

(No Model.)

A. G. DUCK.  
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

No. 587,089.

Patented July 27, 1897.

Fig. 1.

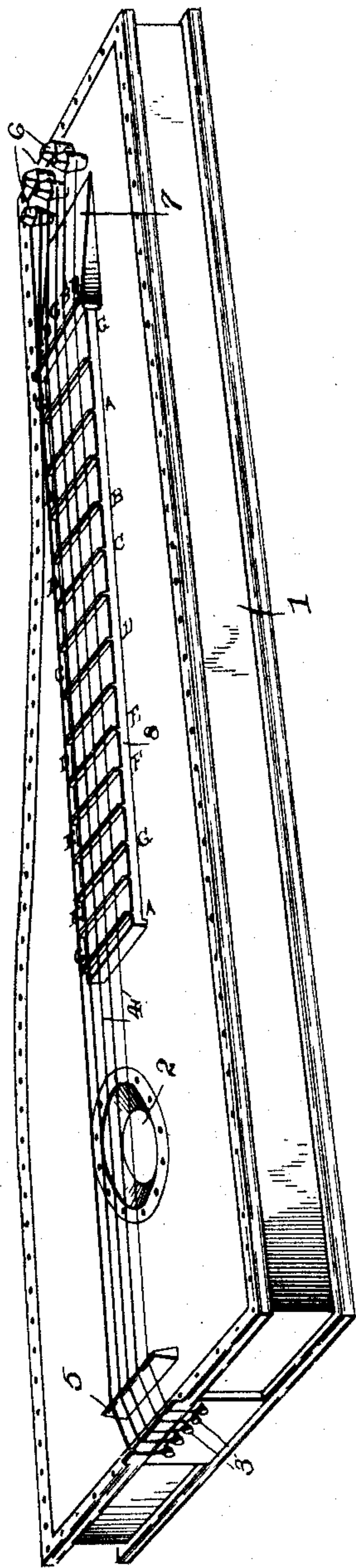


Fig. 3.

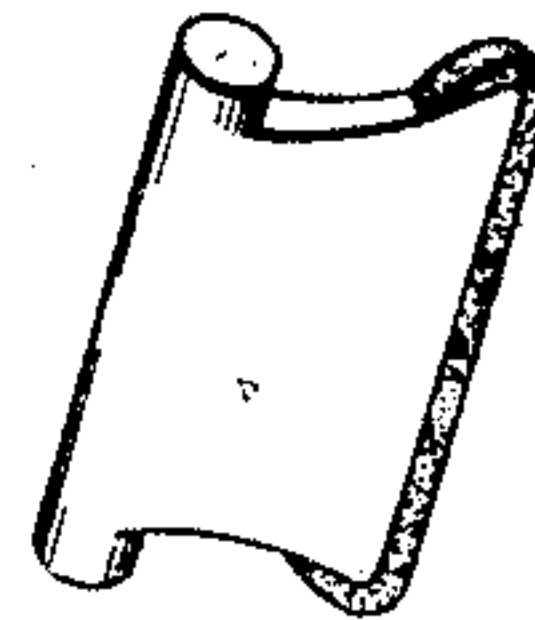
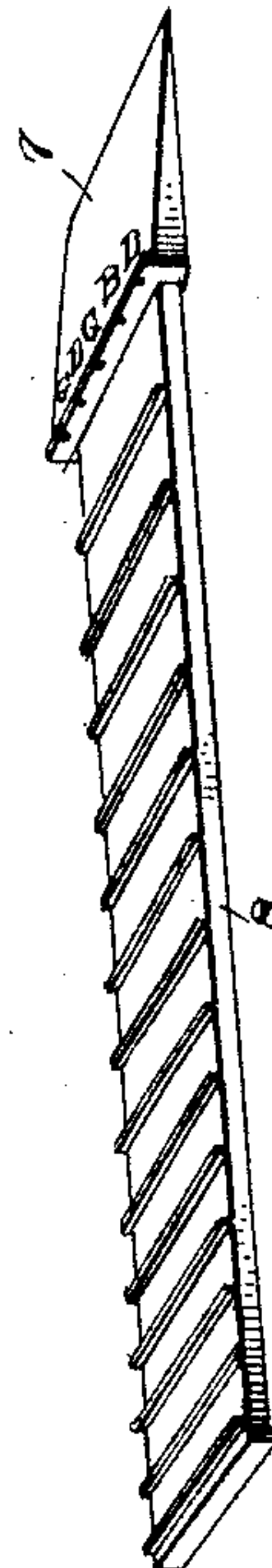


Fig. 2.



Inventor

Albert G. Duck,

Witnesses

C. A. Ford.

By his Attorneys,

C. A. Snow & Co.

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALBERT G. DUCK, OF WAYNESBURG, OHIO.

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 587,089, dated July 27, 1897.

Application filed June 30, 1894. Serial No. 516,190. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ALBERT G. DUCK, a citizen of the United States, residing at Waynesburg, in the county of Stark and State of Ohio, have invented a new and useful Musical Instrument, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to stringed musical instruments designed for use in playing accompaniments for the voice or a solo instrument, for which purpose the strings thereof are tuned to produce a harmonic chord when played "open" or when "stopped" at either of the frets with which the finger-board is provided, the strings being adapted to be picked with the fingers or by means of a plectrum.

Further objects and advantages of the invention will appear in the following description, and the novel features thereof will be particularly pointed out in the appended claim.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of an instrument embodying my invention. Fig. 2 is a detail view in perspective of the rest and finger-board detached. Fig. 3 is a detail view of the stop by which the strings may be brought into contact with any desired fret.

Similar numerals of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures of the drawings.

1 designates the hollow body of the instrument, provided with an opening 2 in its upper side.

3 represents the pegs at the tail end of the instrument, to which the ends of the strings 4 are secured.

5 represents the bridge over which the strings extend, and 6 the tuning-pegs, which are secured in openings at the head of the instrument.

7 represents an inclined rest arranged near the tuning-pegs at the head of the instrument, and 8 represents a finger-board which is raised above the plane of the upper surface of the body of the instrument and is integral with said rest. This finger-board may be provided with raised frets, as shown in the drawings, or not, as may be preferred.

Any desired number of strings may be em-

ployed in connection with the improved instrument, and they are tuned in such a manner that when stopped at any one of the frets the open or sounding portions of the strings form a chord, whereby the instrument is played by stopping all of the strings simultaneously at the same fret, and therefore may be played by means of a stop such as shown in Fig. 3, which extends across and is adapted to depress all of the strings simultaneously. The strings may be picked between the lower end of the finger-board and the bridge in the ordinary way with the fingers or with a plectrum, such as is used in connection with mandolins.

In order that the open portions of the strings may form a harmonic chord when stopped at any one of the frets on the finger-board, the strings are tuned to form such a chord when open, and in the drawings I have illustrated the strings as tuned to form the tones represented by the letters G D G B D. By adopting this tuning for the strings a chord will be formed by the open portions of the strings when stopped simultaneously at any one of the frets by means of the device shown in Fig. 3.

Assume, for instance, that it is desired to play an ordinary accompaniment in the key of G. The open strings will form the tonic chord of the scale, if the strings are fretted at the fifth fret from the upper end or the fret which will produce C on the base or lowermost string the chord produced will be C E G or the chord of the subdominant, and if the strings are fretted at the seventh fret, or that which is necessary to produce D on the base or lowermost string, the chord produced will be D, F sharp, A, or the dominant chord of G. In other words, any chord having the composition of a major third and a fifth—as, for instance, the chord of the tonic and the chords of the subdominant and dominant—may be produced on this instrument by stopping the strings at the proper frets, and hence accompaniments in any major key, provided said accompaniments are restricted to those three chords, may be played.

From the above description it will be seen that this instrument is adapted for use in accompanying the voice or a solo instrument



and is so constructed as to be played by a person having little or no knowledge of music or its composition, the stop, which in length is equal to the width of the finger-board, being employed to stop all of the strings at any desired fret and the strings being picked either in succession, in any desired order, or simultaneously, as preferred, to produce the desired variety, the fundamental notes of the several chords being indicated at the side of the finger-board by letters referring to the bass string, as shown in the drawings.

The stop shown in Fig. 3 is provided with laterally-projecting ears and has its bearing edge covered with suitable material to stop or fret the strings.

Various changes in the form, proportion, and the minor details of construction may be resorted to without departing from the spirit or sacrificing any of the advantages of this invention.

Having described my invention, what I claim is—

A musical instrument for accompanying purposes, comprising a sounding-board, a finger-board provided with raised frets, and strings adapted to be tuned to produce a harmonic chord, and a separate stop consisting of a single piece of material, of a length sufficient to span the finger-board and having laterally-extending ears to be grasped by the hand, said stop designed to be moved to stop the strings at any fret to produce chords in any key within the scope of the instrument during the playing of a piece, substantially as described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

ALBERT G. DUCK.

Witnesses:

J. W. LACOCK,  
FRED GRUBER.