(No Model.)

F. GRETSCH.

BANJO.

No. 456,029. Patented July 14, 1891.

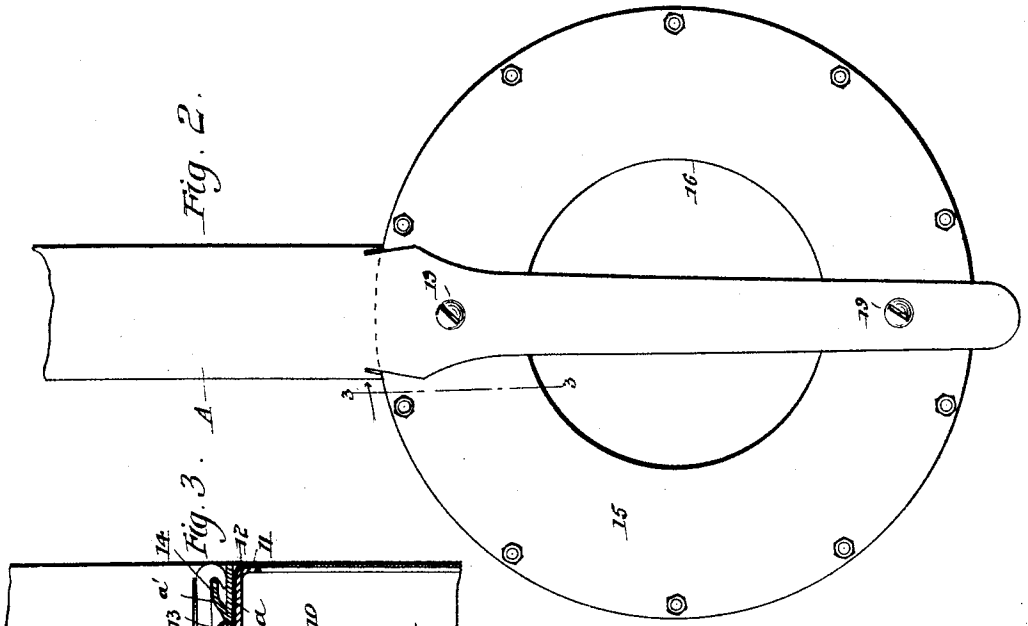


Fig. 2.

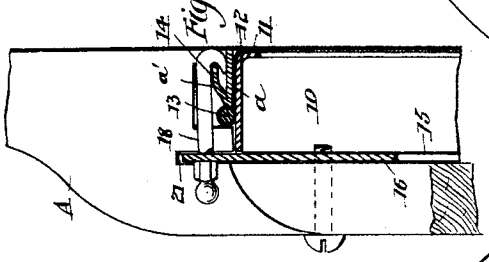


Fig. 3.

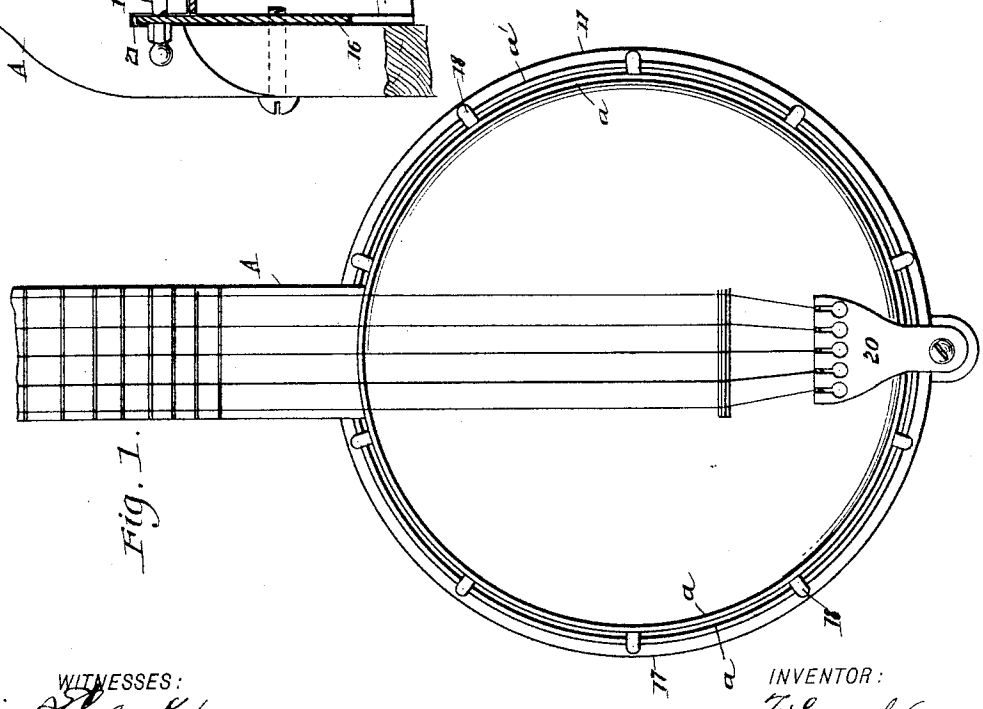


Fig. 1.

WITNESSES:

E. Clark.

E. M. Clark

INVENTOR:

F. Gretsch

BY Munn & Co

ATTORNEYS

THE NORRIS PETERS CO., PHOTO-LITHO., WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FREDERICK GRETSCH, OF BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

BANJO.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 456,029, dated July 14, 1891.

Application filed March 6, 1891. Serial No. 384,010. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FREDERICK GRETSCH, of Brooklyn, in the county of Kings and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Banjos, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to an improvement in banjos, and has for its object to economize in the construction of such instruments and improve the quality of the tone, and also to provide a means whereby the brackets usually employed upon the head may be dispensed with and a means whereby the neck may be secured to the head in such a manner as not to weaken it, but wherein the neck will serve to strengthen the head.

The invention consists in the novel construction and combination of the several parts, as will be hereinafter fully set forth, and pointed out in the claims.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, in which similar letters and figures of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the views.

Figure 1 is a plan view of a banjo-head and a portion of the neck thereof. Fig. 2 is a bottom plan view of the banjo-head and attached portion of the neck, and Fig. 3 is a section taken practically on the line 3 3 of Fig. 2.

The body of the head consists of a band 10, preferably made of metal and provided at its upper edge with an inwardly-extending horizontal flange 11, the said flange being at a right angle to the body of the band, or practically so. The cover membrane 12 is stretched over the body-band 10 and rests upon the flange 11 thereof, being provided at its margin with the usual ring 13.

In connection with the body-band 10 a clamping ring or band 14 is employed, adapted to rest upon the marginal ring 13 of the cover membrane. The clamping-band is of peculiar construction, and is made of a single strip of metal bent upon itself to form an inner straight member *a* and an outer shorter angular member *a'*, as is best shown in Fig. 3. At the lower edge of the clamping-band the metal is tightly pressed together, and that is the edge that bears upon the marginal ring of the cover membrane.

In conjunction with the body-band and clamping-band a circular sounding-plate 15 is employed, the said plate being provided with an opening 16 in its central portion. The body-band 10 rests upon the sounding-plate 15, and the said plate extends some distance beyond the outer face of the band, forming thereby a ledge 17. This ledge is utilized as a substitute for the brackets usually employed in connection with banjo-heads, and the screw-clips 18 are made to bear upon the upper edge of the shorter and outer member *a'* of the clamping-band, and the threaded ends of the clips are passed through apertures in the ledge-section of the sounding-plate, while suitable nuts are screwed upon the lower projecting ends of the said clips, as is illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3.

It will be observed that the sounding-plate and clips serve to bind the head together, and that the ledge portion of the sounding-plate not only serves as a substitute for the brackets, but also materially aids in maintaining the head in a perpendicular position in the lap of a player, as the ledge is not liable to slip upon the clothing, especially when placed between folds that may occur therein.

It may be further observed that in constructing a head in the manner above described but few parts are employed, and those parts are capable of being expeditiously and economically assembled and secured, and when the parts are in position the head has less depth than the ordinary banjo-head, thereby rendering it less bulky, and the inner portion of the plate 15 serves as a sounding-board, and also creates in the head a resonant chamber. A further advantage derived from the construction of the head consists in the fact that the neck A instead of being carried through the head, as heretofore, is at its lower end made to bear upon the sounding-plate 15 and is secured to the under face of said plate by two or more screws 19 or their equivalents, as illustrated in Fig. 2. The lower end of the neck of the banjo is carried beyond the ledge 17, and to this projecting portion of the neck the tail-piece 20 may be secured.

The usual shoulder in the neck of the banjo bears against the head thereof, and below the

shoulder a recess 21 is produced in the neck, adapted to receive the ledge of the head, the said ledge snugly fitting in the recess.

Having thus described my invention, I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent—

1. In a banjo, the combination, with the head thereof, of a neck having its lower end attached to the bottom of the head, as and for the purpose specified.

2. In a banjo, the combination, with the head thereof and a sounding-plate provided with a central opening and engaging the bottom of the head, of a neck the lower end whereof is attached to the bottom surface of the sounding-plate, substantially as shown and described.

3. In a banjo or similar instrument, the combination, with the head thereof and a sounding-plate provided with a central opening and constituting the bottom of the head, which plate extends beyond the outer surface of the body of the head, forming a ledge, of a neck the lower end whereof is secured to the under surface of the sounding-plate and is provided with a recess to receive the projecting or ledge portion of said plate, as and for the purpose specified.

4. A banjo-head consisting of a body-band, a clamping-band encircling the body-band, comprising an inner straight member and an outer shorter spaced member, a sounding-plate upon which the body-band rests, and clips engaging the clamping-band, passed through the sounding-plate, and provided with nuts at their lower ends, as and for the purpose specified.

5. In a banjo-head, the combination, with the body-band and the clamping-band, of a plate provided with an opening therein engaging with the body-band and extending beyond the peripheral surface thereof, and clips engaging with the clamping-band and passed through the projecting portion of the plate, said clips being provided with adjusting or locking devices, as and for the purpose specified.

FREDERICK GRETSCH.

Witnesses:
GUSTAV GROVERMANN,
WM. P. RETTBERG.