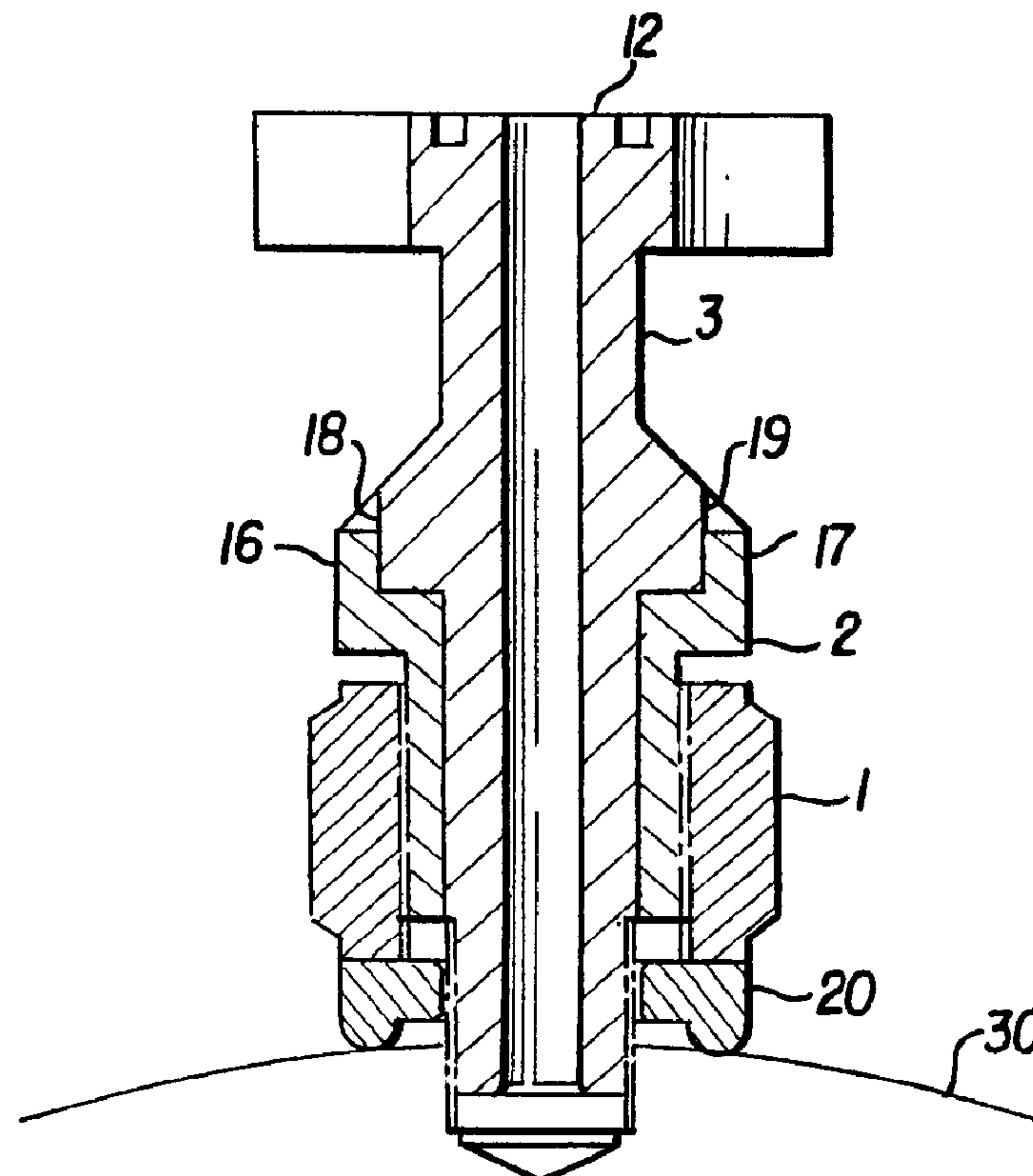




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(54) Title: STABILIZED TAP MOUNTING ASSEMBLY



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A method and apparatus are disclosed to reduce the load from the threads on taps on an orifice plate or orifice fitting. The apparatus includes a tap (3) having an NPT threaded end (10) and a flanged end (12) and an intermediate flange (13) which engages with a stabilizing tube (2) placed around the tap (3). In use, a stabilizing nut (1), previously threaded on the stabilizing tube (2), is unthreaded thereby forcing the stabilizing tube (2) against the intermediate flange (13) and transferring at least some of the weight off the threads (10) of the tap (3).

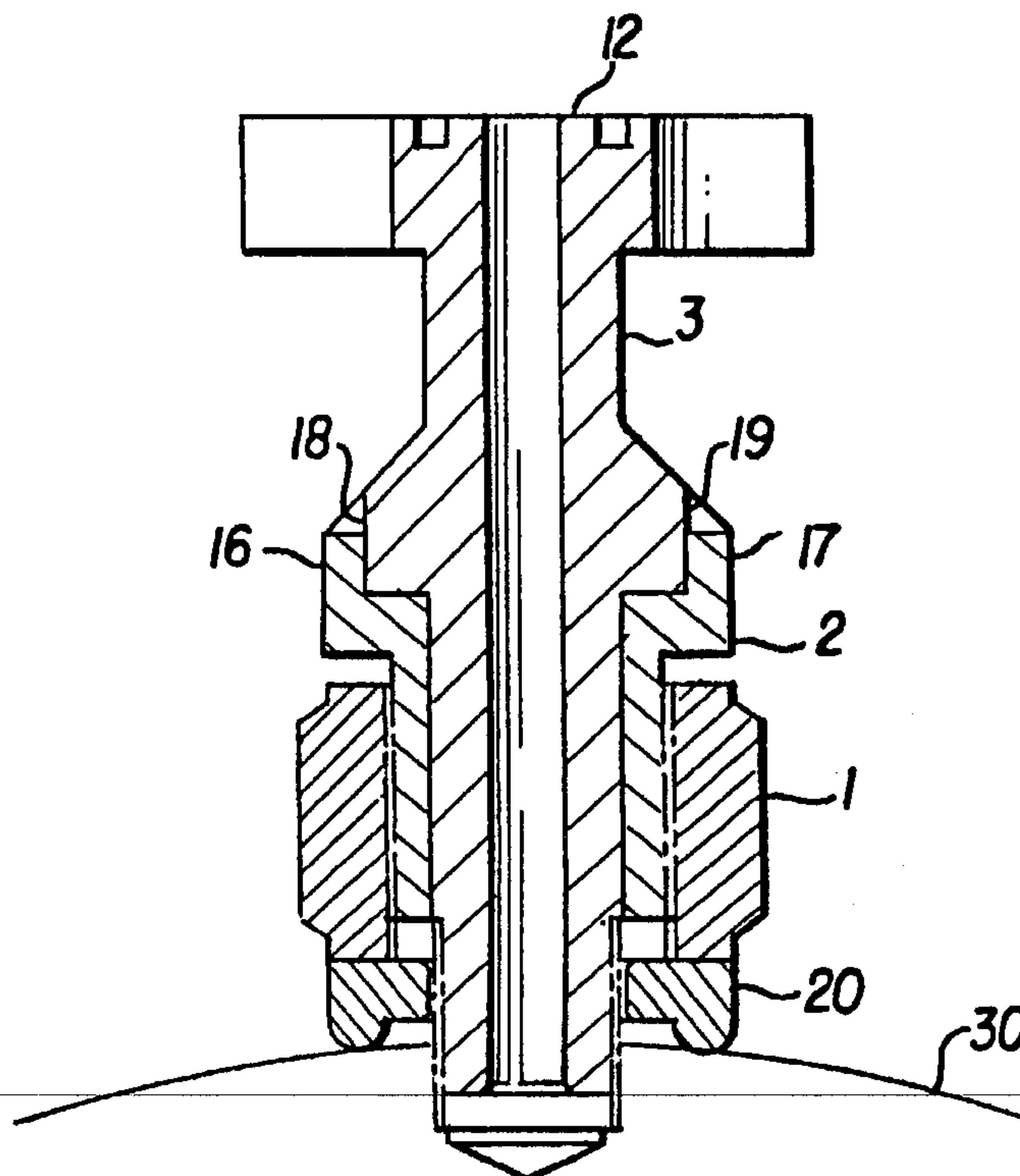
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A method and apparatus are disclosed to reduce the load from the threads on taps on an orifice plate or orifice fitting. The apparatus includes a tap (3) having an NPT threaded end (10) and a flanged end (12) and an intermediate flange (13) which engages with a stabilizing tube (2) placed around the tap (3). In use, a stabilizing nut (1), previously threaded on the stabilizing tube (2), is unthreaded thereby forcing the stabilizing tube (2) against the intermediate flange (13) and transferring at least some of the weight off the threads (10) of the tap (3).



STABILIZED TAP MOUNTING ASSEMBLY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to the remote sensing of pressure drops across an orifice plate in a pipeline and particularly to a stabilized tap mounting assembly to facilitate, stabilize and reduce vibration of the transmitter and associated apparatus, such as valved manifold blocks connecting the transmitter to taps on an orifice plate or orifice fitting.

2. Description of the Related Art

The gas industry makes extensive use of orifice plates for volume measurements. Orifice plates are artificial constrictions in a pipeline. As a result of this constriction there is a pressure drop from the upstream side of the orifice plate to the downstream side of the orifice plate. There is a relationship between the pressure drop and the amount of gas flowing through the pipeline. The pressure drop can be measured which in turn allows a determination of the flow through the pipeline.

The pressure drop is measured using electronic transmitters. These transmitters actually measure the pressures on both the upstream and downstream sides of the orifice plate and then record the difference between the two. Devices of this type are referred as differential pressure transmitters. There are numerous manufacturers of this type of device (e.g. Rosemount, Honeywell, Foxboro and others).

Orifice plate fittings (such as the type manufactured by Daniel Industries) and orifice flanges (manufactured by Daniel and others) are provided with holes (called taps) both upstream and downstream of the orifice plate. The taps are generally threaded holes, typically ½" female NPT (National Pipe Thread - a tapered thread designed to seal pressure tight).

It is necessary to incorporate valving systems between the orifice taps and the differential pressure transmitters. These valving systems need to include the following functions. Block valves to isolate the flow through the upstream and downstream taps (generally referred to as the high pressure side and the low pressure side), between the orifice flange or fitting and the transmitter. An equalizer valve, or valves, to control the connection between the high pressure passages and the low pressure passages. A vent valve, or valves, to allow trapped pressures to be bled off or to allow the passages to be purged of entrapped gases or liquids. Sometimes the vent valve(s) are incorporated into the transmitters.

The natural gas industry has evolved a number of specifications and requirements to minimize errors in the measurement of flow and to provide improved accuracy and response time. Some of these are:

1. The closer the transmitter is to the orifice plate the better.
2. The orifice size through the valving system from the orifice taps to the transmitter must be $\frac{3}{8}$ " in diameter.
3. The flow passages between the orifice taps to the transmitter should be as straight as possible. The ideal is a straight through passage. One 90 degree turn in the flow passage is permitted.

Another consideration is mounting the valve system and the transmitters to the orifice plate assembly. Conventional mounting, valving, and transmitter assemblies can weigh 40 pounds and, depending on the complexity of the assembly and the products used, up to 70 pounds. The pipeline system and the orifice flanges or fittings are subject to vibration. The valving and transmitter assemblies also tend to be leaned on by the instrumentation personnel.

Thus, there is a continuing need to provide an alternative connection method and apparatus to operatively fluidly couple the high and lower pressure taps about an orifice plate with a transmitter.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The device of the invention has been developed to provide a stabilized mount to permit conventional manifold/transmitter assemblies to be attached to orifice fittings. The novelty of this device is restricted to the stabilizing mount itself. The manifold shown in the attached drawings is commercially available through Century Valve and Machine of Calgary, Alberta, Canada and others.

The stabilized tap assembly is designed to mount to both orifice fittings (as manufactured by Daniel and others) as well as orifice flanges.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an exploded view of a typical transmitter and block manifold assembly for use with the stabilizing taps of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a schematic assembled view of the taps of the invention with a conventional manifold.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged view of the taps of the invention of Figs 1 and 2 to show detail thereof;

Fig. 4 is a schematic side view of the stabilizing tube of Figs. 1-2.

Fig. 5 is a top view of the stabilizing tube of Fig. 4.

Fig. 6 is a section along A-A of Fig. 4 of the stabilizing tube.

Fig. 7 is a schematic cross section of a flange shoe for use in mounting the tap of the invention on an orifice flange; and

Fig. 8 is a cross sectional assembled view of the tap and flange shoe on an orifice flange.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

There are two tap assemblies required for each manifold (4) installation. Each tap assembly consists of three pieces. The tap (3), the stabilizing tube (2) and the stabilizing nut (1). The tap consists of a male NPT threaded end (10) and a flanged end (12). The flanged end (12) is for attachment to a conventional manifold (4). The tap (3) also includes a stabilizing flange (13) which is integral with the tap (3) and which is located between the NPT thread end (10) and the manifold connection flanged end (12).

The tap (3) is installed as follows. The stabilizing tube (2) and the stabilizing nut (1) are threaded together. The tap (3) is inserted through bore (14) in the stabilizing tube (2) and the stabilizing nut (1). The tap (3) is threaded into the orifice fitting (5). One end of the stabilizing tube (2) has a flat surface (15) with two projections (16)(17). These two projections (16)(17) fit into mating recesses (18)(19) on the stabilizing flange (12) located on the tap (3). The stabilizing nut (1) is turned on the stabilizing tube (2). The projections (16)(17) on the stabilizing tube (2) prevent the stabilizing tube (2) from turning relative to the tap (3). The lower end of the stabilizing nut (1) is forced against the orifice fitting (5) while the upper end of the stabilizing tube (2) is forced against stabilizing flange (12) on the tap (3). When the assembly of stabilizing nut (1) and stabilizing tube (2) is placed in compression, the loads are transferred from the NPT threads of tap (3), via the stabilizing flange (12), onto the stabilizing tube (2) and stabilizing nut (1), which in turn bears on the orifice fitting (5).

Precision General Inc. (PGI) manufactures a stabilized futbol device which is covered by their patent 4,920,626. In PGI's device the tap itself is threaded and the jam nut threads directly onto the tap.

In the invention, the stabilized tap assembly transfers the imposed loads through a larger area (the stabilizing flange), rather than just threads on the tap. As a result, there are lower stresses imposed on our tap rather than on PGI tap threads.

The same stabilized tap assembly can be used with orifice flanges (30) (instead of the orifice taps of Fig. 1) by using a flange shoe (20) (Fig. 7). The flange shoe (20) is shown on the cross sectional view of Fig. 8. The device works the same as described above except that the stabilizing nut (1) bears on the flange shoe (20). The flange shoe has two projections (22)(24) along opposite sides. Those projections are rounded, as shown on the drawings, and those projections bear on the flange. The flange shoe can be designed to fit all flange sizes and ratings.

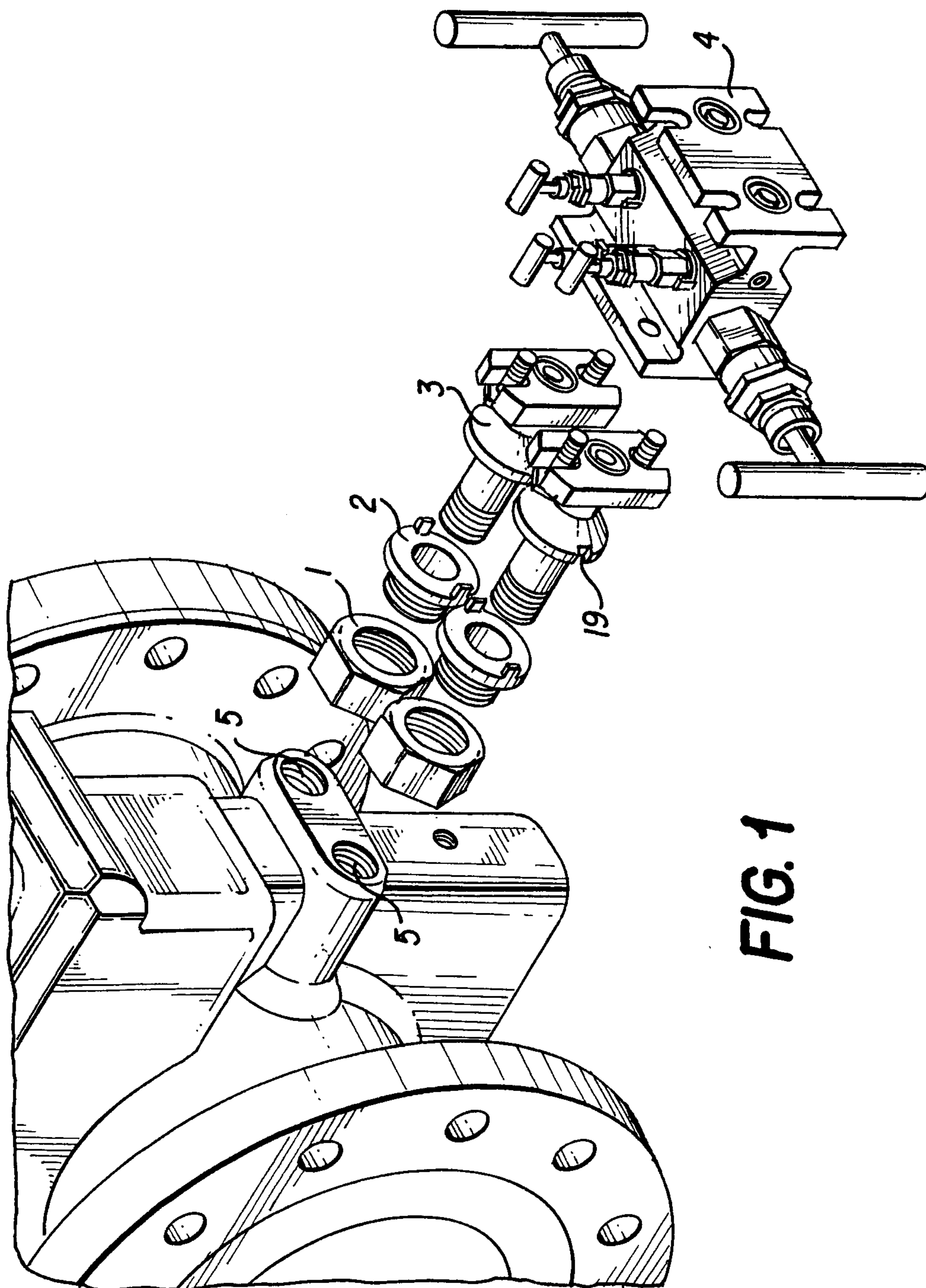
It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that many modifications can be made to the invention without departing from the spirit or scope of the appended claims.

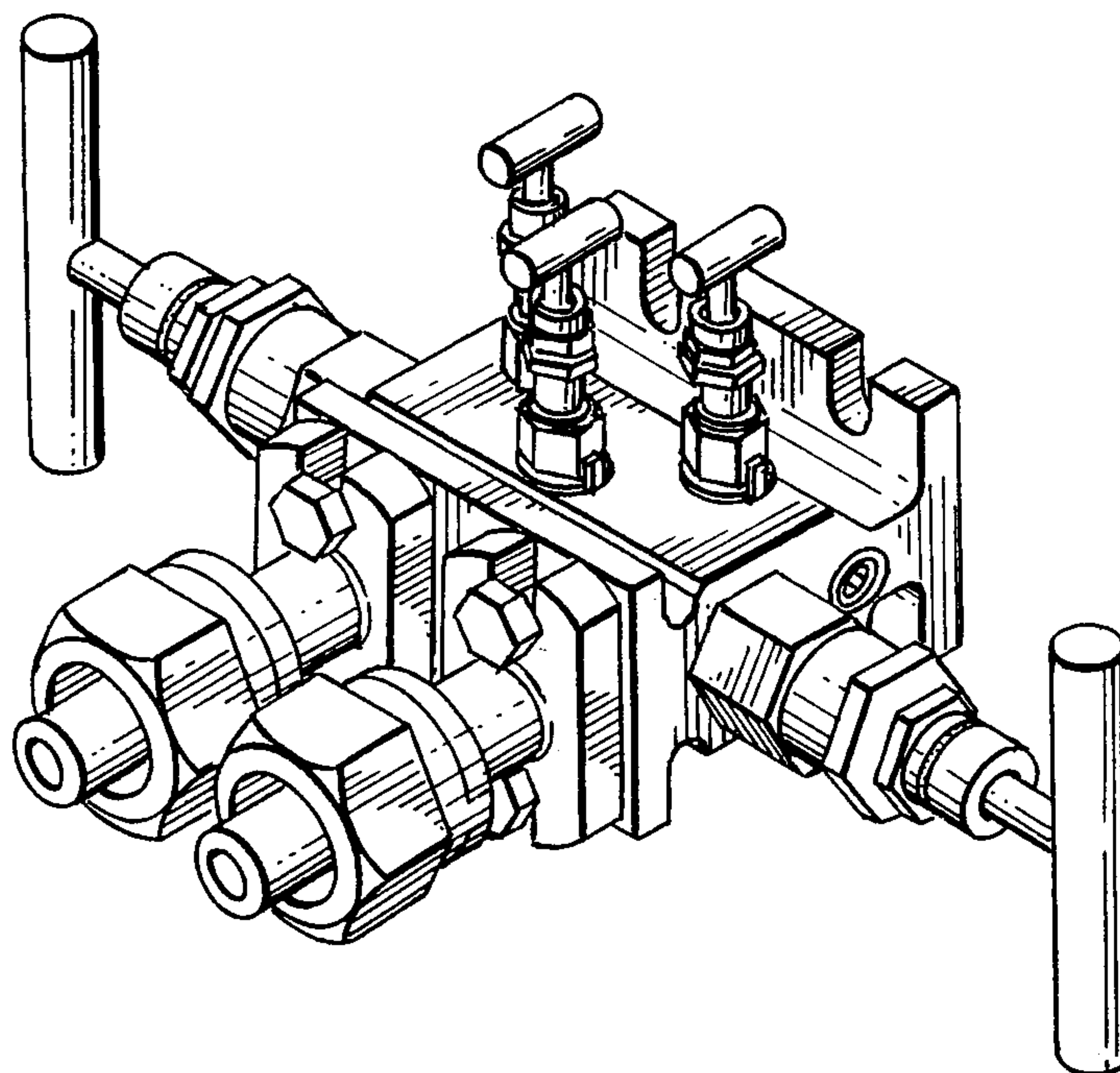
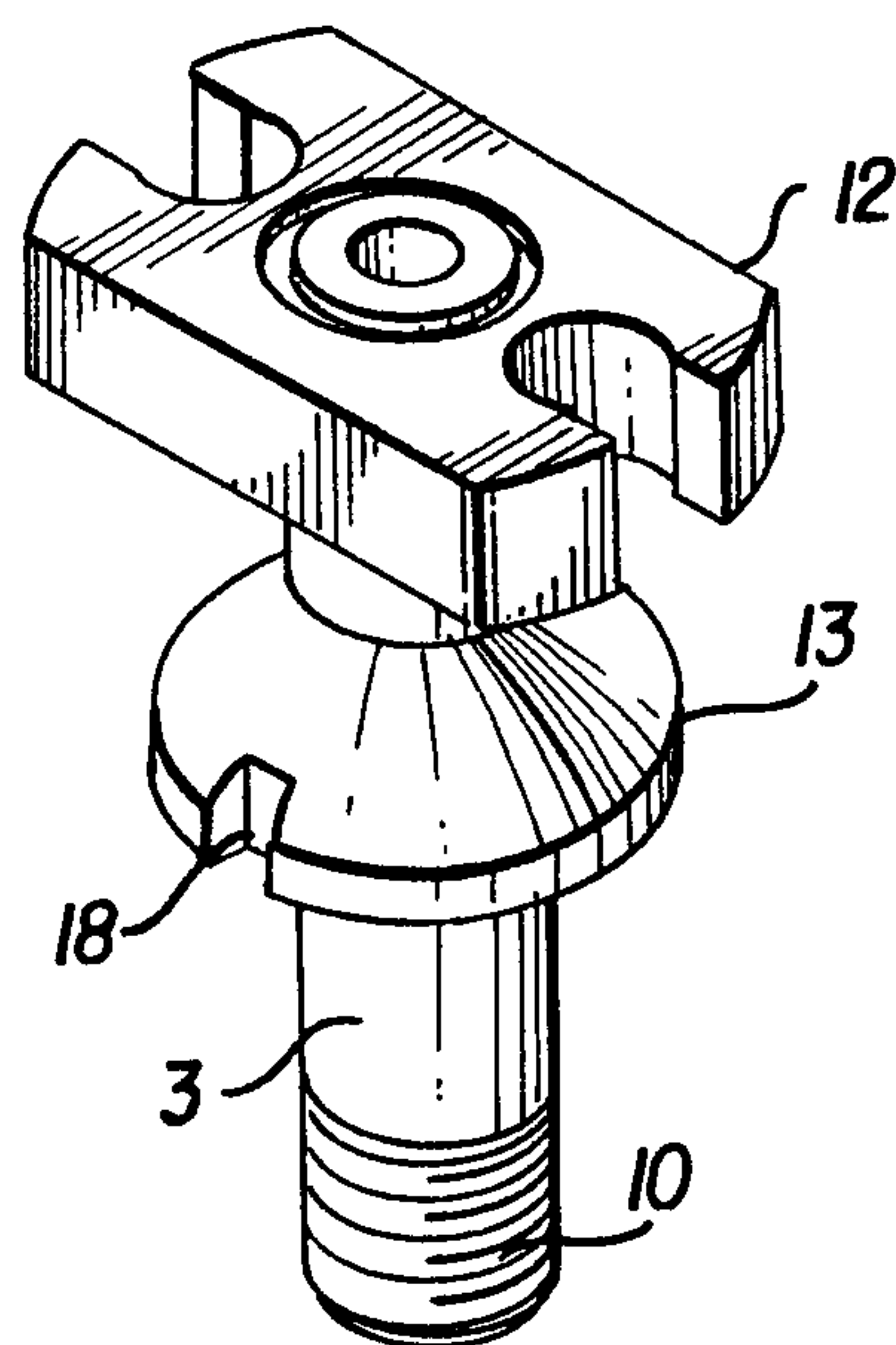
What is claimed is:

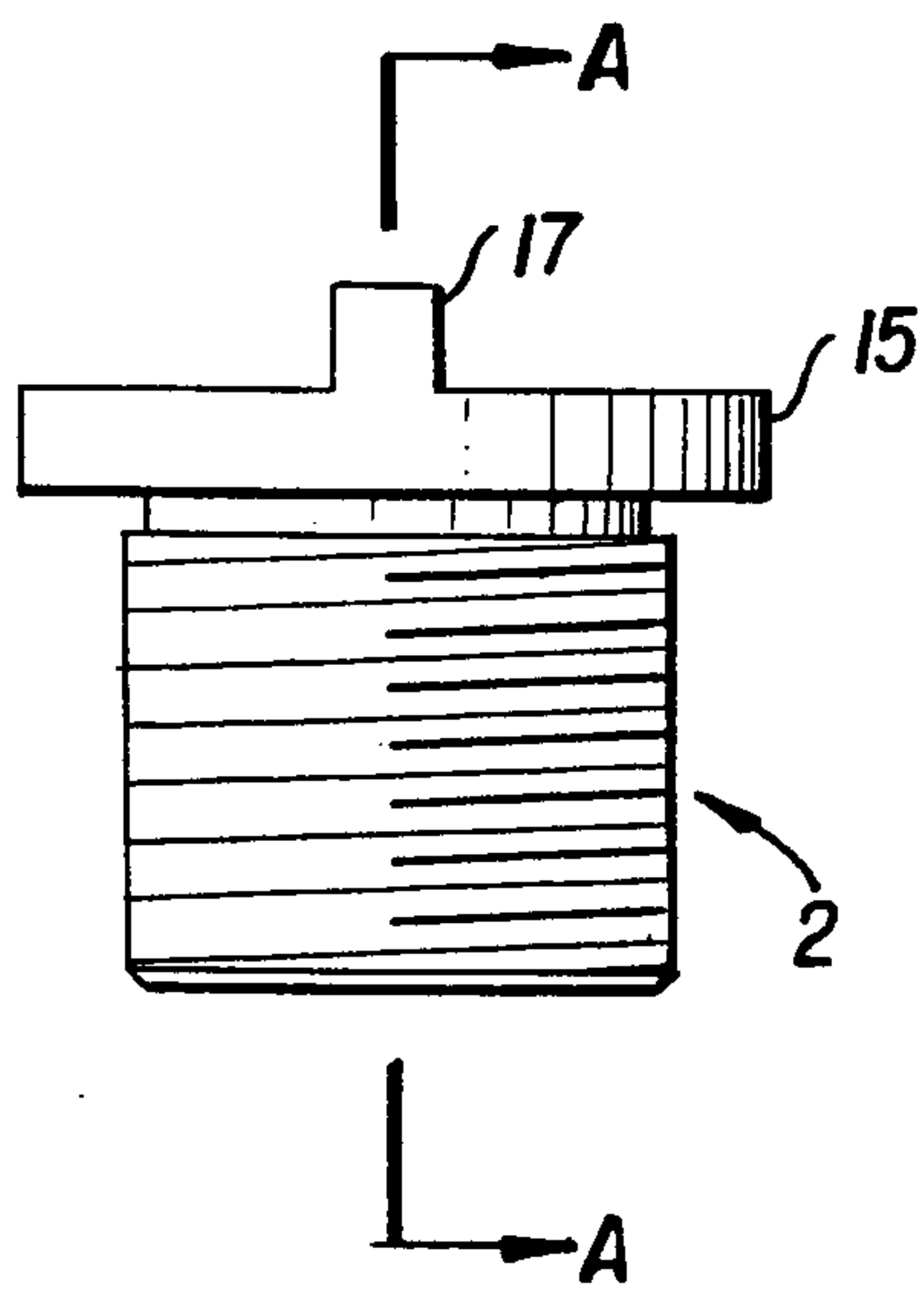
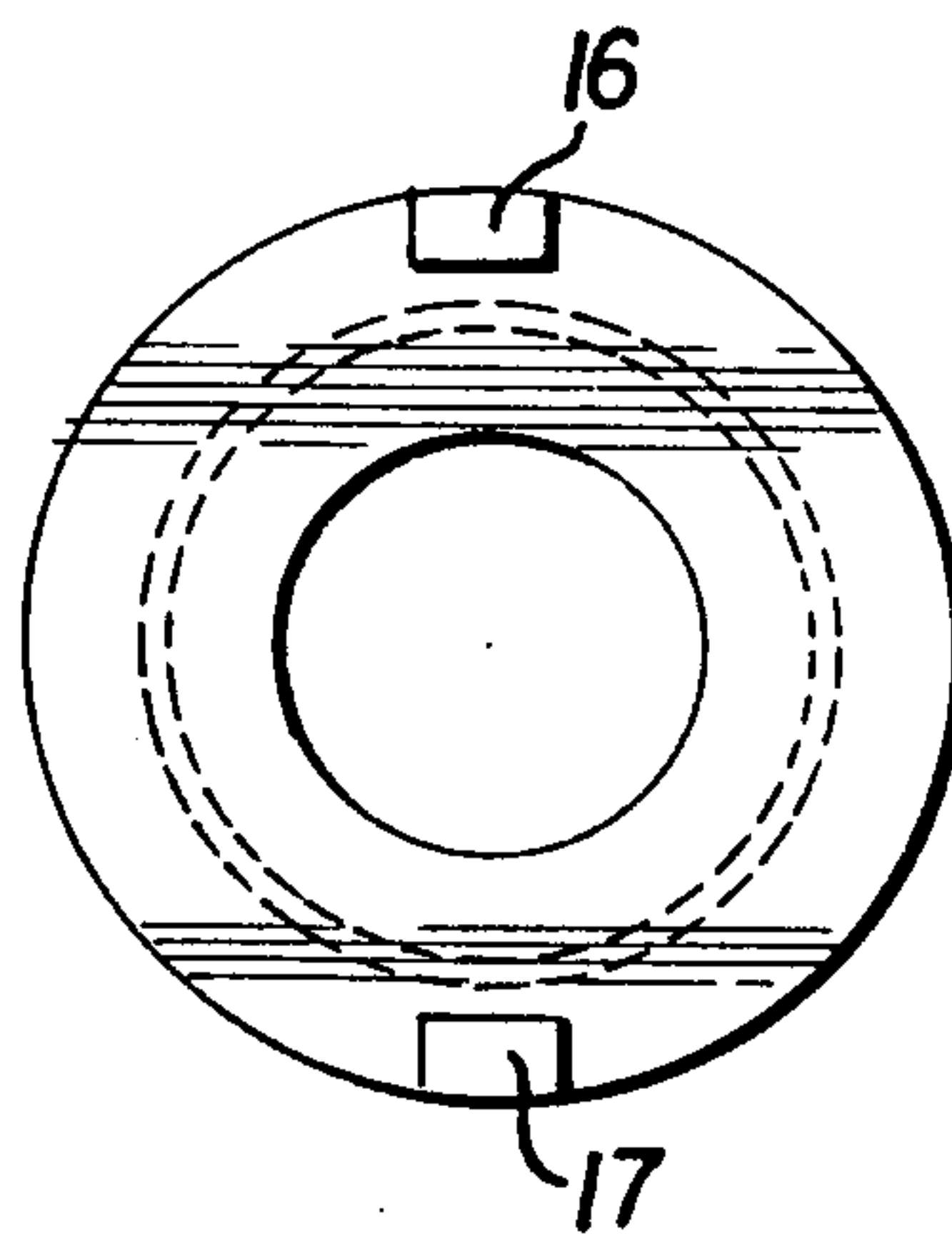
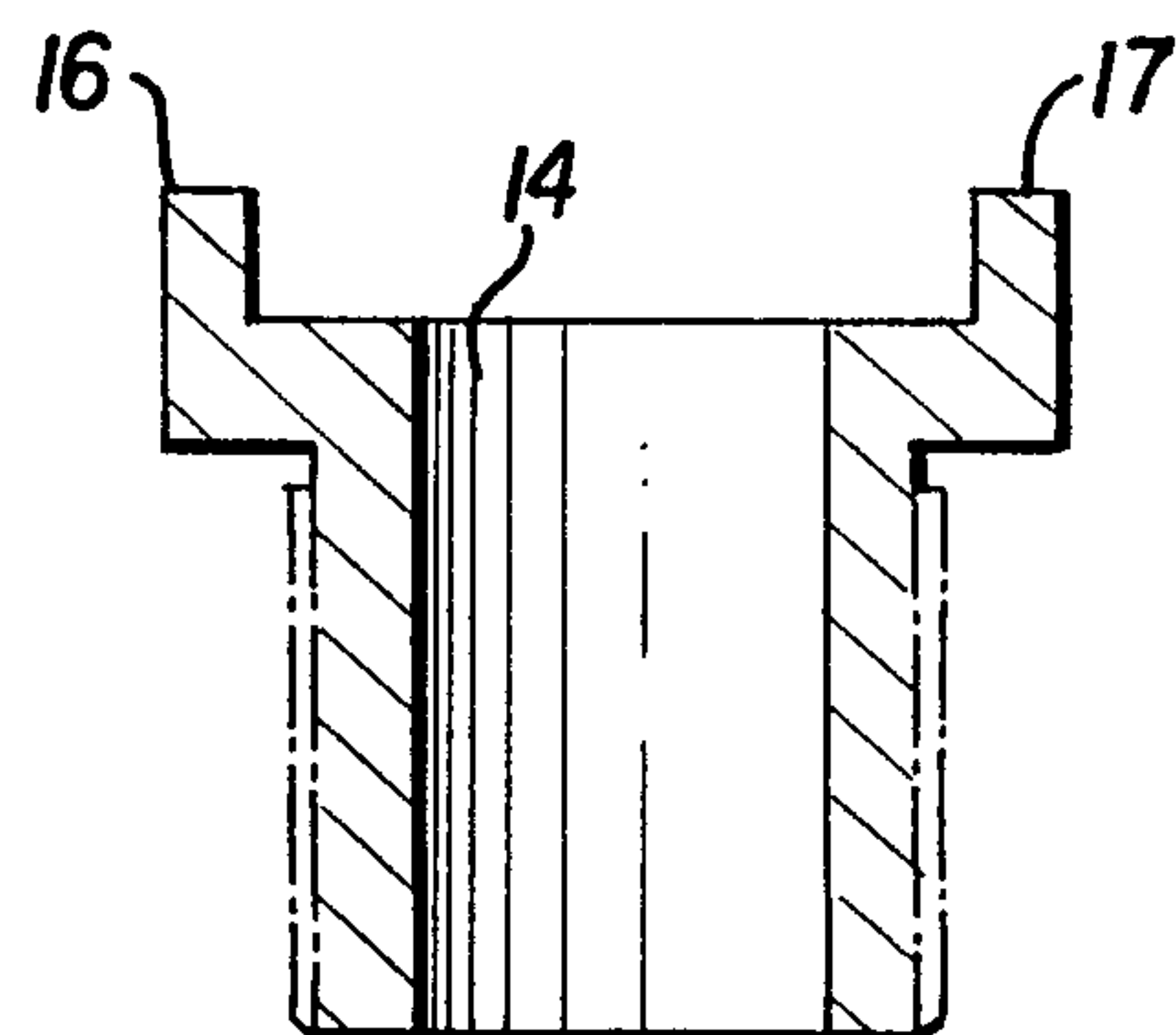
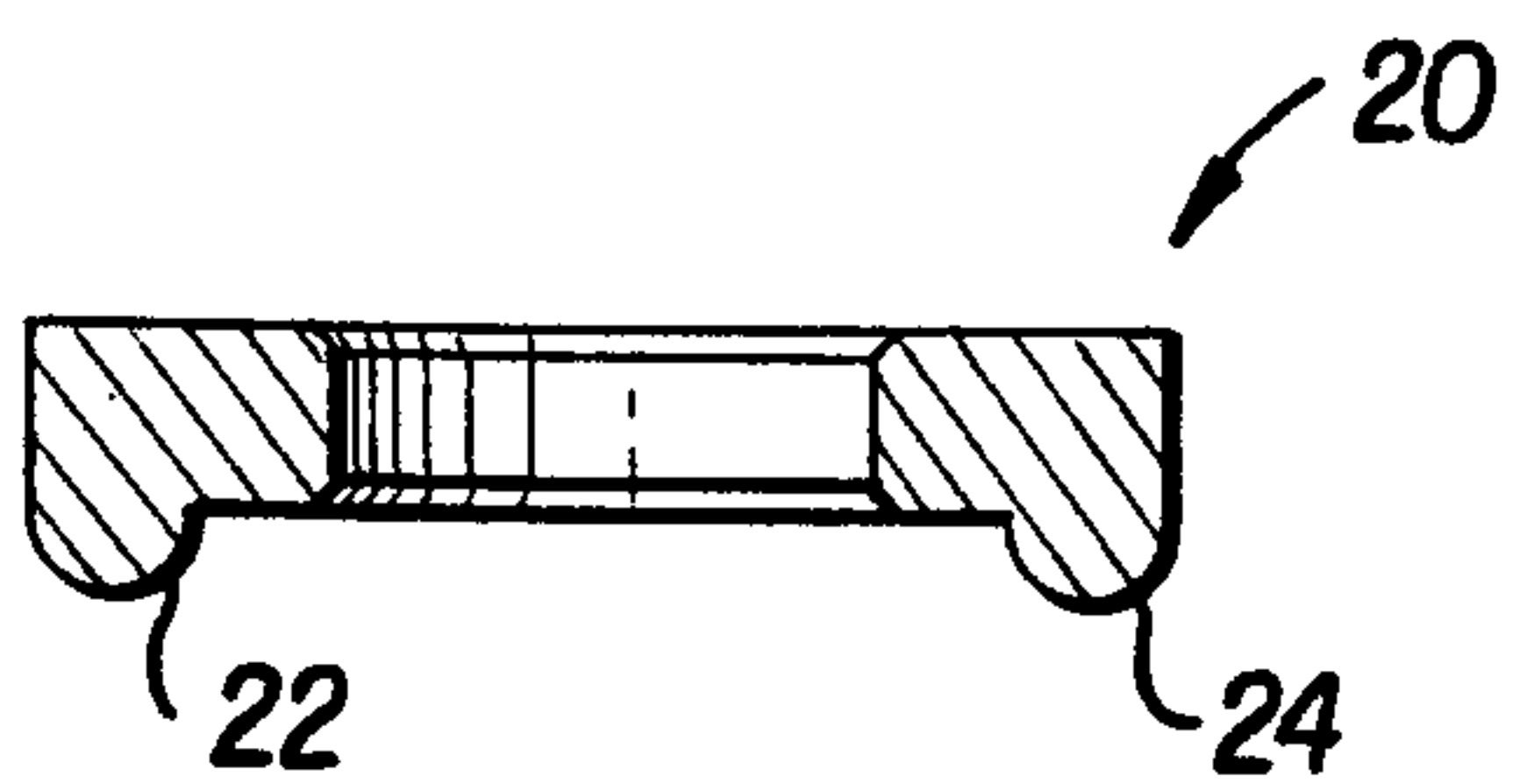
1. A tap assembly comprising:
 - (a) tap comprising a male NPT threaded end and a flanged end, wherein the tap is further provided with a stabilizing flange integral with the tap;
 - (b) a separate stabilizing tube having an external thread; and
 - (c) a stabilizing nut threaded on said stabilizing tube.
2. The tap assembly of claim 1, wherein the stabilizing flange is provided intermediate the threaded end and flanged end.
3. The tap assembly of claim 1, wherein the stabilizing tube has at least one projection interfitting with a recess in the stabilizing flange.
4. The tap assembly of claim 3, wherein said at least one projection comprises two projections interfitting with two mating recesses in the stabilizing flange.
5. The tap assembly of claim 1, further comprising a manifold attached to the flanged end of said tap.
6. The tap assembly of claim 1, further comprising a pressure transmitter attached to the flanged end of said tap.
7. The tap assembly of claim 5, further comprising a pressure transmitter attached to the manifold.
8. A method of transferring the load on the threads of a pressure tap to a larger area than just the threads of the pressure tap, said method comprising:
 - (a) providing a tap having at one end, male NPT threads and at the other end a flange and immediate thereto a stabilizing flange;
 - (b) providing a threaded stabilizing tube;
 - (c) threading a stabilizing nut on said stabilizing tube;
 - (d) threading said NPT threads into a source of pressure; and

(e) unthreading said stabilizing nut on said stabilizing tube to expand the stabilizing tube and stabilizing nut into a state of compression thereby transferring at least some of the load from the NPT threads to the stabilizing flange.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the source of pressure is an orifice plate fitting.
10. The method of claim 8, wherein the source of pressure is an orifice flange.
11. The method of claim 10, further comprising placing a flange shoe between said orifice flange and said stabilizing nut.
12. The method of claim 8, further comprising attaching a manifold to said end flange.
13. The method of claim 12, further comprising attaching a pressure transmitter to said manifold.
14. The method of claim 8, further comprising attaching a pressure transmitter to said end flange.
15. The method of claim 8, further comprising engaging at least one protrusion on said stabilizing tube with at least one mating recess on said stabilizing flange.
16. The method of claim 8, further comprising engaging two protrusions on said stabilizing tube with two mating recesses on said stabilizing flange.
17. The tap assembly of claim 1, further comprising a flange shoe.



**FIG. 2****FIG. 3**

**FIG. 4****FIG. 5****FIG. 6****FIG. 7****FIG. 8**