An Experimental All-Band Nondirectional Transmitting Antenna

Some Possibilities Offered by the Tilted Folded Dipole

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• Those hams who are experimentally inclined will no doubt be interested in the possibilities that this antenna system suggests. Practical tests by the author have shown that the single antenna may be operated over a frequency range as great as 5 to 1 with a relatively small change in the standing-wave ratio on the line and that the pattern is essentially nondirectional.

Few improvements in antennas for the lower-frequency bands have been forthcoming for several years. The arrangement to be discussed is not entirely original with the author but was based on some Navy antenna studies. Initial tests indicate that it may provide an acceptable solution to amateur multiband operation.

Briefly, it is an aperiodic system that will give uniform output over a frequency of approximately a 5-to-1 ratio with nondirectional characteristics and without critical adjustment. In fact, the only adjustment is to couple the final tank to a 600-ohm line.

The practical experiments conducted by the author are incomplete, but it is hoped that the publication of the data contained herein will encourage experimenting by other amateurs.

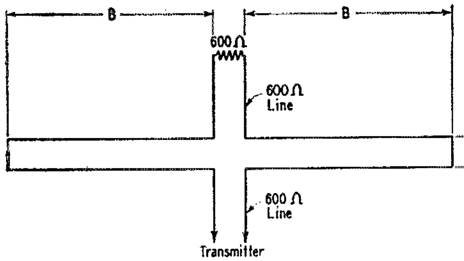

Fig. 1 — General diagram of the terminated folded dipole. Dimensions for *A* and *B* are suggested in the text.

There are many questions unanswered: measured variation in standing-wave ratio over a given frequency range, loss in power attributable to the resistance termination, experimentally-obtained radiation patterns, etc.

Essentially, the system — shown in Fig. 1 — is a nonresonant folded dipole. It is fed with a 600-ohm line. This antenna, if horizontal, will be quite directional at right angles to its axis, with pronounced minima off the ends. As the antenna is tilted with respect to ground, this pattern gradually changes until at an angle of 30 degrees it becomes nondirectional for all practical purposes. Translated into terms of amateur construction this means that only one mast is required, together with a short pole six feet or so in height supporting the low end. There seems to be no marked advantage in an increase in over-all height of the antenna. On the contrary, reports from a distance indicate that signals are definitely better with one end of the antenna only six feet from the ground, perhaps because of a resulting lower angle of radiation.

Because complications are introduced by the resistance termination, it is difficult to make an adequate analysis or evaluation of a terminated folded dipole by conventional methods. It becomes necessary to measure performance experimentally.

One of the Navy laboratories has investigated the performance of this type of antenna and has reported unfavorably upon it. However, the laboratory study was based upon a vertical monopole erected over a metallic ground plane, using conventional measuring instruments, and the characteristics obtained were applied mathematically to arrive at theoretical characteristics for the resistance-terminated folded dipole. Operational tests were not made by this laboratory and their theoretical findings are not borne out by the limited practical tests conducted by the author.

It is of interest to note that the standing-wave ratios estimated by the laboratory for various frequencies from 4 to 22 Mc. ranged from a minimum of 1.4 to a maximum of 2.6, with an average close to 1.7. These ratios compare favorably with average s.w.r.s found in amateur installations. It should be remembered that these standing-wave ratios were not measured but were arrived at by calculation.

Dimensions

Fig. 1 gives a general idea of the system with the important dimensions indicated except for

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the angle of tilt. Fig. 2 indicates the required tilt with a suggested pole arrangement and dimensions pertaining thereto. Two particular sizes should be of interest to amateurs, one of which will have maximum efficiency from 3.5 Mc. to

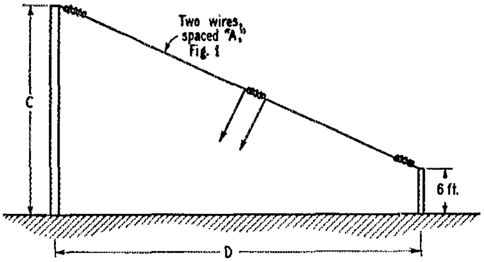

Fig. 2 — **Tilting the terminated folded dipole tends to make the pattern nondirectional. For dimensions *C* and *D*, see text.**

17.5 Mc. and the other being optimum from 7 Mc. to 35 Mc. Dimensions may be developed using the formulas set forth to cover higher-frequency bands, but at 28 Mc. and higher frequencies directional arrays are easy to construct and preferable because of the increased gain. The following dimensions are applicable to the frequency ranges selected above:

Dimension (Figs. 1 and 2)	*3.5 to 17.5 Mc.*	*7 to 35 Mc.*
A	2 ft. 10 in.	1 ft. 6 in.
B	46 ft. 10 in.	23 ft. 5 in.
C	56 ft. 0 in.	32 ft. 0 in.
D	80 ft. 0 in.	44 ft. 0 in.

For an impedance of 600 ohms, the center-to-center spacing of the feeder wires, divided by the diameter of the feeder wires, must equal 70. This means that No. 12 wire spaced six inches will be acceptable. Six-inch spreaders are readily available and the wire will not stretch unduly. No. 10 wire should be spaced 7 inches and No. 16 wire should be spaced 3½ inches.

Terminating Resistor

The terminating resistor should be non-inductive and have a minimum rating equal to 35 per cent of the input power to the final stage. It may be a carbon or graphite rod, adequately protected from the elements, or merely a long 600-ohm transmission line constructed of resistance wire. If the latter is used, the line may be carried vertically down from the center of one leg of the antenna to a short pole and then, if required, extended to one of the masts and doubled back and forth between the masts. If a carbon resistor is used, there is apparently no difference whether the rod is connected directly into the antenna as shown in Fig. 3, or at the end of a transmission line, as shown in Fig. 1. However, it is easier to adjust the resistance and protect it from the elements when it is installed at a fixed location on the ground than when it is suspended across an insulator in the antenna wire.

Formulas

The following formulas will be of assistance in developing antennas for different frequency coverages:

$$\text{Antenna-wire spacing } (A) \text{ for lowest frequency} = \frac{3000}{f\text{ (kc.)}} \times 3.28$$

$$\text{Antenna length, each half } (B) \text{ for lowest frequency} = \frac{50{,}000}{f\text{ (kc.)}} \times 3.28$$

To convert decimal parts of one foot into inches, multiply by 12.

One meter = 3.28 feet.

$$\text{Frequency (kc.)} = \frac{300{,}000}{\lambda \text{ (meters)}}$$

The length of the antenna and the wire spacing may well be the object of further experiments but initial tests indicate that the first two formulas shown above are reasonably accurate and that the system is operable over a 5-to-1 frequency range as previously mentioned.

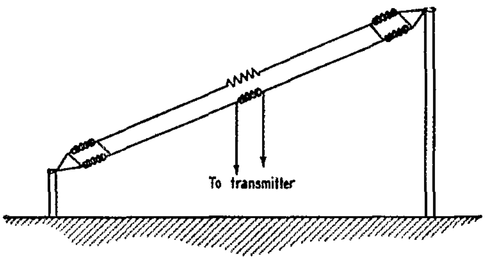

Fig. 3 — **The terminating resistor may be placed directly in the antenna, or at the end of a transmission line as indicated in Fig. 1.**

Initial tests with these antennas indicate no change in signal strength on 40 meters at a distance of 2000 miles when compared with a conventional half-wave antenna, center fed with tuned feeders and carefully adjusted for optimum output at one selected frequency. Good reports were received on both 20 and 80 meters but comparative reports are not available because of the lack of antennas specifically designed for those bands. Transmitter loading was normal.

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