

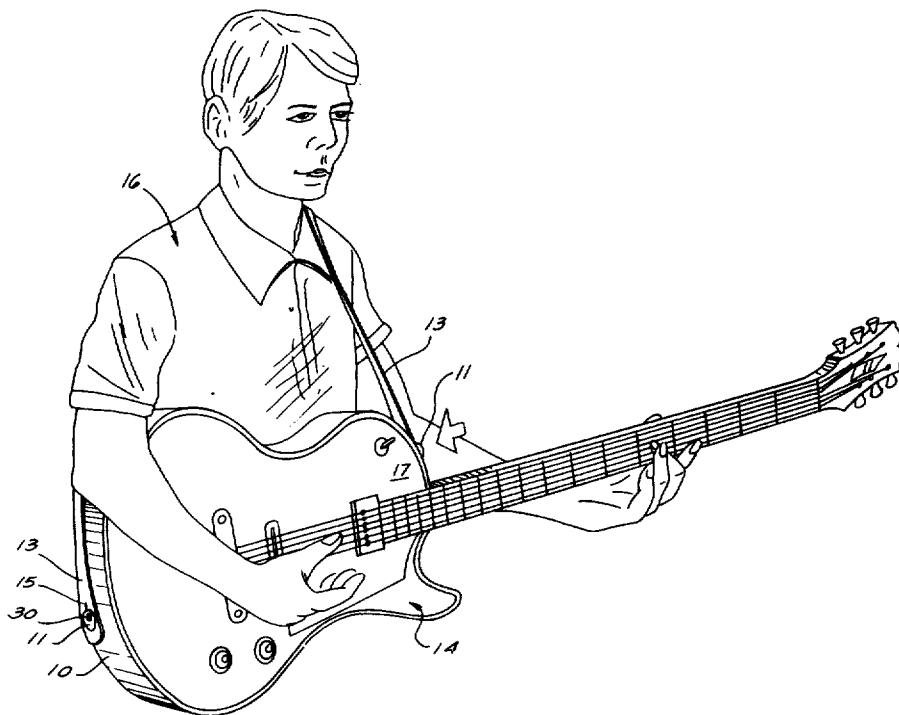
[54] **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT STRAP
RETAINING DEVICE**[76] **Inventor:** Bobby D. Brooks, 927 Harding St.,
Lafayette, La. 70501[22] **Filed:** Jan. 8, 1974[21] **Appl. No.:** 431,715[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... 84/327; 24/3 B; 24/105;
24/114.5; 24/265 R; 84/453; 224/5 S[51] **Int. Cl.**..... G10d 3/00; G10g 5/00[58] **Field of Search**..... 84/267-269,
84/274, 280, 284, 285, 327, 453; 224/5 S;
248/441, 443; 24/3 B, 68 AS, 105, 114.5,
265 R[56] **References Cited****UNITED STATES PATENTS**

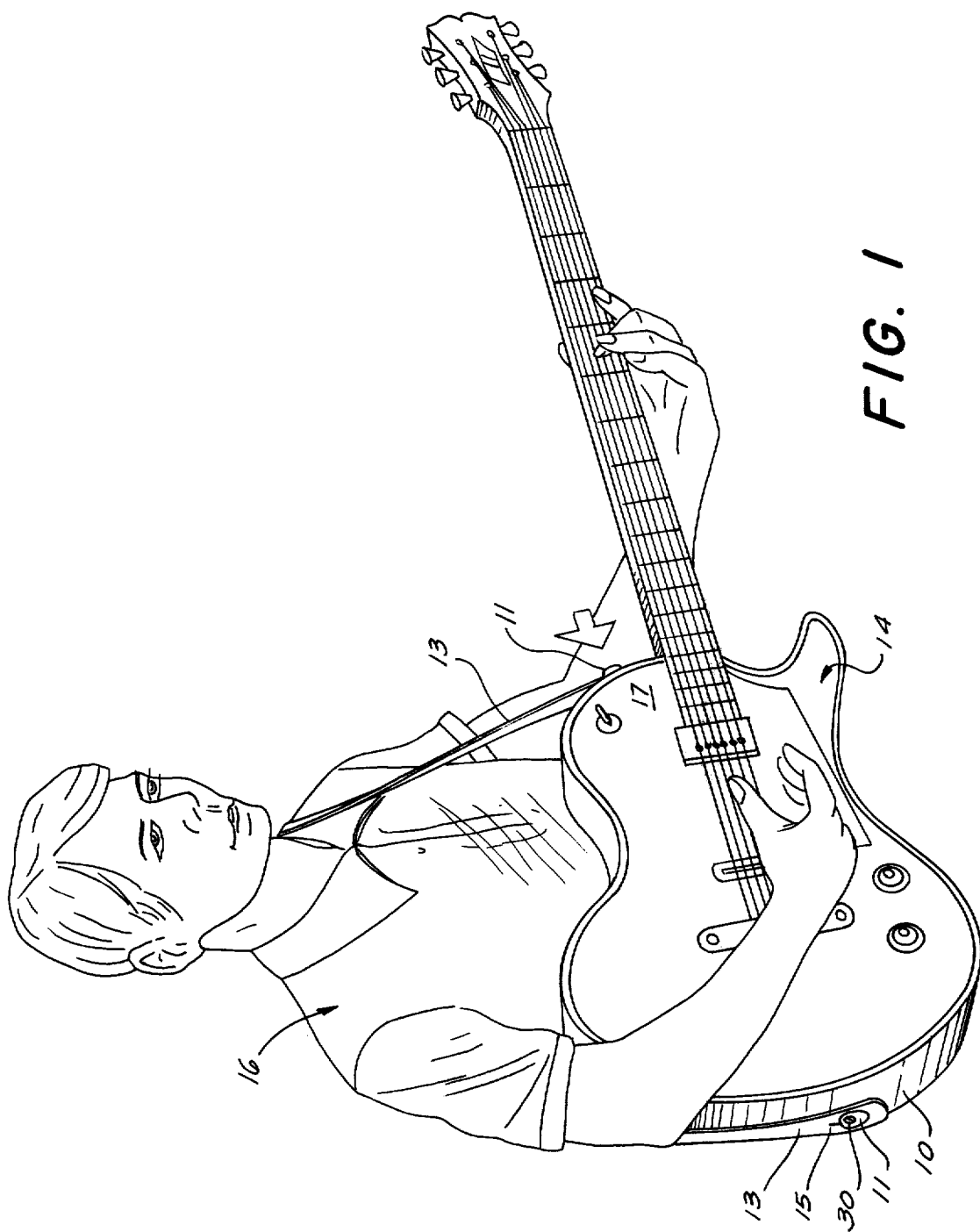
470,986	3/1892	Clement.....	84/327 X
2,061,464	11/1936	Heimers.....	84/280
2,643,039	6/1953	Sottile.....	84/267 X
3,138,050	6/1964	Tevis.....	84/280 X
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3,372,614	3/1968	Galster.....	84/280
3,688,012	8/1972	Vettel.....	84/327

Primary Examiner—Stephen J. Tomsky*Assistant Examiner*—Stanley J. Witkowski*Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Pugh & Laiche[57] **ABSTRACT**

An improved musical instrument strap attaching, hold-

ing, and supporting device and method for supporting, for example, guitars by slitted straps utilizing uniquely shaped and designed retaining devices. The novel attaching, holding and supporting device is usually located at the bottom end of the guitar body for all types of guitars and also near the neck of the guitar for electric guitars (FIG. 1). The device includes an attachment wedge, usually a screw for electric guitars or wooden wedge for either "F hole" or folk or classic guitars, and a central stem portion which is cylindrical in shape which mates with the attachment wedge on one end and a strap retaining head on the other end. The strap retaining head is elongated at one end, forming a generally isosceles triangular shape with curved corners, similar to that of a plectrum, and has a hemispherical projection on its inner side facing the guitar body the combination being used to support the body of the guitar by a shoulder strap or sling placed between the guitar body and the strap retainer and connected by friction and weight to the shoulder of the person playing the guitar and, in the case of "F Hole" or folk or classic guitars, to the neck of the guitar by other means such as a string (FIG. 2). The elongated tip of the retaining head is initially inserted into the slit of the strap in a lateral direction and then rotated 90°. The longest dimension of the retainer head is preferably greater than the length of the slit, and the distance between the tip of the hemispherical projection and the bottom of the central stem is preferably less than the thickness of the strap.

12 Claims, 10 Drawing Figures



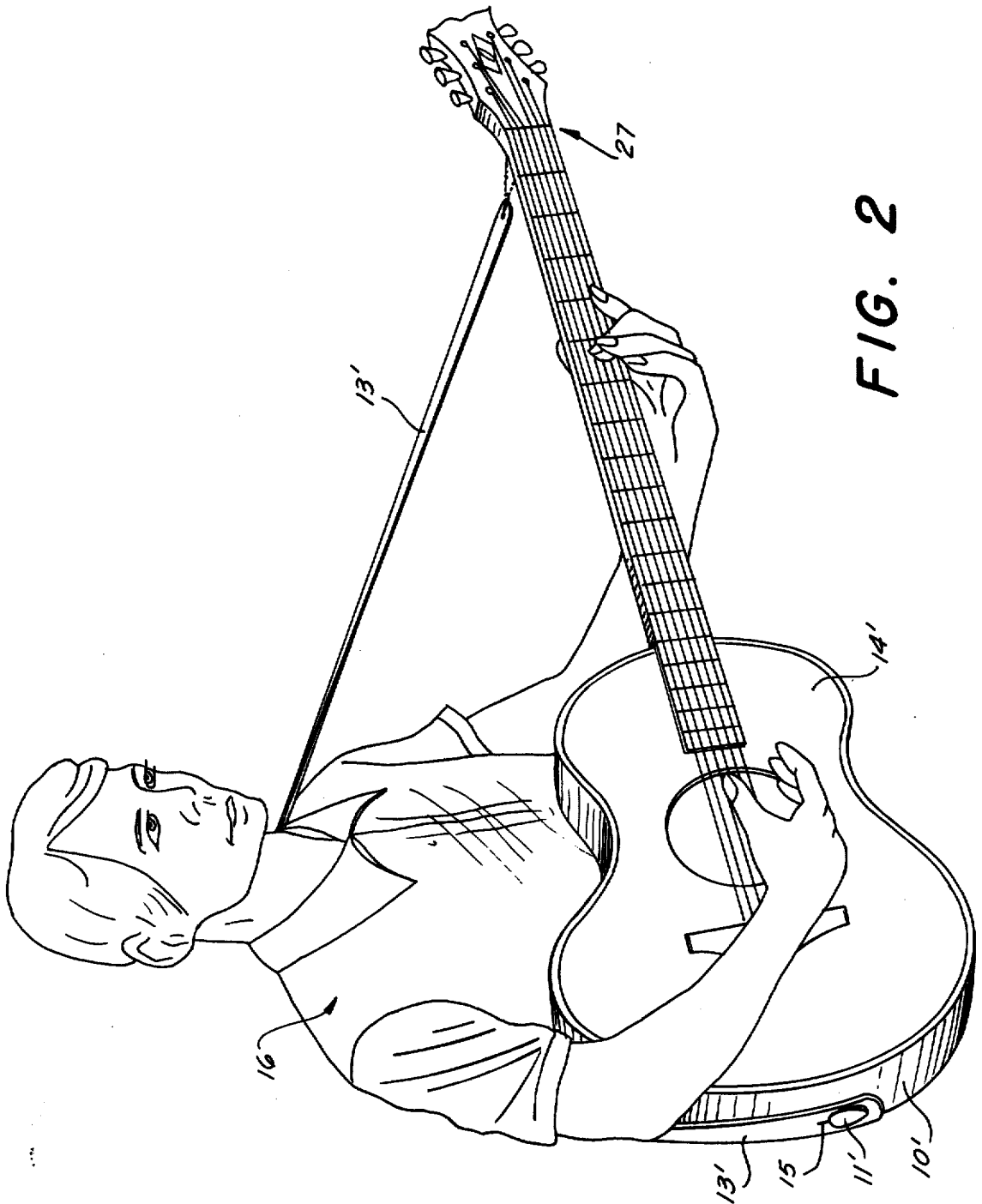


FIG. 2

PRIOR ART
FIG. 3A

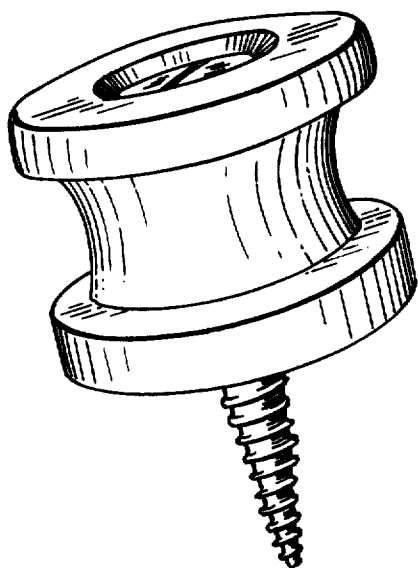


FIG. 3

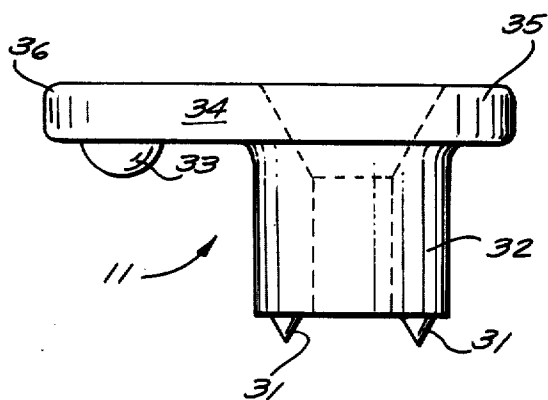
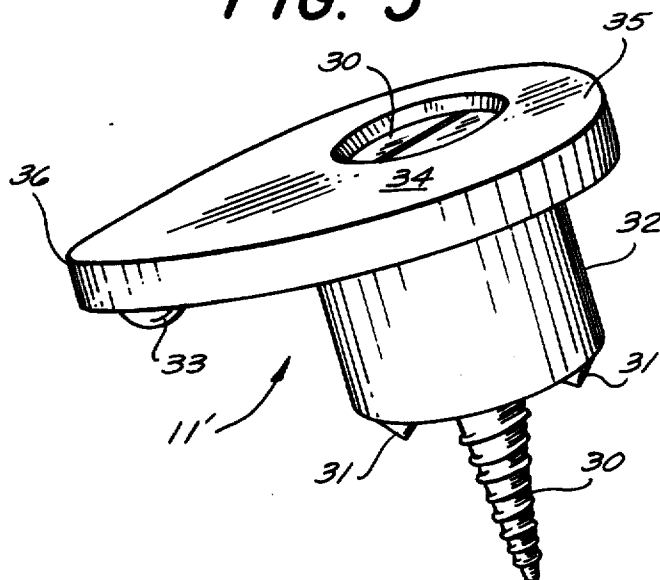


FIG. 4

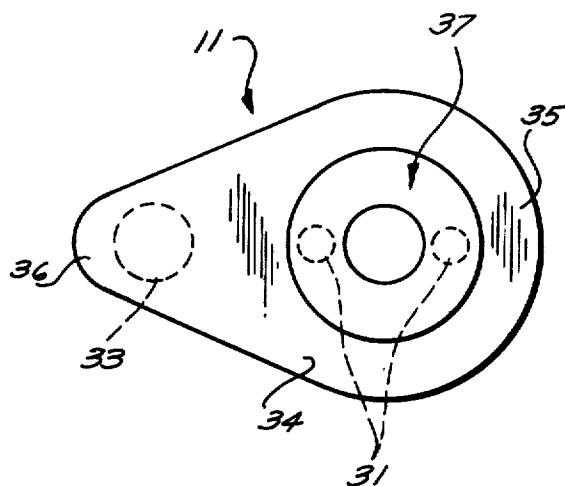


FIG. 5

PRIOR ART
FIG. 6A

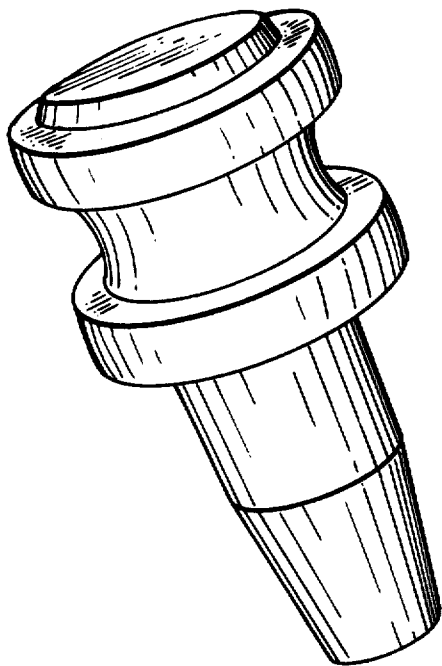


FIG. 6

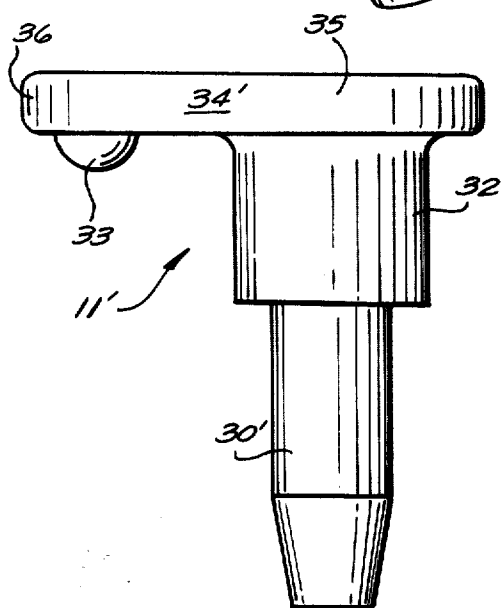
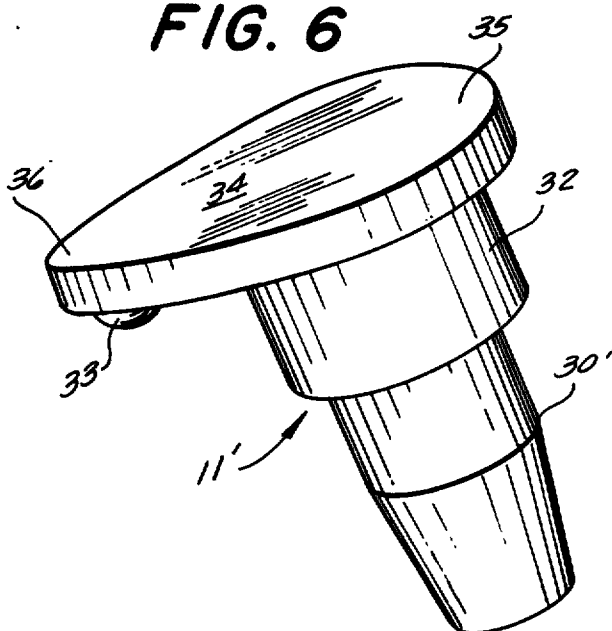


FIG. 7

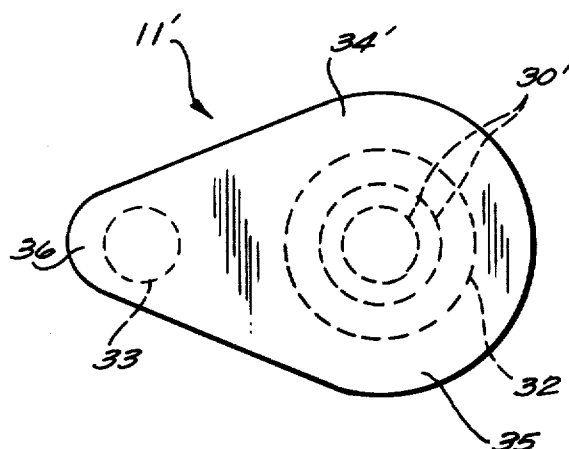


FIG. 8

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT STRAP RETAINING DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a musical instrument strap attaching, holding, and supporting device and method for supporting, for example, guitars, usually by the shoulder of the person playing the instrument through the use of a strap attached to the body and, for certain types of instruments, neck of the instrument. The present invention has been found to be particularly useful in the guitar supporting art, especially as a device for supporting any type of guitar from its two ends, and hence will be discussed with particular reference thereto. However, the present invention is applicable to many other types of instruments as well, not only stringed instruments, as long as a slitted strap and at least one restraining button is used, and the term "guitar" is used herein to include similarly constructed and performing stringed musical instruments such as banjos, mandolins and even zithers.

In the supporting of any type of guitar, a sling or strap is usually attached to the guitar which drapes either over the shoulder or the neck of the player of the guitar. The strap must be capable of staying attached to the player during all acts of playing, including sudden, great physical movements. Thus is necessary to securely fasten the strap to the guitar.

Several types of guitar strap attaching, holding, and supporting devices have been known and used before in the prior art, and typical examples thereof in the guitar supporting art are straps with hooks at one end that fit over the lower edge of the hole in a folk or classical guitar and wrap around the body and around the player's neck, and guitar straps with slits in one or both ends that fit over a cylindrical round "button" shaped device having a beveled indentation with usually an elliptically shaped surface in the middle where the strap fits (note FIGS. 3A and 6A).

It has become the standard practice in the prior art to use the slitted strap and utilize rounded retaining buttons on the guitar body which mate with longitudinal slits in the strap. Note for example, U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,643,039; 3,302,507; 3,323,698; and 3,512,443. However, particularly after extended use of a strap, the slits became worn and out-of-shape, and the strap would often slip out from the retaining buttons, causing the guitar to become loose and fall from the grip of the player. This especially occurred during sudden or violent movements of the guitar player.

In contrast to the prior art having the problem of the strap staying attached to the body of the guitar while the player of the guitar executes sudden, great physical movements during the playing of the guitar in performances and practice, the present invention utilizes a very simple but highly effective design to secure the strap firmly to the guitar body which eliminates the problem. The present invention, while utilizing a strap having at least one slit therein, utilizes a strap retainer that prevents the strap from slipping off from the guitar body. The retaining device of the present invention supports the guitar from the strap with one dimension of the head of the strap retainer of such a large size that it is not physically possible for the slit in the guitar to slip over that side of the head and pull loose.

The present invention utilizes a "plectrum" shaped strap retainer, that is, one having a wide semicircular

top at one end and a point at the other, forming a generally curved, triangular configuration similar to that of a plectrum. The elongated or longest dimension of the plectrum shaped top or head preferably is greater than the length of the slit and the width of the device is substantially greater than the width of the slit. Thus, when the longest dimension of the device is placed in line with the slit during use, the strap cannot, even after extended use, slip over the head of the device. Additionally the device also includes a hemispherically shaped projection at the narrow, bottom part or tip of the plectrum, said hemispherically shaped projection being on the "inside" side of the plectrum, i.e. that side of the plectrum facing the guitar body. In use, the hemispherically shaped projection firmly engages the strap by physical contact, compressing the strap and keeping the strap pressed firmly against the guitar body to prevent or at least minimize physical slipping of the device in the slit of the strap during movement of the guitar.

It is noted that, because the plectrum shaped head of the device and the guitar body combine to hold the strap in place, the central stem portion between the guitar body and the plectrum shaped head of the device upon which the end of the split of the strap rests does not require the beveled, elliptically shaped surface with an indentation in the center of the spacer of the prior art but rather can be merely cylindrical in shape.

Although other types of suspension or supporting systems other than a strap support have been suggested in the prior art, none have been generally as effective or desirable as the strap support approach. Note, for example, the pants top insertion system of U.S. Pat. No. 3,371,570; the fold out leg support for a guitar when sitting down of U.S. Pat. No. 1,945,162; the special encompassing bracket of U.S. Pat. No. 2,510,799; and the upright stands of U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,547,924 and 2,559,200. Additionally, there have been other attempts at improving the strap support approach, but these attempts have not been completely effective in eliminating undesired slipping of the strap from the prior art retaining buttons or have other disadvantages associated with them as compared to the present invention. Note for example U.S. Pat. No. 3,688,012 which uses a metal reinforcing member on the strap at the button holes or slits to prevent accidental disengagement; U.S. Pat. No. 3,037,416 which uses a belt adapter with a strap; and U.S. Pat. No. 3,102,446 which uses a waist strap.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a further understanding of the nature and objects of the present invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like parts are given like references numerals and wherein:

FIG. 1 and FIG. 2 are frontal perspective views of a guitar player using the preferred embodiments of the guitar strap attaching, holding, and supporting device of the present invention for electric or acoustic guitars and for "F Hole", classic or folk guitars, respectively, showing said device in use.

FIG. 3 is a side, perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the guitar strap attaching, holding, and supporting device of the present invention for electric guitars, while FIG. 3A is a similar view of a typical prior art retaining button.

FIGS. 4 and 5 are side and top views, respectively, of the embodiment of FIG. 3.

FIG. 6 is a side, perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the guitar strap attaching, holding, and supporting device of the present invention for "F Hole", classical, or folk guitars, while FIG. 6A is a similar view of a typical prior art retaining button.

FIGS. 7 and 8 are side and top views, respectively, of the embodiment of FIG. 6.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

INTRODUCTION

The guitar strap attaching, holding, and supporting device of the present invention can be used to support for example guitars by standard guitar straps wherein it is important that the strap stay attached to the guitar during use, particularly while the player of the guitar executes sudden, great physical movements during the playing of the guitar in performances and practice. A particularly important area of application of the present invention is in the supporting of electric, folk, and classical guitars, and therefore the preferred embodiments will be described with respect to such applications. In these applications, the support of the guitar is accomplished through the use of one or two of the strap retaining devices of the present invention, depending on the type of guitar involved.

In the case of an electrical or acoustic type guitar (note FIG. 1), two retaining devices of the present invention (the embodiment of FIGS. 3 - 5) are used. In the case of a folk or classical type guitar (note FIG. 2), only one retaining device (the embodiment of FIGS. 6 - 8) of the present invention is used.

The embodiment 11 (note FIGS. 3 - 5) of the device of the present invention for the electrical or acoustic guitars is substantially identical to the embodiment 11' (note FIGS. 6 - 8) for folk or classic guitars, and the same reference numerals are used for identical parts and similar numerals are used for analogous parts.

STRUCTURE AND METHOD OF USE

Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, there is shown the attaching, holding, and supporting devices 11, 11' of the present invention as they are used to support electric or acoustic type or folk or classic type guitars, respectively. A screw or cylindrical extension 30, 30' (note FIGS. 3 and 6), respectively, extends into the body 14, 14' of the guitar at its bottom 10, 10' and is secured in the bottom 10, 10' of the body either mechanically by the screw 30 and projecting spikes 31 (note FIG. 3) for electric guitars or chemically by glue or other suitable means applied to a hole in the bottom of the guitar body 10' and to the cylindrical extension 30' for folk or classical guitars. An additional device 11 with a screw extension 30 is also mechanically connected to the guitar body 14 at the top 17 of the body for electric guitars. The screw or cylindrical extensions 30, 30' is attached by glue, molding or other suitable means to a cylindrical strap holder 32.

The guitar strap 13, 13' is mechanically connected to the cylindrical strap holder 32 by a slit 15 in the strap 13, 13' and the bottom edge of said slit 15 is manually pulled against the cylindrical strap holder 32 and held there by the weight of the guitar body 14, 14'. The strap 13, 13' extends over the shoulder of the player 16 from the bottom 10, 10' of the guitar body 14, 14' to

the top 17 of the guitar body 14 for electric guitars or the head of the guitar just above the nut 27 for folk or classical guitars.

The cylindrical strap holder or stem 32 is attached by glue, molding or other suitable means to the plectrum shaped top 34, 34' (note FIGS. 3-8) of the attaching, holding and supporting devices 11, 11'. A hemispherically shaped projection 33 is attached to the under or inner side of said plectrum shaped top 34, 34' that is, on the side facing the guitar body 10, by glue, molding or other suitable means. The distance between the tip of the projection 33 and the bottom of the stem 32 is preferably less than the thickness of the strap 13, 13'. This projection 33 is designed to bear with force vectors of friction and compression against the surface of the strap 13, 13'.

The top 34, 34' is plectrum shaped, that is, it has a generally curved, isosceles triangular shape, going from a semicircular portion 35 to a point or tip 36 which with the circular portion 35 forms its longest dimension. This dimension is preferably greater than the length of the slit 15.

All components or parts of the attaching, holding, and supporting devices 11, 11' may be made of wood, plastic, metal or a combination thereof, or of other suitable material.

In summary, then, in the present invention, the components of FIG. 3 for electric guitars or FIG. 6 for classic or folk guitars are assembled before any strap attachment begins. Two are used for electric guitars and one for folk or classic guitars. The devices 11, 11' are attached to the guitar body and firmly engaged by mechanical screwing in the instance of electric guitars and by chemical glueing or other suitable means to a hole in the body of folk or classic guitars, respectively. The guitar strap with suitable slit 15 therein is then placed over the device 11, 11' at the bottom of the guitar body, and the tip 36 of the plectrum 34, 34' inserted laterally into the slit 15. The strap 13 is then pulled over the rear 35 of the plectrum and then rotated 90° so that the longest dimension of the device 11, 11' is in line with the slit 15. The strap 13 is manually pulled up so that the bottom of the slit 15 of the strap 13 firmly engages the middle cylindrical body 32 of the device 11, 11' and is held in place securely by the hemispherical projection 33 at the narrow part 36 of the plectrum shaped top 34, 34' of the device 11, 11'.

After the strap 13 is firmly engaged to the bottom of the body of the guitar, it can then be engaged to the top of the body of the guitar, in the case of electric guitars (FIG. 1) in the same manner as the bottom of the body of the guitar by the attaching, holding, and supporting device 11 as herein before described, or by other suitable means such as attaching the strap to a string and looping the string around the head of the guitar just above the nut in the case of folk or classical guitars (FIG. 2). The strap length can then be adjusted to suit the needs of the individual player.

When the strap 13, 13' is attached around the cylinder 32 by slipping the strap 13, 13' having the slit 15 at its end over the plectrum 11, 11' and securing it against the cylinder 32 by manually pulling it upward until its lower edge is in direct contact with the cylinder 32 and the hemispherical projection 33, and the strap is used to support the weight of the guitar, the vertical force vector of the guitar weight is transmitted from the body of the guitar by wedge connection 30, 30' to the

5

cylinder 32 and thence to the guitar strap 13 and the player 16. Any horizontal force applied to the strap 13 is transmitted by the plectrum 11, 11' to the guitar body 14, 14' or is applied directly to the guitar body 14, 14'.

Although the devices described in detail supra have been found to be most satisfactory and preferred, many variations in their structure or use are, of course, possible. For example, the device of the present invention can be installed "upside down" for left handed guitars. Also, it can be installed at a 90° rotation for Hawaiian type guitars. Moreover the strap contacting projection on the plectrum shaped top could be elliptical or "tear" shaped or flat instead of hemispherical with a roughened rather than a smooth surface.

The above are, of course, merely exemplary of the many possible changes or variations.

Because many varying and different embodiments may be made within the scope of the inventive concept herein taught, and because many modifications may be made in the embodiments herein detailed in accordance with the descriptive requirements of the law, it is to be understood that the details herein are to be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

What is claimed as invention is:

1. A musical instrument strap attaching, holding, and supporting device for musical instruments, wherein the instrument is to be supported by a slitted strap connected at at least one place on the musical instrument, at least one of any such connections to said musical instrument being by the musical instrument strap attaching, holding, and supporting device of the present invention being inserted within the slit in the strap, said strap usually being held by friction to the shoulder or neck or other part of the player of the musical instrument, comprising the following interconnected mechanical elements:

attachment means defining a contacting surface for mating with and contacting the exterior surface of the musical instrument for attaching the device to the instrument;

a central stem portion; and

retaining means for normally retaining the strap on the device when said central portion is placed within the slit in the strap; said central portion being located between said retaining means and

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said attachment means; said retaining means defining a retaining surface at least generally parallel to said contacting surface, the defined retaining surface being elongated in one lateral dimension and at least generally defining a triangular configuration, forming an elongated, projecting tip.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein there is further included projection means on said retaining means for contacting the surface of the strap when said central portion is placed within the slit in the strap; said projecting means projecting down inwardly from the inner surface of said retaining means.

3. The device of claim 2 wherein said triangular configuration is an isosceles one, said projecting means being located at the apex between the equal sides beneath said elongated tip.

4. The device of claim 2 wherein said projecting means is hemispheric in shape.

5. The device of claim 1 wherein the three corners of said triangular configuration are curved and are formed by a semicircular portion and an adjacent rounded point or tip.

6. The device of claim 1 wherein the length of the elongated dimension of said retaining means is greater than the length of the slit in the strap.

7. The device of claim 1 wherein said musical instrument is a guitar.

8. The device of claim 7 wherein two such devices are used and the places of connection for the attaching, holding, and supporting devices are at the top and bottom of the body of the guitar, and the guitar is an electric or acoustic type guitar.

9. The device of claim 7 wherein the place of connection is at the bottom of the body of the guitar, and the guitar is a folk or classical type guitar.

10. The device of claim 1 wherein said central portion is cylindrically shaped.

11. The device of claim 1 wherein said attachment means includes at least two spike projections projecting from the surface of the device which is to be placed in face-to-face contact with the musical instrument.

12. The device of claim 2 wherein the distance from the tip of said projection means to the bottom of said central stem portion is less than the thickness of the strap.

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