

Forms 7 and 8

AUSTRALIAPatents Act 1952DECLARATION IN SUPPORT OF A CONVENTION OR NON-CONVENTION
APPLICATION FOR A PATENT OR PATENT OF ADDITIONName(s) of
Applicant(s)In support of the application made by NESTE OY

Title

for a patent for an invention entitled STORAGE BATTERYName(s) and
address(es)
of person(s)
making
declarationI/We, Tapani Alho of Keilaniemi 02150 ESPOO Finland

do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:-

1. I am/we are the applicant(s) for the patent, or am/are authorised by the abovementioned applicant to make this declaration on its behalf.
2. The basic application(s) as defined by Section 141 of the Act was/were made in the following country or countries on the following date(s) by the following applicant(s) namely:-

Country, filing date and name of Applicant(s) for the or each basic application	in <u>Finland</u>	on <u>December 19,</u>	<u>19 85</u>
	by <u>NESTE OY</u>		
	in _____	on _____	<u>19</u> _____
	by _____		

3. The said basic application(s) was/were the first application(s) made in a Convention country in respect of the invention the subject of the application.
4. The actual inventor(s) of the said invention is/are

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5. The facts upon which the applicant(s) is/are entitled to make this application are as follows:-
the applicant is the assignee of the actual inventors

DECLARED at Espoo this 13th day of July 1987Tapani AlhoTapani Alho
Group Manager

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(54) Title
STORAGE BATTERY

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(56) Prior Art Documents
US 4331747
US 2968686
GB 2158285

(57) Claim

1. A storage battery, comprising at least two cells enclosed in a housing, each cell containing electrolyte and monopolar and bipolar plates coated with positive and/or negative active mass and separated by means of separator plates, and electrically conductive connectors connecting the plates and/or cells, characterized in that a wall separating or sealing off each cell from adjacent cells and from the housing has been formed by filling spaces between and/or around the plates with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance which has been cured directly in situ for forming tightly sealing and/or insulating walls.

7. Storage battery according to claim 1, characterized in that the bipolar plates consist of tightly sealing, electrically conductive films on one side of which has been coated positive active mass and on the other side negative

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active mass, and that the storage battery is composed of monopolar plates, separator plates and said bipolar plates stacked upon each other in a housing so that outermost are the monopolar plates and between them the bipolar plates, each one cell being formed of a negative monopolar plate or the negative half of a bipolar plate, the positive half of a bipolar plate or the positive monopolar plate, and of a separator plate between them, and that the wall separating the plates from each other and/or from the walls of the housing has been formed by filling the spaces between the plates and the storage battery housing with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance, which has thereafter been cured in situ to form an insulating and/or sealing layer.

PCT

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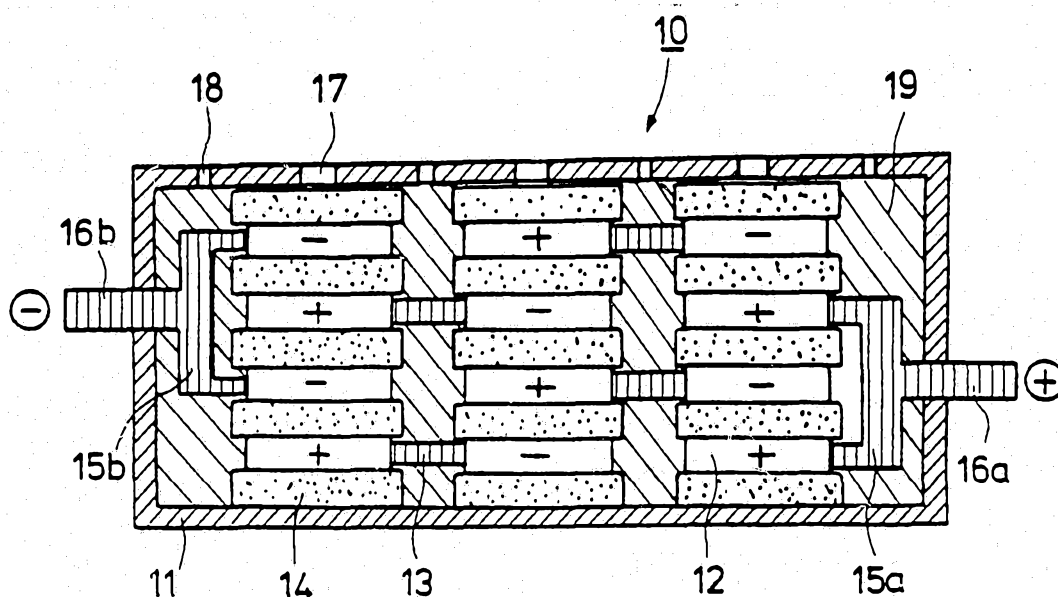
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15 JUL 1987
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(54) Title: STORAGE BATTERY



(57) Abstract

Storage battery (10), comprising one or several cells enclosed in a housing (11), each cell containing electrolyte and monopolar and bipolar plates (12, 13) coated with positive and/or negative active mass and separated by means of separator plates (14), and requisite electrically conductive connectors connecting the plates and/or cells. The wall separating or sealing off each cell from adjacent cells and/or from the housing (11) has been formed by filling the spaces around and/or in the interstices of the plate stacks with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance (19) which has been cured directly in situ for forming tightly sealing and/or insulating walls.

1 Storage battery

5 The present invention concerns a storage battery comprising one or several cells enclosed in a housing, each cell containing electrolyte and, monopolar or bipolar plates coated with positive and/or negative active mass and separated by separator plates, and requisite electrical connectors connecting with each other the cells
10 and/or plates.

Traditional lead storage batteries usually consist of plates enclosed in a cell and immersed in an electrolyte which have a current-carrying conductor part, a plate frame made of lead or of
15 a lead alloy, and active mass, which usually has been pasted onto the plate frames. The plate frames have lugs on their margins by which they are soldered to current busbars of lead, these in their turn being welded to each other through the cell partitions. When the storage battery is being discharged with high current, the
20 resistance of the plate frames limits the operation of the storage battery in the way that only the active mass in the vicinity of the plate lugs will be efficiently utilized. In order to ensure adequate current passage, an unnecessarily high amount of lead has to be provided on the plate frames, and this increases the weight
25 of the storage battery. Furthermore, in conventional storage batteries battery boxes are used in which the partitions between cells are prefabricated. Not very many current leads can in practice be carried through the partitions to carry current from one cell to the other. The deep battery box with its partitions is a plastic
30 component which is in itself expensive and difficult to manufacture.

Storage battery designs deviating from what is conventional are also known in the art, in which part of the electrodes have been made bipolar. The positive and negative active masses of mutually
35 adjacent cells have been pasted on one and the same plate frame, which has in connection with die casting been fixed at its centre

in a plastic frame. These plastic frames have been welded to each other with ultrasonics so that the cell partitions, and at the same time the entire storage battery, are sealed tight. The advantage of a storage battery of this type is low

5 internal resistance and uniform use of the active material, a consequence of the contact from one cell to the other which is divided over the whole of the partition. The drawback is an exceedingly high number of welds that have to be produced in a welding process, whereby the manufacturing costs will be high.

10 So-called recombination storage batteries are also known in the art (see e.g. EP 0107 976), in which the plates carrying positive and negative active mass in adjacent cells have been connected with each other by means of bridging pieces. Said
15 bridging pieces may in fact consist of lands connecting plate parts belonging to adjacent cells. In this storage battery type there are no tightly sealed partitions at all between the plate stacks constituting adjacent cells, there is merely an air gap. This structure is only possible in the case that the electrolyte has been absorbed into the separator plates and
20 active masses. The drawbacks include current leakage on the surface of the leads along the electrolyte film; this drawback is the greater the broader the connecting pieces between plates. The current distribution is also still partially non-uniform because all current must pass through said lands.

25 The object of the invention is a storage battery in which the drawbacks associated with the storage batteries described above have been avoided and a number of significant advantages have been gained which would not be possible using structures conforming to known technology.

30 The invention provides a storage battery, comprising at least two cells enclosed in a housing, each cell containing electrolyte and monopolar and bipolar plates coated with



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positive and/or negative active mass and separated by means of separator plates, and electrically conductive connectors connecting the plates and/or cells, characterized in that a wall separating or sealing off each cell from adjacent cells and from the housing has been formed by filling spaces between and/or around the plates with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance which has been cured directly in situ for forming tightly sealing and/or insulating walls.

5



1 ~~by filling the spaces around the plate stacks and/or between them~~
with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable sub-
stance which has been cured directly in situ in order to establish
2 ~~tightly sealed and/or insulating walls.~~

5

Since in the storage battery of the invention the inter-cell par-
titions are only formed after the storage battery has been assembled
and the plate stacks have been placed in the storage battery hous-
ing, this implies that the optimum number of current leads between
10 plates and/or cells can be provided and they can have optimum
shape. As a consequence, in the storage battery of the invention
low internal resistance is attained, as well as uniform use of
active mass, and less lead is required. Furthermore, in the storage
battery of the invention there are fewer cast and welded joints
15 than in conventional storage batteries, and the design of the
battery housing is simple. Furthermore, the manufacturing of the
storage battery of the invention is easy to automate.

In its general form, the invention comprises a storage battery in
20 which the plate stacks have been separated from each other, or
from the housing, by filling the empty spaces between plate stacks
with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable sub-
stance which has been cured in situ. Tightly sealed partitions
between cells have thus been obtained in a simple manner. A par-
25 ticular advantage is gained in a manufacturing technique of this
kind owing to the circumstance that the wiring between cells can
be as dense as ever required without interfering with or limiting
the forming of partitions. Thus the wiring can be made optimal by
using a great number of slender conductors which have been uniformly
30 distributed in the interval between plates. When flowing, electri-
cally insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance is directed
into the storage battery housing, even slender wiring between the
plates will not be damaged: the wiring remains inside the partitions
that are formed on curing and passes therethrough.

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The substance separating or sealing the cells and which is imper-



1 meable to the electrolyte is advantageously a plastic-based sub-
stance which can be forced in liquid state into the storage battery,
whereat it spreads uniformly and fills the empty spaces between
plates, and becomes cured in situ. Curing may be accomplished in
5 any way known in itself in the art, e.g. with the aid of reactions
based on temperature, on a chemical reaction or on radiation. For
substance which is thus cured may be used any substance which can
be conducted into the storage battery housing in liquid state and
cured in situ to become a wall with adequate sealing and electrical
10 insulating properties. Suitable materials are, among others, poly-
urethane plastics, polyester plastics, and epoxy plastics. In
particular one may with advantage use closed-cell polyurethane
foam plastic which is injected into the housing or into a mould
immediately after mixing the components, in which case the foaming
15 causes the plastic to fill the empty spaces.

According to an advantageous embodiment of the invention no pre-
fabricated storage battery housing is needed at all if the pre-
assembled plate stacks have been placed in a mould which is there-
20 after injected full with curable wall material according to the
invention, which then at the same time constitutes the storage
battery housing.

When the sealing and insulating partitions have been formed in a
25 manner conforming to the present invention, the storage battery
may be filled with acid and formed in a manner known in itself in
the art, to become a storage battery ready for use.

Although in this connection the invention is described as applied
30 to a lead battery, it is obvious that the technique of the invention
may also be applied to those storage batteries in which another
material is used for storage battery plate material.

The invention is described in detail, referring to certain advan-
35 tageous embodiments of the invention presented in the figures of
the attached drawings, yet to which the invention is not meant to

1 be exclusively confined.

Fig. 1 presents an advantageous embodiment of the storage battery of the invention, sectioned.

5

Fig. 2a presents an advantageous embodiment of the negative monopolar plate frame used in the storage battery of the invention, in top view.

10 Fig. 2b presents an advantageous embodiment of the bipolar plate frame used in the storage battery of the invention, in top view.

Fig. 2c presents an advantageous embodiment of the positive monopolar plate frame used in the storage battery of the invention, in
15 top view.

Fig. 3 presents another advantageous embodiment of the storage battery of the invention, in vertical section.

20 In the embodiment of Fig. 1, the 6-volt storage battery of the invention in general has been denoted with the reference numeral 10. The storage battery 10 comprises one or several cells enclosed in a housing 11. Each cell contains electrolyte and monopolar plates 12 and bipolar plates 13 coated with positive and/or negative
25 active mass and separated with separator plates 14. The storage battery 10 moreover comprises requisite, electrically conductive connectors connecting the plates 12,13 and/or the cells. According to the basic insight of the invention, the wall separating, or sealing off, each cell from adjacent cells or from the housing 11
30 has been formed by filling the spaces around and between the plate stacks in the housing 11 with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance 19 which has been cured directly in situ to form tightly sealing and/or insulating walls.

35 In Fig. 1, the lugs connecting plates having the same sign are indicated with reference numerals 15a, respectively 15b. The posi-



1 tive terminal of the storage battery carries the reference numeral
16a and the negative terminal, similarly, the numeral 16b. The
reference numeral 18 indicates an injection hole through which
electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance is
5 conducted into the housing 11. Reference numeral 17 indicates the
acid-filling hole through which the storage battery 10 is provided
with acid in a manner known in itself in the art, for producing a
storage battery ready for use.

10 As shown in Fig. 2a, the monopolar plate frame 12 has been provided
with negative active mass 21, as shown in Fig. 2b, the bipolar
plate frame 13 has been provided with positive active mass 20 and
negative active mass 21, the intermediate part 22 being unfilled,
and as shown in Fig. 2c, the monopolar plate frame 12 has been
15 provided with positive active mass 20.

The electrically conductive bipolar plate 13 or bipolar plate
lattice consists of a reticular structure containing electrically
conductive material and of which one end 20 has been coated with
20 positive and the other end 21 with negative active mass, and on
which the intermediate part 22 is uncoated. A reticular structure
of this kind is composed of an electrically non-conductive sup-
porting structure to which have been joined electrically conductive
wires, or an electrically conductive reticular structure.

25 According to an advantageous embodiment of the invention, the
storage battery of Fig. 1 consists of monopolar and bipolar plates
12, 13 and separator plates 14 stacked upon each other, in such way
that in the extreme outside cells every second plate is monopolar
30 12 and every second is the end with opposite sign of a bipolar
plate 13. At the points between cells, the uncoated parts 22 of
the bipolar plates 13 are in register and constitute current con-
ductors passing through the insulating and/or sealing partition
that is formed when the electrically insulating and electrolyte-
35 impermeable substance 19 is cured.

1 In Fig. 3 is depicted the design principle of a 12-volt storage
battery. The bipolar elements 32 consist of an electrically con-
ductive plate 33 which is coated on one side with positive active
mass 34 and on the other side with negative active mass 35. Between
5 the bipolar elements 32 are placed separator plates 36 which separ-
ate the active masses of opposite signs on the surfaces of adjacent
plates 33.

The structure of the separator plates 36 is porous, and they contain
10 part of the electrolyte acid which is required for operation of
the storage battery 30. Part of the acid is of course contained in
the active masses 34 and 35.

On the ends of the bipolar element stacks are provided end plates
15 37 and 38 which have been coated with active mass on one side
only. To the end plates 37 and 38 have been attached leads or
busbars 39 for taking off electric current.

The bipolar element stack has been placed in an enclosed, gas-
20 tight housing 31, which is provided with at least one pressure
relief valve 40, which prevents damage to the housing 31 of the
storage battery 30 from gas generation due to excessively violent
charging or discharging.

25 In an advantageous embodiment of the invention, in the storage
battery of Fig. 3, the bipolar plates 33 consist of tightly sealing,
electrically conductive films on one side of which has been applied
a coat of positive, and on the other side of negative, active mass
34,35. The storage battery is composed of monopolar plates 37,38,
30 separator plates 36 and bipolar plates 33 stacked upon each other
in the housing 31 in such manner that outermost are placed the
monopolar plates 37,37 and between these the requisite number of
bipolar plates 33. Each single cell is constituted by the negative
monopolar plate 37 or the negative half 35 of one bipolar plate
35 33, the positive half 34 of one bipolar plate 33 or the positive
monopolar plate 38, and the separator plate 36 between them. The

1 layer separating the plate stacks from each other and/or from the
wall of the housing 31 and/or sealing them thereagainst has been
formed by filling the free spaces between the plate stacks and the
storage battery housing with an electrically insulating and elec-
5 trolyte-impermeable substance 41, whereafter this substance has
been cured in situ to form an insulating and/or sealing layer. In
this connection an injection hole similar to the injection hole 18
in Fig. 1 is formed in the housing 31.

10 In the storage battery of the invention, the negative active ma-
terial 21,35 is advantageously metallic lead, and the positive
active material 20,34 is lead dioxide, and the electrolyte is an
aqueous solution of sulphuric acid. For the insulating and sealing
material 19,41 it is advantageous to use polyurethane or poly-
15 urethane foam, or a plastic-based product which can be made flowing
and injectable by heating and which hardens, or is cured, on cool-
ing. One such insulating and sealing substance 19,41 is polyester
or epoxy which hardens on injection either with the aid of a hard-
ener or of heat treatment.

20 In an advantageous embodiment of the invention, after stacking,
placing in the housing 11,31 and fitting the electric connections
the empty spaces have been filled with insulating and sealing
substance 19,41, whereafter the storage battery 10,30 has been
25 filled with acid and formed in a way known in itself in the art.

In an advantageous embodiment, after stacking, placing in the
housing 11,31 and fitting the electric connections the storage
battery 10,30 has been filled with acid in such manner that all
30 acid can be absorbed in the active materials 20,21;34,35 and in
the separator plates 14,36 without there being so much free elec-
trolyte in the storage battery that it could cause short-circuits
between different cells, whereafter the storage battery has been
formed in a way known in itself in the art and filled of its empty
35 spaces with insulating and sealing material 19,41.

- 1 In conjunction with the cells free cavities have been left when
applying the insulating and sealing substance 19,41 in which extra
electrolyte may be placed.

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THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A storage battery, comprising at least two cells enclosed in a housing, each cell containing electrolyte and monopolar and bipolar plates coated with positive and/or negative active mass and separated by means of separator plates, and electrically conductive connectors connecting the plates and/or cells, characterized in that a wall separating or sealing off each cell from adjacent cells and from the housing has been formed by filling spaces between and/or around the plates with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance which has been cured directly in situ for forming tightly sealing and/or insulating walls.

2. Storage battery according to claim 1, characterized in that said electric connections pass through the spaces around and between said plates, said connections passing after the curing of the electrically insulating and electrolyte impermeable substance within ~~the~~^{or} ~~the~~^{the} through walls.

3. Storage battery according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that said bipolar plates consist of an electrically conductive plate or plate lattice of which one end is coated with positive active mass and the other end with negative active mass and on which an electric connection is constituted by an uncoated area of the plate or plate lattice between the coated areas, said uncoated area being located at the site of a wall produced by curing the electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance, and passing through said wall.

4. Storage battery according to claim 3, characterized in that said electrically conductive bipolar plate or bipolar plate lattice consists of a reticular structure containing electrically conductive material, of which one end is coated with positive active mass and the other end with negative active mass and of which the intermediate part is uncoated.

5. Storage battery according to claim 4, characterized in that the reticular structure consists of an electrically

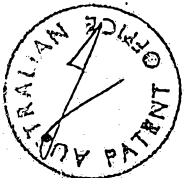


non-conductive supporting structure to which have been joined electrically conductive wires or an electrically conductive reticular structure.

6. Storage battery according to any one of claims 3 to 5, characterized in that the storage battery is composed of said monopolar and bipolar plates and separator plates stacked upon each other in a housing so that in outermost cells every second plate is monopolar and every other plate is the end with opposite sign of a bipolar plate, and that in intermediate cells there are alternately ends with different signs of bipolar plates, and that at the points between cells are the uncoated portions of the bipolar plates, forming current conductors which pass through the wall that has been formed on curing the electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance.

7. Storage battery according to claim 1, characterized in that the bipolar plates consist of tightly sealing, electrically conductive films on one side of which has been coated positive active mass and on the other side negative active mass, and that the storage battery is composed of monopolar plates, separator plates and said bipolar plates stacked upon each other in a housing so that outermost are the monopolar plates and between them the bipolar plates, each one cell being formed of a negative monopolar plate or the negative half of a bipolar plate, the positive half of a bipolar plate or the positive monopolar plate, and of a separator plate between them, and that the wall separating the plates from each other and/or from the walls of the housing has been formed by filling the spaces between the plates and the storage battery housing with an electrically insulating and electrolyte-impermeable substance, which has thereafter been cured in situ to form an insulating and/or sealing layer.

8. Storage battery according to claim 6 or 7, characterized in that the plates have been placed in a mould, whereby the electrically insulating and



electrolyte-impermeable insulating and/or sealing substance cured in the mould at the same time forms the storage battery housing.

9. Storage battery according to any one of claims 1-8, characterized in that the negative active mass is metallic lead and the positive active mass is lead dioxide, and the electrolyte is an aqueous solution of sulphuric acid.

10. The storage battery according to any one of claims 1-9, characterized in that said substance is polyurethane or polyurethane foam.

11. Storage battery according to any one of claims 1-9, characterized in that said substance is a plastic-based product which can be made flowing and injectable by heating and which hardens on cooling.

12. Storage battery according to any one of claims 1-9, characterized in that said substance is polyester or epoxy which becomes cured after injection with the aid either of a hardener or of heat treatment.

13. Storage battery according to any one of claims 1-12, characterized in that after locating said plates in the housing and making the electric connections the spaces have been filled with said substance whereupon the storage battery is filled with acid.

14. Storage battery according to claim 7, characterized in that after locating said plates in the housing and making the electric connections the storage battery has been acid-filled in such manner that all acid may be absorbed in the active masses and in the separator plates without there being so much electrolyte in the storage battery that it could cause short-circuits between different cells, whereafter the spaces have been filled with said substance.

15. Storage battery according to any one of claims 1-14, characterized in that free cavities have been left in the cells when applying said substance, in which extra electrolyte can be placed.

DATED THIS 6th DAY OF September 1989

NESTE OY
By Its Patent Attorneys

GRIFFITH HACK & CO.
Fellows Institute of Patent
Attorneys of Australia



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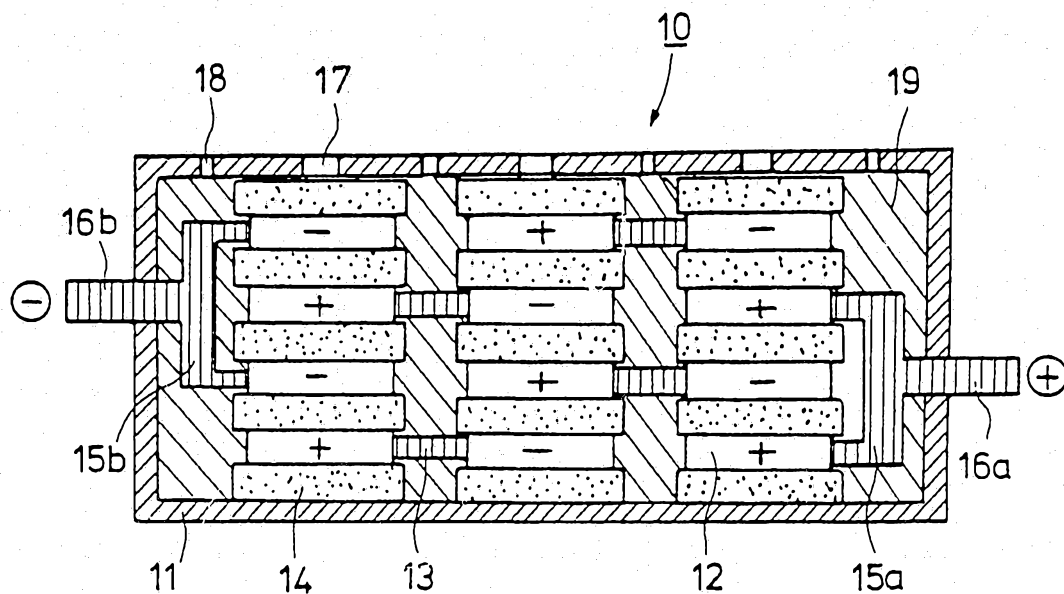


FIG. 1

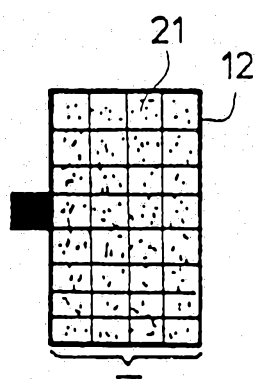


FIG. 2a

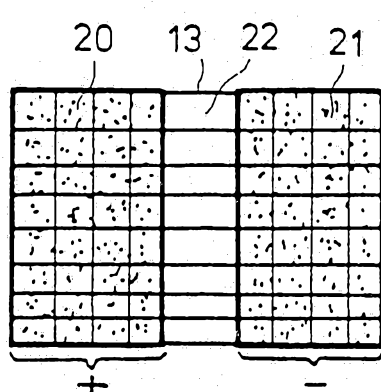


FIG. 2b

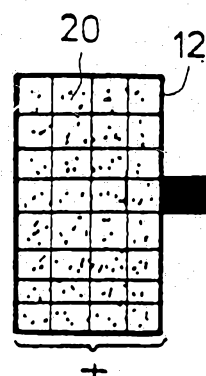


FIG. 2c

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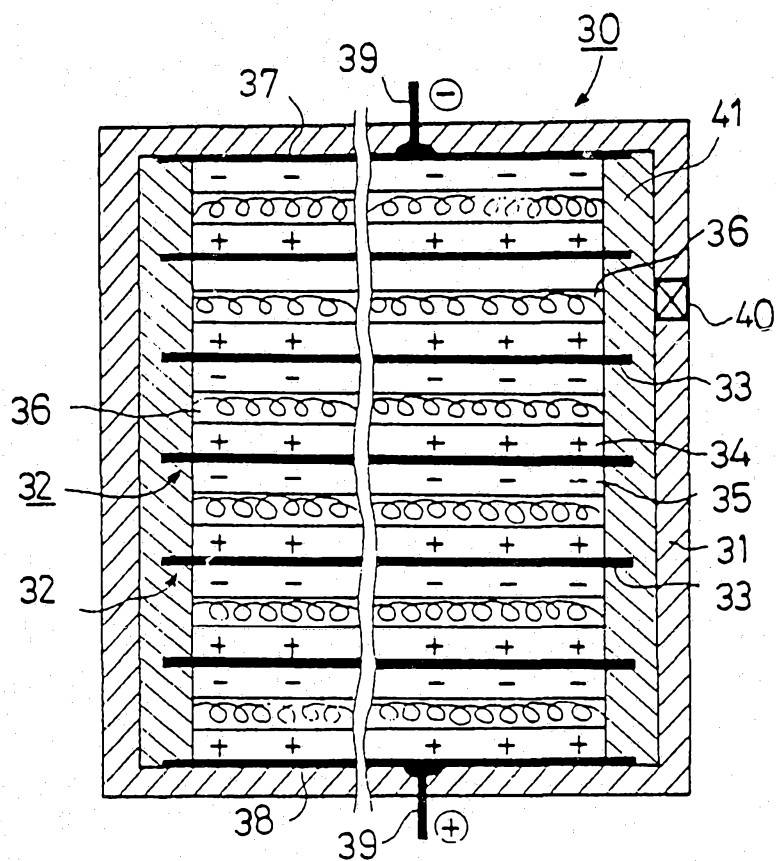
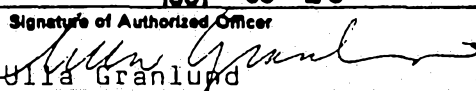


FIG. 3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/FI86/00150

I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER (if several classification symbols apply, indicate all) ⁶		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC		
H 01 M 10/16, 10/18		4
II. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum Documentation Searched ⁷		
Classification System	Classification Symbols	
IPC 4 US C1	H 01 M 10/04, /06, /12, /16, /18, /34 429:121, 152, 153, 160, 161, 186, 210	
Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation to the Extent that such Documents are Included in the Fields Searched ⁸		
SE, NO, DK, FI classes as above		
III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT ⁹		
Category ⁹	Citation of Document, ¹¹ with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages ¹²	Relevant to Claim No. ¹³
X	US, A, 2 968 686 (J.C. DUDDY) 17 January 1961	1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 12
X	US, A, 4 331 747 (K. JULIAN ET AL) 25 May 1982 See spec. col. 7 line 11-15, claim 5. & WO, 80/02473 EP, 0028227 AU, 59921/80 AU, 531567	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11-15
Y	GB, A, 2 158 285 (P. JARRET) 6 November 1985	3, 4, 5, 14
Y	DE, B2, 2 548 813 (N. LAHME) 23 March 1978	10
P	EP, A, 195 567 (NESTE OY) 24 September 1986	
	.../...	
¹⁰ Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art. "Δ" document member of the same patent family		
IV. CERTIFICATION		
Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search	Date of Mailing of this International Search Report	
1987-03-20	1987-03-23	
International Searching Authority	Signature of Authorized Officer	
Swedish Patent Office	 Ulla Granlund	

L.E

III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT (CONTINUED FROM THE SECOND SHEET)		
Category *	Citation of Document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to Claim No
A	US, A, 3 003 012 (J.C. DUDDY) 3 October 1961	
A	WO, A, 84/02230 (T. ERIKSSON) 7 June 1984	