

Abstract

In a postage meter that has value wheels and date wheels, each value wheel is adjustable by a linkage that moves through a range of positions sufficient to select any of the ten print indicia thereof. Several of the linkages (enough for the date wheels that need setting) are able to move further (to what might be termed an "eleventh position"), beyond the positions for the ten indicia of the value wheels. When such a linkage moves to its eleventh position, it moves a pawl that ratchets a corresponding date wheel to its next position. The linkages may include rack elements that move along the axis of the print rotor. Each such rack element has a first rack that is engagable with a gear in the main body of the postage meter (when the rotor is in its "home" position) and a second rack that engages with a value wheel. The engagement between the rack element and the value wheel defines ten linear positions for the rack element, one for each of the digits printable by the value wheel. An eleventh position of the rack element causes the rack element to push a lever, and the lever causes the pawl to move a date wheel to its next position. A "closed loop" method of operation permits the postage meter, with the assistance of the user, to accomplish recovery from an incorrect date wheel position.

For each of several settable date wheels on a common axle, there is provided an advancing mechanism disposed to advance its corresponding date wheel by one or more positions.



Importantly, the several advancing mechanisms are disposed so that relative to the axle, one means advances its date wheel clockwise, the next counterclockwise, and so on in alternation. Since each advancing means not only serves to advance its corresponding date wheel in a predetermined

5 direction but also serves to block its corresponding date wheel from retrograde rotation, it is not possible for a wheel that is being advanced to drag along its neighbor.

This Sheet Has Been Replaced

