

No. 881,480.

PATENTED MAR. 10, 1908.

J. MITCHELL.

VIOLIN MUTE.

APPLICATION FILED JUNE 3, 1907.

Fig. 1.

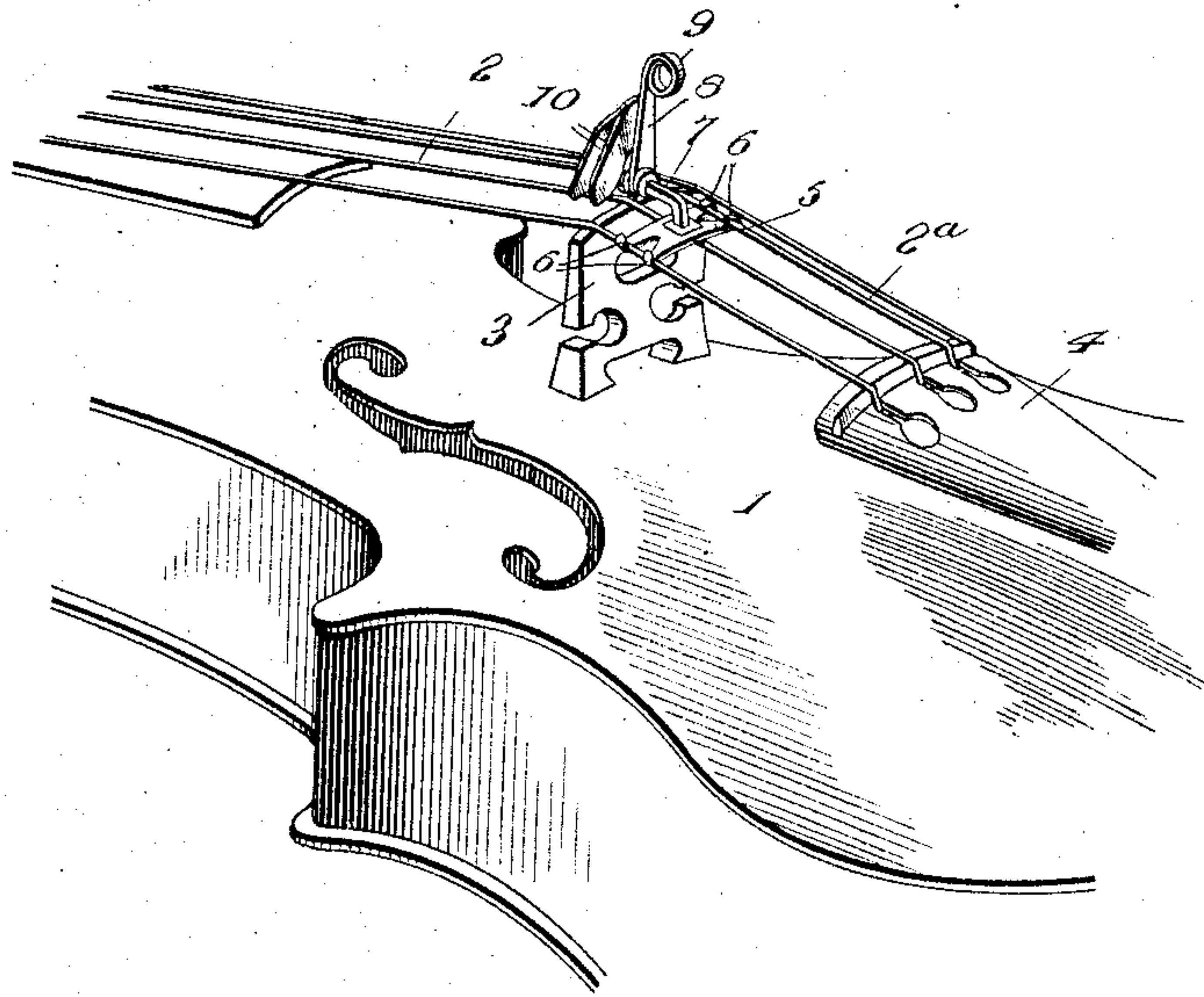


Fig. 2.

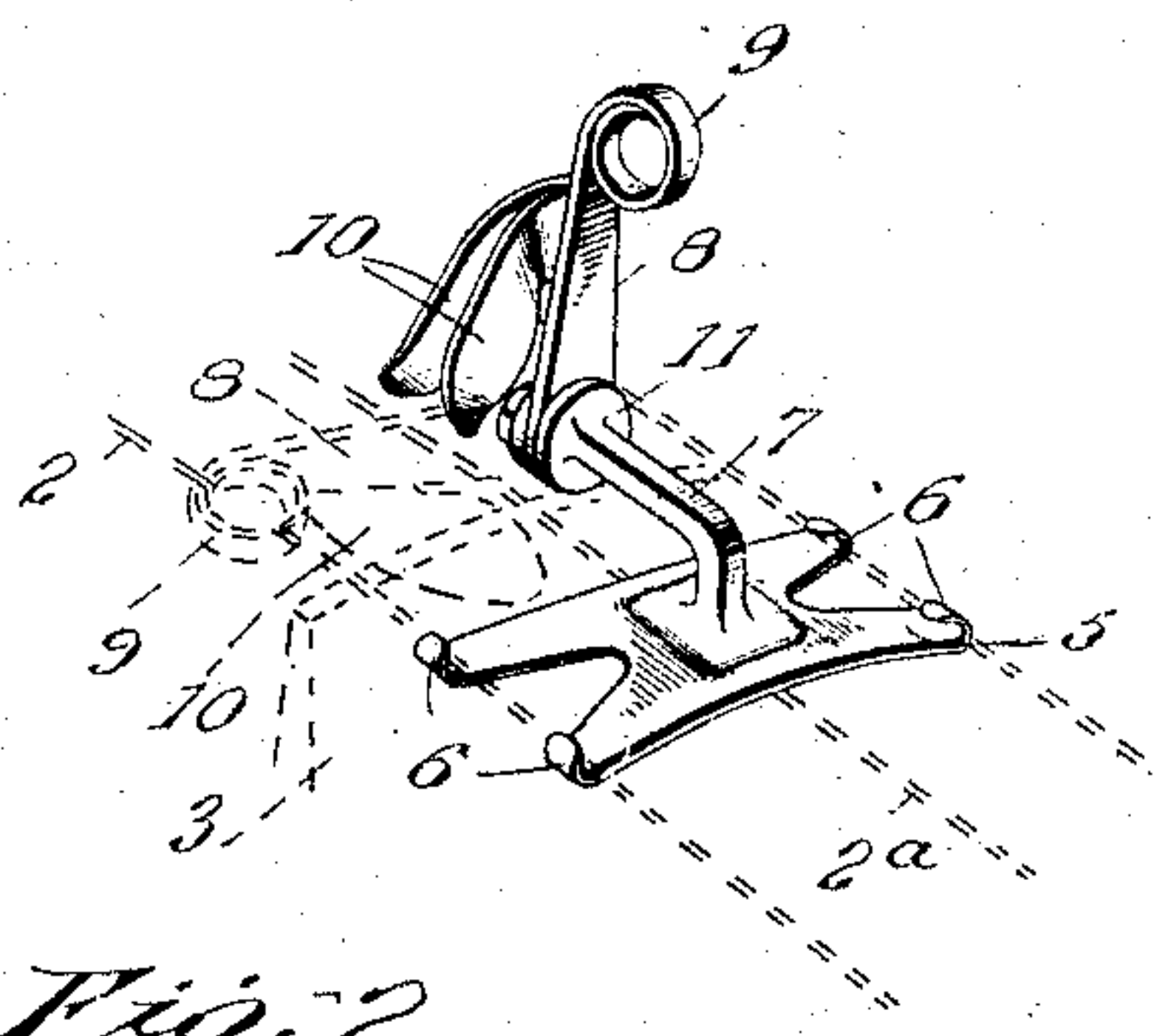


Fig. 3.

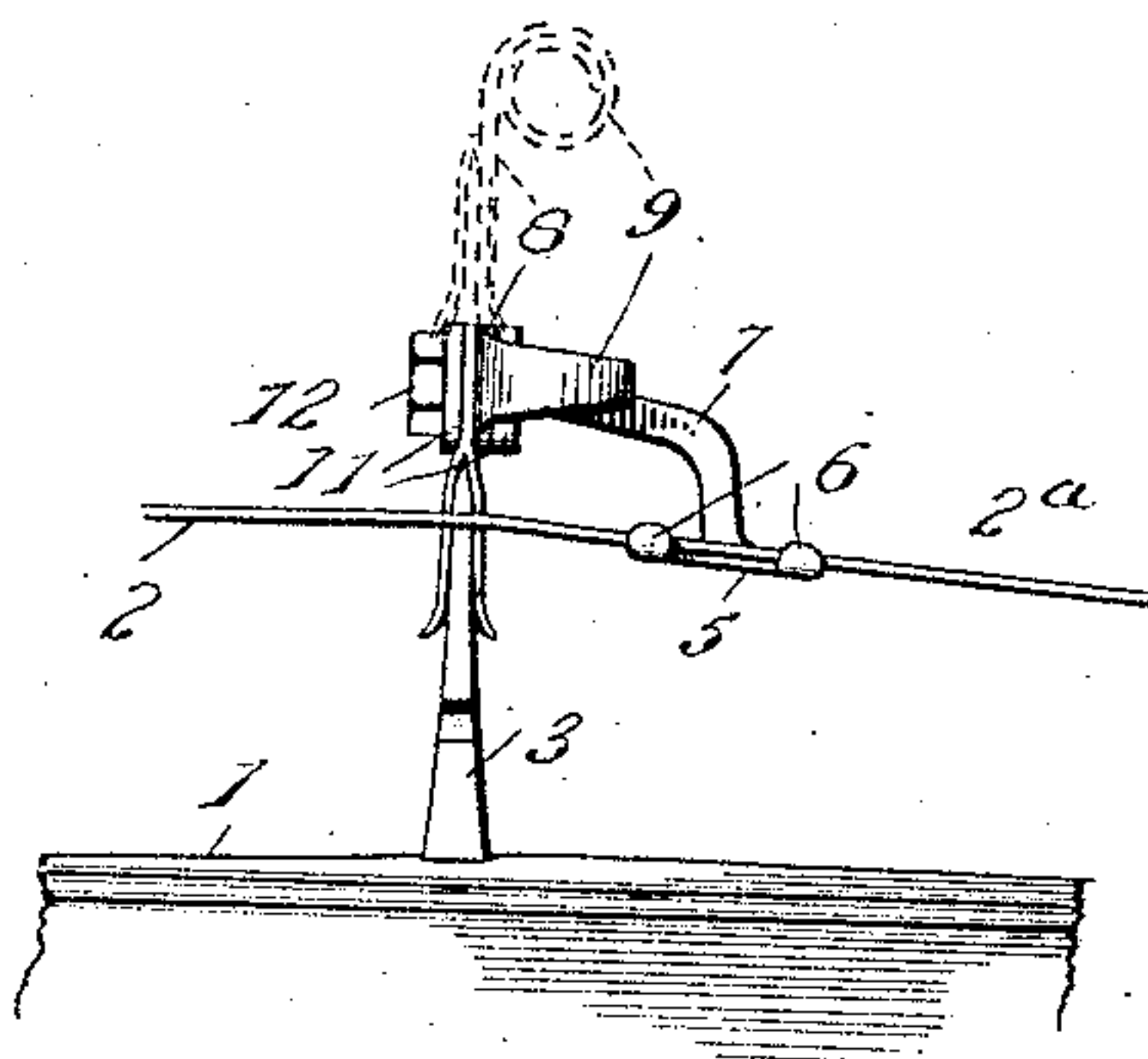
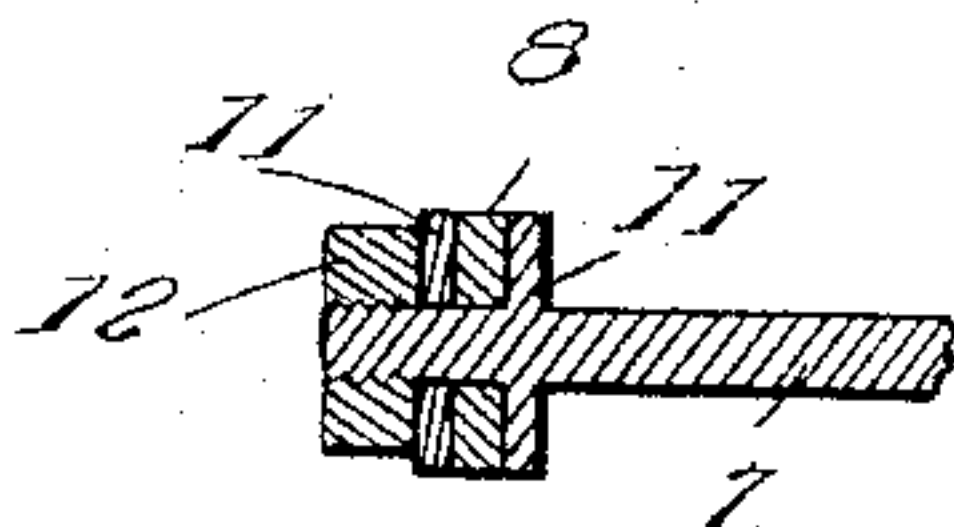


Fig. 4.



Witnesses

A. B. Williams
S. M. Hughes.

Inventor

Invent
John Mitchell,
Deeler & Robb

Attorney

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN MITCHELL, OF AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND.

VIOLIN-MUTE.

No. 881,480.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented March 10, 1908.

Application filed June 3, 1907. Serial No. 376,993.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN MITCHELL, a subject of the King of Great Britain, residing at Auckland, New Zealand, (and whose post-office address is 215 Victoria Arcade, Auckland, New Zealand,) have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Violin-Mutes, of which the following is a specification.

This invention comprises a mute or tone modulating appliance for stringed instruments, such as the violin, violoncello, and bass-viol.

The main desideratum of the present invention is to provide an improved device of the above nature, which is extremely simple in structure, and very easy to operate, involving a broad principle which constitutes an essential feature thereof. In mutes such as now commonly employed, various disadvantages are present, by reason of the inconvenience experienced in operating the device to control the tone of the instrument to which it is applied, on account of the noise caused by actuation of the modulating member in throwing the same into and out of coöperation with the bridge, and other defects existing from the practical standpoint. This invention eliminates the disadvantages above mentioned, as the present mute device is constructed with a special view of improving upon the common types of mutes enabling the player to easily and quickly control the tone of the instrument without undue effort, and what is most important of all, without interruption in playing.

For a full understanding of the invention and the merits thereof, and to acquire a knowledge of the details of construction and the means for effecting the desired result, reference is to be had to the following description and the accompanying drawing; in which

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing the invention applied to a violin. Fig. 2 is a detail perspective view bringing out clearly the arrangement of the modulating member relative to the bridge of the instrument, dotted lines showing said member in an applied position. Fig. 3 is a side elevation of the mute, and Fig. 4 is a detail of the pivot bearing.

Corresponding and like parts are referred to in the description and drawings by similar reference characters.

As before premised herein, my mute has been designed having in view especially the

requirements and convenience of the player of the instrument to which it may be applied. As above noted, it may be stated that an essential feature of novelty in my invention resides in a special arrangement of the tone modulating member with reference to its support, so that when in operative position upon an instrument, this member may be caused to coöperate with the bridge, or disengage therefrom, by movement substantially parallel with that of the bow by which the instrument is played. The advantage of the above will be readily appreciated when it is understood that by this arrangement of the parts, it is unnecessary for the player to remove his hand from the bow when operating the modulating member, as such operation may be readily accomplished while the bow is moved in the customary way, substantially transversely of the strings of the violin, or other instrument, as the case may be.

Specifically describing the invention, the numeral 1 indicates the violin to which my mute is applied, and 2 denotes the strings. The usual bridge 3, and tail-piece 4, are provided, the hitch sections 2^a of the strings 2 being secured to the member 4, as usual.

In the application of my invention to a violin, the mute is supported at one side of the bridge 3 and upon the hitch sections of the strings 2. The device consists of a support 5 comprising a slightly bowed plate, the opposite end portions of which are bifurcated, as shown, each bifurcate member having hooks 6 at its outer extremities. Projecting upwardly and curving outwardly from the support 5 is a standard 7. Upon the outer end of the standard 7 is mounted the modulating member, which is composed preferably of an arm 8 having its lower end pivotally connected with the standard 7. At the upper end of the arm 8 is formed a suitable finger piece 9, extending transverse to the plane of movement of the arm, and projecting laterally from the arm are the downwardly curving extensions 10 which are designed to engage directly with the bridge 3 in order to reduce vibration thereof in the well-known manner, and thus modulate the tone of the instrument.

The extensions 10 are spaced from one another and are adapted to engage the bridge 3 at opposite sides, when in engagement therewith. Suitable washers 11 may be carried by the outer end of the standard 7,

which constitutes the pivotal axis of the modulating member of my mute, and arranged upon opposite sides of the member 8. A nut 12 applied to the outermost threaded 5 extremity of the standard 7 is adjusted to afford sufficient friction between the parts 8 and 11, whereby the member 8 will readily remain in an adjusted position.

In practical use, when my mute is applied 10 to a violin, the support 5 is preferably arranged so that the hooks 6 at opposite ends are in engagement with the G and A strings of the instrument, passing thereunder, the body of the support or plate 5 resting upon 15 the D string. When thus disposed, as shown, the modulating member is above the bridge and movable in substantially the plane thereof, or in other words, said member, which comprises the arm 8, is capable of 20 what will be herein termed as bow-wise movement (movement in a direction substantially the same as that in which the bow of the violin moves in playing). This is important as it admits of actuation of the member 25 8, as the hand of the player carries the bow across the strings 2, without interruption of the playing or inconvenience. It is only necessary, when desirable to modulate the tone of the instrument, for the player to 30 touch the finger-piece 9 of the arm 8, say in the upward stroke of the bow, and the modulating member may be moved from its normal upright or inoperative position, downwardly, to cause the extensions 10 to engage 35 the bridge 3. The extensions engage the bridge 3 between the G and D strings as shown, but it is to be understood that the support 5 may be arranged so as to be held in place by other of the strings of the instru- 40 ment, under which conditions the point of engagement of the extensions 10 with the bridge 3 would be different.

When out of use, the arm 8 of the mute will remain in an approximately vertical 45 position. It will be obvious that this lever may be readily moved downward on the upstroke of the bow, and restored to its normal position on the down-stroke. However, if the extensions 10 were oppositely arranged, 50 the operation might be just the reverse of that above described. The movement of the arm 8 under all conditions may be said to be bow-wise.

When my mute is applied to a cello or 55 bass-viol, the standard 7 will extend from the opposite side of the support or plate 5 and the parts 8, 9, and 10, arranged in positions

reverse to those shown in the drawing. This modification is necessary in view of the different position in which these instruments are 60 held when playing them.

From the foregoing, it will be appreciated that my invention is the embodiment of simplicity in structure, and furthermore, it 65 possesses great advantages by reason of such structure, and especially on account of the peculiar arrangement and operation of the modulating member.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new is:— 70

1. In combination, a stringed instrument embodying a bridge, and a mute therefor comprising a modulating member movable into and out of engagement with the bridge by bow-wise movement of the hand. 75

2. In combination, a stringed instrument embodying a bridge, a mute therefor comprising a modulating member movable into engagement with the bridge by bow-wise movement, and frictional means for holding 80 the modulating member in an adjusted position.

3. In combination, a stringed instrument embodying a bridge, and a mute therefor comprising a support located at one side of 85 the bridge, a standard projecting from said support, a modulating member consisting of an arm pivoted to the standard for engagement with the bridge, and means connecting the arm with the standard and permitting 90 of bow-wise movement thereof as set forth.

4. A mute for stringed instruments consisting of a supporting plate, a standard extending laterally from said plate, means for securing the plate to an instrument, a modu- 95 lating member pivoted to the outer end of the standard, and friction means coöperating to hold the modulating member in an adjusted position.

5. A mute for stringed instruments comprising a support including a pivot member 100 substantially parallel with the strings, a modulating member mounted on said pivot, and a finger-piece for said member arranged transversely with respect to the plane in 105 which the modulating member is adapted to move.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

JOHN MITCHELL.

Witnesses:

GEO. D. WEEKS,
CORNELL BENJAMIN.