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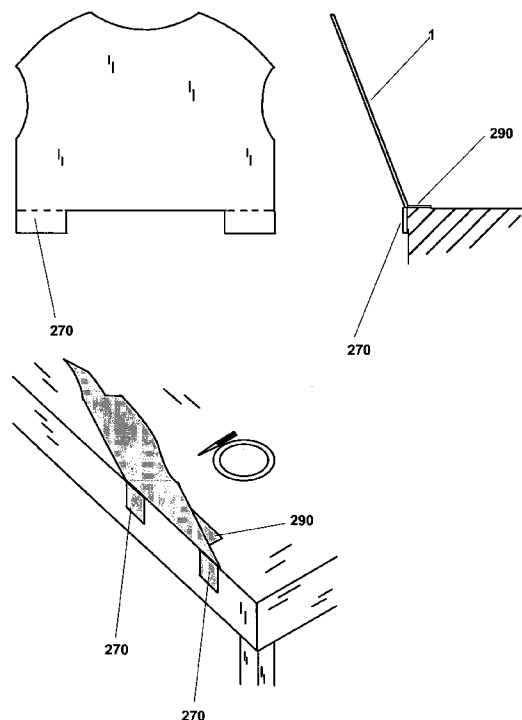
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[Continued on next page]

(54) **Title:** PROTECTION DEVICE FROM STAINS WHILE EATING AT THE TABLE

Fig.5



(57) **Abstract:** The present invention refers to a new device to protect the dresses of a person from accidental splashes of food and/or dressing during a meal. The characterizing elements of the same are substantially: - At least a protective surface (1) projecting from the table upward and interposing between the person and the plate; - Fitting means to place the protective surface respect to the table, and where the fitting means comprise at least a portion of the lower edge (8) of the same surface.

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PROTECTION DEVICE FROM STAINS WHILE EATING AT THE TABLE

Technical Field

5 The invention refers to the technical field relative to services and accessories for the table and, in particular, it refers to an innovative device that protects the clothing from eventual food and/or dressing splashes during a meal.

10

State of the Art

 While eating from a plate, using the flatware, there is a frequent inconvenient of getting stained. Indeed while bringing the food from the plate to the
15 mouth, could easily happen that small parts or drops of it fall. As a consequence, it is very common to see people forced to eat bent on their own plate to avoid that the dressing drops fall on the clothing and stain irreparably.

20 The problem is practically found with all the dressed food, but in particular with foods as spaghetti or other types of pasta which are not easy to grab in a firm and stable way. Thus, it happens that the spaghetti twisted around the fork can easily untwist,
25 splashing the dressing anywhere. It is sure, thus, that the problem is not less serious in the case of general food that can anyway re-fall in the plate full of dressing and stain in the same way the dress. It is also know how the oil found on the leaves of the salad
30 splashes with such an easiness in the attempt of grabbing the same leaves with the flatware or when the same is mixed.

Obviously the problem is particularly found not only for adults but also in the case of children or people that are not self sufficient or that must be helped in this operation.

5 Generally, according to the prior art, the problem is solved partially by using bibs or fabric napkins leaned or tied on the chest or on the abdomen. However, unwillingly, fellow diner uses a napkin or a bib around the neck, retaining this last one not very elegant for
10 the circumstances. Especially in the case of dinners or lunches meetings, where the fellow diners are dressed elegant, it is very difficult that these tie a bib on the neck, preferring to take the risk of dirty themselves, by simply placing the same on their knees
15 in a well hidden manner.

It is clear how in this way the risk of getting stained and to ruin very expensive dresses is very high, beyond, naturally, the embarrass of the unpleasant situation. In this case, thus, the fellow
20 diner renounces to its favourite and full of delicious sauce spaghetti meal choosing a meal that implies less risks.

In the case, in the other hand, it is decided to choose the not very elegant use of the napkin, its
25 efficiency is really very limited. Indeed, it is usually worn or leaned on the person whom, with his movements, often moves it and place it in a not efficient way for the function of protection. Moreover, it can easily slide away with the user that
30 does not even realize it, the whole with high risks.

Disclosure of invention

It is therefore the aim of the present invention

to give a protection device that resolves all the above mentioned inconvenient.

In particular it is the aim of the present invention to give a new device that allows an efficient
5 protection for the clothing during a meal without having to force the user to wear uncomfortable and embarrassing napkins or bibs.

These and other aims are obtained through the present device to protect the dresses of a person
10 sitting at a table during a meal from accidental splashes of food and/or dressings in general and characterized by the fact that it comprises:

- At least a protective surface (1) projecting from the table upward and interposed between the person and
15 the plate;
- Fitting means to place the protective surface respect to the table, said fitting means comprising at least a portion of the lower edge (8) of the protective surface (1).

20 In this way the fellow diner can apply to the edge of the table the protective surface, without being forced to wear uncomfortable napkins. Thus, the surface placed closed to the plate, will allow him also to eat in a comfortable position, without necessarily having
25 to bend toward the plate to avoid the splashes.

Advantageously the fitting means (2, 8) comprise in detail a channel (3), provided with a notch (4)
30 obtained on its back (13), in combination to the lower edge (8) of the protective surface. The most appropriate configuration of the channel is U, allowing

this last one an easy coupling of the same to the edge of the table in any position.

The notch allows then the insertion of the protective surface from the side of the lower edge (8) realizing this way the positioning interposed between the person and the plate.

According to this solution it is therefore sufficient to position the channel to the table, also in a permanent way, and insert the papers from the side of the edge 8. Thus it results extremely hygienic and economic, each time, the use of new papers for each new client.

Advantageously the notch (4) is passing through the entire section of the channel from the back (13) toward the front (14). In this way the passing notch allows an adjustment of the height of the protective surface (1) respect to the person sitting at the table.

This way people with different height can easily adjust the desired height of the paper avoiding that this one cover them in an insufficient or excessive way.

Moreover the notch is bent to a predetermined angle "alfa" allowing a positioning of the surface consequently inclined. The inclination of the notch helps also the fitting of the paper to the same channel. Obviously, any kind of "alfa" inclination could indifferently be chosen.

Advantageously the U channel is realized by pressing in plastic material, as polyethylene, polypropylene, and similar.

Moreover the protective surface is a napkin or a paper realized in a rigid or semirigid material of dinked type or similar.

According to another constructive solution, the fitting means (8, 402) comprise at least a both side adhesive tape (401) placed close to the lower edge (8), the protective upper layer (400) of said tape being
5 removable at the time of the positioning of the napkin to allow the fitting to the edge of the table.

In this way, the paper results immediately applicable to the table with a simple removal motion of the layer or gaiter 400. Such solution it clearly
10 economic and fast in the application.

Alternatively the fitting means (8, 502) comprise an adhesive strip (500) placed closed to the lower edge (8) of the surface (1) and such as to allow a stacking respectively one on the other of the above mentioned
15 papers. This way each napkin on top of the pile results removable from the rest of the pile and it is positioned to the table by means of the adhesive (500).

According to another possible configuration, the fitting means (8, 202) comprise at least two notches
20 (260) obtained in correspondence to the lower edge (8), said notches realising anchor tongues (270, 290) folding from the side of the upper surface of the table and/or from the side of the lateral edge to be placed in adherence to it to hold the napkin.

Advantageously the notches are in two realizing
25 this way three tongues. In particular the central tongue (290) folding in adherence to the table from the side of its upper surface while the two remaining laterals (270) being folding from the opposite side
30 toward the edge of the table or vice-versa.

In an alternative version of this solution, the lateral tongues (270) are doubly folding. In particular it is executable a first folding backward respect to

the central tongue (290) and lying on the upper surface of the table, and a second folding in a way to make respect to the first one a right angle around the corner of the table.

5 According to this solution, it is possible to plan to shape opportunely the paper in a way that it can lay also on the user's body.

At last a further solution comprises the fitting means (8, 302) comprising a T element (370, 390). The T
10 element realizes a tongue (370) doubly folding to adhere in part with the upper surface of the table and in part to the edge of the table while the rear tongue (390) can be placed in adherence entirely to the upper surface of said table from the side opposite to the
15 tongue 370.

Brief description of drawings

Further features and advantages of this device, according to the invention, will be clearer with the
20 description that of one of its pattern realization that follows, made to illustrate but not limit, with reference to the annexed drawings, in which:

- the figure 1 shows a device according to a first configuration of the invention;
- 25 - the figure 2 and 3 show the plan view and the lateral section of the device;
- The figure 4 shows a second solution with notches and tongues;
- The figure 5 shows an application of the device
30 according to this solution;
- The figure 6 shows a variant of this second solution and one of its application;

- The figure 7 shows a third constructive solution with a T support;
- The figure 8 shows an application of this third solution;
- 5 - The figure 9 shows an alternative fourth and a fifth solution with adhesives;
- the figure 10 shows an application according to the first preferred solution of the invention.

10 Description of some pattern realizations

The figure 1, shows the new protection device for clothing according to the present invention. In particular a protective surface 1, as for example a paper or a rigid napkin in dinked cardboard or other
15 materials in general, constitutes the protection element to be positioned on the edge of the table, in a way to interpose between the plate and the user.

Obviously, both the material and the geometric shape for the realization of the surface 1 can be of
20 many kinds, without having to move apart from the present inventive concept. For this aim, only as an example and not to restrict the present invention, the paper 1 in figure 1 has been represented in a geometry that is particularly ergonomic, making its use more
25 comfortable.

In particular have been prearranged shaped cuttings 10 for the arms of the user and a shaped cutting 11 for the positioning of the neck. However different geometries can be easily obtained, between
30 which the easiest one of a rectangular paper.

For the aim to allow the fitting of the surface to the table, are comprised fitting means (8, 2; 8, 202;

8, 302; 8, 402; 8, 502). In all the preferred solutions of the invention and hereinafter described, the above mentioned means comprise at least the portion of the lower edge 8 of the same protective surface. This, as
5 described later on, can alone or in combination to other devices allow the above mentioned positioning.

In particular (look at figure 1), according to the first preferred configuration of the invention, the
10 fitting means comprise in combination a channel, usually a U one, and the lower edge 8 of the paper 1. The channel comprises a notch 4 that allows the insertion of the paper from the side of the edge 8 while its special U conformation allows to couple it to
15 the edge of the table allowing its positioning in an easy way.

Obviously any other shape of channel can be easily used, without having to move apart from the present inventive concept. Moreover, with the aim of helping
20 its fitting to the edges of the table there can be comprised in its inside simple spacers 15.

Figure 2 shows in detail the A-A section of the U channel and of the notch 4. In particular the notch is realized slightly bended according to the positioning
25 angle indicated with "alfa". In this way, the lower edge 8 will be held better inside the same notch because of the friction action applied by the respective surface in contact, resulting this way very firm. The figure shows also the eventual blocking
30 spacers.

The figure 3 shows an alternative solution, where the notch is passing through the entire section of the channel from the back 13 toward the front 14. In this

way it is possible to adjust the height of the paper 1
(as indicated from the direction of the double arrow),
allowing this way to people with different height to
choose the positioning that suits them better.

5 Obviously the inclination indicated in the figures are
merely indicative and any other angle value could
easily be used, without having to move apart from the
present inventive concept.

The U channel could be obviously realized in any
10 material. In particular result to be particularly
suitable material the plastic materials, as for example
the polyethylene, polypropylene and similar. These,
moreover, are very suitable for the realizations of the
same by pressing.

15 A second preferred configuration (look at figure 4
and 5) comprises, on the other hand, simple notches 260
realized in correspondence of the lower edge 8 and able
to realize two lateral tongues 270 and a central tongue
290 folding in a way to couple the edge of the table.
20 In particular it is possible to have a solution where
the two lateral tongues 270 can be doubly folded
having, thus, a portion lying on the upper surface of
the table and a portion in adherence to the edge (look
figure 6).

25 A third preferred configuration comprises on the
other hand a T element 302 connected to the paper from
the side of the edge 8. The T element is folding around
the edge of the table with an edge 370 while the other
opposite edge 390 results lying on the surface of the
30 same table (look figure 7 and 8).

A forth preferred configuration of the invention
(look at figure 9) can comprise on the other hand the
fitting means comprising a simple both sides adhesive

tape 401 placed closed to the lower edge 8. In this way, by simply removing the protective layer 400, it is possible to place the paper on the edge of the table. Alternatively the adhesive strip 500 placed closed to the lower edge 8 allows a stacking respectively of one paper 1 on the other. In this way the simple drawing operation of the napkin on top of the pile allows its further positioning and usage.

It is hereinafter described the use of the present invention.

According to the first preferred configuration of the invention (look at figure 10), it is highlighted how the U channel is coupled to the edge of the table thanks to its configuration, while the paper 1 is inserted in the opposite site 4 realizing the protection respect to the plate placed on the table. In this manner any user is protected during a meal.

Figure 5 highlights on the other hand an application using the tongues 270 and 290. In particular it is clear how the folding of the tongue 270 on the lower surface of the table and the corresponding folding of the two tongues 270 on the lateral edge of the table allow to realize the positioning. In this case, since the positioning is not entirely stable, it will be necessary that the fellow diner allow the paper 1 to lean on its chest. It is for this reason, usually, that are used ergonomic paper with cuttings for arms and neck as described in figure 1.

Figure 6 shows the alternative where the lateral tongues 270 of the board are folded twice. A first time backward respect to the central tongue 290 and lying on

the upper surface of the table, and a second time in a way to make with them a right angle with the corner.

Obviously, without moving apart from the present inventive concept, any number of tongues can be easily
5 realized.

Figure 8 shows on the other hand an application to the table where the fellow diner places the paper by folding the T element 302 according to a double fold of the tongue 370 that wraps the corner of the table and a
10 simple fold of the tongue 390 lying on the table. In conclusion, the double folding of the tongue 370 happens in an entirely similar manner to the 270 one of the preceding solution. Alternatively also the tongue 370 can lean entirely to the surface of the table
15 exactly like the tongue 390.

Moreover nothing would avoid, with the aim to realize a better fitting of the napkin to the table, to comprise the use of the adhesive in combination to the tongue devices described above.

Obviously a simple positioning in correspondence of the edge of the table is obtained by adopting both the solution of the both sides adhesive tape 401 and the adhesive 500. In the first case, for the fellow diner, will be sufficient to remove the protection 400
20 and fit the paper to the edge of the table. According to the other choice, it will be sufficient to remove the paper from the pile and place it directly on the edge of the table on the adhesive side 500.
25

It is at this point clear how all the aims of the present inventing have been reached. It is particularly
30 clear how the present device is a valid system of protection against the stain for the fellow diners. Indeed, once it is positioned to the table by the

fellow diner, it will protect the same from unwanted and accidental splashes of food. It is also clear how different possibilities of fitting of the same allow a wide choice of equivalent and economic solutions.

5 Moreover it is important to underline how the paper is very suitable for commercial or other kinds of drawings.

The above description of a specific shape is able to show the invention from the conceptive point of view, in a way that others, by using the art, can modify and/or adapt in different applications this specific shape without any further research and without going apart from the inventive concept, and, therefore, it is intended that these adaptations and

10 transformations will be considered as equivalent to this specific realization. The means and materials to make the many described functions can be of various nature without exiting the area of the invention. it is intended that the expressions or the terminology used

15 have a simple descriptive aim and therefore not limiting.

20

CLAIMS

1. Device to protect the dresses of a person sitting
5 at a table during a meal from accidental splashes of
food and/or dressings in general and **characterized by
the fact** of comprising:

- At least a protective surface (1) projecting from
the table upward and interposed between the person and
10 the plate;

- Fitting means to place the protective surface
respect to the table, said fitting means comprising at
least a portion of the lower edge (8) of said
protective surface.

15

2. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim
1, where said fitting means comprise in combination a
channel (3) and the lower edge (8) of the protective
surface, said channel being able to wrap the edge of
20 the table and being provided with a notch (4) obtained
on its back (13) and such for which said notch allows
the insertion of said protective surface from the side
of said lower edge (8) realising this way the
positioning interposed between said person and said
25 plate.

3. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim
2, where said channel is a U one and contains in its
inside specific spacers (15) for the fitting to the
30 edge of the table.

4. Device to protect the dresses, according to one or more of the previous claims, where said notch (4) is passing through the entire section of the channel from the back (13) toward the front (14), said passing notch
5 allowing an adjustment of height of said protective surface (1) respect to the person sitting at the table.

5. Device to protect the dresses, according to one or more of the previous claims, where said notch is bent
10 to a predetermined angle allowing a positioning of said surface consequently bent.

6. Device to protect the dresses, according to one or more of the claims from 2 to 5, where said U channel is
15 realized by pressing in plastic material, as polyethylene, polypropylene, and similar.

7. Device to protect the dresses, according to one or more of the previous claims, where said protective
20 surface is a napkin or paper realized in a rigid or semi-rigid material of dinked or similar type.

8. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim 7, where said paper comprises two shaped cuttings (10)
25 for the arms of the user and a shaped cutting (11) for the positioning of the neck.

9. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim 1, where said the fitting means (8, 402) comprise at
30 least a both side adhesive tape (401) placed close to the lower edge (8), the protective upper layer (400) of said tape being removable at the time of the

positioning of the napkin to allow the fitting to the edge of the table.

10. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim
5 1, where said fitting means (8, 502) comprise an adhesive tape (500) placed close to the lower edge of the surface (1) and such to allow a stacking respectively one on the other, each napkin on top of said pile being removable from the rest of the pile for
10 the positioning by means of said adhesive on the edge of the table.

11. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim
15 1, where said fitting means (8, 202) comprise at least two notches (260) obtained in correspondence to said lower edge (8), said notches realising anchor tongues (270, 290) folding from the side of the upper surface of the table and/or from the side of the lateral edge to be placed in adherence to it to hold said napkin.

20

12. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim
25 11, where said notches in numbers are two realizing this way a total of three tongues, the central tongue (290) by folding in adherence to the table from the side of its upper surface while the two remaining laterals (270) being folding from the side of the edge of the table toward the opposite direction to the tongues (290) or vice-versa.

30 13. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim 11 and 12, where said lateral tongues (270) are doubly folding, a first folding backward respect to the central tongue (290) and lied on the upper surface of

the table, and a second folding in a way to make respect to the first one a right angle around the corner of the table

5 14. Device to protect the dresses, according to claim
1, where said fitting means (8, 302) comprise a T
element (370, 390), said T element comprising a tongue
(370) doubly folding to be placed in adherence in part
to the upper surface of the table and in part to the
10 edge of said table and the back tongue (390) being able
to be placed entirely in adherence to the upper surface
of said table from the opposite side of said tongue
(370).

15 15. Device to protect the dresses, according to one or
more of claims from 11 to 1 where it is comprised the
use of adhesive or both sides adhesive tape in
combination to said tongues.

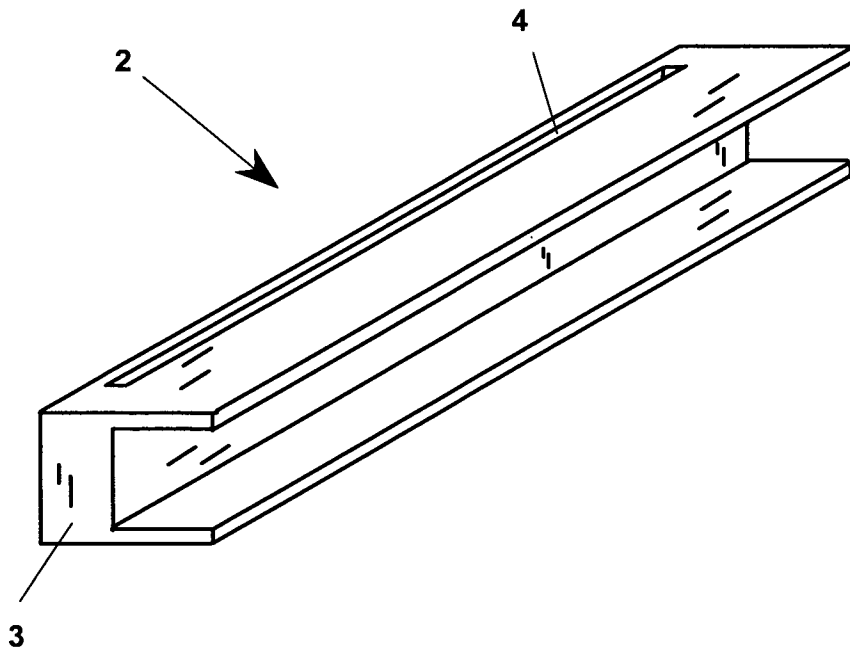
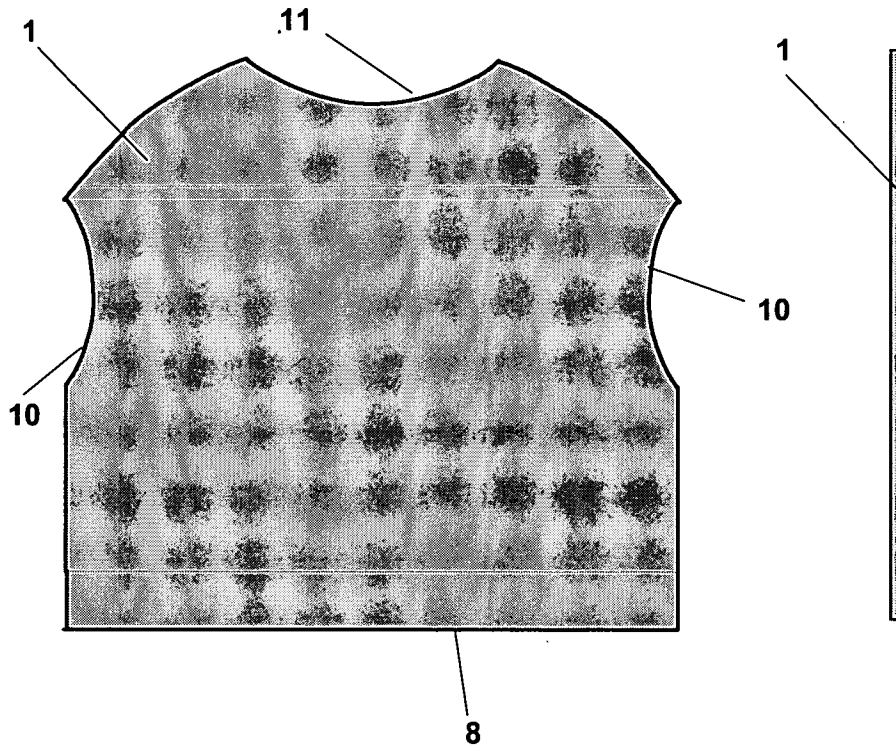
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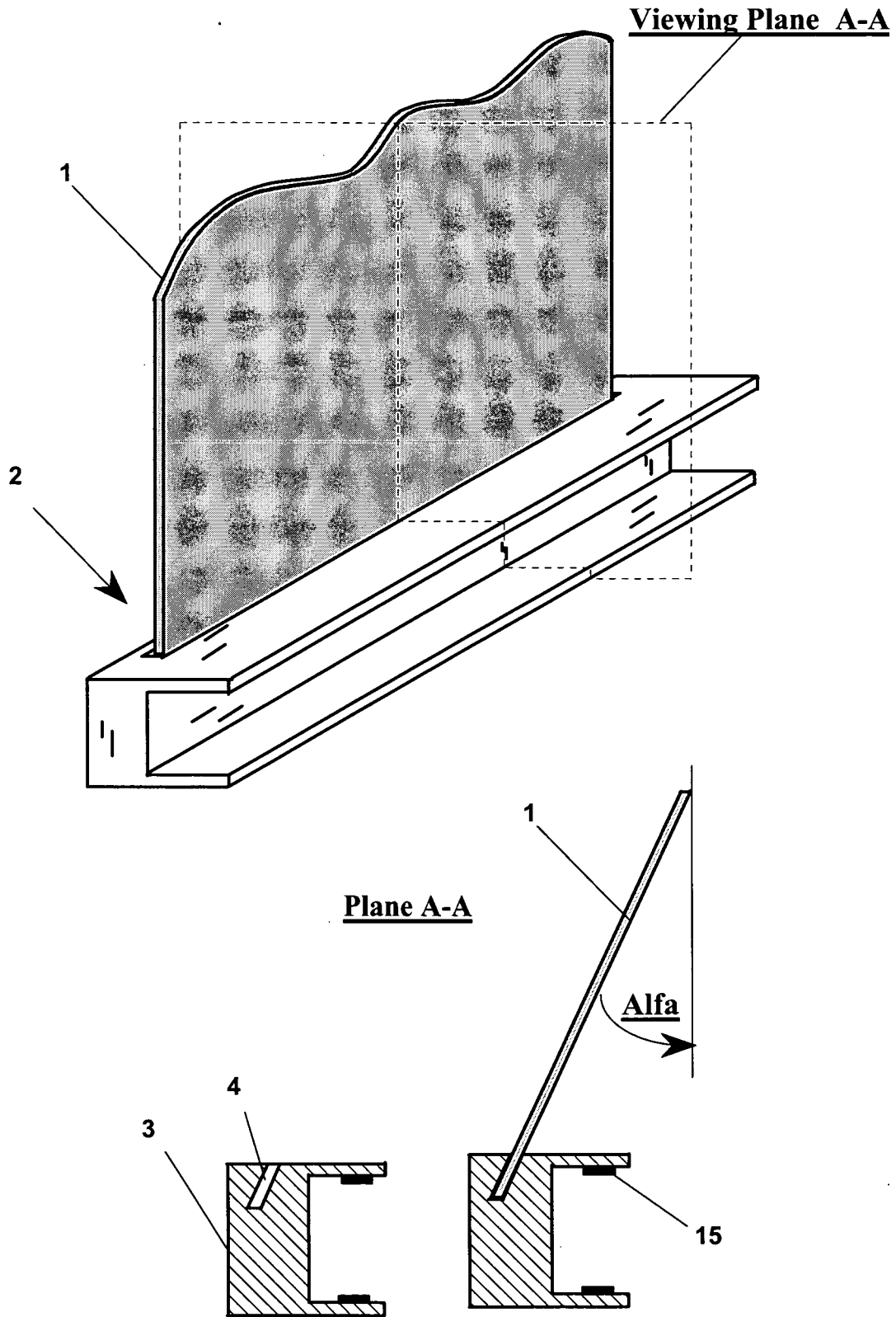
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Fig. 1



- 2/10 -

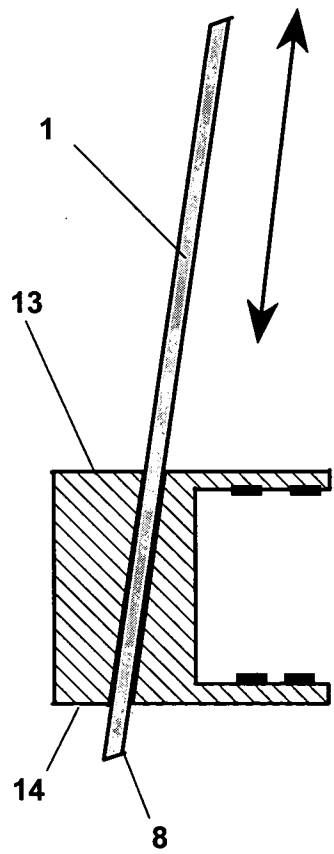
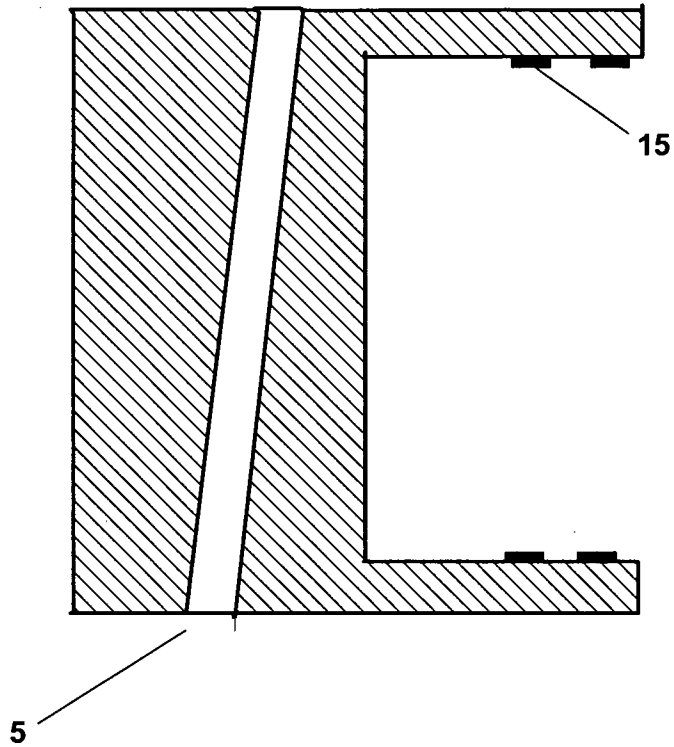
Fig. 2



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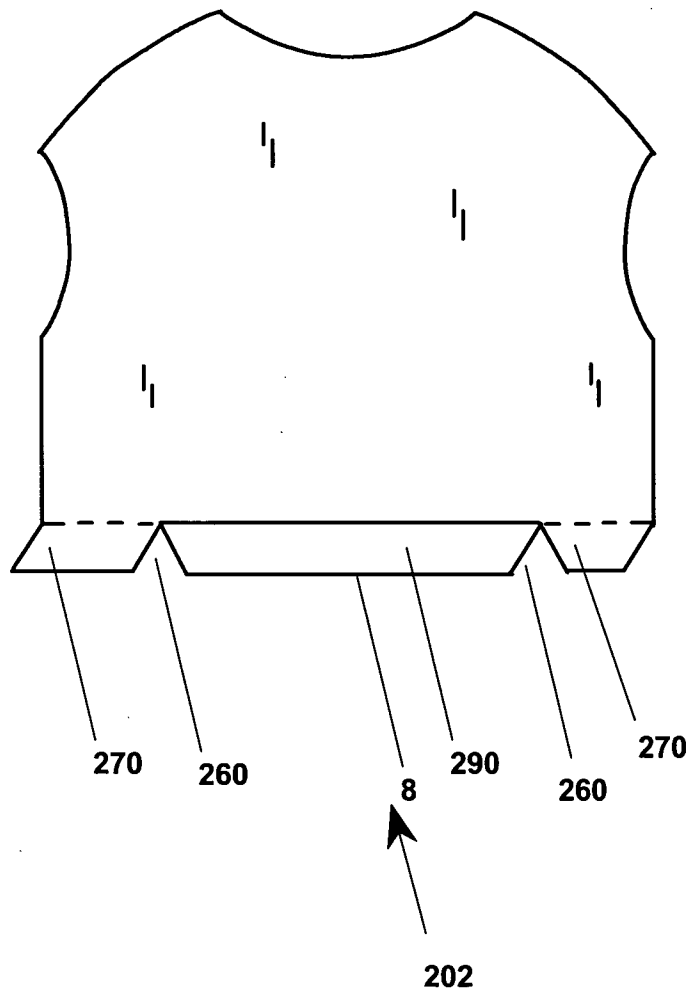
Fig. 3

Plane A-A

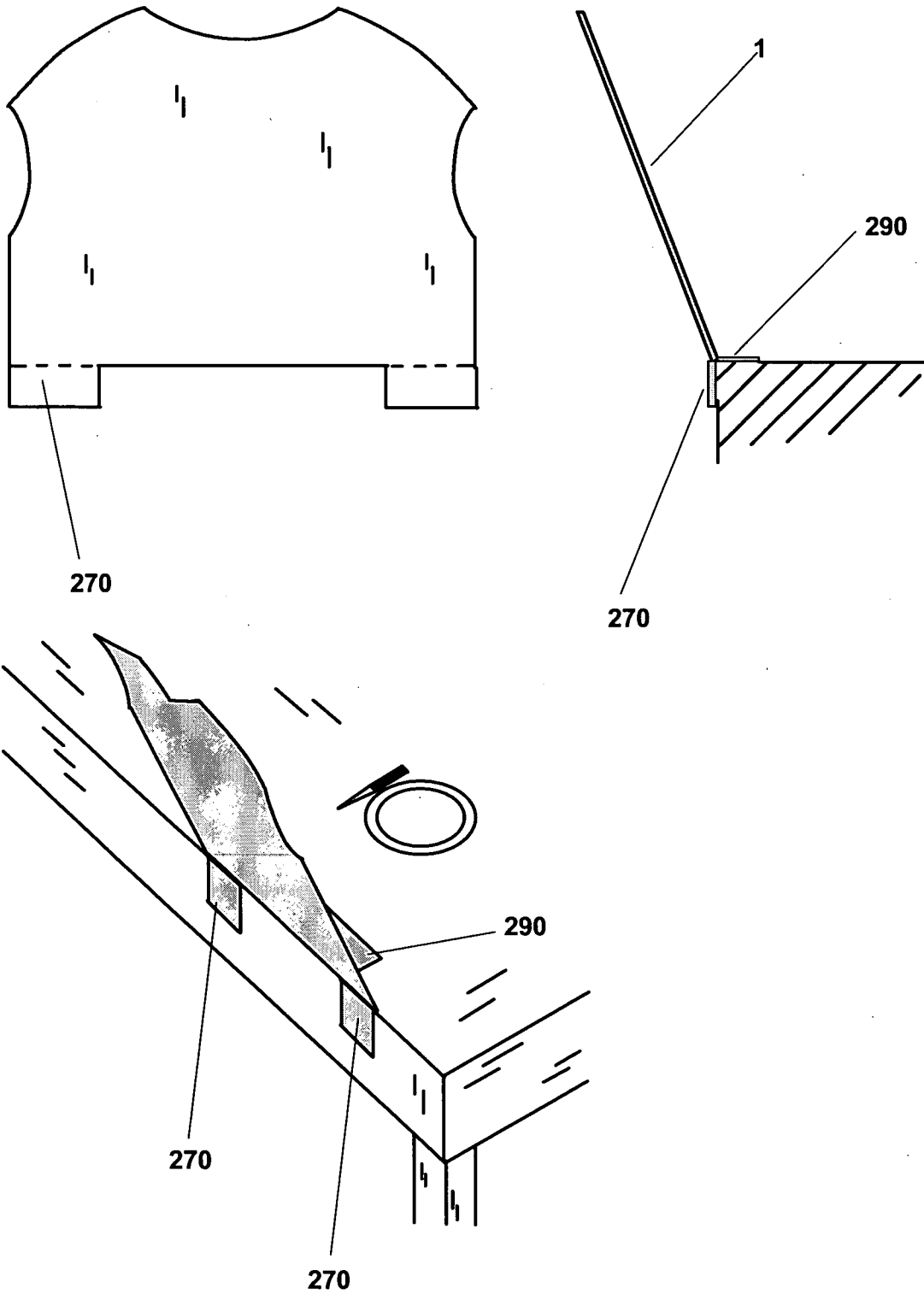


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Fig.4

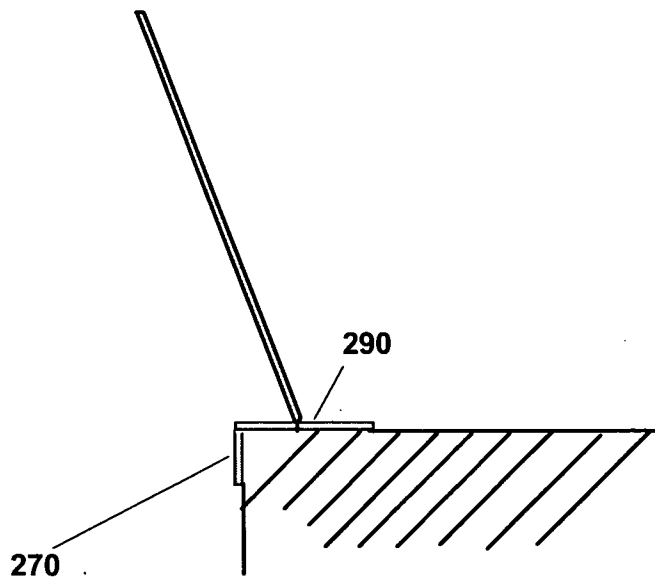
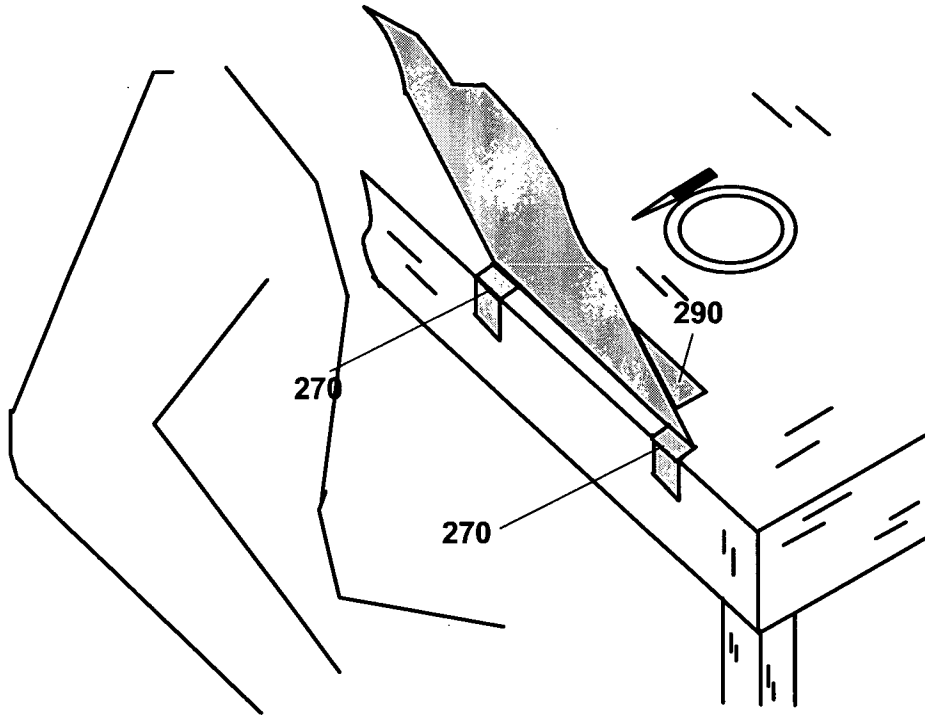


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Fig.5



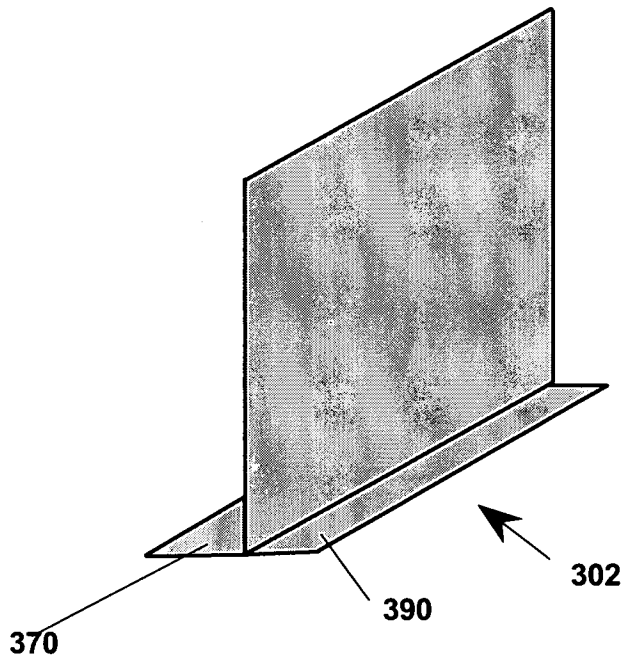
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Fig.6



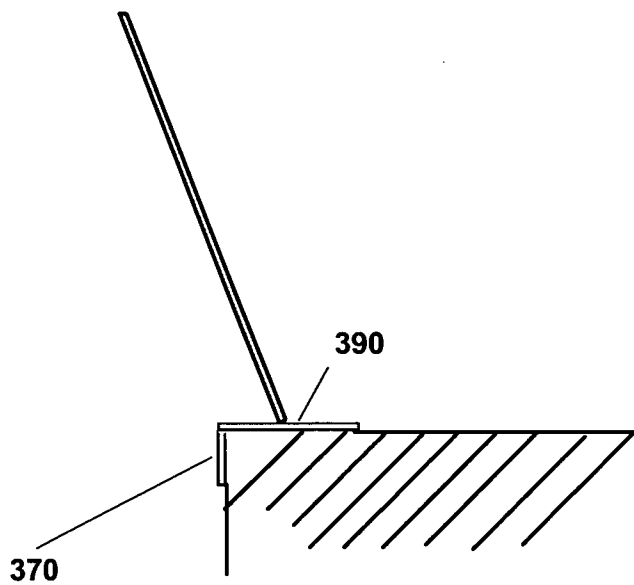
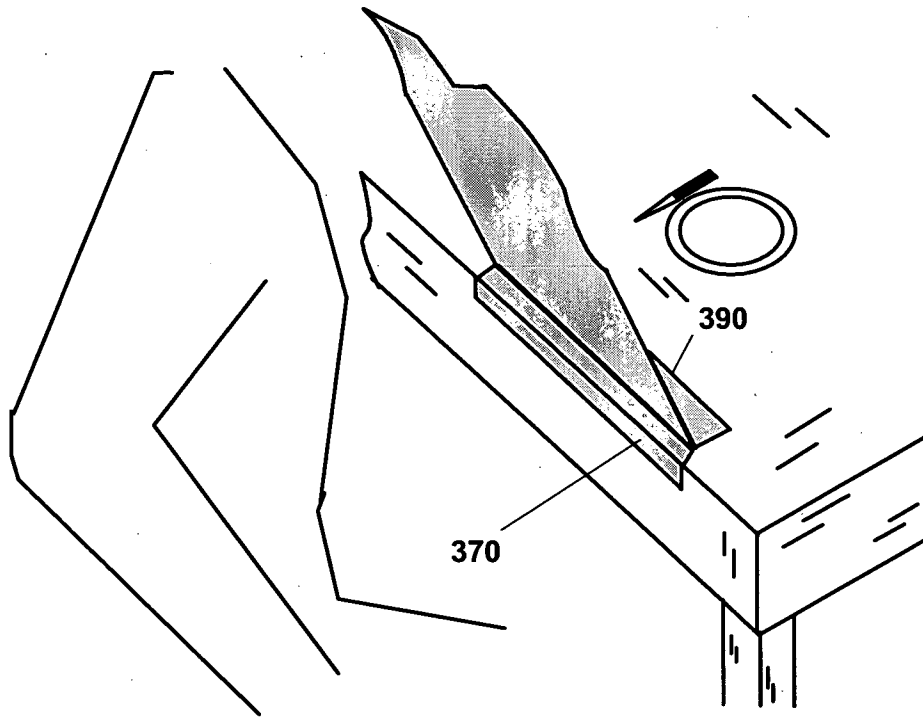
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Fig.7



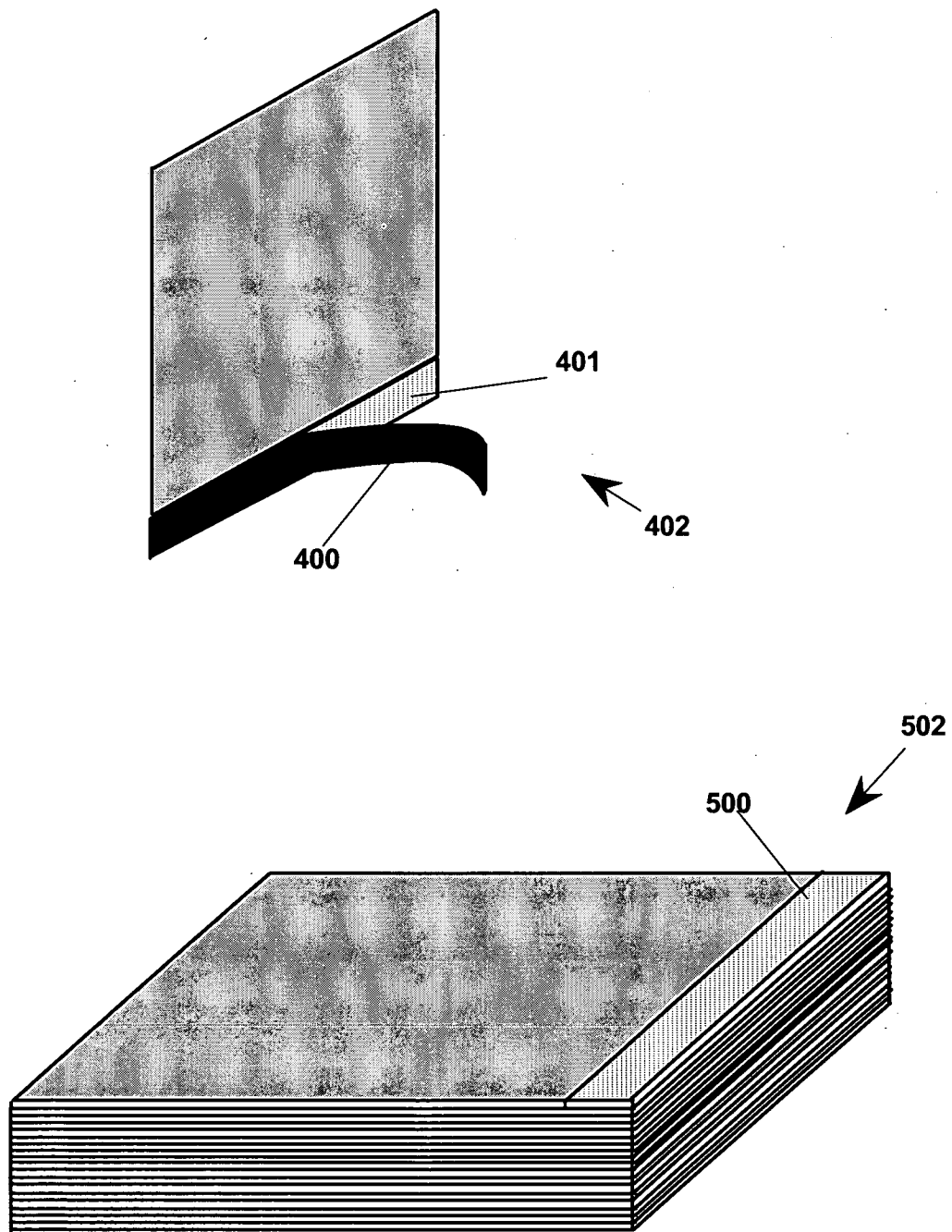
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Fig.8



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Fig.9



- 10/10 -

Fig.10

