

Modern dairy barn rises from ashes



This is the newly built dairy barn at the John L. Landis farm which was open to inspection last weekend.

By JOANNE SPAHR
EAST PETERSBURG —
As the black smoke smouldered from the ashes and charred ruins of what had been a complete set of farm buildings, John L. Landis looked through the haze that morning to see reality staring him straight in the face.

"Well," he sighed, drawing in the cold smoke filled air that stung his nostrils, "We're going to have to start all over again."

Although the night's destruction had warped time into what seemed an eternity, it wasn't more than a few hours before that he and his wife Doris had been awakened by the honking of horns and banging on the door. Sensing the problem, Landis had sat up straight in bed to see flames shooting out from his tobacco shed windows about 10 feet.

Without even thinking twice he grabbed for the phone. It was dead.

Taking advantage of neighbors and friends that had begun to arrive, Landis got someone to drive to his brother's house and make a call from there.

Five minutes late the fire chief arrived.

At first the Landis's expected only the tobacco shed to go up, which, by this time, was completely engulfed in flames.

"But, what we didn't know was that it hadn't reached the peak of its heat," says Landis. "I looked at the barn (situated right beside the tobacco shed), and thought to myself, 'Oh, the fire company will be here in five minutes and they will save it.'"

Nevertheless, he made a snap decision to let the tied cows out.

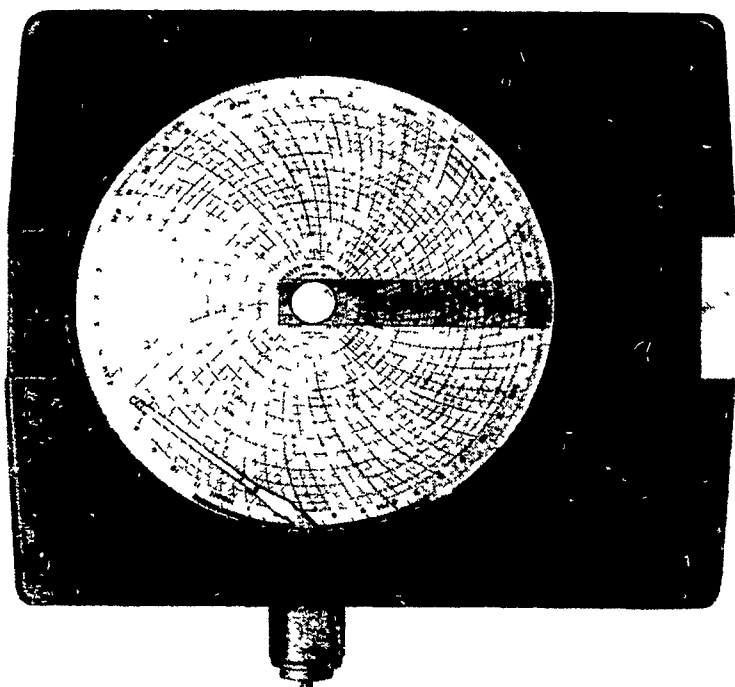
Running barefoot across the icy tarred driveway on that Wintery cold March night, Landis went down the line and untied each cow.

"They did pretty good," he remembers. "They all went into the barnyard without any problems."

To his dismay, however, he had forgotten to open the gate to let them out of the

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