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(54) **Apparatus and methods for use in the mass analysis of chemical samples.**

(57) A probe for supporting a sample in an ion source of a mass spectrometer is arranged to receive a continuous supply of liquid containing a sample to be analysed, which sample may, or may not, change with time. The probe can comprise a target formed by a copper probe tip (18) and the liquid sample can pass, for example through a fine bore (18a) of the tip, on to the end surface of the tip where it is held as a droplet by surface tension. In order to replenish the droplet surface, liquid sample can be supplied, for example via capillary tubing (14) from a syringe (11), to the inlet end of the bore in the probe tip.

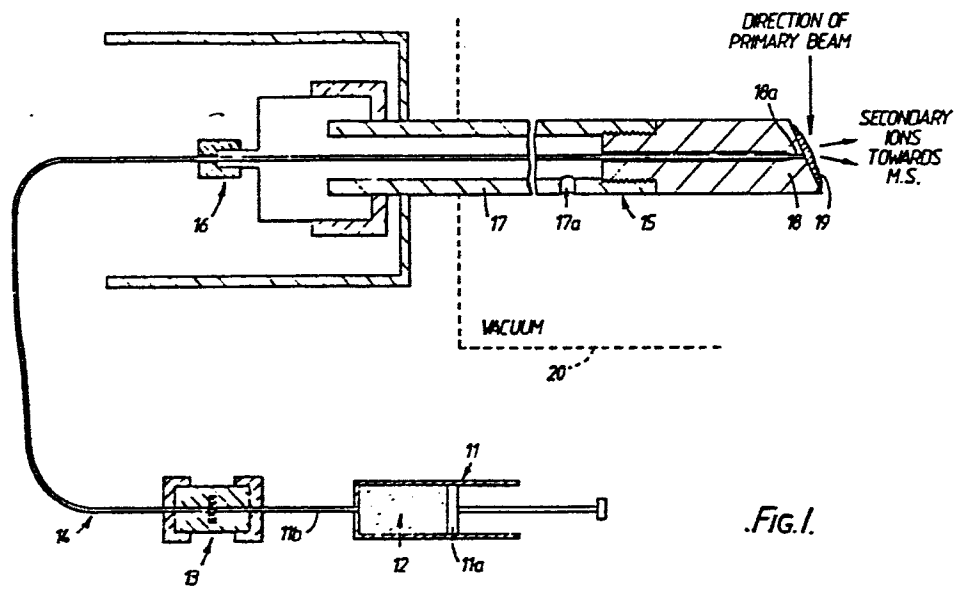


FIG. 1.



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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EP 86 30 6004

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 4)
Y	GB-A-2 050 686 (HEWLETT-PACKARD CO.) * figure 1; page 2, lines 13-53 *	1-5, 9, 14, 16	G 01 N 27/62 H 01 J 49/04 H 01 J 49/14
Y	GB-A-2 091 937 (NATIONAL RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT CORP.) * abstract; page 1, lines 5-27; page 4, lines 2-10 *	1-5, 9, 14, 16	
A		17	
A	FR-A-1 512 509 (CSF) * page 1, left-hand column, lines 1-6 *	1, 2, 16	
A	US-A-4 209 696 (W.L. FITE) * column 1, lines 10-30 *	1, 2, 16	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 4)
A, D	ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY, vol. 57, no. 6, May 1985, pages 1153-1155; J.S. BRODBELT et al.: "An exceedingly simple mass spectrometer interface with application to reaction monitoring and environmental analysis"	1, 2, 16	H 01 J 49/00 G 01 N 30/00 G 01 N 1/00
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search BERLIN		Date of completion of the search 24-07-1987	Examiner BRISON O.P.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			