

1777

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KLYSTRONS AND MICROWAVE TRIODES

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NATIONAL DEFENSE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

FIRST EDITION



NEW YORK · TORONTO · LONDON
MCGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.

1948

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TK 6573
M 41
V. 7

KLYSTRONS AND MICROWAVE TRIODES

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MCGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.

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Foreword

THE tremendous research and development effort that went into the development of radar and related techniques during World War II resulted not only in hundreds of radar sets for military (and some for possible peacetime) use but also in a great body of information and new techniques in the electronics and high-frequency fields. Because this basic material may be of great value to science and engineering, it seemed most important to publish it as soon as security permitted.

The Radiation Laboratory of MIT, which operated under the supervision of the National Defense Research Committee, undertook the great task of preparing these volumes. The work described herein, however, is the collective result of work done at many laboratories, Army, Navy, university, and industrial, both in this country and in England, Canada, and other Dominions.

The Radiation Laboratory, once its proposals were approved and finances provided by the Office of Scientific Research and Development, chose Louis N. Ridenour as Editor-in-Chief to lead and direct the entire project. An editorial staff was then selected of those best qualified for this type of task. Finally the authors for the various volumes or chapters or sections were chosen from among those experts who were intimately familiar with the various fields, and who were able and willing to write the summaries of them. This entire staff agreed to remain at work at MIT for six months or more after the work of the Radiation Laboratory was complete. These volumes stand as a monument to this group.

These volumes serve as a memorial to the unnamed hundreds and thousands of other scientists, engineers, and others who actually carried on the research, development, and engineering work the results of which are herein described. There were so many involved in this work and they worked so closely together even though often in widely separated laboratories that it is impossible to name or even to know those who contributed to a particular idea or development. Only certain ones who wrote reports or articles have even been mentioned. But to all those who contributed in any way to this great cooperative development enterprise, both in this country and in England, these volumes are dedicated.

L. A. DuBRIDGE.

Preface

THIS volume of the Radiation Laboratory Series attempts to cover the basic principles underlying the operation of klystrons and planar grid tubes as oscillators and amplifiers. It has been the desire of the authors to present the technical and theoretical aspects of this field as completely and as rigorously as possible, even though this meant the exclusion of a great deal of descriptive material, and has certainly added to the difficulty of a first reading. Nevertheless it was felt that the greatest need for a book on this subject at the present time was for one from which the fundamental principles for the design and understanding of microwave vacuum tubes could be obtained. No attempt has been made to describe how a vacuum tube is actually constructed. Rather the emphasis has been placed on presenting the fundamental material which the tube designer or tube user must have at his command.

Because the radio-frequency work of the Radiation Laboratory was concentrated almost entirely in the frequency region above 3000 Mc/sec, this book naturally tends to emphasize the operation of tubes in that region. However the basic principles are the same at lower frequencies although as a general rule the electrical and mechanical requirements become more difficult to attain as higher frequencies are approached. Certainly it is the authors' hope that this is a book on the principles of operation of particular types of tubes, and not a treatise on the generation of oscillations in a particular frequency band.

The wartime development of microwave radar and communications was based on three important types of amplifier and oscillator tubes: the multicavity magnetrons, the klystron family of tubes, and the planar grid tubes (also called lighthouse tubes and disk-seal tubes). The extraordinarily rapid engineering development of the multicavity magnetron as a transmitting tube is certainly one of the great advances of the war and is discussed elsewhere in the Radiation Laboratory Series. The present volume attempts to complete the story, and to cover in particular the development of microwave receiving tubes, local oscillators, and signal amplifiers. The use of klystron and planar grid tubes as transmitting oscillators, and in a few cases transmitting amplifiers, is not neglected. But up to the present their greatest use has been in receivers. It seems hardly necessary to caution the reader that the future develop-

PREFACE

ment of microwave receiver tubes will hardly be limited to the two types discussed here. One need only recall the announcement in June of this year of the development first at Oxford University and later at the Bell Telephone Laboratories of the traveling-wave tube, which may well revolutionize our idea of amplifier design.

This volume has been written in parts based on tube types and construction, a division in form rather than in use or purpose. Following four introductory chapters discussing tube types and functions and basic electronic and circuit phenomena common to all types of tubes there is a part on planar grid tubes and a part on klystrons. This division has seemed desirable to the authors since it has made the purely mathematical developments more logical than would have been the case if the division in function had been followed. This arrangement should reduce the number of cross references, and make the reading more straightforward. Aside from a few special cases of r-f circuits which are used solely for microwave vacuum tubes, no attempt has been made in this book to discuss the general properties of distributed constant circuits, since these problems have been discussed thoroughly elsewhere in this series.

Except for the important work of H. V. Neher and his group, most of the effort at Radiation Laboratory on microwave receivers went into the design of circuits, and the corollary tube testing and specification. We have drawn freely upon the work of other organizations both in England and in this country, and in particular upon the work of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, the General Electric Company, and the Sperry Gyroscope Company. Since the bulk of the wartime work has just been declassified and remains unpublished, it has been necessary to refer to internal organization reports, which are not available generally.

With the increasing awareness of engineers and physicists of the relative merits of various systems of units, it has become the duty of the preface writer to mention and defend the system chosen for the book at hand. The present volume uses the MKS system for reasons no more cogent than (1) this system is becoming more and more popular among engineers, and is making headway even among physicists; (2) amperes, ohms, and volts are units which the tube designer naturally uses.

We should like to express our thanks to Professor Eugene Feenberg, now at Washington University in St. Louis, Mr. Edward Barlow, and Dr. Marvin Chodorow, of the Sperry Gyroscope Company for many helpful comments and criticism of the manuscript. We are indebted to our former colleagues Dr. Milton Gardner, now at the University of California, and Mr. M. C. Waltz, now at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, for a great deal of help in preparing the information for

PREFACE

this volume. In particular we wish to thank Dr. W. G. Shepherd, of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, who has read the entire manuscript and has helped us greatly by his criticism.

ALBERT G. HILL.

CAMBRIDGE MASS.,
July, 1946.

Contents

FOREWORD BY L. A. DuBRIDGE	v
--------------------------------------	---

PREFACE.	vii
------------------	-----

PART I. FUNDAMENTALS

CHAP. 1. INTRODUCTION	3
1-1. Electron Tubes at Very High Frequencies.	3
1-2. Microwave Region.	4
1-3. Microwave Techniques.	7
1-4. Principal Tube Types.	9
1-5. Points of Comparison between Low-power Microwave Tubes	13
1-6. Plan of this Book	15
CHAP. 2. DISCUSSION OF TUBE TYPES AND FUNCTIONS	17
2-1. Mixers	17
2-2. Amplifiers.	18
2-3. Frequency Multipliers	23
2-4. Oscillators.	25
CHAP. 3. BASIC ELECTRONIC PHENOMENA AT HIGH FREQUENCIES	31
3-1. Phenomena of Particular Importance at High Frequencies.	32
3-2. Current Induced by a Moving Charge	37
3-3. Modulation of the Beam	39
3-4. General Relations in a Narrow Gap	47
3-5. High-velocity Gap.	54
3-6. Low-velocity Gap, Neglecting Velocity Spread.	60
CHAP. 4. BASIC CIRCUIT PHENOMENA AT HIGH FREQUENCIES	70
4-1. Cavity Resonators.	70
4-2. Resonator Fields in Principal Mode	83
4-3. Cavity Excitation in Principal Mode.	90

PART II. PLANAR SPACE-CHARGE TUBES

CHAP 5. THEORY OF H-F SPACE-CHARGE DEVICES	97
5-1. Characteristics of a Single Region	99
5-2. General Relations for Multigrid Tubes	106
5-3. Positive-grid Space-charge-limited Input with Minimum near Cathode	110
5-4. Grid-screen and Output Regions, Neglecting Velocity Spread	115
5-5. Positive-grid High-mu Triode with Minimum near Cathode	116
5-6. Positive-grid Tetrode with Minimum near Cathode.	119
5-7. General Relations for Velocity-distribution Phenomena.	122

CONTENTS

5-8.	Low-velocity Gap without Reflections	128
5-9.	Retarding Field with Reflections.	138
CHAP. 6.	SPACE-CHARGE DEVICES AS MICROWAVE AMPLIFIERS	146
6-1.	Introduction.	146
6-2.	Elementary Discussion of Grid-separation Amplifiers.	146
6-3.	Experimental Amplifier Tubes for the 3000-Mc/sec Region	153
6-4.	Noise in Microwave Amplifiers.	157
6-5.	High-efficiency Amplifiers.	162
6-6.	Practical Triode Amplifiers	163
CHAP. 7.	MICROWAVE TRIODE OSCILLATORS.	170
7-1.	Introduction.	170
7-2.	Principal Types of Oscillator Circuits Applicable to Triodes	171
7-3.	Power Supply and Bias Considerations	175
7-4.	Two-cavity Grid-separation Oscillators	177
7-5.	Reentrant Oscillators.	179
7-6.	Behavior of Practical Reentrant Oscillators	183
7-7.	Modulation of Triode Oscillators.	185
CHAP. 8.	PULSE OPERATION OF MICROWAVE TRIODES.	187
8-1.	Factors Important in Pulse Operation	187
8-2.	Typical Cavity Design	188
8-3.	Tube-design Requirements	191
8-4.	Effect of Plate-plunger Position	192
8-5.	Grid Bias.	193
8-6.	Plate and Heater Voltages	195
8-7.	Load Coupling.	197

PART III. KLYSTRONS

CHAP. 9.	VELOCITY MODULATION AND KLYSTRON BUNCHING	201
9-1.	Introduction.	201
9-2.	Simple Velocity Modulation and Bunching	202
9-3.	Debunching in a Klystron.	209
9-4.	Bunching with Finite Gap-voltage and Arbitrary Drift-space Characteristics.	218
9-5.	Influence of Finite Gap-transit Angle on Bunching.	224
9-6.	Bunching by a Gap Voltage Comparable to Beam Voltage	232
9-7.	Analytical Discussion of Bunching by Gap Voltage Comparable to Beam Voltage.	235
9-8.	Cascade Bunching	240
9-9.	Bunching in the Presence of Harmonic Phase and Amplitude Modulation	245
CHAP. 10.	AMPLIFIER KLYSTRONS.	248
10-1.	Multiresonator Klystron Types	248
10-2.	General Voltage-amplifier Relations	249
10-3.	Two-resonator Voltage Amplifiers; Gain.	252
10-4.	Voltage-amplifier Klystrons; Noise.	257
10-5.	Two-resonator Power-amplifier Klystrons; Bunching Conditions	260
10-6.	General Klystron Power-amplifier Relations.	263

CONTENTS

10-7.	Comparison of Theory and Experiment for Two-resonator Amplifier Klystrons.	267
10-8.	Voltage Cascade-amplifier Klystrons	271
10-9.	Voltage Cascade Amplifier Gain; Comparison with Experiment	278
10-10.	Power Cascade-amplifier Klystrons.	280
CHAP. 11.	FREQUENCY MULTIPLIER KLYSTRONS AND TWO-RESONATOR KLYSTRON OSCILLATORS.	285
11-1.	Frequency Multiplier Klystrons	285
11-2.	Frequency Multiplier Klystrons; Comparison of Theory and Experiment.	290
11-3.	Two-resonator Klystron Oscillators.	294
11-4.	Condition for Oscillation	297
11-5.	Transadmittance Diagrams	302
11-6.	General Oscillator Characteristics	304
CHAP. 12.	REFLEX KLYSTRON OSCILLATORS	311
12-1.	Oscillator General Behavior.	311
12-2.	Oscillator Theory for High Modes	317
12-3.	Observed Characteristics of the Reflex Klystron	329
12-4.	Quantitative Comparison of Theory and Experiment.	332
12-5.	Detailed Theory of Idealized Oscillator.	337
CHAP. 13.	NONIDEAL REFLECTORS	352
13-1.	D-c Electron Optics	352
13-2.	General Scaling of Voltages and Dimensions.	354
13-3.	Reflector Mode Patterns	357
13-4.	Reflector Mode Patterns of V_r -vs.- λ	362
13-5.	Normalized Mode Locus of a Space-charge-free Recessed Reflector.	364
13-6.	Space-charge Transit-time Effects in the Plane-parallel Reflector	367
13-7.	Influence of Reflector Field on Bunching	373
13-8.	D-c Transit Time vs. Effective Bunching Time	375
13-9.	Bunching and Space Charge.	380
13-10.	Reflector Fields with Phase Aberrations.	382
13-11.	Comparison of Phase Aberrations and Reflector Nonlinearities.	382
CHAP. 14.	HYSTERESIS IN REFLEX KLYSTRONS.	384
14-1.	Phenomenon of Hysteresis	384
14-2.	Mode Asymmetry Produced by Dependence of G_r on ϕ in Low Modes	385
14-3.	Hysteresis Caused by Phase Shifts Dependent upon R-f Gap Voltage and Independent of ϕ_0	387
14-4.	Bunching Theory for Multiple-transit Electrons	393
14-5.	Production of Hysteresis by Multiple-transit Electrons	397
CHAP. 15.	LOAD EFFECTS IN REFLEX KLYSTRONS	404
15-1.	Introduction.	404
15-2.	Basis of the Cold Test	405
15-3.	Cold Test Procedure	409
15-4.	Active Operation; the Ideal Rieke Diagram.	414
15-5.	Transformation to the Practical Rieke Diagram	421
15-6.	Experimental Rieke Diagrams.	432
15-7.	Effects of a High-Q Load	435

CONTENTS

CHAP. 16. REFLEX-KLYSTRON MODULATION	441
16-1. Types of Modulation.	441
16-2. Static Characteristics Relevant to Low-frequency Modulation.	442
16-3. Limitations on the Use of Static Characteristics; the Quasistatic Approximation in Modulation Theory	444
16-4. Description of Modulation; the Small-signal Approximation.	446
16-5. Bunching in the Presence of Gap-voltage Modulation or Transients.	449
16-6. Effect of Primary Modulation of Oscillator Parameters.	452
16-7. Driving of a Resonant Circuit by a Slowly Changing R-f Current	455
16-8. Transient Phenomena; Pulse Buildup.	458
16-9. General Oscillator Relations with Sinusoidal Modulation	462
16-10. Low-frequency Modulation of Beam Current and Reflection Transit Time.	465
16-11. Modulation of G_s and θ_0 at Frequencies Comparable to ω	469
CHAP. 17. NOISE IN REFLEX KLYSTRONS	470
17-1. Importance of Oscillator Noise.	470
17-2. Method of Measurement	471
17-3. Total Oscillator Noise	473
17-4. Separation of Sidebands.	475
17-5. Dependence of Noise on Load.	477
17-6. Summary of Noise Behavior and Estimate of Noise Magnitude	479
17-7. Discussion of Complicating Effects.	482
17-8. Summary of Results of Noise Calculation.	484
17-9. Theory of Noise in Reflex Klystron.	489
CHAP. 18. PRACTICAL REFLEX KLYSTRONS.	495
18-1. Introduction.	495
18-2. Resonator Design in Relation to Performance	498
18-3. Tuning Methods.	502
18-4. Output Couplings	507
18-5. Description of Some Representative Reflex Tubes	508
18-6. Power Supplies	521
INDEX.	527