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NASA Case No. LEW-15,898-1

PRINT FIG. 1

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AWARDS ABSTRACT

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PRODUCING
A SUBSTRATE WITH LOW SECONDARY ELECTRON EMISSIONS

The present invention is directed to a method and apparatus for producing a highly-textured surface on a copper substrate with only extremely small amounts of texture-inducing seeding or masking material. The texture-inducing seeding material is delivered to the copper substrate electrically switching the seeding material in and out of a circuit loop.

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Employer: NASA LeRC

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METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PRODUCING
A SUBSTRATE WITH LOW SECONDARY ELECTRON EMISSIONS

ORIGIN OF THE INVENTION:

5 The invention described herein was made by employees of the United States Government and may be manufactured and used for the Government for government purposes without the payment of any royalties thereon or therefore.

10 FIELD OF THE INVENTION:

 The present invention is directed to a method and apparatus for producing a highly-textured surface on a copper substrate with only extremely small amounts of texture-inducing seeding or masking material. The purpose of the invention is to produce a
15 surface with secondary electron emission properties sharply lower than those of untreated copper.

 The present invention is particularly useful on surfaces of multistaged depressed collector electrodes of vacuum-tube
20 amplifiers such as traveling-wave tubes or klystrons. These devices, which are widely used in space communications, aircraft, and terrestrial applications, are described in U.S. Pat. No. 3,702,951 to H. Kosmahl.

 Some of the significant factors involved in maximizing the efficiency of these devices include the use of electrode
25 materials that have low secondary electron emission properties.

This is discussed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,349,424 to Sovey et al.

Specifically, these low secondary electron emission properties
5 recover the maximum kinetic energy from the spent electron beam
after it has passed through the device's interaction section and
entered the collector. To have high collector efficiency, the
electrodes must have low secondary electron emission
characteristics so that the impinging electrons are not
10 excessively reflected or re-emitted from the surfaces. Textured
copper surfaces have been found to be useful for this purpose.
Untreated copper surfaces have relatively high secondary
electron emission levels.

Prior art methods for achieving copper surfaces with reduced
15 secondary electron emission properties included coating the
surfaces with compounds such as titanium carbide or roughening
the surface by various means such as particle blasting.
However, these prior art methods produce only modest reductions
in secondary electron emission properties. Specifically, the
20 coating approach results in a coating/substrate interface which
becomes subject to delamination failure with vibration or
repeated thermal cycling due to the difference in thermal
expansion characteristics between the coating and the substrate.
The particle-blasting approach is generally even less effective
25 and poses the potential problem of leaving residual and loosely-
attached particles of the abrasive material on the substrate,

which may cause damage by separating from the substrate during operation and migrating to other components.

5 Additional methods such as the direct and continuous simultaneous ion-bombardment of stainless steel, tantalum, or molybdenum targets and copper substrates in a low-pressure environment also produce a highly-textured copper surface which displays low secondary electron emission properties. While the
10 secondary electron emission properties of the copper substrate are sharply reduced by the use of this method, the resulting surface generally is burdened with unacceptably large amounts of residual target material which poses the potential problem of separating from the substrate in operation by virtue of large
15 differences in thermal expansion properties with the copper substrate.

It is therefore an object of the invention to produce an ion-textured copper substrate with very low secondary electron emission properties with only acceptably small (essentially
20 trace) amounts of residual target material which pose no potential problem of separation from the substrate by virtue of thermal expansion differences.

It is a further object of the present invention to use electrical means to turn the bombardment of the substrate with
25 the target material off and on to control and minimize the deposition or arrival rate of the target material on the

substrate.

DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART:

5 U.S. Patent No. 3,604,970 to Culbertson discloses an electrode which has been coated with a non-emissive coating produced through ion implantation. U.S. Patent No. 4,349,424 to Sovey relates to a sputtering process which is intended to reduce secondary emissions. U.S. Patent No. 4,417,175 to Curren
10 discloses a sputtering process which reduces secondary emissions in which a resurfaced graphite plate is used. U.S. Patent No. 4,607,193 to Curren discloses a triode sputtering process to apply a textured carbon coating onto a copper substrate. U.S. Patent No. 4,693,760 to Sioshansi relates to a coating process
15 in which ion sputtering of a titanium surface is intentionally carried out to produce a surface with a high porosity. U.S. Patent No. 5,245,248 to Chan illustrates the geometry of an emitter.

20 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION:

The present invention discloses a method of developing a secondary-electron-suppressing highly textured copper surface with small, acceptable amounts of residual molybdenum texture-inducing masking material. This is accomplished by controlling
25 the arrival rate of a molybdenum target/seeding material at the copper surface.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS:

The objects, advantages, and novel features of the invention
5 will be more fully apparent from the following detailed
description when read in connection with the accompanying
drawings in which:

Fig. 1. displays a schematic diagram of the ion-texturing
apparatus;

10 Fig. 2. displays a scanning electron microscope
photomicrograph of an ion-textured oxygen-free, high-
conductivity (OFHC) copper surface;

Fig. 3. displays a graph of the true secondary electron
emission ratio as a function of primary electron energy; and

15 Fig. 4. displays a graph of the reflected primary electron
yield index as a function of primary electron energy.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT:

Figure 1 displays a schematic diagram of the facility
20 developed to accomplish the ion-texturing of copper as shown in
Figure 2.

In figure 1 the textured copper surface is formed by means of a
triode sputtering process, in which a copper substrate is
continuously exposed to an accelerated argon plasma beam in a
25 low-pressure environment while a molybdenum target/seeding
element is simultaneously but intermittently exposed to the same

plasma beam.

Figure 1 displays a schematic diagram of the ion-texturing apparatus contained within a vacuum chamber 100. The vacuum chamber 100 contains a plasma chamber 110, along with an annular molybdenum target 120 and a copper substrate 130 mounted on a support structure 140, all positioned as shown.

Prior to starting the texturing process, the vacuum chamber 100 is evacuated to and maintained at a pressure of from 1×10^{-4} to 4×10^{-4} torr (millimeters of mercury) by means of a pumping system 150. When the reduced-pressure condition within the vacuum chamber 100 is reached, argon gas 160 is ducted into the plasma chamber 110 through a resistance-heated hollow cathode 170, the heater of which is served by a cathode heater power supply 180. At the same time, an anode power supply 190 establishes a potential difference between the cathode 170 and the plasma chamber anode 200, and an arc rf starter 210 served by a starter power supply 220 is momentarily activated to establish a quiescent plasma 230 within the plasma chamber 110.

The texturing process begins when a potential difference is established between the cathode 170 and both the molybdenum target 120 and copper substrate 130 by means of a high-voltage power supply 240. This potential difference causes an ion beam 250 to be directed through a restricting electrically-floating orifice plate 260 and simultaneously impinge the molybdenum

target 120 and copper substrate 130. The ion beam 250 removes
small quantities of material from the molybdenum target 120 and
5 deposits it in a discontinuous but uniform "mask" over the
surface of the copper substrate 130. Formation of the textured
surface on the copper substrate 130 apparently comes about as
the result of the differences in sputtering properties between
molybdenum and copper, with the copper being sputtered away by
10 the ion beam far more rapidly than the molybdenum dispersed
masking to form densely-packed, uniform, and sharply-defined
conical copper spires. During the texturing process, the ion
beam 250 continuously impinges the copper substrate 130 as a
result of the potential difference between the cathode 170 and
15 the copper substrate 130. A high-speed switch module 270
controls the potential difference between the copper substrate
130 and the molybdenum target 120. When the switch module 270
provides for the molybdenum target 120 and the copper
substrate 130 to be at the same potential relative to the
20 cathode 170, the ion beam 250 deposits material from the
molybdenum target 120 to the copper substrate 130. When the
switch module 270 electrically disconnects the molybdenum target
120 from the copper substrate 130 (except for a small sustaining
current), the deposition of material from the molybdenum target
25 120 to the copper substrate 130 is sharply reduced or
eliminated. By regulating the switch module 270, the arrival

rate of material from the molybdenum target 120 to the copper substrate 130 is controlled. An oscillator switch control 290 regulates the switch module 270 and establishes the switching frequency as well as the duty cycle, or that portion of each switching cycle during which the molybdenum target 120 and copper substrate 130 are electrically connected. Hence, a switching frequency of 20Hz with a duty cycle of 25 percent indicates the molybdenum target 120 and the copper substrate 130 are electrically connected 25 percent of the time (0.0125 second) during each of twenty switching cycles (0.05 second each) which occur during one second. The output signals of the oscillator switch control 290 and switch module 270 are monitored with the use of a duty cycle monitor 280.

During processing, a pre-selected current level is established between the cathode 170 and the copper substrate 130. During the period when the molybdenum target 120 is electrically disconnected from the copper substrate 130 by the switch module 270, the entire pre-selected current (except for a small sustaining current) passes through the copper substrate 130 and its support structure 140. During the period when the switch module 270 electrically connects the molybdenum target 120 and the copper substrate 130, the pre-selected current flow is divided between the molybdenum target 120 and the copper substrate 130.

In a typical case, where the copper substrate 130 is circular in shape, the molybdenum target 120 is annular, approximately the same diameter as the copper substrate 130 with the target surface facing the ion beam 250 sloping radially upward at an angle of approximately 45 degrees, and spaced approximately one-half the diameter of the copper substrate 130 from the copper substrate 130. This configuration has been shown to provide for uniform development of the textured surface of the copper substrate 130.

The operating conditions which were used to produce the textured copper surface displayed in Fig. 2 and whose secondary electron emission characteristics are displayed in Figs. 3 and 4 are as follows:

Vacuum chamber pressure: 1×10^{-4} to 4×10^{-4} torr (millimeters of mercury)

Ionizing gas: argon

Accelerating potential difference: 1500 volts dc

Substrate current density (approx.): 5 mA/cm^2

Texturing period: 1 hour

Switching frequency: 20Hz

Duty cycle: 25 percent

Fig. 2 is a scanning electron microscope photomicrograph of an ion-textured copper surface produced by the process described in this disclosure, taken at an angle of 30 degrees from normal to the surface. The morphology is characterized by a dense uniform array of pointed spires normal to the surface with average feature height and separation of approximately 10 and 5 micrometers, respectively. Examinations of this surface by Auger and energy-dispersive X-ray analyses indicate the presence of only extremely small amounts of the texture-inducing seeding or masking material, molybdenum.

The textured copper surface characteristics and consequently the secondary electron emission characteristics may be altered from those of the surface described in this disclosure by varying the operating conditions within reasonable limits. It will be appreciated that other gases in addition to argon can be used to form the bombarding ions in the ion beam. For example, xenon may also be used.

The secondary electron emission characteristics for normal beam impingement and 30 and 60 degrees from normal beam impingement for a representative primary electron beam energy range for the surface produced in accordance with the present invention are shown in Figs. 3 and 4. The true secondary electron emission ratio, which is the ratio of low energy emitted electrons to impinging electrons for the conditions

described, is shown by the curves in Fig. 3. The reflected
primary electron yield indexed to that of a sooted control
5 surface at the same primary beam energy and beam impingement
angle, is shown by the curves in Fig. 4. The measurements were
made using a method described in "Secondary Electron Emission
Characteristics of Molybdenum-Masked Ion-Textured OFHC Copper",
NASA TP-2967, 1990, by Curren, A. N., Jensen, K. A., and Roman,
10 R. F.

For comparison, characteristics curves for untreated copper
are also shown in Figs. 3 and 4, respectively. The sharply
lower emission level for the surface of the present invention
relative to those of the untreated copper are clearly evident.
15 The true secondary electron emission ratio increases with beam
impingement angle over the entire energy range for both the
untreated and ion-textured copper surfaces, with the values for
ion-textured copper ranging from 40 to 60 percent lower than
those for untreated copper, as shown in Fig. 3. Fig. 4
20 indicates the reflected primary electron yield index for the
textured copper is significantly lower than that for untreated
copper for all beam impingement angles across the entire energy
range, ranging from a minimum of about 30 percent at 60 degrees
beam impingement angle to about 70 percent at 0 degrees beam
25 impingement angle.

Most of the electrons in a primary electron beam which impinges the textured copper surface strike the conical sloping walls of the spires or at the base of the spires. Secondary electrons which are then emitted from these regions are repeatedly intercepted with repeated partial retention by nearby adjacent spire walls. This greatly reduces net electron emission from the textured surface. The highly textured surface therefore is the principal factor in producing the low secondary electron emission characteristics exhibited by the surface of the present invention relative to those of untreated copper.

While the preferred embodiment of the invention is disclosed and described it will be apparent that various modifications may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention or the scope of the subjoined claims.

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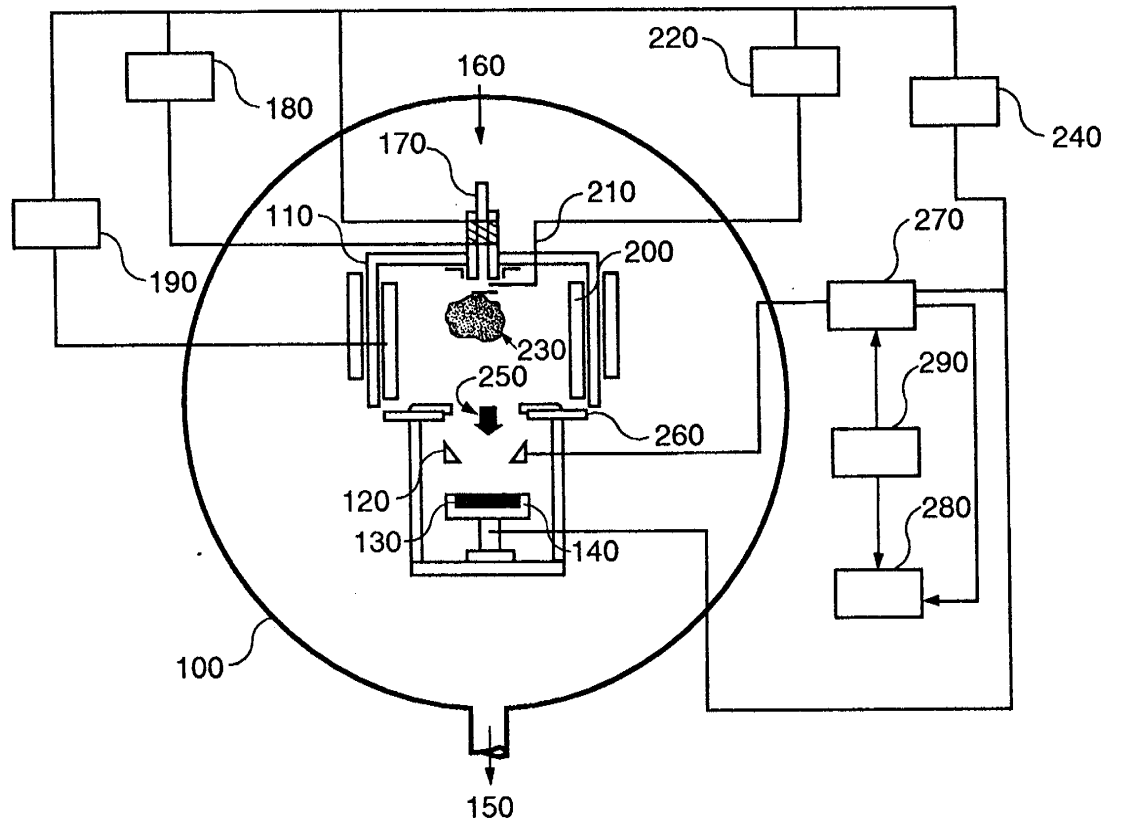


FIG. 1

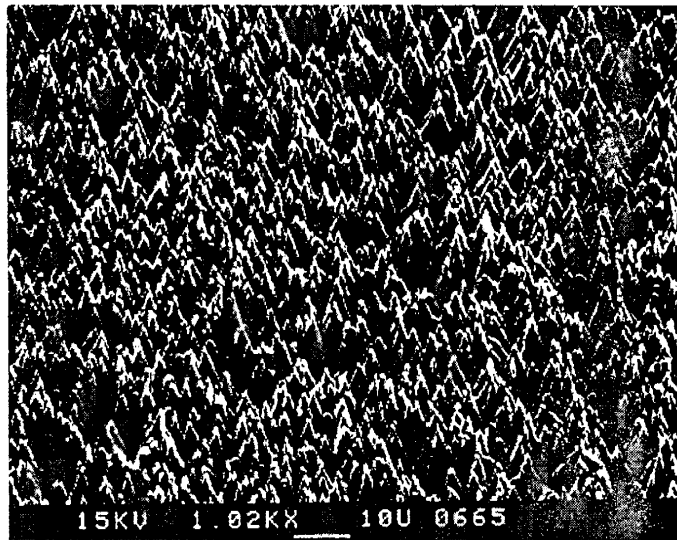


FIG.2

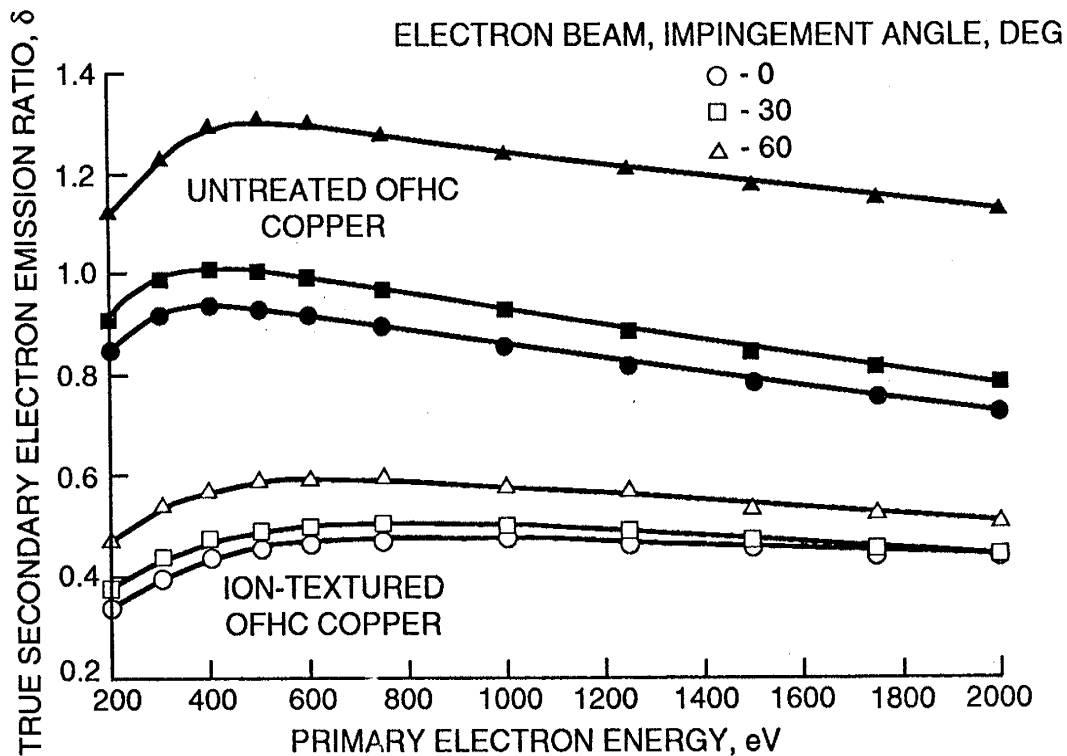


FIG. 3

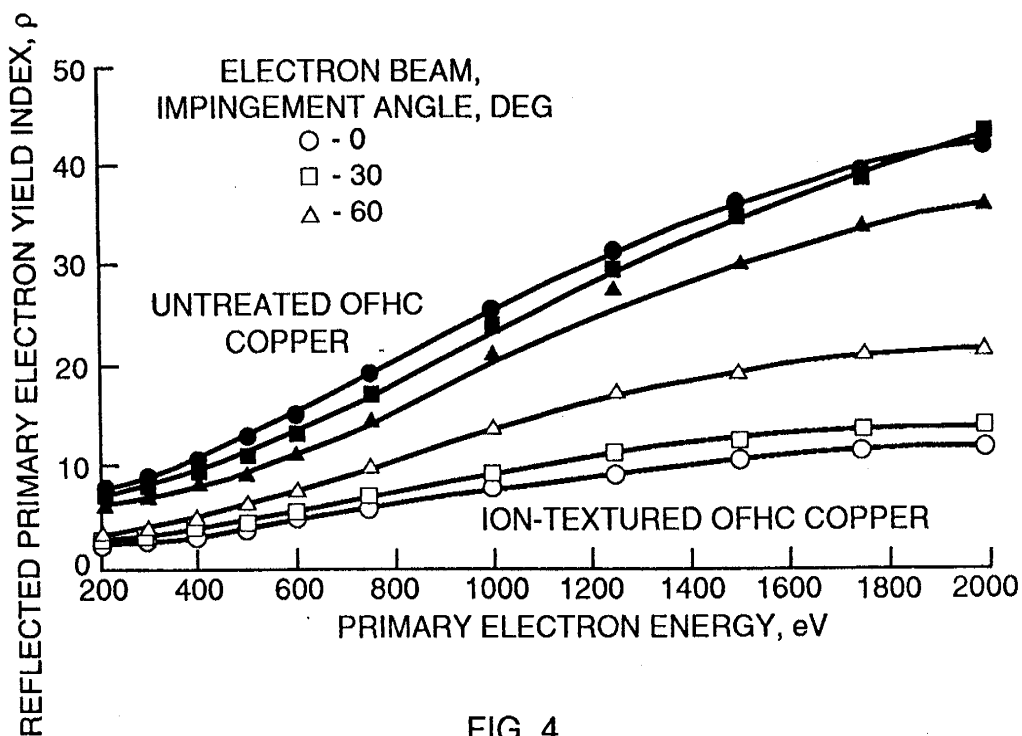


FIG. 4