April 4, 1944. H. P. ELLIOTT 2,345,557

APPARATUS FOR FORMING CHARACTERS ON STENCILS

Filed Feb. 12, 1943 5 Sheets-Sheet 1

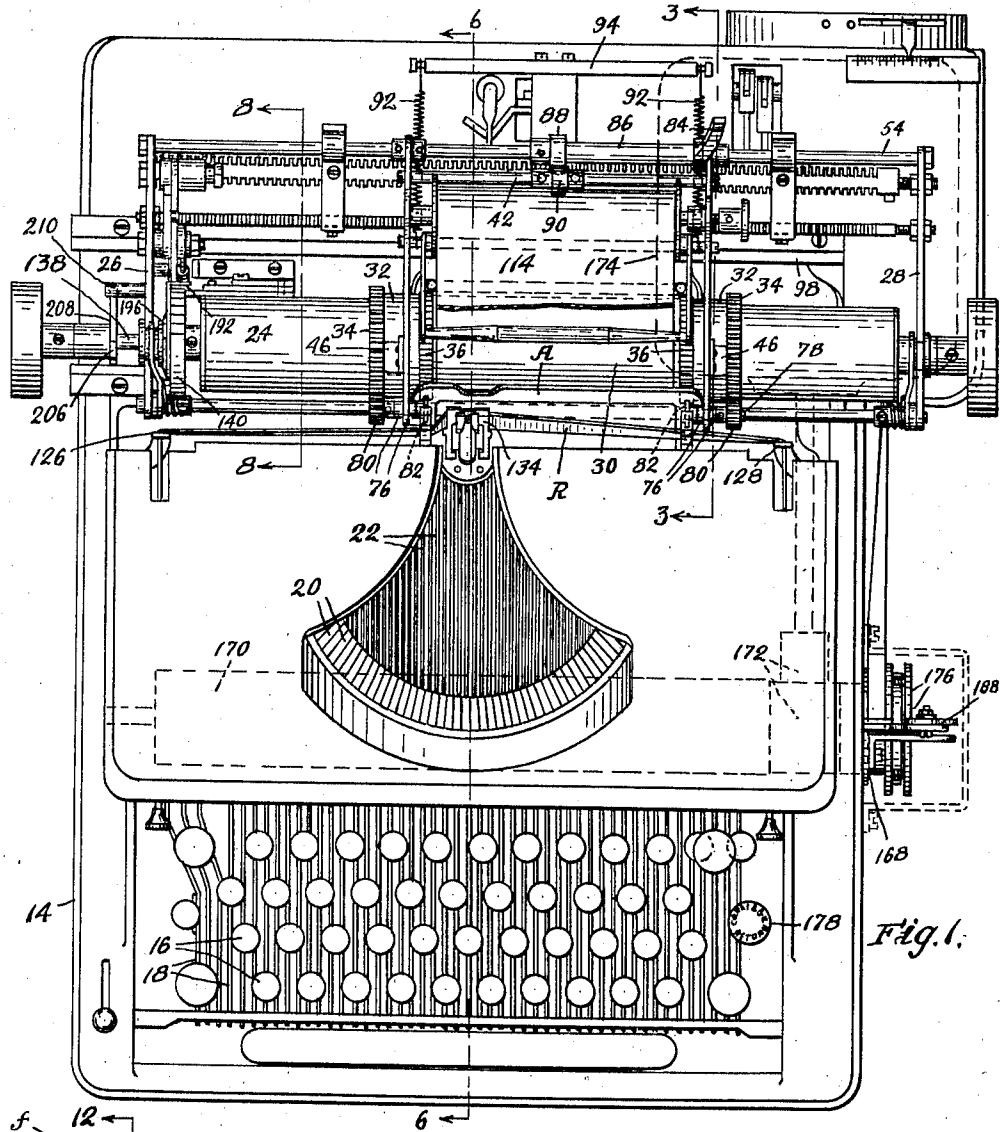


Fig. 1.

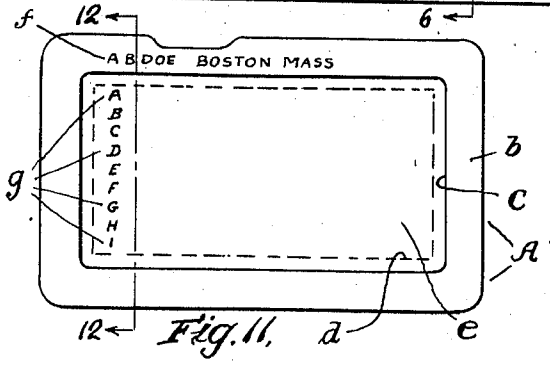


Fig. 11.

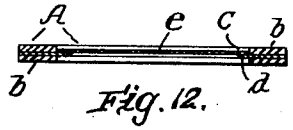


Fig. 12.

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APPARATUS FOR FORMING CHARACTERS ON STENCILS

Filed Feb. 12, 1943 5 Sheets-Sheet 2

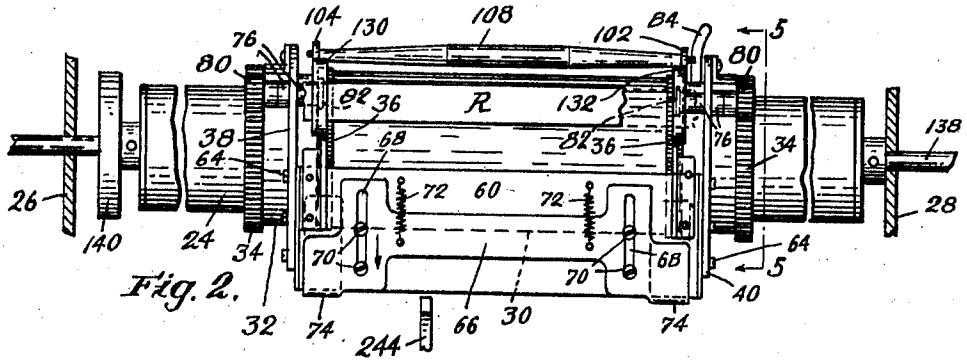


Fig. 2.

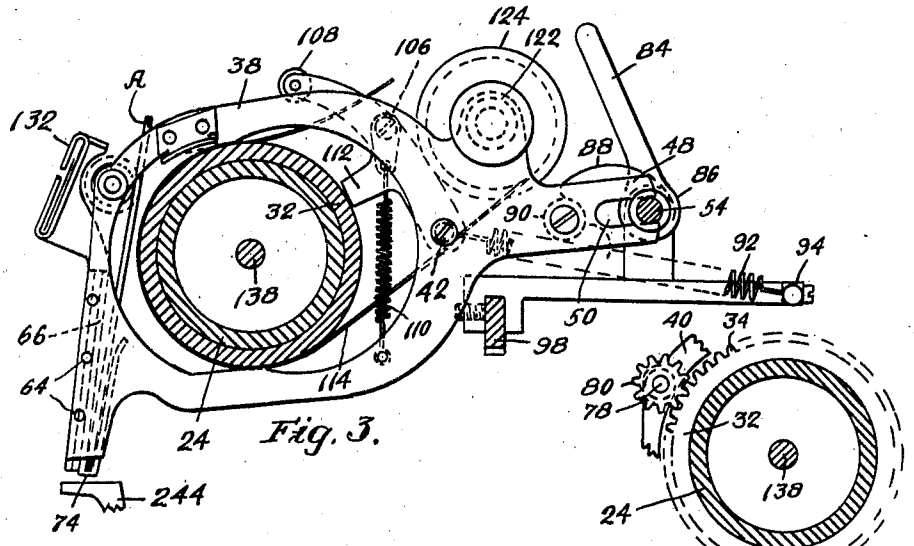


Fig. 3.

Fig. 5.

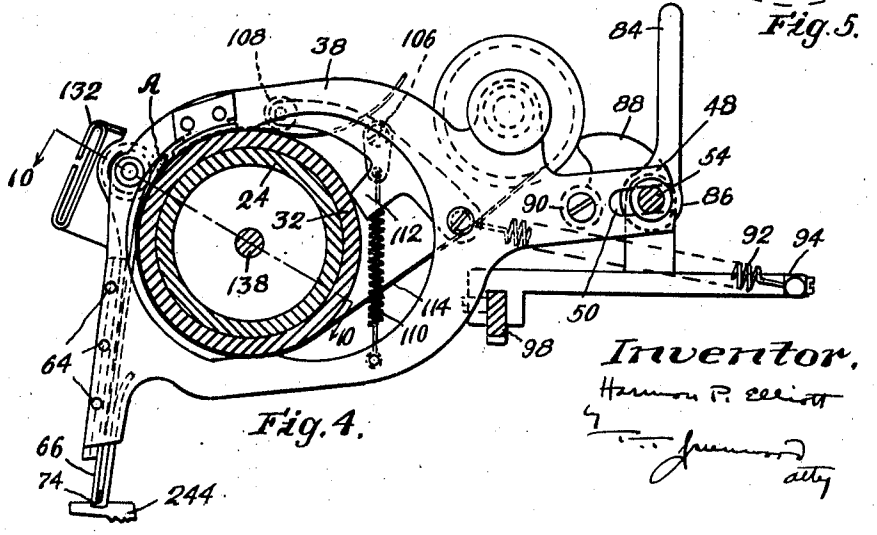


Fig. 4.

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APPARATUS FOR FORMING CHARACTERS ON STENCILS

Filed Feb. 12, 1943 5 Sheets-Sheet 3

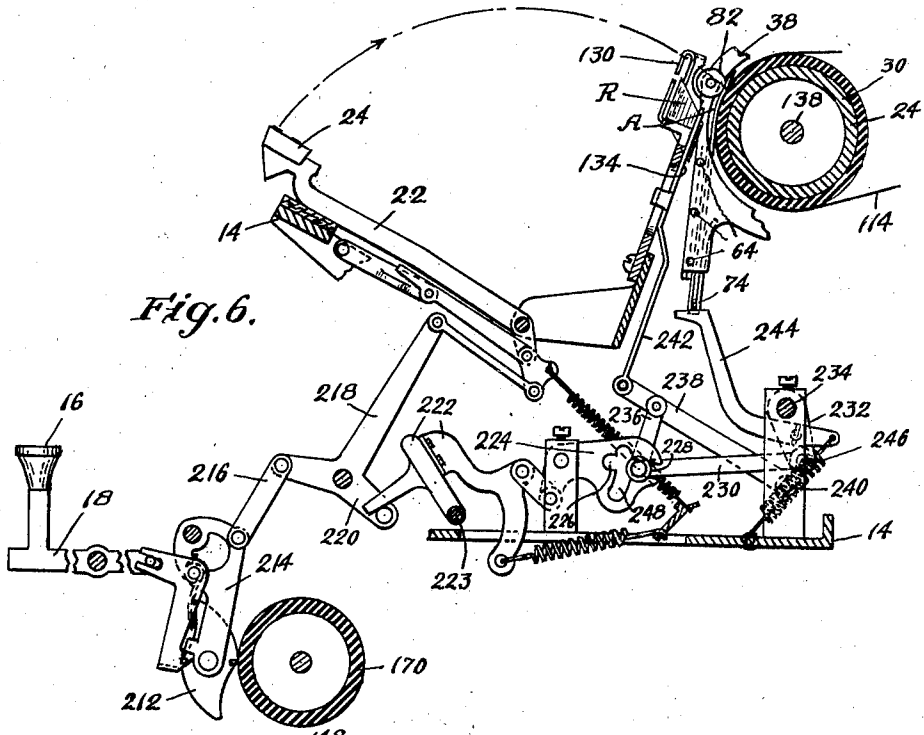


Fig. 6.

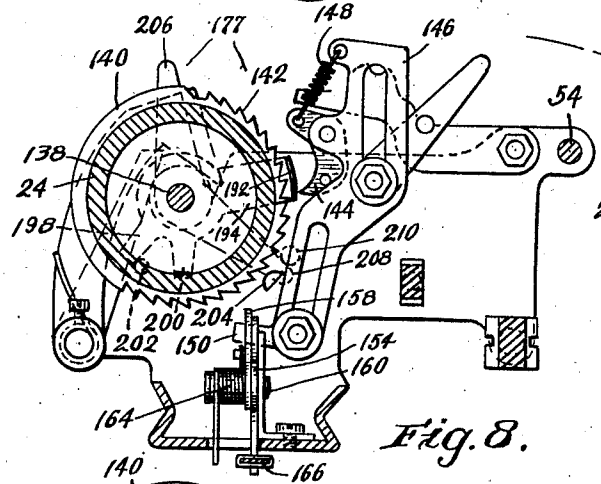


Fig. 8.

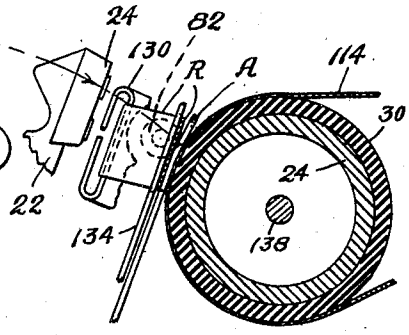


Fig. 7.

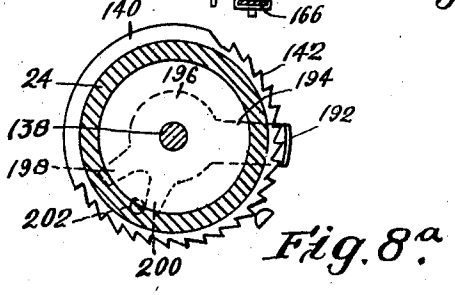


Fig. 8a.

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APPARATUS FOR FORMING CHARACTERS ON STENCILS

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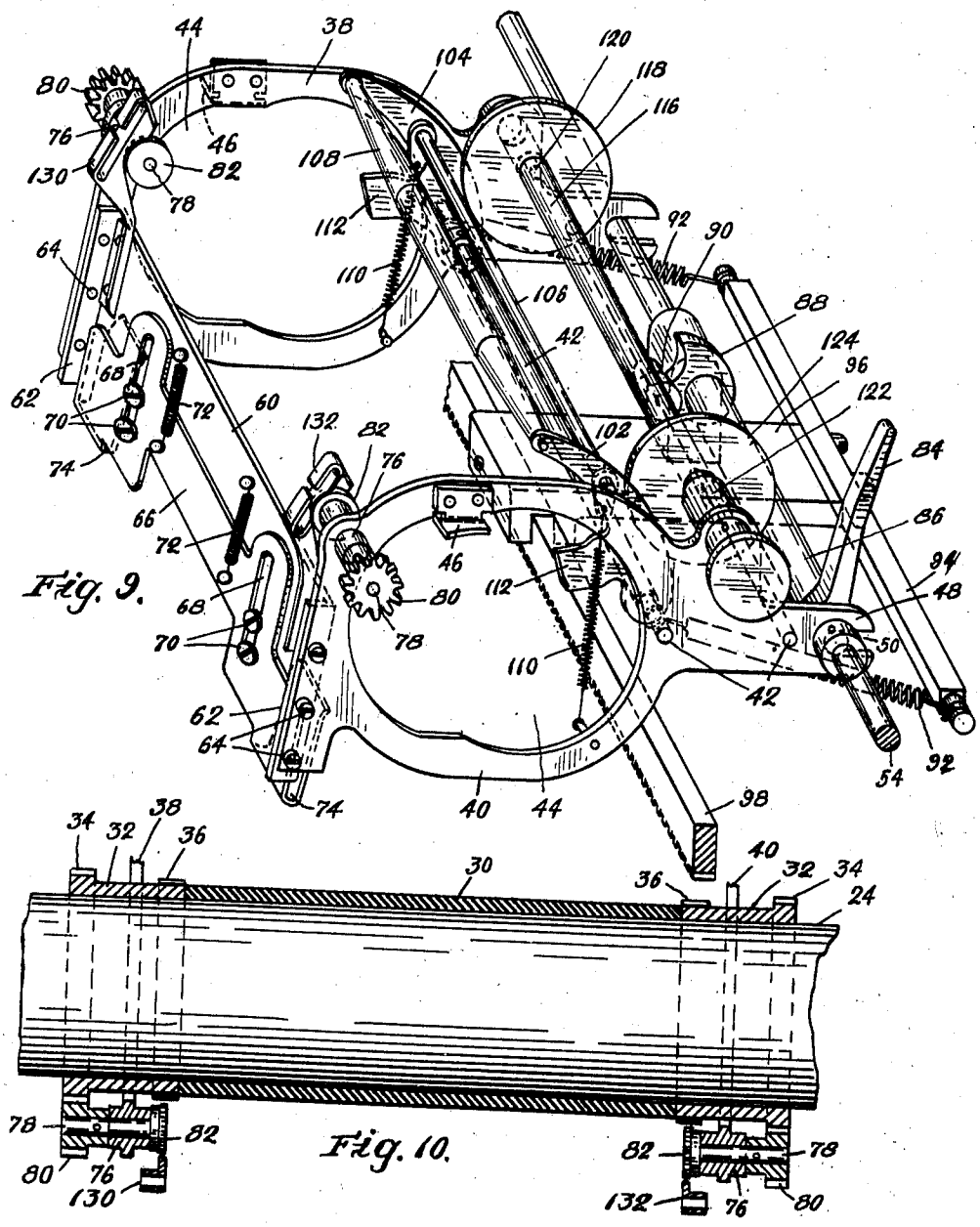


Fig. 9.

Fig. 10.

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APPARATUS FOR FORMING CHARACTERS ON STENCILS

Filed Feb. 12, 1943 5 Sheets-Sheet 5

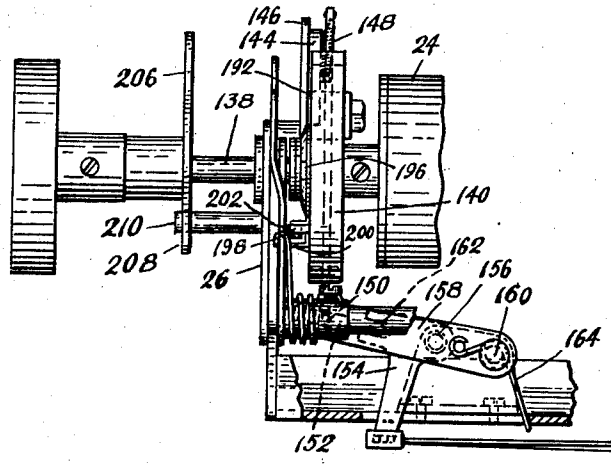
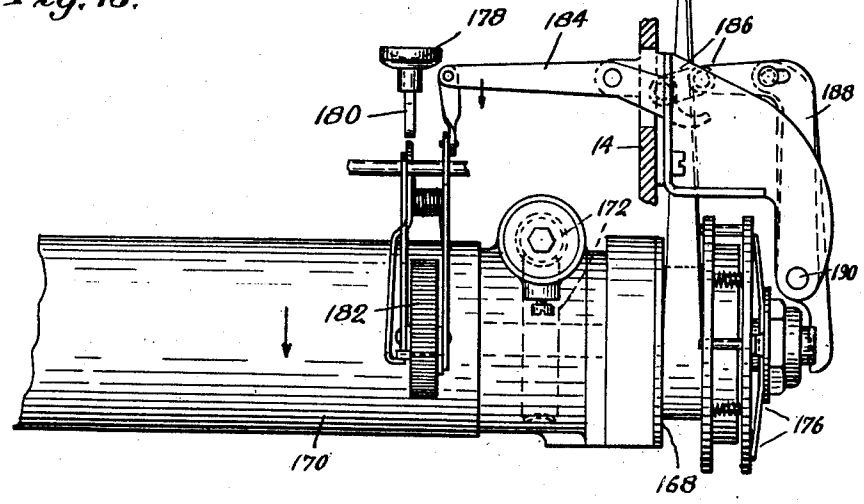


Fig. 13.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,345,557

APPARATUS FOR FORMING CHARACTERS ON STENCILS

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Application February 12, 1943, Serial No. 475,635

7 Claims. (Cl. 197—135)

This invention relates to apparatus for forming printing characters on stencils and particularly stencils that are used in addressing machines.

One of the objects of the present invention is the provision of improved mechanism adapted to be associated with the usual mechanism of a typewriter for enabling the stencils to be cut or addressed with printing characters by the usual typewriter mechanism and particularly when the stencil is of such width that it can accommodate, for instance, as many as nine single spaced lines of characters on the stencil sheet thereof.

A further object of the invention is the provision of an improved form of mechanism associated with an ordinary typewriter mechanism for enabling such a wide stencil to be cut therein to the full useable extent of the width of its printing surface.

In cutting an address stencil it is desirable to typewrite the name of the addressee on the upper part of the frame of the stencil so that the name can be readily ascertained when the stencils are in a collection without removing a stencil partially or completely from the collection. To this end, it is necessary to have the typewriting ribbon in writing position, although for cutting the address in the stencil sheet of the stencil it is necessary to have the typewriter ribbon positioned away from the action of the type characters. Thus, another object of the invention is to provide mechanism for accomplishing this result.

An additional object of the invention is the provision of mechanism so arranged that when the stencil is in position to receive an impression of characters on the upper margin of the stencil the ribbon is in position to be interposed between the margin and the type characters to mark the characters on the margin and when the stencil is advanced to receive the first line of characters on the stnecil sheet the ribbon is disposed out of operative relation with the type characters and is maintained out of operative relation during the cutting of the characters in succeeding lines of the stencil.

It is desirable to provide a stop which defines the low position of the stencil for receiving the address characters on the upper frame portion of the stencil. Such a stop, however, at least with some typewriters, interferes with an action of the typewriter. Hence it is an object of the present invention to provide means whereby the stop is automatically moved out of its service position following the raising of the stencil to a position for receiving an impression of printing characters on its stencil sheet.

Another object of the invention is the provision of mechanism wherein the stencil is automatically advanced a predetermined plurality of line spaces between its position for receiving the typed address on the margin and its position for receiving the first line of impressions on the stencil sheet and is thereafter advanced automatically a lesser number of lines for the cutting of the successive lines of characters in the stencil sheet.

Another object is generally to improve upon the construction and operation of apparatus for forming characters in stencils.

Fig. 1 is a plan view of a typewriting machine having stencil cutting apparatus embodying the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a front elevation of the platen and stencil holding mechanism of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged sectional detail taken along line 3—3 of Fig. 1, illustrating the stencil holding mechanism in position to receive a stencil.

Fig. 4 is a view of the mechanism of Fig. 3 with the stencil in operative position therein and in the lowermost position to receive type characters on the upper margin thereof.

Fig. 5 is a sectional detail taken along line 5—5 of Fig. 2, illustrating particularly the arrangement of gears for positively advancing the stencil.

Fig. 6 is a sectional detail, diagrammatic in some respects, taken along line 6—6 of Fig. 1, and illustrating particularly the stencil operated mechanism for controlling the position of the typewriting ribbon.

Fig. 7 is an enlarged detail of the position of the stencil and ribbon of Fig. 6 at the time of receiving an impression of a type character on the upper margin of the stencil.

Fig. 8 is a sectional view taken along line 8—8 of Fig. 1, and illustrating the mechanism for automatically advancing the stencil.

Fig. 8a is a detail view of the shield of Fig. 8 and illustrating its position during the cutting of the printing characters on the stencil sheet.

Fig. 9 is a perspective detail of the stencil holding mechanism of Figs. 1 through 4.

Fig. 10 is an enlarged sectional detail of the platen taken along line 10—10 of Fig. 4.

Fig. 11 is a plan view of an address stencil adapted to be used in the apparatus of the present invention.

Fig. 12 is a section taken along line 12—12 of Fig. 11.

Fig. 13 is a view somewhat diagrammatic of the carriage return and platen advancing mechanism.

The stencil A for the cutting of the printing

characters in which the apparatus of the present invention was particularly designed, but to which it is not necessarily limited, comprises a rectangular frame *b* having a window *c* therein into which is projected a circumferentially continuous welt strip *d* to which within the window is attached a thin stencil sheet *e* adapted to receive the printing characters.

In accordance with the present invention the apparatus is arranged to provide a line *f* of legible type characters on the upper margin of the stencil frame *b* and a succession of lines of printing characters *g* on the stencil sheet *e*, the stencil herein illustrated being sufficiently wide to receive nine lines *g* of printing characters.

The apparatus is associated with the essential elements of a typewriter, the particular typewriter herein illustrated being of the electrically operated type. That is to say, the type bars are operated and the return of the carriage is effected through the operation of an electric motor under control of manually operated keys and the like.

The typewriter as herein illustrated comprises a frame 14 having the usual keys 16 and their bars 18, the usual collection of type characters or type blocks 20 at the ends of their levers 22 and the various parts required for a completely operative typewriter. The machine also has the cylindrical platen 24 mounted rotatably and removably in side plates 26 and 28 of a shiftable carriage.

In accordance with the present invention the platen is provided with a rubber or other resilient surface 30, see especially Fig. 10, for only a portion of its length sufficient to support the stencil against the action of the type characters. The present apparatus is so arranged that the platen together with the stencil holding apparatus can be removed from the machine and a regular platen having a resilient surface under its entire length substituted therefor to condition the machine for the usual typewriting duties.

The platen at the ends of the resilient surface 30 is provided with horizontally spaced rings 32 having at their remote ends a continuous line of gear teeth 34, the gear teeth being of considerable radial length. The rings at the confronting parts thereof are provided each with a continuous line of longitudinally cut teeth 36 adapted to engage the side margins of the stencil frame to grip it firmly and advance it with the platen.

The stencil is held removably in operative position in front of the platen by a frame consisting of two identical end plates 38 and 40, see especially Fig. 9, spaced apart by means which include a pair of spacer rods 42. The frame plates 38 and 40 are provided with apertures 44 through which the platen is extended and the plates overlie the rings 32 between the gear teeth 34 and the stencil driving teeth 36. Said frames have longitudinally spaced abutment members 46 fixed thereto which terminate close to and below the peripheries of the lines of gear teeth 36 of both rings to hold the frame against undue movement longitudinally of the platen.

Said plates are provided with rearwardly extended tails or projections 48 having slots 50 therein in which the usual bar 54 of the typewriter is extended loosely, said bar comprising one of the elements that ties together the end plates 26 and 28 of the platen carriage. The frame is held against longitudinal movement on said rod by collars 58, see especially Fig. 1.

The stencil is supported by said frame plates by means including a flat vertical front plate 60 disposed between said plates 38 and 40 in front of and mainly below the horizontal line of the platen and having forwardly directed ears 62 that overlie the confronting faces of the plates 38 and 40 and are secured thereto by screws 64. A vertically slidable stencil engaging plate 66 is carried by said plate 60 mainly on the outer face thereof and has near its opposite ends vertically elongated slots 68 through which vertically spaced screws 70 are passed, the screws being fixed to the plate 60 and retaining the plate 66 on the plate 60 while permitting vertical sliding movement of the plate 66 and defining the low position of the plate 66 and hence the stencil. Tensile springs 72 connected between the plates 66 and 60 maintain the plate 66 yieldingly in elevated position. The plate 66 at its lower ends has ears 74 that extend under the lower edge of the plate 60 and thence are bent upwardly but are spaced therefrom to provide channels in which the lower part of a stencil A is adapted to be received to rest upon the bottoms of said channels, as is illustrated in Figs. 3 and 4.

In the normal elevated position of the plate 66, the stencil is about in position to receive the first line of impressed characters on the stencil sheet. The plate, however, is designed to be moved downward as far as is permitted by the screws 70 against the pressure of the springs 72 when the stencil is first inserted in the channels not only to position the stencil to receive type characters on the margin but also to condition the ribbon mechanism for rendering such characters legible as will be explained hereinafter.

The frame plates 38 and 40 in the front part thereof are provided with aligned bearings 76 in which short shafts 78 are rotatable, each shaft having a pinion gear 80 that meshes with a platen gear 34 and a knurled or toothed roll or wheel 82 that is adapted to engage the outer face of the frame part of the stencil and cooperate with the underlying teeth 36 of the platen in positively gripping the stencil and advancing it concurrently with the platen. The provision of means to drive the rolls 82 positively with the platen permits a positive non-slipping advance of the stencil concurrently with the platen so that the lines of printing characters on the stencil are uniformly spaced apart. The gear teeth of the gears 80 are relatively long so that they are in constant engagement with the long platen gear teeth 34 notwithstanding the forward shifting of the frame to open the space between the wheels 80 and the driving teeth 36 of the platen to permit ready entrance and removal of the stencils therebetween.

Said frame is shifted longitudinally by a cam mechanism including an upwardly projecting arm or handle 84 which is fixed to a hub 86 journalled loosely on the aforesaid shaft 54 and having at the end opposite the arm 84 a cam segment 88 cooperating with a cam roller 90 on the rearmost frame-plate spacing rod 42. The cam 88 has such shape that when the handle 84 is moved forwardly the frame including the plates 38, 40 and parts carried thereby is advanced forwardly and is also held in such position. Movement of the handle 84 in the rearward direction permits the frame to move rearwardly. The rearward movement of the frame is accomplished by tensile springs 92 the rear ends of which are secured to a cross bar 94 secured to a bracket 96 that extends rearwardly from and is secured to the usual rack bar 98 of the typewriter carriage.

The forward ends of the springs are connected to an inner frame spacing rod 42.

Between the plates 38 and 40 is positioned a paper hold-down frame comprised of a pair of plates 102, 104 journalled on said inner rod 42 and upstanding thereabove and over the rear part of the platen and held in spaced relation by means including the rod 106. A hold-down roller 108 is positioned between and is loosely journalled in the upper ends of said plates and when permitted presses upon the platen. Said plates 102, 104 are normally urged toward the platen by tensile springs 110 connected at their upper ends to said plates and to the lower ends to the lower part of the plates 38, 40. Said plates 102, 104, intermediate their ends, have forwardly projecting ears 112 that when the machine is in use clear the platen but when the stencil holding frame including the plates 38, 40 is moved forwardly said ears engage the platen rings 32 and serve to raise the roller 108 off the platen. Said roller 108 serves to keep down onto the platen a blanket sheet 114, or it may be a carbon sheet, that is adapted to be passed around the platen and lie between it and the stencil to protect the platen from the cutting action of the type characters. Said blanket sheet can be a sheet having a carbon deposit on that face thereof opposing the stencil so that the carbon deposit collects in the characters cut in the stencil sheet and thereby makes these characters readily visible to the eye.

Said sheet 114 is contained on a roll comprising a hub 116 having a flange 118 fixed thereto at one end and at that end being journalled on a pin 120 carried by the frame plate 38. Said hub at the other end is journalled in a spring-urged axially-slidable pin 122 journalled in the other frame 40 and carrying a flange 124. The pin 122 can be withdrawn axially from the hub 116 to allow the hub to be removed from the frame and the paper roll thereon removed from the hub. The paper sheet is gripped between the platen and the idler pressure roll 108 and is advanced by the advance of the platen.

The typewriter ribbon R passes through the usual guides 126 and 128 at the sides of the machine and in addition passes through guides 130, 132 carried by the front plate 60 of the stencil holding frame and disposed approximately in radial line with the line including the stencil driving wheels 82 and the platen so that when the ribbon extends in a straight line between the guides it is interposed between the type characters and the stencil and so deposits ink on the stencil where struck by a type character. The ribbon is thus positioned, at the time of the type blow, in front of the top part, or margin of the stencil or on the line *f*, Fig. 11, but is held down below the striking position for cutting the type characters in the lines *g* of the stencil. The dispositions of the parts is such that the characters impressed through the ribbon upon the frame of the stencil are capitals.

The ribbon between the guides 130, 132 passes through the usual vertically shiftable ribbon guide 134, Figs. 1 and 6, of the typewriting machine. The manner in which this guide is controlled will be explained hereinafter.

The platen is advanced or rotated line by line by mechanism illustrated particularly in Figs. 1 and 8. The shaft 138 of the platen at the left hand end thereof is provided with a disc 140 formed in part with a series of ratchet teeth 142, the distance between the consecutive teeth representing one line of type characters. The usual tooth engaging pawl 144 is pivoted on a vertically reciprocating plate 146 of the carriage, the pawl being engaged by a tensile spring 148 which urges it yieldingly into engagement with the teeth. Said plate 146 at its lower end has a projection 150, see Figs. 8 and 13, which is positioned in a slot 152 of a bell crank lever 154 pivoted at 156 to a lever 158 pivoted at 160 to the frame of the carriage, the bell crank lever 154 having a pin and slot connection 162 which said lever 158 and the lever 158 having a spring 164 which normally urges said lever and also said pawl carrying plate 146 for upward movement. Depression of said bell crank lever 154 causes the pawl to be moved downwardly and ultimately to engage a ratchet tooth. It also effects retraction of the platen carriage in a common manner.

Movement of the bell crank lever is accomplished through a cable 166 connected to the lower arm of the bell crank lever and to a drum 168 normally loose on the continuously rotating power-driven mechanism-actuating resilient-faced roll 170 disposed crosswise of the machine in the lower part thereof. Said roll is driven through a worm and gear 172 by an electric motor indicated generally at 174, Fig. 1. The drum 168 has a clutch connection 176 with said roll. Said clutch connection when actuated to connect the drum 168 with the roll 170 for conjoint rotation therewith serves not only to effect the return movement of the carriage to its start position but also serves to effect a line advance of the platen. The clutch connection is controlled by the carriage return button 178. The bar 180 thereof causes the knurled faced driving cam 182 associated therewith to engage the driving roll 170 and effect movement of the lever 184 associated therewith. Said lever has a toggle connection 186 with a second lever 188 pivoted to the frame at 190 which operates or sets the clutch connection 176 to cause the drum 168 to rotate concurrently with the roll 170. This mechanism is old in the art and need not be explained further.

Since the plate 146 and the pawl 144 have a constant stroke so far as the present invention is concerned, although the typewriter per se has mechanism 177 to give said plate and pawl different lengths of strokes, and during the initial movement of the platen to shift the stencil from margin writing to the first line of stencil cutting the platen has to advance more line spaces than the distance between individual cutting spaces, a shield 192 is provided to control and at proper times to change the number of lines of advance of the stencil. Said shield plate 192 overlies the ratchet teeth 142 and at times is positioned between certain of the ratchet teeth and the pawl 144. The shield 192 is carried by an arm 194 terminating in a circular hub 196 disposed on the platen shaft 138 and having a friction clutch engagement therewith so that it can rotate with the platen and yet when it is held against rotation permits free rotation of the platen. The hub 196 has a pair of angularly spaced arms 198, 200 disposed on opposite sides of a stop pin 202 carried by the carriage frame plate 26, the angular space between the plates determining the number of line spaces between the line of typed characters on the frame and the first line of printing characters on the stencil sheet. Thus when the platen is rotated backwardly or in a counter-clockwise direction, Fig. 8, the shield rotates with the platen until the arm 198 strikes the pin 202 whereupon the platen

can continue to rotate but the shield becomes stationary. When the platen is rotated forwardly the shield plate can rotate therewith until the arm 200 engages the pin 202 whereupon the shield is held stationary and remains in its stopped position regardless of the successive advance movements of the platen. The arrangement of the shield is such that as the pawl moves downwardly after the line of characters has been typed on the frame of the stencil and the shield thus is in its uppermost or retracted position the pawl rides off the shield and engages the first underlying tooth 142 and rotates the platen until the pawl engages the underlying stop pin 204 carried by the carriage frame plate 26. For the particular mechanism herein illustrated this movement is a three line advance of the platen and stencil. During the advancing movement of the platen the shield moves with it until the arm 200 strikes the pin 202 or reaches the position illustrated in Fig. 8a. On the next down stroke of the pawl to shift the stencil from the first line of stencil cutting to the second line, the shield remains in the illustrated position so that the pawl cannot engage a ratchet tooth until its drops below the lower edge of the advanced shield. The distance between the lower edge of the shield and the pin 202 is such that but a one line advance of the platen is permitted. When the platen is rotated in the opposite direction to condition the machine for operation on a second stencil the shield is restored to its initial position. The extreme range of angular shift of the platen is limited by a pair of angularly related arms 206, 208 fixed to the platen shaft 138 and adapted alternately to engage a fixed pin 210 located between said arms and carried by the frame plate 26.

The ribbon R is moved up into writing position immediately prior to each stroke of a type bar and then is lowered as is common practice. In the present machine this is effected in the following manner: A key bar 18 controls the unlatching of a driving cam 212, see Fig. 6. When unlatched this cam moves into contact with and is rotated by the driving roll 170 which swings the link 214 carrying the cam in a clockwise direction. This action through a link 216 swings a double bell crank lever 218 in a counterclockwise direction. The movement of said lever effects an operating stroke of a type bar 22. The bell crank lever 218 has an arm 220 provided with a loose connection with a ribbon reciprocating bar or frame 222 pivoted at its lower end at 223 and above its pivot having a connection with a pivoted ribbon reciprocating plate 224 provided with a generally horizontal slot 226. A roller 228 is located in the slot and is carried by an arm 230, the rear end of which is pivotally connected to an arm 232 fixed to a shaft 234 that in its oscillations is adapted to operate the ribbon feeding mechanism not herein illustrated. The roller 228 is also connected by a link 236 to an arm 238 pivoted at 240 and having at its free end a connection 242 with a reciprocating ribbon carrier 134. The arrangement is such that when the slotted plate 224 reciprocates the ribbon carrier 134 is also caused to reciprocate.

As hereinbefore stated, the ribbon is adapted to be disposed in operative position only when typing the first name of the address on the upper frame part of the stencil and is located in an out-of-use position while cutting the address and other printing characters in the stencil sheet of the stencil. To this end a bar 244 is fixed to the arm 232 of the shaft 234 and extends upwardly into a position under the stencil holder and high enough to be engaged and depressed by the plate 66, or by the lower edge of the stencil, when the stencil is pushed down into the holder to elongate the springs 72, Figs. 2, 3, 4. The bar 244 is held by the stencil in depressed position so long as the stencil remains in its lowermost position, which will be until the platen is advanced to cut the first line of printing characters in the stencil sheet.

The depressing of the bar 244 causes the roller 228 to move to the right, Fig. 6, into the horizontal part of the slot 226 in the plate 224 and thus the ribbon operates in the normal manner and is positioned between the stencil frame and each type character that moves against it. When, however, the platen is advanced to position the first line of the stencil sheet to receive the impact of the type characters the bar 244 is free to be moved upwardly, this movement being accomplished by the retractile spring 246. Such action causes the roller 228 to be moved forwardly into the mid portion of the plate 224 where the slot is vertically elongated, as at 248. In such position the plate 224 can oscillate in a vertical plane with each stroke of a type character but without raising the ribbon R into operating position.

In the operation of the device, the roll is first retracted until the arm 208, Fig. 8, engages the stop 210. The handle 84 is then moved forwardly to open up the space between the stencil gripping wheels 82 and the platen to allow the stencil to be inserted therebetween. The stencil is inserted as far as it will go and sufficient pressure is used to stretch the springs 72 and lower the plate 66 and depress the ribbon controlling bar 244, Fig. 6, to condition the mechanism to permit the ribbon to be used. The handle 84 is then restored to its rearward position to cause the stencil to be gripped firmly by the wheels 82 and the platen. The typewriter is then operated in the usual way to place a line of ribbon-inked type characters on the top margin of the stencil frame. The carriage is then returned to its original position by the depression of the carriage release button and the platen is caused to be advanced three lines, for the particular mechanism herein illustrated, to raise the stencil into position to receive the first line of printing characters. The raising of the stencil moves it away from control of the bar 244 which rises under urge of the spring 246 and the spring moves forwardly the roller 228 into the vertical portion 248 of the slot in the ribbon reciprocating plate 224, thereby preventing the ribbon from being raised into operative position during the cutting of the stencil. At the end of the cutting operation the handle 84 is again moved forwardly to release the stencil and permit it to be withdrawn from position and a new stencil inserted.

I claim:

1. In a machine for impressing characters on stencils, the combination with a platen and a collection of type characters, of a stencil holder including horizontally spaced frame plates traversing the platen, a front plate connecting the frame plates in front of the platen, a slidable stencil-engaging member on said front plate having means for engaging the lower part of the stencil, said member being constructed and arranged for downward movement by corresponding movement of the stencil, means limiting the

amount of downward movement, and means for raising said member following upward movement of the stencil.

2. In a machine for impressing characters on stencils, the combination with a platen, a carriage therefor having end plates, a bar connecting said end plates behind said platen, and a collection of type characters, of a stencil holder comprising a pair of horizontally spaced side plates traversing said platen, stencil engaging means carried by said plates in front of the platen, means for holding the stencil in driving engagement with the platen, said side plates having elongated openings therethrough through which said carriage bar is loosely extended and on which bar said side plates are supported, and means for reciprocating said side plates forwardly and rearwardly of said bar.

3. In a machine for impressing characters on stencils, the combination with a platen, a carriage therefor having end plates, a bar connecting said end plates behind said platen, and a collection of type characters, of a stencil holder comprising a pair of horizontally spaced side plates traversing said platen, stencil engaging means carried by said plates in front of the platen, means for holding the stencil in driving engagement with the platen, said side plates having elongated openings therethrough through which said carriage bar is loosely extended and on which bar said side plates are supported, spring means exerting pressure on said side plates in a direction tending to move them rearwardly, and cam means carried in part by said bar and coacting with a part of said holder operative to advance said holder forwardly against the action of said spring means to free the stencil from driving engagement with the platen.

4. In a machine for impressing characters on stencils, the combination with a platen, a carriage therefor having end plates, a bar connecting said end plates behind said platen, and a collection of type characters, of a stencil holder comprising a pair of horizontally spaced side plates traversing said platen, stencil engaging means carried by said plates in front of the platen, means for holding the stencil in driving engagement with the platen, said side plates having elongated openings therethrough through which said carriage bar is loosely extended and on which bar said side plates are supported, a paper spool carried by said side plates, a roller frame journalled on parts of said holder, a paper holding roller in said frame normally urged toward said platen, means for advancing said frame plates forwardly, and said roller frame having extensions positioned to abut the platen upon such forward position of the stencil holder frame to effect the raising of said paper roller above the platen.

5. In a machine for impressing characters on stencils, the combination with a platen and a collection of type characters, of a stencil holder having means for holding a stencil in front of the platen, said platen having gear teeth and stencil engaging teeth, said holder having a shaft provided with a pinion gear engaged and rotated by said gear teeth and having a toothed wheel confronting the stencil feeding teeth of the platen for engaging the stencil between it and said teeth.

6. In a machine for impressing characters on stencils, the combination with a platen and a collection of type characters, of a stencil holder having means for holding a stencil in front of the platen, said platen having gear teeth and stencil engaging teeth, said holder having a shaft provided with a pinion gear engaged and rotated by said gear teeth and having a toothed wheel confronting the stencil feeding teeth of the platen for engaging the stencil between it and said teeth, spring means urging said holder rearwardly of said stencil feeding wheel into pressure engagement with the stencil, and means for advancing said holder forwardly against the action of said spring means to free the stencil from the engagement of said driving wheel and teeth.

7. In a machine for impressing characters on stencils, the combination with a platen and a collection of type characters, of a stencil holder having means for holding a stencil in front of the platen, said platen having gear teeth and stencil engaging teeth, said holder having a shaft provided with a pinion gear engaged and rotated by said gear teeth and having a toothed wheel confronting the stencil feeding teeth of the platen for engaging the stencil between it and said teeth, spring means urging said holder rearwardly of said stencil feeding wheel into pressure engagement with the stencil, and means for advancing said holder forwardly against the action of said spring means to free the stencil from the engagement of said driving wheel and teeth, said platen gear teeth and pinion gear teeth being long to maintain their intermeshing relation in the forward stencil freeing position of the holder.

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