Brief answers to short questions

Sheila's Shorts

By Sheila Miller

Stray voltage ships out

In a recent issue of **Lancaster Farming**, I reported on a 'hot' subject — stray voltage and its potential for creating production problems in milking parlors and stanchion barn assembly lines in the dairy business

That story was read by one of our subscribers, **Fritz Preyer**, a marine electrician on the Jersey Shore He contacted me the following week and discussed via the telephone that stray voltage in his business is an intolerable situation. Mr Preyer owns Marineonics, Mantocoking, New Jersey.

I listened intently as Preyer explained how he has eliminated the problem of stray voltage in boats and ships and I asked him to follow up our conversation with a letter

His letter arrived several days later and read

"Your problems in farm buildings are not unlike problems I've found in boats over the past 20 -+ years. We've had to eliminate all stray voltages and currents on board, not because of shocks or tingles, but because of electrolysis which can destroy underwater fittings and sink a boat in a matter of days.

"As you asked, I'm sending these drawings, showing a 120 volt 2-wire system for simplicity. But a 3-wire 120/240 volt system or a 3-phase 4-wire system would exhibit the same problems if unbalanced. And these systems are seldom balanced."

Admittedly, I am no electrician About the closest I come to understanding electricity is changing a lightbulb or throwing the circuit breaker in the baffling box in the basement. The rest of the details I leave to the experts to understand and sometimes explain to this inquisitive writer — with many short circuits in communication at time, I'm afraid.

If Mr Preyer's drawings would have been a map to a buried treasurer instead of illustrations on electrical systems, I'm afraid I never would be able to find the pot of gold. So, I am letting the drawings speak for themselves.

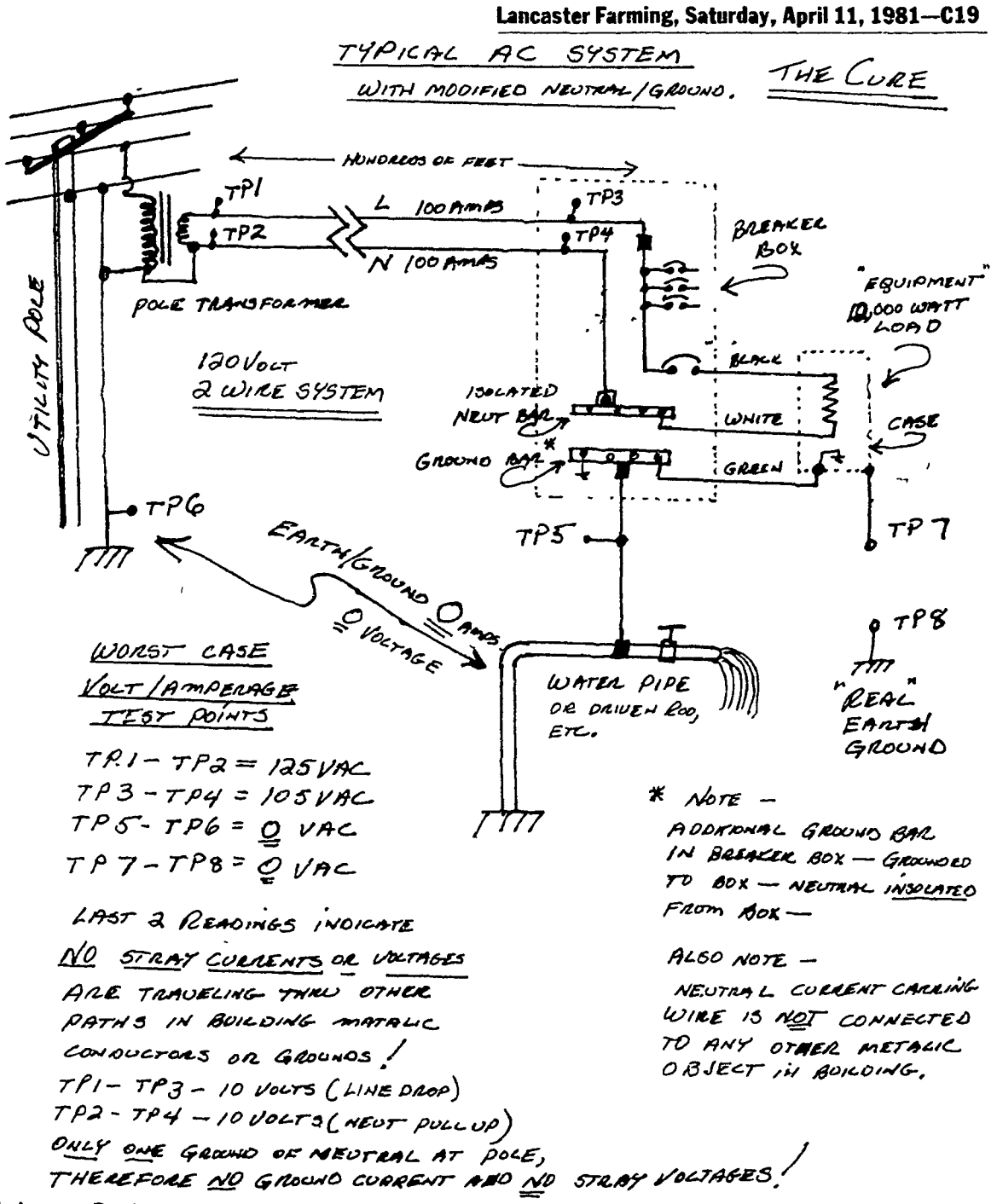
Luckily, Mr. Preyer included a list of "points to consider".

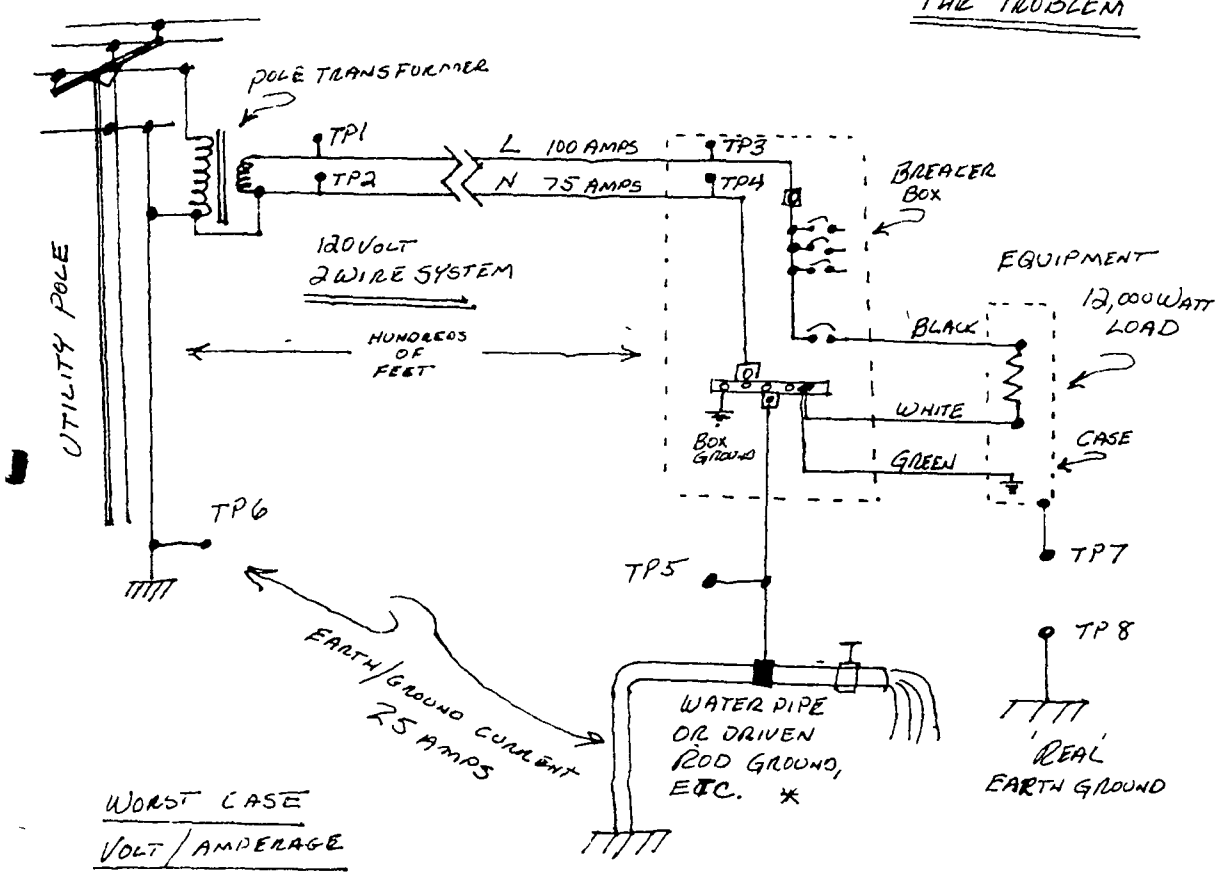
- "There is no reason to ground the neutral in any place other than at the utility pole;
- Don't forget, voltage drops in both the line and neutral, pulling the line voltage down and pulling the neutral voltage up above the ground potential,
- Neutral voltages above ground at the load end may be as much as 5 volts above ground;
- Grounding of the neutral at the load end surely invites ground currents and stray voltages,
- Multiple grounds invite ground currents;
- Neither the neutral or line can have a path to ground anywhere in the building or barn; and
- Metal objects subject to stray voltages are probably freely corroding and rusting away, including plumbing and metal buildings.

Any questions?

If so, Mr. Preyer invites you to send them to him at his business addresses Marineonics, 188 Cedar Pt. Avenue, Brick Town, N J. 08723 or P O. Box 13, Mantocoking, N.J. 08738.

Hopefully the dairy farmer's ship has come in for solving stray voltage problems thanks to the concern and interest of this marine electrician.





SCS grows specialized conservation plants

HARRISBURG — Plants provide ground cover which reduce soil erosion and improve water quality of streams New and better variety of plants do not just happen, they are planned and developed

Plant Material Centers operated by the USDA Soil Conservation Service, with cooperating agencies, have tested and released more than 200 different varieties of conservation plants for commercial production and use in conservation programs Currently, seed growers and nursery owners are commercially producing more than 140 SCS-released varieties

PMC's have released most of these plants for solving soil and water conservation problems within the last 10 years In 1979, the commercial value to the seed and plant industry from the commercial production of SCS-released plant varieties was approximately $26 million The seed produced in one year was enough to vegetate 1 3 million acres

In recent years, the Northeast Plant Materials Center at Big Flats, New York, released erosion control plants such as Chemung crownvetch, Lathco flatpea, Arnot bristly locust, Streamco willow, and Tioga deertongue grass These plants are used on roadsides, streambanks, utility rights-of-way, and in strip mine reclamation

All over this country, cover provided by SCS-released plant materials is helping to control erosion and sedimentation by stabilizing the soil, filtering runoff, and serving as windbreaks.

This plant cover also provides many side benefits. Conservation plant materials provide food and cover for wildlife, provide forage for livestock, beautify the landscape, and, if properly selected and positioned, can cut energy costs for heating and cooling houses and commercial buildings

Last year, through a public participation campaign conducted by SCS, citizens considered alternatives to Federal management in the support of PMC's. Out of the responses received, 85 percent of the public recommended SCS continue operating PMC's.

In view of this public approval, SCS will continue the search for conservation plants to meet the needs of all SCS soil and water conservation programs, including plants with potential energy conservation characteristics

Learn to make slipcovers

YORK — Does your upholstered furniture need a new look for spring? Slip covers can give that new look to a room You can learn to make your own slipcovers in a workshop Making Slipcovers being offered by the Cooperative Extension Service of York County The class will be held April 14, May 5,6,&1 - 9 30-2 30 p m at the 4-H Center

According to A. Joan Lamberson, extension home economist, this is a hands-on class, in which you will either make your own slipcover or help someone else. You will learn about fabrics, measuring, figuring yardage and how to construct slipcover

Advance registration is necessary at the York County Extension Office, 112 Pleasant Acres Road, York, PA - phone 757-9657