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An intragastric pH and motility monitoring and automatic titration system

Barry Foster Maycock

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AN INTRAGASTRIC pH AND MOTILITY MONITORING
AND AUTOMATIC TITRATION SYSTEM

BY

BARRY F. MAYCOCK

A

THESIS

submitted to the faculty of

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI AT ROLLA

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge of the effects of prolonged states of weightlessness on the physiological activities of gastric motility and acid secretion will aid in the planning of future space flights, since aberrations in these activities could affect the performance of astronauts. Investigation of these activities requires monitoring of the pressure and pH in the stomach and titration of the gastric contents. Since previous methods and equipment used for performing these functions are inadequate for this investigation, the equipment whose design and operation are discussed in this thesis was developed. This equipment includes an ingestible sensor capsule which is tethered in the stomach, a modulation unit which can modulate a transmitter to permit mobility of the subject, and an automatic titration unit.
PREFACE

The author wishes to express his gratitude to Dr. Malcolm Peterson and Dr. Rodolpho Guillen of the Gastroenterology Division of Washington University Medical School for their aid in obtaining the in vivo test results reported in this thesis.
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I. INTRODUCTION

This thesis describes electronic equipment designed by the author as an employee of the McDonnell Astronautics Company to support the gathering of clinical baseline data for a medical experiment conducted by Dr. Malcolm Peterson of Washington University in St. Louis. The experiment will be sponsored by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and is designed to investigate the effects of prolonged states of weightlessness on gastric motility and acid secretion. Knowledge of these effects will aid in the planning of space flights where an astronaut's performance might be compromised by aberrations in physiological activities. The investigation will be performed on a 10 to 14 day space flight by monitoring the pressure in the stomach as an indication of motility and by titrating gastric acid secretion. The latter requires monitoring the pH of gastric contents and introducing known amounts of a known alkaline solution into the stomach. The equipment described consists of an ingestible sensor capsule to measure the pH and pressure, a modulation unit to modulate a transmitter with the pH and pressure information, and an automatic titration unit.
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. INTRAGASTRIC PRESSURE MEASUREMENT

Early methods of measuring intragastric pressure usually consisted of systems utilizing catheters inserted through the esophagus with either a balloon on the end or an open end. The pressure was measured externally by optical, water, and Bourdon-tube manometers or by strain-gage transducers. The primary disadvantage of these techniques is that they render the patient immobile during the measuring period and in some cases require a stationary relationship between patient and equipment.

In 1957, two groups, one headed by J. T. Farrar and the other by R. S. Mackay and B. Jacobson, independently developed radio capsules which transmitted the stomach pressure from inside the stomach to an external receiver. Both groups used a bellows or diaphragm which was mechanically coupled to a ferrite core. As pressure fluctuations displaced the bellows, the core was moved in relation to a coil, producing a variable inductance which frequency modulated a transmitter. Mackay and Jacobson's capsule also transmitted temperature information by pulsing the frequency-modulated signal at a rate which was dependent on the temperature.

Similar capsules were developed by von Ardenne and Sprung in 1958, R. F. Russ and H. S. Wolff in 1960, Jacobson and Nordberg in 1961, and B. W. Watson, B. Ross, and A. W. Kay in 1962. All of the above capsules
suffered from either a short life, a short transmission range, or both. Life was usually limited to 1 or 2 days with a typical transmission range of 1 m. The necessity of a small battery was the limiting factor on both, although a life of longer than 1 or 2 days was not usually required since the capsule would pass through the gastrointestinal tract in the natural manner in that period of time. Jacobson and Nordberg did develop a capsule with a 90 day life, but its transmission range was only 15 to 30 cm. Farrar developed a passive capsule which received radiated energy at one frequency and reradiated it at another frequency which was dependent on the pressure. Both Farrar and Mackay tethered capsules in the stomach at the end of threads which extended through the esophagus and were anchored to a tooth. This allowed them to control the position of the capsule in the gastrointestinal tract and obtain measurements over long periods of time, restricted only by battery life. Mackay suggested the use of power lines in the tether giving an unlimited life, subject only to electrical and mechanical failure.

B. pH MEASUREMENT

1. Definition and Measurement of pH\(^{(9,10)}\) - The relative strength of an acid solution is a function of the hydrogen-ion concentration in the solution. This concentration, in gram equivalents per liter, can vary from 1 or greater for very strong acids, to 10\(^{-7}\) for neutral solutions. A neutral solution is one in which the hydrogen-ion
concentration is equal to the hydroxyl-ion concentration. In aqueous solutions, the product of the hydrogen-ion concentration and the hydroxyl-ion concentration is always equal to $10^{-14}$. Those solutions in which the hydroxyl-ion concentration is greater than the hydrogen-ion concentration are called basic or alkaline solutions. Basic solutions therefore have hydrogen-ion concentrations ranging from $10^{-7}$ to $10^{-14}$. The use of decimal notation to express hydrogen-ion concentration is rather inconvenient, so in 1909, Sorenson, a Danish biochemist, proposed the use of the pH scale. The pH of a solution is defined as the negative common logarithm of the hydrogen-ion concentration in that solution. This system results in a scale of small positive numbers, ranging from 0 for strong acids to 7 for neutral solutions to 14 for strong bases.

Measurement of pH can be accomplished by several methods, the most familiar of which is probably the use of organic colorimeter indicators such as litmus paper. Since the utility of these methods is limited, particularly where continuous pH measurement of a changing solution is required, electrometric methods of pH determination have become quite popular. With electrometric methods two electrodes are immersed in the solution whose pH is to be measured, and the electric potential between these electrodes is monitored. One of the electrodes is a pH-sensitive electrode whose potential with respect to the solution is a function of pH. The other electrode is a reference electrode whose potential
with respect to the solution is constant.

The first pH-sensitive electrode was the hydrogen electrode whose potential is developed when pure hydrogen gas is bubbled around an inert metal. This electrode, while still used as the primary reference for the pH scale, has the disadvantages of complicated operation and a 15 to 45 minute stabilization period. Another pH electrode is the quinhydron electrode configuration in which an excess of solid quinhydrone is introduced into the solution to be measured and a platinum or gold electrode is used. This configuration establishes equilibrium in 1 to 5 minutes, has a limited pH range of 0 to 8, is sensitive to salt-ion concentrations, and has the inconvenient requirement of adding quinhydrone to the solution. A third pH electrode is the antimony electrode which has a rapid response to pH change and requires nothing but the electrode itself to be introduced into the solution. Its disadvantages are nonlinearity and lack of reversibility. The pH electrode most responsible for the popularity of electrometric pH measurement is the glass electrode. This electrode has a response on the order of hundreds of milliseconds, is least affected by oxidizing agents of the four electrodes, and is quite durable. Its disadvantages are its high electrical resistance and a nonlinearity at the extreme ends of the 0 to 14 pH scale.

Two types of reference electrodes commonly used are the calomel electrode and the silver-silver chloride (Ag/AgCl)
electrode. Both of these electrodes are immersed in a saturated potassium chloride (KCl) solution which in turn forms a liquid junction with the solution being measured. The Ag/AgCl electrode has the better stability of the two for temperatures greater than 80°C and as high as 100°C.

2. **Intragastric pH Measurement** - Before the advent of radio capsules, the pH of gastric contents was generally measured by one of two methods: gastric emptying by tube aspiration with external measurement of pH; and the use of glass electrodes designed for insertion through the esophagus and connected directly to a laboratory meter. The disadvantages of the first method, besides the obvious discomfort to the patient and the requirement to be prone, are the time delay in acquiring the measurement and the fact that the pH value obtained is merely an average value since considerable time is required to empty the stomach. The second method also restrains the patient considerably since the electrode requires a rather stiff shielded cable and connects to the laboratory meter.

In addition to developing one of the first pressure-sensitive radio capsules, Mackay and Jacobson also developed one of the first pH-sensitive capsules\(^2,6\). In this unit a plastic underwent mechanical changes with changes in pH. This mechanical change was coupled to a ferrite core whose motion relative to a coil frequency modulated a transmitter. The accuracy of this capsule was very poor.

In 1958, von Ardenne and Sprung developed a pH capsule
which used an antimony pH-sensitive electrode and an AgCl wire in sodium chloride (NaCl) solution for the reference electrode\(^2\). The potential developed across the electrodes modulated a transmitter. The capsule had a pH sensitivity which was of the same order of magnitude as its temperature drift and suffered from the defective response which is inherent in the antimony electrode.

In 1960, Russ and Wolff developed the first capsule utilizing the highly accurate glass pH electrode which had previously been shunned because of its high impedance\(^2,7\). The reference electrode was an Ag/AgCl electrode in contact with KCl crystals which were separated from the solution by a porous plug. This capsule suffered from drift with bias voltage and was limited to a life of 5 days by the battery.

During the early 1960's, H. G. Noller developed a capsule which was unique in that instead of using the standard commercial battery, electrical energy was obtained from a cell consisting of a magnesium electrode and an AgCl electrode in NaCl solution\(^2\). Since the cell compartment was in contact with the solution being measured through a semipermeable membrane, the AgCl cell electrode also served as the reference electrode for pH measurement. Unfortunately, the cell was capable of providing only 2.5 hours of operation and antimony was employed as the pH-sensitive electrode.

A passive pH capsule which utilized an external radio-frequency energy source similar to Farrar's passive pressure
capsule was developed by J. Nagumo et al. in 1962\(^{(2,11)}\).
The capsule had an antimony and Ag/AgCl with KCl electrode combination and suffered from the usual antimony problems. A thread tether was used to fix the position of the capsule in the gastrointestinal tract.

In 1964, Y. B. Babskiy reported a capsule which used an antimony pH electrode and a reference electrode consisting of an AgCl cup containing a solution of NaCl and AgCl\(^{(12)}\). The capsule was tethered on the end of a catheter which, in addition to fixing the position of the capsule, allowed removal of gastric juice to compare capsule readings with those given by a standard laboratory meter.

Perhaps the best capsule with regard to stability and accuracy was reported by K. Kitagawa et al. in 1966\(^{(13)}\). This capsule used a glass pH electrode and an Ag/AgCl reference electrode. Stability was reported to be \(\pm 0.1\) pH over a 30 day period when operating in buffer solutions. The capsule probably did not operate on one battery for this period, since its current drain (250\(\mu\)A) and the battery employed (Mallory RM312, 36 mAh capacity) indicate a 6 day life. The current drain also indicates a very short transmission range. A stainless steel basket cover was used over the electrode to prevent electrode contact with mucosa which would result in erratic readings as noted by Bircher et al.\(^{(14)}\).

C. INTRAGASTRIC TITRATION

The classical method of titrating gastric contents in order to determine the acidity involves emptying of the
stomach by tube aspiration and titrating the contents in the laboratory. Either a colorimeter indicator or a pH meter is used to indicate the end point or neutralization of the titration. The acid concentration is usually expressed in milliequivalents per liter or the number of ml of 0.1 N sodium hydroxide (NaOH) required to neutralize 100 ml of gastric juice. This is equivalent to the number of ml of 0.1 N hydrochloric acid (HCl) present in 100 ml of the gastric juice\(^{15}\).

In 1960, Noller\(^{16}\) began using a pH-sensitive radio capsule to indicate the end point of titrations performed on gastric juice in the stomach. His titration method involved introducing a known volume of sodium bicarbonate (NaHCO\(_3\)) into the stomach, causing the pH to reach alkaline levels, and then noting the time required for the stomach to return to its original acidic pH. This time was called the alkali-test time and was a measure of the gastric acidity.

In 1964, A. M. Connell and T. E. Waters\(^{14}\) performed titrations similar to those of Noller's, with the exception of using smaller amounts of alkaline solution and substituting potassium bicarbonate (KHCO\(_3\)) as the alkaline solution. The use of smaller amounts reduced the test time and therefore reduced the effect of emptying of the stomach into the intestine. The use of KHCO\(_3\) tended to inhibit this emptying rate.
III. EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The primary requirements of the equipment are to monitor the pressure in the stomach, to monitor the pH of the gastric contents, to modulate a transmitter with the above information, and to automatically titrate the stomach acid. The pressure fluctuations from which motility is to be inferred, vary in the range from 0 to 100 mmHg at rates up to 5 c/min. Since only the rate of these fluctuations is of interest, no accuracy of measurement of the actual pressure is required. The pH range to be monitored is 1 to 10 with an accuracy goal of ±0.1 pH unit. The automatic titration system must be capable of injecting an alkaline solution into the stomach when the pH falls below a given value, and discontinuing the injection when the alkaline solution causes the pH to rise above another given value. Since the limits within which the pH must be maintained will be determined during the clinical studies, the limits must be adjustable. The equipment must be capable of operating for 14 days.
IV. EQUIPMENT DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS

A. SYSTEM APPROACH

The system can be divided into three pieces of equipment: the sensor capsule, the transmitter modulation unit, and the automatic titration unit. The pH and pressure in the stomach are monitored by the sensor capsule which is tethered in the stomach. Signals from the sensor capsule representing pH and pressure are used by the modulation unit to control respectively the pulse rate and width of a pulse train which modulates a transmitter. The pH information from the modulation unit is sensed by the titration unit and controls a constant-speed pump. When the pH drops to a low pH level, the pump is activated and begins pumping a known alkaline solution into the stomach. When the pH reaches a high level, the pump is deactivated, allowing the gastric acid secretion to drive the pH level low again, causing the cycle to repeat.

B. SENSOR CAPSULE

The sensor capsule contains a pH-sensitive glass electrode, an Ag/AgCl with KCl reference electrode, a pH preamplifier, and a pressure-sensitive transducer. The capsule is restrained in the stomach for 14 days by a tether consisting of three tubes. One contains the wires which provide power to the capsule electronics and transmit the pH and pressure signals to the modulation unit. Another tube is used for pumping the alkaline solution into the stomach. The third tube is used to periodically flush air or water.
around the glass electrode in order to prevent clogging of
the basket by solids in the gastric contents which would
inhibit measurement. The capsule has a teflon shell,
2.6 cm long and 0.8 cm in diameter, with a basket guard at
one end which prevents the glass electrode from contacting
mucosa and providing erratic measurement.

Of the four pH-sensitive electrodes discussed previ­
ously, the glass electrode is the logical choice. The
hydrogen and quinhydrone electrodes are both impractical,
requiring the introduction of hydrogen and quinhydrone
respectively into the stomach. The antimony suffers from
nonlinearity and lack of repeatability. A commercially
available glass electrode, the Beckman Model 39042, is
used after its stem has been shortened to reduce its size.

The Ag/AgCl reference electrode is preferred over the
calomel electrode because of its simpler construction,
using an Ag/AgCl wire rather than a calomel paste in con-
junction with the KCl liquid junction. Construction of the
electrode consists of filling a small glass tube with KCl
crystals, sealing the Ag/AgCl wire in one end, and sealing
a piece of fine porosity glass frit into the other end. The
glass frit allows the KCl crystals to absorb liquid, pro-
viding the liquid junction, and also reduces the diffusion
rate of the KCl crystals into the solution being measured,
resulting in long life.

Because the output impedance of the electrode pair is
several hundred megohms, a preamplifier must be located in
the capsule to reduce noise problems. The preamplifier
uses a field-effect transistor (FET) with a resistor be-
tween source and ground. When the pH electrode pair po-
tential is applied between gate and ground, the amplifier
acts as a pH-controlled current source, where the FET drain
current is given by:

\[ I(\text{pH}) = I_o - \frac{g_m R_s}{(1 + g_m R_s)} \cdot \frac{\Delta V_{\text{pH}}(\text{pH})}{R_s} \quad (1) \]

where:

- \( I_o \) is the drain current at 0 pH and is a function of
  the FET pinch-off voltage
- \( g_m \) is the FET forward transconductance
- \( R_s \) is the source resistor
- \( \text{pH} \) is the solution pH
- \( \Delta V_{\text{pH}} \) is the change in voltage of the electrode pair
  per pH unit

Typical values are:

- \( I_o = 4.55 \mu \text{A} \)
- \( g_m = 100 \mu \text{mho} \)
- \( R_s = 360 \text{ k}\Omega \)
- \( \Delta V_{\text{pH}} = 0.059 \text{ V/pH unit} \)

Substitution of the above values into equation (1) yields:

\[ I(\text{pH}) = 4.55 - 0.16(\text{pH}) \mu \text{A} \quad (2) \]

The pressure transducer, a Pitran Model PT-1 manufac-
tured by Stow Laboratories, is a low-gain transistor modified
to exhibit change in current gain with change in pressure.
The modification consists of replacing the top of the
transistor can with a flexible diaphragm and connecting a pin between the diaphragm and the transistor base-emitter junction. Displacement in the diaphragm due to pressure change is coupled through the pin to the base-emitter junction, where the resulting stress causes a change in the current gain.

C. MODULATION UNIT

The modulation circuitry is shown in Figure 1. Transistors Q₁, Q₂, Q₃, resistors R₁, R₂, R₃, and capacitor C₁ form a relaxation oscillator whose frequency is a function of I(pH). Operation is as follows. Initially C₁ is discharged and R₁ has a voltage across it as determined by the constant-current source formed by Q₃ and R₃. Q₁ and therefore Q₂ are cutoff, allowing I(pH) to charge C₁ until the voltage across C₁ is large enough to forward bias the base-emitter junction of Q₁ causing it to conduct. The collector current of Q₁ drives Q₂ which in turn provides additional drive to Q₁, resulting in a regenerative action which discharges C₁ until the collector current of Q₂ becomes less than the current of the current source. The current source then begins to draw more current through R₁, cutting off Q₁ and Q₂. The process is repeated at a frequency given by:

\[ f(pH) = \frac{I(pH)}{C_1 \Delta V_{C_1}} \]  

where \( \Delta V_{C_1} \) is the change in voltage across \( C_1 \) during a cycle and is:

\[ \Delta V_{C_1} = I_1 R_1 + V_{BE1} - (V_{CE2} + V_{BE1}) = I_1 R_1 - V_{CE1} \]
FIGURE 1 - SENSOR CAPSULE AND MODULATION UNIT
where $V_{BEX}$ and $V_{CEX}$ are the base-to-emitter and collector-to-emitter voltages respectively of $Q_x$. Substitution of typical values yields:

$$f(pH) = 2.28 - 0.08(pH) \text{ kHz}$$  \hspace{1cm} (5)

The output of the relaxation oscillator is differentiated and gated to a monostable multivibrator consisting of $Q_6$, $Q_7$, $Q_8$, $Q_9$, $R_8$, $R_9$, $R_{10}$, $R_{11}$, $C_4$, and diode $D_7$. The multivibrator is a standard circuit with the exception of $Q_7$, $D_7$, $Q_8$, and $R_{10}$. $Q_7$ and $D_7$ provide a fast recovery time by recharging $C_4$ with an amplified current allowing a high duty cycle. $Q_8$ and $R_{10}$ provide a constant discharge rate to $C_3$ resulting in a pulse width which is independent of supply voltage variations and which is a linear function of $V_p$ as follows:

$$T(P) = \frac{C_3 \Delta V_{C3}}{I_3}$$ \hspace{1cm} (6)

where $T(P)$ is the pulse width and $\Delta V_{C3}$ is the change in voltage across $C_3$ each cycle as given by:

$$\Delta V_{C3} = (V_p - V_{BE7} - V_{BE9}) - (V_{CE6} + V_{D7} - V_{BE9})$$

$$= V_p - V_{BE7} - V_{CE6} - V_{D7}$$ \hspace{1cm} (7)

where $V_{D7}$ is the voltage across diode $D_7$ and $V_p$ is as shown in Figure 1. Substitution of typical values yields:

$$T(P) = 145V_p - 159 \mu s$$ \hspace{1cm} (8)

$V_p$ is determined by the voltage across $D_2$ and $D_3$ plus the voltage across $R_6$ as determined by the collector current of the pressure transducer. $D_2$ and $D_3$ are used for temperature compensation of $V_{BE7}$ and $V_{D7}$. $Q_4$ and $R_5$ form a current source which provides a constant base current to the pressure
transducer independent of supply voltage variations. \( Q_5, \)
\( R_7, D_4, D_5, \) and \( D_6 \) provide a regulated voltage to the
collector of the pressure transducer. This improves the
linearity of the collector current as a function of pres­
sure. If the collector voltage were allowed to vary with
\( V_p, \) the change in collector-to-emitter voltage divided by
the collector resistance would result in collector-current
variations not directly related to pressure variations.
These changes are significant with this transistor because
of its low current gain and operating current. Immunity
to bias voltage variations is also provided by this type of
biasing. A curve of collector current versus pressure is
shown in Figure 2. If this curve is expressed as:

\[
I(P) = 395 - 1.95P \quad \mu A
\]  

where \( P \) is the pressure in mmHg, the equation for \( V_p \) using
actual values is:

\[
V_p = 2.15 - 0.0047P \quad V
\]  

The final expression for pulse width as a function of pres­
sure is then:

\[
T(P) = 153 - 0.64P \quad \mu s
\]  

D. AUTOMATIC TITRATION UNIT

The automatic titration unit is shown in Figure 3 and
consists of a frequency-to-dc voltage converter, a Schmitt
trigger, a peristaltic pump, and a pump speed control loop.
The frequency-to-dc voltage converter linearly converts the
pH-dependent frequency to a dc voltage. The Schmitt trigger
senses the dc voltage representing pH and activates the pump
FIGURE 2 - PRESSURE CURRENT RESPONSE
FIGURE 3 - AUTOMATIC TITRATION UNIT
when the voltage indicates a predetermined upper pH level has been reached, and deactivates the pump when a predetermined lower pH value has been reached. Since the speed, and therefore the pumping rate, of the peristaltic pump is maintained constant by the speed control loop, only the time that the pump has operated must be known to specify the amount of alkaline solution that has been pumped into the stomach.

The frequency-to-dc voltage converter operates as follows. The incoming pulses are differentiated and gated to trigger a constant-pulse-width monostable multivibrator consisting of $Q_1$, $Q_2$, $Q_3$, and their associated components. $R_6$ and $C_3$ average the output of the monostable multivibrator and $Q_4$ acts as a buffer amplifier. The voltage at the emitter of $Q_4$ is:

$$V_2 = V_1 T_1 f(pH) - V_B E_4$$

(12)

where $V_1$ and $T_1$ are the amplitude and width respectively of the monostable multivibrator output pulses. Substitution of typical values yields:

$$V_2 = 1.73 f(pH) - 0.7 \quad V$$

(13)

In order to allow for experimentation with various combinations of upper and lower pH levels during clinical studies, a variable-hysteresis Schmitt trigger is used(17). Here $Q_7$ and $Q_8$ form an ordinary Schmitt trigger with upper and lower trigger levels of $V_U$ and $V_L$ respectively as seen at the base of $Q_7$. $Q_6$ acts as a buffer amplifier to prevent loading of the hysteresis control circuitry which
operates as follows. If $Q_8$ is cutoff, meaning that the circuit has received the upper trigger level most recently and is now awaiting the lower trigger level, $Q_5$ is saturated, $D_3$ is forward biased bringing $R_9$ into the circuit, and $D_4$ is back biased removing $R_{12}$ from the circuit. The lower trigger level as seen at the emitter of $Q_{14}$, $T_L'$, is changed as a result of the divider action of $R_8$ and $R_9$ and can be controlled by $R_9$ according to:

$$T_L' = \frac{R_8 + R_9}{R_9} T_L$$

(14)

if various transistor and diode voltages are neglected.

Similarly, when the Schmitt trigger is in the other state, $Q_8$ is saturated, $Q_5$ is cutoff, $D_3$ is back biased removing $R_9$ from the circuit, and $D_4$ is forward biased bringing $R_{12}$ into the circuit. The upper trigger level as seen at the emitter of $Q_4$, $T_U'$, is changed as a result of the divider action of $R_8$ and $R_{12}$ and can be controlled according to:

$$T_U' = \frac{R_8 + R_{12}}{R_{12}} T_U$$

(15)

if various transistor and diode voltages are neglected.

This technique allows independent adjustment of the upper and lower pH levels. $Q_9$, $Q_{10}$, and $Q_{16}$ activate or deactivate the pump, depending on the state of the Schmitt trigger.

The speed regulation of the pump is accomplished as follows. The pump motor is a permanent magnet motor to which a pick-up pole and winding have been added. Each time an armature pole passes the pick-up pole, a pulse is generated in the pick-up winding. These pulses are amplified by $Q_{11}$ and their frequency is converted to a dc voltage at
the emitter of $Q_{15}$ in a manner similar to the pH frequency-to-dc voltage conversion discussed above. The voltage at the emitter of $Q_{15}$ is related to the motor speed as:

$$V_S = 3V_3 T_3 S - V_{BE15}$$  \hspace{1cm} (16)

where $V_3$ and $T_3$ are the amplitude and width respectively of the monostable multivibrator pulses and $S$ is the speed of the motor. The factor 3 occurs because the armature has 3 poles, and therefore 3 pulses are produced for each revolution of the motor. $V_S$, and therefore the motor speed, are regulated as follows. $D_8$, $Q_{17}$, $R_{30}$, and $R_{32}$ constitute a constant-current source, the output of which can either be shunted to ground through $Q_{18}$ or provide drive to the motor through $Q_{19}$ and $Q_{20}$. If $V_S$ becomes smaller, indicating a reduction in speed, $Q_{18}$ shunts less current to ground, allowing more drive to the motor, and causing an increase in speed and $V_S$. If $V_S$ increases too much, indicating a high motor speed, $Q_{18}$ shunts more current to ground, decreasing the drive to the motor, and causing a reduction in speed and $V_S$. $D_7$ provides the reference for the regulator and determines the speed for a given setting of $R_{28}$. Adjustment of $R_{28}$ changes the speed to the desired pumping rate.
V. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

A. pH MEASUREMENT

Each sensor capsule has a different pH response, due primarily to differences in the pinch-off voltages of the individual FET's. The pinch-off voltage affects the 0 pH drain current, $I_0$. Other variables between various sensor capsules are the FET transconductance, $g_m$, and the source resistor, $R_s$. The former affects the variable term of $I(pH)$, while the latter affects both terms. Figure 4 is a plot of $I(pH)$ for the sensor capsule used in the in vivo tests discussed in the remainder of this section. The data for this curve was obtained from laboratory measurements using buffered pH solutions maintained at $37^\circ C$, the normal body temperature. The actual curve can be approximated by the linear curve:

$$I(pH) = 4.55 - 0.148(pH) \text{ \mu A}$$

(17)

The response becomes nonlinear in the alkaline region above pH 8; this was expected as noted earlier in this paper.

The response of $f(pH)$ is shown in Figure 5, using the same sensor capsule as above with the modulation unit, and again using buffered solutions maintained at $37^\circ C$. The curve can be approximated by:

$$f(pH) = 2.155 - 0.07(pH) \text{ kHz}$$

(18)

Again the same departure from linearity is noted in the alkaline region. The pH temperature coefficient of this capsule is 2.5 Hz/°C representing 0.036pH unit/°C. Long term drift data obtained from other capsules and breadboard
FIGURE 4 - pH CURRENT RESPONSE
FIGURE 5 - pH FREQUENCY RESPONSE
capsules indicate random drift over a 0.2pH range for periods up to several days, with some breadboard capsules demonstrating drift less than 0.1pH over a 2 week period.

The useful life of the capsule is limited by two items, the reference electrode and the encapsulating material. The reference electrode produces a constant potential only if the KCl solution contained in it remains saturated. When the capsule is placed in a solution to be measured, the KCl solution in the reference electrode becomes diluted as KCl diffuses into the solution being measured. The use of the glass frit has reduced this loss to the extent that reference electrodes of the size compatible with the sensor capsule have operated as long as 21 days with breadboard capsules.

The problem concerning encapsulating materials, which has not been completely solved, is one of moisture absorption. As the capsule soaks in a solution, moisture is absorbed by the encapsulating material, reducing its insulating effectiveness. Although the conductivities of the moisture leakage paths are quite low, the impedances associated with the pH measuring circuit are quite high, and deterioration of the capsule operation results. The moisture leakage problem manifests itself in two ways: leakage between the FET gate and source or the solution, and leakage between the FET drain and the solution. The first type reduces the effective $\Delta V_{pH}$ of equation (1) by loading the glass electrode. The second type produces a leakage path in parallel with the
pH-sensitive current source resulting in an apparent increase in $I_0$ of equation (1). The most promising encapsulating materials have been the silicone rubbers, of which several types have been tried. Lifetimes up to 28 days have been obtained with the silicone rubbers, but these results have by no means been repeatable. The use of the teflon capsule shell has improved the situation by reducing the surface area exposed to soaking. When the teflon shell is used, the capsule components are potted in a silicone rubber slug which is then coated with silicone grease and forced into the teflon shell. The grease inhibits the leakage of moisture between the teflon shell and the rubber slug.

B. PRESSURE MEASUREMENT

The response of the pressure transducer is shown in Figure 2. When the sensor capsule is used in conjunction with the modulation unit, the pulse width as a function of pressure is as shown in Figure 6. The curve can be approximated by:

$$T(P) = 162 - 0.72P \quad \mu s$$

(19)

The nonlinearity of the actual response at high pressures is inherent in the pressure transducer. The temperature coefficient of the pressure response is $-8 \text{ mmHg/°C}$. The long term drift at constant temperature is within $5 \text{ mmHg}$.

The temperature coefficient could be improved to approximately $-1 \text{ mmHg/°C}$ by venting the inside of the pressure transducer to atmospheric pressure. It is presently sealed
FIGURE 6 - PRESSURE PULSE WIDTH RESPONSE
at atmospheric pressure and an increase in temperature results in air expansion, which appears as a decrease in external pressure. The venting could be accomplished via the tether, although it might introduce an additional leak-age problem. The improved accuracy may not be necessary, since only the detection of the presence of motility waves at a rate of 3 c/min is desired and temperature fluctuations will probably not occur at this rate.

In vivo tests thus far have been disappointing with respect to motility detection. Pressure fluctuations of 5 to 10 mmHg due to respiration, 40 to 50 mmHg due to coughing, and up to 100 mmHg due to bearing down as in a bowel movement are readily observed. However, no fluctuations which might be attributed to motility have been observed. This problem is not without precedent. Farrar(3), Connell(18,19), and Wolff(20) have reported monitoring pressure fluctuations as large as 80 mmHg attributed to motility with the use of radio capsules. However, Connell discovered that the pressure fluctuations he monitored were actually changes in signal strength from the radio capsule which were caused by a unidirectional antenna and movements of the capsule due to motility. A. N. Smith and M. Ridgway(21) overcame the uni-directionality problem by the use of a multiple antenna array. Their findings indicate that pressure fluctuations due to motility are more likely to be observed in the pyloric section of the stomach than in the body of the stomach, possibly due to the narrowness of the pyloric section.
Studies by others (1, 22, 23) with open tip catheters and balloons have indicated that pressure fluctuations due to motility on the order of 20 mmHg might be expected in the pyloric section while little or no fluctuation may appear in the body of the stomach. These effects will be studied during the clinical baseline tests and are not of primary concern for the purposes of this thesis. Tests thus far have demonstrated that the technical aspects of the pressure channel operation are satisfactory.

C. AUTOMATIC TITRATION

Titration tests using the entire system in the laboratory and in vivo have indicated satisfactory performance of the automatic titration unit. Turn on and turn off levels for the pump are repeatable to within 0.1 pH unit. A plot of a laboratory titration is shown in Figure 7. In this titration 0.1 N NaOH was titrated against 0.1 N HCl, with the upper and lower pH levels set at 6.8 pH and 2.4 pH respectively.

The results of an in vivo titration are presented in Figure 8. Here the alkaline solution used was 1 M NaHCO₃ and the upper and lower pH levels were set at 6.6 pH and 1.5 pH respectively. When the automatic titration system was activated, the pump turned on immediately since the pH was initially at 1.0. 188 ml of the NaHCO₃ were required to raise the pH of the gastric contents to 6.6, turning off the pump. The acid secreted by the stomach then drove the contents to pH 1.5 and the pump turned on again, causing
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mL 0.1N NaOH ADDED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72.9</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mL 0.1N HCl ADDED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7 – Laboratory Titration**

- Titration unit initially activated
- = Pump on
- = Pump off
Figure 8 - In Vivo Titration
the cycle to repeat.

Although the regulation of the pumping rate has been measured to be normally within 3% when only the speed control loop and the pump are operating, several periods of poor regulation were noted during operation of the entire system. This has been traced to interference from the pH frequency causing misfiring of the regulator's frequency-to-dc converter. This problem has been reduced by placing capacitors from the collectors of the switching transistors to ground, eliminating the high-frequency radiation components due to fast switching times.
VI. CONCLUSIONS

Although not all of the equipment performance requirements have been met on a consistent basis, the capability of meeting each requirement has been demonstrated. The greatest need for improvement is a longer capsule lifetime which must be achieved with improved capsule materials and/or construction techniques to reduce moisture absorption. Reduction of pH frequency drift is also desired; this problem may be associated with moisture absorption since breadboard capsules have demonstrated better drift characteristics than potted capsules. Performance of the pressure channel and automatic titration unit have been technically satisfactory, although there appears to be some question as to the validity of using pressure to infer motility. This will be resolved by further testing and is not a primary concern of this thesis.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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12. Y. B. Babskiy et al., "Radiotelemetric investigation of the pH content of the alimentary canal," NASA TTF-9026.


## APPENDIX A

The component values for the circuit of Figure 1 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$R_1$</td>
<td>6.8 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_2$</td>
<td>82 Ω</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_3$</td>
<td>5.26 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_4$</td>
<td>100 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_5$</td>
<td>10 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_6$</td>
<td>2.4 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_7$</td>
<td>75 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_8$</td>
<td>430 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_9$</td>
<td>330 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_{10}$</td>
<td>51 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_{11}$</td>
<td>33 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_s$</td>
<td>360 kΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C_1$</td>
<td>1000 pF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C_2$</td>
<td>500 pF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C_3$</td>
<td>25 μF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C_4$</td>
<td>6800 pF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_1$</td>
<td>2N930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_2$</td>
<td>2N327A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_3$</td>
<td>2N3819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_4$</td>
<td>2N2498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_5$</td>
<td>2N930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_6$</td>
<td>2N995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_7$</td>
<td>2N995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_8$</td>
<td>2N995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q_{PH}$</td>
<td>KW3686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All diodes</td>
<td>1N645</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

The component values for the circuit of Figure 3 are:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>R_1</th>
<th>100 kΩ</th>
<th>R_{19} = 56 kΩ</th>
<th>C_5 = 1000 pF</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R_2</td>
<td>68 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{20} = 680 kΩ</td>
<td>C_6 = 0.133 μF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_3</td>
<td>330 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{21} = 100 kΩ</td>
<td>C_7 = 0.1 μF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_4</td>
<td>100 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{22} = 68 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_1, Q_2, Q_3, Q_4,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_5</td>
<td>33 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{23} = 68 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_5, Q_6, Q_7, Q_8,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_6</td>
<td>100 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{24} = 330 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_{10}, Q_{11}, Q_{12},</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_7</td>
<td>10 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{25} = 330 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_{13}, Q_{14}, Q_{15},</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_8</td>
<td>56 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{26} = 68 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_{16}, and Q_{18} =</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_9</td>
<td>100 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{27} = 470 kΩ</td>
<td>2N930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{10}</td>
<td>56 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{28} = 25 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_9 = 2N995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{11}</td>
<td>56 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{29} = 200 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_{17} = 2N1132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{12}</td>
<td>25 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{30} = 6.8 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_{19} = 2N1613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{13}</td>
<td>100 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{31} = 1 kΩ</td>
<td>Q_{20} = 2N3585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{14}</td>
<td>33 kΩ</td>
<td>R_{32} = 6.8 kΩ</td>
<td>D_1, D_2, D_3, D_4,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{15}</td>
<td>100 kΩ</td>
<td>C_1 = 150 pF</td>
<td>D_5, and D_6 =</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{16}</td>
<td>22 kΩ</td>
<td>C_2 = 0.01 μF</td>
<td>1N645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{17}</td>
<td>180Ω</td>
<td>C_3 = 1 μF</td>
<td>D_7 = 1N751A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R_{18}</td>
<td>33 kΩ</td>
<td>C_4 = 2200 pF</td>
<td>D_8 = 1N748</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VITA

Barry Foster Maycock was born on October 16, 1940 in St. Louis, Missouri, where he received his primary and secondary education. In 1962, he received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering from Washington University in St. Louis. At this time he accepted employment as a design engineer with Autonetics, a division of North American Aviation in Anaheim, California. While in California he attended graduate classes at the University of California at Los Angeles. In 1964, he returned to St. Louis, accepting employment with the McDonnell Aircraft Corporation as an electronics engineer in the Missile and Space Division. He has been enrolled as a graduate student at the University of Missouri at Rolla Graduate Extension in St. Louis since 1965.