UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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STRING DEPRESSOR FOR STRINGED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Howard L. Sprague, New York, N. Y.

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1 Claim. (Cl. 84—515)

1 This invention relates to a string depressor for stringed musical instruments and has for its primary object to facilitate the fingerling of instruments of this character.

The invention is particularly applicable for use in connection with stringed musical instruments of the lute type in which the instrument is provided with a head adjacent which is located a finger board having a plurality of transversely extending frets between which the strings are adapted to be depressed against the finger board. In the fingerling of instruments of this type it is difficult for a person having large finger-tips accurately to depress a string without interfering with adjacent strings.

An object of this invention is to facilitate the accurate depressing of the selected string without interfering with adjacent strings in order to preserve the purity of tone and produce accurate melody.

Another object of this invention is to depress a plurality of strings simultaneously in order that chords may be played by the use of a single finger.

The above and other objects may be attained by employing this invention which embodies among its features a perforated plate adapted to be mounted on an instrument of the lute type adjacent the head thereof, a depressible button mounted in each perforation in the plate and a stop carried by each button for depressing at least one string of the instrument against the finger board between a pair of frets.

Other features include a stop so designed that it will depress a plurality of strings on the instrument against the finger board between pairs of frets whereby chords may be played.

Still other features include means yieldingly to sustain each button elevated and the stop out of contact with the strings until the button is depressed by the player of the instrument.

In the drawings,

Figure 1 is a plan view of a stringed musical instrument showing my improved string depressor in place thereon.

Figure 2 is a fragmentary enlarged side view of the finger board and a portion of the head of the instrument showing it equipped with my improved string depressor.

Figure 3 is a transverse sectional view taken substantially along the line 3—3 of Figure 2.

Figure 4 is an enlarged plan view of this improved string depressor.

Figure 5 is a bottom plan view of Figure 4.

Figure 6 is a transverse sectional view taken substantially along the line 6—6 of Figure 4.

Figure 7 is a horizontal sectional view of the string depressor taken substantially along the line 7—7 of Figure 2, and

Figure 8 is a perspective view of one of the stops and its associated button.

Referring to the drawings in detail, a stringed instrument designated generally 10 comprises a body or sound box 11 to one end of which is attached the usual neck 12 provided on its upper side with a finger board 13 across which frets 14 extend. The end of the neck 12 opposite that connected to the body or sound box 11 is provided with the usual head 15 in which the pegs 16 supporting strings 17 are mounted. The instrument is provided with the usual bridge 18 which supports the strings in spaced relation above the finger board 13 all in the conventional manner.

My improved string depressor designated generally 19 comprises a pair of spaced parallel plates 20 and 21 held in fixed spaced relation by upturned side flanges 22 formed on the plate 21 carrying at their upper edges intumted flanges 23 which are pierced at spaced intervals with internally threaded openings 24 for the reception of attaching screws 25 by means of which the plate 20 is rigidly held in proper position. Formed in the plate 20 at suitably spaced intervals are perforations 26, and formed at various locations in the plate 21 are slots 27 which extend perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the string depressor 19. Suitable spacing pins 28 are carried by the plate 21 near one end and are adapted to cooperate with the bridge 18 in supporting the string depressor 19 in spaced relation with the finger board 13 and out of contact with the strings 17 as will be readily understood upon reference to Figure 2.

Mounted for vertical sliding movement in each opening 26 in the plate 21 is a button 29 to the lower end of which is attached a stop designated generally 30. Each such stop comprises a base plate 31 having angularly extending therefrom depending fingers 32 the free ends of which are received in the slots 27 while the plate 32 bears against the inner face of the top plate 20 to limit upward movement of the stop. It is to be noted that each finger 32 is of a length sufficient to bridge the gap between the plates 20 and 21 with the lower ends of the fingers 32 disposed in the slots 27 (Fig. 2). The plate 31 is pierced intermediate its ends to receive the shank of a screw 33 which passes through a washer 34 and the opening in the plate 31 and thence into the bottom end of the button 29 in order to hold the parts in assembled position. A compression
A coil spring 35 surrounds each washer 34 with its upper end bearing against the plate 31 while the lower end of the spring rests upon the inner face of the bottom plate 21. It will thus be seen that the button and its respective stop will be yieldingly urged upwardly through its respective opening 26 in the plate 20. It is to be understood that the plate 31 may take various different shapes so that the fingers 32 may be disposed to engage various different strings of the instrument so that when a single button is depressed a number of strings may be depressed into contact with the finger board between the frets. On the other hand each plate 31 may carry only one such extension 32 so that when its respective button is depressed only one string will be depressed. Thus many combinations of strings may be depressed simultaneously according to the design of the device.

In operation it will be understood that the device is placed in position on the instrument as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 and it may be held thereon by any suitable attaching means such as a strap 36 which may be connected to the device in any suitable manner, in such a position as to embrace the neck 12 of the instrument. Upon depressing one of the buttons 29 its respective stop will be moved downwardly so as to cause the fingers carried thereby to contact the strings and depress them into contact with the finger board 13 between the frets 14. In this way various chords and combinations may be played and the fingerings of the instrument is materially simplified.

While in the foregoing there has been shown and described the preferred embodiment of this invention it is to be understood that minor changes in the details of construction, combination and arrangement of parts may be resorted to without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as claimed.

What I claim as my invention is:

A string depressor for a stringed musical instrument comprising a hollow rectangular box adapted to be mounted on the finger board of an instrument of the lute type adjacent the head thereof, the wall of the box remote from the instrument having spaced apertures extending therethrough, the wall of the box adjacent the instrument having spaced parallel slots therein which lie perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the box, a stop within the box aligning with each aperture, fingers on the stops extending through the slots, a push-button fixed to each stop and projecting from its respective stop through an aperture in a direction opposite that in which the fingers project and compression coiled springs, each bearing at one end on a stop and at its opposite end on the inner face of the wall of the box adjacent the instrument to hold the fingers out of contact with the strings of the instrument.

HOWARD L. SPRAGUE.

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