Jan. 4, 1966 G. M. SIMMS 3,227,028

CAPO OR PITCH CHANGING DEVICE FOR FIFTH STRING OF A BANJO

Filed Sept. 4, 1964

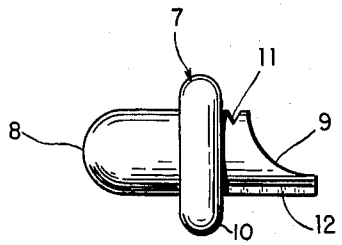


Fig. 1

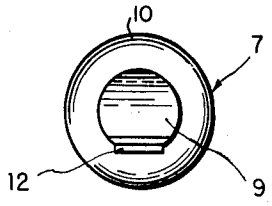


Fig. 2

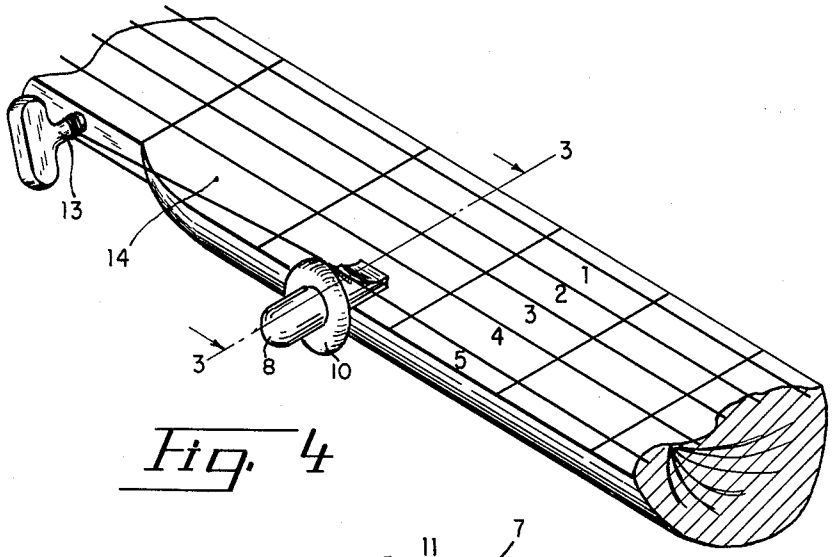


Fig. 4

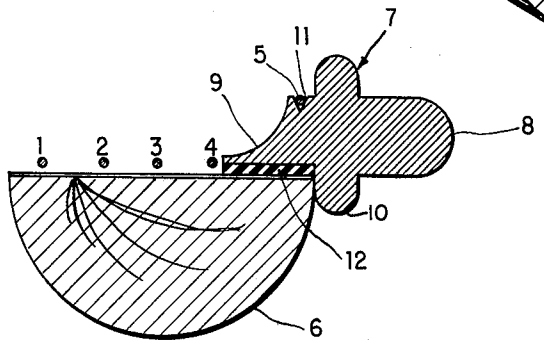


Fig. 3

INVENTOR.
Gordon M. Simms
BY F. S. Tingley
Attorney

United States Patent Office

3,227,028

Patented Jan. 4, 1966

3,227,028

CAPO OR PITCH CHANGING DEVICE FOR FIFTH STRING OF A BANJO

Gordon M. Simms, Kalamazoo, Mich.
(R.D. 1, W. Oakhill Road, Jamestown, N.Y. 14701)

Filed Sept. 4, 1964, Ser. No. 394,515
5 Claims. (Cl. 84—318)

The present invention relates to a capo or pitch changing device for use in combination with a banjo. The device is novel and useful, simple in structure, and can be used without structurally modifying the banjo.

An object of my invention is to provide a device intended for use with the fifth string of a banjo whereby the vibration or effective length of the fifth string may be varied and made to sound in a range above G, where the string is normally tuned.

I have produced a capo or pitch changing device of the fewest possible number of parts. My capo can be readily attached to and removed from the banjo without the aid of nails, screws or adhesive or without changing the structure of the banjo.

Further objects relating to details and economies of my invention will definitely appear from the description to follow.

A structure embodying the features of my invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein: FIG. 1 is a side view of my improved pitch changing device or capo, generally designated by the numeral 7; FIG. 2 is an end view looking at the capo from the right-hand end of FIG. 1; FIG. 4 is a perspective view of my capo applied to a banjo; and FIG. 3 is a sectional view on line 3—3 of FIG. 4.

Referring to the drawings, 6 represents the handle or neck of a conventional banjo having the usual five strings delineated by numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The capo or pitch changing device is designated generally by numeral 7 in the drawings.

It will be noted that capo 7 is formed on one side with a knob handle 8 and on the opposite side with a finger 9. Midway between the knob handle 8 and the finger 9 of the capo there is provided an integrally formed, rounded stop shoulder 10. A groove 11 is formed in the finger 9 as shown in the drawings. The underside of finger 9 is covered with a small pad of plastic, felt, or vinyl material 12 so as not to mar the surface of the banjo when capo is in place. Preferably the capo 7 is formed of cast or turned metal.

It will be noted that the banjo fifth string designated by numeral 5 is shorter than strings 1, 2, 3, 4 and is held in place over the fretboard by screw-peg or nut 13 as shown.

The capo 7 is very readily applied to the banjo by first placing the tapered outer edge of finger 9 between string 5 and the fretboard 14, then pushing the capo onto the banjo neck, whereupon string 5 will slip into groove 11 on the capo finger 9. String 5 will be under tension sufficient to hold the capo in the desired position at the corner of the banjo neck with finger 9 of the capo overlying and bearing on the fretboard 14 and the stop shoulder 10 abutting and bearing against the side of the banjo neck as shown. The capo may be positioned on the banjo anywhere along the banjo neck up to the twelfth fret.

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

1. A device for use in changing the pitch of a single string of a stringed instrument having a fretboard, comprising a body member with a knob handle at one end and a finger-like extension on the opposite end, the extension being provided with a groove to receive a single string, the device being removably wedged in position between the fretboard and the string by pressure of the string in the groove, whereby the string is elevated to a position above the fretboard to vary the pitch thereof.

2. A device for use in changing the pitch of the fifth string of a banjo comprising a body having a knob handle at one end, a finger at the opposite end, a stop shoulder intermediate the ends, the finger being tapered for a portion of its length from its end upwardly toward the stop shoulder and the finger having a groove formed between the tapered portion and the stop shoulder for receiving the fifth string whereby the string is elevated above the fretboard and is directed by the taper into the groove when the finger is forced in the space between the fifth string and the fretboard.

3. A device as in claim 2, wherein the tapered finger has a pad fixed to its lower surface for contact with the fretboard.

4. A device as in claim 3 wherein the stop shoulder is spaced laterally from the groove a distance equal to the distance between the edge of the banjo neck and the fifth string and the shoulder abuts the neck edge to position the string in the groove in proper alignment.

5. A capo device for changing the pitch of the fifth string of a banjo, the device being manually applied at one side of the banjo neck and provided with a groove into which the string fits when the device is laterally inserted between the fretboard and the string at any selected point longitudinally of the string.

References Cited by the Examiner

UNITED STATES PATENTS

279,173	6/1883	McCord	84—269
370,172	9/1887	Wood	84—318
394,530	12/1888	Wood	84—314
416,057	11/1889	Gill et al.	84—318

LEO SMILOW, *Primary Examiner.*