

2003029337

21 FEB 2003

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau(43) International Publication Date
2 May 2002 (02.05.2002)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/35199 A1(51) International Patent Classification⁷: G01M 3/40

(21) International Application Number: PCT/GB01/04702

(22) International Filing Date: 23 October 2001 (23.10.2001)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
0025956.4 24 October 2000 (24.10.2000) GB

(71) Applicant and

(72) Inventor: POWELL, David, John [GB/GB]; 82 Belmont
Street, Southport, Merseyside PR8 1JH (GB).(74) Agent: ROYSTONS; Tower Building, Water Street, Liv-
erpool L3 1BA (GB).(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU,
AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU,CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH,
GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC,
LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW,
MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI,
SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU,
ZA, ZW.(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM,
KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian
patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European
patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE,
IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF,
CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD,
TG).**Published:**

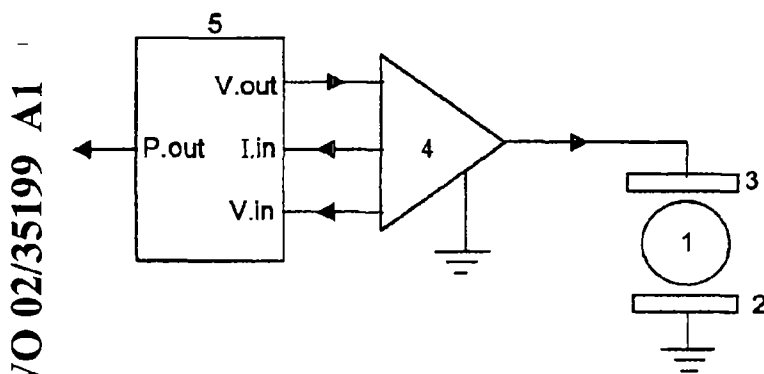
- with international search report
- before the expiration of the time limit for amending the
claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of
amendments

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guid-
ance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the begin-
ning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.



162162

(54) Title: IMPROVED METHOD OF MEASURING VACUUM PRESSURE IN SEALED VIALS



WO 02/35199 A1

The gas pressure within the vial or vessel is derived as a function of the electrode voltage at the point at which ionization terminates.

(57) Abstract: The present invention provides a fast and accurate method of measuring the vacuum pressure in a sealed glass vial or other electrically non-conductive vessel. In the method the vial or vessel to be tested is placed between a pair of electrodes. The gas contained within the vial or vessel is ionized by applying a high frequency, high voltage potential across the electrodes. The voltage is progressively decreased once ionization has occurred and the termination of ionization is detected by registering either the sudden drop in electrode current or the termination of light emission from the vial.



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