

(19)



(11)

EP 3 355 018 B1

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION

(45) Date of publication and mention of the grant of the patent:

19.01.2022 Bulletin 2022/03

(51) International Patent Classification (IPC):

F28D 7/10 ^(2006.01) **F28D 21/00** ^(2006.01)
F28F 1/08 ^(2006.01) **F28F 1/42** ^(2006.01)
F02M 26/29 ^(2016.01) **F28F 1/06** ^(2006.01)

(21) Application number: **17000163.0**

(52) Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC):

(22) Date of filing: **02.02.2017**

F28D 7/103; F02M 26/29; F28D 7/106;
F28D 21/0003; F28F 1/06; F28F 1/08; F28F 1/426

(54) **FINNED COAXIAL COOLER**

GERIPPTER KOAXIALER KÜHLER

REFROIDISSEUR COAXIAL À AILETTES

(84) Designated Contracting States:

AL AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB
GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO
PL PT RO RS SE SI SK SM TR

- **Walsh, Timothy M.**
Oswego, IL 60543 (US)
- **Carney, Thomas J**
Batavia, IL 60510 (US)
- **Davey, Mark**
North Aurora, IL 60542 (US)
- **Buttermore, Edward S.**
South Elgin, IL 60177 (US)
- **Collins, Ryan**
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 (US)

(30) Priority: **30.01.2017 GB 201701501**

(43) Date of publication of application:

01.08.2018 Bulletin 2018/31

(60) Divisional application:

19169163.3 / 3 543 636

(73) Proprietor: **Senior UK Limited**

Gumlin, Gwent NP11 3HY (GB)

(74) Representative: **Franks & Co Limited**

15 Jessops Riverside
Brightside Lane
Sheffield S9 2RX (GB)

(72) Inventors:

- **Charles, penny**
Whitchurch, Ross-on-wye HR9 6BP (GB)
- **Ware, Adrian**
Risca, Gwent NP11 6ND (GB)
- **Subramanyam, Ragu**
Pontilanfraith, NP12 2PD (GB)

(56) References cited:

JP-A- H10 170 172 JP-A- 2000 079 431
JP-A- 2000 111 277 US-A1- 2012 222 845
US-A1- 2014 110 095

Note: Within nine months of the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent in the European Patent Bulletin, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to that patent, in accordance with the Implementing Regulations. Notice of opposition shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

EP 3 355 018 B1

Description

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to heat exchangers.

Background of the Invention

[0002] Modern internal combustion engines often use externally flowed and cooled exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) to aid emissions control and reduce fuel consumption. Modern gasoline and diesel engines can have high gas inlet temperatures into an exhaust gas recirculation system. These high gas temperatures can cause damage to EGR components, for example the EGR valve or the main cooler.

[0003] It can be of significant advantage to reduce the exhaust gas recirculation gas temperature prior to contact with these potentially vulnerable components. A coaxial cooler is a component which can fulfill this function.

[0004] A coaxial cooler which is known in the art comprises a heat transfer tube positioned inside an outer tube. The heat transfer tube has a formed or corrugated surface which encourages heat exchange and gives some flexibility to the component.

[0005] Three major drawbacks of this type of prior art design are:

- A relatively low heat exchange per unit length;
- A relatively high gas pressure loss caused by the turbulence induced by the corrugation; and
- A relatively poor flow of coolant into the roots of the outside of the heat exchange tube.

[0006] A pre cooler located upstream in the gas flow to a valve or main cooler in an EGR system needs to be compact and of the shortest possible length since space is at a premium in modern vehicle engine compartments.

[0007] On EGR systems in particular, a low gas pressure drop in the return gas path between exhaust and engine air intake is critical for engine function. As an ongoing objective, engineers are always looking to reduce pressure losses in EGR systems, as this allows a greater flow for the same differential pressure.

[0008] Further, boiling of coolant can cause damage to components, coolers, pre coolers or even damage to the engine itself.

[0009] A problem with prior art co-axial heat exchange tubes of the corrugated type having an inner heat exchange tube and an outer corrugated housing with a liquid filled cavity therebetween is that the rate of heat exchange per unit length of the heat exchanger is insufficient in some EGR applications.

[0010] Further, with the known corrugated heat exchanger, excessive boiling of coolant can occur.

[0011] There is a need for a compact coaxial cooler which has a high ratio of heat exchange per unit length

to transfer more energy to the coolant with reduced EGR gas pressure drop whilst at the same time avoiding damaging levels of boiling within the cooler.

[0012] It is accordingly an objective of the present invention to maximize heat transfer from a hot gas to a liquid coolant using alternative cooling structures.

[0013] In addition, alternative cooling structures may experience harsh environmental conditions, such as significant temperature gradients, gas pressures, and gas velocities. It is therefore another objective of the present invention to minimize the risk of structural failures-such as cracking or fractures in components of the cooler-due to physical phenomena (e.g., thermal expansion), to increase the longevity and reliability coolers.

[0014] Manufacturing components for coaxial coolers typically involves a series of steps to turn raw materials into useful structures and arranging and securing those structures to form the coaxial cooler. Poor alignment or unwieldy components can increase manufacturing time and cost, while reducing manufacturing consistency and reliability of the coolers. Thus, a further objective of the present invention is to include physical features on alternative cooling structures that aid in the alignment and assembly of coaxial coolers.

[0015] These and other objectives and advantages will become apparent from the following detailed written description and figures.

[0016] JP 2000-079431A discloses a heat exchanger according to the preamble of claim 1 and a method for manufacturing a heat exchanger having an outer tube 14, an inner pipe 12, and heat transfer fins 22 inserted into the inner heat exchanger pipe 12, as shown in FIG 5. of JP 2000-079431A. The heat transfer fins 22 are formed by winding a corrugated sheet, which is cut into predetermined dimensions and then brazed or fixed within inner pipe 12. The heat transfer fins serve to increase the heat transfer area, to thereby increase the heat exchange capacity of the apparatus. In addition, the disclosure teaches a multi-tubular-type heat exchanger having a plurality of small-diameter inner pipes, as shown in FIGS 3 and 4 of JP 2000-079431A.

[0017] U.S. Patent application publication No. US 2014/0110095 discloses a heat dissipating apparatus within a cooling tube 11, a tubular conductor 20, and a heat sink 30 mounted within the tubular conductor, as shown in FIG. 3 of US 2014/0110095. The heat sink 30 has multiple fins formed by continuously folding a metal sheet in a corrugated and annular form. High-temperature liquid flows through the annular chamber between the cooling tube 11 and the tubular conductor 20, which transfers heat into the heat sink 30. Air flows through cooling channels formed between the fins of the heat sink 30, thereby absorbing heat from the heat sink 30, which in turn lowers the temperature of the liquid in the outer annular chamber.

[0018] U.S. patent application, publication No. US 2012/222845 discloses a coaxial gas-liquid heat exchanger having at least three concentric tubes forming

at least two annular flow passageways, as shown in FIG. 6 of US 2012/222845. The disclosure teaches a fin and turbulizer 22 which is situated between tubes 10, 12. Liquid coolant flows through the passage between the middle tube and the outer tube, while hot gas flows through the passage formed between the inner tube and the middle tube. Each of these passageways may have situated therein either a corrugated fin or a turbulizer, which are oriented to permit longitudinal flow through the passageways. The fin is joined to the inner surface of the middle tube by brazing, and is described as a turbulence enhancing insert.

[0019] Japanese patent application JP H10 170172 discloses a double tube - type heat exchanger formed from an inner pipe 1 surrounded by outer pipe 2, as shown in FIG. 1(b). The space between the inner pipe and the outer pipe, forming flow chamber 3, is filled with "cooling medium" that cools a "medium to be cooled" circulating within inner pipe 1. Inner pipe 1 has fixed there-within cross fin 6, which is characterised in that "one sheet of plate material is bent into a concave-convex [sic] shape," forming "a roughly star -shaped cross-section." The fin structure is also disclosed as being "uneven," and being manufactured "by bending a part of the fin portion 6b to form the uneven portion 6c on the front surface," such that "the heat receiving surface area is increased and heat exchange efficiency is further promoted."

[0020] Japanese patent application JP 2000 111277 discloses a double pipe exhaust gas recirculation cooler formed from inner pipe 11 surrounded by outer pipe 12, where the space between the inner pipe and the outer pipe, forming flow passage 13, is filled with "cooling water" that cools gas passing through a "coolable section." Radiating fin 16 is fixed within inner tube 11, and is "substantially in the shape of a star in cross-section." Radiating fin 16 also includes crest portions 16a, which are fixed to the inner surface of inner pipe 11 by brazing, and the shape of radiating fin 16 is accomplished by bending a single metal plate in a "wavy shape (substantially bellows shape)."

Summary of the Invention

[0021] According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a heat exchanger for cooling a first fluid using a second fluid, the heat exchanger comprising:

at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401) for exchanging heat between said first fluid and said second fluid, said at least one inner heat exchange tube having an inner surface and an outer surface; a tubular outer body (112, 1202, 1205) surrounding at least part of said at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401), said tubular outer body having an inner surface and an outer surface; wherein the first fluid flows through the at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401) and the second fluid flows between the outer surface of the inner

heat exchange tube and the inner surface of the tubular outer body (112, 1202, 1205); and a substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material forming a plurality of fins (600) configured for orientation within said at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401), wherein at least one of said plurality of fins is in contact with the inner surface of the at least one inner heat exchange tube characterised in that:

a particular fin of said plurality of fins comprises:

an outer connecting wall (613) positioned adjacent to the inner surface of said at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401), said outer connecting wall (613) having a pair of opposing ends, a pair of substantially straight fin walls (602, 607) extending radially inwardly from the opposing ends of said outer connecting wall (613), respectively, each of said straight fin walls (602, 607) converging toward a central axis of said at least one inner heat exchange tube, and a gap (902) positioned within said outer connecting wall (613), said gap (902) having been formed between a first end and a second end of a single elongate strip of material, wherein such single elongate strip of material is folded to form said substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material, such that said first end, said gap (902) and said second end collectively form the outer connecting wall (613).

[0022] The fins may act to increase heat exchange between the first fluid and the second fluid by transferring heat from the centre of the first fluid flow to the inner walls of the heat exchange tube, whilst not significantly increasing the first fluid pressure drop along the heat exchange tube.

[0023] Each fin may comprise an inwardly extending fin wall extending between an inner surface of the heat exchange tube and towards a main central axis of the heat exchanger.

[0024] A first plurality of fins may extend substantially radially inwardly towards a central axis of the heat exchanger to a longer radial distance than to each of a second plurality of fins, so as not to cause one fin to be in close proximity to another fin.

[0025] The main planes of the fin walls preferably extend in a direction parallel to the main axial length of a section of the cooler in which they are fitted. Preferably the main planes of the fin walls extend radially towards the main central length axis of the tube in which they are located so as to provide a plurality of individual first fluid passages surrounding a central first fluid passage having its centre coincident with a main central axis of the heat exchange tube, so that first fluid flows along the main central passage and along each of the individual first fluid passages surrounding the main central first fluid pas-

sage.

[0026] The heat exchange tube may consist of a number of substantially straight sections separated by a bent or curve section. At least one of the substantially straight sections will be over at least part of its length plain or smooth. At least one fin will be attached to the heat exchange tube over a length of the substantially straight plain section. Other straight sections may have a profiled surface that is used without a fin.

[0027] A straight section of the heat exchange tube may be plain over its full length and have at least one fin attached to it over the majority of the length.

[0028] A straight section may be a combination of a plain section with at least one fin attached and a section of profiled tube without a fin attached.

[0029] The profiled section may comprise helical or annular corrugations or individual forms that improve heat exchange where there is no fin.

[0030] A corrugated straight section may also be used to give the heat exchange tube some thermal or vibrational compliance.

[0031] The bent sections of the heat exchange tube do not have fins. The bent section may be plain, helically or annularly corrugated or have a profiled geometry to improve heat exchange.

[0032] The embodiments include a heat exchanger for cooling a hot gas using a liquid coolant, by utilising a coaxial cooler with an inner heat exchange tube and an outer body surrounding at least part of the inner heat exchange tube; the hot gas flowing through the heat exchange tube and the coolant flowing in an annulus between the heat exchange tube and the outer body tube; the heat exchange tube being smooth over at least part of its length, and having a fin or a series of fins joined to the inner surface of the heat exchange tube to increase heat exchange, whilst not significantly increasing gas pressure drop.

[0033] There may be fins having at least two different lengths, so as not to cause one fin to be in close proximity to another fin.

[0034] A plurality of fins are preferably formed from a single strip of material.

[0035] A plurality of fins may be arranged as a plurality of segments, each segment comprising at least one fin.

[0036] A plurality of fins may be manufactured from a strip of material such that the plurality of fins are formed into an arc of substantially less than 360°, when unconstrained and wherein the plurality of fins form an arc of nearly 360°, when constrained by insertion into a tube.

[0037] A plurality of fins may be manufactured from a single strip of material and may comprise a plurality of arcs wherein each arc has a radius greater than an internal radius of a tube into which the fin is designed to fit, so as to promote efficient heat transfer between the arcs of the fins and an internal surface of the tube. The tangent point of the radius of the corner of the fin may contact the heat exchange tube giving the shortest possible route for conduction of heat. When the fin is attached

to the heat exchange tube with braze then the meniscus of the braze will further aid heat transfer by reducing the route for conduction and thickening the material width of the fin at its base.

[0038] The heat exchanger may comprise a compensation tube at one end of the heat exchanger to accommodate thermal growth and manufacturing tolerances.

[0039] There is disclosed herein a gas to liquid heat exchanger comprising: at least one tubular section having therein one or a plurality of heat exchange walls or fins extending into a gas passage of the tubular section, the walls extending along a main length of the tubular section; and an outer jacket surrounding at least a part of the at least one tubular section, there being a cavity between said tubular section and the outer jacket within which the liquid may pass.

[0040] There is disclosed herein a heat exchanger for cooling hot gas using a liquid coolant, the heat exchanger comprising: an inner heat exchange tube for exchanging heat between the gas and the liquid coolant; a tubular outer body surrounding at least part of the inner heat exchange tube; wherein the gas flows through the heat exchange tube and the liquid coolant flows between the inner heat exchange tube and the tubular outer body; and a fin member which fits inside the inner heat exchange member, the fin member comprising a plurality of substantially radially extending walls each extending along a main length direction of at least a portion of the inner heat exchange tube, and a plurality of substantially circumferentially extending connecting portions, each extending between adjacent ones of the substantially radially extending walls, and each connecting portion connecting a pair of the substantially radially extending walls; wherein the fin member is of dimensions such as to fit tightly within the inner heat exchange tube such that an outer surface of each the connecting portion is in contact with an inner surface of the inner heat exchange tube.

[0041] In one embodiment, the heat exchanger comprises at least one inner heat exchange tube for exchanging heat between said first fluid and said second fluid, in which the at least one inner heat exchange tube has an inner surface and an outer surface. In this embodiment, a tubular outer body surrounds at least part of said at least one inner heat exchange tube, in which the tubular outer body has both an inner surface and an outer surface. In this embodiment, the first fluid flows through the at least one inner heat exchange tube and the second fluid flows between the outer surface of the inner heat exchange tube and the inner surface of the tubular outer body. A substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material forming a plurality of fins is configured for orientation within the at least one inner heat exchange tube, with at least one of the fins positioned to be in contact with the inner surface of the inner heat exchange tube.

[0042] A particular fin of the plurality of fins may include a gap formed between a portion of the first end of the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet and a portion of a second end of the substantially cylindrical corrugated

sheet. The gap may exist as a result of the plurality of fins being formed from a single pressed and shaped piece of material, which may be rolled into a substantially cylindrical shape such that opposite ends of the sheet meet and form said gap.

[0043] The portion of the first end of the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet may include one or more raised protrusions (which may be referred to herein as "locking clips") that at least partially overlap the portion of the second end of the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet. Locking clips may friction fit with portions of the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet opposite thereof, mechanically securing the corrugated sheet in a substantially cylindrical shape.

[0044] The fins may include undulations for increasing turbulence in the first fluid, each of said undulations oriented along the longitudinal axis of said inner heat exchange tube. The undulations may be periodic, sinusoidal in shape, or otherwise be substantially nonlinear in a direction of the longitudinal axis of the inner heat exchange tube for increasing turbulence in the first fluid.

[0045] At least one of the plurality of fins may include one or more radially-extending slots. The slots may form "V" shaped gaps extending radially from a radially inward fin tip toward adjacent radially outward fin tips. There may be any number of slots spaced apart along the longitudinal direction of the plurality of fins. The slots may have either uniform or non-uniform width, as measured along the longitudinal axis of the inner heat exchange tube. The slots may be "bulb" shaped, in that they include a straight portion and a circular segment portion which collectively form an "omega" or bulb-shaped gap. In some implementations, the one or more radially-extending slots have a minimum width of at least 0.2 millimeters over at least a portion of the slot.

[0046] A heat exchanger may include a substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material having fins of two or more lengths. In some embodiments, the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet may include three different fin types, each having different lengths respectively. As described herein with respect to fin types, "length" may refer to the radial distances of the fin "walls" (which extend radially outward) between radially-inner fin tips and adjacent radially-outer fin tips.

[0047] In the present invention, some of the heat exchangers may include tubular bellows structures operably affixed to at least one end of said inner heat exchange tube. The tubular bellows may include an outer lip that at least partially overlaps the tubular outer body. The tubular outer body might include an angled protrusion extending radially outward from the tubular outer body, wherein a distal end of the outer lip abuts the angled protrusion. The angled protrusion (also referred to herein as an "angled retention feature") may encourage the flow of braze paste toward the joint formed between the outer lip and the angled protrusion during the brazing process.

[0048] The tubular bellows may be positioned radially outwardly from the inner heat exchange tube at a position

such that the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material forming the plurality of fins may not be positioned radially thereunder. In other words, the tubular bellows may or may not surround the portion of the inner heat exchange tube containing the fin assembly, depending upon the particular implementation.

[0049] There is also disclosed herein a heat exchanger comprising a plurality of finned heat exchange tubes (sometimes referred to herein as coaxial coolers) arranged substantially parallel to each other. Each coaxial cooler includes an inner heat exchange tube for exchanging heat between a first fluid and a second fluid, each having both an inner surface and an outer surface. For each coaxial cooler, a portion of said first fluid flows through the respective inner heat exchange tube. Each coaxial cooler also includes a plurality of fins contacting the inner surface of said respective inner heat exchange tube. In this embodiment, the plurality of coaxial coolers are collectively surrounded by at least one tubular outer body having an inner surface and outer surface. In this embodiment, the second fluid flows between the outer surfaces of said inner heat exchange tubes of the plurality of coaxial coolers and the inner surface of said tubular outer body.

[0050] Other aspects are as set out in the claims herein.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0051] For a better understanding of the invention and to show how the same may be carried into effect, there will now be described by way of example only, specific embodiments, methods and processes according to the present invention with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 shows schematically in perspective view a first cooler according to a first specific embodiment heat exchanger;

Figure 2 shows the first cooler in perspective view from a first end;

Figure 3 herein shows the first cooler in perspective view from a second end;

Figure 4 shows schematically the first cooler in perspective view showing a gas domain of the first cooler;

Figure 5 shows schematically the first cooler in perspective view showing a coolant domain of the cooler;

Figure 6 herein shows schematically a first fin assembly according to a first embodiment fin assembly;

Figure 7 herein shows a second fin assembly ac-

cording to a second embodiment fin assembly;

Figure 8 herein shows a third fin assembly according to a third specific embodiment fin assembly;

Figure 9 shows part of the first fin assembly viewed from its end;

Figure 10A shows part of the fin assembly of figure 9, and part of a heat exchange tube, showing contact points between the fin assembly and the heat exchange tube;

Figure 10B shows part of the fin assembly and heat exchange tube of Figure 10A, having brazed connection between the fin assembly and the heat exchange tube, illustrating how a joint having good thermal transfer characteristics is achieved;

Figure 10C shows schematically a joint between a fin assembly and the heat exchange tube, which has a non-optimal heat transfer characteristics.;

Figure 11 herein illustrates schematically part of a second cooler device according to a second specific embodiment heat exchanger;

Figure 12 shows a third cooler device according to a third specific embodiment heat exchanger, having three bends;

Figure 13 shows the third cooler of figure 12 in its pre-bent condition during a stage of manufacture;

Figure 14 shows the heat exchange tube of the first cooler with the two fin sets placed next to their straight sections of the heat exchange tube;

Figure 15 shows the heat exchange tube for the first cooler with one of the fin sets in its manufactured condition prior to insertion in the heat exchange tube;

Figure 16 shows the heat exchange tube for the first cooler with one of the fin sets partially inserted therein;

Figure 17 shows a portion of an undulating corrugated fin sheet in an unrolled state;

Figure 18 shows a substantially cylindrical radial undulating corrugated fin assembly;

Figure 19A shows an elevated cross-sectional side view, of a portion of a cooler with a radial undulating corrugated fin assembly;

Figure 19B shows another elevated cross-sectional side view, of a portion of a cooler with a radial undulating corrugated fin assembly;

Figure 19C shows yet another elevated cross-sectional side view, of a portion of a cooler with a radial undulating corrugated fin assembly;

Figure 20 shows a perspective view of a fin assembly with varying fin heights;

Figure 21 shows a plurality of round radial fin tubes in a bulkhead assembly;

Figure 22A illustrates an example fin assembly with decoupling slots having uniform width;

Figure 22B illustrates a cutaway perspective view of the fin assembly of Figure 22A with uniform width decoupling slots;

Figure 23A illustrates an example fin assembly with decoupling slots 2301-2309 having non-uniform width;

Figure 23B illustrates a cutaway perspective view of the fin assembly of Figure 23A with non-uniform width decoupling slots;

Figure 24 illustrates an example set of locking clips; and

Figure 25 depicts a portion of a cooler 2500 where tubular bellows section 2501 is retention fit adjacent to coaxial cooler.

Detailed Description of the Embodiments

[0052] There will now be described by way of examples several specific modes of the invention as contemplated by the inventors. In the following description numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding. It will be apparent however, to one skilled in the art, that the present invention may be practiced without limitation to these specific details. In other instances, well known methods and structures have not been described in detail so as not to unnecessarily obscure the description.

[0053] In this specification, the embodiments described are heat exchangers aimed at exchanging heat between a gas and a liquid. In various embodiments, the heat exchangers described are coolers which cool a hot gas using a liquid coolant. It will be understood by the skilled person that a cooler is a type of heat exchanger.

[0054] The coolers described herein are particularly although not exclusively aimed at providing pre-cooling prior to a valve component in an internal combustion exhaust gas recirculation circuit. In this application, the cooler is fitted in an EGR circuit between an exhaust manifold and an exhaust gas recirculation valve or an EGR

cooler, from which the recirculated gas is fed back into an inlet manifold of the internal combustion engine. However, in other applications, the cooler embodiments described herein may be suitable for long route circuit exhaust gas recirculation systems, in which an exhaust gas is sampled downstream of a catalytic converter and is reintroduced into an air inlet of an internal combustion engine upstream of the compressor.

[0055] In the following description a flow of coolant is shown and described in a first direction as indicated by the arrows in figure 1 herein, but it will be appreciated that the coolant flow can be reversed so the coolant flows through the cooler in the opposite direction. Similarly, a gas flow direction is shown in a first direction in figure 1 herein, opposite to the general direction of coolant flow, but it will be appreciated that the direction of gas flow can be reversed. The cooler can be connected in a gas circuit so that the gas flow is either in the first gas flow direction of figure 1, or alternatively in the opposite direction. Similarly the coolant flow can be connected in the first coolant flow direction as shown in figure 1 herein, or alternatively in the opposite direction. The efficiency of heat transfer between gas and liquid coolant may be optimal when the gas and coolant flows are connected in opposite general directions to each other and as shown in figure 1 herein.

[0056] In the embodiments described herein, a hot gas flow is shown as passing centrally through a liquid coolant flow, where the liquid coolant flow is contained within an outer jacket which surrounds a central heat exchange tube through which the gas passes, and the gas and liquid are separated by the thin metal walls of the heat exchange tube.

[0057] Referring to figures 1 to 3 herein, there is shown three views of a co-axial cooler 100 according to a first specific embodiment. The cooler comprises a tubular gas passage for flow of gas therethrough, and a tubular outer jacket surrounding part of the length of the gas passage, there being a cavity between the inner tubular gas passage and the outer jacket, so that a liquid coolant can flow in the cavity between the inner tubular gas passage and the outer jacket, to cool part of the inner tubular gas passage. At one end of the cooler, there is a further connecting section 104 which is single walled and does not have an outer jacket, which is cooled by external ambient air.

[0058] One use of the cooler is to cool the exhaust gas flow immediately prior to entering the exhaust gas recirculation valve component. In use, the cooler component is fixed in an exhaust gas recirculation circuit of an internal combustion engine by connecting first and second ends of the cooler within the circuit. The cooler is inserted between an exhaust manifold of the internal combustion engine, and an exhaust gas recirculation valve.

[0059] The cooler 100 comprises: at a first end, a first flange 101 for connecting the first end of the cooler into a gas flow circuit; a liquid cooled section 102 having an inner tubular passage and an outer tubular jacket 103 in which a liquid coolant passes between the inner tubular

passage and the outer tubular jacket in order to cool the inner tubular passage; an air cooled section 104 comprising a tubular bellows member 105; and at a second end of the cooler, a second flange 106 for connecting a second end of the cooler into said gas flow circuit.

[0060] The liquid cooled section outer coolant jacket 102 comprises a first straight substantially circular cylindrical section 107; a flexible corrugated central section 108 that has a straight and a bent portion; and a second straight substantially circular cylindrical section 109.

[0061] The first straight section 107 comprises a first outer substantially circular cylindrical tube 103; and a first inner substantially circular cylindrical tube. Extending transverse to the main axial length of the first section is provided a coolant outlet tube 110 for draining coolant from the first tubular section. A first end of the first outer tube is secured to the first flange 101 by welding or brazing the end of the outer tube to the flange at a position surrounding a circular aperture in the flange, and a first end of the first inner tube is also secured to the first outer tube 103 by welding or brazing to the inside of said circular aperture in the end of the flange, so that the inner and outer first tubes are coaxial with each other and have a substantially annular cavity therebetween. Liquid coolant enters the annular cavity at a second end of the straight section where the straight section joins with the flexible corrugated central section 108, and can pass through the annular cavity between the inside of the first outer tube and the outer surface of the first inner tube and can flow out of the coolant outlet tube 110.

[0062] Within the first straight inner tube there is provided a first finned insert member 111 which separates the interior of the first straight inner tube into a plurality of radially extending gas passages extending along a length of the first straight section.

[0063] The flexible corrugated central section 108 comprises a first outer corrugated tubular bellows member 112, the inner tube member being inside and concentric with the outer bellows member so that there is a cavity therebetween which completely surrounds the inner member and through which liquid coolant can flow. The corrugated central section 108 is sufficiently flexible to absorb thermal growth of the inner member during use of the cooler. A first end of the central corrugated section 108 is fixed to the second end of the first straight section 107, and a second end of the central corrugated section is attached to a first end of the second straight section 109.

[0064] The second straight section 109 comprises a second outer substantially circular cylindrical tube 113; a second inner substantially circular cylindrical tube located coaxially within the second outer cylindrical tube 113; and a coolant inlet tube 114 through which coolant can be passed into the second straight section 109. The inner heat exchange tube has a finned section that is not visible. A first end 115 of the second straight section 109 is fixed to a second end of the central corrugated section 108 and a second end 116 of the second straight section

109 is connected to a first end of the second section 104. The corrugated section 108 has the second ends of its respective inner and outer corrugated tubes connected in gas and liquid tight manner to the corresponding respective first ends of the second straight inner and outer tubes. The second ends 116 of the second inner and outer tubes are welded or brazed together so that the two tubes are located coaxially with each other and with an annular cavity there between through which liquid coolant passes.

[0065] In some implementations, the tubular bellows member 112 may include one or more outer lips (at opposite coaxial ends of tubular bellows member 112), that at least partially overlap with portions of adjacent outer tubular jacket 103 and/or second outer substantially circular cylindrical tube 113. The adjacent outer tubular jacket 103 and/or second outer substantially circular cylindrical tube 113 may include a protrusion extending radially (also as shown in Figure 25 as angled retention feature 2506), which may act as a retention and/or alignment feature against which the outer lip can operably abut. In some embodiments, the protrusion may form an angle between 15 degrees and 75 degrees with respect to the longitudinal axis of the portions of adjacent outer tubular jacket 103 and/or second outer substantially circular cylindrical tube 113. During assembly of cooler 100, the angled protrusion or retention feature may encourage braze paste to flow toward the joint formed by an outer lip and the angled protrusion.

[0066] Inside the inner tube of the second straight section 109 there is provided a second finned member which separates the interior of the second straight inner tube into a plurality of radially extending gas passages extending along a length of the second straight section, similarly to the first finned member 111 in the first straight section 107.

[0067] Although first finned member 111 is shown to include six fins, with three fins of a first length and three fins of a second length, other embodiments may include fin members having other numbers of fins, having various lengths and/or shapes. Some fin geometries may be rounded and form curved petals, while other fin geometries have well-defined edges (e.g., folds in a metal sheet). Various fin members described herein may include additional features, such as slots to account for thermal expansion of the fin member, or locking clips to hold the fin member in a substantially cylindrical shape, among other possible features.

[0068] Within the first and second straight portions 107, 109, there is provided said first and second finned members, however the bent section of the central corrugated section 108 does not contain an internal finned member. The corrugated section 108 has a degree of thermal compliance due to the outer corrugated bellows part which is capable of absorbing thermal growth during operation of the cooler.

[0069] The second section 104, which is an air cooled section, is primarily aimed at providing a compensation

portion to absorb differences in manufacturing tolerances, vibration and thermal growth of the cooled section 102. The section 104, which is a gas cooled section, comprises a single wall corrugated bellows member 105, a first end of which is connected to a second end of the second straight section 109, and a second end of which is connected to the second flange member 106. The second section 104 has a degree of flexibility due to the corrugated bellows part 105 which is capable of absorbing vibration and thermal growth during operation of the cooler.

[0070] The cooler heat exchange tube therefore comprises alternating straight sections and bent sections along its length, wherein the straight sections have internal finned structures providing heat transfer surfaces which are aligned in an axial direction along the flow of gas.

[0071] In a variation, the second section 104 may be deleted and instead a corrugated bend and short length of straight on the heat exchange tube may be used. This, together with the corrugated outer tube give a component capable of absorbing build tolerances, vibration and thermal growth.

[0072] Referring to figure 2 herein, there is shown the first end of the cooler in which the first finned structure 111 can be seen inserted into the inner tube of the first straight section. The first finned structure comprises a tubular metal component having in the radial direction a plurality of flower petal shaped undulations, so that a single central passage of the fin component presents a substantially flower shape central gas passage as viewed in the main direction of gas flow surrounded by a plurality of substantially triangular or trapezoid shaped peripheral gas passages between the fin member and the internal wall of the heat exchange tube. The finned component is inserted into the inner straight tube, so that between the fin component and the inner wall of the inner tube there are created a plurality of outer gas passages separated circumferentially from each other by the fin component, the outer passages separated from the central inner passage by the walls of the fin component. The walls of the fin component extend axially along the length of the straight section to present a first plurality of heat transfer walls which are radial to the straight section, and which are substantially parallel to the axial gas flow, and a second set of circumferential heat transfer walls which are concentric with and in contact with the inner cylindrical wall of the inner tube, and which extend axially along the length of the inner tube, one side of each said circumferential wall being in contact with the gas flow and another side of each said circumferential wall being in contact with the inner wall of the inner tube.

[0073] Referring to figure 3 herein, there is shown the cooler in perspective view from the second end, showing the inside of the single walled corrugated tube 105 of the second section 104. Inside the second straight section 109, there is a corresponding finned member similar to the finned member 111 in the first-rate section, which is

just out of view in the view of figure 3.

[0074] Referring to figure 4 herein, there is shown in perspective view the first embodiment cooler, showing a gas domain, being component parts and surfaces of the cooler which are in direct contact with the gas to be cooled, and to which heat is directly transferred by said gas. The gas domain comprises an inner surface of: the inner tubular parts of the first section 102, the first set of internal fins 111, the second set of internal fins; and an inner surface of the second section 104.

[0075] Referring to figure 5 herein, there is shown a view of the first embodiment cooler which shows a coolant domain, being component parts and surfaces of the cooler which are in direct contact with the liquid coolant and to which heat is transferred from the component parts to the liquid coolant. The coolant domain comprises inner surfaces of: the outer jacket comprising first outer straight tube 103, outer corrugated tube 112, and second outer straight tube 113; outer surfaces of the first straight inner tube, the inner bent tube, and the second inner straight tube, the coolant outlet tube 110 and the coolant inlet tube 114. The coolant domain comprises the whole of the internal cavity in the straight sections and corrugated section of the first section 102 together with the coolant inlet tube and the coolant outlet tube.

[0076] As seen in figure 5, along the length of the cooler the coolant domain extends in parallel with the gas domain over part of the length of the gas domain, whereas the gas domain extends over substantially the entire length of the coolant domain. The gas domain runs centrally through the coolant domain.

[0077] Although figures 4 and 5 show the gas domain as containing a single inner tubular part and a single set of internal fins, other embodiments of the present disclosure may include an array of inner tubular parts and internal fin assemblies which may be collectively surrounded by an outer tube. In such embodiments, coolant may flow through the coolant inlet tube and pass through a cavity defined by the outer tube that enclose two or more substantially parallel inner tubular parts. In this manner, hot gas may be separated into two or more substantially parallel inner tubular parts, thereby increasing the effective surface area between the gas and the liquid coolant, in turn encouraging greater heat exchange compared to single inner tubular part and fin arrangements.

Internal Fins

[0078] In the first embodiment cooler, the internal fins each comprise a substantially radially extending wall extending between an inner wall of the substantially straight inner tube and a position near the centre of the gas passage through the inner tube. The walls extend axially along a length of the inner tube, and project inwardly into the central gas passage.

[0079] A plurality of said internal fins may be provided as part of a fin member. Each fin member comprises a plurality of substantially radially extending walls joined

together at their radially outermost positions by a plurality of substantially arced cylindrical walls.

[0080] In a conventional tubular gas to liquid heat exchanger, having passage of a gas through a tubular member, heat exchange occurs only on the inner facing wall of the tubular member, this being the only place where gas comes into contact with the material of the tubular member. However, by providing a plurality of fins as described herein, this provides further heat exchange surfaces which the gas may come into contact with. Heat transferred from the gas to the fins passes by conduction along the material of the fin, heating up the whole fin and reaches a position where the fin contacts the inner wall of the tubular member. Heat is transferred by conduction from the fin member to the inner wall of the tubular member, through the material of the tubular member, and to the coolant on the other side of the tubular member, where the outer surface of the tubular member comes into contact with the liquid coolant.

[0081] Hence, the overall surface area in the central passage of the tubular heat exchange member which comes into contact with the gas flow and through which heat can be exchanged between the material of the heat exchanger and the gas is increased by provision of the fins in the heat exchange tube.

[0082] Referring to figure 6 herein, there is shown in perspective view a first fin assembly 600. The fin assembly is shown in its condition when inserted into the heat exchange tube. Prior to insertion the fin assembly is more open, (see figures 15 and 16 herein). The first fin assembly is formed from a single strip of initially flat metal having a smooth surface on both sides. The strip is formed into a fin member which is shaped to fit into a circular cylindrical outer boundary (for example an inner surface of a circular cylindrical heat exchange tube). The first fin assembly comprises a plurality of substantially radially inwardly extending longer first fin walls 601 - 606; a plurality of substantially radially inwardly extending shorter second fin walls 607 - 612; a plurality of part circular cylindrical or arced outer connecting walls 613 - 618; a plurality of part circular cylindrical first inner connecting walls 619 - 621 each of which connects together the radially inward lower ends of a pair of adjacent first fin walls; and a plurality of part circular cylindrical second inner connecting walls 622 - 624 each of which connects together the radially inward lower ends of a pair of adjacent second fin walls.

[0083] Figures 6, 7 and 9 show the inner connecting walls to form parts of a circle. For ease of manufacture figure 9 shows the inner connecting walls to be a radius between the fin walls.

[0084] The inwardly facing surfaces of the first inner connecting walls, facing inwardly towards the central axis of the fin member, lie substantially on a first circular cylinder. The inwardly facing surfaces of the second inner connecting walls, facing inwardly to a central axis of the fin member, lie substantially on a second circular cylinder. The inwardly facing surfaces of the second inner

connecting walls lie radially inwardly relative to the inwardly facing surfaces of the first inner connecting walls, so that the plurality of first fin walls extend radially further inwards from an outer circumference of the fin member compared to the plurality of second fin walls.

[0085] The fin member is manufactured from a single elongate substantially flat smooth sided piece of metal which is formed into the substantially flower shaped cross-sectional form as shown in figure 6. The single elongate strip of metal is folded such that a first end and a second end of the metal strip form a first outer connecting wall 613. The fin member is formed such that the outside diameter of the component in an unrestrained state, where the fin member is not inserted into a heat exchange tube is larger than the outside diameter of the component in a constrained state when the component is fitted inside a heat exchange tube. The fin when fitted inside the heat exchange tube does not form a full 360° as shown by connecting wall 613. There is a small gap between the two ends of the material to allow for ease of insertion and tolerances.

[0086] In some embodiments, the small gap shown along connecting wall 613 may include a set of raised tabs, protrusions, or "locking clips" as shown in Figure 24. These locking clips extend circumferentially from either end of the gap toward the opposite end of the gap. The protrusions may be raised in either the radially outward direction (to slide on the outside of the opposite end of the connecting wall) or in the radially inward direction (to slide on the inside of the opposite end of the connecting wall). The protrusions may have dimensions that create an interference or friction fit with the opposite end of the connecting wall. When assembled, the raised protrusions may act to secure the fin member in a substantially cylindrical shape to prevent it from unrolling and to maintain a consistent gap width, which may be beneficial for some assembly or manufacturing processes.

[0087] The fin member may be formed of a resilient metal material, such that once formed, it has a resilience and a tendency to expand into its as - formed shape, such that when fitted inside a heat exchange tube and therefore compressed to a slightly smaller diameter circular cylinder, the outer circumferential surfaces 613 - 618 of fin member contact with, and are urged radially outwardly against, the inner circular cylindrical surface of a heat exchange tube, thereby ensuring good thermal contact between the fin member and the wall of the heat exchange tube.

[0088] In order to fit the fin member into a substantially straight circular cylindrical heat exchange tube, the fin member will be compressed from its more open form to the diameter of the heat exchange tube and then may be slightly compressed in the circumferential direction, slid into the inside of the heat exchange tube, and released. The resilience of the metal material of the fin member causes the fin to expand outwards on to the heat exchange tube diameter and retain itself by friction inside the heat exchange tube. However, as a further stage of

manufacture, the circumferentially extending faces 613 - 618 may be brazed, welded or soldered to the inner facing wall of the heat exchange tube, either at the axial ends of the fin member, and/ or along the edges between the first radially extending fins 601 - 607 and a corresponding respective outer circumferential surface 613 - 618.

[0089] Having alternate pairs of relatively longer and relatively shorter radially extending fins prevents adjacent pairs of fins being located in too close proximity to each other, and thereby minimizes the effect of resistance to gas flow, thereby minimizing the effect of pressure drop and improving heat exchange, and minimizes the incidence of the inward tips or edges of the fins and the inner circumferential extending surfaces becoming clogged with exhaust gas solid/liquid pollutants.

[0090] In the case of the first fin assembly, there are provided a first plurality of gas passages between the fin assembly and the inner walls of the heat exchange tube which extend in a circumference around the second circular cylinder. A central gas passage is formed in a substantially flower petal shape when viewed along a main axis of the heat exchange tube, said central gas passage comprising a substantially circular cylindrical central passage having a plurality of radially extending segments arranged around said substantially circular cylindrical central passage.

[0091] Referring to figure 7 herein, there is illustrated schematically in perspective view a second fin assembly 700. The second fin assembly is manufactured from a single strip of initially flat metal having a smooth surface on both sides. The fin member is shaped to fit into a circular cylindrical outer boundary, for example an inner surface of a circular cylindrical heat exchange tube. The second fin assembly comprises a plurality of substantially radially inwardly extending fin walls 701 - 712; a plurality of part circular cylindrical outer connecting walls 713 - 718 extending in an outer circumference, each of which connects together the radially outer edges of a pair of adjacent first fin walls; a plurality of part circular cylindrical first inner connecting walls 719 - 721 extending in an inner circumference, each of which connects together the radially inward lower edges of a pair of adjacent first fin walls.

[0092] The inwardly facing surfaces of the inner connecting walls 719 - 721, face inwardly towards a main central axis of the fin member and lie substantially on a first circular cylinder. The outer surfaces of the outer connecting walls 713 - 718 face outwardly radially away from the main central axis and lie on a second outer circular cylinder. In use, these outer surfaces are in contact with the inner surface of the central heat exchange tube so that heat can exchange between the fin member and the wall of the inner heat exchange tube.

[0093] Along the axial length of each fin, the fin wall is formed into a plurality of protruding dimples or mounds which protrude circumferentially into the gas flow between adjacent fins. Each fin wall comprises alternating

dimples formed successively to one side and then to another of the main plane of the fin wall, so that as gas flows along the passage bounded by the thin walls, the dimples or mounds cause turbulent gas flow within the passages. In the embodiment shown, the dimples are substantially square shaped frusto - pyramids, but in other embodiments the dimples may be hemispherical, semi ovoid, frusto - conical, or elongate ridges/troughs. Provision of the protrusions has the effect of providing additional resistance to gas flow, and therefore has the penalty of increasing the gas pressure drop through the fin member, but has an advantage of increasing turbulence in the gas flow, and increasing the surface area of the fin per unit length of the fin member which comes into contact with the gas and therefore enhances heat transfer rate per unit length of fin member.

[0094] The second fin member is manufactured from a single elongate substantially smooth sided piece of metal which is initially flat and is formed into the substantially flower shaped cross-sectional form as shown in figure 7. The single elongate strip of metal is stamped or pressed to form the plurality of dimples or mounds, and is folded such that a first end and a second end of the metal strip form a first outer connecting wall 713. The fin member is formed such that the outside diameter of the component in an unrestrained state, where the fin member is not inserted into a heat exchange tube is slightly larger than the outside diameter of the component in a constrained state when the component is fitted inside a heat exchange tube. The difference in diameter between the unrestrained and restrained conditions is accommodated by virtue of the two ends of the metal strip forming the first outer circumferential wall part 713 not overlapping each other and being slidable with respect to each other over a circumferential distance less than the circumferential distance of the outer circumferential wall portion.

[0095] The fin member may be formed of a resilient metal material, such that once formed it has a resilience and a tendency to expand into its as - formed shape, such that when fitted inside a heat exchange tube and therefore compressed to a slightly smaller diameter circular cylinder, such that the outer circumferential surfaces 713 - 718 contact and are urged radially outwardly against the inner circular cylindrical surface of a heat exchange tube, thereby ensuring good thermal contact between the fin member and the wall of the heat exchange tube.

[0096] In order to fit the fin member into a substantially straight circular cylindrical heat exchange tube, the fin member may be slightly compressed in the circumferential direction, slid into the inside of the heat exchange tube, and released. The resilience of the metal material of the fin member causes the fin to retain itself by friction inside the heat exchange tube.

[0097] The second fin assembly may be inserted inside a heat exchange tube and retained inside the heat exchange tube either by friction, or by welding, brazing or

soldering similarly as described herein before with reference to the first fin assembly.

[0098] Each of the first and second fin assemblies described hereinabove, when manufactured and unrestrained may form a first arc of less than 360°. When the first and/or second fin assembly is inserted into a heat exchange tube, the assembly may be compressed such that it extends over a greater angle of arc than in its uncompressed state. In the installed state the fin will extend over an angle of just under 360°.

[0099] The second fin assembly provides a plurality of radially extending elongate passages along a main length of the heat exchange tube, each said passage having a substantially truncated segment shape having an outer arcuate wall and an inner arcuate wall, said elongate passages being provided between the fin member and the inner wall of the heat exchange tube. There is also provided a central gas passage comprising a central circular cylindrical passage and a plurality of radially and circumferentially extending second passages, being substantially segment shaped in cross-section, wherein the second segment shaped portions alternate with the first set of substantially truncated segment shaped passages. The plurality of radially extending first elongate passages are separated from the main central passage by the fin walls. On passing through the second fin member, a single flow of gas is divided into a plurality of parallel gas passages by the fin member, and once passed through the fin member, the gas flow re-converges into a single gas flow.

[0100] In each of the first and second fin assemblies described herein, the fin assembly provides a plurality of fin walls which extend inwardly from an inner surface of said inner heat exchange tube towards a main central axis of said heat exchange tube, and which form a plurality of axially extending gas passages which occupy a substantially annular region in a direction perpendicular to said main central axis of said heat exchange tube.

[0101] Referring to figure 8 herein, there is illustrated schematically a third fin assembly 800 also suitable for use in the first embodiment cooler herein. The third fin assembly comprises of the same basic form as figure 7. Instead of the dimples being formed into the fin material, the material is pierced on one side, so as to form a plurality of semicircular apertures 801 in the fin walls, and semicircular projections 802 extending into the gas flow path. This opens a path for flow of some gas from an outer gas passage into the inner petal shaped gas passage and from the inner petal shaped gas passage to the adjacent outer gas passages.

[0102] Referring to figure 9 herein there is illustrated schematically in view from one end along an axial direction, part of a fin assembly in its installed condition. In this installed condition, a minimum distance 901 between any two adjacent fin surfaces is preferably 1.5mm or greater. Gaps smaller than this tend to cause excessively low gas velocities reducing heat exchange and increasing the likelihood of clogging of exhaust material between

the fins.

[0103] Referring to figure 9 herein there is illustrated schematically in view from one end along an axial direction, part of a fin assembly in its installed condition. In this installed condition, a minimum distance 901 between any two adjacent fin surfaces is preferably 1.5mm or greater. Gaps smaller than this tend to cause excessively low gas velocities reducing heat exchange and increasing the likelihood of clogging of exhaust material between the fins.

[0104] A gap 902 between the two ends of the formed fin assembly is required. If the two ends touched or overlapped when the fin assembly was in its installed condition, part of the fin assembly may not have the correct contact with the heat exchange tube (unless the contact is a result of friction fit locking clips, as described herein). The gap does not affect heat exchange. Heat conducted from the fin to the heat exchange tube is transferred at or near the interface 903 at the transition between the substantially radially extending fin walls 904, 905 and the arced perimeter portions 906. The fin assembly in its as manufactured state tends to have a greater external radius than the internal radius of the heat exchange tube into which it is designed to fit and needs to be compressed slightly in order to fit inside the heat exchange tube. The resilience of the material of which the fin assembly is made cause fin assembly to press against inner surface of the heat exchange tube when fitted therein.

[0105] Referring to Figure 10A herein, a pair of fin walls 904 and 905 and an outer fin connecting length 906 are shown in the fin - installed condition inside a heat exchange tube 1000. The fin set contacts with the heat exchange tube 1000 in a region near the bend between the substantially radially extending fin walls and the arc-shaped connecting portions between the fin walls. It can be seen that radius r_1 of the heat exchange tube is smaller than the radius r_2 of the arced outer surface of the connecting portion 906, as measured from the axial centre of the fin assembly. This ensures that the fin assembly contacts the heat exchange tube as near to the end of the fin walls as possible.

[0106] The difference in radii r_1 and r_2 should not be so great as to cause an excessive gap between the outer fin connecting portion 906 and the heat exchange tube. An excessive gap in this region would cause loss of heat exchange.

[0107] Referring to Figure 10B herein, when the fin is soldered or brazed to the heat exchange tube, a meniscus 1002 and 1003 is formed either side of the contact points between the fin assembly and the inside surface of the inner heat exchange tube. This meniscus ensures the best path for heat conduction. The braze will also fill the gap between the arced outer fin connecting length 906 and the heat exchange tube 1000, as shown in figure 11B further improving heat exchange.

[0108] As shown schematically in figure 10C herein, if r_1 is greater than r_2 then the centre of the outer fin connecting portion 906 will contact the heat exchange tube.

Even when brazed, the meniscus may not fill the gap between the outer surface of the arced connecting part of the fin assembly and the inner facing surface of the inner tube. This effectively increases the length of the fin wall and reduces heat exchange occurring through conduction between the fin assembly and the inner tube, leading to a less effective heat transfer than where the radially outermost ends of the fin walls contact the inner surface of the heat exchange tube, and are connected by brazing as shown in figure 10B herein.

[0109] Referring to Figure 11 herein, there is illustrated schematically part of a second heat exchanger device 1100 showing an internal heat exchange tube 1103 according to a further embodiment heat exchanger. The heat exchanger of figure 11 comprises a first flange 1101 at a first end of the heat exchanger; a second flange 1102 at a second end of the heat exchanger; an inner heat exchange tube 1103 extending between the first and second ends; and a corrugated end tube 1104 extending between one end of the inner heat exchange tube 1103 and the second flange 1102. The heat exchanger of figure 11 also comprises first and second outer substantially straight jacket sections and a central corrugated outer jacket section surrounding the inner heat exchange tube 1103, similarly as described with respect to the first cooler embodiment of figures 1 to 5 herein. The second heat exchanger also has a coolant inlet tube and a coolant outlet tube. The tube may be fitted with a set of internal fins as described with reference to figures 1 to 8 herein. Preferably, the fins will be attached to a smooth section and the dimples shown in figure 11 will be in a non finned area. Preferably, the internal fins occupy straight sections of the inner heat exchange tube. The outer jacket, internal fins, and coolant inlet and outlet tubes are omitted from figure 11 in order to show in more detail the structure of the internal heat exchange tube 1103.

[0110] The heat exchange tube 1103 comprises a single tubular metal member having a first substantially straight portion 1105; a curved or angled portion 1106; and a second substantially straight portion 1107. An end of the second substantially straight portion 1107 is connected to a first end of the corrugated end tube 1104. The entire heat exchange tube comprising the first and second straight sections 1105, 1107 and the curved section 1106 is in use surrounded by liquid coolant which is encased in a cavity between the heat exchange tube 1103 and first and second outer straight tubular sections and an outer corrugated section.

[0111] The tubular wall of the heat exchange tube is formed with a plurality of outwardly projecting mounds or dimples which project into the cavity in which the liquid coolant flows. The projecting dimples or mounds on the outside of the heat exchange tube correspond with respective recesses on the otherwise smooth internal heat exchange tube wall on the inside of the tube. The projections provide a relatively increased surface area for heat transfer between the gas on one side of the surface, and the liquid coolant on the other side of the surface,

compared to a straight circular cylindrical tube.

[0112] The effect of the dimples on the heat exchange tube was found to cause only a low increase in the turbulence of the exhaust gas. The dimples can be used on the straight portions of the heat exchange only, on the curved portion of the heat exchange tube only, or on both the straight and the curved portion.

[0113] Referring to Figure 12 herein there is shown a third co-axial cooler according to a third embodiment heat exchanger, having three bends and four straights. The cooler consists of a gas inlet boss 1201 a straight section 1202 with a coolant connection tube 1203, a first corrugated section 1204, a second straight section 1205, a second corrugated section 1206, a third straight section 1207 a third corrugated section 1208, a fourth section 1209 with a second coolant connection 1210 and a flange 1211. Inside the cooler is a heat exchange tube 1212 and (not shown in figure 12) a number of fins.

[0114] Corrugated sections 1204, 1206 and 1208 each have a small straight section either side of a bent section.

[0115] The heat exchange tube 1212 has a dimpled section (as illustrated in figure 11 herein) in the length inside the first straight section 1202. In this section there are no fins, this reduces heat exchange at the gas inlet and aids the reduction of localized boiling of coolant in the outer jacket surrounding the first straight section. The heat exchange tube 1212 inside the first corrugated section 1204 is also corrugated and has no fin. The heat exchange tube inside second straight section 1205 has a smooth surface and a fin brazed to it over at least part of its length. At both ends of the second straight section 1205, the tube has a single line of dimples. The heat exchange tube 1212 under the corrugated section 1206 is also corrugated and has no fin. The heat exchange tube 1212 inside the straight section 1207 has a dimpled section and no fin. The heat exchange tube 1212 inside the third corrugated section 1208 is also corrugated and has no fin. The heat exchange tube 1212 inside fourth straight section 1209 has a smooth surface and a fin brazed to it over at least part of its length. At the end of the fourth straight section adjacent to the third corrugated section 1208, the heat exchange tube has a single line of dimples. Thus the heat exchange tube is made of sections of smooth tubing with fins attached, a short length of tube either side of the finned area with dimples, straight sections with dimples without fins and a corrugated section without fins.

[0116] It is apparent to one skilled in the art that the gas could flow in the opposite direction entering the cooler at the flange 1211. This may be a preferred gas flow regime if there was a concern with boiling at the corrugated bend. The first finned section within the fourth straight section 1209 would have already substantially cooled the gas prior to the bend 1208 in the third corrugated section. All designs will be variations and dependant on the required application and boundary conditions.

[0117] Referring to Figure 13 herein, the third cooler

is shown assembled in its straight condition. Fins are brazed to the heat exchange tube in the second and fourth straight section regions 1205 and 1207. There are dimples on the heat exchange tube in the second, third and fourth straight regions 1205, 1207, 1209. The outer diameter formed by the crest of the dimples is nominally at the same diameter as the internal diameter of the outer tube. Tolerancing is set to enable assembly.

[0118] Once assembled the first corrugation at 1204 is bent. This action causes both the outer tube and the inner heat exchange tube to bend together. The assembly is then bent at the second corrugated section 1206 and finally at the third corrugated section 1208. By virtue of the dimples' outer diameter being nominally the same diameter as the inner diameter of the outer tube the heat exchange tube is maintained in a substantially concentric condition during bending.

[0119] Referring to Figure 14 herein there is shown an inner tube 1401 of the first embodiment heat exchanger tube 1401 and two sets of fins 1402 and 1403 from the heat exchanger shown in figure 1.

[0120] Referring to Figure 15 herein there is shown the heat exchange tube 1401 and one fin set 1403 in its as-manufactured condition. It can be seen that there is a substantial width gap 1500 between the ends of the fin form. The diameter of the fin in this condition is greater than the internal diameter of the heat exchange tube 1401.

[0121] Referring to Figure 16 herein there is shown one of the fin sets 1403 partially inserted into the heat exchange tube 1401. The gap 1600 between the ends of the fin form can now be seen to be substantially smaller than the gap 1500 in the fin set's unconstrained state. The fin set 1403 is now compressed and the elasticity of the material tries to open the fin set outwards. This ensures that close contact is maintained between the fin and heat exchange tube.

Fin Materials

[0122] In various embodiments, the internal fin members may be constructed of ferritic stainless steel. Ferritic stainless steel has a significantly higher thermal conductivity than 300 series stainless steel and was found to give a reduced gas out temperature of 18°C lower than the corresponding gas out temperature using equivalent fins made of stainless steel 321. The use of ferritic stainless steel fins compared to using stainless steel 321 reduced the gas out temperature by up to 18°C under equivalent operating conditions.

[0123] The fins may be manufactured from 309, 310 or Inconel.

Undulating Corrugated Fins

[0124] In addition to the embodiments described above, other fin geometries may be utilized in the cooler to further improve the rate of heat transfer between the

gas and liquid coolant. In general, the fins act as conduits for drawing heat from the center of the gas flow within an inner heat exchange tube to the outer walls of the inner heat exchange tube, which is in contact with a liquid coolant. In some instances, the fin geometry may be adjusted to cause increased turbulence in gas flowing through the passages defined by the fins. This increased turbulence encourages greater heat transfer from the gas to the fins.

[0125] One example of fin geometry that provides such increased turbulence is illustrated in Figures 17 and 18. Figure 17 depicts a portion of a corrugated undulating fin sheet 1700 in an unrolled state. Similar to other fin geometries shown in Figures 1-16, the fins in Figure 17 includes inwardly extending walls and arced outer connecting walls that collectively form a corrugated shape. The corrugations effectively form longitudinal channels or "fins." The fin sheet 1700 also includes lateral undulations that may perturb gas flowing longitudinally along the channels or fins, introducing turbulence that increases heat exchange from the gas to the fin sheet 1700.

[0126] The corrugations of fin sheet 1700 may form outer fin tips (e.g., outer fin tip 1701) and inner fin tips (e.g., inner fin tip 1702) connected to each other via connecting walls (e.g., connecting walls 1703 and 1704). In some embodiments, the outer fin tips may include a straight or arced portion that is substantially larger than the straight or arced portion of the inner fin tips. Such an asymmetrical geometry may provide increased contact between the outer fin tips and an inner surface of an inner heat exchange tube (when rolled in a substantially cylindrical shape, as shown in Figure 18). In general, an increase in surface area contact between the outer fin tips and an inner surface of an inner heat exchange tube increases the amount of heat transfer between the fins and the inner heat exchange tube.

[0127] In addition to increasing gas turbulence and heat transfer, the undulating and other nonlinear fin sheet geometries may also act to absorb thermal expansion of the fins, thereby reducing stresses within the fins, at the interface between the outer fin tips and an inner surface of an inner heat exchange tube, and/or at the interface between the fins and the bulkhead interface (e.g., fins within the finned heat exchange tube 2102 and the head plate 2101). During operation, the inner fin tips can become very hot-in some instances, at or near the temperature of the gas flowing therethrough-resulting in substantial thermal expansion. The undulations in the fin sheet 1700 may provide room for thermal expansion horizontally, or circumferentially when rolled into a substantially cylindrical fin assembly (e.g., as shown in Figure 18). This may reduce stresses resulting from thermal expansion pushing in the radially outward direction and/or in the coaxial direction (i.e., at the distal and/or proximal ends of the fin assembly).

[0128] The undulating fin sheet 1700 may be initially formed from a single strip of initially flat metal, having a smooth surface on both sides. Then, the strip may be pressed or otherwise formed into the shape illustrated in

Figure 17. The undulating fin sheet 1700 may be inserted into heat exchange cavities, including cavities that have cross-sectional shapes that are oval, circular or substantially rectangular. In some embodiments, the undulating fin sheet 1700 is rolled into an undulating radial fin assembly, such as fin assembly 1800 illustrated in Figure 18.

[0129] Figure 18 depicts substantially cylindrical undulating fin assembly 1800. Like other fin assemblies described herein, fin assembly 1800 may be inserted or fitted within an inner heat exchange tube, such that the arced outer connecting walls (such as outer connecting wall 1801) is at least partially in contact with the inner wall of the inner heat exchange tube.

[0130] During operation, hot gas flows from an inlet end of a heat exchange tube to an outlet end of the heat exchange tube. Gas may enter through the radially central region-including the region defined by the radially inwardly facing surfaces of the fin assembly-or through one of the channels formed from the radially outwardly facing surfaces of the fin assembly. As gas flows through one of these channels, it may collide with the walls of these channels, facilitating a transfer of heat from the gas to the fin walls. The heat from the fin walls may be drawn outwardly toward an inner heat exchange tube, which tube may be cooled using a liquid coolant.

[0131] Although Figure 18 depicts an axially sinusoidal or wave-like shape, other axial geometries that facilitate turbulence and/or exchange of heat from the gas to the fin walls may be used. For example, other geometries may have undulations that have a different frequency or amplitude than depicted in Figure 18. Other non-sinusoidal geometries may be used, such as square waves, triangle waves, or sawtooth waves, among other geometries. Furthermore, such other geometries may also be non-periodic, asymmetrical, or any other shape.

[0132] Figures 19A-19C show three elevated cross-sectional side views of portions of the finned heat exchange tubes. In each cooler shown, differently shaped connecting portions may be used, depending on the particular embodiment. For instance, an inlet or outlet region may be shaped to fit or abut another component within an engine. Additionally, some regions may adjust the coaxial diameter axially (i.e., a reducer), which may increase or decrease gas velocity flowing through those regions. It should be understood that the present disclosure is not limited to the examples specifically shown in Figures 19A-19C.

[0133] Referring to Figure 19A, cooler 1900 includes first substantially straight portion 1901, flexible corrugated central section 1902, angled section 1903, second substantially straight portion 1904, and cooling tube section 1906, which contains undulating fin assembly 1800. As shown, first substantially straight portion 1901 and flexible corrugated central section 1902 have approximately the same diameter, excluding the diameter of the tubular bellows corrugations. Angled section 1903 increases the diameter of the annular cavity between flex-

ible corrugated central section 1902 and second substantially straight portion 1904. Second substantially straight portion 1904 is coupled to cooling tube section 1906, which contains undulating fin assembly 1800. In this arrangement, gas may flow from right to left or left to right, depending on the particular implementation.

[0134] Referring to Figure 19B, cooler 1910 includes first substantially straight portion 1911, flexible corrugated central section 1912, second substantially straight portion 1913, and cooling tube section 1916, which contains undulating fin assembly 1800. As shown, first substantially straight portion 1911, flexible corrugated central section 1912, and second substantially straight portion 1913 have approximately the same diameter, including the diameter of the tubular bellows corrugations. Second substantially straight portion 1913 is coupled to cooling tube section 1916, which contains undulating fin assembly 1800. In this arrangement, gas may flow from right to left or left to right, depending on the particular implementation.

[0135] Referring to Figure 19C, cooler 1920 includes first substantially straight portion 1921, angled section 1922, flexible corrugated central section 1923, second substantially straight portion 1924, and cooling tube section 1926, which contains undulating fin assembly 1800. As shown, angle section 1922 increases the diameter of the annular cavity between first substantially straight portion 1921 and flexible corrugated central section 1923, including the diameter of the tubular bellows corrugations. Flexible corrugated central section 1923 is coupled to second substantially straight portion 1924, which is itself coupled to cooling tube section 1926, which contains undulating fin assembly 1800. In this arrangement, gas may flow from right to left or left to right, depending on the particular implementation.

[0136] Figures 19A-19C depict different cooler configurations, each having respective advantages. For instance, the tubular bellows portion of a cooler may be include "bellows out" corrugations (e.g., tubular bellows 1912 and 1923) or "bellows in" corrugations (e.g., tubular bellows 1902). From a manufacturing standpoint, it may be easier to produce "bellows out" corrugations compared to producing "bellows in" corrugations. However, "bellows out" corrugations may provide less volume for one or more finned heat exchange tubes to fit into compared to "bellows in" corrugations. Thus, depending on a desired amount of cooling and manufacturing cost or time constraints, heat exchangers of the present application may use "bellows out" corrugations, "bellows in" corrugations, or some combination thereof.

Multiple Fin Lengths

[0137] In some embodiments, a fin assembly may include fins having two or more different lengths. Figure 20 shows a perspective view of a portion of a fin assembly 2000 with three different fin lengths. In embodiments where all of the fins have a uniform length, the gap be-

tween the fins may become narrow, leading to increasing drag on gases passing near those parts of the fin. This may result in lower gas velocities and decreased heat exchange between the gas and the fin walls. One way of avoiding the issues caused by narrow channels, while maintaining a large number of fins, is to vary the lengths of successive fins. Fin assembly 2000 varies the lengths of successive fins by utilizing three different fin lengths-repeating a series of short fins (e.g., fin 2001), medium fins (e.g., fin 2002), and long fins (e.g., fin 2003)-in order to fit many fin structures within fin assembly 2000, without creating an overly narrow gap between the fins.

[0138] While Figure 20 depicts a fin assembly 2000 having three different fin lengths, it should be understood that any number of fin lengths may be used without departing from the scope of the present application. Successive fins in other fin assemblies may also not follow a symmetrical or periodic fin length pattern. The number of fins and the number of fin lengths used in a particular fin assembly may depend on the fin material, thickness, the diameter of the inner heat exchange tube, and a desired amount of cooling, among other possible factors.

Arrayed Fin Assembly

[0139] In some embodiments, a cooler may include a region formed from multiple heat exchange tubes-such as fin assembly 2000 or other fin assemblies described herein-arranged substantially in parallel to each other in the coaxial direction. Each of these heat exchangers may include an inner heat exchange tube surrounding a fin assembly. Collectively, the plurality of heat exchangers may be surrounded by a tubular outer body, forming a cavity between the inner walls of the tubular outer body and the outer walls of the inner heat exchange tubes of the heat exchangers. Liquid coolant may flow through this cavity, drawing heat away from gas passing through the heat exchangers. Hot gas provided to the heat exchanger array may pass through the heat exchangers, and furthermore may pass through channels within those heat exchangers defined by the fin assemblies therein. In this manner, greater heat transfer may be achieved over non-arrayed fin assemblies or coolers.

[0140] As described herein, each heat exchanger within an array may be referred to as a "coaxial cooler," and a plurality of coaxial coolers may be referred to as a "bulkhead assembly."

[0141] Figure 21 illustrates a gas domain portion of bulkhead assembly 2100, which includes a plurality of finned heat exchange tubes (such as finned heat exchange tube 2102) or round radial fin tubes arranged substantially parallel to each other. The inlets of the coaxial coolers may be coupled to a head plate 2101, which may be coupled with other sections of a cooler that act as a channel for inlet or outlet gas. Although not illustrated in Figure 21, bulkhead assembly 2100 may include a tubular outer wall surrounding the plurality of coaxial coolers. Such a tubular outer wall may have a diameter ap-

proximately the same as that of the head plate 2101. The tubular outer body may include inlet and outlet sections that allow liquid coolant to flow between and among the outer surfaces of the plurality of coaxial coolers, thereby cooling the gas flowing through those coolers.

[0142] Although Figure 21 illustrates coaxial coolers having fin assemblies with varying fin heights (e.g., fin assembly 2000 shown in Figure 20), other bulkhead assemblies may use coaxial coolers with other fin types described herein. It should be understood that the varying fin heights shown in Figure 21 is merely an example, and that the present application includes bulkhead coolers with various types of fin assemblies.

Slotted Fin Assembly

[0143] During operation, different portions of a fin assembly used for heat exchange may have significant differences in temperature. For example, the radially outward walls, which are in contact with the inner heat exchange tube (where coolant flows) may be substantially cooler than it's the radially inward walls, located deeper inside and farther away from the inner heat exchange tube. In some instances, this temperature gradient may not be large enough to produce detrimental effects. However, in applications where the temperature gradient is large (e.g., a 90° C liquid coolant and a 1000° C post-combustion gas), the large temperature differential spanning across the height of the fin (i.e., the radial direction) may create additional stress. Specifically, since heat causes materials to expand, the large temperature differential may cause portions of fins or of the fin assembly to experience substantially different amounts of thermal expansion. As one example, the hotter "tip" (radially inward section) of the fin may expand considerably compared to the colder "tip" (radially outward section, closer to the inner heat exchange tube).

[0144] This differential expansion may result in substantial stress levels in the fin assembly, particularly at or near the meeting point of the fin with the inner heat exchange tube. If the thermal expansion causes the fin to push on the inner heat exchange tube with enough force, the inner heat exchange tube may crack or fracture, providing a leak path through which the gas and liquid coolant may mix. This type of failure can be significant, especially in systems where the coolant recirculates cooled gas directly into combustion chambers of an engine.

[0145] To reduce the mechanical stress applied by the fins to the inner heat exchange tube due to differential thermal expansion, decoupling slots may be provided along the fin height to provide for coaxial, rather than radial, thermal expansion of the fins. The slots may be gaps, spanning both radially along the fin height, as well as coaxially along the fin assembly length. As the radially inward hot fin tip expands, the slots provide room for thermal growth coaxially to reduce the amount of fin stress applied radially toward the inner heat exchange tube.

[0146] Figure 22A illustrates an example fin assembly 2200 with decoupling slots having uniform width. As shown, slots 2201-2204 extend radially outward from the inner fin tips 2211-2215 (i.e., the radially innermost section of the fin). In Figure 22A, decoupling slots 2201-2204 are of uniform width in the coaxial direction. Additionally, the proximal and distal ends of fin assembly 2200 do not terminate at the same length; rather, the radially outward sections of the proximal and distal ends of the fin assembly 2200 are longer than the radially inward sections of the proximal and distal ends of the fin assembly 2200. By introducing slots 2201-2204, one section of a hotter part of the fin assembly 2200 may expand coaxially, rather than radially, thereby accommodating thermal expansion and reducing the mechanical stress applied to inner heat exchange tubes or other fluid separation surfaces.

[0147] Figure 22B illustrates a cutaway perspective view of the fin assembly 2200 with uniform width decoupling slots. As shown in the cutaway view, slots 2205 and 2206 may begin at the radially inward fin tip 2211 and extend radially outward toward the outer fin tips 2221 and 2226. Likewise, slots 2207 and 2208 may begin at the radially inward fin tip 2215 and extend radially outward toward outer fin tips 2225 and 2226. Note that the slots may not extend to the entire radial length of the fins.

[0148] In some implementations, the minimum coaxial width of slots 2201-2204 may be 0.2 millimeters. However, it should be understood that various slot widths may be used to effect different levels of cooling and/or account for different amounts of thermal expansion, without departing from the scope of the present disclosure.

[0149] Figure 23A illustrates an example fin assembly 2300 with decoupling slots 2301-2309 having non-uniform width. Decoupling slots 2301-2309 may be of non-uniform width along the radial length of the fins in the coaxial direction. In Figure 23A, slots 2301-2309 are of a first coaxial width at the radially inward fin tips. Moving radially outward, the coaxial width of the slots widens, then narrows to form a shape similar to a segment of a circle. Other slots may take the shape of an omega, an ellipse, or any other geometry having non-uniform coaxial width in the radial direction. Such slot geometries may further reduce the mechanical stress applied to an inner heat exchange tube due to thermal expansion of the fin assembly.

[0150] Figure 23B illustrates a cutaway perspective view of the fin assembly 2300 with non-uniform width decoupling slots 2301-2309. As shown in the cutaway view, slots 2301-2303 may begin at the radially inward fin tip 2311 and extend radially outward toward outer fin tips 2321 and 2322. Likewise, slots 2304-2306 may begin at radially inward fin tip 2312 and extend radially outward toward outer fin tips 2322 and 2323. Further, slots 2307-2309 may begin at radially inward fin tip 2313 and extend radially outward toward outer fin tips 2323 and 2324. The non-uniform width may be embodied as a straight slot portion (e.g., straight slot portion 2341) near the radially inward fin tips (e.g., radially inward fin tip

2311) and a circular segment portion (e.g., circular segment portion 2342) near the radially outward fin tips (e.g., radially outward fin tips 2321 and 2322). Note that slots 2301-2309 may not extend to the entire radial length of the fins.

[0151] The particular dimensions of non-uniform slots may be adjusted to suit a desired amount of cooling, the expected heat differential between the gas and liquid coolant, and the size and strength of the inner heat exchange tube, among other factors. If the width of the slot becomes too large, the amount of material between slots may become too narrow, and the amount of heat transfer effected by the fin assembly may diminish. On the other hand, if the width of the slot is too narrow, thermal expansion may lead to high mechanical stress and cracking of the inner heat exchange tube. Thus, the particular geometry, dimensions, number, and placements of the slots may depend upon the specific implementation or system in which the cooler is used.

[0152] Furthermore, as shown in Figures 22A and 23A, the distal and proximal ends of a fin assembly may include cutaways of material in the shape of partial slots, such that the coaxial length of the fin assembly at the radially outward fin tips (where there is no cutaway or partial slot) is greater than the coaxial length of the fin assembly at the radially inward tips (where there is a cutaway or partial slot). Such partial slots may provide room for coaxial thermal expansion at the distal and proximal ends of a fin assembly.

[0153] The ratio between the width of material between slots and the widest part of two slots (i.e., the slot "pitch") may vary among different implementations. In some embodiments, the slot pitch may be greater than or equal to 0.25; in other words, successive slots may be separated by at least four times the width of the slots.

Effect of Relative Flow Direction

[0154] The embodiment coolers herein can be connected in circuit so that the gas flow and liquid coolant flow can be changed so that the gas coolant are in contra flow (in the opposite direction to each other), or in parallel flow (in the same direction as each other). Computer modelling tests found that by connecting the gas flow and liquid coolant flow in parallel a significant reduction in the boiling index could be achieved, without any significant difference in rate of heat exchange. Therefore, in some applications, connection of the gas flow and liquid coolant flow in parallel may be preferred.

Locking Clips

[0155] As described above, a fin assembly may be formed from a single strip or sheet of initially flat metal. The sheet may then be pressed and formed into "fins," and then rolled into a radial fin assembly. In some embodiments, the two outer edges of the sheet touch or are in close proximity to each other once the sheet is rolled

into the radial fin assembly (e.g., as shown in Figure 6, where a gap is present in the very middle of arced outer connecting wall 613). This gap may accommodate manufacturing tolerances, allowing the fin assembly to be squeezed and fit into inner heat exchange tubes of slightly different dimensions.

[0156] In some embodiments, the partially open fin gap may include "locking clips" which mechanically couple the two outer ends of the fin sheet and hold together the radial fin assembly. Figure 24 illustrates an example set of locking clips 2400. The set of locking clips 2400 may be formed from two opposite ends of a corrugated fin sheet that is rolled or otherwise formed into a substantially cylindrical shape, such that opposite ends of the sheet meet near the same circumferential location. The set of locking clips 2400 may include a first end 2410 and a second end 2420 that collectively form, in some embodiments, a radially outward fin tip 2401.

[0157] In the example set of locking clips 2400 depicted in Figure 24, first end 2410 includes a tab 2411 (extending circumferentially from first end 2410) that partially overlaps a portion of second end 2420, and is disposed between tabs 2421 and 2422. Tab 2411 is operably configured to engage with the partially overlapping portion of second end 2420 in an interference or friction fit. Likewise, tabs 2421 and 2422 extend circumferentially from second end 2420, both of which partially overlap respective portions of first end 2410. Tabs 2421 and 2422 are also operably configured to engage with partially overlapping portions of first end 2410 in an interference or friction fit. Collectively, the locking clips may serve to mechanically secure a fin assembly in a substantially cylindrical shape.

[0158] As shown in Figure 24, successive locking clips may alternate, such that successive tabs are formed from opposite sides of the fin. Note that "raised" protrusions described above may refer to a change in length in the radially inward or radially outward direction. Collectively, the locking clips 2400 form a portion of a radially outward fin wall 2401 (i.e., an arced outer fin in contact with or close to the inner heat exchange tube).

[0159] In non-locking clip embodiments, the size of the gap between the two ends of the fin sheet may depend on the exact size of the inner heat exchange tube, which constrains the radial fin assembly from unrolling. In locking clip embodiments, the locking clips may act as mechanically secure fasteners that maintain a consistent gap dimension between the ends of the sheet that form the gap. A consistent gap width may be beneficial for certain manufacturing processes, such as brazing.

Retention Features

[0160] When assembling a cooler prior to brazing, it may be desired to have cooler components that can be assembled without moving relative to each other. Some interfaces between components within a cooler may be tack welded, while other joints may be press fit or me-

chanically secured via retention.

[0161] If a component is fitted into a cooler by retention, the retention method generally needs to be accurate enough to retain the component in its correct position. In the present application, an outer body tube or outer shell may be retained between two reducer castings. The outer body tube or shell may need to fit closely to the retaining features in order to maintain its proper position. In some instances, a square retention feature may act as a back-stop against which the outer body tube may abut; however, a square retention feature is poor for braze paste or welding, as the paste may not flow in a direction that forms a secure weld or joint.

[0162] Some embodiments herein may include an angled retention feature that provides an accurate alignment for brazing or welding of adjacent components, such as a tubular bellows section and fin assembly. In some embodiments, the angled retention feature may include a chamfered or angled portion between 15 and 75 degrees with respect to the surface of the tubular outer body.

[0163] Figure 25 depicts a portion of a cooler 2500 where tubular bellows section 2501 is retention fit adjacent to coaxial cooler section 2502. Coaxial cooler section 2502 includes tubular outer body 2503 and fin assembly 2504. As shown, tubular bellows section 2501 includes lip 2505 that slides over a portion of tubular outer body 2503. The end of lip 2505 may abut or be in close proximity to angled retention feature 2506. In this arrangement, braze paste or soldering material may be applied to angled retention feature 2506 which, when melted, may flow toward the joint formed between angled retention feature 2506 and lip 2505. Angled retention feature 2506 allows the braze paste to be applied in an area that is not directly above the joint, while also improving the flow of the braze paste towards the joint during brazing.

Other Variations

[0164] In various embodiments disclosed herein, and variations thereof within the scope of this disclosure, a coaxial cooler having a heat transfer tube, comprises at least in part, one or more straight sections having a plain or smooth surface. The plain surface ensures good coolant flow over the heat exchange surface. Eddies of low coolant flow present in the roots of the corrugations may be eliminated, and boiling may thereby be very significantly reduced. Further, as the heat exchange surfaces may be plain or smooth, the drag caused by those surfaces on passing gas may be much reduced, and so gas pressure drop may be significantly reduced in comparison to a conventional corrugated heat exchange tube.

[0165] In general, providing a smooth heat exchange surface reduces turbulence, but also reduces heat exchange. To achieve a relatively high heat exchange per unit length, a plurality of fins are joined to an inner surface of a heat exchange tube. The heat transfer tube may be

a plain or smooth surface over its whole length, including any bends in the tube.

[0166] Alternatively, the heat exchange tube may have corrugations on the bend portion, or on a section of the straight portion, or on both. The corrugations may be either annular or helical. The corrugated section may have a varying pitch, which improves performance of the heat exchanger, or facilitates improved assembly of the heat exchanger.

[0167] Adapter tubes for the coolant inlet and outlet which join the main heat exchanger body may be pressed, cast, machined, sintered or 3-D printed in order to minimise their size. For cost reasons, the adapters may be formed.

[0168] These exchangers may operate with the gas flow in contraflow to the liquid coolant, or with the gas flow coincident or parallel with the liquid coolant flow.

[0169] An outer tube which is positioned around a central heat exchange tube may be partially corrugated or may be plain and smooth. Where corrugated, the corrugations may be either annular or helical. The corrugated section may comprise a varying pitch along its length, to improve performance, or to improve assembly.

[0170] The fin components may be made of austenitic or ferritic stainless steel. Ferritic stainless steel has a high thermal conductivity which may make the fins more effective for heat transfer. For very high temperature applications, an Inconel fin may be used.

[0171] The fins may be attached to the inside of the heat exchange tube by a brazing process or by a welding process. The fins may be formed in a rolled strip forming an arc between 0° and 350°. The natural resilience of the strip material when inserted into the inside of a heat exchange tube increases the angle of the arc, pushing the fin out to contact the heat exchange tube surface.

[0172] Successive fins may be of the same length or differing lengths. Where fins are all of the same length, then as the fins extend towards the centre of the tube, the gap between the fins may become small, causing increased drag on gases passing in the vicinity of those parts of the fin, leading to low velocities and relatively poor heat exchange. To ensure that the fins are as efficient as possible, the fins may be attached to the heat exchange tube as near to right angles to the inner circular cylindrical surface of the tube as possible. This can be achieved by having a sharp radius of curvature on the fin on the transition from the circumferential part of the fin to the radially extending part of the fin which extends radially into the heat exchange tube. Having a good braze meniscus on the joint between the fin and the heat exchange tube also helps to achieve high heat transfer efficiency between the fin and the tube.

[0173] There may be between 1 and 30 individual radially extending fins inside the inner tube. The cooler may optimally have a heat exchange tube inner diameter of between 5 mm and 50 mm in preferred embodiments.

[0174] Any of the individual fins structures and fin assemblies disclosed herein may be used with any one of

the heat exchanger embodiments disclosed herein in any combination.

[0175] Dimples formed outward from the heat exchange tube may be used to improve heat exchange and to centre the heat exchange tube inside the outer tube. The dimples aid concentricity of the inner tube to the outer casing or tube, especially when a cooler has more than one bend.

Claims

1. A heat exchanger (1100) for cooling a first fluid using a second fluid, said heat exchanger comprising:

at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401) for exchanging heat between said first fluid and said second fluid, said at least one inner heat exchange tube having an inner surface and an outer surface; a tubular outer body (112, 1202, 1205) surrounding at least part of said at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401), said tubular outer body having an inner surface and an outer surface; wherein the first fluid flows through the at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401) and the second fluid flows between the outer surface of the inner heat exchange tube and the inner surface of the tubular outer body (112, 1202, 1205); and a substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material forming a plurality of fins (600) configured for orientation within said at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401), wherein at least one of said plurality of fins is in contact with the inner surface of the at least one inner heat exchange tube

characterised in that:

a particular fin of said plurality of fins comprises:

an outer connecting wall (613) positioned adjacent to the inner surface of said at least one inner heat exchange tube (1000, 1401), said outer connecting wall (613) having a pair of opposing ends, a pair of substantially straight fin walls (602, 607) extending radially inwardly from the opposing ends of said outer connecting wall (613), respectively, each of said straight fin walls (602, 607) converging toward a central axis of said at least one inner heat exchange tube, and a gap (902) positioned within said outer connecting wall (613), said gap (902) having been formed between a first end and a second end of a single elongate strip of material, wherein such single elongate strip

of material is folded to form said substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material, such that said first end, said gap (902) and said second end collectively form the outer connecting wall (613).

2. The heat exchanger of claim 1, wherein the portion of the first end of the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet includes one or more raised protrusions that at least partially overlap the portion of the second end of the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet.

3. The heat exchanger of claim 1, wherein one or more of the plurality of fins includes undulations (1701, 1704) for increasing turbulence in the first fluid, each of said undulations oriented along the longitudinal axis of said at least one inner heat exchange tube.

4. The heat exchanger of claim 1, wherein one or more of the plurality of fins have a substantially nonlinear shape in a direction of a longitudinal axis of said at least one inner heat exchange tube for increasing turbulence in the first fluid.

5. The heat exchanger of claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of fins includes one or more radially-extending slots (2201, 2204).

6. The heat exchanger of claim 1, wherein the one or more radially-extending slots have non-uniform width (2301, 2309) as measured along the longitudinal axis of said at least one inner heat exchange tube.

7. The heat exchanger of claim 6, wherein the one or more radially-extending slots includes a straight portion (2341) and a circular segment portion collectively forming a bulb-shaped slot.

8. The heat exchanger of claim 6, wherein the one or more radially-extending slots (2201, 2204) each have a minimum width of at least 0.2 millimeters over at least a portion of the respective slot.

9. The heat exchanger of claim 1, wherein the plurality of fins further comprise at least two different fin lengths, a first fin length and a second fin length, each of which first and second fin lengths extending inwardly by different radial distances towards the longitudinal axis of said at least one inner heat exchange tube.

10. The heat exchanger of claim 1, further comprising:

a tubular bellows (112) operably affixed to at least one end of said inner heat exchange tube, said tubular bellows (112) including an outer lip, wherein the outer lip at least

partially overlaps the tubular outer body; and wherein the tubular outer body includes an angled protrusion (2506) extending radially outward from the tubular outer body, wherein a distal end of the outer lip abuts the angled protrusion. 5

11. The heat exchanger of claim 10, wherein the tubular bellows is positioned radially outwardly of the at least one inner heat exchange tube at a position where the substantially cylindrical corrugated sheet of material forming the plurality of fins is not positioned radially thereunder. 10
12. The heat exchanger of claim 1, wherein the at least one heat exchange tube comprises a plurality of finned heat exchange tubes (2102) arranged substantially parallel to each other. 15

Patentansprüche 20

1. Wärmetauscher (1100) zum Kühlen eines ersten Fluids unter Verwendung eines zweiten Fluids, wobei der Wärmetauscher umfasst:

mindestens ein inneres Wärmetauscherrohr (1000, 1401) zum Austauschen von Wärme zwischen dem ersten Fluid und dem zweiten Fluid, wobei das mindestens eine innere Wärmetauscherrohr eine Innenfläche und eine Außenfläche aufweist; einen rohrförmigen Außenkörper (112, 1202, 1205), der das mindestens eine innere Wärmetauscherrohr (1000, 1401) zumindest teilweise umgibt, wobei der rohrförmige Außenkörper eine Innenfläche und eine Außenfläche aufweist; wobei das erste Fluid durch das mindestens eine innere Wärmetauscherrohr (1000, 1401) strömt und das zweite Fluid zwischen der Außenfläche des inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs und der Innenfläche des rohrförmigen Außenkörpers (112, 1202, 1205) strömt; und eine im Wesentlichen zylindrische gewellte Materialbahn, die eine Vielzahl von Rippen (600) bildet, die zur Ausrichtung innerhalb des mindestens einen inneren Wärmeaustauschrohrs (1000, 1401) konfiguriert ist, wobei mindestens eine der Vielzahl von Rippen mit der Innenfläche des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs in Kontakt steht, 50

dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass:
eine bestimmte Rippe der Vielzahl von Rippen umfasst:

eine äußere Verbindungswand (613), die angrenzend an die Innenfläche des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs

(1000, 1401) positioniert ist, wobei die äußere Verbindungswand (613) ein Paar von gegenüberliegenden Enden aufweist, ein Paar von im Wesentlichen geraden Rippenwänden (602, 607), die sich jeweils von den gegenüberliegenden Enden der äußeren Verbindungswand (613) radial nach innen erstrecken, wobei jede der geraden Rippenwände (602, 607) in Richtung einer Mittelachse des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs konvergiert, und einen Spalt (902), der innerhalb der äußeren Verbindungswand (613) positioniert ist, wobei der Spalt (902) zwischen einem ersten Ende und einem zweiten Ende eines einzelnen langgestreckten Materialstreifens gebildet wurde, wobei dieser einzelne langgestreckte Materialstreifen gefaltet ist, um die im Wesentlichen zylindrische gewellte Materialbahn derart zu bilden, dass das erste Ende, der Spalt (902) und das zweite Ende zusammen die äußere Verbindungswand (613) bilden.

2. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, wobei der Abschnitt des ersten Endes der im Wesentlichen zylindrischen gewellten Bahn einen oder mehrere erhabene Vorsprünge beinhaltet, die den Abschnitt des zweiten Endes der im Wesentlichen zylindrischen gewellten Bahn zumindest teilweise überlappen. 25
3. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, wobei eine oder mehrere der Vielzahl von Rippen Wellungen (1701, 1704) zum Erhöhen der Turbulenz in dem ersten Fluid beinhalten, wobei jede der Wellungen entlang der Längsachse des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs ausgerichtet ist. 30
4. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, wobei eine oder mehrere der Vielzahl von Rippen eine im Wesentlichen nichtlineare Form in einer Richtung einer Längsachse des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs aufweisen, um die Turbulenz in dem ersten Fluid zu erhöhen. 35
5. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, wobei mindestens eine der Vielzahl von Rippen einen oder mehrere sich radial erstreckende Schlitze (2201, 2204) beinhaltet. 40
6. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, wobei der eine oder die mehreren sich radial erstreckenden Schlitze eine ungleichmäßige Breite (2301, 2309) gemessen entlang der Längsachse des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs aufweisen. 45
7. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 6, wobei der eine oder die mehreren sich radial erstreckenden Schlitze 50

einen geraden Abschnitt (2341) und einen kreisförmigen Segmentabschnitt beinhalten, die zusammen einen zwiebelartigen Schlitz bilden.

8. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 6, wobei der eine oder die mehreren sich radial erstreckenden Schlitze (2201, 2204) jeweils eine minimale Breite von mindestens 0,2 Millimetern über mindestens einen Abschnitt des jeweiligen Schlitzes aufweisen. 5
9. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Vielzahl von Rippen ferner mindestens zwei unterschiedliche Rippenlängen, eine erste Rippenlänge und eine zweite Rippenlänge, umfasst, wobei sich die erste und die zweite Rippenlänge jeweils um unterschiedliche radiale Abstände nach innen in Richtung der Längsachse des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs erstrecken. 10 15
10. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, ferner umfassend: 20

einen rohrförmigen Balg (112), der betriebsfähig an mindestens einem Ende des inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs befestigt ist, wobei der rohrförmige Balg (112) eine Außenlippe beinhaltet, wobei die Außenlippe den rohrförmigen Außenkörper zumindest teilweise überlappt; und wobei der rohrförmige Außenkörper einen abgewinkelten Vorsprung (2506) beinhaltet, der sich von dem rohrförmigen Außenkörper radial nach außen erstreckt, wobei ein distales Ende der Außenlippe an den abgewinkelten Vorsprung anstößt. 25 30
11. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 10, wobei der rohrförmige Balg radial außerhalb des mindestens einen inneren Wärmetauscherrohrs an einer Position positioniert ist, an der die im Wesentlichen zylindrische gewellte Materialbahn, welche die Vielzahl von Rippen bildet, nicht radial darunter positioniert ist. 35 40
12. Wärmetauscher nach Anspruch 1, wobei das mindestens eine Wärmetauscherrohr eine Vielzahl von gerippten Wärmetauscherrohren (2102) umfasst, die im Wesentlichen parallel zueinander angeordnet sind. 45 50

Revendications

1. Échangeur de chaleur (1100) pour refroidir un premier fluide en utilisant un deuxième fluide, ledit échangeur de chaleur comprenant : 55

au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne (1000, 1401) pour échanger de la chaleur entre

ledit premier fluide et ledit deuxième fluide, ledit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne ayant une surface interne et une surface externe ;

un corps externe tubulaire (112, 1202, 1205) entourant au moins une partie dudit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne (1000, 1401), ledit corps externe tubulaire ayant une surface interne et une surface externe ;

dans lequel le premier fluide s'écoule à travers l'au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne (1000, 1401) et le deuxième fluide s'écoule entre la surface externe du tube d'échange de chaleur interne et la surface interne du corps externe tubulaire (112, 1202, 1205) ; et

une feuille de matériau ondulée sensiblement cylindrique formant une pluralité d'ailettes (600) configurées pour une orientation à l'intérieur dudit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne (1000, 1401), dans lequel au moins une de ladite pluralité d'ailettes est en contact avec la surface interne de l'au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne

caractérisé en ce que :

une ailette particulière de ladite pluralité d'ailettes comprend :

une paroi de raccordement externe (613) positionnée adjacente à la surface interne dudit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne (1000, 1401), ladite paroi de raccordement externe (613) ayant une paire d'extrémités opposées,

une paire de parois d'ailettes sensiblement droites (602, 607) s'étendant radialement vers l'intérieur depuis les extrémités opposées de ladite paroi de raccordement externe (613), respectivement, chacune desdites parois d'ailettes droites (602, 607) convergeant vers un axe central dudit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne, et un espace (902) positionné à l'intérieur de ladite paroi de raccordement externe (613), ledit espace (902) ayant été formé entre une première extrémité et une seconde extrémité d'une bande allongée unique de matériau, dans lequel cette bande allongée unique de matériau est pliée pour former ladite feuille de matériau ondulée sensiblement cylindrique, de telle sorte que ladite première extrémité, ledit espace (902) et ladite seconde extrémité forment collectivement la paroi de raccordement externe (613).

2. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la partie de la première extrémité de la feuille ondulée sensiblement cylindrique comprend une ou

plusieurs saillies surélevées qui chevauchent au moins partiellement la partie de la seconde extrémité de la feuille ondulée sensiblement cylindrique.

3. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, dans lequel une ou plusieurs de la pluralité d'ailettes comprennent des ondulations (1701, 1704) pour augmenter la turbulence dans le premier fluide, chacune desdites ondulations étant orientée le long de l'axe longitudinal dudit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne. 5
10
4. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, dans lequel une ou plusieurs de la pluralité d'ailettes ont une forme sensiblement non linéaire dans une direction d'un axe longitudinal dudit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne pour augmenter la turbulence dans le premier fluide. 15
5. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, dans lequel au moins l'une de la pluralité d'ailettes comprend une ou plusieurs fentes s'étendant radialement (2201, 2204). 20
6. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, dans lequel l'une ou plusieurs fentes s'étendant radialement ont une largeur non uniforme (2301, 2309) telle que mesurée le long de l'axe longitudinal dudit au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne. 25
30
7. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 6, dans lequel l'une ou plusieurs fentes s'étendant radialement comprennent une partie droite (2341) et une partie de segment circulaire formant collectivement une fente en forme de bulbe. 35
8. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 6, dans lequel l'une ou plusieurs fentes s'étendant radialement (2201, 2204) ont chacune une largeur minimale d'au moins 0,2 millimètre sur au moins une partie de la fente respective. 40
9. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la pluralité d'ailettes comprend en outre au moins deux longueurs d'ailettes différentes, une première longueur d'ailette et une deuxième longueur d'ailette, chacune desquelles première et deuxième longueurs d'ailette s'étendant vers l'intérieur sur des distances radiales différentes vers l'axe longitudinal dudit au moins un tube d'échangeur de chaleur interne. 45
50
10. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, comprenant en outre : 55
un soufflet tubulaire (112) fixé de manière fonctionnelle à au moins une extrémité dudit tube d'échange de chaleur interne, ledit soufflet tu-

bulaire (112) comprenant une lèvre externe, dans lequel la lèvre externe chevauche au moins partiellement le corps tubulaire externe ; et

dans lequel le corps externe tubulaire comprend une saillie coudée (2506) s'étendant radialement vers l'extérieur depuis le corps externe tubulaire, dans lequel une extrémité distale de la lèvre externe vient en butée contre la saillie coudée.

11. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 10, dans lequel le soufflet tubulaire est positionné radialement vers l'extérieur de l'au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur interne à une position où la feuille de matériau ondulée sensiblement cylindrique formant la pluralité d'ailettes n'est pas positionnée radialement en dessous.
12. Échangeur de chaleur selon la revendication 1, dans lequel l'au moins un tube d'échange de chaleur comprend une pluralité de tubes d'échange de chaleur à ailettes (2102) disposés sensiblement parallèlement les uns aux autres.

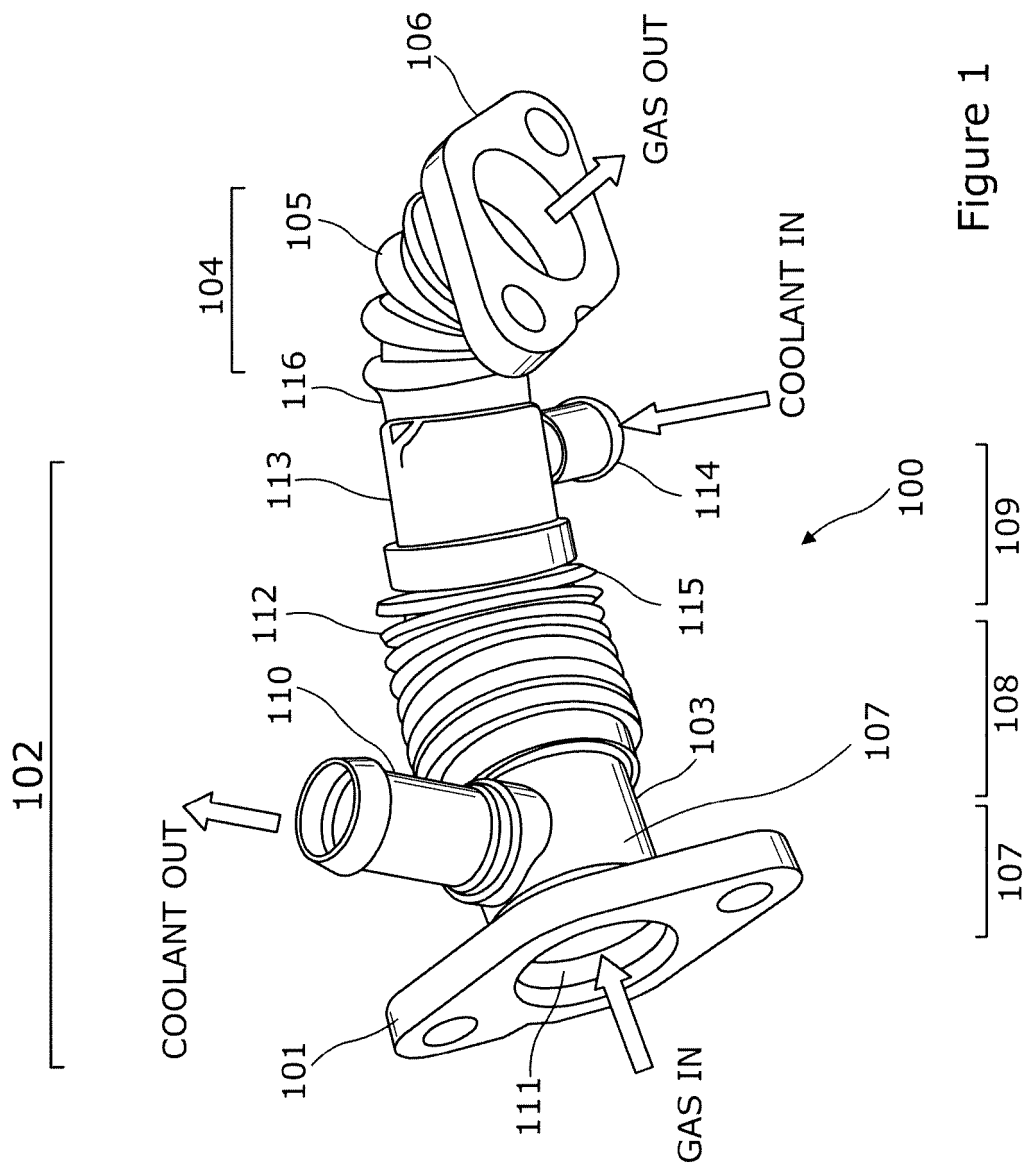


Figure 1

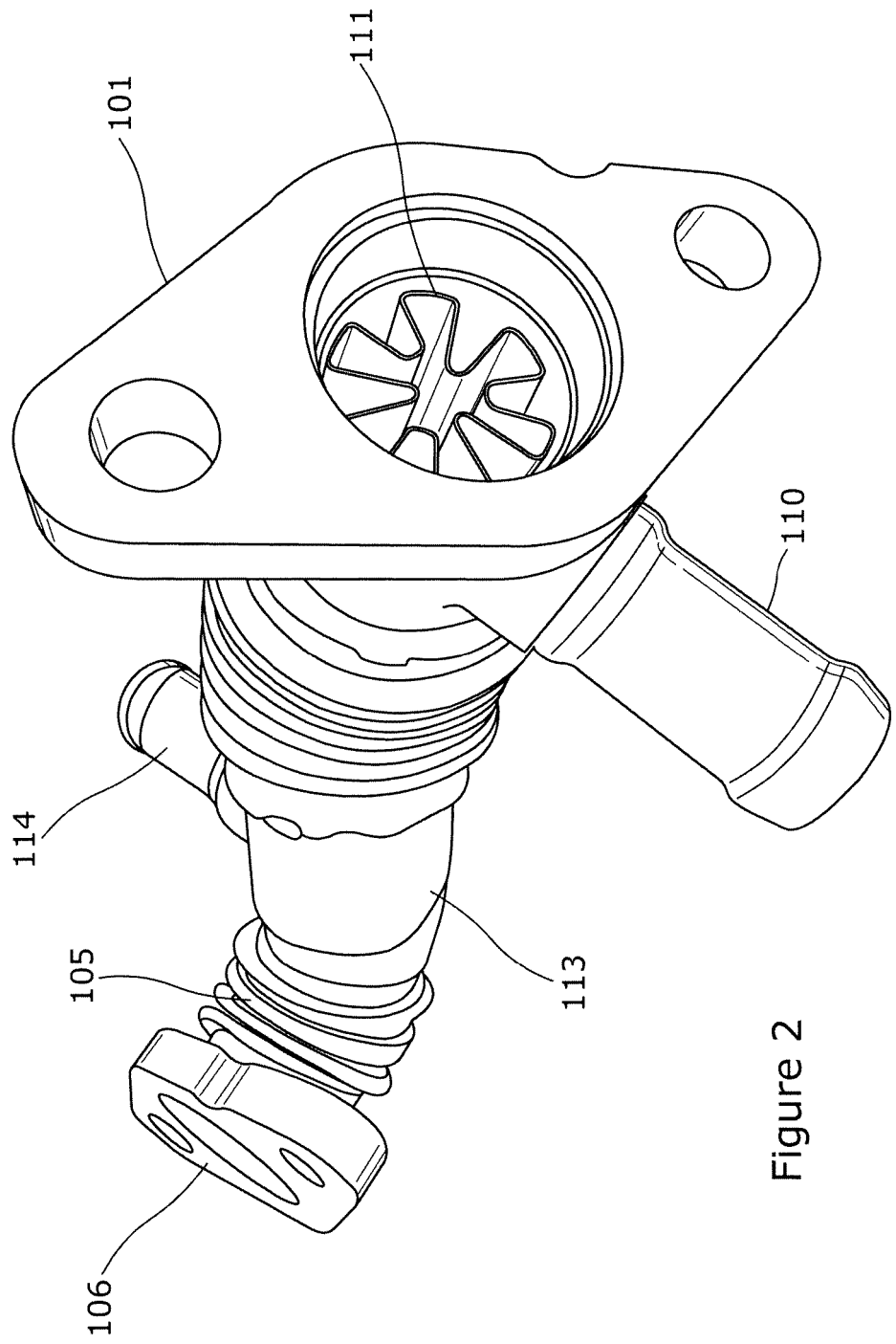


Figure 2

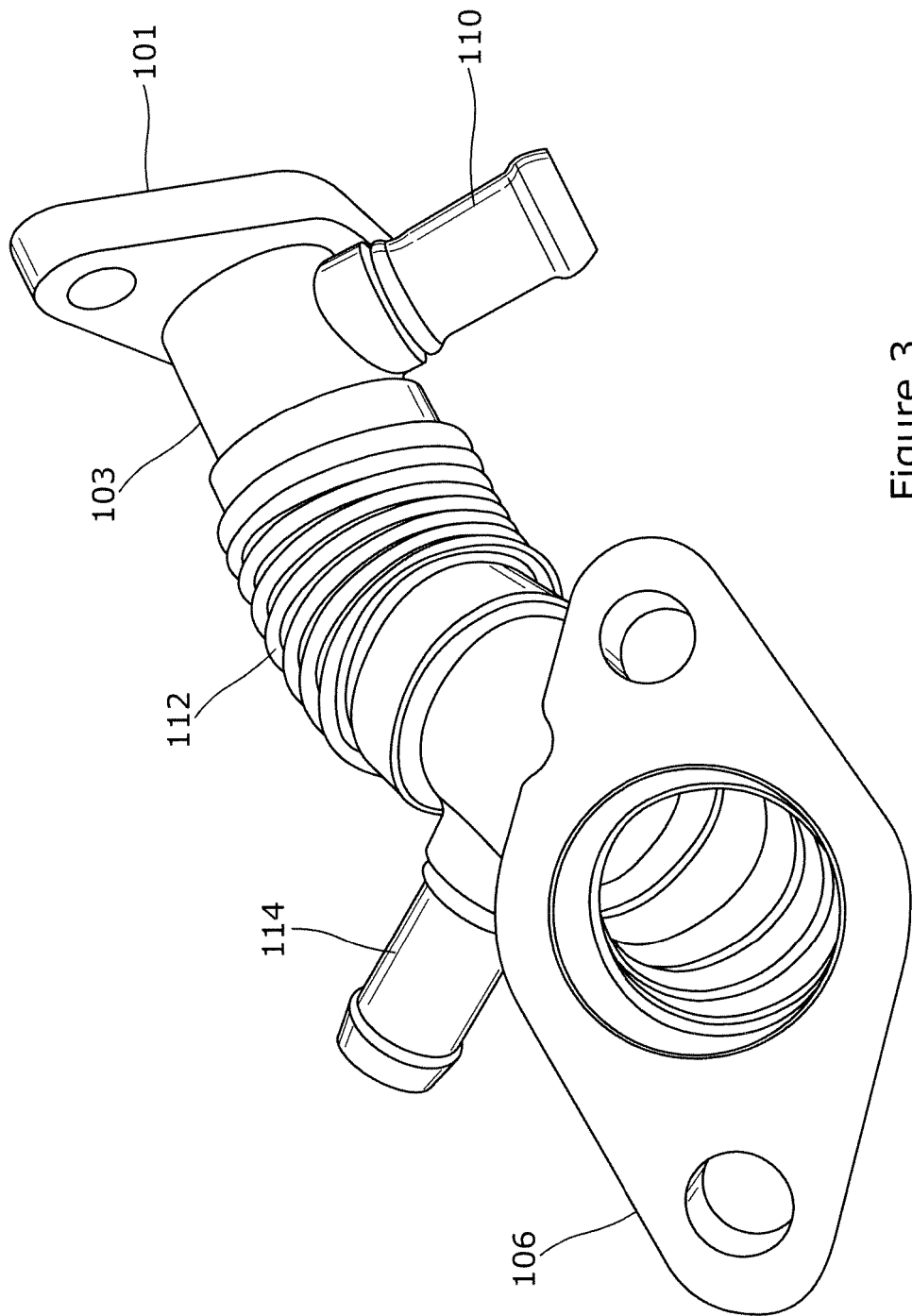


Figure 3

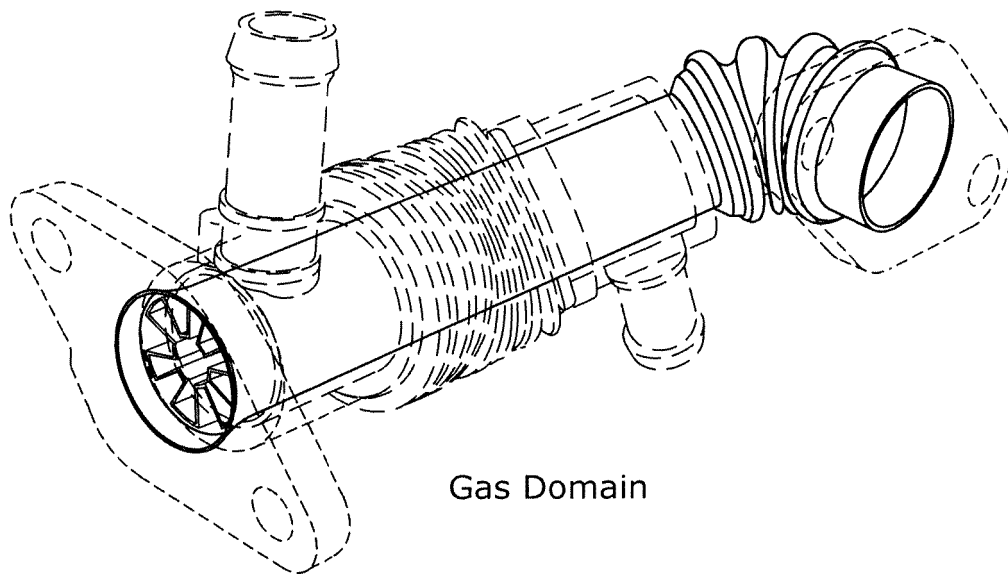


Figure 4

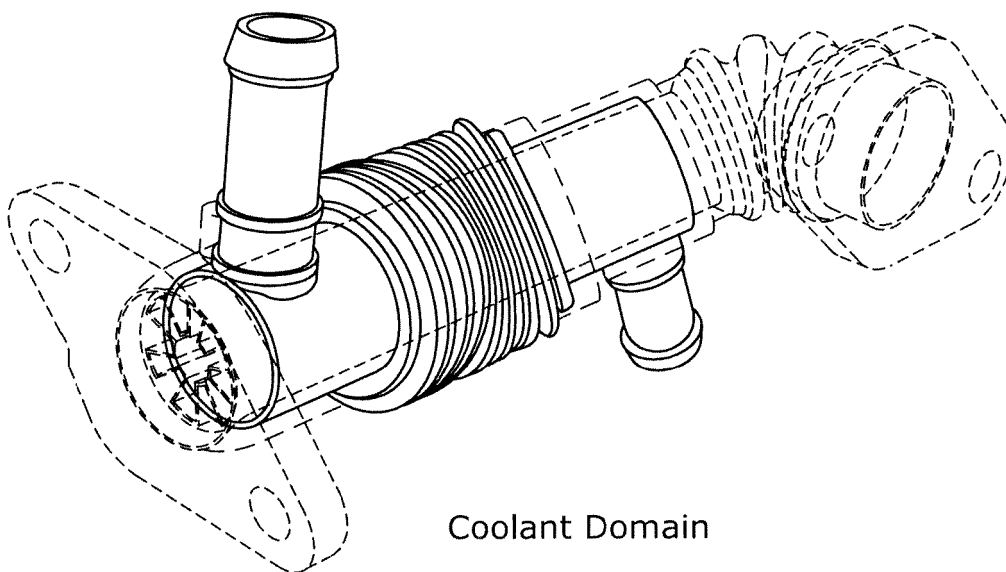


Figure 5

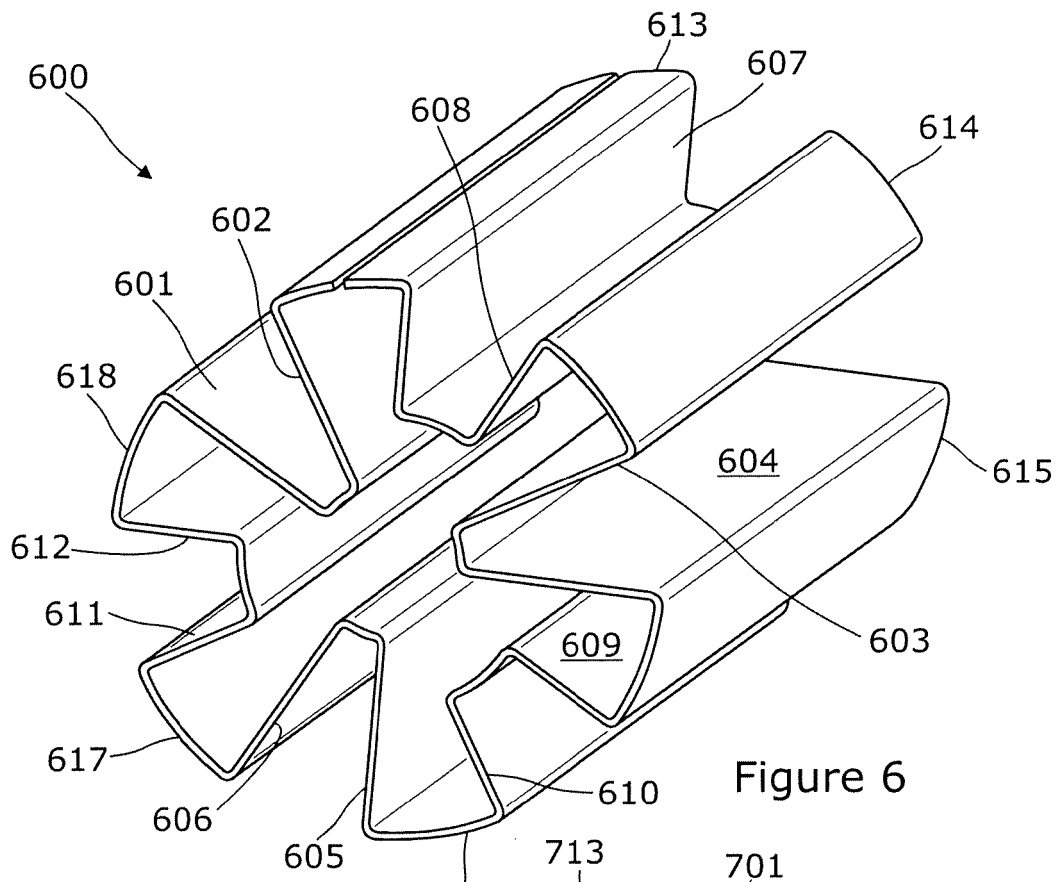


Figure 6

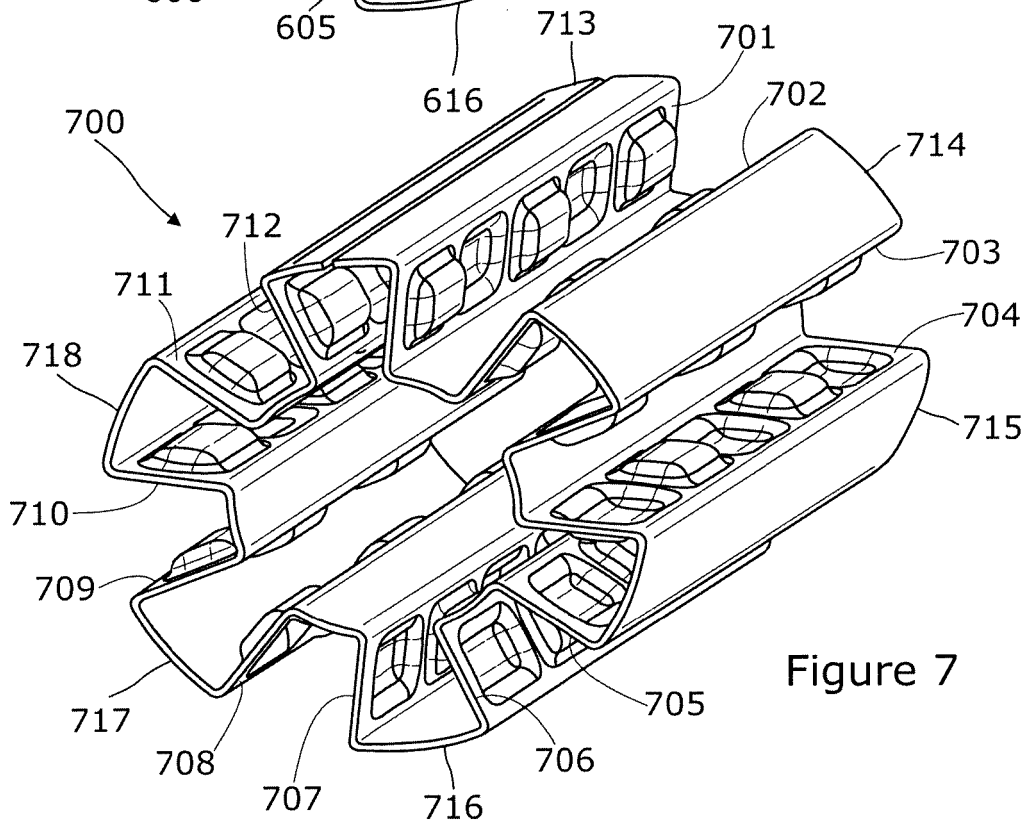


Figure 7

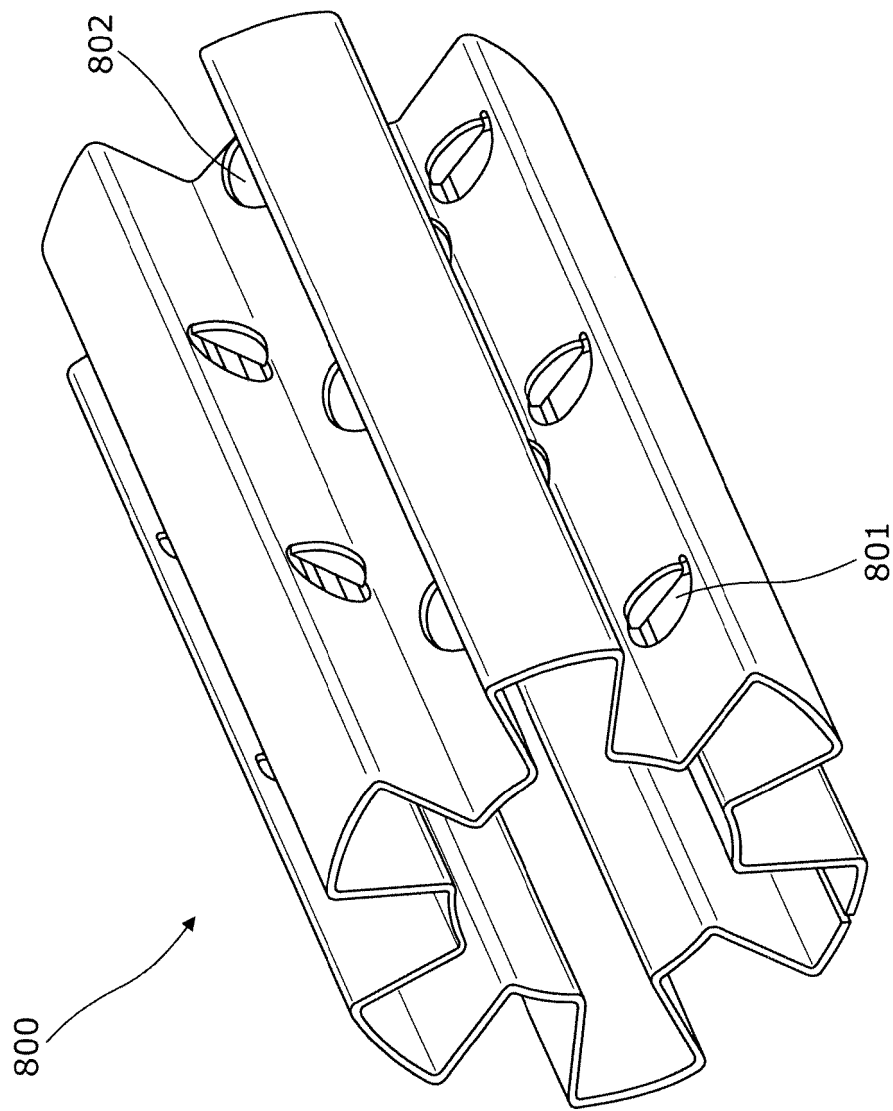


Figure 8

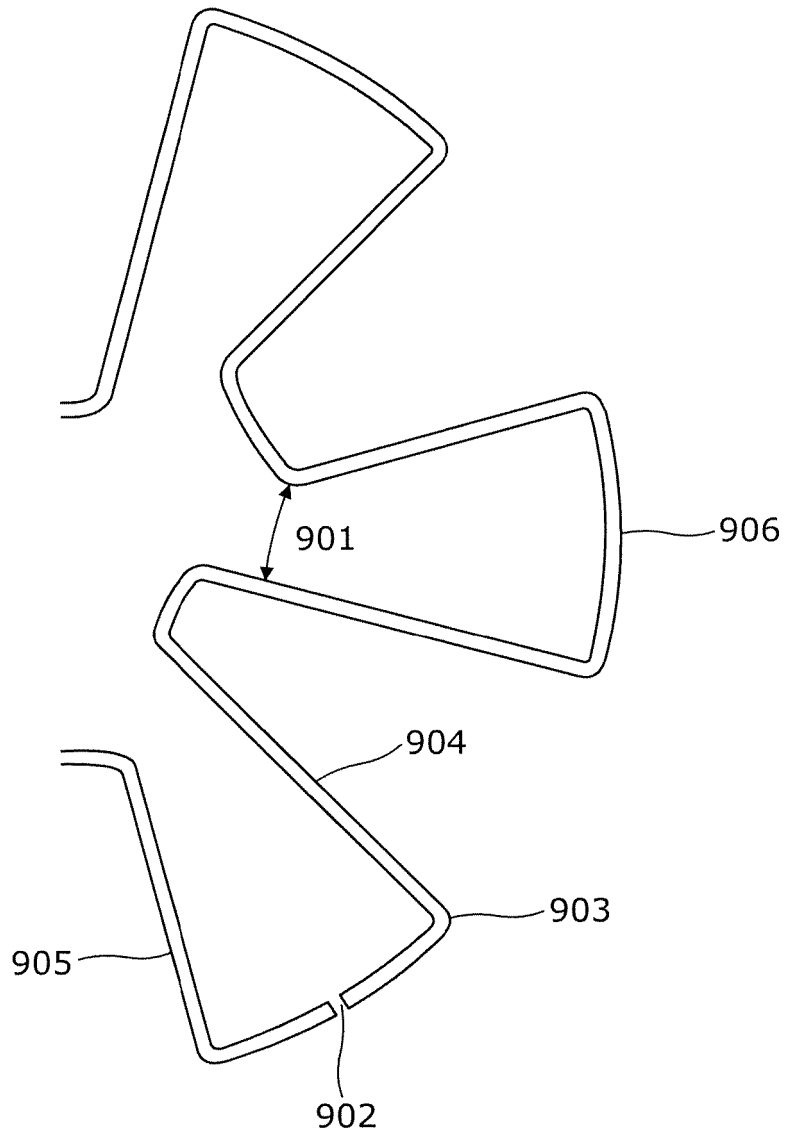


Figure 9

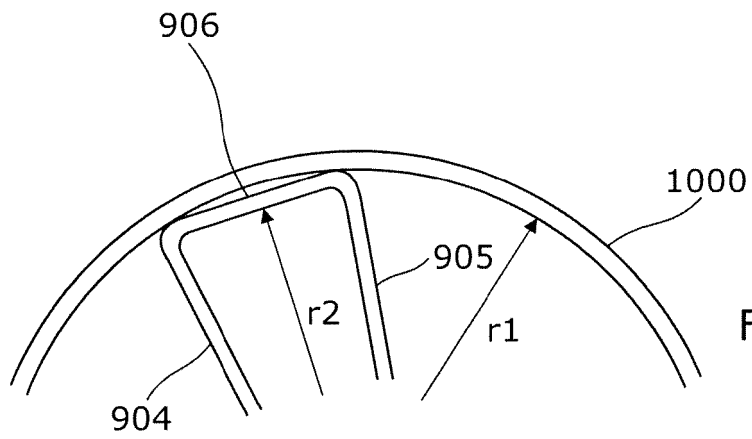


Figure 10A

$$r2 > r1$$

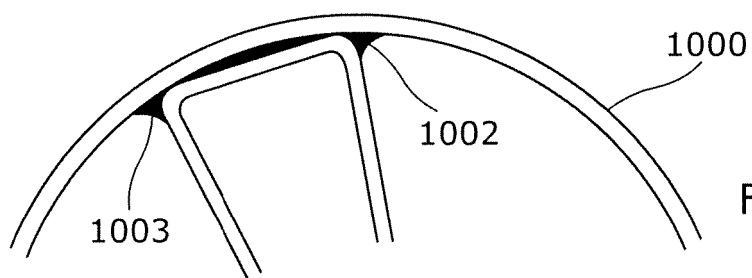


Figure 10B

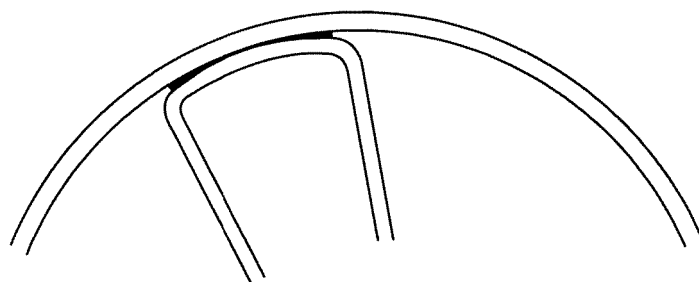


Figure 10C

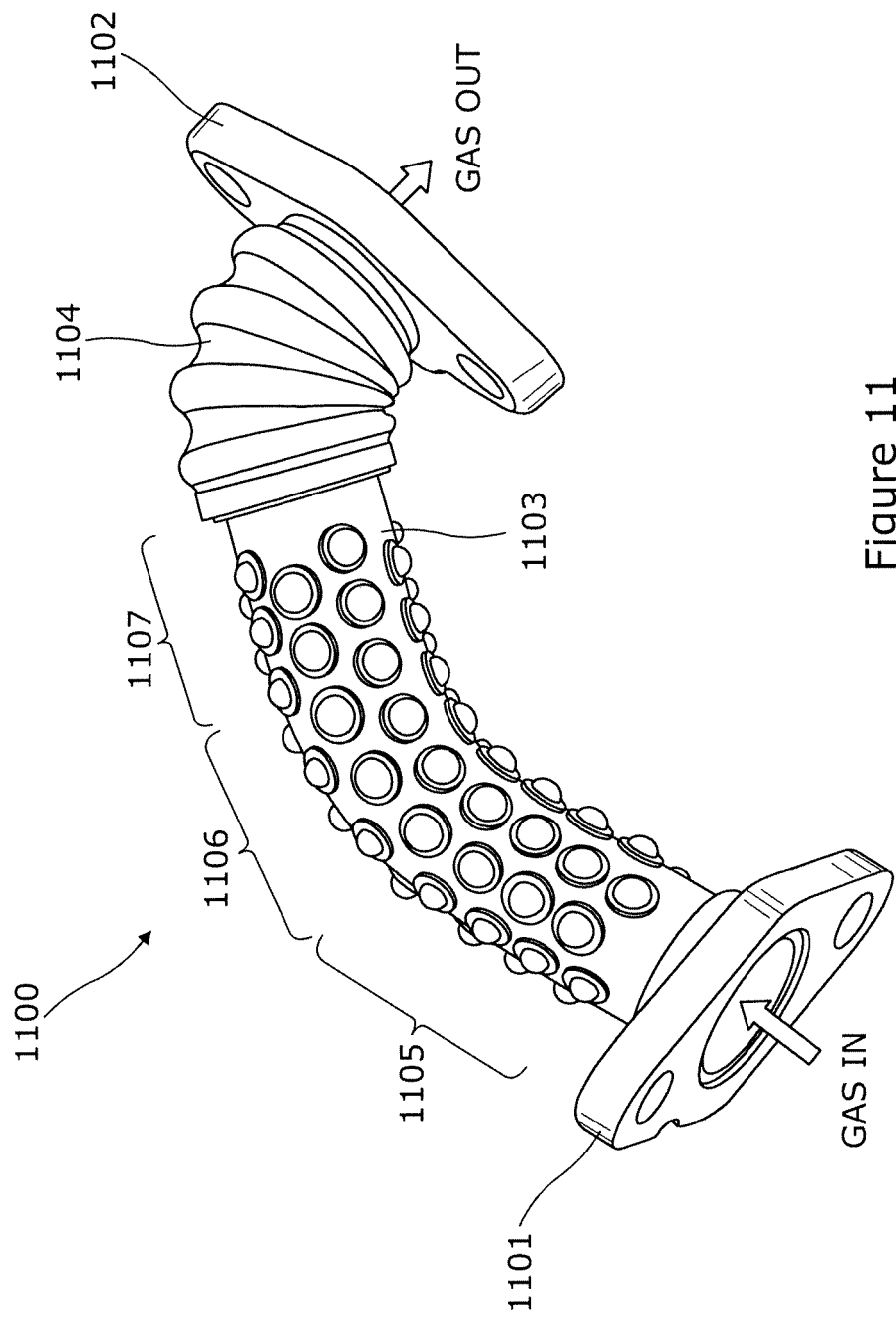


Figure 11

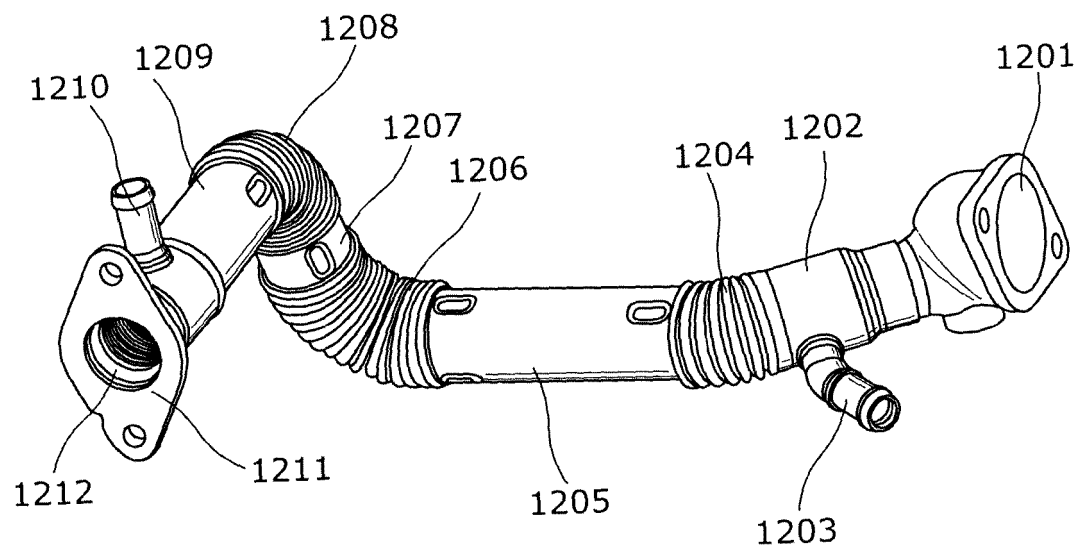


Figure 12

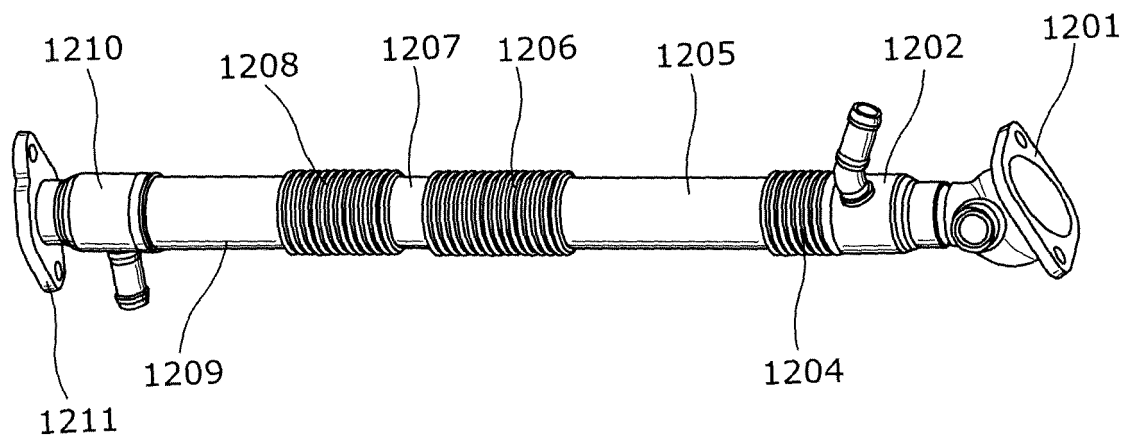


Figure 13

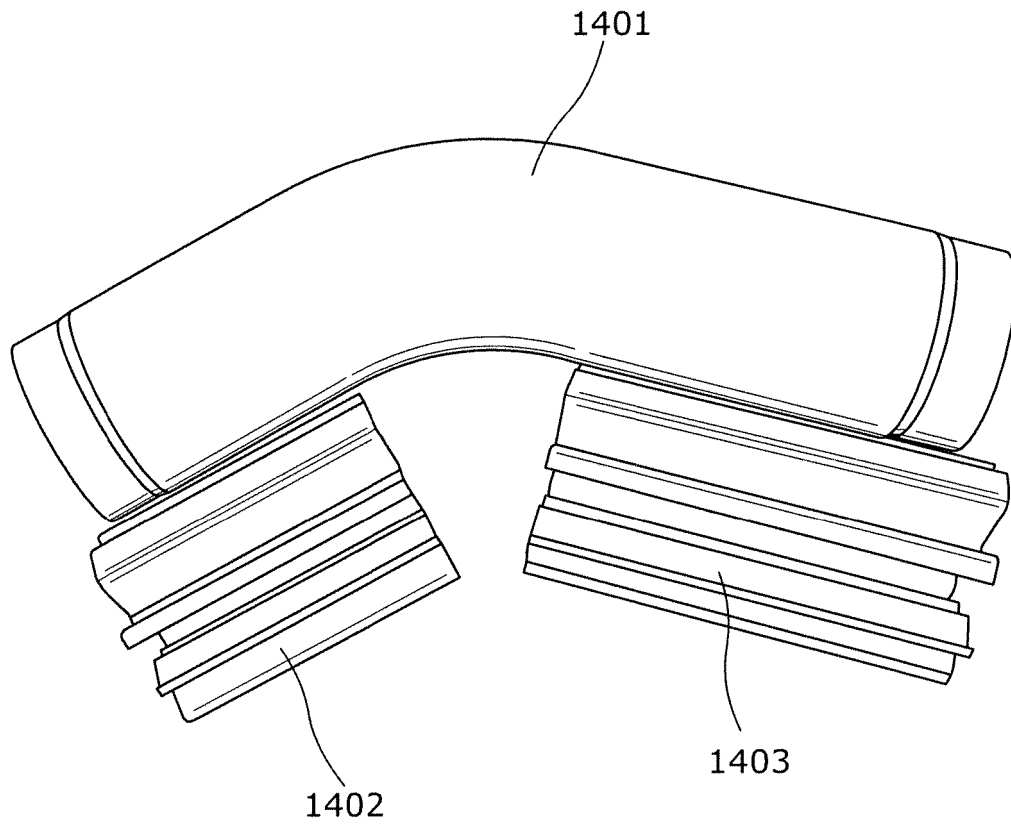


Figure 14

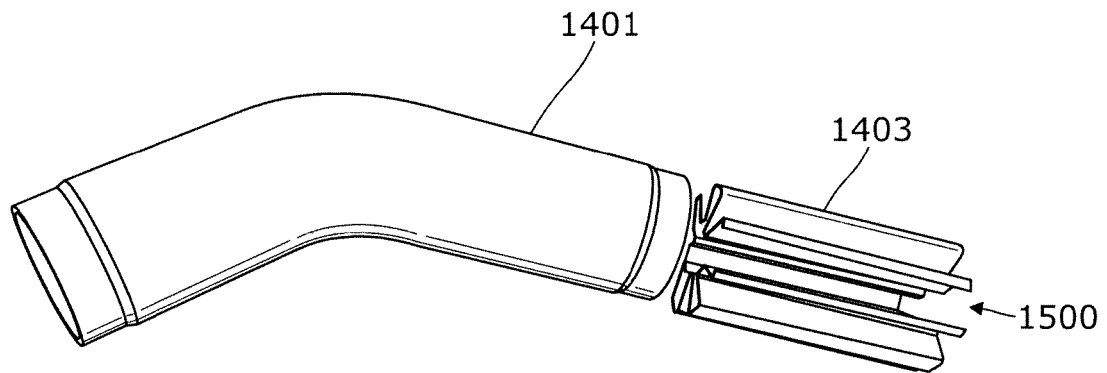


Figure 15

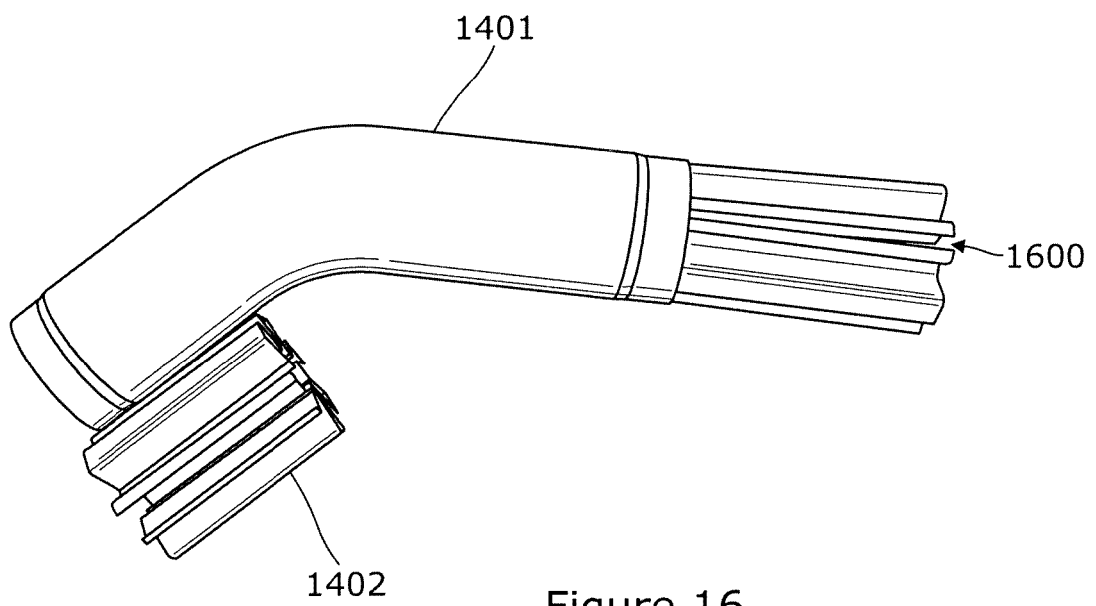


Figure 16

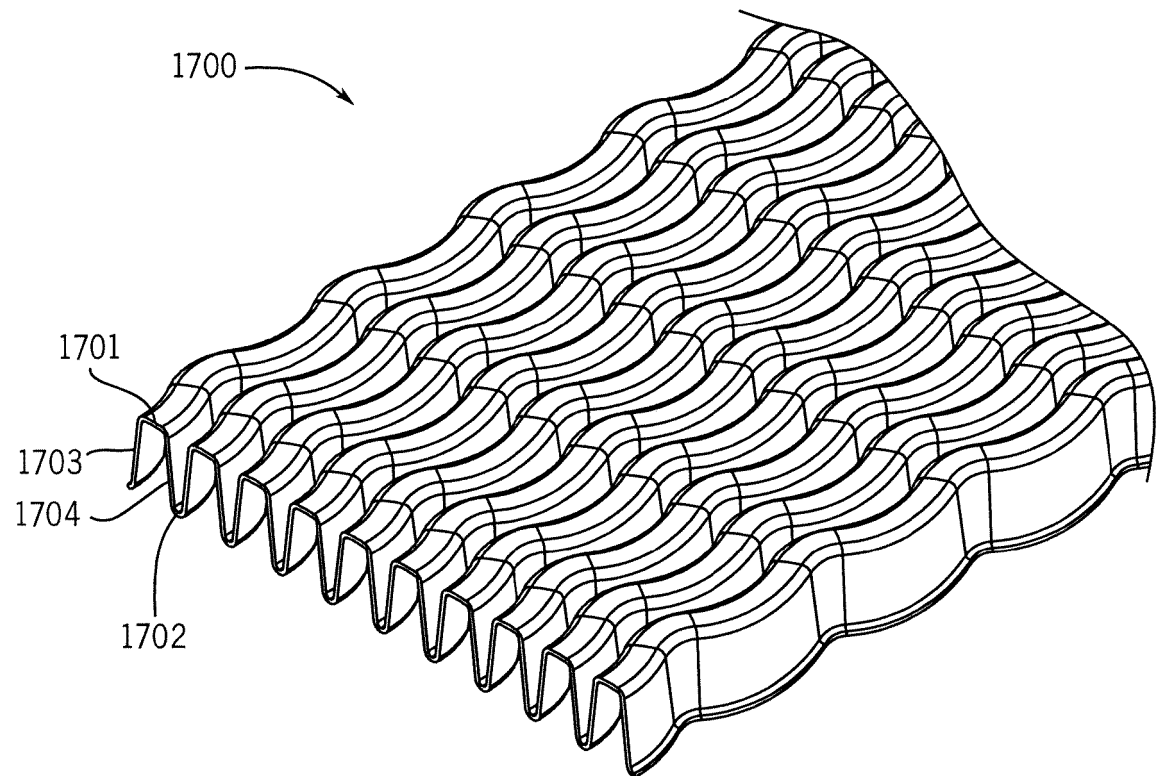


FIGURE 17

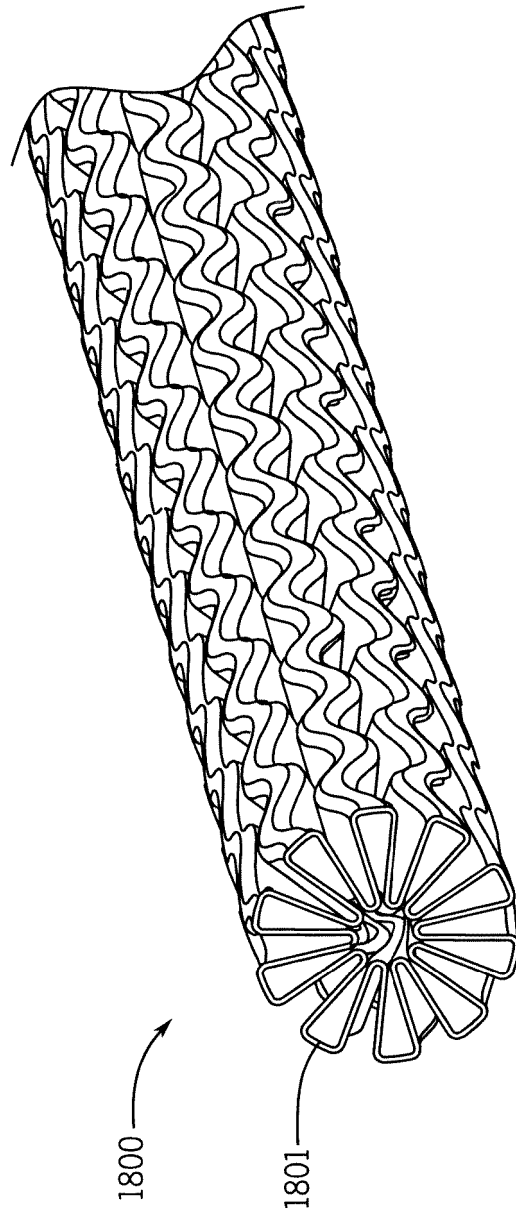


FIGURE 18

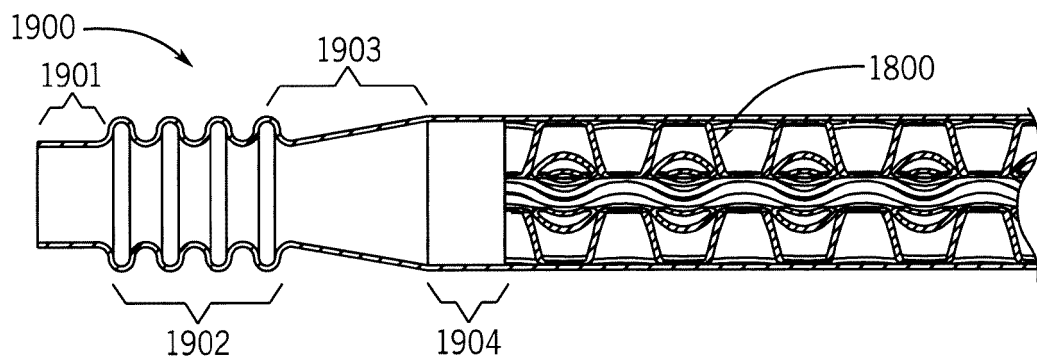


FIGURE 19A

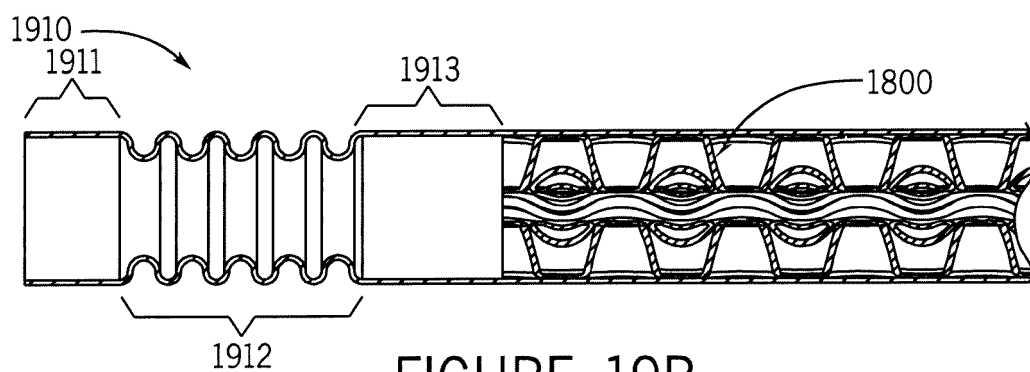


FIGURE 19B

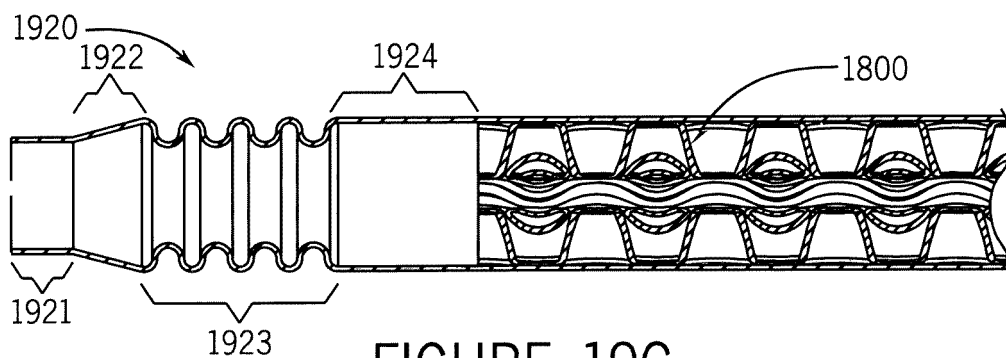


FIGURE 19C

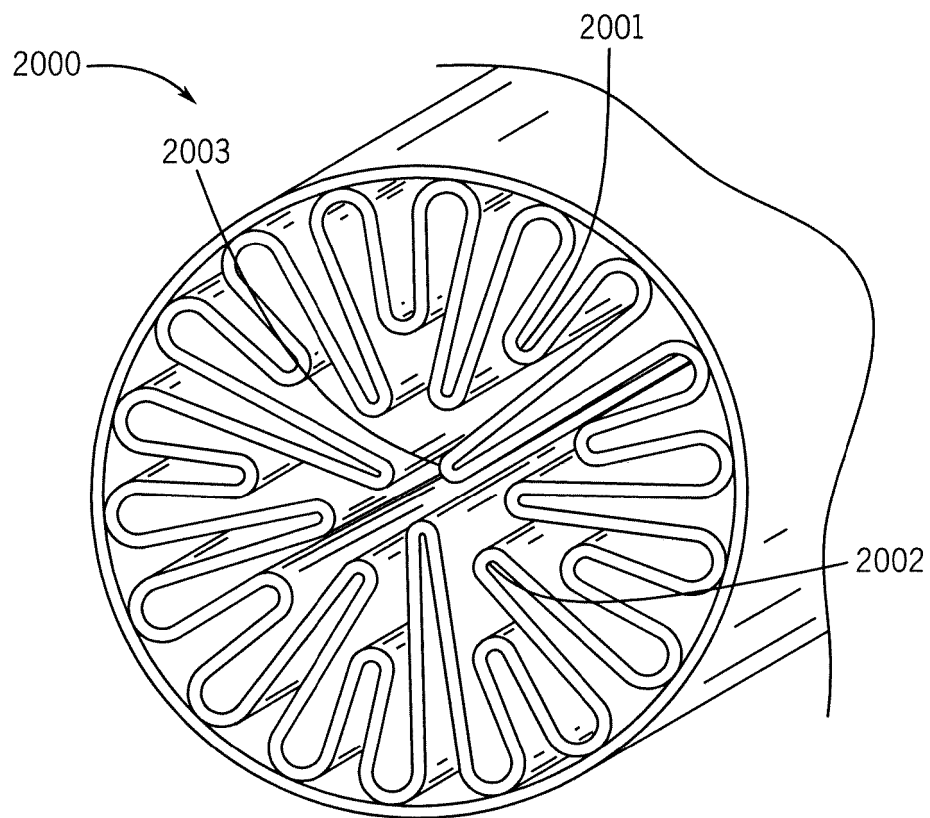


FIGURE 20

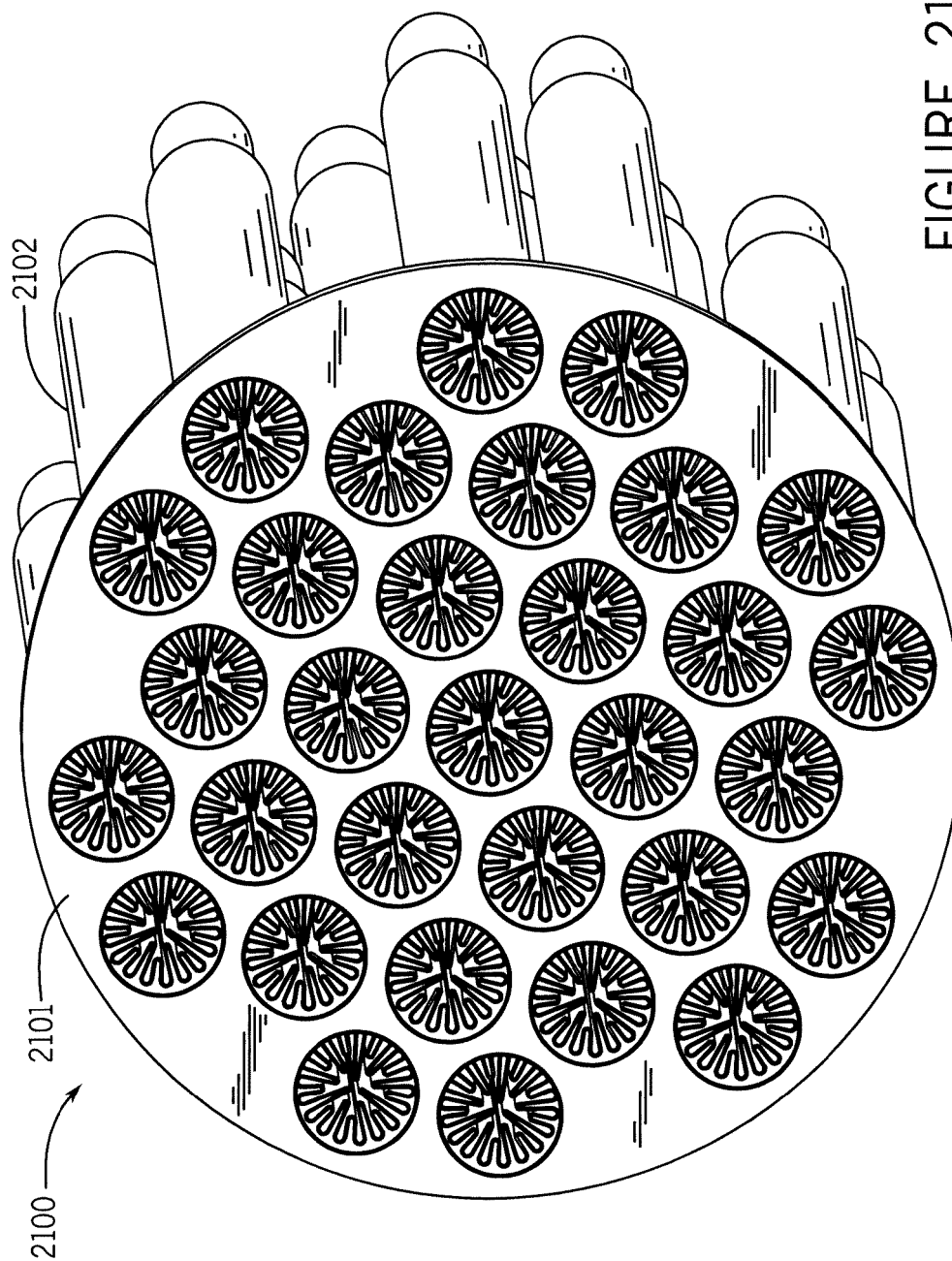


FIGURE 21

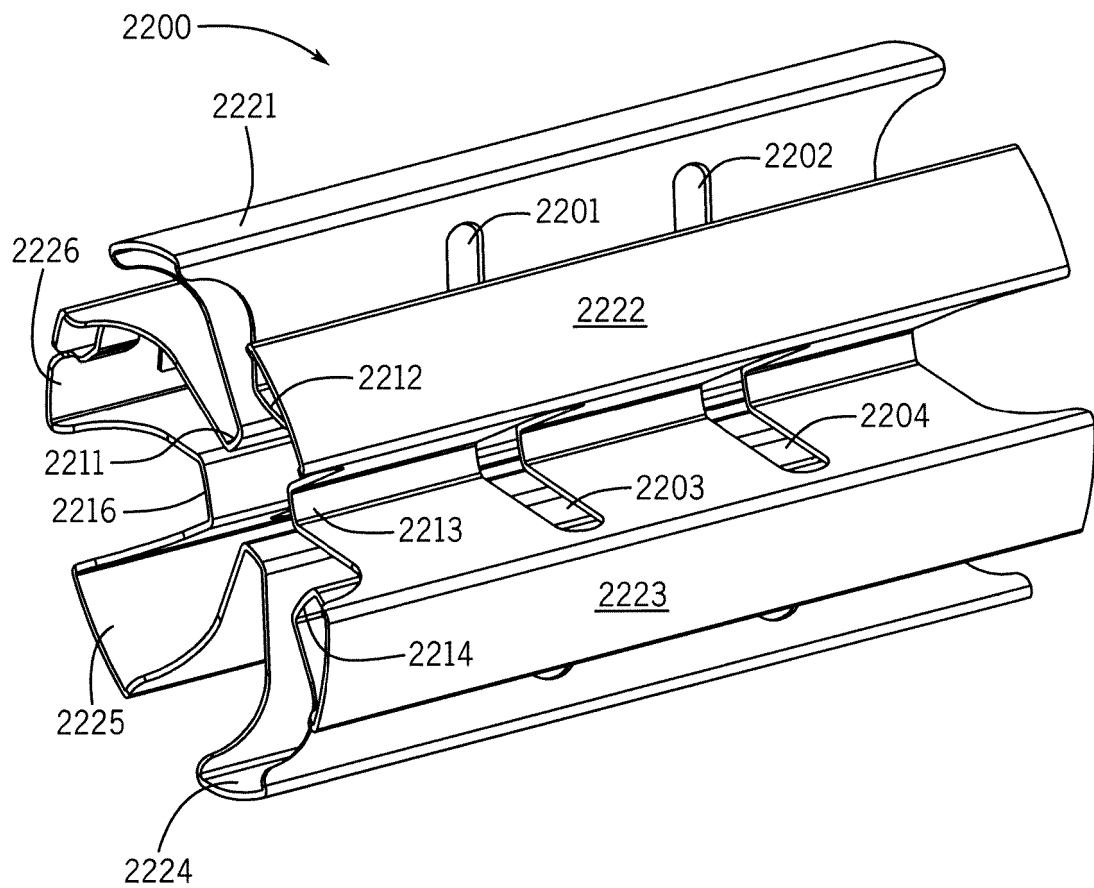


FIGURE 22A

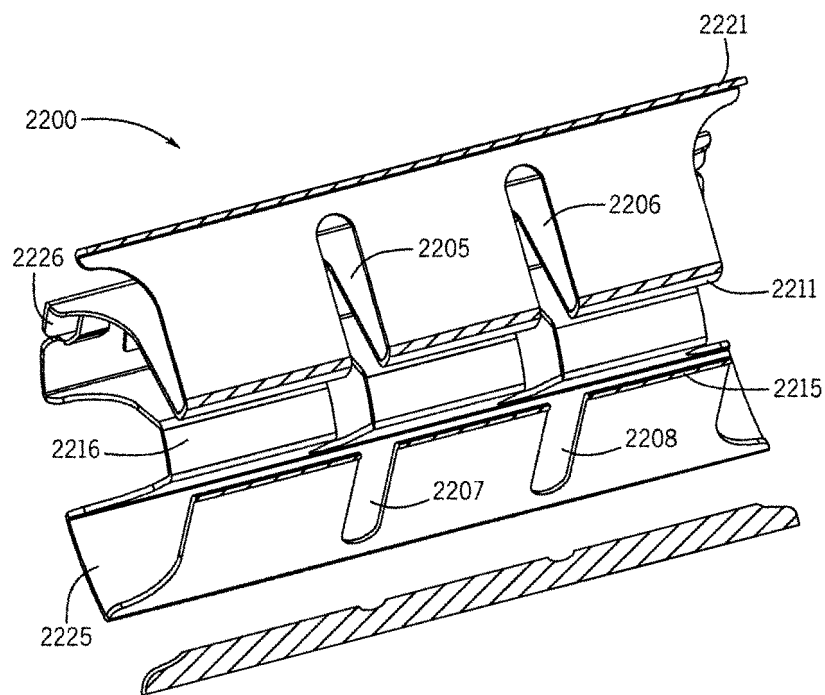


FIGURE 22B

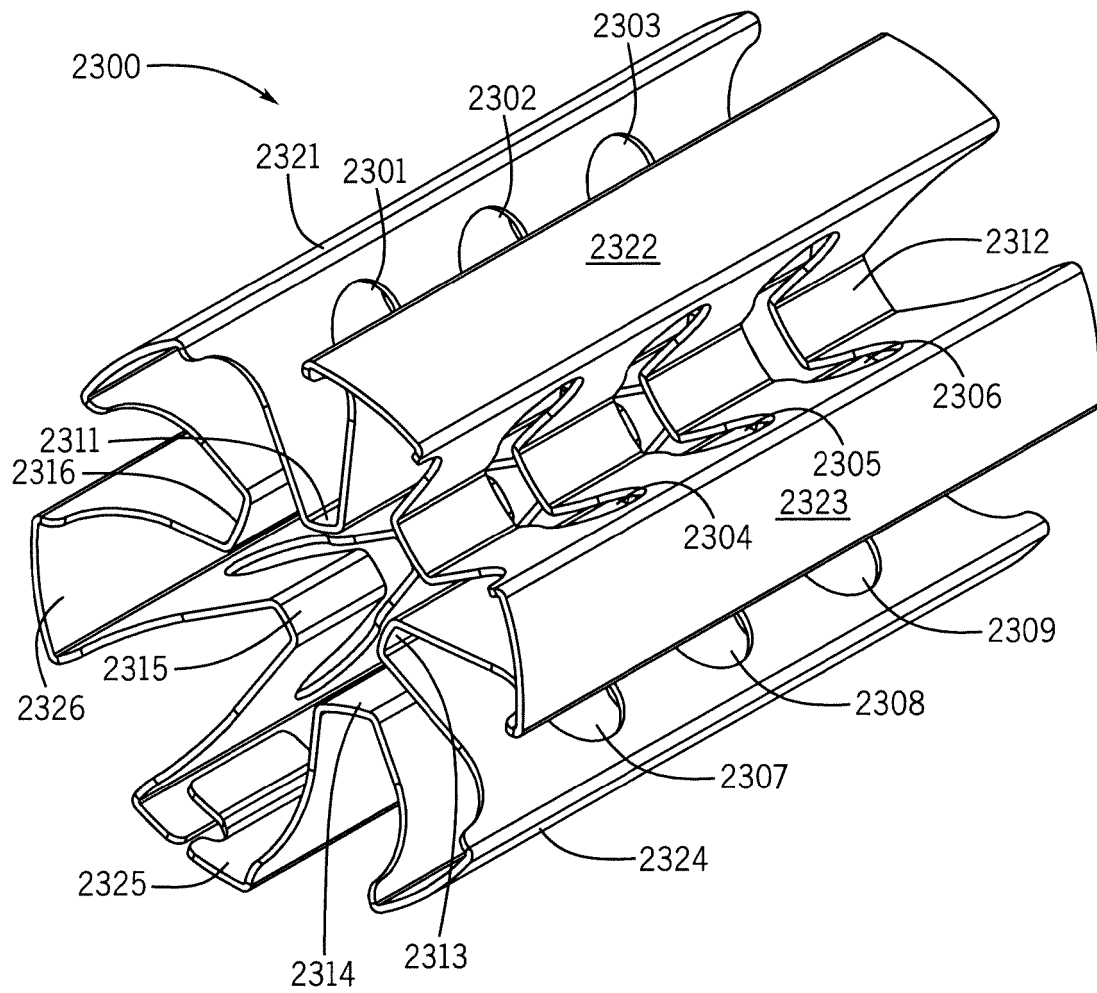


FIGURE 23A

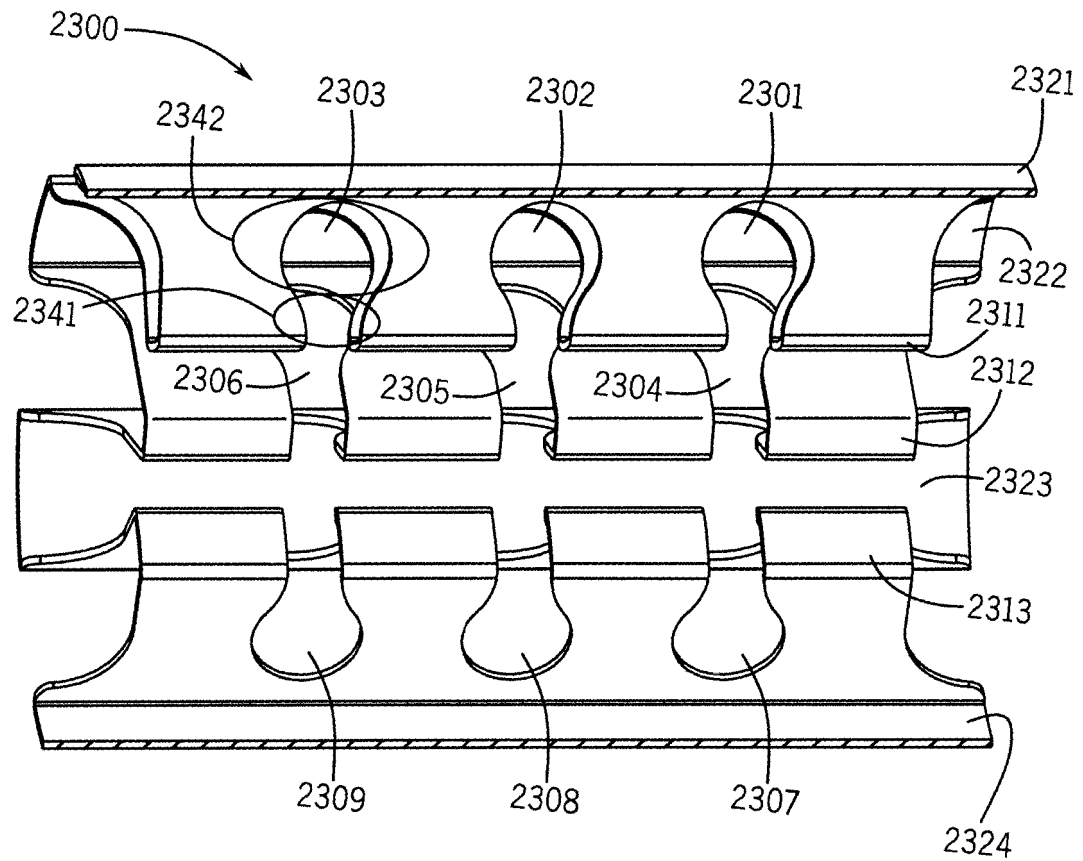


FIGURE 23B

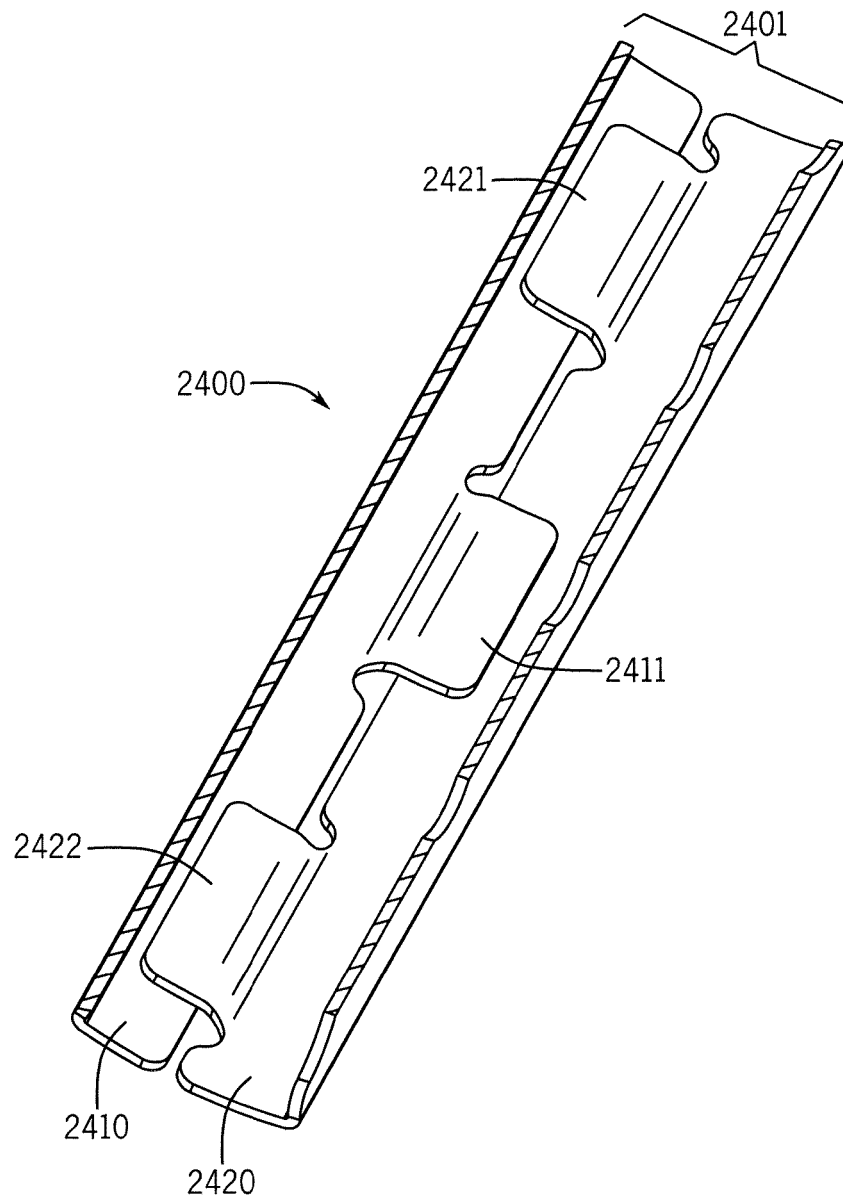


FIGURE 24

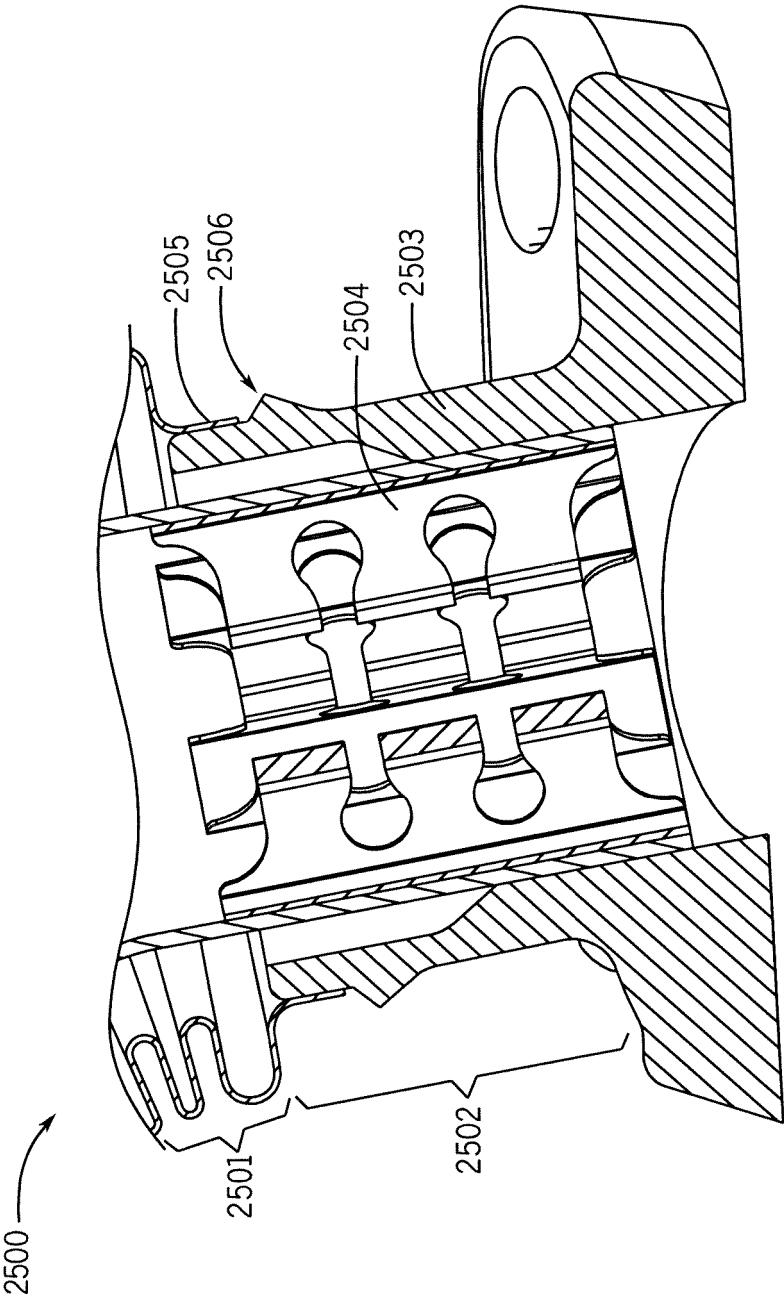


FIGURE 25

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

This list of references cited by the applicant is for the reader's convenience only. It does not form part of the European patent document. Even though great care has been taken in compiling the references, errors or omissions cannot be excluded and the EPO disclaims all liability in this regard.

Patent documents cited in the description

- JP 2000079431 A [0016]
- JP 2000 A [0016]
- JP 079431 A [0016]
- US 20140110095 A [0017]
- US 2012222845 A [0018]
- JP H10170172 B [0019]
- JP 2000111277 A [0020]