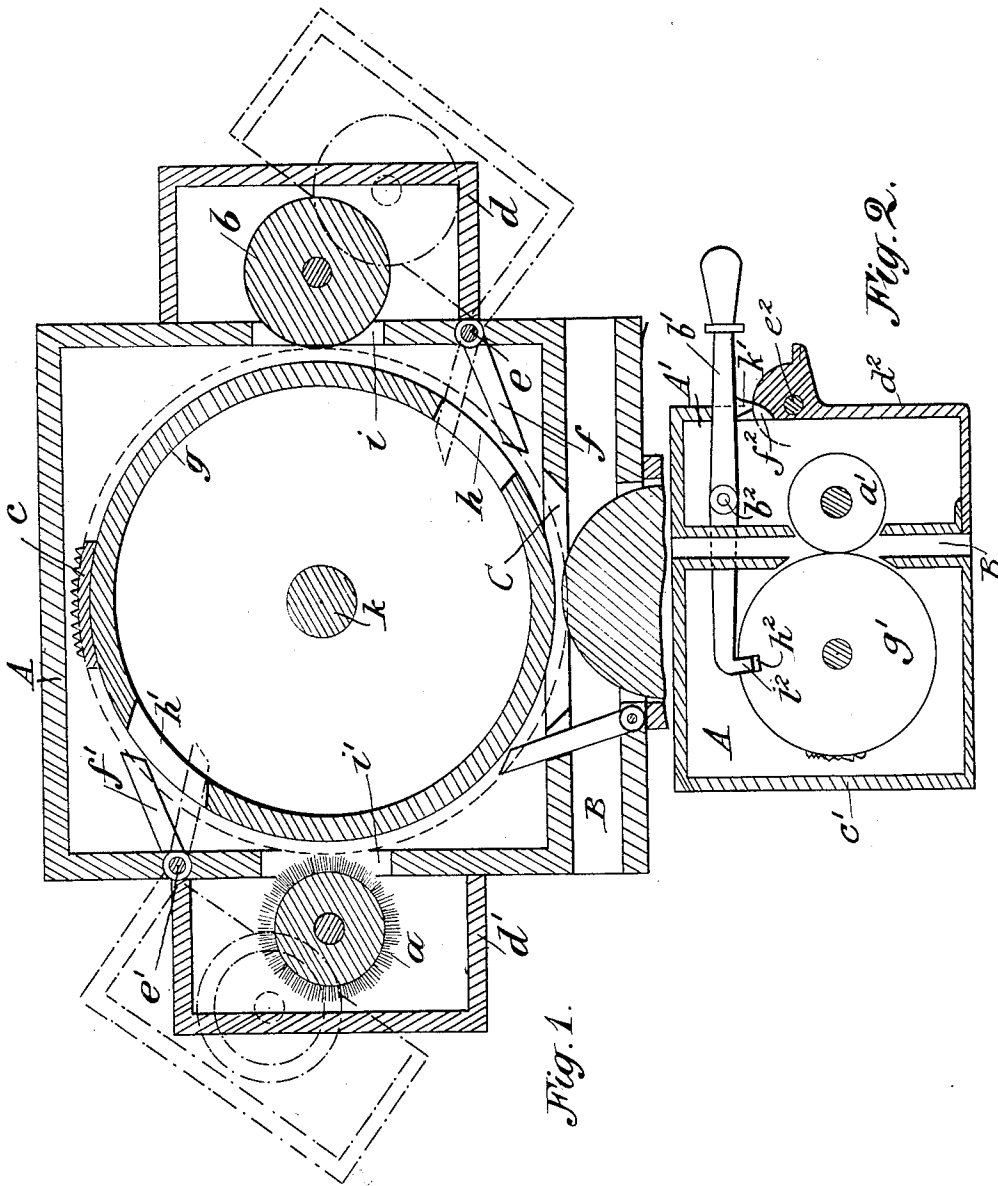


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 APPARATUS FOR PRINTING PREPAID POSTAGE.
 APPLICATION FILED JAN. 24, 1912.

1,114,893.

Patented Oct. 27, 1914.



Witnesses
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by

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JULIUS LERCHE, OF STEGLITZ, NEAR BERLIN, GERMANY, ASSIGNOR TO DEUTSCHE POST- UND EISENBAHN-VERKEHRSWESSEN AKTIENGESSELLSCHAFT (DAPAG-EFUBAG), OF STAAKEN, NEAR SPANDAU, GERMANY.

APPARATUS FOR PRINTING PREPAID POSTAGE.

1,114,893.

Specification of Letters Patent.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JULIUS LERCHE, Königlicher Baurat, a subject of the German Emperor, and residing at 14 Arndtstrasse, Steglitz, near Berlin, Prussia, Germany, have invented new and useful Improvements in Apparatus for Printing Prepaid Postage Having the Inking and Cleaning Devices Arranged Outside, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to a simple apparatus for printing stamps or other indications of postage on postal packages, and is designed to be used by those having large quantities of mail to send out: as by means of this apparatus the stamping of letters and packages is expedited and the slow tiresome task of applying gummed-stamps to mail matter avoided.

The invention comprises a tight casing containing a cylinder on which is a raised block for printing the stamps or other impression, capable of being rotated by hand or power. In one side of the casing adjacent the cylinder is a passage way through which the letters and packages to be marked are fed. Suitable counting mechanism is connected to the cylinder or the shaft for the purpose of registering the amount of matter stamped. Exterior of the casing containing the printing cylinder is an ink roller on one side and a rotary cleaning brush on the other, each carried in a housing hinged on the casing, the roller and brush each projecting through an opening in the casing to engage the stamping block. Means are provided to prevent the inking roller and cleaning brush being moved to uncover the printing cylinder except at such times as the stamping block on the printing cylinder is fully covered by the casing and at a distance from the openings therein through which openings said inking roller and brush project, thus preventing any one tampering with the block and printing therefrom without registering the impression.

In connection with the printing cylinder one or more counterpressure rollers may be employed and as these rollers run close to or in contact with the printing cylinder through an opening in the casing a housing must be provided for the counterpres-

sure rollers to prevent their removal while the stamping block is in position to be tampered with. Suitable locking means is also provided for the housing of the counterpressure rollers to permit its removal from the casing only when the stamp block has been turned away from the opening through which the counter-pressure rollers project.

To more clearly set forth the invention attention is directed to the accompanying drawings, in which,

Figure 1 is a cross-sectional view of the apparatus in its simplest form with the counterpressure rollers omitted. Fig. 2 is a similar view through a form of the apparatus showing one counterpressure roller, its housing, and locking means therefor differing from that shown in Fig. 1, the inking roller and cleaning brush being omitted.

In the drawing, A is a tight casing, at one side of which is a passage-way B extending through the casing through which letters and other postal packages to be stamped are passed. Between the interior of the casing and the passage way is an opening C to permit a stamping block on a revoluble cylinder *g* to project and print a stamp on the letter or package within the passage-way. The cylinder *g* is mounted on a shaft *h* which may be rotated by hand or power as desired.

On opposite sides of the casing A are housings *d, d'* hinged respectively at *e, e'* to the casing in such manner as to swing outwardly therefrom as indicated in dotted lines. Within one of the housings *d* is rotatably mounted an inking roller *b* projecting through an opening *i* in the casing in position to bear on the printing block *c* as the cylinder rotates, while in the other housing *d'* is pivotally mounted a cylindrical brush *a* which projects through an opening *i'* in the casing and which may be rotated for the purpose of cleaning the stamp block when the latter is brought around in suitable position. Extending inwardly toward the cylinder *g* from the pivots *e, e'* are fingers *f, f'* their free ends lying normally close to the periphery of said cylinder in position to enter slots *h, h'* formed therein, or in a flange on the cylinder, when said slots are, in the course of rotation of the cylinder brought

into register with the fingers. These slots h, h' are so positioned with relation to the stamp block c that they register therewith only when the stamp block is in position to project through the opening c for the purpose of printing or when in a diametrically opposite position as shown in the drawing. When in such position either the housing d or d' with its inking roller b or cleaning brush a may be swung away from the casing as shown in dotted lines for the purpose of reinking the roller b cleaning the same, or cleaning the brush a , such movement exposing the openings i, i' , through which, were the cylinder g permitted to rotate freely, the stamp block could be reached by moving the cylinder to bring said block opposite either of said openings, and any number of impressions taken therefrom upon letters or other postal packages without rotating the cylinder and consequently without counting or registering the impression. The parts, however, are so arranged that the moment either housing is swung away from the casing A , however slight, the respective fingers f, f' will enter the slots h, h' in the cylinder and lock the same in safe position against rotation, said cylinder remaining locked until the housings are closed tightly against the casing and the openings i, i' securely closed. Movement of the cylinder in either direction a short distance beyond the position of safety shown will carry the slots h, h' out of register with the fingers f, f' so that any attempt to swing the housings away from the casing and uncover the openings i, i' will be prevented by the fingers f, f' striking the nonslotted portion of the cylinder.

It is often desirable to use counterpressure rollers for holding the mail matter against the printing cylinder for which purpose a counterpressure roller a' is shown in Fig. 2 mounted within an extension A' of the casing A on the opposite side of the passage-way B into which passage-way the counterpressure roller extends into close proximity to the printing roller g' with its stamp block c' . The casing extension containing the counterpressure roller is closed to prevent said roller being removed and leaving the opening through which it projects uncovered and free for malicious persons tampering with the stamp block or taking unregistered impressions therefrom. It is often, however, desirable for various reasons to remove the counterpressure roller and for this purpose a housing d^2 is hinged at e^2 on the casing A' and interlocking means are provided to prevent said housing being opened when the stamp block is in position to be tampered with. This interlocking mechanism comprises a lever b' hinged to the casing extension A' at b^2 having on its inner end a finger i^2 adapted to enter a notch h^2 in the

printing cylinder g' , or a disk rotatable therewith when the stamp block c' is in a position of safety as shown in Fig. 2.

The outer end of the lever b' is provided with a handle while from one side projects a finger k' in position to abut against a stop f^2 on the housing d^2 when the finger i^2 is moved out of the slot h^2 in the printing roller. When in this position the printing roller may be turned indefinitely, the finger k' passing behind the stop f^2 holds the housing d^2 closely over the counterpressure roller a' . When, however, the lever b' is raised to throw the finger i^2 into the notch h^2 the other finger k' will be raised above the stop f^2 and the housing d^2 may then be swung outwardly on its pivot b^2 as is evident.

What I claim is:

1. An apparatus for printing prepaid postage stamps on packages comprising a closed casing having a passage-way on one side for the package to be stamped, a revoluble cylinder having a slot in its periphery and carrying a printing block, mounted within said casing, a housing hinged on said casing to swing away from the same, and a swinging arm adapted to enter said slot in the printing cylinder when the latter is in a predetermined position and lock the cylinder against rotation, the housing being free at said time to swing, said arm holding the housing immovable against said casing when said slot is in other than said predetermined position.
2. An apparatus for printing prepaid postage stamps on packages comprising a closed casing having a passage-way on one side for the package to be stamped, a revoluble printing cylinder within said casing, a housing hinged on said casing to swing away from the same and an arm projecting from the pivot of said housing toward said cylinder to interlock with the same and prevent rotation of the cylinder when the housing is free to swing and to lock said housing closed when the cylinder is free to rotate.
3. An apparatus for printing prepaid postage stamps on packages comprising a closed casing having a passage-way at one side for the package to be stamped and a small opening on another side, a revoluble printing cylinder within said casing provided with a peripheral printing block, a rotating member mounted in a housing hinged on the exterior of said casing to close over said small opening and project the member through the same into position to contact with said printing block as it rotates, and means carried by said housing to interlock with said cylinder and prevent rotation thereof when the housing is free to swing and to lock said housing closed when the cylinder is free to rotate.
4. An apparatus for printing prepaid postage stamps on packages comprising a

closed casing having a passageway on one side for the package to be stamped and openings through two other sides, a revoluble printing cylinder within said casing
5 provided with a peripheral printing block, an inking roller pivotally mounted in a housing hinged on the exterior of said casing to close over one of said openings and project the roller through the same into
10 position to contact with said printing block as it rotates, a cleaning brush also contained within a housing similarly hinged over the opposite side opening, a counter-pressure roller protected by a housing projecting into

the passage-way through which the postal 15 packages are fed, and interlocking means between the several housings and the printing cylinder to prevent rotation thereof when either of said housings is free to swing and to lock said housings closed when the 20 cylinder is free to rotate.

In testimony whereof I hereto affix my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

JULIUS LERCHE.

Witnesses:

HENRY HASPER,
WOLDEMAR HAUPT.