



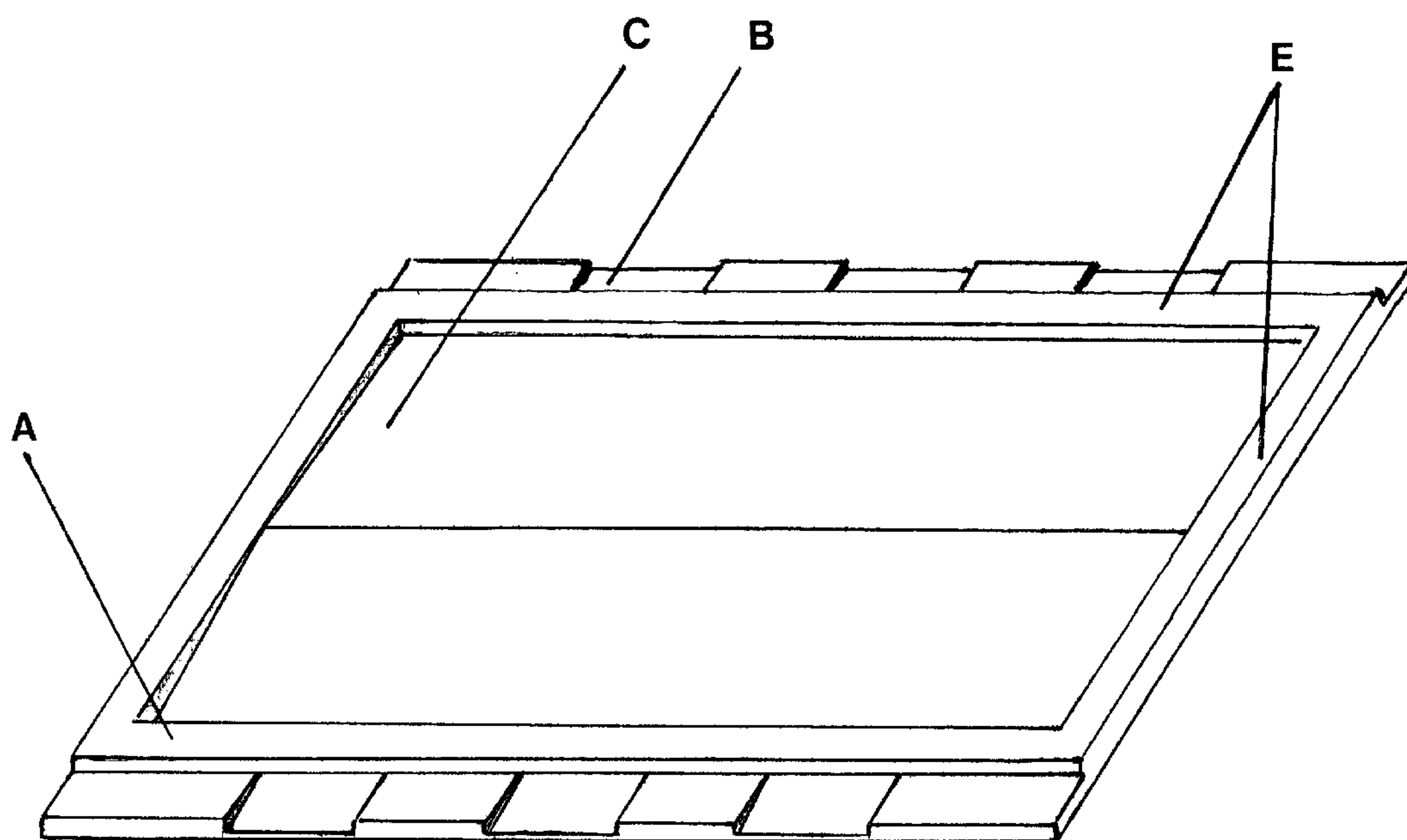
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(54) **LE SNOMAT**

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(57) This device has been conceived with the goal of eliminating the time and energy required to manually clear snow from one's walkway, i.e., with a snow shovel or broom. The device consists of a two-piece mat, one top mat, which sits squarely on a lower mat, designed to melt and siphon the melted snow out of the respective sides of the mat. This is accomplished by way of venting the top mat so that snow or freezing rain can fall through to the lower mat, which is equipped with a slightly graded reservoir which peaks down the lengthwise center much like a roof but only at about 2 degrees. When this reservoir is filled with salt or any other crystallized granular substance designed for the melting of snow, intermittent vents along the sides of the lower mat channel the water out of the mat and onto the sides of the walkway, for safety. This device could be implemented as soon as cold weather begins or as soon as the user receives a forecast of a snowfall. The device may be produced in varying sizes to adapt to numerous walkways, and could also be formatted to fit on stairs.

Abstract

This device has been conceived with the goal of eliminating the time and energy required to manually clear snow from one's walkway, i.e., with a snow shovel or broom.

The device consists of a two-piece mat, one top mat, which sits squarely on a lower mat, designed to melt and siphon the melted snow out of the respective sides of the mat. This is accomplished by way of venting the top mat so that snow or freezing rain can fall through to the lower mat, which is equipped with a slightly graded reservoir which peaks down the lengthwise center much like a roof but only at about 2 degrees. When this reservoir is filled with salt or any other crystallized granular substance designed for the melting of snow, intermittent vents along the sides of the lower mat channel the water out of the mat and onto the *sides* of the walkway, for safety.

This device could be implemented as soon as cold weather begins or as soon as the user receives a forecast of a snowfall.

The device may be produced in varying sizes to adapt to numerous walkways, and could also be formatted to fit on stairs.

Specification

This invention relates to a two-piece mat for the alleviation of snow or ice buildup in one's walkway or on one's stairs.

In anticipation, or upon realization of a snowfall, many will spread salt or other snow-melting material over their walkway or stairs. While temporarily effective, the salt often gets kicked away by passersby, essentially defeating its purpose. Also, due to the unavoidably random distribution of the salt on the particular surface, at times, only sections or patches of the walkway or stairs are safe enough to walk on without risk of significant injury. In turn, the homeowner ends up having to do the very thing which they'd originally hoped to avoid, that of shoveling the walkway and/or stairs. Also, in some walkways, there is not a significant grade for water to be channeled along, and melted snow thus stays in the walkway only to freeze, consequently becoming an even greater hazard.

This device will alleviate all of these problems by eliminating the above processes of snow removal, which are limited in their effectiveness. First, this device enables the salt to be placed in a controlled environment, thus alleviating the problem of salt being kicked away from the problem area, while enabling it to carry out its intended purpose, that of melting snow. Second, the device will ensure that all areas that need to be rendered clear and safe will remain just that, instead of just patches or spots of the walkway being so. Third, after the snow has melted the water will be channeled off to either side of the walkway, thus ensuring safe passage. Fourth, the user will save valuable time and energy often expended in the manual shoveling of snow.

In drawings which illustrate embodiments of the invention, Figure 1 is a three-dimensional upper side view of the lower mat, Figure 2 is a three-dimensional upper view of the top mat, and figure 3 is a cutaway view of the fully assembled, two-piece device.

The device illustrated comprises a lower mat 1 which attaches to a top mat 2. The lower mat 1 is equipped with a guide track A which holds the top mat 2 in place. The top mat 2 is equipped with a corresponding lip G to line up on the track A. Prior to assembly, the graded lower mat reservoir C is filled with snow and ice-melting crystals D. These are contained throughout the lower mat reservoir C by way of a perimeter lip E that has openings only at each intermittent graded vent B. The top mat 2 is then placed upon the lower mat 1.

When snowfall does occur, the snow will fall through the upper grid F and onto the contained snow and ice melting crystals D. As snow enters the graded lower mat reservoir C it will melt, producing water. The water will then trickle out of the lower mat 1 through the intermittent graded vents B. At each vent B the graded reservoir C continues beyond the guide track A, thus guiding the water out of the mat 1 completely.

Figure 3 is a cutaway view of the assembled figures 1 and 2. As shown the snow and ice melting crystals D are contained directly beneath the upper grid F and at each graded vent B there is a continuous flow for water removal. When crystals D eventually melt, the top mat 2 can be easily removed and the lower mat reservoir C can be refilled.

Excluding ice-melting crystals, the device consists entirely of injection-moulded rubber.

Claims

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A manually utilized device for the melting and dispersion of snow, comprising of an upper gridded mat, and a lower graded mat equipped with salt for the melted snow's retrieval and dispersion.
2. Starting from the lengthwise center of the lower mat and descending to the lengthwise edges of the lower mat, an intermittent venting system for directing water out of the mat.

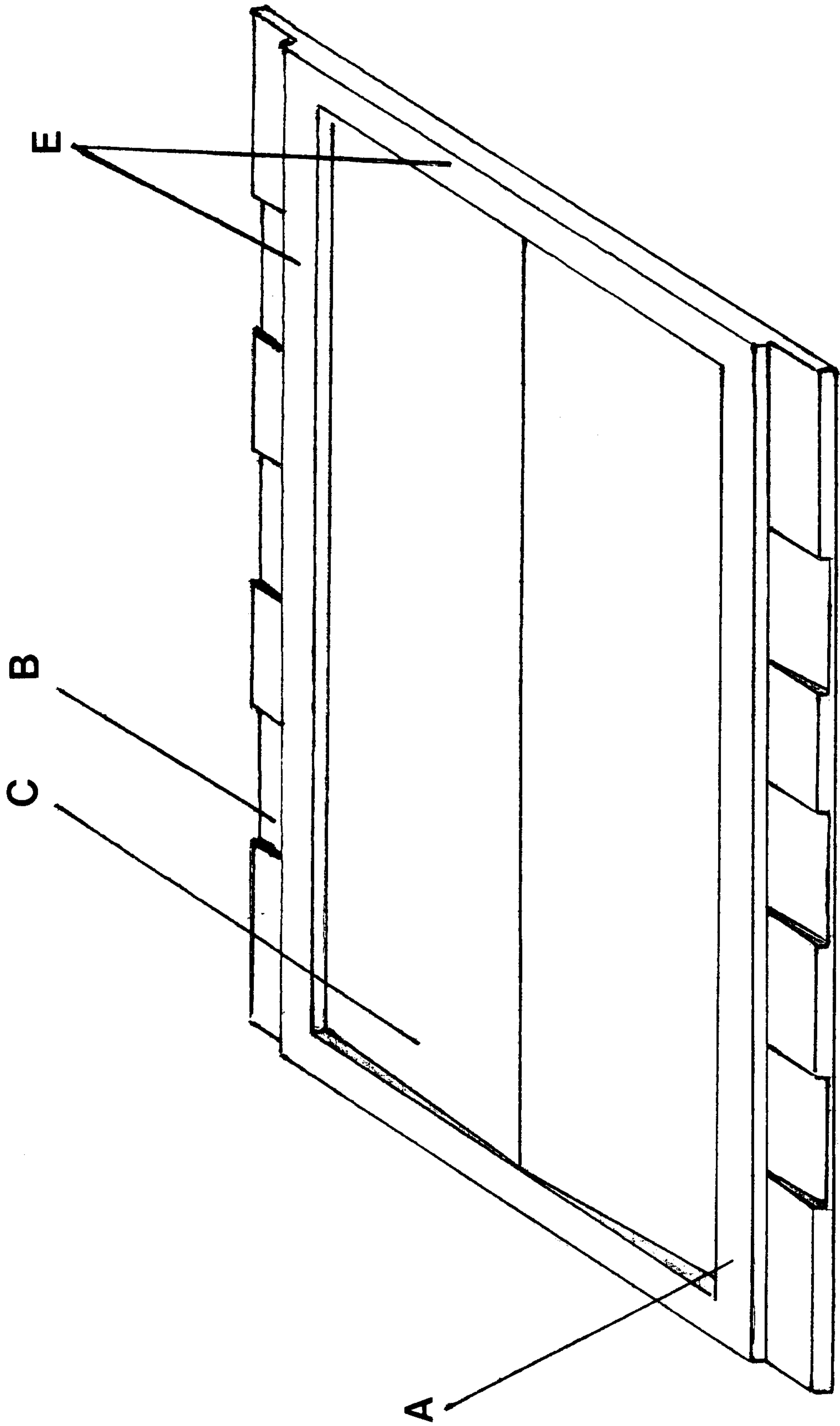


Figure 1

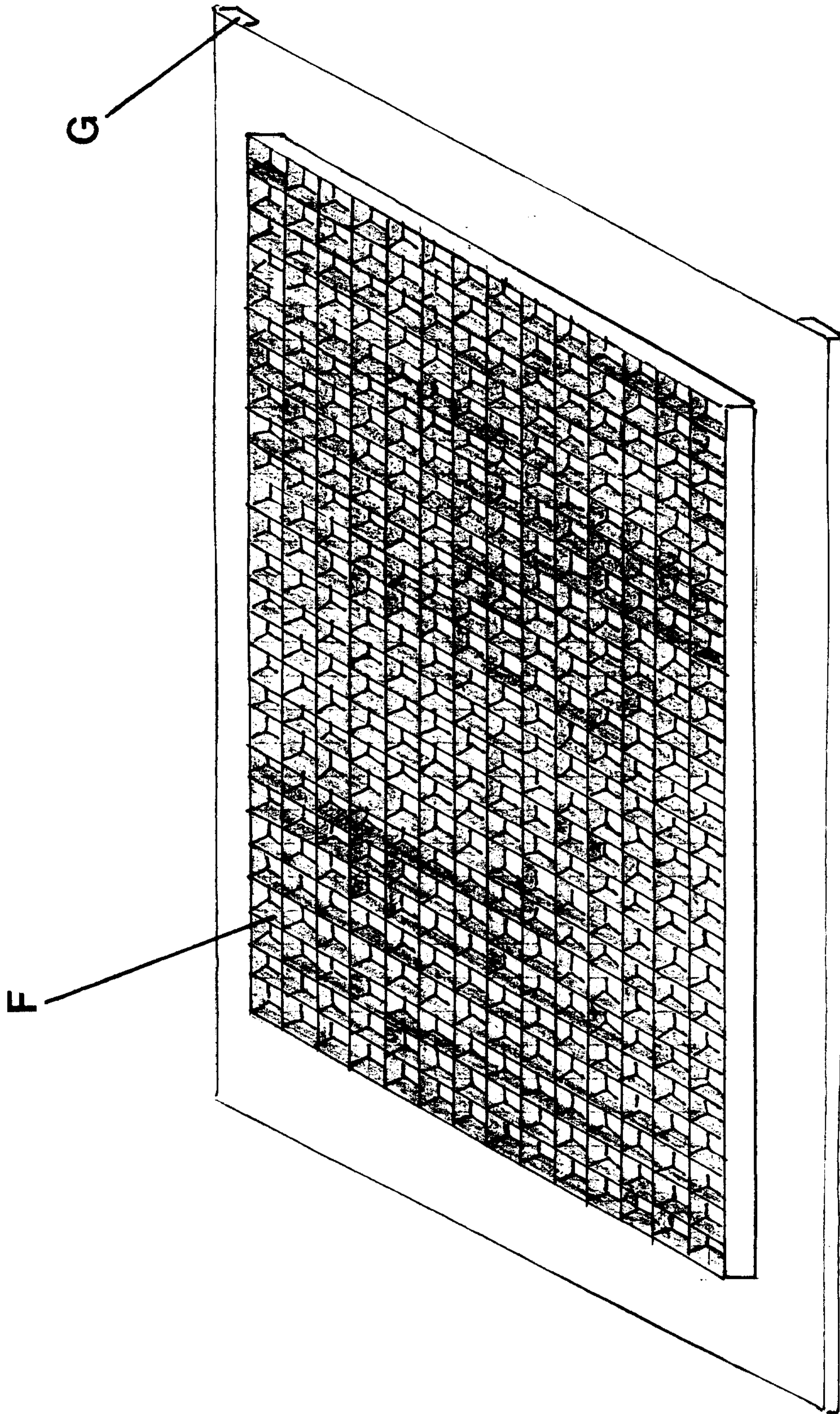


Figure 2

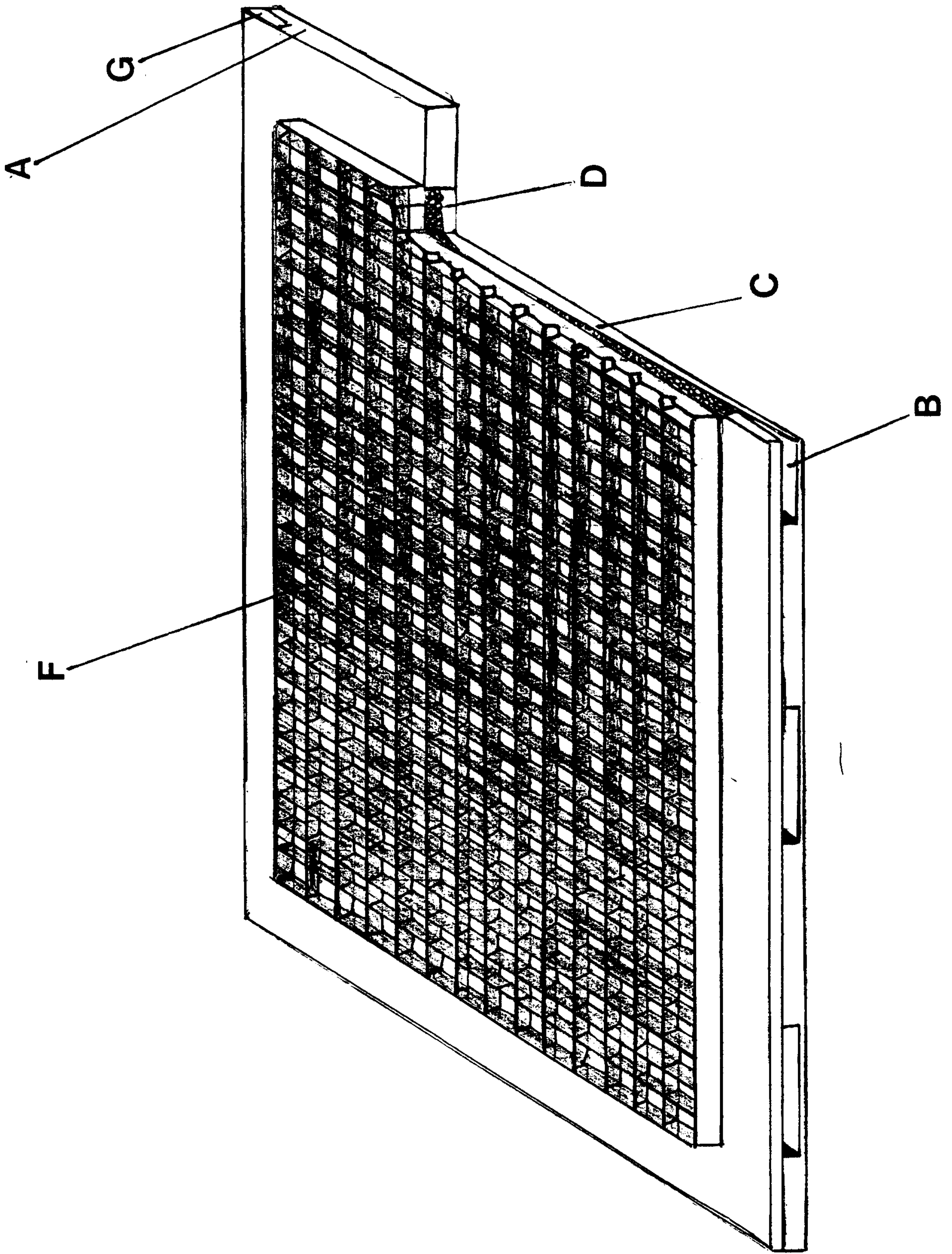


Figure 3

