are arranged in sections or groups of three strings each, which with the bass-string form one chord, and the combination of all the sections plays four different keys C, G, D, and A. Then by moving the bridge to a different position the instrument will play four additional keys by picking the strings without fingering. The air side has two fixed bridges 11, and the strings are preferably twenty-nine in number, arranged and tuned as shown by the lettering on the strings, thus also playing four keys C, G, D, and A by picking the strings without any fingering in unison with the accompaniment side.

By the above-described instrument both the air and the accompaniment can be played in unison with each other, and the accompaniment can also be played with any other instrument, and the peculiar manner in which the instrument is tuned allows this to be done merely by picking the strings without any fingering. By leaving off the bass-strings in the accompaniment side or letting said strings lie dormant and by a peculiar mode of picking the sectional strings only the harmonic tones of a banjo can be produced.

I am aware that it has been proposed to apply additional strings to a banjo or guitar for the purpose of conveniently playing arpeggios or similar passages; but in such case all the strings are set upon the front of the instrument. I am also aware that it has been proposed to make pianofortes with two sounding-boards and a set of strings for each, as shown in the English patent, No. 2,939, of 1867. My invention, however, differs essentially from either of these instruments, inasmuch as I provide a central sounding-board contained within the body of the instrument and with the strings on the back and front and outside of the body.

What I claim as new is—

1. A musical instrument comprising a body, a sounding board arranged between the back and front of said body, two sets of keys connected to said sounding board, two sets of strings secured by said keys, one set of strings being arranged on the front of the body and the other set on the back thereof, and bridges on which said strings rest, substantially as described.

2. The musical instrument herein described, comprising a body 2, a sounding-board 1 set centrally in the body, and having a keyboard 8 formed of an extension thereof, two sets of keys set in said keyboard, two sets of strings arranged on opposite sides of the body and connected to the keys, and the bridges 9 and 10, all substantially as described and shown.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature, in the presence of two witnesses, this 31st day of May, 1895.

ELWIN J. BABBITT.

Witnesses:

T. T. AUSBERRY,  
J. I. HALE.