



(22) Date de dépôt/Filing Date: 2006/09/28

(41) Mise à la disp. pub./Open to Public Insp.: 2007/03/30

(30) Priorité/Priority: 2005/09/30 (US11/240,949)

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *B32B 3/14* (2006.01),
A47L 13/16 (2006.01), *B32B 37/14* (2006.01),
B32B 5/02 (2006.01), *B32B 5/22* (2006.01),
B32B 7/12 (2006.01)

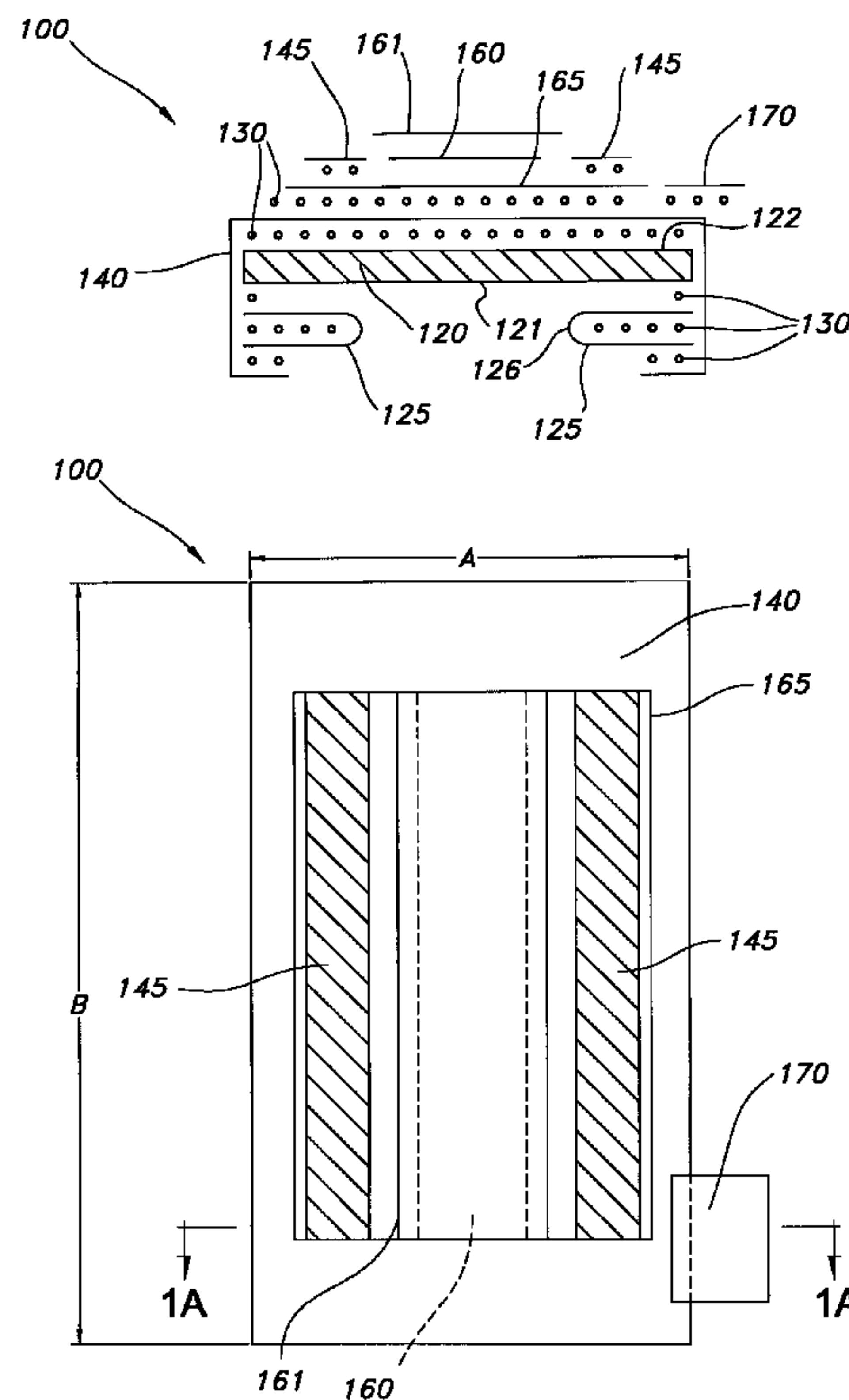
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(54) Titre : TAMPON NETTOYANT ABSORBANT ET METHODE DE FABRICATION CONNEXE

(54) Title: ABSORBENT CLEANING PAD AND METHOD OF MAKING SAME



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

A surface cleaning pad comprising a pad body and an attachment surface associated with the pad body and positioned to face a cleaning implement is provided. The attachment surface comprises a substantially hydrophilic portion and a substantially hydrophobic portion.

ABSTRACT

A surface cleaning pad comprising a pad body and an attachment surface associated with the pad body and positioned to face a cleaning implement is provided. The attachment surface comprises a substantially hydrophilic portion
5 and a substantially hydrophobic portion.

ABSORBENT CLEANING PAD AND METHOD OF MAKING SAME

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an absorbent cleaning pad and to a method for fabricating the absorbent cleaning pad.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Conventional floor mops comprise a handle rotatably connected to a mop head and a disposable absorbent cleaning pad coupled to the mop head in a variety of different configurations. One side of the disposable absorbent cleaning pad is placed in direct contact with a surface to be cleaned and the opposing side of the cleaning pad is in contact with the mop head. The absorbent pad absorbs and retains fluids, and loosens and traps dirt particles on the cleaning surface.

The art is replete with a wide variety of mechanisms which are configured to couple an absorbent cleaning pad to a mop head. These mechanisms generally allow for releasable attachment of the cleaning pad to the mop head so that the cleaning pad can be removed and discarded after use.

For example, a removable absorbent cleaning pad coupled to a mop head is disclosed in U.S. Patent Number 4,114,223. The double-sided cleaning pad of '223 encases the body of the mop head. A plurality of fastener ties positioned on an open end of the removable cleaning pad are utilized to constrict the cleaning pad around the body of the mop head. A disposable absorbent cleaning pad

coupled to a mop head is also disclosed in U.S. Patent Number 6,766,552. The disposable absorbent cleaning pad of '552 provides VELCRO loop fasteners which couple with VELCRO hook fasteners positioned on the underside of the mop head. Another example of a disposable absorbent cleaning pad coupled to a mop head is disclosed in U.S. Patent Numbers 6,810,554 and 6,807,702. In these examples, the disposable cleaning pad provides extended attachment tabs which are configured for insertion into retaining apertures positioned on the topside of the mop head.

A disposable absorbent cleaning pad coupled to a mop head is also disclosed in U.S. Patent Number 3,991,431. The removable absorbent cleaning pad of '431 provides pliable clips that releasably engage with rigid tabs positioned on the mop head. The engagement between the pliable clips and the rigid tabs facilitate the assembly and removal of the cleaning pad from the mop head. Still another example of a disposable absorbent cleaning pad coupled to a mop head is disclosed in U.S. Patent Numbers 3,473,184. The mop head of '184 comprises an upper plate and a lower plate separated by a gap. The periphery of a disposable absorbent cleaning pad is positioned in the gap and compressed between the plates. A wing nut positioned above the upper plate engages with a threaded fastener coupled to the lower plate. The rotation of the wing nut translates the upper plate to control the size of the gap between the plates and the compression of the cleaning pad between the plates.

Nevertheless, there continues to be a need to further refine and improve absorbent cleaning pads and the mechanisms used to attach a disposable cleaning pad to a cleaning implement.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to one aspect of the invention, a surface cleaning pad comprising a pad body and an attachment surface associated with the pad body and positioned to face a cleaning implement is provided. The attachment surface comprises a substantially hydrophilic portion and a substantially hydrophobic portion.

According to another aspect of the invention, a surface cleaning pad for use with a cleaning implement is provided. The surface cleaning pad consists of a unitized pad body formed from an airlaid composite. A barrier layer is coupled adjacent a cleaning-implement-facing surface of the unitized pad body and a hydrophobic layer is coupled adjacent the barrier layer. A position adhesive is applied to the hydrophobic layer and is positioned for engaging the cleaning implement. A release sheet is applied over a functional surface of the position adhesive.

According to yet another aspect of the invention, a method is provided for assembling a surface cleaning pad consisting of the step of applying a barrier layer to a cleaning implement facing surface of an airlaid composite. The barrier layer is folded over at least one edge of the airlaid composite, thereby encapsulating the edge of the airlaid composite. The barrier layer is applied to an opposing surface of the pad body that is positioned to face a surface to be cleaned and a hydrophobic layer is positioned over the barrier layer. A position adhesive is coupled to the hydrophobic layer, wherein a functional surface of the position adhesive is configured to engage a cleaning implement. A release sheet is mounted to the functional surface of the position adhesive.

According to still another aspect of the invention, a surface cleaning pad comprising a unitized pad body formed from an airlaid composite is provided. The unitized pad body includes a cleaning-implement-facing surface configured to face the cleaning implement and a surface-cleaning surface, wherein at least a portion of the surface-cleaning surface is exposed for direct contact with a surface to be cleaned. A barrier layer is coupled adjacent the cleaning-implement-facing surface of the unitized pad body and positioned to face the cleaning implement, wherein the barrier layer comprises a hydrophobic portion.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention is best understood from the following detailed description when read in connection with the accompanying drawings. It is emphasized that, according to common practice, the various features of the drawings are not to scale. On the contrary, the dimensions of the various features are arbitrarily expanded or reduced for clarity. Included in the drawings are the following figures:

Figure 1 is a top plan view of an absorbent cleaning pad in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 1A is a cross-sectional view of the absorbent cleaning pad taken along the line 1A-1A illustrated in Figure 1;

Figure 1B is a bottom plan view of the absorbent cleaning pad illustrated in Figure 1;

Figure 2 is a top plan view of an absorbent cleaning pad in accordance with another exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 2A is a cross-sectional view of the absorbent cleaning pad taken along the line 2A-2A illustrated in Figure 2;

Figure 3 is a top plan view of an absorbent cleaning pad in accordance with yet another exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 3A is a cross-sectional view of the absorbent cleaning pad taken along the line 3A-3A illustrated in Figure 3;

Figure 4 is a top plan view of an absorbent cleaning pad in accordance with still another exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 4A is a cross-sectional view of the absorbent cleaning pad taken along the line 4A-4A illustrated in Figure 4;

Figure 5 is a top plan view of an absorbent cleaning pad in accordance with another exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 5A is a cross-sectional view of the absorbent cleaning pad taken along the line 5A-5A illustrated in Figure 5;

Figure 6 is a top plan view of an absorbent cleaning pad in accordance with yet another exemplary embodiment of the present invention; and

Figure 6A is a cross-sectional view of the absorbent cleaning pad taken along the line 6A-6A illustrated in Figure 6.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Although the invention is illustrated and described herein with reference to specific embodiments, the invention is not intended to be limited to the details shown. Rather, various modifications may be made in the details within the scope and range of equivalents of the claims and without departing from the invention. Also, the embodiments selected for illustration in the figures are not shown to scale and are not limited to the proportions shown.

As used herein, the term "hydrophilic" is used to refer to surfaces that have an affinity for water and readily absorb or dissolve in a liquid. Conversely, the term "hydrophobic" is used to refer to surfaces that repel or tend not to combine with or dissolve in a liquid.

Referring generally to the figures and according to one aspect of the invention, a surface cleaning pad 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600 comprising a pad body 120, 220, 320, 420, 520, 620 and an attachment surface 122 associated with

the pad body and positioned to face a cleaning implement (not shown) is provided. The attachment surface 122 comprises a substantially hydrophilic portion 140, 240, 340, 440, 540, 642 and a substantially hydrophobic portion 165, 265, 641.

According to another aspect of the invention, a surface cleaning pad 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600 for use with a cleaning implement is provided. The surface cleaning pad consists of a unitized pad body 120, 220, 320, 420, 520, 620 formed from an airlaid composite. A barrier layer 140, 240, 340, 440, 540, 640 is coupled adjacent a cleaning-implement-facing surface 122 of the unitized pad body and a hydrophobic layer 165, 265, 641 is coupled adjacent the barrier layer. A position adhesive 160, 260, 360, 560, 660 is applied to the hydrophobic layer and is positioned for engaging the cleaning implement. A release sheet 161, 261, 361, 561, 661 is applied over a functional surface of the position adhesive.

According to yet another aspect of the invention, a method is provided for assembling a surface cleaning pad 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600 consisting of the step of applying a barrier layer 140, 240, 340, 440, 540, 640 to a cleaning implement facing surface 122 of an airlaid composite 120, 220, 320, 420, 520, 620. The barrier layer is folded over at least one edge of the airlaid composite, thereby encapsulating the edge of the airlaid composite. The barrier layer 140, 240, 340, 440, 540, 640 is applied to an opposing surface 121 of the pad body that is positioned to face a surface to be cleaned and a hydrophobic layer 165, 265, 641 is positioned over the barrier layer. A position adhesive 160, 260, 360, 560, 660 is coupled to the hydrophobic layer 165, 265, 641, wherein a functional surface of the position adhesive is configured to engage a cleaning implement. A release sheet 161, 261, 361, 561, 661 is mounted to the functional surface of the position adhesive.

According to still another aspect of the invention, a surface cleaning pad 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600 comprising a unitized pad body 120, 220, 320, 420, 520, 620 formed from an airlaid composite is provided. The unitized pad body includes a cleaning-implement-facing surface 122 configured to face the cleaning implement and a surface-cleaning surface 121, wherein at least a portion of the surface-cleaning surface 121 is exposed for direct contact with a surface to be cleaned. A barrier layer 140, 240, 340, 440, 540, 640 is coupled adjacent the cleaning-implement-facing surface 122 of the unitized pad body and positioned to face the cleaning implement, wherein the barrier layer 140, 240, 340, 440, 540, 640 comprises a hydrophobic portion 165, 265, 641.

Referring specifically to the exemplary embodiment illustrated in Figures 1, 1A and 1B, an absorbent cleaning pad is designated generally by the numeral "100". Generally, the absorbent cleaning pad 100 has a pad body 120 that absorbs and retains fluid removed from a cleaning surface. The cleaning side 121 of the pad body 120 is configured for cleansing contact with the cleaning surface. The opposing attachment side 122 of the pad body 120 is configured to be positioned facing a cleaning implement (not shown).

A barrier layer 140 is folded over the length-wise sides of the pad body 120 to limit the escapement of super absorbent polymer (SAP) particles from the exposed length-wise sides of the pad body 120, if the pad body 120 is an airlaid composite having SAP particles. A pair of lofty cuffs 125 adhered to the cleansing side 121 of the pad body 120 trap and retain large dirt particles removed from the cleaning surface. Two cut and place barriers 150 are adhered to both lofty cuffs 125 and the folded portion of the barrier layer 140, as illustrated in Figure 1B.

A tab portion 170 adhered to the barrier layer 140 extends beyond an edge of the pad body 120 and is configured to be grasped by a user of the cleaning implement to facilitate detachment of the cleaning pad 100 from the cleaning implement. An optional film layer 165 adhered to the barrier layer 140 provides a smooth surface to mount a position adhesive 160. The position adhesive 160 mounted to the film layer 165 is configured to releasably mount to a cleaning implement. A release sheet 161 is releasably mounted to the position adhesive 160 and removed from the position adhesive 160 prior to attachment to a cleaning implement. Two attachment members 145 adhered to the film layer 165 are configured to mount to a bottom side of the cleaning implement.

Although this cleaning pad embodiment comprises two attachment members 145 and the position adhesive assembly (i.e. 160, 165, 161) mounted to the barrier layer 140, the cleaning pad may only comprise two attachment members 145 mounted to the barrier layer 140 or the position adhesive assembly mounted to the barrier layer 140.

Regarding each component of the cleaning pad 100 of this exemplary embodiment, the pad body 120 of this exemplary embodiment absorbs and retains fluids and/or other matter residing on a cleaning surface. The pad body 120 is optionally formed from an airlaid composite. An airlaid composite is a unitized body with an absorbent core generally composed of wood pulp, binder fibers and optionally impregnated with super absorbent polymer (SAP) particles. The airlaid composite is formed by an airlaying or other process. The binder fibers form the overall structure of the pad body 120 and the wood fibers and SAP particles provide absorbency to the pad body 120. The term "unitized" refers to the airlaid composite as being composed of one material composite. However, the airlaid composite may be composed of multiple material layers adhered to one another.

Additional benefits and features of an airlaid composite construction are disclosed in U.S. Application No. 11/240,929. The disclosure of U.S. Application No. 11/240,929 is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

The width "A" of the cleaning pad 100 may be any dimension sufficient to cover all or a portion of the width of a surface of a cleaning implement, such as a mop head for example. For the purposes of illustration only, the width "A" may be about 5.7 inches. The length "B" of the cleaning pad 100, as illustrated in Figure 1, may be any dimension sufficient to cover all or a portion of the length of the cleaning implement. For the purposes of illustration only, the length "B" may be about 11.6 inches. The thickness of the pad body 120, as illustrated in Figure 1A, may be any dimension sufficient to absorb an appropriate volume of fluid and retain its structural integrity when wet.

The lofty cuff 125 facilitates the removal of soils from the surface being cleaned by contacting and trapping larger soil particles. The lofty cuff 125 may be folded and adhered to itself for structural integrity or a single ply of lofty cuff material could be selected to provide enhanced structural properties. The lofty cuff 125 material has a relatively large and open pore structure to trap particles and is configured to be flexible, sustain multiple uses and resist tearing or deformation. The lofty cuff 125 may optionally be composed of apertured polyethylene or polypropylene films, foams, airlaids, wetlaids, or laminations and combinations thereof. The lofty cuff 125 component may be either hydrophilic or hydrophobic.

In this exemplary embodiment, a portion of each lofty cuff 125 is bonded to the cleaning side 121 of the pad body 120 and barrier layer 140, and the two cut-and-place barriers 150 are adhered to the ends of both lofty cuff 125 with

an adhesive 130. Furthermore, by fastening only three sides of each lofty cuff 125, the closed-face folded end 126 of each lofty cuff 125 is unrestricted and a pocket or pouch is formed between the lofty cuff 125 and the pad body 120. The pouch provides an area to store collected dirt particles removed from the cleaning surface. The pouch traps large particles as the cleaning pad 100 is wiped back and forth along the cleaning surface. The pouches also substantially prevent the large particles from redepositing onto the cleaning surface. Additional benefits and features of a lofty cuff are disclosed in U.S. Application No. 11/241,437. The disclosure of U.S. Application No. 11/241,437 is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

The barrier layer 140 covers the attachment side 122 of the pad body 120 and is folded over the length-wise sides of the pad body 120. The barrier layer 140 is folded over the length-wise sides to limit the escapement of SAP particles from the exposed length-wise sides of the pad body 120, if the pad body 120 is formed from an airlaid composite containing SAP particles. Accordingly, the barrier layer 140 may not be required if the pad body 120 does not include SAP particles. Additional benefits and features of a cleaning pad configured to limit the escapement of SAP particles are disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. 11/240,726. The disclosure of U.S. Application No. 11/240,726 is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

The portion of the barrier layer 140 folded over the length-wise sides of the pad body 120 may be formed from a hydrophilic material to facilitate the removal of fluid from the surface being cleaned since that portion is in fluid communication with the surface being cleaned. If the barrier layer 140 was entirely formed from a hydrophobic material, the length-wise sides of the barrier layer 140 would merely push the fluid over the surface being cleaned, instead of

delivering the fluid into the pad body 120. However, as described in further detail later, the barrier layer may be formed from an entirely hydrophilic material, an entirely hydrophobic material, or, alternatively, a partially hydrophilic and partially hydrophobic material.

The film layer 165 is utilized to keep the cleaning implement substantially free of fluid and provide a smooth surface to mount the position adhesive 160 and the attachment members 145. The film layer 165 is mounted to the top of the barrier layer 140 with an adhesive 130. The surface of the film layer 165 is desirably non-porous for adequate adhesion of the position adhesive 160, and is desirably hydrophobic to limit fluid from passing to the position adhesive. Non-limiting examples of suitable materials include plastics such as polyethylene, polypropylene, polyester, and similar materials, as well as hydrophobic foams, airlaids, wetlaids, and laminations thereof. The film layer 165 optionally takes the form of a film, sheet, or similar substrate.

The cut and place barriers 150 cover the exposed width-wise sides of the pad body 120 to limit the escapement of SAP particles from the width-wise sides of the pad body 120, if the pad body 120 is optionally formed from an airlaid composite containing SAP particles. Accordingly, the cut and place barriers 150 may not be required if the pad body 120 does not include SAP particles. Each cut and place barrier 150 overlaps with and is adhered to both the lofty cuffs 125 and the barrier layer 140 with an adhesive 130. Similar to the barrier layer 140, the cut and place barrier 150 is desirably formed from a hydrophilic material configured to deliver the fluid to the pad body 120 for absorption and removal of the fluid from the cleaning surface. In this embodiment, the cut and place barrier layer 150 is optionally formed from a hydrophilic non-woven material.

The attachment members 145 facilitate releasable engagement of the cleaning pad 100 to a surface of a cleaning implement. That surface may be the bottom side surface of a mop head or another portion of a cleaning implement. The attachment members 145 are adhered to the hydrophobic film layer 165 with an adhesive 130. The attachment members 145 are optionally positioned along either a portion of or the entire length of the barrier layer 140 and are separated by a distance from the length-wise sides of the barrier layer 140, as illustrated in Figure 1. Although two longitudinally positioned attachment members 145 are selected for illustration, a cleaning pad may have any number of attachment members 145 positioned in any orientation.

In this exemplary embodiment, the attachment members 145 are composed of hook or loop material such as VELCRO loop material available from Velcro USA Inc. of Manchester, NH, USA. The attachment members 145 illustrated in Figure 1 are loop fasteners such as a VELCRO loop fastener(s) optionally configured to couple with hook fasteners such as a VELCRO hook fastener(s) positioned on a bottom-side surface of a commercially available mop head. The functional side of the VELCRO loop or hook material faces away from the barrier layer 140. The VELCRO loop and hook fasteners are configured to withstand the pressure and stress associated with typical mopping and scrubbing motions against a cleaning surface. The VELCRO loop and hook fasteners substantially limit the cleaning pad 100 from shifting, bunching, or otherwise becoming unattached, either partially or in whole, from the cleaning implement. The attachment member(s) 145 may optionally be designed in such a way as to allow for attachment to multiple types of commercially available mop systems.

While the exemplary embodiment illustrated in Figures 1, 1A and 1B utilizes a loop fastener for attachment to a hook fastener of another component,

the cleaning pad is alternatively provided with a hook fastener for attachment to a loop fastener positioned on another component. Also, other forms of fasteners are contemplated as well, including adhesives, co-adhesives, and other known fastening mechanisms. Alternative attachment mechanisms are disclosed in U.S. Application No. 11/241,138. The disclosure of U.S. Application No. 11/241,138 is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

In this exemplary embodiment, the position adhesive 160 provides an attachment means to temporarily couple the cleaning pad 100 to a cleaning implement. The position adhesive 160 facilitates releasable engagement of the cleaning pad 100 to a surface of a cleaning implement. That surface may be the bottom side surface of a mop head or another portion of a cleaning implement. The position adhesive 160 is optionally a double sided adhesive configured to couple with two different surfaces. The bottom side of the position adhesive 160 is adhered to the film layer 165 and the top side is covered by the release sheet 161.

The adhesive bond between the position adhesive 160 and the film layer 165 is desirably greater than the adhesive bond between the position adhesive 160 and the cleaning implement so as to prevent the position adhesive 160 from remaining on the surface of the cleaning implement upon removal of the cleaning pad 100 from the cleaning implement. In other words, it is desirable that upon removal of the cleaning pad 100 from the cleaning implement, the entire position adhesive 160 is intact and mounted to the film layer 165 of the cleaning pad and no residue of the position adhesive 160 remains on the surface of the cleaning implement.

Furthermore, the adhesive bond between the position adhesive 160 and the cleaning implement is desirably strong enough so that the position

adhesive 160 resists disengaging from the cleaning implement upon use of the cleaning pad. Conversely, the adhesive bond between the position adhesive 160 and the cleaning implement is desirably weak enough to disengage the cleaning pad 100 from the cleaning implement. A suitable position adhesive 160 is currently sold and distributed by the National Starch and Chemical Corporation of Bridgewater, NJ, USA.

Although the length of the position adhesive 160 selected for illustration is less than the length "B" of the cleaning pad 100, it should be understood that the length of the position adhesive 160 may be any dimension equal to or less than the length "B" of the cleaning pad 100. In another exemplary embodiment, not shown in the Figures, the length of the position adhesive 160 is desirably equal to the length "B" of the cleaning pad 100. From the manufacturing perspective, it is contemplated that a roll of barrier material having a continuous position adhesive strip 160 is advantageous for a high production volume application. In such case, the barrier roll with continuous position adhesive would be separated into individual barriers 140 with position adhesive 160 to be applied to each cleaning pad 100.

The release sheet 161 is applied to the top of the position adhesive 160 to protect and preserve the adhesive layer of the position adhesive 160 so that the position adhesive 160 retains its adhesion properties. Accordingly, the size of the release sheet 161 is equal to or, more desirably, larger than the position adhesive 160 to protect the entire position adhesive 160. The position adhesive 160 is illustrated in dotted line form to indicate that the adhesive 160 is positioned below the release sheet 161. In practice, the cleaning pad 100 is shipped with the release sheet 161 pre-applied to the position adhesive 160. The user removes the release sheet 161 from the position adhesive 160 prior to use of the cleaning pad

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100. Although, if the cleaning implement is configured to mount with the attachment members 145, the position adhesive is not required. In such case, the user is not required to remove the release sheet 161 from the position adhesive 160.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the width of the release sheet 161 is greater than the width of the position adhesive 160 to facilitate easy removal of the release sheet 161 from the position adhesive 160. In use, the user grasps the release sheet 161 in an area where the release sheet 161 is not adhered to the position adhesive 160 to avoid contact with the tacky position adhesive 160. Alternatively, if the width of the release sheet 161 is less than or equal to the width of the position adhesive 160, the user would conceivably lift the release sheet 161 from the tacky position adhesive 160 using a finger nail.

In the course of the assembly process, the position adhesive 160 is applied to the release sheet 161 before it is applied to the film layer 165. The temperature of the post-processed position adhesive 160 is too great to immediately apply it directly to the film layer 165, as the position adhesive 160 could melt or burn the film layer 165. Accordingly, the position adhesive 160 is applied to the release sheet 161 first, permitted to cool down to a pre-determined temperature and then transfer coated onto the film layer 165.

The tab portion 170 is provided to ease the removal of the absorbent cleaning pad 100 from the cleaning implement. In use, the user tugs on the tab portion 170 to remove the cleaning pad 100 from the cleaning implement without having to contact the dirty pad body 120, dirty lofty cuffs 125 or the cleaning implement. The tab portion 170 sits on a plane substantially parallel with the cleaning side 121 of the pad body 120 and extends outwardly from the pad body

120, lofty cuffs 125 and the cleaning implement. Accordingly, the tab portion 170 is desirably formed from a rigid or semi-rigid material so that it substantially retains its form and parallel orientation with the cleaning side of the pad body.

The tab portion 170 is desirably positioned in close proximity to a corner of the cleaning pad 100 to facilitate easy removal of the cleaning pad 100 from the cleaning implement. In other words, it is considerably easier for the user to peel the corner of the cleaning pad 100 away from the cleaning implement than to peel an entire side of the cleaning pad 100 away from the cleaning implement.

Although the tab portion 170 is adhered to the barrier layer 140 as illustrated in Figures 1 and 1A, the tab portion 170 may also be adhered to the pad body 120 or the film layer 165 with an adhesive 130. In another embodiment not illustrated herein, the tab portion 170 is integral with and extends from the attachment member, which will be described in further detail later. Although the embodiment selected for illustration includes only one tab portion 170, a plurality of tab portions 170 could be positioned on any longitudinal side or corner of the cleaning pad 100.

The adhesive 130 of the exemplary embodiment may be composed of any material sufficient to provide a bond between the components of the cleaning pad 100. In the exemplary embodiment and by way of non-limiting example, one exemplary adhesive is manufactured by H.B. Fuller Company of St. Paul, MN, e.g., Part Number 1696. However, one skilled in the art will recognize that other types of adhesive and other fastener mechanisms are suitable for this application.

The details of the construction and assembly of the exemplary cleaning pad are disclosed in U.S. Application No. 11/241,138. The disclosure of U.S. Application No. 11/241,138 is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Similar to the absorbent cleaning pad embodiment illustrated in Figures 1, 1A and 1B, the exemplary embodiment of a cleaning pad 200 shown in Figures 2 and 2A is provided with a pad body 220, two lofty cuffs 225, barrier layer 240, two attachment members 245, position adhesive 260 with release sheet 261, tab portion 270, hydrophobic film layer 265 and a cut and place barrier (not shown). In this exemplary embodiment, the width of the film layer 265 is less than the width of the film layer 165 of the previous embodiment. The film layer 265 is smaller in this embodiment to reduce the material expense of the cleaning pad 200. The attachment members 245 of this embodiment are applied directly to the barrier layer 240.

Similar to the absorbent cleaning pad embodiment illustrated in Figures 2 and 2A, the exemplary embodiment of a cleaning pad 300 shown in Figures 3 and 3A is provided with a pad body 320, two lofty cuffs 325, two attachment members 345, tab portion 370, barrier layer 340, position adhesive 360 with release sheet 361 and a cut and place barrier (not shown). In this exemplary embodiment, the barrier layer 340 is composed of a hydrophobic material, similar to the material of the film layers 165 and 265 of the previous embodiments, thereby eliminating the need for a secondary film layer (e.g. 165 and 265). The hydrophobic material of the barrier layer 340 limits fluid from passing to the cleaning implement to keep the cleaning implement free of dirty fluid. The hydrophobic material of the barrier layer 340 also provides a better surface than a non-woven material for the adhesion of the attachment members 345, tab portion 370 and the position adhesive 360. An adhesive 330 is provided

to adhere the attachment members 345 and the tab portion 370 to the barrier layer 340. By virtue of the non-porous structure of the barrier layer, less adhesive 330 is required to adequately adhere the attachment members 345 and the tab portion 370 to the barrier layer 340.

The length of the release sheet 361 of this embodiment is significantly greater than the length of the position adhesive 360 to facilitate easy removal of the release sheet 361 from the position adhesive 360, the benefits of which have already been described. In addition to the release sheet 361 modification, the attachment members 345 of this embodiment extend along the entire length of the pad body 320 for greater adhesion to the cleaning implement.

Similar to the absorbent cleaning pad embodiment illustrated in Figures 3 and 3A, the exemplary embodiment of a cleaning pad 600 shown in Figures 6 and 6A is provided with a pad body 620, two lofty cuffs 625, barrier layer 640, two attachment members 645, tab portion 670, position adhesive 660 with release sheet 661 and a cut and place barrier (not shown). In this embodiment the barrier layer 640 is composed of a unique material that is partially hydrophobic and partially hydrophilic. The hydrophobic portion 641 is positioned in the central region of the cleaning pad 600 and configured to limit fluid from passing from the pad body 620 to the position adhesive and/or the cleaning implement. The width of the hydrophobic portion 641 may be any size equal to or smaller than the width of the cleaning implement. The hydrophilic portions 642 positioned on both of the folded sides of the cleaning pad 600 are configured to deliver the fluid from the cleaning surface and into the pad body 620 for absorption and removal from the cleaning surface. As described previously, if the barrier layer 640 were formed from a substantially impervious and hydrophobic material, the length-wise sides of the barrier layer 640 would merely push the fluid over the surface being cleaned,

as opposed to delivering the fluid to the pad body 620 for absorption. The unique barrier layer 640 alleviates the necessity for a separate film layer, which could represent a cost savings.

Similar to the absorbent cleaning pad embodiment illustrated in Figures 1, 1A and 1B, the exemplary embodiment of a cleaning pad 400 shown in Figures 4 and 4A is provided with a pad body 420, two lofty cuffs 425 (one folded cuff shown), barrier layer 440, two attachment members 445, tab portions 470 and a cut and place barrier (not shown). In this embodiment, the cleaning pad 400 is provided with straps 480 configured to wrap around a cleaning implement. The two straps 480 are oriented along the width of the cleaning pad 400 and positioned to accept the head of the cleaning implement. The straps 480 and the barrier layer 440 define a passage sized and positioned to receive a head portion of a commercially available cleaning implement. In use, the head portion of the cleaning implement is positioned beneath one of the straps 480 and the other strap 480 is lifted or optionally stretched around the head portion of the cleaning implement to fully engage and substantially retain the head portion of the cleaning implement.

The straps 480 may have elastic functionality configured to stretch around the head portion of the cleaning implement and retain the cleaning implement. By way of non-limiting example, the elastic strap is formed from a material having an elastic elongation limit of at least approximately 100 percent and more preferably at least approximately 250 percent. The straps 480 may optionally be composed of hook or loop fastener material. Although not shown, in another embodiment, the cleaning pad includes straps formed from loop or hook material thereby eliminating the need for the attachment members 445. In such an embodiment, the straps would be configured to wrap around the head of a

cleaning implement in one configuration and mount to a surface of the cleaning implement in another configuration.

The straps 480 are also configured to permit the user to operate the cleaning pad 400 independent from a cleaning implement. The cleaning pad 400 may be useful for hand-cleaning any small, delicate, or non-planar surface that the cleaning implement can not clean or is unable to access. The strap 480 may be composed of any elastic material flexible enough to accommodate a child and an adult-sized hand and rigid enough to firmly grip a child and an adult-sized hand.

The tab portions 470 are integral with and extend from the straps 480, as illustrated in Figure 4. Similar to the tab portions 170, 270, 370, 470, 670 of the previous embodiments, the tab portions 470 are provided to ease the removal of the cleaning pad 400 from the cleaning implement.

Similar to the absorbent cleaning pad embodiment illustrated in Figures 4 and 4A, the exemplary embodiment of a cleaning pad 500 shown in Figures 5 and 5A is provided with a pad body 520, two lofty cuffs 525 (one folded cuff shown), barrier layer 540, two attachment members 545, tab portions 570, two straps 580 and a cut and place barrier (not shown). In this embodiment, the cleaning pad 500 includes a position adhesive 560 with a release sheet 561. As described previously, the position adhesive 560 provides an attachment mechanism to temporarily couple the cleaning pad 500 to a cleaning implement. The position adhesive 560 facilitates releasable engagement of the cleaning pad 500 to a surface of a cleaning implement. The release sheet 561 is applied above the position adhesive 560 to shield and preserve the position adhesive 560 prior to its use.

Although the invention is illustrated and described herein with reference to specific embodiments, the invention is not intended to be limited to the details shown. Rather, various modifications may be made in the details within the scope and range of equivalents of the claims and without departing from the invention. Also, the embodiments selected for illustration in the figures are not shown to scale and are not limited to the proportions shown.

What is Claimed:

1. A surface cleaning pad comprising a pad body and an attachment surface associated with said pad body and positioned to face a cleaning implement, said attachment surface comprising a substantially hydrophilic portion and a substantially hydrophobic portion.

2. The surface cleaning pad of claim 1, said attachment surface defined at least in part by a barrier layer including said substantially hydrophilic portion and said substantially hydrophobic portion.

3. The surface cleaning pad of claim 2 further comprising an attachment member directly coupled to said substantially hydrophobic portion of said barrier layer.

4. The surface cleaning pad of claim 3, said attachment member being positioned for engagement with a cleaning implement.

5. The surface cleaning pad of claim 4, said attachment member comprising a position adhesive.

6. The surface cleaning pad of claim 2, said barrier layer being folded over at least one edge of said pad body, thereby encapsulating said edge of said pad body.

7. The surface cleaning pad of claim 6 wherein a folded portion of said barrier layer is substantially hydrophilic.

8. The surface cleaning pad of claim 6 wherein a folded portion of said barrier layer is applied to a surface of said pad body that is opposed to said attachment surface and positioned to face a surface to be cleaned.

9. The surface cleaning pad of claim 8, wherein said folded portion of said barrier layer is substantially hydrophilic.

10. The surface cleaning pad of claim 1 wherein said attachment surface comprises a substantially hydrophobic layer defining said hydrophobic portion and a substantially hydrophilic layer defining said hydrophilic layer and associated with said substantially hydrophobic layer.

11. The surface cleaning pad of claim 10, said substantially hydrophilic layer being directly applied to said pad body.

12. The surface cleaning pad of claim 11 wherein said substantially hydrophobic layer is positioned over said hydrophilic layer.

13. The surface cleaning pad of claim 12 further comprising an attachment member directly coupled to said hydrophobic layer and positioned to face the cleaning implement.

14. The surface cleaning pad of claim 13, said attachment member comprising a position adhesive.

15. The surface cleaning pad of claim 1, said pad body being formed from a unitized airlaid composite.

16. A surface cleaning pad for use with a cleaning implement, said surface cleaning pad consisting of:

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a unitized pad body formed from an airlaid composite;

a barrier layer coupled adjacent a cleaning-implement-facing surface of said unitized pad body;

a hydrophobic layer coupled adjacent said barrier layer;

a position adhesive applied to said hydrophobic layer and positioned for engaging the cleaning implement; and

a release sheet applied over a functional surface of said position adhesive.

17. The surface cleaning pad of claim 16, said barrier layer being folded over at least one edge of said pad body, thereby encapsulating said edge of said pad body.

18. The surface cleaning pad of claim 17 wherein a folded portion of said barrier layer is substantially hydrophilic.

19. The surface cleaning pad of claim 17 wherein a folded portion of said barrier layer is applied to a surface of said pad body that is opposed to said attachment surface and positioned to face a surface to be cleaned.

20. The surface cleaning pad of claim 19 wherein said folded portion of said barrier layer is substantially hydrophilic.

21. A method of assembling a surface cleaning pad consisting of the steps of:

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- a) applying a barrier layer to a cleaning implement facing surface of an airlaid composite;
- b) folding the barrier layer over at least one edge of the airlaid composite, thereby encapsulating said edge of the airlaid composite;
- c) applying the barrier layer to an opposing surface of the pad body that is positioned to face a surface to be cleaned;
- d) positioning a hydrophobic layer over the barrier layer;
- e) coupling a position adhesive to the hydrophobic layer, wherein a functional surface of the position adhesive is configured to engage a cleaning implement; and
- f) mounting a release sheet to the functional surface of the position adhesive.

22. A surface cleaning pad configured for use with a cleaning implement, said surface cleaning pad comprising:

a unitized pad body formed from an airlaid composite, said unitized pad body having a cleaning-implement-facing surface configured to face the cleaning implement and a surface-cleaning surface, wherein at least a portion of said surface-cleaning surface is exposed for direct contact with a surface to be cleaned; and

a barrier layer coupled adjacent said cleaning-implement-facing surface of said unitized pad body and positioned to face the cleaning implement, wherein said barrier layer comprises a hydrophobic portion.

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23. The surface cleaning pad of claim 22 further comprising a position adhesive mounted to said hydrophobic portion of said barrier layer, said position adhesive including a release sheet.

24. The surface cleaning pad of claim 22, said barrier layer being folded over at least one edge of said unitized pad body, thereby encapsulating said edge of said unitized pad body.

25. The surface cleaning pad of claim 24 wherein said folded portion of said barrier layer is substantially hydrophilic.

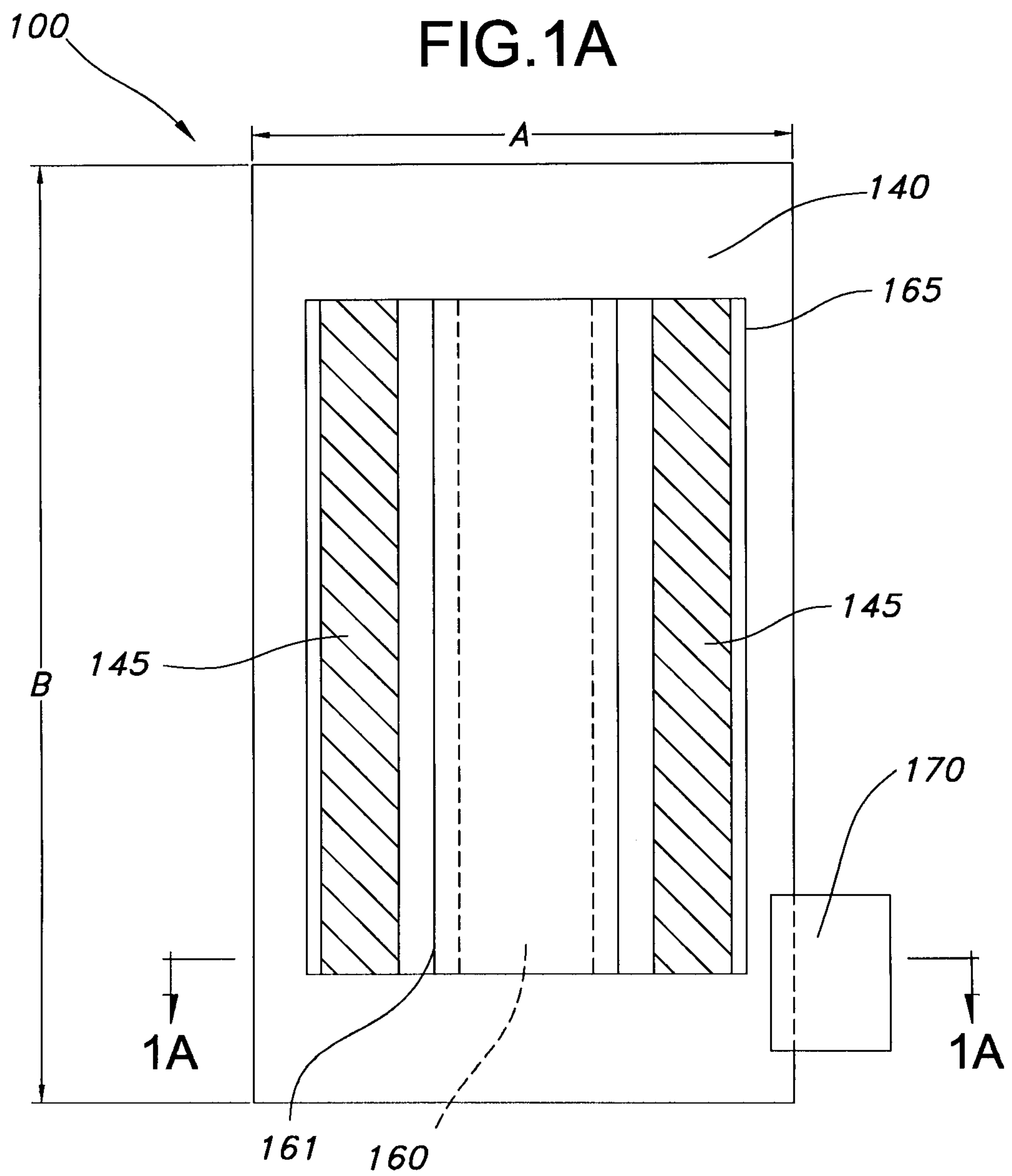
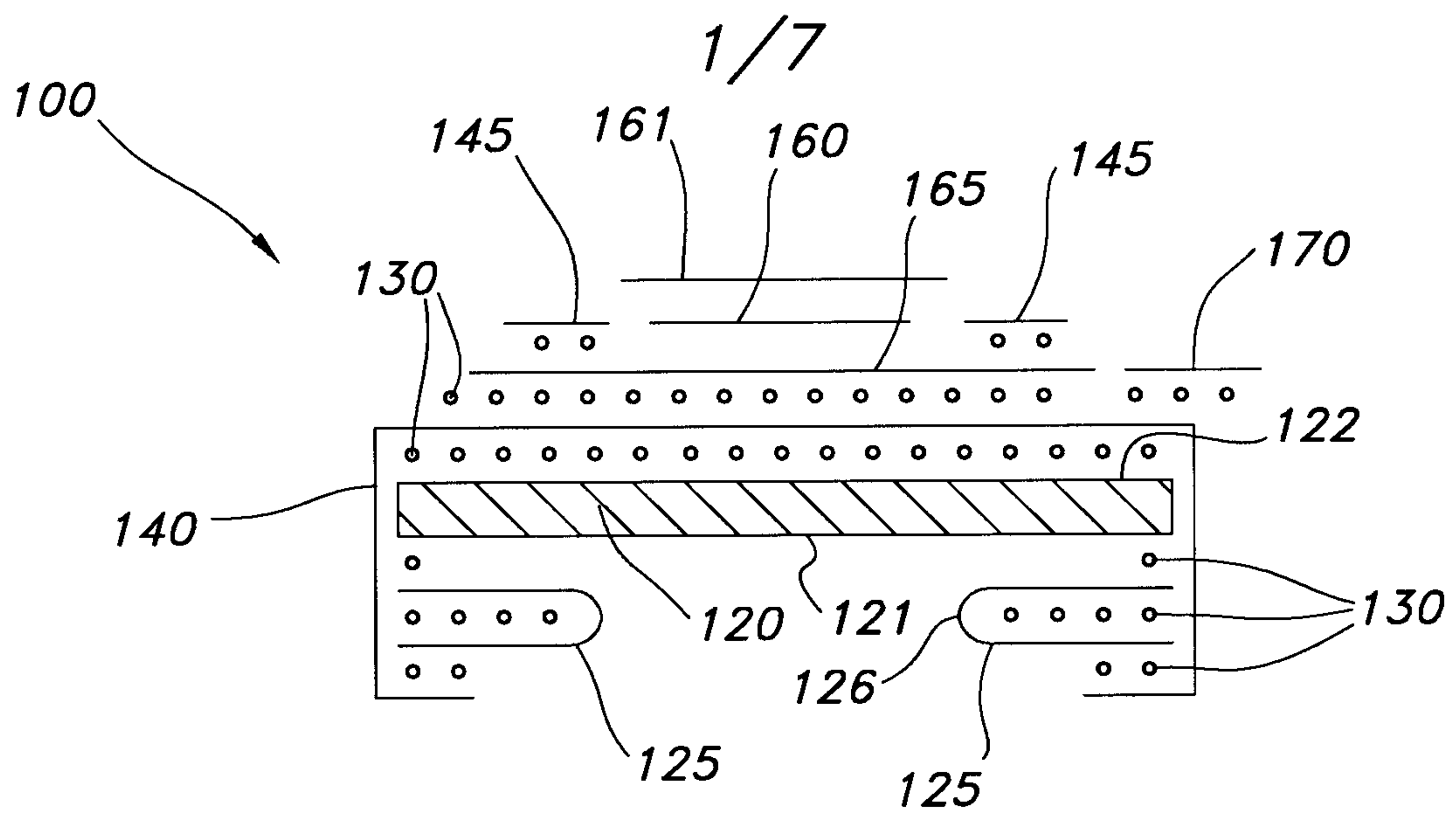
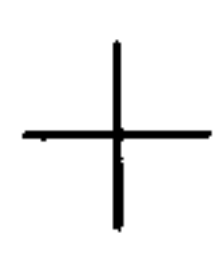


FIG. 1



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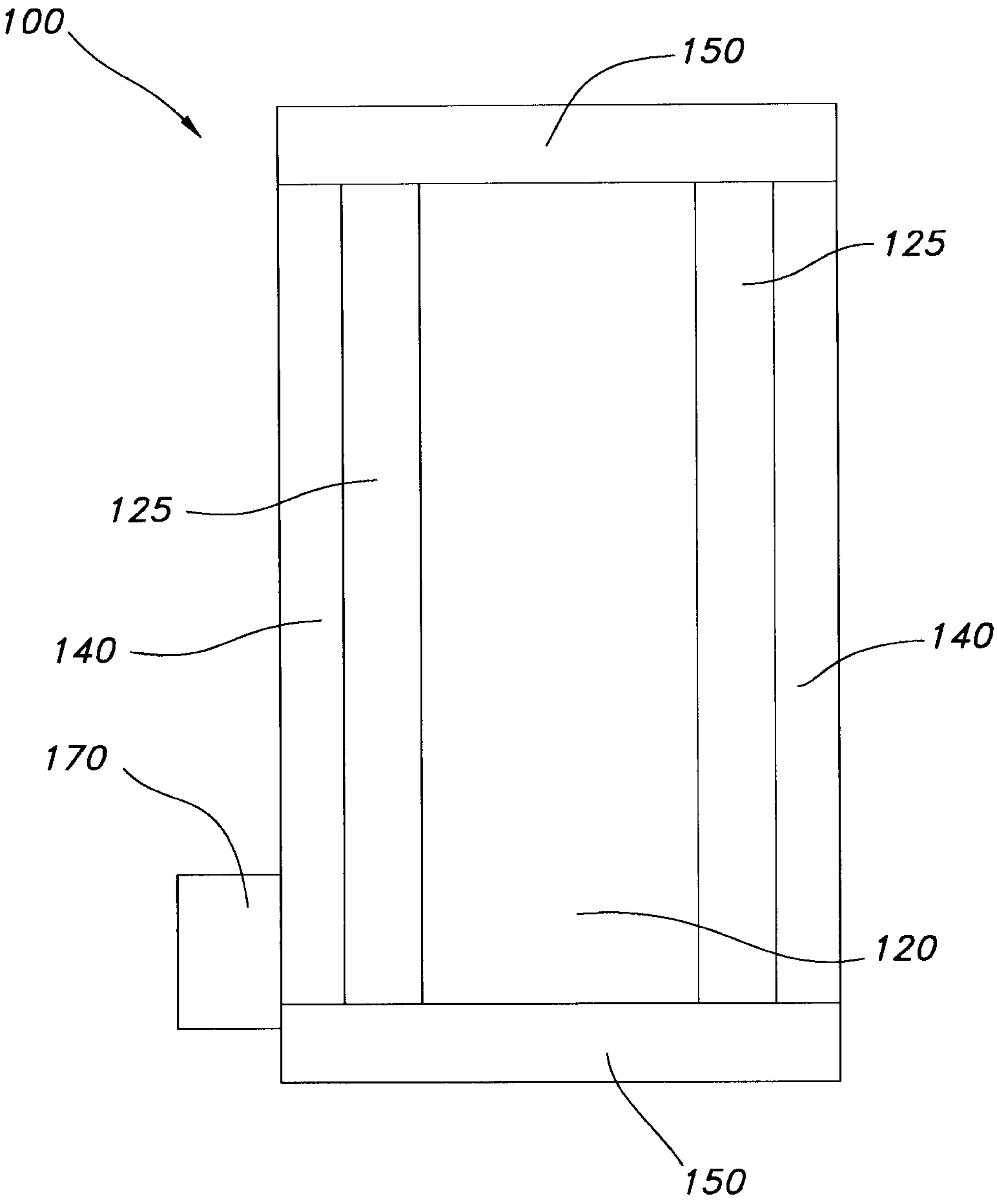


FIG. 1B

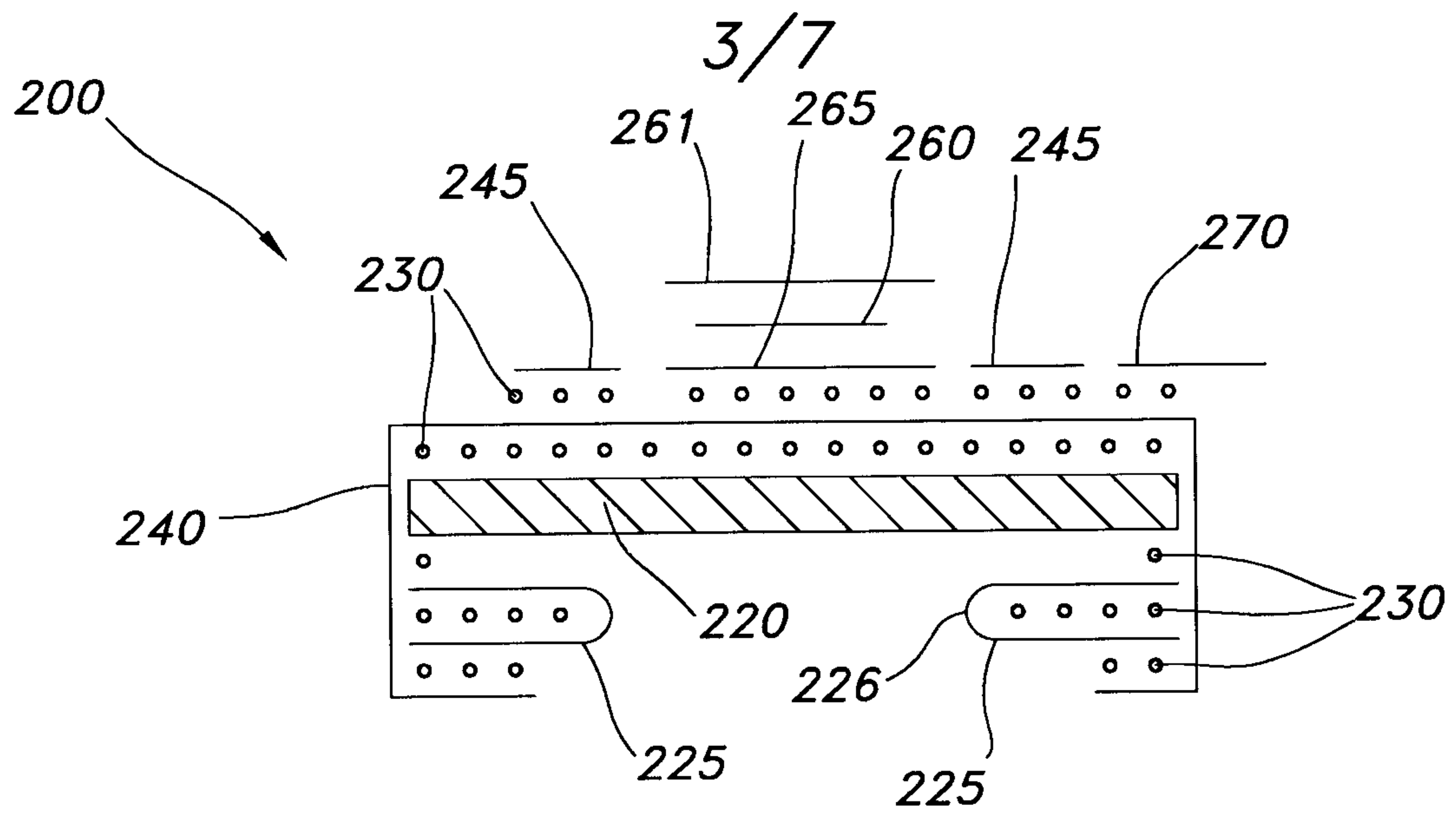
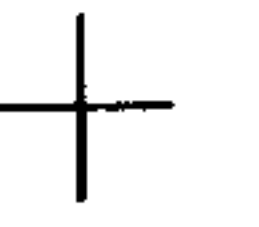


FIG. 2A

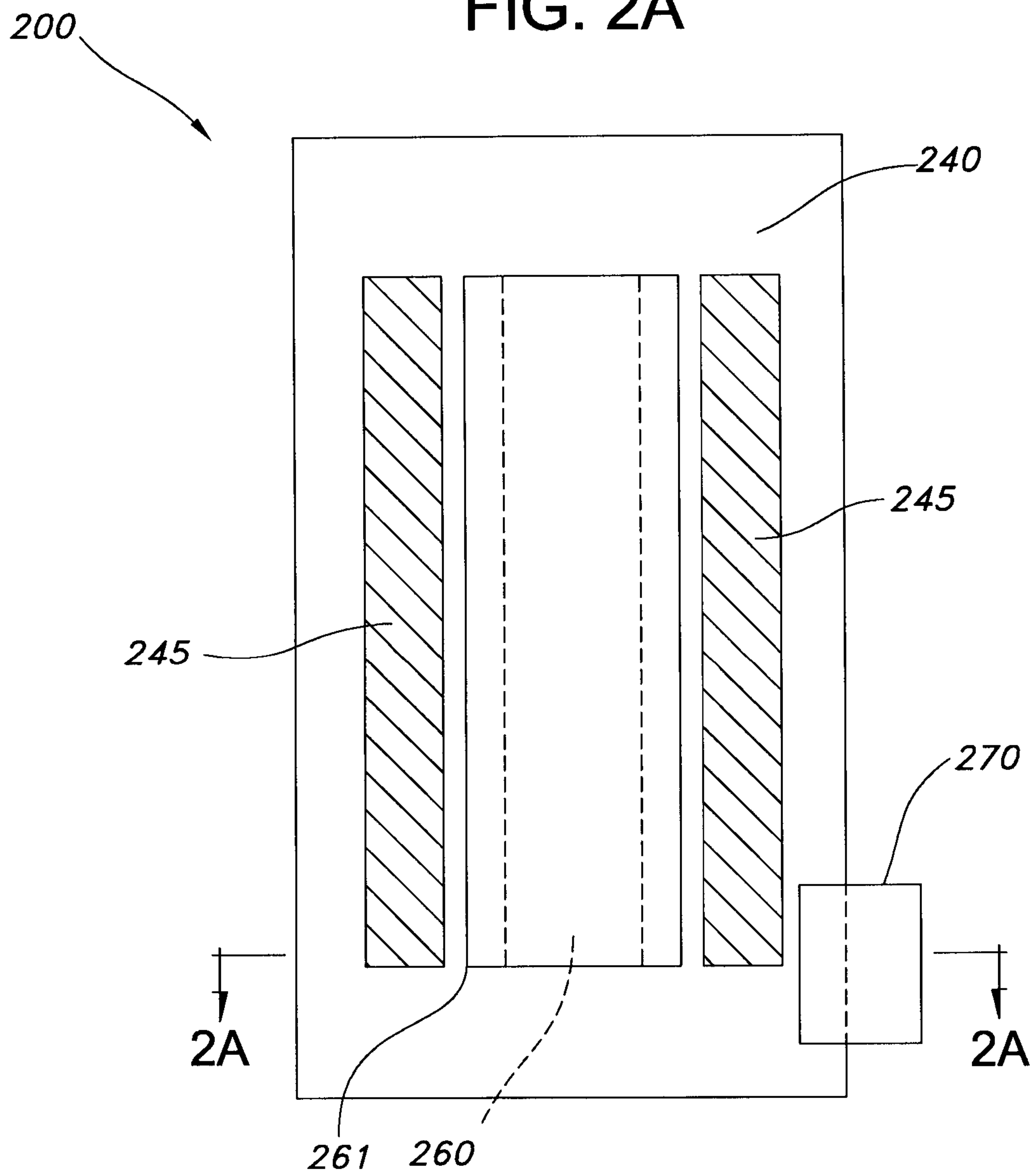
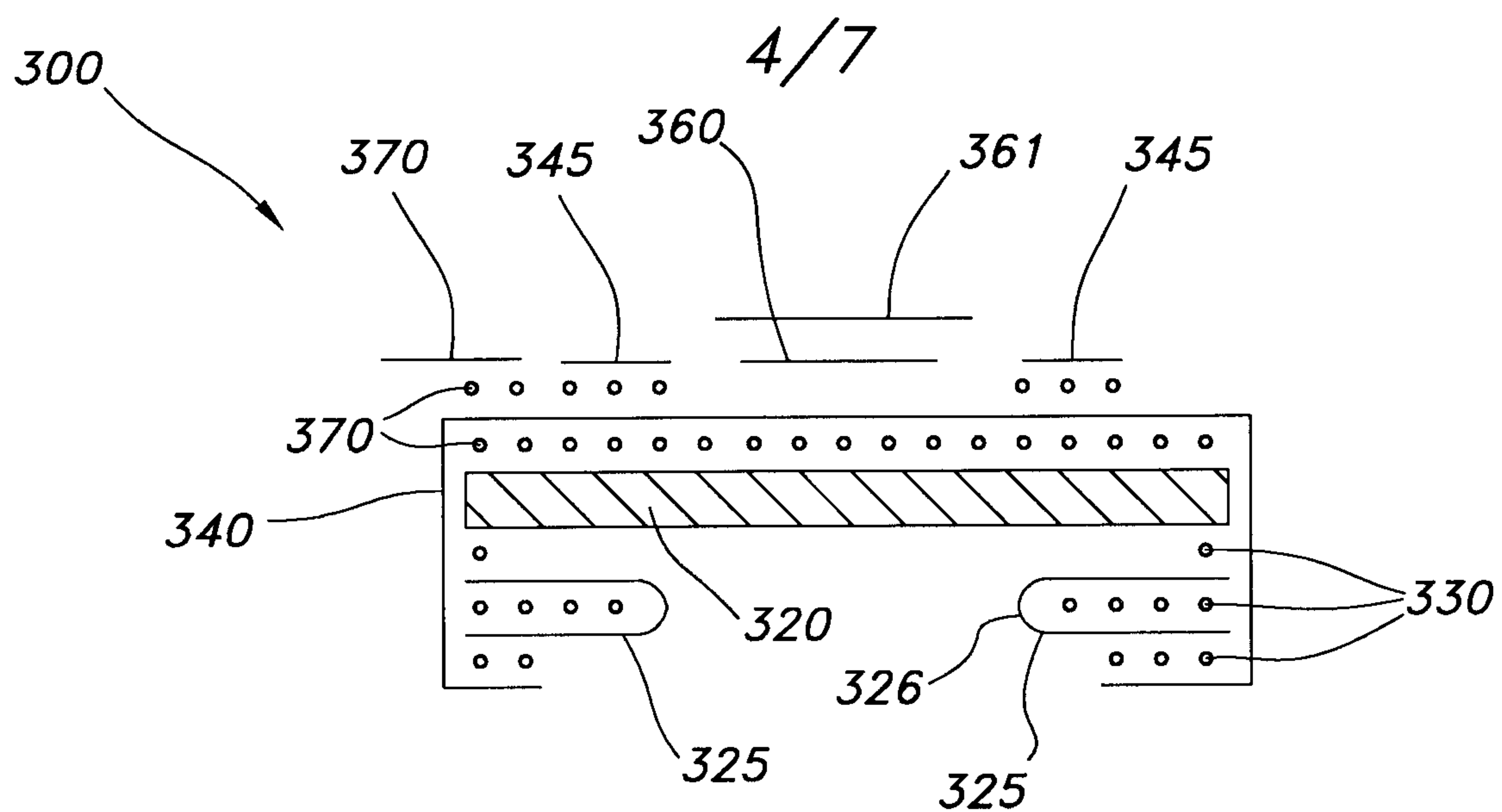
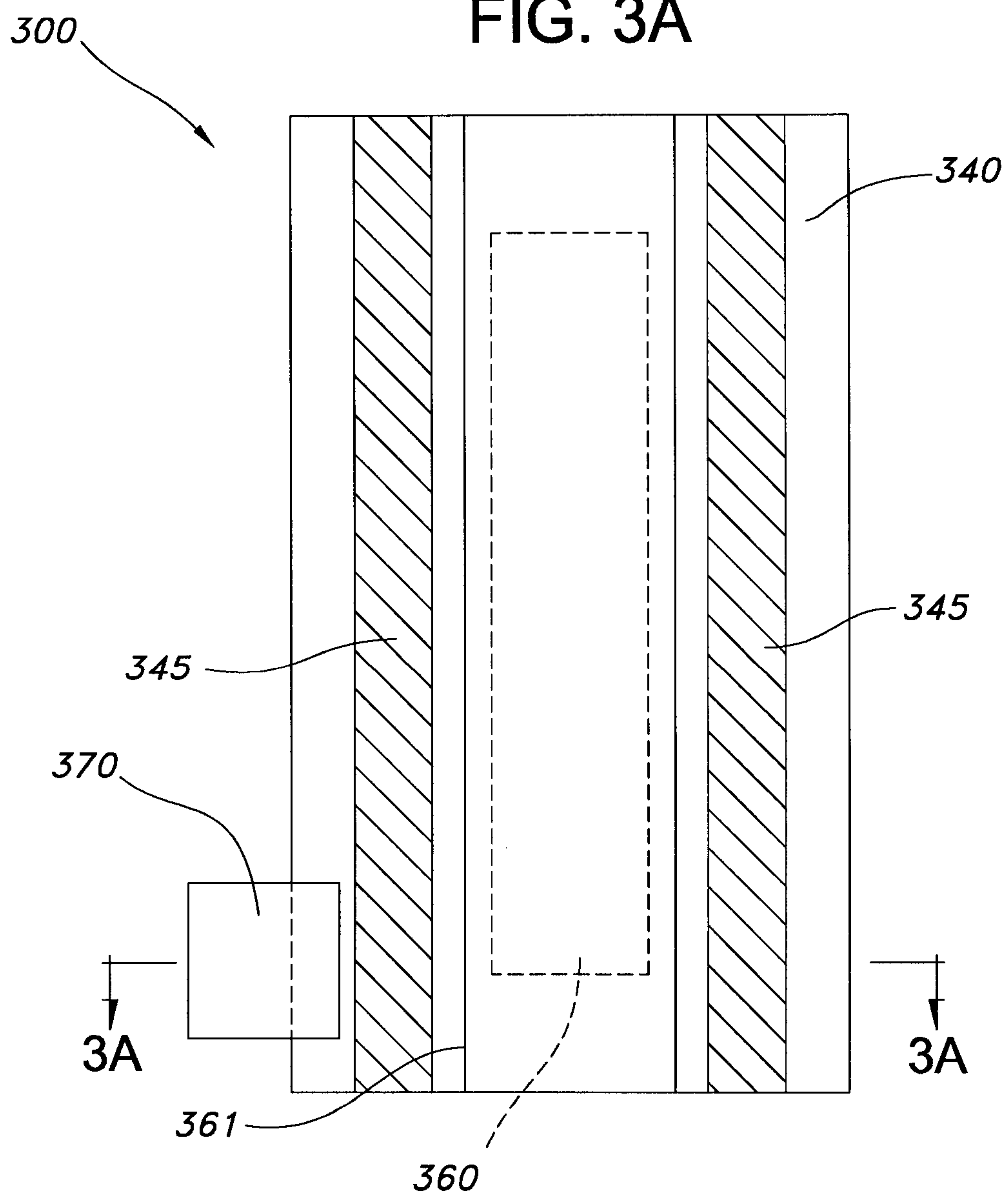


FIG. 2

**FIG. 3A****FIG. 3**

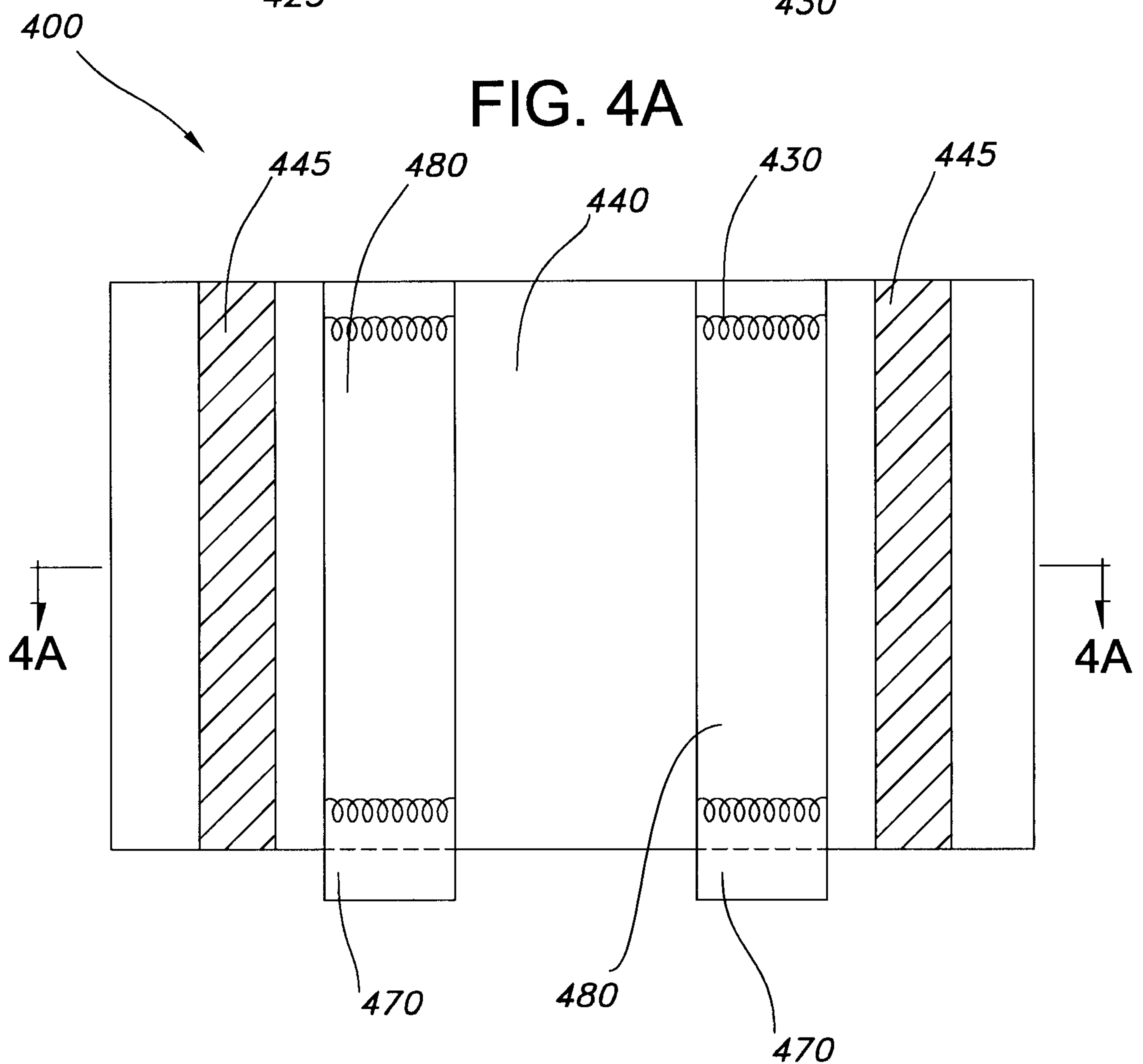
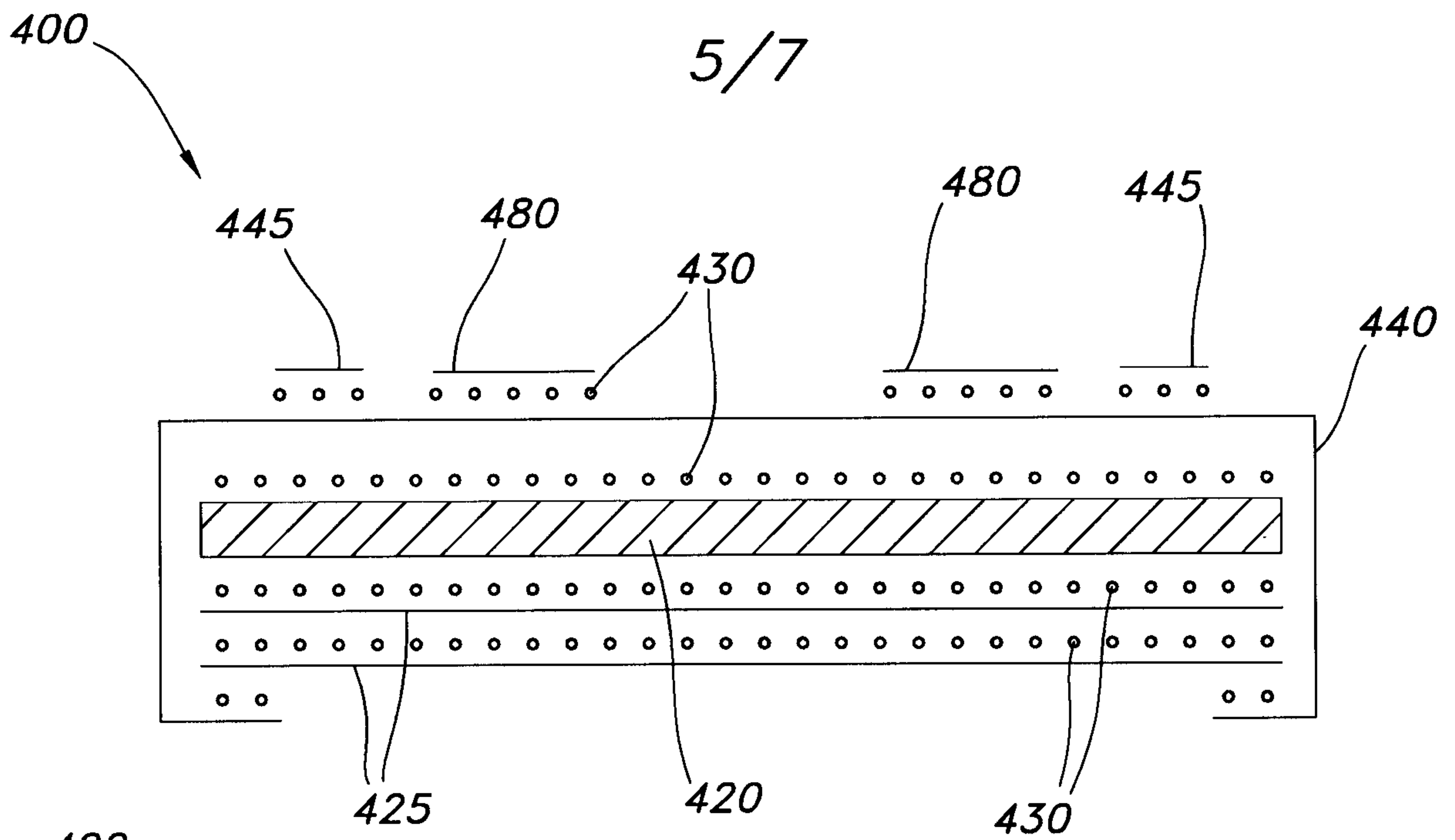


FIG. 4

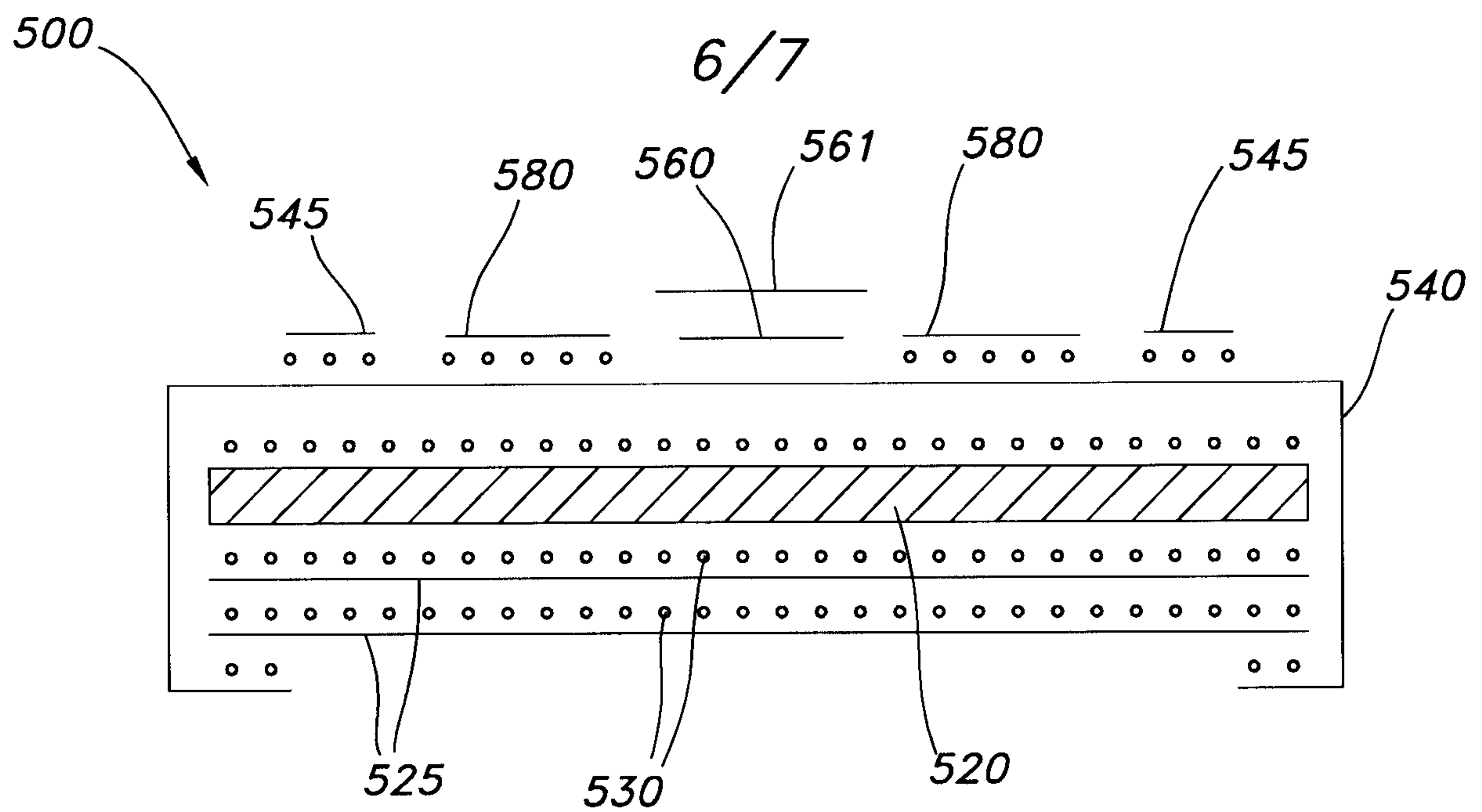


FIG. 5A

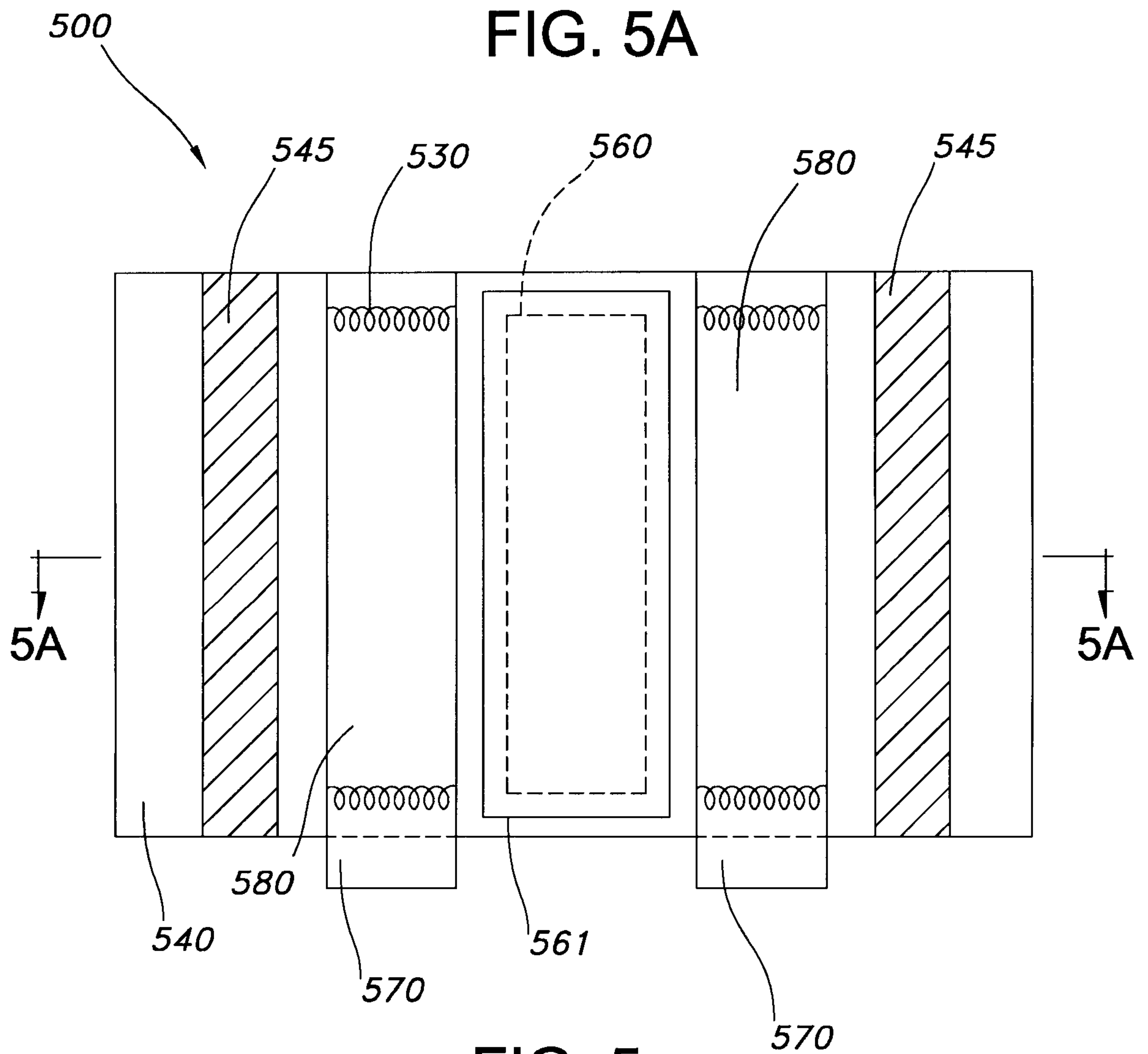


FIG. 5

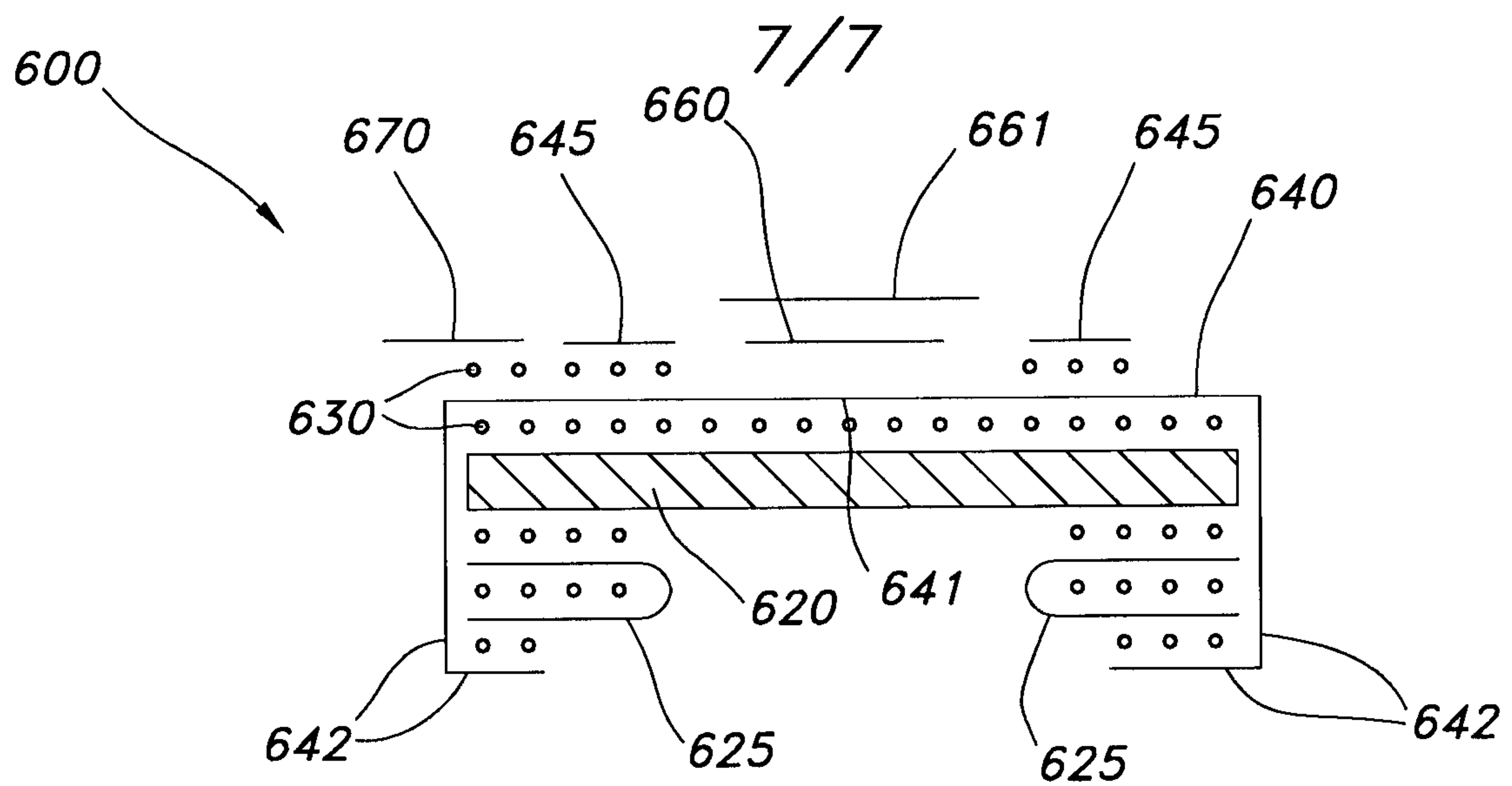


FIG. 6A

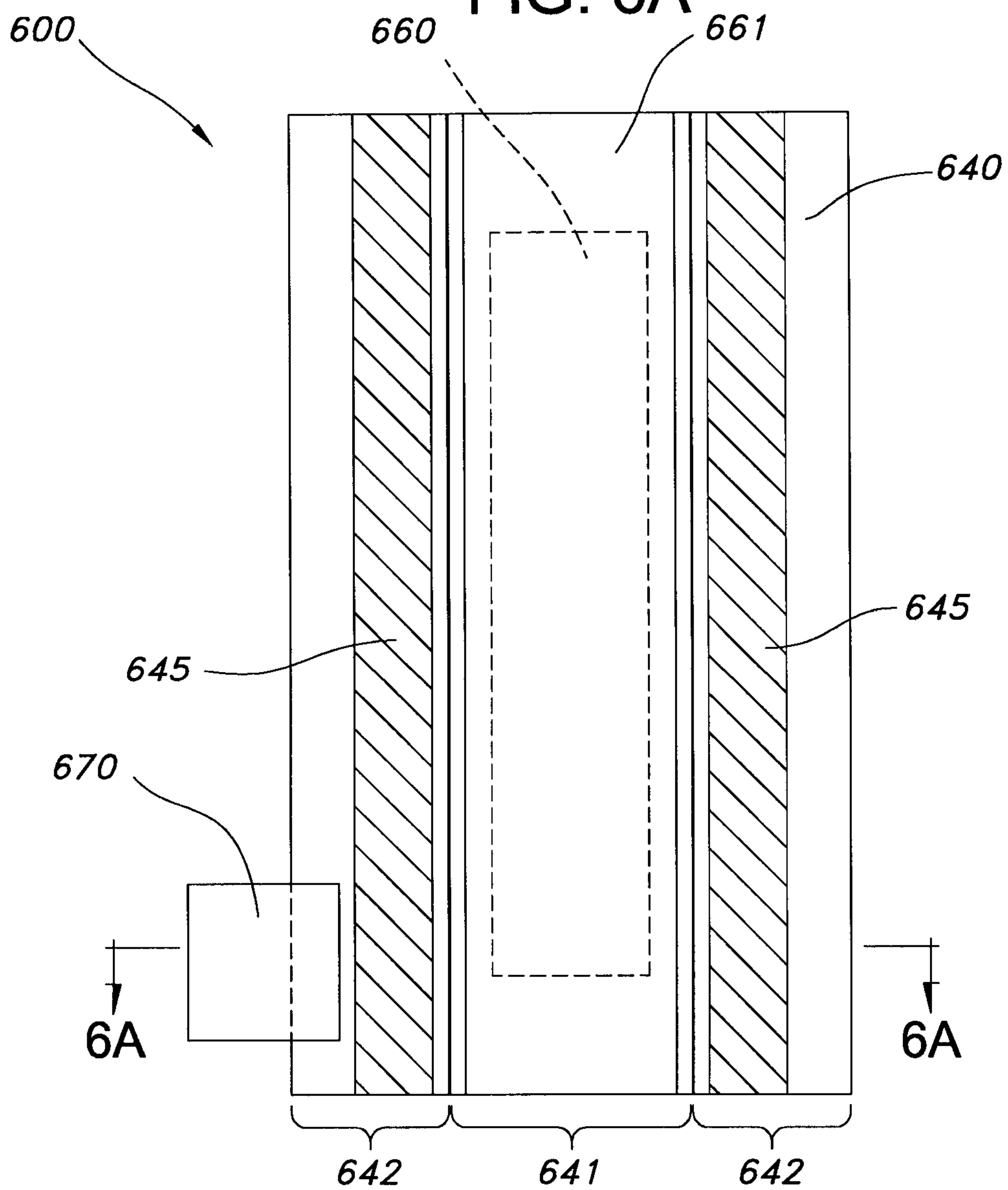


FIG. 6

