US 20100218447A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2010/0218447 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Sep. 2, 2010**

Gehring

(54) **THIN BRICK AND METHOD FOR MAKING**

(76) Inventor: **Steve Gehring**, Salt Lake City, UT (US)

Correspondence Address:
MORRISS OBRYANT COMPAGNI, P.C.
734 EAST 200 SOUTH
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84102 (US)

(21) Appl. No.: **12/478,447**

(22) Filed: **Jun. 4, 2009**

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 61/156,376, filed on Feb. 27, 2009.

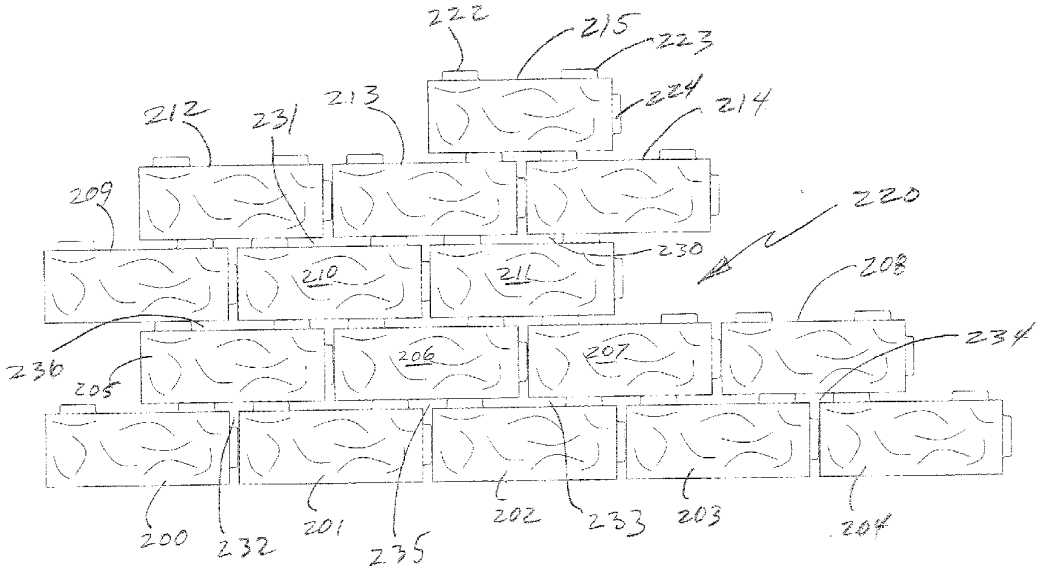
Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
E04B 2/18 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **52/435**; 52/745.19; 52/745.09

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A thin brick and method of forming a thin brick having a generally rectangular base portion with a plurality of laterally extending tabs extending therefrom is provided. An outer perimeter edge of each tab and a respective opposite side of the base portion has a precise dimension. A decorative upper portion is integrally formed with the base portion and has a generally rectangular shape, sized and shaped to substantially match the size and shape of the base portion. The upper portion extending from the base portion has a thickness that is at least equal to a thickness of the base portion.



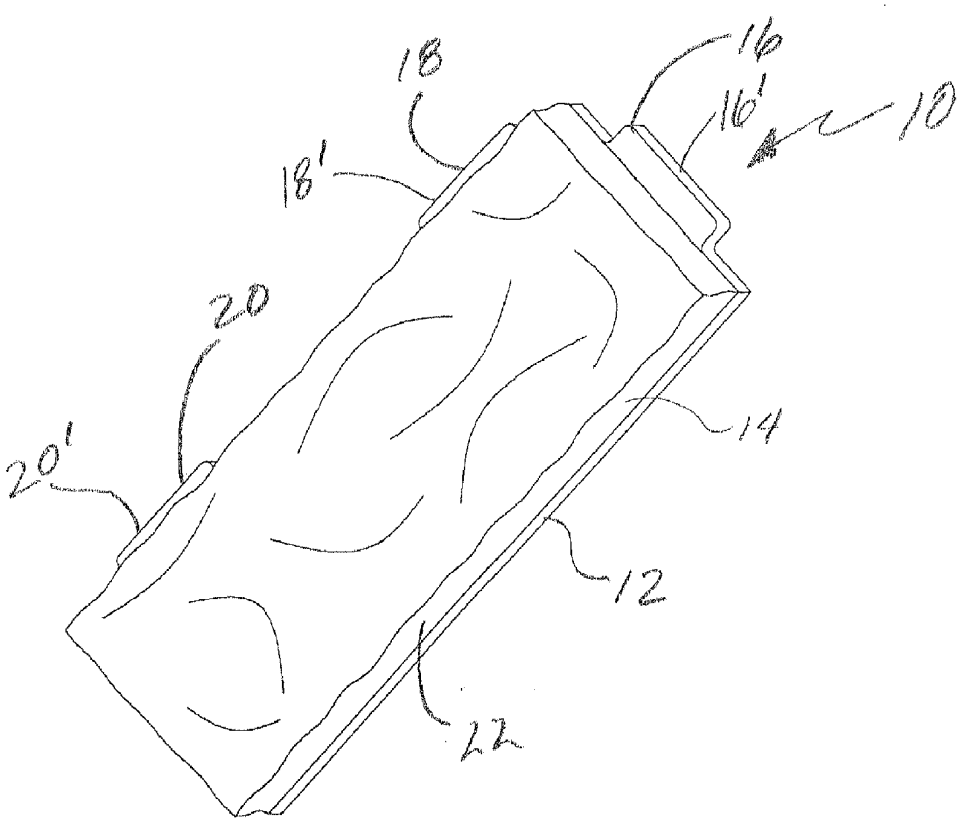


FIG. 1

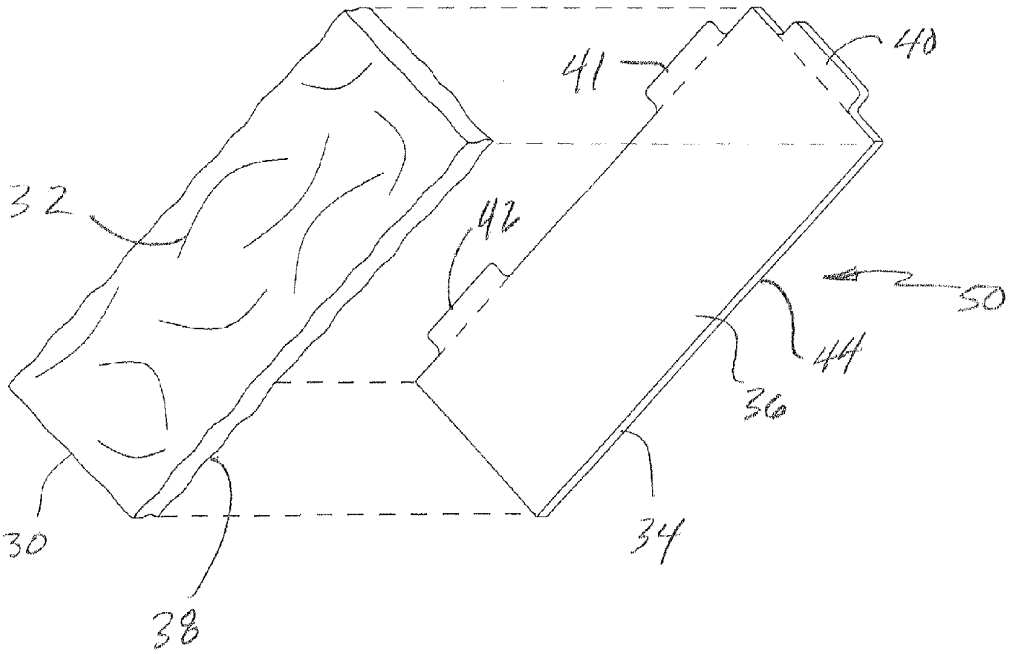


FIG. 2

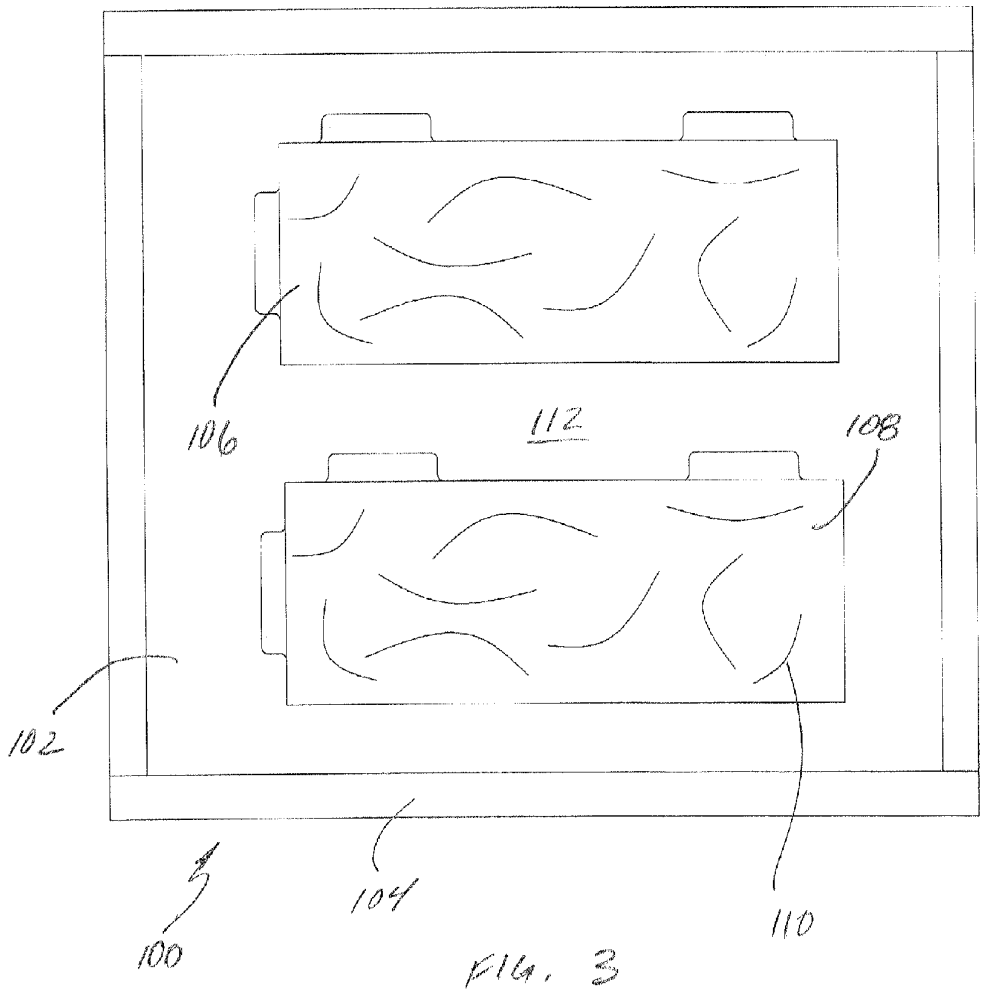


FIG. 3

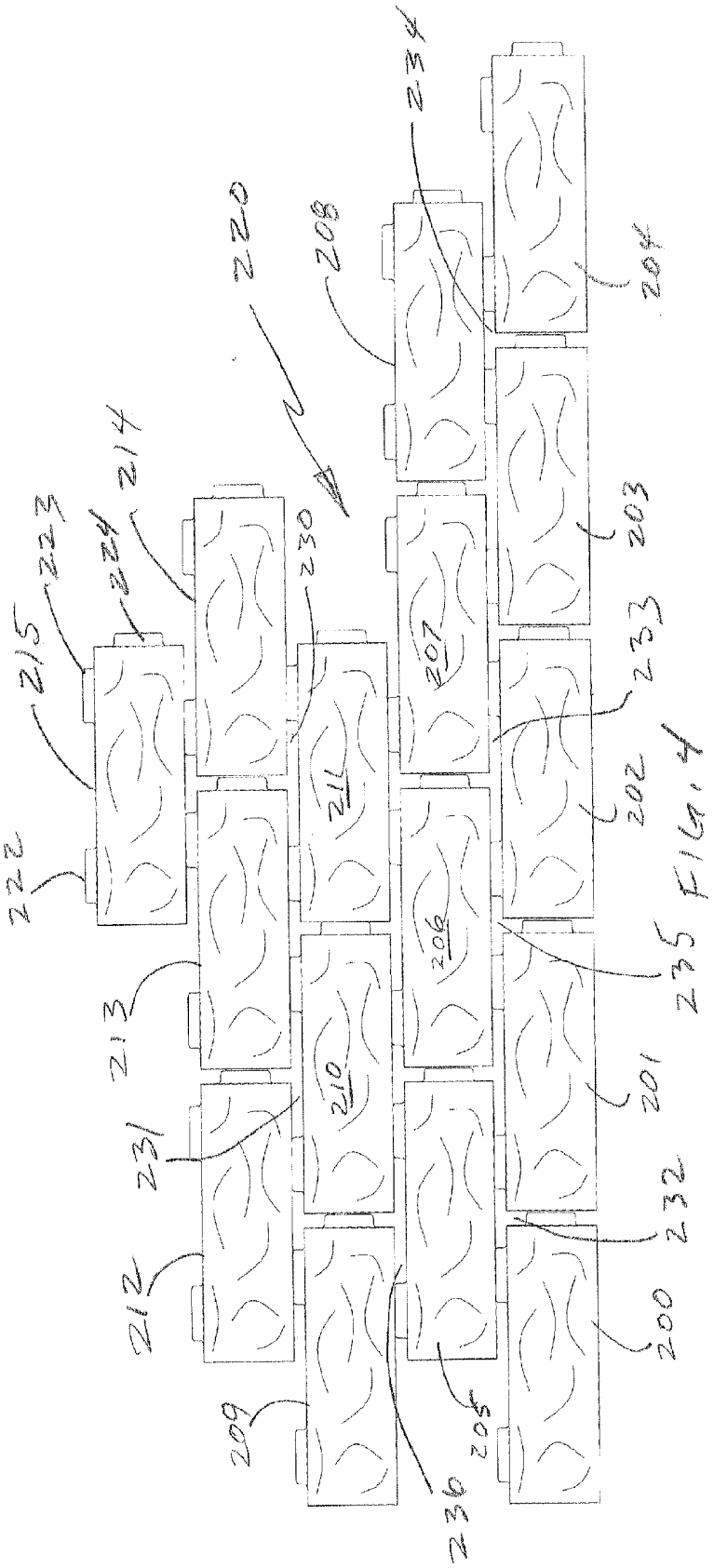

234
220
208
204
214
223
224
230
203
215
207
233
202
222
211
206
235
213
201
210
231
232
212
200
209
205
236

FIG. 4

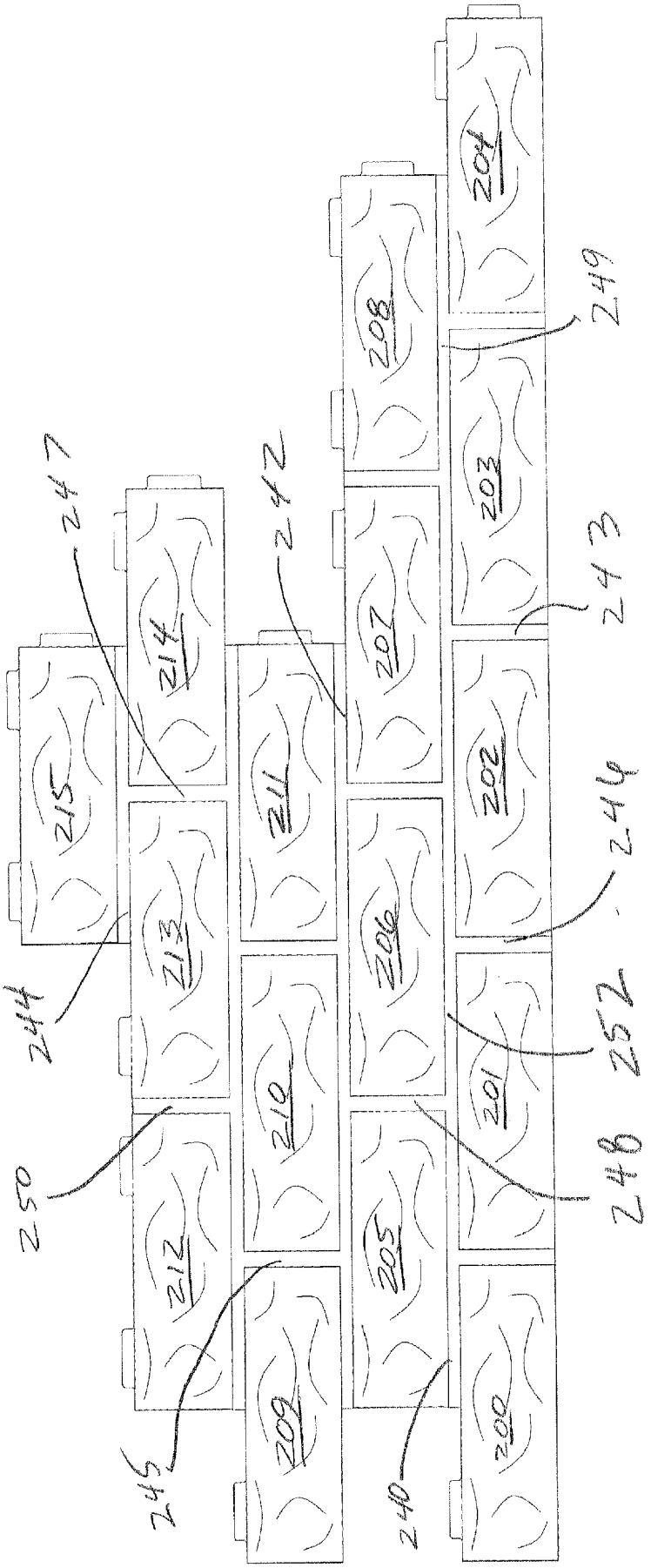

201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
240
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
252

FIG. 5

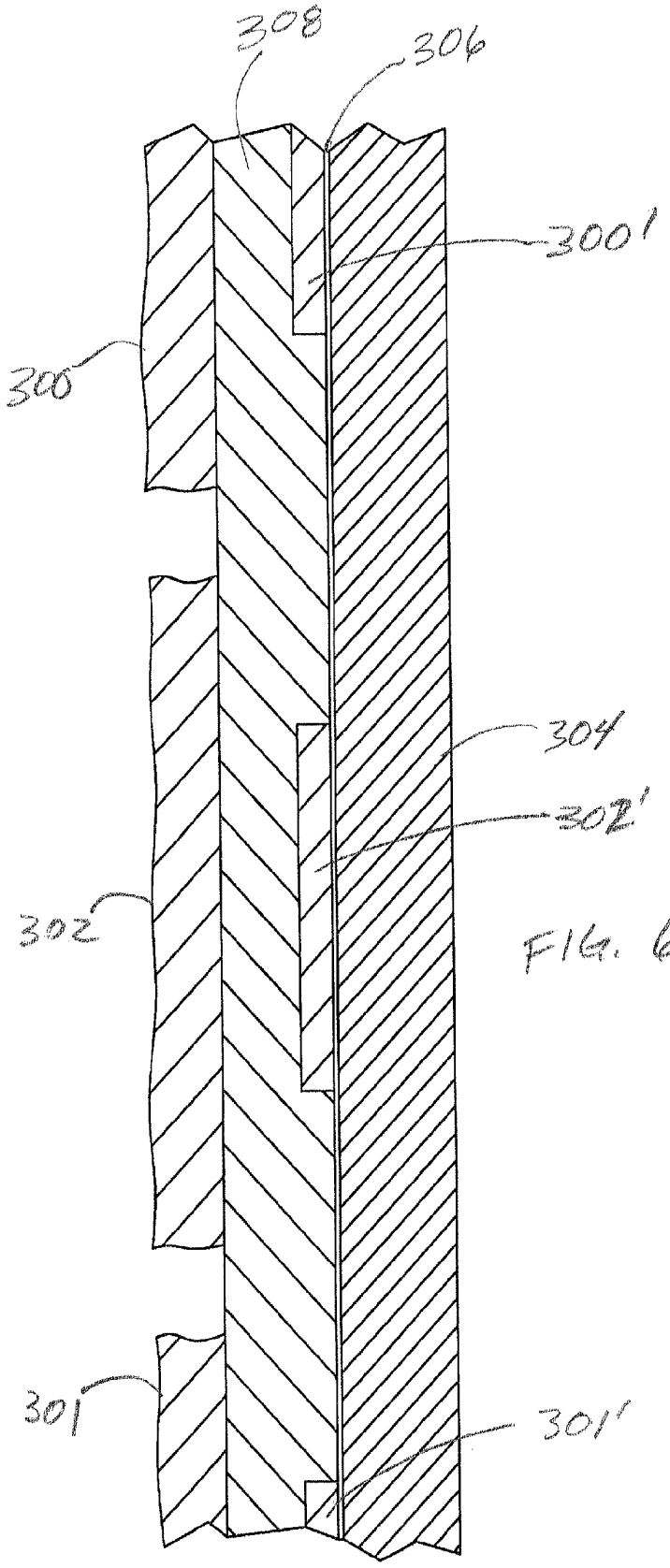


FIG. 6

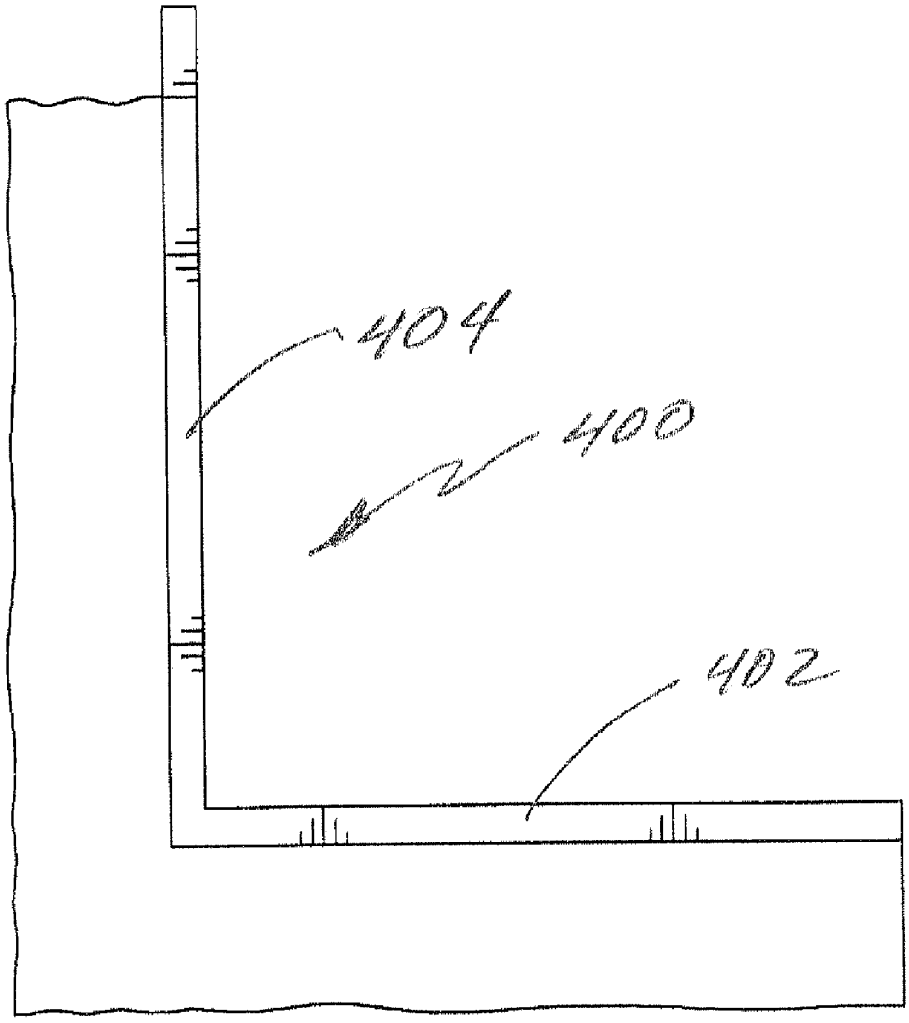


Fig. 7

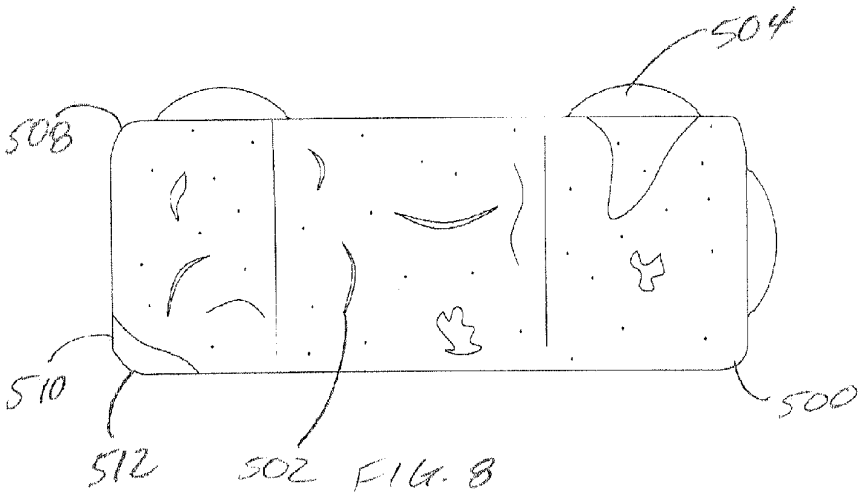


FIG. 8

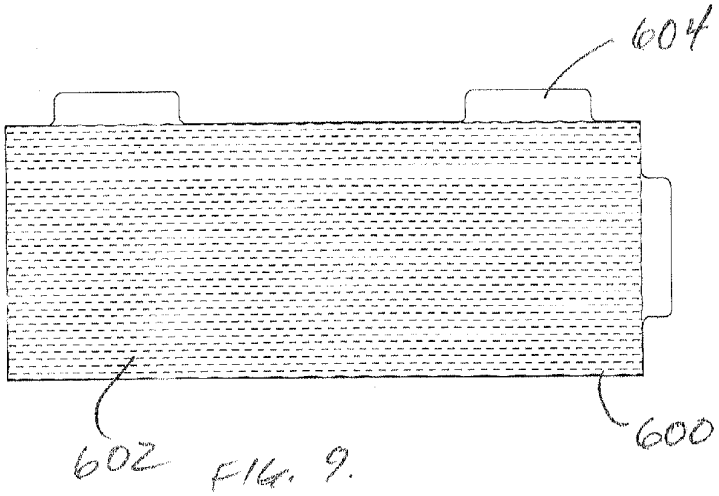


FIG. 9.

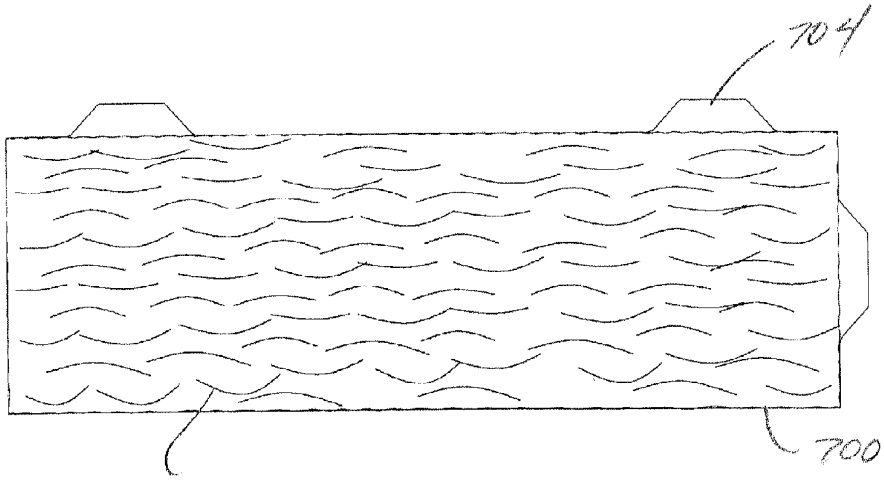


FIG. 10

THIN BRICK AND METHOD FOR MAKING

CROSS-REFERENCE TO PRIORITY APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 61/156,376 filed on Feb. 27, 2009, the entirety of which is incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to a thin brick and a method of manufacturing such thin bricks for forming a thin brick facade on a building or other structure. More specifically, the present invention relates to a thin brick and a method of forming such a thin brick that provides uniform spacing between adjacent thin bricks and that does not require additional spacing or support structure when forming a facade on a wall or other surface.

[0004] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0005] Architectural thin face brick, commonly referred to as "thin brick," is typically kiln dried brick units that have height and width dimensions similar to those dimensions of conventional brick, but have a relatively small thickness. Some other thin brick units are formed from concrete, such as those manufactured by Western Thin Brick and Tile in Phoenix Ariz. Such thin brick is typically used as a decorative element to an existing architectural structure. The thin brick is typically applied to the structure with an adhesive and then grouted with mortar to give the resulting panel the appearance of "real" brick. Such a thin brick panel, however, is much lighter than a wall formed from conventional brick, is typically less expensive than a conventional brick wall, and can be applied to the facade of a newly constructed building or a building that has been in existence for some period of time.

[0006] One of the problems identified early on with applying thin brick is the ability to hold the brick in place during the installation process. That is, when a row of thin brick is first applied to an existing wall and the adhesive is still wet, the brick will slip if the brick is not held in place until the adhesive cures. In addition, without some structural support for aligning the brick during the installation process, a skilled brick layer must be employed to properly lay the brick. As such, several attempts have been made in the art to provide structural support for the individual brick members.

[0007] One such panel system is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,809,470 to Bauer et al. Bauer teaches the use of a bonded vacuum formed polystyrene and extruded polystyrene foam. The outer portion is configured to secure bricks in place by a friction fit until the mortar is laid. Channel bars separate the bricks in a vertical direction.

[0008] Another brick support structure is provided in U.S. Pat. No. 4,662,140 which includes a sheet of metal having a plurality of tabs punched therein and extending outward from a first side thereof. Also positioned on the first side of the sheet metal panel are adhesive strips for permanently affixing bricks to the panel's first, or outer, side with the bricks positioned in a given spaced array on the panel by the tabs extending therefrom. The tabs provide support for the bricks when initially positioned upon the panel.

[0009] Yet another brick panel apparatus, disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,311,714 to Passeno, a stiff backing member such as an extruded polystyrene insulted board is laminated to a water impermeable sheet. A plurality of integrally formed projections are disposed in a plurality of horizontal rows on the impermeable sheet whereby these projections and the sheet constitutes a one-piece structure. The thin bricks are disposed between the rows of projections. Brackets are utilized to attach the thin sheet and backing member to a vertical substrate. The brackets have a planar portion for allowing the fastener to pass through it, through the thin sheet and through the backing member to a vertical structural member. These brackets also have a top portion which supports the bottom of the brick and is configured to engage with the mortar.

[0010] A similar thin brick panel assembly to Passeno is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,501,149 to Francis et al. Francis teaches abrick panel system which includes a backing member formed from a sheet of material adapted to retain individual thin brick tiles. The backing member has a generally uniform cross-section throughout its entire length, providing channels which allow the thin brick tiles to lay uniformly across each row. The channels are defined by retaining bars which hold the thin brick tiles in place. The retaining bars include mortar lock notches which are adapted to provide a dovetail connection between the mortar an the backing board, as well as a path for moisture and water to escape from the brick panel assembly.

[0011] The forgoing attempts to provide a way of applying thin brick to an existing structure each have significant disadvantages. For example, the use of dual layer systems, i.e.! a first layer configured to hold the brick during installation attached to a second layer comprised of foam, are expensive to manufacture and difficult to adapt to structures that are not planar. Such two layer systems are provided because the foam layer is comprised of an extruded polystyrene. The adhesives used to attach the brick to the panel will disintegrate such foam. Therefore, the foam layer must be protected from adhesive contact. In addition, expensive adhesives must be used to bond the brick to such two layer panel systems.

[0012] Another problem with extruded polystyrene is that mortar will not adhere to it. As such, as previously discussed, some of the panel systems of the prior art include brackets which become embedded in the mortar during installation. Such brackets are provided to presumably hold the mortar relative to the panel system. Temperature variations, however, will cause such brackets to expand and contract at a different rate that the mortar, thus causing the mortar joints to crack and/or become dislodged.

[0013] Yet another problem with such extruded foam systems is that manufacturers are not able to produce extruded foam over a thickness of about 1.5 inches. Because of the extrusion process used to form such panels, thicker panels become warped and unusable for brick panel systems where walls must remain planar and where any warping in the foam panel would be noticeable in the finished brick wall.

[0014] The use of metal sheets is not desirable as such materials often have sharp edges making them dangerous to handle. In addition, temperature variations in such sheets will cause the sheet to expand and contract. The expansion and contraction rate of the metal sheet will be different than that of the mortar, causing the mortar to crack and/or become dislodged. Furthermore, systems which use individual brackets to hold the brick in place require additional time to install.

[0015] Dislodgement of thin bricks or mortar could be dangerous to passersby if the thin brick units or mortar were to become dislodged and fall to the ground. The prior art systems configured to attach thin bricks to an existing structure, however, have problems with bricks and/or mortar becoming

dislodged. Indeed, the mortar used to fill gaps between bricks will not bond to the prior art panel systems. As previously described with the prior art systems, it is often the case that a lining sheet of material, such as plastic or metal, is placed between the foam and the brick. Because such materials will have different expansion and contraction rates due to temperature variations than the adhesive, mortar and brick, the mortar is caused to crack and the brick and mortar will become dislodged.

[0016] Thus, it would be an advantage to provide a thin brick that does not require additional structure to support the thin bricks during installation.

[0017] It would be another advantage to provide a thin brick that allows bonding of the mortar to the underlying structure without the need for additional structural support.

[0018] It would also be advantageous to provide a thin brick which is simple and relatively inexpensive to manufacture,

[0019] It would be a further advantage to provide a thin brick that provides proper spacing between adjacent thin bricks without the need for additional structural elements.

[0020] It would be another advantage to provide a thin brick that is configured to prevent the brick thin and mortar attached thereto from being easily dislodged.

[0021] These and other advantages will become apparent from a reading of the following summary of the invention and description of the illustrated embodiments in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0022] Accordingly, a thin brick comprises a generally rectangular base portion having a plurality of laterally extending tabs extending therefrom. An outer perimeter edge of each tab and a respective opposite side of the base portion having a relatively precise dimension. A decorative upper portion is integrally formed with the base portion and has a generally rectangular shape, sized and shaped to substantially match the size and shape of the base portion. The upper portion extends from the base portion and has a thickness that is at least equal to a thickness of the base portion.

[0023] The present invention also includes a method of forming a thin brick. The method comprises forming a base member having a generally rectangular perimeter with a plurality of laterally extending tabs extending therefrom. An outer perimeter edge of each tab and a respective opposite side of the base member have a relatively precise dimension. A thin brick having an outer decorative texture is attached to the base member such that a perimeter of the back side is substantially aligned with the generally rectangular perimeter of the base member. A mold is formed by inserting the thin brick and base member into the mold material until a back side of the base member is substantially flush with a top surface of the mold material. The mold material is allowed to cure and the thin brick and base member are removed from the mold to form a mold cavity. A cementitious material is inserted into the mold cavity and allowed to cure into a thin brick. The thin brick is then removed from the mold.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0024] The foregoing summary, as well as the following detailed description of the illustrated embodiments, is better understood when read in conjunction with the appended drawings. For the purpose of illustrating the invention, there is shown in the drawings embodiments that illustrate what is currently considered to be the best mode for carrying out the invention, it being understood, however, that the invention is not limited to the specific methods and instruments disclosed. In the drawings:

[0025] FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a first embodiment of a thin brick in accordance with the principles of the present invention;

[0026] FIG. **2** is an exploded perspective view of a mold piece in accordance with the principles of the present invention;

[0027] FIG. **3** is a top view of a mold in accordance with the principles of the present invention;

[0028] FIG. **4** is a side view of a wall in accordance with the principles of the present invention;

[0029] FIG. **5** is a side view of the wall shown in FIG. **4** with mortar applied;

[0030] FIG. **6** is a cross-sectional side view of a wall in accordance with the principles of the present invention;

[0031] FIG. **7** is a top side view of a corner piece in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0032] FIGS. **8**, **9** and **10** are front views of various embodiments of a thin brick in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0033] Referring to the drawings wherein like numerals indicate like elements throughout, there is shown in FIG. **1** a thin brick, generally indicated at **10**, in accordance with the principles of the present invention. The thin brick **10** is comprised of a base portion **12** and an upper decorative portion **14**. The base portion **12** is provided with a plurality of laterally extending tabs **16**, **18** and **20**. Each tab **16**, **18** and **20** defines an outer edge **16'**, **18'** and **20'** that is the same width. More specifically, the effective lengths and widths of the thin brick **10**, as defined by the outer edges **16'**, **18'** and **20'** of each tab and their respective opposite side edge of the thin brick **10** have a relatively precise dimension (e.g., in the range of 3.00 to 3.25 inches wide and 7.75 to 8.00 inches long with a desired dimension of 3.125 inches wide and 7.825 inches long for a 2⅝×7½ inch brick), with tolerances of ±0.01 inches or less. The base and upper portions **12** and **14**, respectively, and the tabs **16**, **18** and **20** are integrally formed from a concrete mixture, such as glass fiber reinforced cement ("GFRC") or other lightweight concrete mixtures known in the art. The rectangular perimeter of the base portion **12** may be sized to that of a standard brick with the upper decorative portion **14** having a similar, if not virtually identical perimeter size that extends from the base portion **12**. As configured, as will be described in more detail herein, when the thin brick **10** is placed adjacent to other similarly configured thin bricks **10**, with the long side **22** of the thin brick **10** being horizontally oriented, the tab **16** provides horizontal spacing between adjacent thin bricks **10** and the side tabs **18** and **20** provide vertical spacing between adjacent bricks **10**.

[0034] A thin brick **10** according to the present invention is formed by first obtaining an actual thin brick **30** having a desired external decorative texture **32**. The thin brick **30**, is thus a pre-manufactured component that may be of the type that is to be installed using conventional thin brick installation methods known in the art. A sheet of material, such as one quarter inch thick MDF (medium density fiber board), is cut and thus formed as by CNC milling or other cutting process into a base member **34** as shown. Using computer controlled

milling techniques to form the base member **34**, ensures that the perimeter edges of the base member **34** have exacting tolerances to ensure that each thin brick formed using the molding techniques described herein have consistent dimensions. This ensures that the spacing of adjacent thin bricks according to the present invention can be precisely controlled when installing the thin bricks.

[0035] The base member **34** has a generally rectangular portion **36** that is sized to substantially match the size of the bottom **38** of the thin brick **30**. Laterally extending flanges or tabs **40**, **41** and **42** are formed on the perimeter of the base **34**. The tabs **40**, **41** and **42** form portions in the base **34** that make the base **34** wider and longer at the locations of the tabs **40**, **41** and **42**. The thin brick **30** is then attached to the base **34** as with a construction or industrial adhesive in order to bond the thin brick **30** to the base member **34** and thus form a mold piece, generally indicated at **50**, that is in the configuration of a finished thin brick according to the present invention.

[0036] Once assembled, the mold piece **50** is used to form a mold **100**, as shown in FIG. **3**. Mold **100** may be formed from a material of sufficient flexibility to allow it to be removed from a hardened component, yet of sufficient rigidity to shape a concrete material deposited therein. Suitable materials include natural and synthetic rubbers, and other polymers of sufficient elasticity. For example, the mold may be formed from a flexible mold compound made from liquid rubber such as POLYTEK's Poly 74-30 or POLYGEL Spray 50 urethane. The materials allow complex shapes and high detail to be easily de-molded.

[0037] The mold material **102** is poured into a mold frame **104**. The mold piece **50** is then inserted face down into the mold material **102**. As shown in FIG. **3**, more than one mold cavity **106** and **108** may be formed in a single mold **100**. In addition, it should be noted that each mold cavity **106** and **108** may be formed from a differently configured mold piece **50** such that each mold cavity **106** and **108** has a slightly different texture so as to produce thin bricks according to the present invention with varying textures for a more realistic appearance to a wall formed from such thin bricks. Thus, while the mold is illustrated as having two mold cavities of identical configuration, the mold **100** may include several mold cavities, each having a unique textural pattern **110**. The mold pieces **50** are inserted into the mold material **102** such that the back surface **44** (see FIG. **2**) of the base member **34** is substantially flush with the top surface **112** of the mold material **102**.

[0038] Once the mold material **102** has cured, mold pieces **50** are removed from the mold and the mold **100** may be removed from the mold frame **104** for use. To form thin bricks according to the present invention a cementitious molding compound is poured or otherwise applied to the inside of a mold cavities **106** and **108**. If desirable, a suitable release agent may be disposed over the inside the mold cavities **106** and **108**, prior to deposition of the molding compound used to form the thin bricks of the present invention. One such molding compound may be GFRC, glass fiber reinforced concrete, which contains fiberglass strands as a reinforcing material. The GFRC may include various substances to help reduce water content in the finished product such as REAL MIX 100 (a water reducer) as well as VIABOLD 235, which helps reduce efflorescence in the surface of the GFRC. The fiberglass F is introduced into the cement in the form of chopped fiberglass strands. The fiberglass strands act to reinforce the material and add strength to the finished product. The fiberglass strands may be formed of alkali resistant fiberglass in lengths of from about 0.25 inches to about 0.5 inches. The GFRC material may contain from about 3% to about 10% fiberglass, although a range of from about 6% to about 6.5% may be desireable. The GFRC may also contain polyurethane beads B, which reduce the overall weight of the finished component. The beads are generally of the size of approximately 1/32 inch to 1/8 inch in diameter. The beads also strengthen the GFRC and help reduce surface cracking.

[0039] The GFRC material may be disposed in the mold **100** by pouring or spraying therein with a specialized spray gun. Glass fiber F may be fed into the spray gun from a roll and cut off at appropriate lengths, beads B and uncured cement may also be fed into the spray gun. Such spray guns are known in the art.

[0040] In order to provide thin bricks of various colors and with various color variations to form thin bricks having a more realistic appearance, a coloring agent may be disposed in each mold cavity **106** and **108** prior to insertion of the molding compound. That way, a limited amount of coloring agent is needed since the entire mold compound mix is not being colored. In addition, by applying the coloring agent to the mold cavities **106** and **108**, the coloring agent can be unevenly applied to provide varying shades of coloring in the outer decorative surface of the finished thin brick. Thus, coloring agents may be used to impart desired color to the finished component. Suitable coloring agents may include any solution or formulation which can impart color to a cementitious material. Coloring agents that are partially absorbed into the cementitious material may be desirable, as this allows the color to remain constant on a colored area, even when the component is scratched or if the component surface is acid washed to remove grime. Suitable coloring agents may include iron oxide pigments or polymer color agents. As previously discussed, the coloring agents may be randomly disposed in various locations of the mold cavities **106** and **108**, as by placement through brushing, spraying or other methods.

[0041] The GFRC material may also contain an acrylic polymer in order to provide increased flexibility to the finished component. The polymer also slows the curing time to prevent cracking of the GFRC during the curing process. One such suitable polymer is commercially available under the name FORTON. FORTON is used as a curing agent to eliminate the need for moist curing.

[0042] Once the molding compound is disposed in the mold **100**, it may be compacted, if necessary, by application of a compactor, such as roller or other device. Compaction of the molding material forces air out of the mix resulting in a stronger, more uniform finished component. Compaction may take place by rolling the upper exposed surface of the molding compound or as otherwise known to those of skill in the art. Once the molding compound has cured, the thin bricks according to the present invention may be removed from the mold. Formation of molds and the resulting formation of thin bricks according to the principles of the present invention result in thin bricks having base portions that have extremely type dimensional tolerances.

[0043] As shown in FIG. **4**, a plurality of thin bricks **200-216** form a partial wall **220**. The thin bricks **200-215** are stacked and laterally abutted against each other. The extending tabs, such as tabs **222**, **223** and **224** of brick **215** provide uniform spacing between adjacent bricks. In addition, because of the spacing between tabs **222**, **223** and **224** around

the perimeter of the brick **216**, gaps, such as gaps **230-236** are formed between the bricks. These gaps **230-236** provide spaces where mortar that is applied between the bricks to adhere to the underlying wall structure in order to secure the mortar to the wall as well as to the bricks.

[0044] As shown in FIG. **5**, once the thin bricks **200-215** are attached to a wall or other structure, the spaces **240-250** between adjacent bricks **200-215** are filled with mortar **252**. The mortar **252** is applied over the tabs **222**, **223** and **224** of the thin bricks **220-215** and over the exposed wall surfaces between adjacent thin bricks **220-215**. The mortar **246** further bonds the thin bricks **200-215** to the wall. In addition, because of the spacing between tabs **222-224** of each brick, the mortar, while having a thinner thickness over such tabs **222-224** is thicker in the spaces between tabs **222-224** to ensure that the mortar has sufficient thickness over portions of the mortar that it will not become dislodged from the thin bricks **200-215** over time.

[0045] As further illustrated in FIG. **6**, the thin bricks **300-302** are attached to a wall structure **304** as with a layer **306** of bonding material, such as a construction adhesive, thin set or other materials known in the art. Once cured, a layer **308** of mortar is applied between and around the thin bricks **300-302**. The mortar **308** has a more shallow thickness over the spacing tabs **300'**, **301'** and **302'** and a maximum thickness between the spacing tabs **300'**, **301'** and **302'**. Thus the mortar **308** helps to secure the bricks **300-302** to the wall **304** by interlocking the tabs **300'-302'** to the wall such that the bricks **300-302** cannot be easily dislodged without dislodging any surround mortar extending over the tabs **300'-302'**. The combination of the mortar **308** and tabs **300'-302'** form a stronger bond between the bricks **300-302** and the wall **304** than prior art thin brick systems. Accordingly, the thickness of the tabs **300'-302'** are about no more than one third to one half of the thickness of the thin brick so that sufficient mortar can be placed over the tabs **300-302'** to form a thickness of mortar over the tabs **300'-302'** that will not be easily dislodged, such as by freeze/thaw cycles that can occur in colder climates. Thus, for an overall thin brick thickness of about three quarters of an inch, the tab thicknesses would be approximately one quarter inch.

[0046] It is further contemplated that various other configurations of thin bricks may be formed according to the present invention. For example, as shown in FIG. **7**, a corner brick **400** may be formed. The corner brick **400** has a similar thickness as the other thin bricks of the present invention but is formed into a ninety degree angle. The corner brick **400** also includes spacing tabs **402** and **404** similar to the spacing tabs of the thin bricks previously described herein. The effective length of each side of the corner brick **400** may be approximately one half of the length of the thin bricks with which it is to be used.

[0047] Also, as shown in FIGS. **8**, **9** and **10**, thin bricks **500**, **600** and **700** according to the present invention may be provided with different decorative textures **502**, **602** and **702**, respectively. Likewise, the thin bricks **500**, **600** and **700** may be provided with variously configured spacing tabs **504**, **604** and **804**, respectively. In addition, as shown in FIG. **8**, the thin brick **500** may be provided with rounded corners **508** to match the rounded corners of a conventional thin brick configuration. In such a case, the base portion **510** is provided with substantially matching rounded corners **512**. When forming the mold piece, as previously described, once the brick is attached to the base, the corners can be sanded to match.

[0048] Reference herein to specific details of the illustrated embodiments is by way of example and not by way of limitation. It will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that the embodiments described herein are not intended to limit the scope of the present invention. Various combinations and modifications of the embodiments described herein may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention and all modifications are meant to be included within the scope of the present invention. Thus, while certain exemplary embodiments and details have been described for purposes of describing the invention, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that various changes in the invention described herein may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention, which is defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A thin brick, comprising:

a generally rectangular base portion having a plurality of laterally extending tabs extending therefrom, with an outer perimeter edge of each tab and a respective opposite side of the base portion having a relatively precise dimension; and

a decorative upper portion integrally formed with said base portion having a generally rectangular shape, sized and shaped to substantially match the size and shape of the base portion, the upper portion extending from said base portion and having a thickness that is at least equal to a thickness of said base portion.

2. The thin brick of claim **1**, wherein the plurality of laterally extending tabs comprises at least one tab on a long side of said base portion and at least one tab on a short side of said base portion.

3. The thin brick of claim **2**, wherein the plurality of laterally extending tabs consists of a pair of tabs on one long side of said base portion and a single tab on one short side of said base portion.

4. The thin brick of claim **3**, wherein the plurality of tabs are spaced apart along the perimeter of the base portion with the single tab being generally centered on the short side and the pair of tabs being generally equally spaced from respective ends of the long side.

5. The thin brick of claim **1**, wherein the dimensions of the base portion have a dimensional tolerance of ±0.01 or less.

6. A method of forming a thin brick, comprising:

forming a base member having a generally rectangular perimeter with a plurality of laterally extending tabs extending therefrom, with an outer perimeter edge of each tab and a respective opposite side of the base member having a relatively precise dimension;

providing a thin brick having an outer decorative texture;

attaching a back side of the thin brick to the base member such that a perimeter of the back side is substantially aligned with the generally rectangular perimeter of the base member;

providing a mold material in a mold form;

inserting the thin brick and base member into the mold material until a back side of the base member is substantially flush with a top surface of the mold material;

allowing the mold material to cure;

removing the thin brick and base member from the mold to form a mold cavity;

inserting a cementitious material into the mold cavity;

allowing the cementitious material to cure into a thin brick; and

removing the thin brick from the mold, the thin brick having a base portion with a plurality of a laterally extending tabs extending therefrom, an outer perimeter edge of each tab and a respective opposite side of the base portion having a relatively precise dimension and an upper decorative portion integrally formed with the base portion that substantially matches the outer decorative texture.

7. The method of claim **6**, further comprising forming at least one tab on a long side of said base portion and at least one tab on a short side of said base portion.

8. The method of claim **7**, further comprising forming a pair of tabs on one long side of said base portion and a single tab on one short side of said base portion.

9. The method of claim **8**, further comprising forming the single tab to be generally centered on the short side and the pair of tabs to be generally equally spaced from respective ends of the long side.

10. The method of claim **6**, further comprising forming the base portion with a dimensional tolerance of ±0.01 or less.

11. The method of claim **6**, further comprising adhesively attaching the thin brick to the base member.

12. The method of claim **6**, further comprising forming a plurality of mold cavities in each mold.

13. The method of claim **12**, further comprising forming a plurality of mold cavities having different textures in each mold.

14. A method of forming a thin brick wall, comprising:

providing a plurality of thin bricks, each comprising:

a generally rectangular base portion having a plurality of laterally extending tabs extending therefrom, with an outer perimeter edge of each tab and a respective opposite side of the base portion having a relatively precise dimension; and a decorative upper portion integrally formed with said base portion having a generally rectangular shape, sized and shaped to substantially match the size and shape of the base portion, the upper portion extending from said base portion and having a thickness that is at least equal to a thickness of said base portion;

attaching the plurality of thin bricks to an existing structure such that the plurality of tabs of one thin brick abut against a side of an adjacent thin brick;

applying mortar between adjacent thin bricks over said plurality of tabs and to the structure.

15. The method of claim **14**, further comprising providing thin bricks having a pair of spaced apart tabs on a long side and a single tab generally centered on a short side and with no tabs on a sides of said brick opposite the tabs.

16. The method of claim **14**, wherein the sides opposite the tabs abut at least one tab of an adjacent brick.

* * * * *