

Cigar Box Uke

By Charles A. King

WHAT "Handy Boy" with an ear for tinkling sounds has not tried to make something of this sort? It was not a success in every case, but any one who can use the simple tools may safely venture to make this instrument.

Secure a good cigar box of about the dimensions given; moisten the paper around the corners and tear and scrape off as much as possible, sandpapering the rest after the box has dried. Nail the corners of the sides, ends and bottom, and glue corner blocks as at 2, leaving the top until later. Make a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch neck 3 the width of the inside of the box and 8 inches long; cut grooves to receive the end of the box as shown and cut a piece out of the end as at A1 to fit into these grooves. Fit the pieces but do not fasten at this time. Make the finger-board and head pieces $\frac{3}{4}$ inches x $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches x 12 inches. Plane the finger-board at Z and the top side of the head at Y; put the neck in place, hold in exact position and mark the top of it so it will fit the under side of the finger-board when the top of the latter is perfectly straight with the top of the box. Use a straight edge in doing this. Cut exactly to this line and square across and glue the finger-board in its exact position. Shape the neck and finger-board as indicated and round roughly as shown in sections at X. Fit them so the center lines of the finger-board and of the box will coincide and finish the under side of the head and neck as shown by dotted lines. Place glue blocks around the top of the rim of the box as at 4 so the top will rest upon them when it is glued in place.

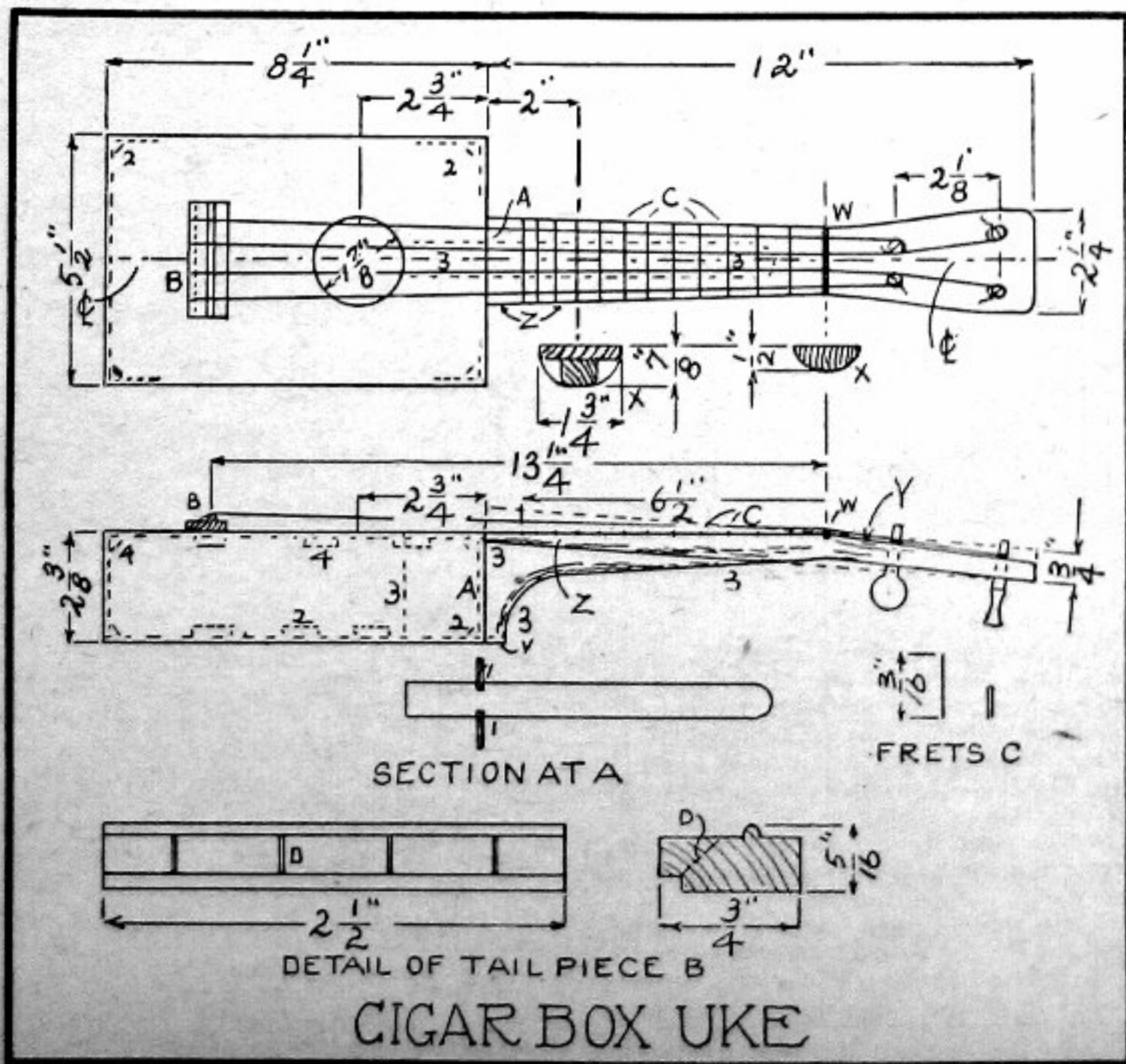
Cut the $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch hole as shown, make the

tall piece B of hard wood and glue it in place. The next day glue the neck and finger-board in place, being sure that the center lines are in true relation.

When the glue has thoroughly hardened sandpaper the body and finish the neck and finger-board with file and sandpaper. Bore the four $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch peg holes as shown, using a round file or reamer to taper the hole so it will be somewhat larger on the bottom side. Make four pegs about 2 inches long with tapered shanks to fit these holes. A saw cut in the end of each peg will hold the string. Glue a small piece at V to finish the bottom of the neck.

Make the nut W of hard wood, cut the groove to receive it and glue it in place. Get out twelve frets C of tin or copper and bend them over as shown. This may be made of wider metal and cut to 3-32 inches width after bending. To locate the frets, string up the instruments and try with a piano or other instrument of fixed tone. Move a piece of wire back and forth until the correct pitch is attained. The octave fret of the open string should be about $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the nut W, but this must be proved by trial. Find the octave first, then the 3rd, 5th and 7th, the 2nd, 4th and 6th and the half tones last. Make fine saw cuts $\frac{1}{16}$ inch deep where the frets are to be placed and we are ready for finishing.

Stain if desired and give two coats of hard varnish. When thoroughly dry, clean out the cuts for the frets and set them in varnish, carefully removing any surplus. The strings may be old violin strings or different sizes of wire though softer tones may be made with stout linen or silk thread.



CIGAR BOX UKE