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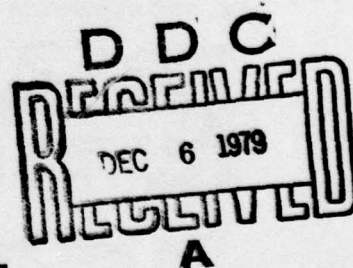
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## CALCIUM INORGANIC ELECTROLYTE BATTERY DEVELOPMENT

R. HIGGINS & L. ELLIOTT  
EAGLE-PICHER INDUSTRIES INCORPORATED  
ELECTRONICS DIVISION  
JOPLIN, MISSOURI 64801

JUNE 1979

INTERIM TECHNICAL REPORT AFAPL-TR-79-2044  
Interim Report for period August 1977 — January 1979



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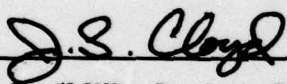
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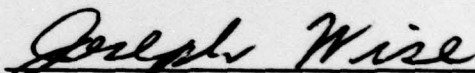
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| 20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)<br>The objectives of this program are based on the desire to develop a calcium/oxyhalide system comparable to the lithium/oxyhalide system with respect to energy density and rate capabilities, while overcoming the problems of voltage delay and safety hazards. This project is directed toward assessing basic performance, safety, storage, and voltage delay of the calcium/oxyhalide system for use in Air Force applications. Early small cell development is designed for use in life support, rescue equipment, and spacecraft power, while |                                                                                                  |                                             |

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→ Phase II development of large cells up to 10,000 Ampere hours is anticipated for use in missile standby and emergency ground power systems. Specific factors of concern in these applications are low volume, performance over a temperature range -40°F to 165°F, safety, and long shelf life. ←

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| SECTION |                              | PAGE |
|---------|------------------------------|------|
| I       | INTRODUCTION                 | 1    |
| II      | CELL DEVELOPMENT             | 3    |
|         | a) Anode Development         | 6    |
|         | b) Cathode Development       | 9    |
|         | c) Electrolyte Development   | 16   |
| III     | BASIC CELL PERFORMANCE       | 22   |
| IV      | STORAGE EVALUATION           | 53   |
| V       | SAFETY EVALUATION            | 57   |
|         | a) Short Circuit             | 58   |
|         | b) Incineration              | 60   |
|         | c) Reversal                  | 60   |
|         | d) Constant Current Charging | 61   |
|         | e) Shock                     | 66   |
|         | f) Vibration                 | 66   |
|         | g) Crushing                  | 68   |
|         | h) Puncture                  | 70   |
| VI      | REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS   | 72   |

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# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| FIGURE |                                                                    | PAGE |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1      | Discharge Curve Annealed vs. Unannealed Calcium Anodes             | 8    |
| 2      | Cell Polarization - Room Temperature Rate - 0.05 Amps              | 14   |
| 3      | Cell Polarization - Short Circuit Test                             | 15   |
| 4      | Conductimetric Titration - $\text{AlCl}_3/\text{CaCl}_2$           | 20   |
| 5      | Conductimetric Titration - $\text{AlCl}_3/\text{LiCl}$             | 21   |
| 6      | $\text{Ca}/\text{SOCl}_2$ "Half-D" Cell Configuration              | 24   |
| 7      | Room Temperature Discharge - 0.05 Amp. Rate                        | 27   |
| 8      | Room Temperature Discharge - 0.10 Amp Rate                         | 28   |
| 9      | Room Temperature Discharge - 0.50 Amp Rate                         | 29   |
| 10     | Room Temperature Discharge - 1.00 Amp Rate                         | 30   |
| 11     | Capacity Vs. Current Density Optimized "Half-D" Cell               | 31   |
| 12     | Normal Discharge for "Half-D" Cells                                | 32   |
| 13     | $\text{Ca}/\text{SOCl}_2$ Rate Vs. Capacity Temperature Comparison | 33   |
| 14     | 0°F Discharge Curve - 0.05 Amp                                     | 35   |
| 15     | 0°F Discharge Curve - 0.10 Amp                                     | 36   |
| 16     | 0°F Discharge Curve - 0.50 Amp                                     | 37   |
| 17     | 0°F Discharge Curve - 1.00 Amp                                     | 38   |
| 18     | 120°F Discharge Curve - 0.05 Amp                                   | 39   |
| 19     | 120°F Discharge Curve - 0.10 Amp                                   | 40   |
| 20     | 120°F Discharge Curve - 0.50 Amp                                   | 41   |
| 21     | 120°F Discharge Curve - 1.00 Amp                                   | 42   |
| 22     | 165°F Discharge Curve - 0.05 Amp                                   | 44   |
| 23     | 165°F Discharge Curve - 0.10 Amp                                   | 45   |



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| FIGURE |                                                | PAGE |
|--------|------------------------------------------------|------|
| 24     | 165°F Discharge Curve - 0.50 Amp               | 46   |
| 25     | 120°F Discharge Curve - 1.00 Amp               | 47   |
| 26     | Capacity Vs. Current Density - 25 Amp Hr. Cell | 48   |
| 27     | Discharge Curve - 25 Amp Hr. Cell - 0.050 Amp  | 49   |
| 28     | Discharge Curve - 25 Amp Hr. Cell - 0.10 Amp   | 50   |
| 29     | Discharge Curve - 25 Amp Hr. Cell - 0.5 Amp    | 51   |
| 30     | Discharge Curve - 25 Amp Hr. Cell - 1.00 Amp   | 52   |
| 31     | Voltage Delay                                  | 55   |
| 32     | Short Circuit                                  | 60   |
| 33     | Cell Reversal                                  | 62   |
| 34     | Charging Constant Current - 0.05 Amp           | 63   |
| 35     | Charging Constant Current - 0.10 Amp           | 64   |
| 36     | Charging Constant Current - 1.00 Amp           | 65   |
| 37     | Constant Potential Charging - 5.00 Volts       | 67   |
| 38     | Cell Crushing                                  | 69   |
| 39     | Cell Puncture                                  | 71   |

# LIST OF TABLES

| TABLE NUMBER |                                                              | PAGE |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1            | Annealed Vs. Unannealed Calcium Anodes                       | 7    |
| 2            | Effect Of Anode Surface On Discharge                         | 9    |
| 3            | Preliminary Current Density Vs. Cathode Thickness            | 10   |
| 4            | Carbon Blacks Evaluated                                      | 13   |
| 5            | Material Compatibility Evaluation Summary - Room Temperature | 18   |
| 6            | Calcium Stability Study - 120°F                              | 19   |
| 7            | Discharge Matrix                                             | 25   |
| 8            | Preliminary Storage Cells Discharge Data                     | 54   |
| 9            | Storage Evaluation Test Schedule                             | 56   |

## SECTION I

### INTRODUCTION

During the past ten (10) years, various lithium anode systems have been developed to fill the need for long shelf life high energy density batteries, one of which has been  $\text{Li}/\text{SOCl}_2$ . Although  $\text{Li}/\text{SOCl}_2$  has exhibited the highest energy density of all the lithium systems, it has also experienced the greatest safety problems. In an effort to develop a battery which retains the high energy density of lithium systems but with increased safety, a system has been investigated which is composed of the carbon collector and electrolyte/depolarizer of the  $\text{Li}/\text{SOCl}_2$  but with an anode of pure calcium. The system is to be evaluated with respect to three (3) Air Force applications: small cells of less than five ampere hours for life support equipment; 600 ampere hour cells for space craft power; and 10,000 ampere hour cells for missile standby and emergency ground power systems.

The program is divided into two (2) major phases each lasting eighteen (18) months. The objective of Phase I was to begin preliminary development of the system using small hermetically sealed cells. The development to consist of:

- Preliminary investigation

- Life support cell design

- Storage life evaluation

- Safety evaluation.

Preliminary investigation covered evaluation of all materials, modification of cathode substrate for use with the Ca electrode, development of the Ca electrode, and design of a sealed cell as a test vehicle for the system. Immediately following the preliminary investigation was the Life Support design consisting of design and development of a "half-D" cell for



life support applications along with basic characterization of the cell from  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $70^{\circ}\text{C}$  at currents ranging from .05 amp to 1.0 amp. Following design of the "half-D" cell, a storage test was begun to run for eighteen (18) months at room temperature and  $55^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The test utilized approximately one hundred (100) cells with samples removed on monthly schedule. An additional one hundred (100) cells were used to demonstrate safety under a variety of abuse tests.

Phase II of the program will cover design and test of 600 AH to 10,000 AH cells, along with further development in problem areas encountered during Phase I. Phase II efforts will consist of:

- Cell performance improvement

- Theoretical analysis-cell reaction products and kinetics

- 600 AH cell development

- 2000 AH cell development

- 10,000 AH cell development

- Deactivation/Disposal study

Cell performance improvement will cover further development of cell and electrode materials and any other problem areas which might surface during the first phase. The theoretical analysis will be an investigation of the basic cell reaction products as well as the electrode kinetics of the anode. Concurrently with these efforts, a scale up development of the small cell will be conducted to produce a 600 AH cell for evaluation of abuse hazards and as a design aid to further development of larger cells. After evaluation of 600AH cells, 2000 AH cells will be made and tested in demountable cell cases such that the cells can easily be dismantled for examination after discharge. A 10,000 AH cell will be made immediately following analysis of the 2000 AH cells. The 10,000 AH cells will be evaluated during steady

state discharge, and a variety of abuse tests including reversal short circuit and puncture.

The last effort in Phase II will be a study into the methods of deactivation and disposal of  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  cells, with particular emphasis on 10,000 AH cells and the safe handling procedures for such cells before, during and after use.

## SECTION II

### CELL DEVELOPMENT

The approach to the first phase of this program involved applying the current technology of inorganic depolarizers to calcium anodes in an effort to develop a calcium/inorganic system of high energy density capable of meeting the performance requirements of next generation life support, space and standby missile applications. The resulting battery system ideally would have these capabilities without the safety problems currently associated with existing high energy systems.

One of the objectives of Phase I was to design and optimize a test vehicle with which to define the parameters of the calcium/inorganic system. The initial investigation was to establish a baseline capability that would determine the extent to which the problems of the lithium/thionyl chloride system would apply to calcium/thionyl chloride, as well as bring to light any unforeseen problems unique to the calcium system. The advanced cell development in Phase II will be predicated upon the evaluation of baseline performance in this first phase. Several test vehicles were utilized in these investigations to characterize the system with respect to efficiency of cell structures, cell voltage/current parameters at various temperatures, and effects of material purity and compatibility on performance. Later sealed cells were used to evaluate the calcium/thionyl chloride systems

sensitivity to fire, detonation or other hazardous conditions resulting from test procedures. Finally, these investigations were to bring out and define any unforeseen problems unique to the calcium/thionyl chloride system with subsequent cell design iteration to follow. The first quarter of Phase I was devoted primarily to the discharge of open laboratory-type bag cells, the advantage of these cells being that changes in cathode and anode structure could be quickly instituted and evaluated. This type of construction also allowed for simple access to these structures for examination immediately after discharge. Construction of the test cells utilized a small cathode and anode of 5.0 square centimeters with 0.125 nickel tab current collector spot welded on each electrode and an envelope wrap of glass separator (Dexter or Reeve Angel) surrounding the cathode. Once assembled, the cell materials were carefully inserted in a polyethylene or polypropylene bag with a heat sealed closure. A pair of plexiglas plates were used as support around the bag. Once sealed and in the support plates, electrolyte was added using a syringe and needle. This type of cell was used extensively to evaluate cathode yield, various types of double anodes, carbon black, variation in anode and cathode thickness, and alterations in the electrolyte. Each of these is described under its respective heading.

After evaluation of the basic parameters of the system using bag cells, the first wound sealed cells were made using a "half-D" configuration. The cell was hermetically sealed using glass-to-metal seals, and incorporated a low pressure safety vent on the bottom of the cell case which would open at 150 psi. A description of the sealed cell is as follows:



#### PRELIMINARY CELL DESIGN

CELL CASE: 1.135" diameter x 1.50" tall ( $1.5 \text{ in}^3/27.25\text{cc}$ )  
304 Stainless steel  
Glass-to-metal seal  
150 psi safety vent

CATHODE: 90% Acetylene Black/10% Dupont Teflon  
12.5" x 0.95" x 0.022" ( $153 \text{ cm}^3$ )  
Exmet expanded nickel grid

ANODE: Annealed calcium foil on expanded nickel  
grid 13.5" x 0.95" x 0.22"

SEPARATOR: Non-woven glass 0.012" thick  
Reeve Angel or Dexter

ELECTROLYTE: 1.0 molar  $\text{LiAlCl}_4/\text{SOCl}_2$   
22 grams average

Efficiencies of the various electrodes, as well as changes in electrolyte purification, molarity and preparation methods were evaluated in these cells. Data from this first cell design was used to design a second more optimized version of the cell. The second design differed from the first in that the cathode thickness was reduced to increase surface area of the electrodes by 30%. All cells used in the final discharge characterization and safety investigation were constructed using the optimum configuration with the same low pressure safety vent assembly used in the first cell design.

#### OPTIMIZED CELL DESIGN

##### "HALF-D" CELL - 3.5 AH

CELL CASE: 1.135" diameter x 1.50" tall ( $1.5 \text{ in}^3/27.25\text{cc}$ )  
304 Stainless Steel  
Glass-to-metal seal  
150 psi Safety Vent

CATHODE: 90% Acetylene Black/10% Dupont Teflon  
15.5" x 1.0" x 0.017" ( $200 \text{ cm}^2$ )

ANODE: Annealed calcium foil on expanded nickel  
grid. 16.0" x 1.0" x 0.012"

SEPARATOR: Non-woven glass 0.012" thick  
Reeve Angel or Dexter

ELECTROLYTE: 1.4 molar  $\text{LiAlCl}_4/\text{SOCl}_2$   
22 grams average.

All cells were activated using a vacuum system fabricated from teflon and glass, using approximately twenty-two (22) grams of 1.4 molar lithium aluminum tetrachloride/thionyl chloride.

A discussion of the development of the major cell structures is as follows:

a) Anode Development-Calcium anodes have been used extensively in thermal battery applications, both as sheet and vapor deposited; however, the use of these traditional electrodes was not practical with respect to the current design, the vapor deposited anode being too thin and the pure sheet being too brittle. Elemental calcium as manufactured is too brittle to be bent easily; and lamination to an expanded metal current collector is difficult. Preliminary discharge data using calcium anode was accumulated in laboratory bag cells using calcium film 0.015 inches thick as received from the manufacturer with a 0.125 inch wide nickel tab spot welded to the calcium foil as a current collector. Examination of these cells after discharge showed heavy corrosion at the sites of the spot welds resulting in extremely poor contact at the tab/calcium interface. An improvement in these results was made by annealing the calcium film in an inert atmosphere. The annealing was accomplished by heating the calcium foil to its first phase change temperature in an inert atmosphere followed by slow cooling. The resulting foil was malleable, easily bent, and lent itself to lamination with an expanded metal current collector. Once laminated, the calcium foil did become somewhat work-hardened again; however, the resulting anode structure was still more manageable than the untreated calcium foil. Discharge capacities and load voltages in cells constructed with annealed and unannealed calcium anodes were compared using laboratory bag cells identical in all respects except for the

anode variation. All were subjected to a 27 ohm constant resistive load and were monitored to a cutoff voltage of 2.00 volts. Table 1 and Figure 1 clearly indicate an increased capacity from those cells containing annealed calcium.

TABLE 1

UNANNEALED VERSUS ANNEALED CALCIUM ANODES

| UNANNEALED ANODE |                 |                 |                | ANNEALED ANODE |                 |                 |                |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| TEST CELL        | ANODE THICKNESS | TIME ABOVE 2.0V | CAPACITY (MAH) | CELL NO.       | ANODE THICKNESS | TIME ABOVE 2.0V | CAPACITY (MAH) |
| 8                | .010            | 1.50            | 75             | 13             | .010            | 3.50            | 175            |
| 9                | .015            | 1.75            | 87.5           | 14             | .015            | 3.65            | 182.5          |
| 10               | .020            | 1.70            | 85.0           | 15             | .020            | 3.72            | 186            |

The increased capacity seemed primarily due to improved electrical contact at the calcium/current collector interface. Although the calcium foil was annealed in a vacuum oven, the annealing atmosphere was never pure enough to prevent some oxide or nitride formation. When removed from the vacuum oven, the calcium ranged from a medium to dark gray, always considerably darker than before processing. To examine the consequences of the filming, discharge tests were made using calcium in varying states of oxidation as given in Table 2. Anodes were used in three (3) forms: gray as removed from the oven; polished by sanding with fine emery cloth; and heavily filmed, by exposing the anode to a 75% RH atmosphere for 60 minutes. All were discharged through 27 ohms in bag cells (5 cm<sup>2</sup> electrodes). Table 2 indicates a general lack of sensitivity towards the condition of the anode surface, evidenced by the constant capacity produced by all samples.



Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
OPEN LABORATORY CELLS  
ANNEALED VERSUS UNANNEALED CALCIUM  
RATE: 0.05 AMP

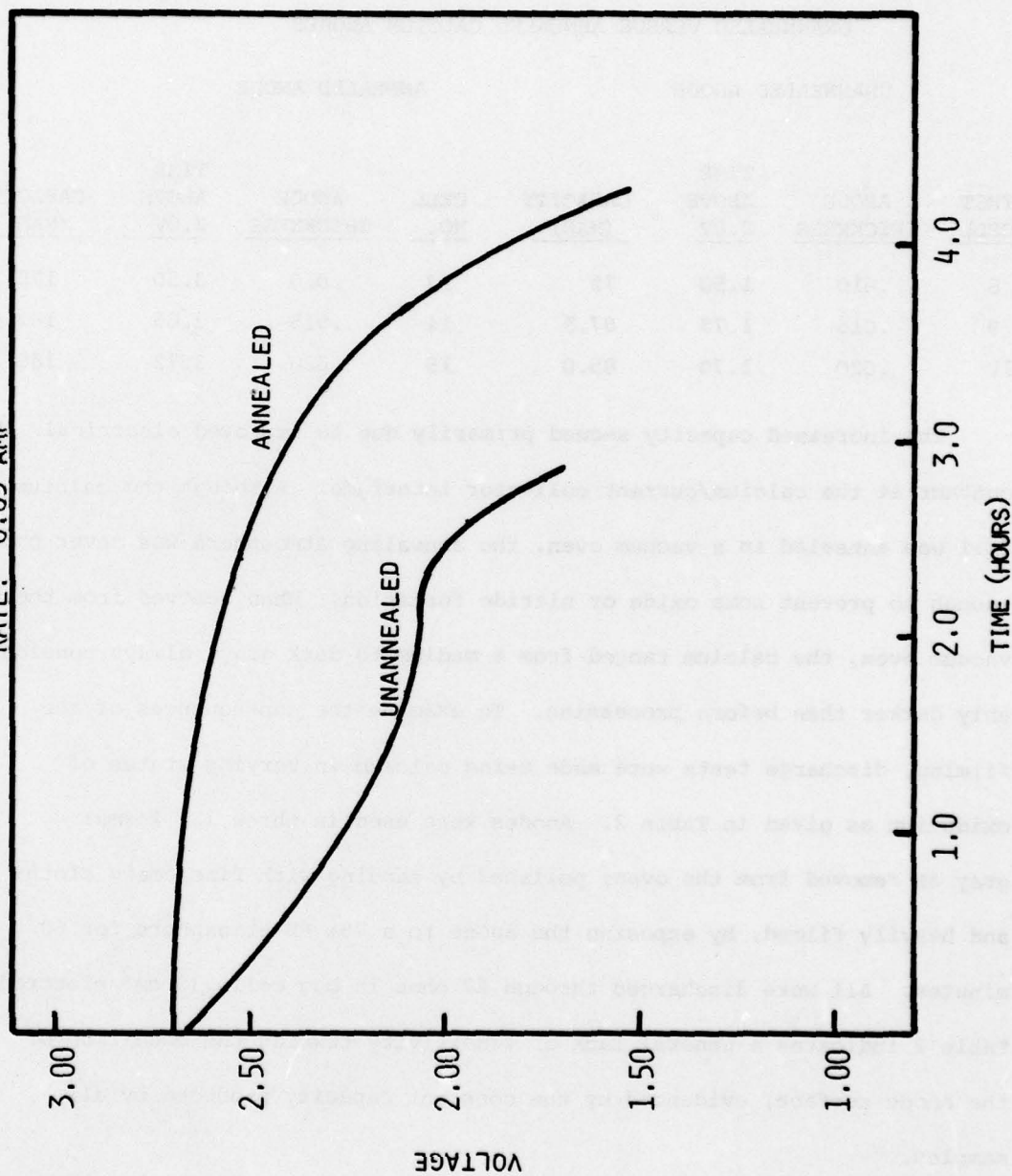


FIGURE 1 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> OPEN LABORATORY CELLS ANNEALED VS. UNANNEALED CALCIUM-RATE: 0.05 AMP

TABLE 2

| EFFECT OF ANODE SURFACE ON DISCHARGE                          |                                   |                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <u>ANODE PREPARATION</u>                                      | <u>SURFACE CONDITION</u>          | <u>DISCHARGE TIME ABOVE 2.00 V</u> |
| 1) No preparation, used as received                           | Some film (med. gray)             | 45 minutes                         |
| 2) Polished (with fine emery paper) surface slightly abraded. | Shiny, film removed               | 40 minutes                         |
| 3) No preparation, exposed to 75% humidity for 60 minutes.    | Heavily filmed, surface blackened | 45 minutes                         |

These results were observed repeatedly in an assortment of test vehicles throughout Phase I.

Based on these results, anodes used in sealed cells throughout the program have been used without any special care devoted to maintaining the original shiney surface.

b) Cathode Development - The original approach to the cathode for this system was to simply adapt the inert, teflon bound carbon black cathodes used in lithium/thionyl chloride cells to calcium/thionyl chloride. Initial discharges, however, indicated that a direct substitution of cathodes might not be practical, i.e. a cathode which works well with  $\text{Li/SOCl}_2$  might not work well with  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$ . The first cells discharged yielded very poor cathode efficiency, a problem illustrated by the following matrix of nine (9) cells which utilized cathodes of varying thicknesses from 1.1 mm to 5.1 mm.

Cells were identical with the exception of cathode thickness, composed of  $5 \text{ cm}^2$  electrodes and discharged in polyethylene bags. Throughout the range of current densities, the capacity of the cells remained constant

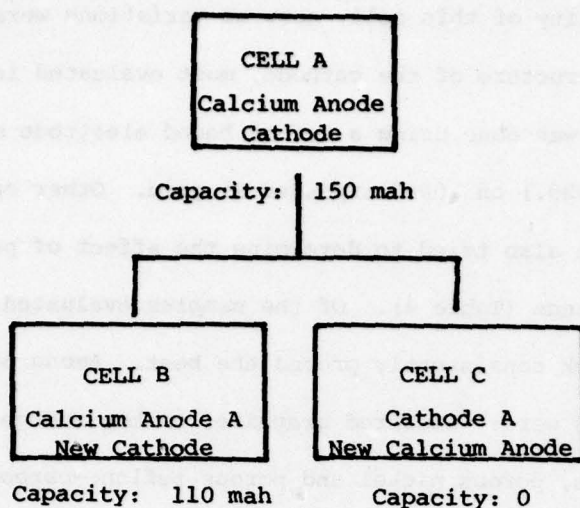
for all cathode thicknesses. Post mortem of the cells revealed them to be flooded with electrolyte and with excess calcium remaining at the anode, indicating that the source of the poor capacity might be the cathode.

TABLE 3

| PRELIMINARY CURRENT DENSITY VS. CATHODE THICKNESS |                                     |                                  |                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                                   | <u>2.7 ma/cm<sup>2</sup></u>        | <u>5.0 ma/cm<sup>2</sup></u>     | <u>9.6 ma/cm<sup>2</sup></u>    |
| <u>CATHODE THICKNESS</u>                          |                                     |                                  |                                 |
| 1.3mm                                             | Cap.* - 150 mah<br>Voltage** - 2.87 | Cap. - 155 mah<br>Voltage - 2.60 | Cap. - 70 mah<br>Voltage - 2.54 |
| 2.5mm                                             | Cap. - 145 mah<br>Voltage - 2.80    | Cap. - 172 mah<br>Voltage - 2.70 | Cap. - 70 mah<br>Voltage - 2.55 |
| 5.1mm                                             | Cap. - 156 mah<br>Voltage - 2.84    | Cap. - 170 mah<br>Voltage - 2.70 | Cap. - 72 mah<br>Voltage - 2.60 |
| Average Discharge Time                            | 5.6 hours                           | 3.4 hours                        | 0.73 hours                      |
| * Above 2.0 volts                                 |                                     |                                  |                                 |
| ** Average Discharge Voltage                      |                                     |                                  |                                 |

This assumption was verified in two ways. Three (3) electrode cells using a lithium wire as the third electrode revealed that cell failure was due to cathode polarization rather than anode. In addition, an electrode substitution test was made which indicated the cathode to be the failed electrode. The substitution test was made by discharging a bag cell until failure, then disassembling the cell and constructing two (2) new cells, one using the discharged anode with a fresh cathode, and a second using the discharged cathode with a new anode. Subsequent discharge of the two cells showed that no further capacity could be withdrawn from the discharged cathode, while the discharged anode produced almost as much capacity as during the original run.

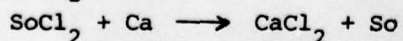
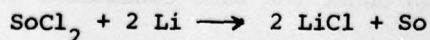




The conclusions reached from these experiments were that the prime cause of reduced capacity from the system lay in premature cathode failure, and that the failure was probably caused by a clogging of the cathode with reaction products, presumably at the electrode surface. The penetration of the cathode seemed to be constant regardless of the thickness of the electrode.

Spent cathodes were examined and found to contain  $\text{CaCl}_2$ . A quantitative determination of the  $\text{CaCl}_2$  present in a cathode which had produced 1.5 AH yielded 6.8 gms. This quantity is not unrealistic if the reaction mechanism considered is  $\text{SOCl}_2 + \text{Ca} \longrightarrow \text{CaCl}_2 + \text{So}$ , which would predict a  $\text{CaCl}_2$  content of 7.25 grams after 3.5 AH. By comparison with the analogous lithium system, with which the problem cathodes performed well, an examination of reactant volumes predicted some loss in capacity.

Assuming the capacity limiting factor to be reactant volume and the overall energy producing reactions to be:



the volume of  $\text{LiCl}$  per AH is  $.77 \text{ cm}^3$  compared with  $96 \text{ cm}^3$   $\text{CaCl}_2$  per AH.

This alone predicts a 20% reduction in capacity.

Due to the low capacity of this cell, several variations were made in the composition and structure of the cathode, most evaluated in bag cells. The initial work was done using a teflon bound electrode of Columbian carbon black (929.) on .005" expanded Ni grid. Other carbon blacks and graphites were also tried to determine the effect of particle size on cathode performance (Table 4). Of the samples evaluated, Shawinigan Acetylene Black consistently proved the best. Among other cathode samples evaluated were: sintered graphite, carbon sponge, carbon felt, carbon monofluoride, porous nickel and porous teflon--carbon--films. All suffered from low surface areas and all discharged at reduced voltage under load. Dry hot-formed electrodes, carbon black "pocket" plates formed by packing carbon mixtures into porous nickel envelopes, and pelletized carbon formed by blending carbon black with alcohol were also tried but failed to produce a suitable cathode for the  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$ .

The cathodes used in half-D cells were made using teflon bound acetylene black. The cathodes were formed to a thickness of .022" to alleviate as much as possible the clogging effect noted in larger electrodes. The first sealed cells using this electrode had a surface area of  $153 \text{ cm}^2$ .

To evaluate the cathode and anode, the "half-D" cells incorporated a lithium reference electrode. Normal discharge at room temperature indicated that the cathode was polarizing to a far greater extent than the anode. A plot of this data in Figure 2 shows cathode polarization going from 410 millivolts to 1010 millivolts with respect to the lithium reference electrode while anode polarization under the same conditions varied from 20 millivolts to 120 millivolts.

TABLE 4  
CARBON BLACKS EVALUATED

| <u>CARBON TYPE</u>                   | <u>PARTICLE DIAMETER</u> | <u>STRUCTURE</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Shawinigan Acetylene Black           | 42 nanometer             | -                |
| Degussa Corax                        | 28                       | 480              |
| Huber N-339                          | 23                       | 128              |
| Huber N-650                          | 60                       | 125              |
| Huber N-765                          | 23                       | 103              |
| Huber N-326                          | 29                       | 75               |
| Huber N-762                          | 76                       | 65               |
| Huber N-330                          | 29                       | 103              |
| Ashland N-650                        | 68                       | 134              |
| Ashland N-762                        | 74                       | 80               |
| Ashland N-375                        | 26                       | 102              |
| Ashland N-339                        | 22                       | 114              |
| Cabot Monarch 1300                   | 13                       | 121              |
| Cabot Monarch 1100                   | 14                       | 65               |
| Cabot Monarch 880                    | 16                       | 120              |
| Black Perl 1300                      | 13                       | 105              |
| Black Perl 1100                      | 14                       | 50               |
| Black Perl 880                       | 16                       | 110              |
| Vulcan XC72                          | 30                       | 185              |
| Vulcan XC72R                         | 30                       | 178              |
| Regal 336                            | 62                       | 25               |
| Regal 330R                           | 62                       | 70               |
| Mineral Lamp Black 8405              |                          |                  |
| Mineral Carbon Black C391            |                          |                  |
| Mineral Water Dispersable Balck 8452 |                          |                  |



CELL POLARIZATION  
ROOM TEMPERATURE DISCHARGE  
RATE: 0.05 AMP

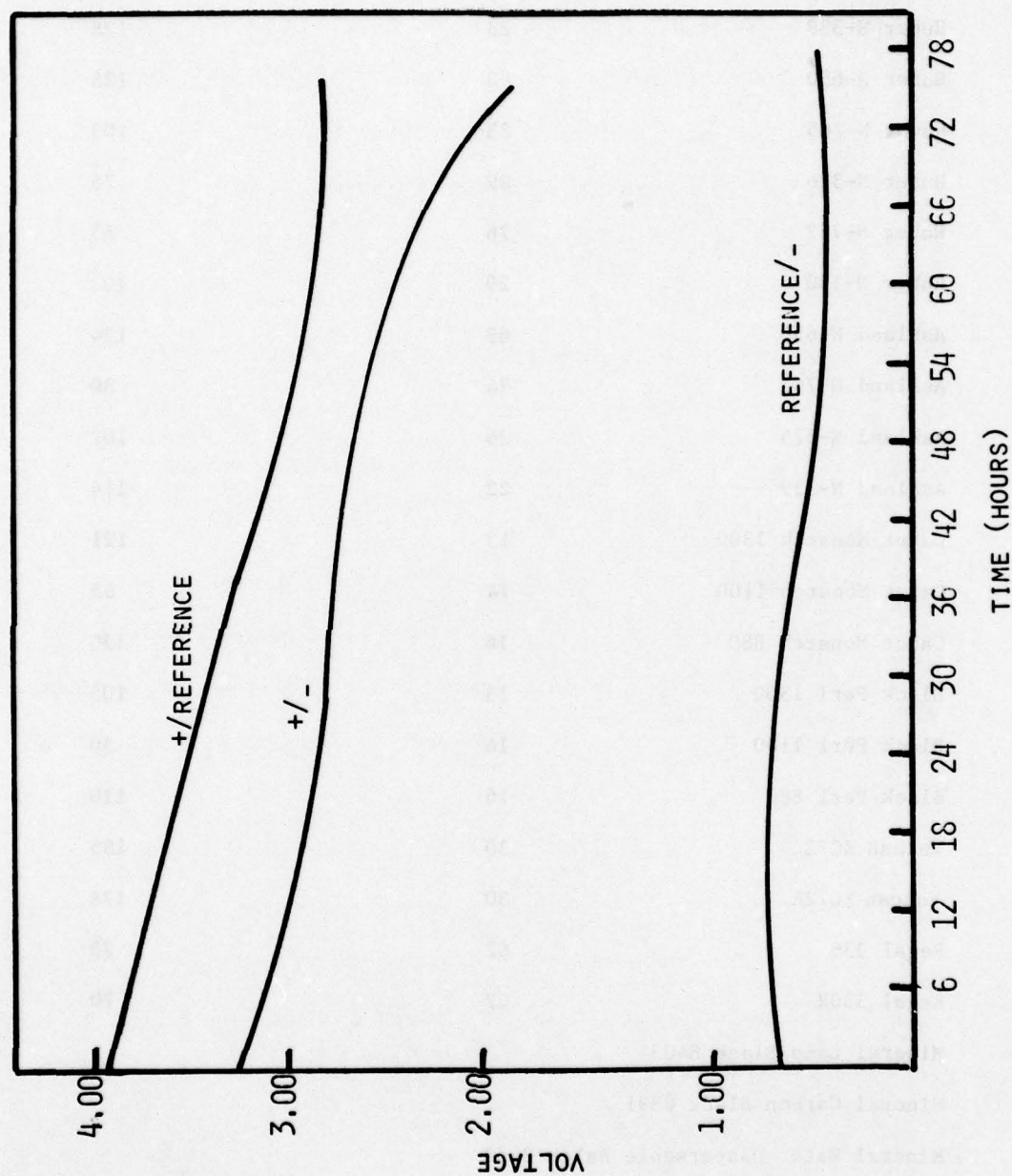


FIGURE 2 CELL POLARIZATION - ROOM TEMPERATURE DISCHARGE - RATE: 0.05 AMP

# CELL POLARIZATION TEST SHORT CIRCUIT TEST

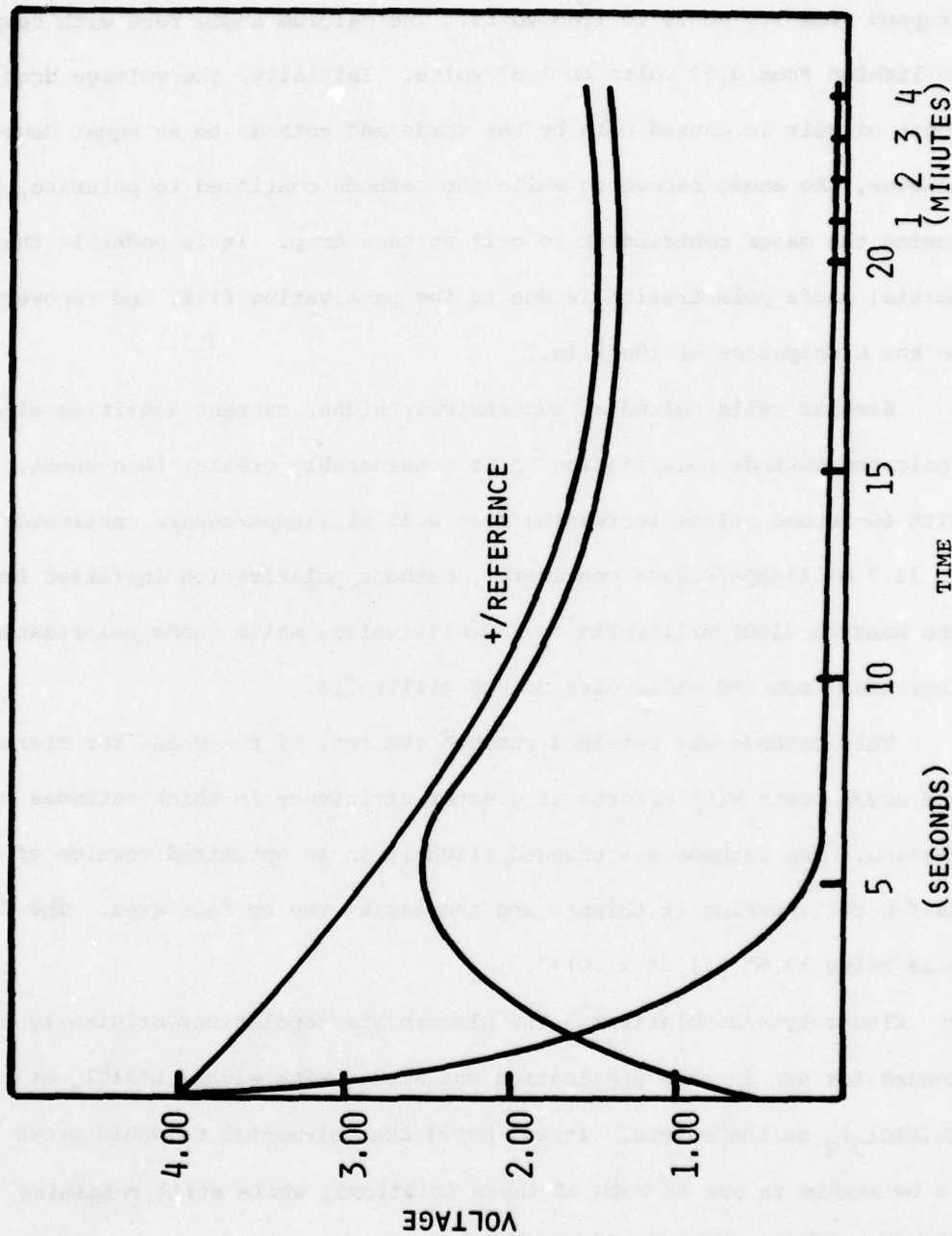


FIGURE 3 CELL POLARIZATION TEST - SHORT CIRCUIT TEST

When these cells with reference electrodes were short circuited, the cathode also exhibited a greater degree of polarization. Figure 3 is representative of all cells tested. Half cell voltages stabilized within twenty (20) seconds. With respect to lithium, the cathode voltage dropped from 3.9 volts to 1.46 volts. The calcium anode rose with respect to lithium from 0.57 volts to 1.37 volts. Initially, the voltage drop on short circuit is caused both by the anode and cathode to an equal degree; however, the anode recovered while the cathode continued to polarize, becoming the major contributor to cell voltage drop. It is possible that initial anode polarization is due to the passivating film, and recovery to the dissipation of the film.

Similar cells pulsed at successively higher current densities also indicated cathode polarization to be considerably greater than anode. With 60-second pulses increasing from 0.35 milliamps/square centimeter to 11.7 milliamps/square centimeter, cathode polarization increased from one hundred (100) millivolts to 730 millivolts, while anode polarization increased from 180 millivolts to 500 millivolts.

This cathode was retained through the rest of the phase for storage and abuse tests with efforts at greater efficiency in thick cathodes continuing. The cathode was changed slightly in an optimized version of the half-D cell, making it thinner and increasing the surface area. The final size being 15.5" x 1.0" x .017".

c) Electrolyte/Depolarizer - The electrolyte/depolarizer originally intended for use in this application was  $\text{SOCl}_2$ , with either  $\text{LiAlCl}_4$  or  $\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_3)_2$  as the solute. It was hoped that elemental Ca would prove to be stable in one or both of these solutions, while still retaining a rapid voltage response when loaded.



The electrolyte first used in bag cell discharges was  $\text{SOCl}_2/\text{LiAlCl}_4$  and  $\text{SOCl}_2/\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_3)_2$ . Salts were iron free obtained from Fluke A.S., solvents were obtained from Eastman and re-distilled prior to use. These electrolyte solutions were used successfully in cells, discharging with the expected efficiency. However, in ampule tests of these solutions in contact with foil Ca samples (Table 5 & 6), the Ca filmed and in some cases generated enough gas to rupture the glass ampule after two (2) weeks storage at  $50^\circ\text{C}$ . Filming and/or decomposition of the Ca occurred only in salt solutions of  $\text{SOCl}_2$  and not in the pure  $\text{SOCl}_2$ . Control ampules having Li samples instead of Ca generally showed less change in all solutions than those previously mentioned. None of the electrolyte samples were analyzed for water or other impurity contents. Molarities of the salt solutions were either .5M or 1.0M. One molar was used as the upper limit due to what seemed a limitation of  $\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_3)_2$  solubility in the  $\text{SOCl}_2$ . Solutions of  $\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_3)_2$  greater than 1.0 M produced a precipitate which went back into solution upon addition of  $\text{AlCl}_3$ .

A conductimetric titration was done by adding pure  $\text{CaCl}_2$  to a 2.0 molal solution of  $\text{AlCl}_3$  in  $\text{SOCl}_2$  and monitoring the solution resistance using a 1 KHz AC resistance bridge. The resulting curve, Figure 4, indicates a stabilized conductivity and the onset of precipitation at an approximate mole ratio of 3 parts  $\text{AlCl}_3$  to 1 part  $\text{CaCl}_2$ . The precipitate which occurred after the 3:1 ratio was reached was  $\text{CaCl}_2$ . This would seem to indicate that we were not seeing the expected  $\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_3)_2$  species in  $\text{SOCl}_2$  solution. A similar titration made by adding  $\text{LiCl}$  to a solution of  $\text{AlCl}_3$  in  $\text{SOCl}_2$  was performed with the expected results of a stable conductivity at a 1:1 mole ratio. The results of that titration was shown in Figure 5.

MATERIAL COMPATIBILITY EVALUATION SUMMARY

ROOM TEMPERATURE

1 Month Test Period

TABLE 5

| SAMPLE TESTED                                                    | SOCl <sub>2</sub>         | SO <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> | 1.0m Ca(AlCl <sub>4</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> /SOCl <sub>2</sub> | 1.0m Ca(AlCl <sub>4</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> /SOCl <sub>2</sub>   | 1.0m LiAlCl <sub>4</sub> /SOCl <sub>2</sub> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1. Calcium strip-polished                                        | Surface slightly darkened | Surface slightly darkened       | Surface uniformly dark                                      | Surface uniformly dark<br>Edges corroded                      | Surface slightly darkened                   |
| 2. Calcium strip-laminated to nickel grid-nickel tab spot-welded | Surface slightly darkened | Surface slightly darkened       | Surface uniformly dark                                      | Surface uniformly dark<br>Edges corroded<br>Spotweld attacked | Surface slightly darkened                   |
| 3. Lithium strip                                                 | No change                 | No change                       | Edges slightly darkened                                     | Edges darkened                                                | No change                                   |
| 4. Lithium strip-laminated to nickel grid-nickel tab spot-welded | No change                 | No change                       | Edges slightly darkened                                     | Edges darkened                                                | No change                                   |
| 5. Nickel tab                                                    | No change                 | No change                       | No change                                                   | No change                                                     | No change                                   |
| 6. Expanded nickel grid                                          | No change                 | No change                       | No change                                                   | No change                                                     | No change                                   |
| 7. 304 Stainless Steel                                           | No change                 | No change                       | Mild discoloration                                          | Mild discoloration                                            | Mild discoloration                          |
| 8. 304 Stainless Steel                                           | No change                 | No change                       | Mild discoloration                                          | Mild discoloration                                            | Mild discoloration                          |

TABLE 6  
CALCIUM STABILITY STUDY - 120°F

| SOLVENT                                                              | POLISHED                                   |                                                                                       |                                                                              |                                               | UNPREPARED                                                              |                                                                               |           |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                                                                      | 24 Hours                                   | 7 Days                                                                                | 14 Days                                                                      | 24 Hours                                      | 7 Days                                                                  | 14 Days                                                                       |           |           |
| 1.0 $\text{SOCl}_2$<br>Pure                                          | Slightly gray<br>Some dulling<br>of finish | No change                                                                             | No change                                                                    | No change                                     | No change                                                               | No change                                                                     | No change | No change |
| 2.0 $\text{SOCl}_2$<br>0.5m<br>$\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_4)_2$          | Slightly gray<br>Some dulling<br>of finish | Blackened<br>uniformly<br>50% corrosion                                               | Surface uni-<br>formly black<br>75% corrosion<br>flaky residue<br>in solvent | No apparent<br>change                         | Surface uniformly<br>blackened<br>50% corrosion                         | Surface uniformly<br>blackened<br>75% corroded<br>flaky residue in<br>solvent |           |           |
| 3.0 $\text{SOCl}_2$<br>1.0m<br>$\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_4)_2$          | Slightly grey<br>Some dulling<br>of finish | Surface uni-<br>formly black-<br>ened<br>75% corrosion<br>flaky residue<br>in solvent | Sample com-<br>pletely de-<br>composed<br>heavy residue                      | No apparent<br>change                         | Surface uniformly<br>blackened<br>75% corroded                          | Sample completely<br>decomposed<br>heavy residue                              |           |           |
| 4.0 $\text{SOCl}_2$<br>1.0m<br>$\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_4)_2$          | Slightly duller<br>finish                  | Surface uni-<br>formly black<br>Some corrosion<br>along edges<br>No residue           | Unchanged<br>No residue                                                      | No obvious<br>change                          | Surface uniformly<br>black<br>Some corrosion<br>on edges,<br>No residue | Unchanged                                                                     |           |           |
| 5.0 $\text{SO}_2\text{Cl}_2$<br>0.5m<br>$\text{Ca}(\text{AlCl}_4)_2$ | Sample black-<br>ened<br>heavy corrosion   | Sample ex-<br>ploded<br>36 - 48 hrs.<br>into storage                                  | Sample ex-<br>ploded<br>36 - 48 hrs.<br>into storage                         | Sample black-<br>ened<br>heavy corro-<br>sion | Sample exploded<br>36 - 48 hrs.<br>into storage                         | Sample exploded<br>36 - 48 hrs.<br>into storage                               |           |           |



# CONDUCTIMETRIC TITRATION

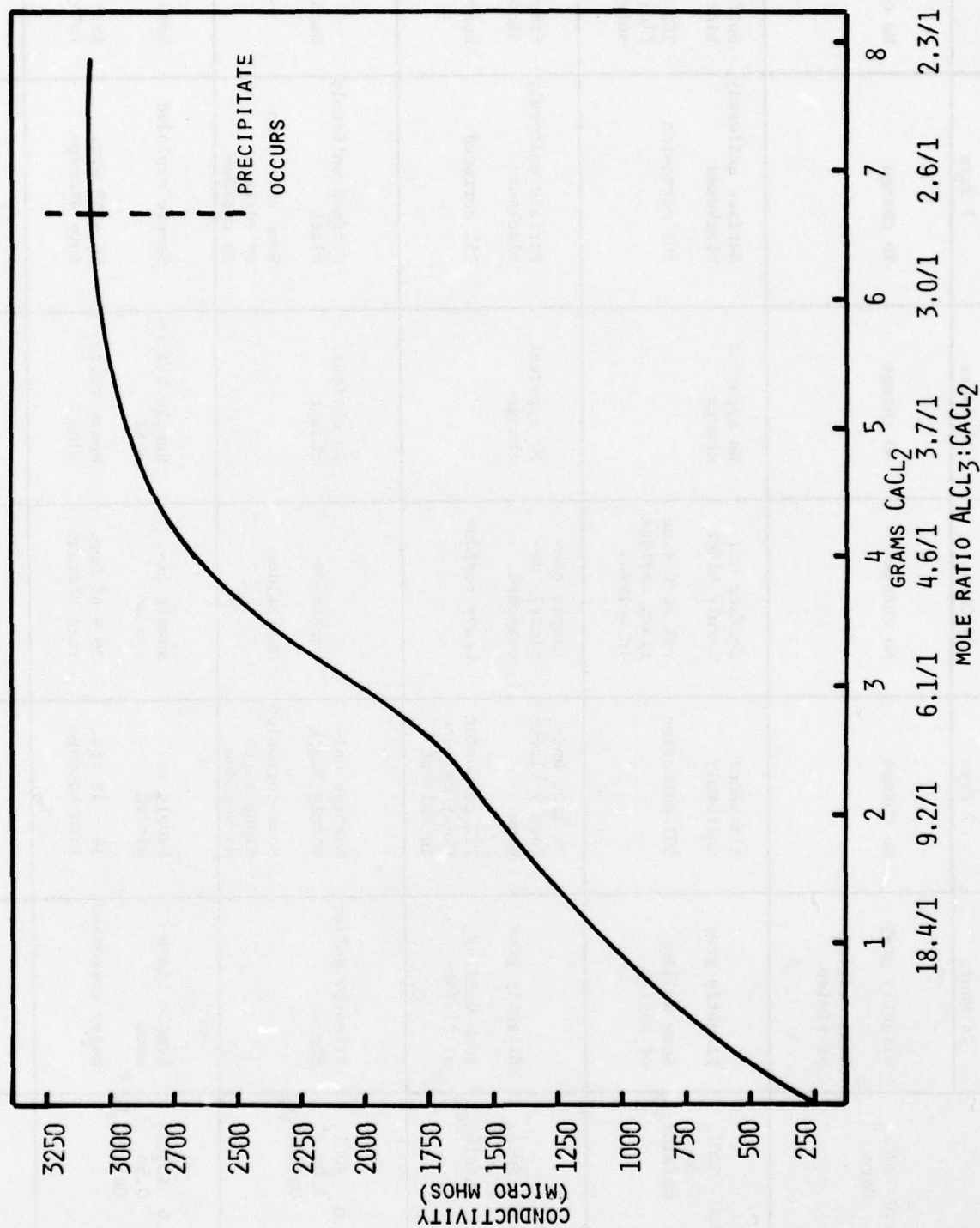


FIGURE 4 CONDUCTIMETRIC TITRATION

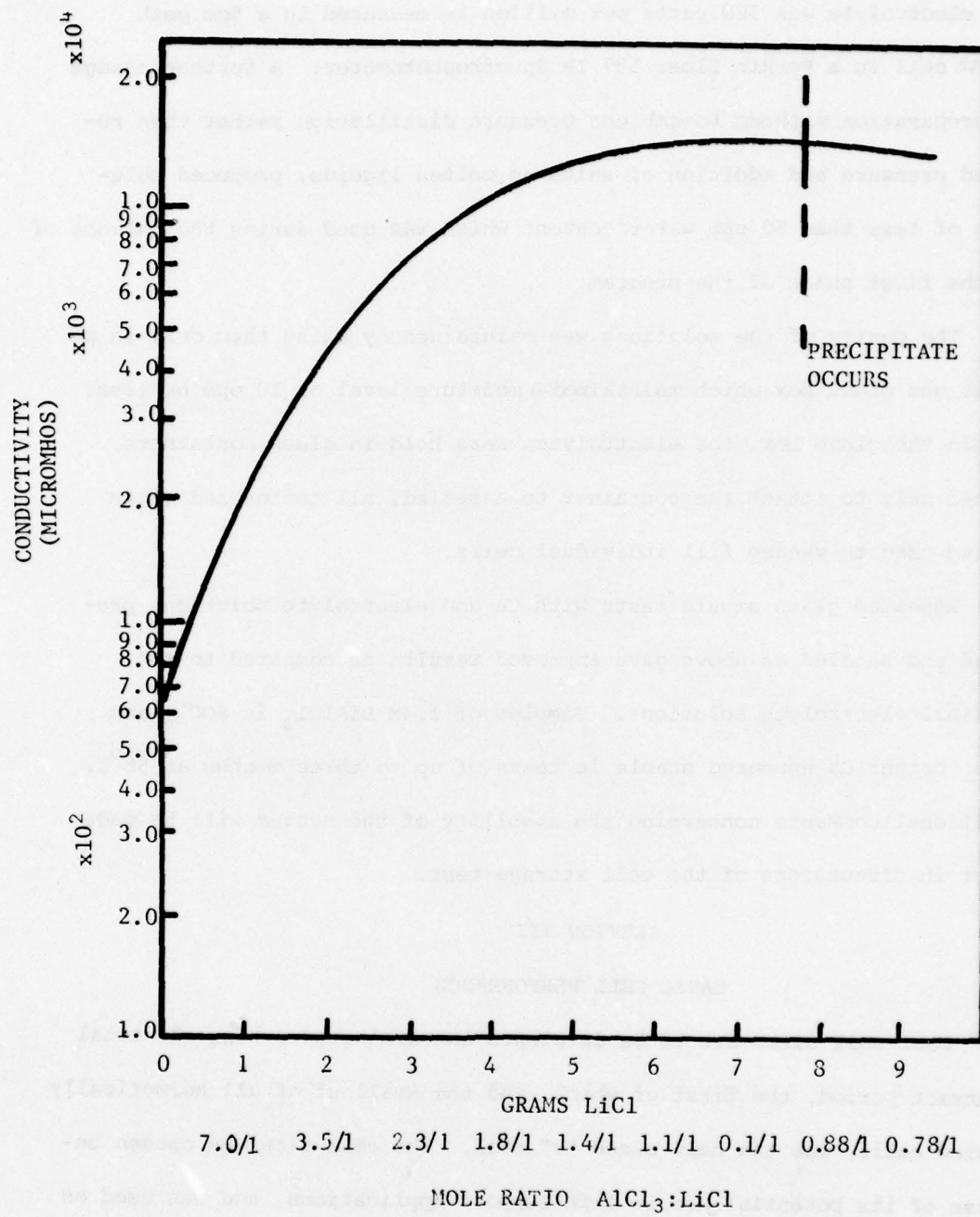


Figure 5 CONDUCTIMETRIC TITRATION  
 $\text{AlCl}_3/\text{LiCl}$

A modified distillation procedure was used to prepare  $\text{SOCl}_2$  for use in sealed "half-D" cells, 1.4 molar in  $\text{LiAlCl}_4$ . Water content of the electrolyte was 300 parts per million as measured in a 5cm path length cell in a Perkin Elmer 597 IR Spectrophotometer. A further change in preparation methods to ambient pressure distillation rather than reduced pressure and addition of salts as molten liquids, produced solution of less than 50 ppm water content which was used during the balance of the first phase of the program.

The purity of the solutions was maintained by using them only in an inert gas glove box which maintained a moisture level of 10 ppm or less. Within the glove box, the electrolytes were held in glass containers, opened only to attach the container to a sealed, all teflon and glass system used to vacuum fill individual cells.

Repeated glass ampule tests with Ca and electrolyte solutions prepared and handled as above gave improved results as compared to the original electrolyte solutions. Samples of 1.4M  $\text{LiAlCl}_4$  in  $\text{SOCl}_2$  and pure, bright Ca appeared stable in tests of up to three months at  $55^\circ\text{C}$ . Additional comments concerning the stability of the system will be made later in discussions of the cell storage test.

### SECTION III

#### BASIC CELL PERFORMANCE

Four cell sizes are to be developed and evaluated during the total contract period, the first of which, and the smallest of all hermetically sealed cells, was the half sized "D" cell. The cell size was chosen because of its potential use in life support applications, and was used as a primary vehicle for evaluating the  $\text{Ca}/\text{SOCl}_2$  system because of its small



size and therefore greater safety as well as its simplicity and ease of construction.

This cell was used in three ways during the course of this first phase: as a tool for general evaluation of the system; as a standard cell to evaluate storage capabilities; and as a standard cell for use in abuse tests.

The first design for the "half-D" cell was a cylindrical roll cell, as shown in Figure 6, contained in a 304 stainless case. The cell case had a glass-to-metal seal terminal pin and fill tube in the cover, and a 125 psi pressure release vent in the bottom. The cathode dimensions of this first design were 12.5" x 0.95" x .017". Composition was 90% acetylene black and 10% teflon on nickel Exmet. The separator was Dexter non-woven glass and the electrolyte was 22 grams of 1.0M  $\text{LiAlCl}_4$  in  $\text{SOCl}_2$ . The anode was .020" Ca foil.

The cells were discharged according to the test schedule shown in Table 7; however the results of the discharges were erratic with capacities ranging from 3.0 AH to 1.0. A group of Li anode cells built under the same conditions and with the same electrolyte produced similarly erratic results. Upon examination of the electrolyte solution, the water content proved to be 300 ppm.

A second group of cells were prepared using a new electrolyte solution and different electrode balance for re-test. This group of cells had the same overall dimensions as the first, but had cathode dimensions of 15.5" x 1.0" x .017", Ca thickness of .013", and 22 grams of 1.4M  $\text{LiAlCl}_4$  in  $\text{SOCl}_2$ , distilled by a different method and having a water, or hydrolysis product, content of less than 50 ppm.

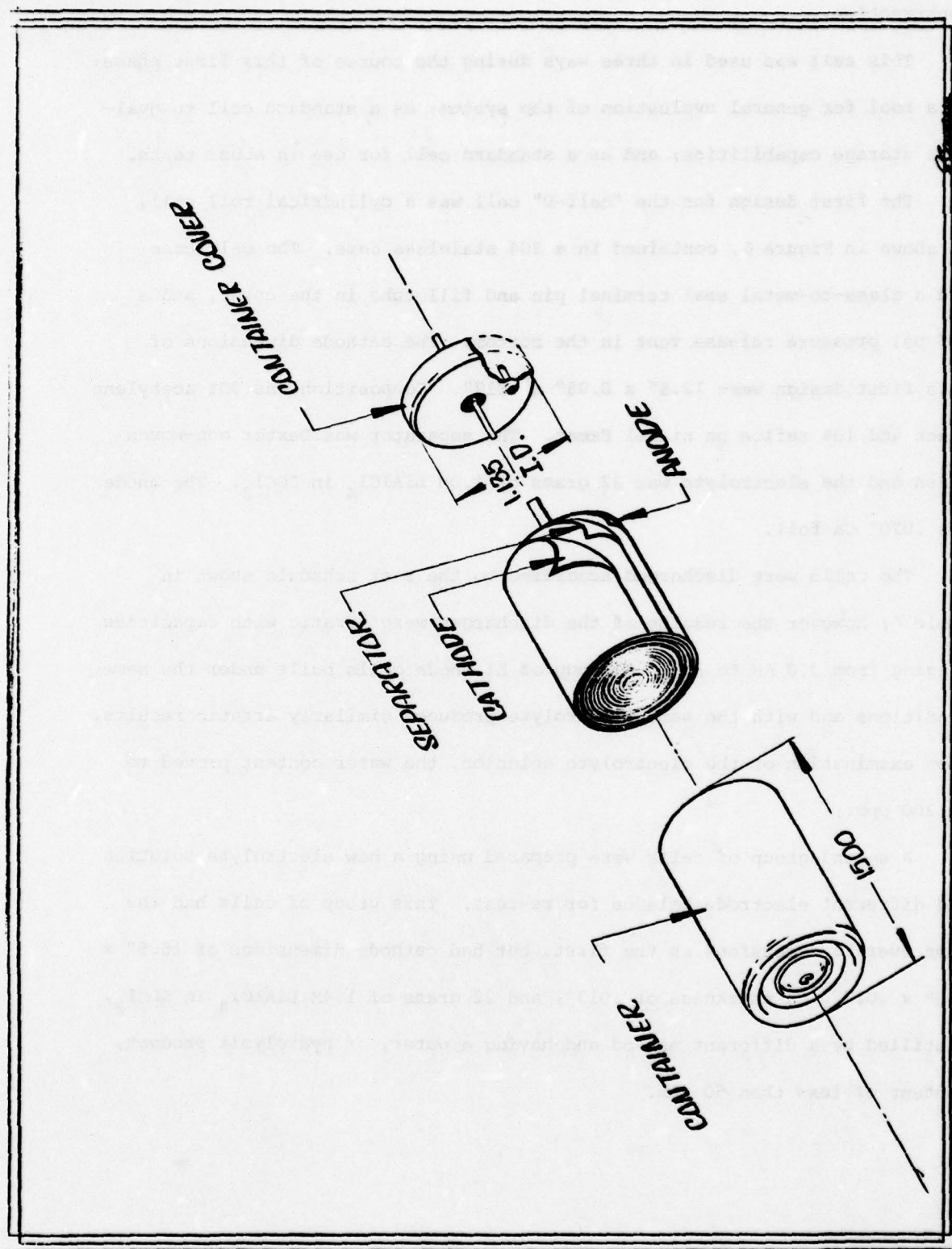


FIGURE 6  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  "HALF-D" CELL CONFIGURATION

TABLE 7

## DISCHARGE MATRIX

| Current Density |      | .25 ma/cm <sup>2</sup> | .50 ma/cm <sup>2</sup> | 2.5 ma/cm <sup>2</sup> | 5.0 ma/cm <sup>2</sup> |
|-----------------|------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Temperature     | -20° | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      |
|                 | 0°   | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      |
|                 | 75°  | 4                      | 4                      | 4                      | 4                      |
|                 | 120° | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      |
|                 | 165° | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      | 2                      |



This second group of cells was also discharged according to the matrix shown in Table 7, the referenced current densities of that table corresponding to a total cell current of 50 ma, 100 ma, 500 ma and 1000 ma respectively. Discharge of cells at 75°F at the four referenced rates is shown in Figure 7 - 10. A summary of the effects of current on capacity is given in Figure 11. A comparison of the second cell group against the first at a 40 ma discharge rate at 75°F is shown in Figure 12.

The nominal capacity of the cells at room temperature when discharged at a current of 50 ma (equivalent to .25 ma/in<sup>2</sup>) was 3.5 AH. Open circuit was 3.1 volts and internal resistance measured in a 1 K Hz milliohm meter. ranged from 600 to 800 mohms. The 3.5 AH capacity at 50 ma was reduced to approximately 2.25 AH when discharged at 1000 ma. The cells were discharged in open air and allowed to cool without restriction during discharge. No significant temperature rise was observed at 50, and 100ma rates, however a slight rise was noted at 500 ma rate, and there was a noticeable rise at the 1000 ma rate. At room temperature starting conditions, temperatures on the side of the cell case rose 28°F during the first 10-15 minutes of the 1000 ma discharge and stabilized at that temperature during the balance of the discharge. This rise in temperature is probably responsible for the relative consistency of the load voltages at various rates.

A summary of cell discharges at 50 ma to 1000 ma rates at temperature other than 75°F is given in Figure 13. Discharges at -20°F are not shown as the cells would not run above 2.0 volts. Teardown and examination of the cells revealed that water content of the electrolyte solution was much higher than that normally found. Another group of cells was tried later in the program at -20°F and were found to discharge above 2.0 volts at the

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
ROOM TEMPERATURE  
RATE: 0.05 AMP

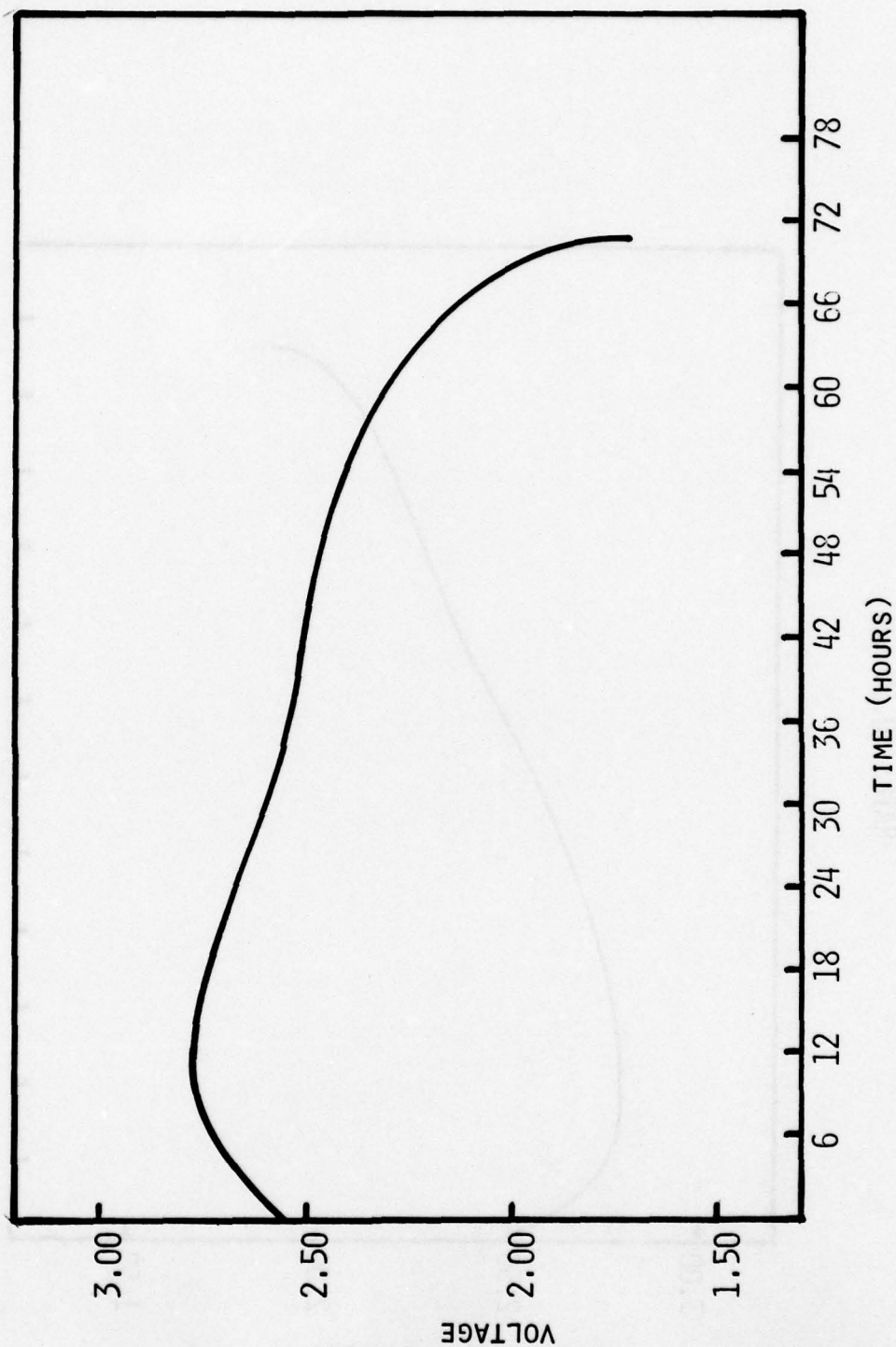


FIGURE 7 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE ROOM TEMPERATURE - RATE:0.05 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
ROOM TEMPERATURE  
RATE: 0.10 AMP

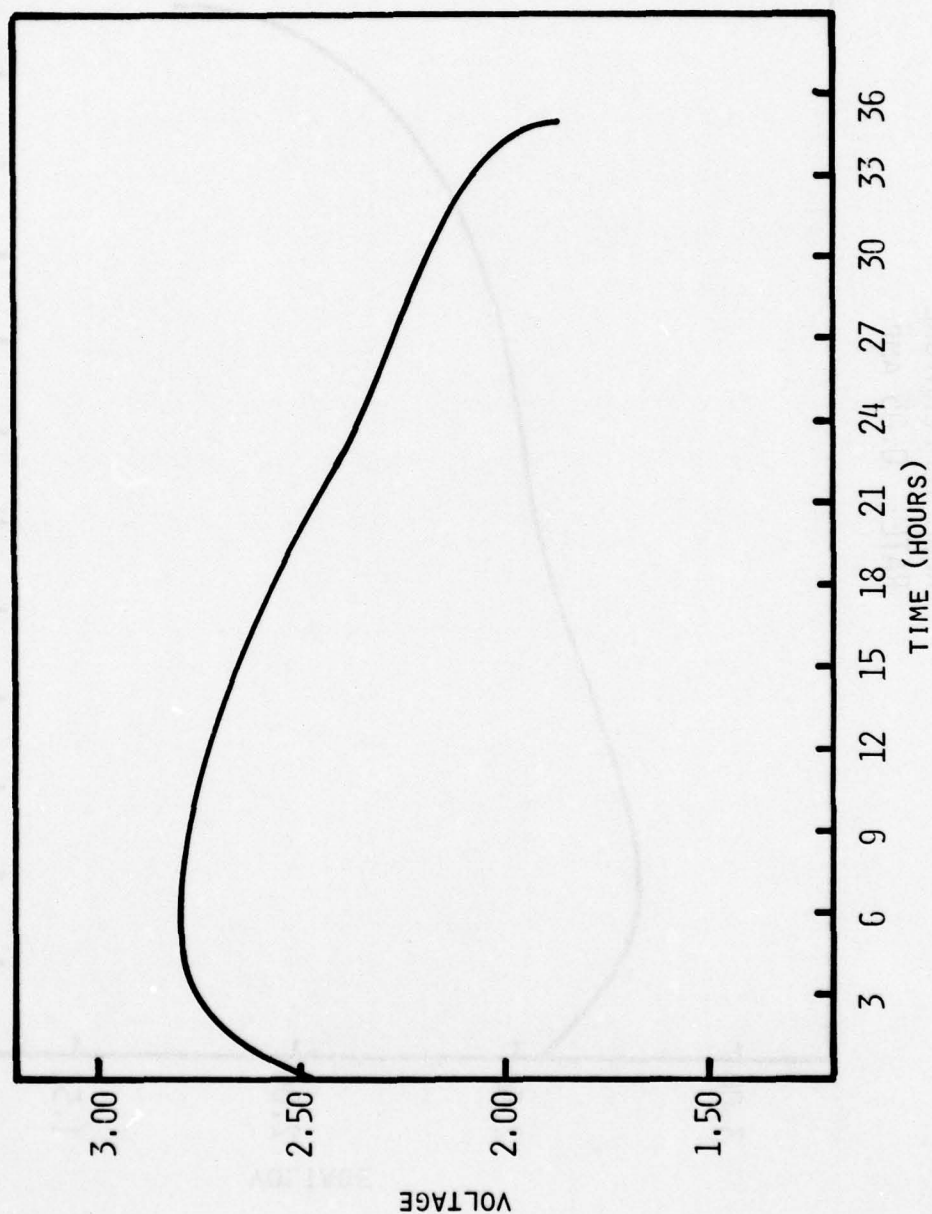


FIGURE 3 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE ROOM TEMPERATURE - RATE: 0.10 AMP



Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
ROOM TEMPERATURE  
RATE: 0.50 AMP

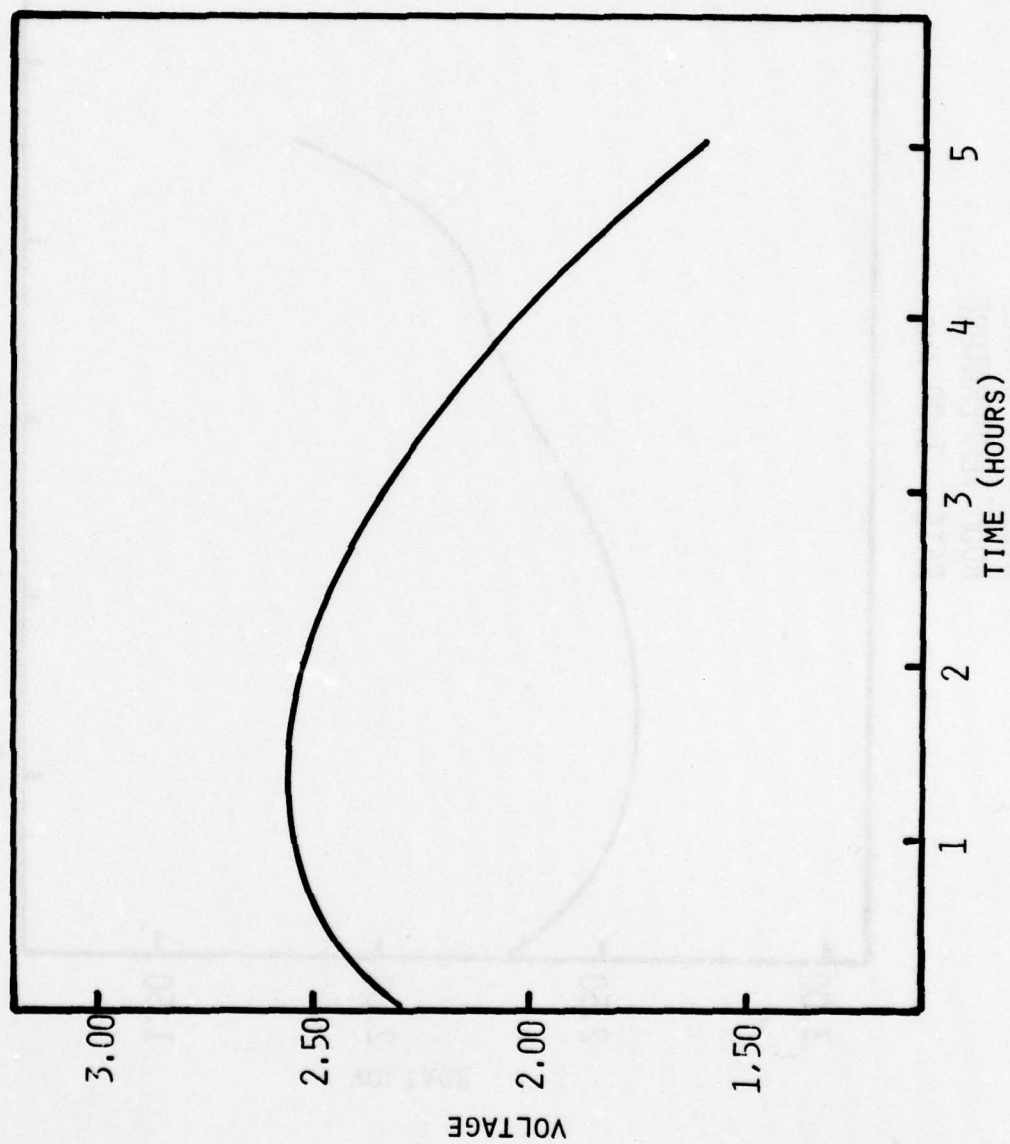


FIGURE 9 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE ROOM TEMPERATURE - RATE: 0.50 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
ROOM TEMPERATURE  
RATE: 1.00 AMP

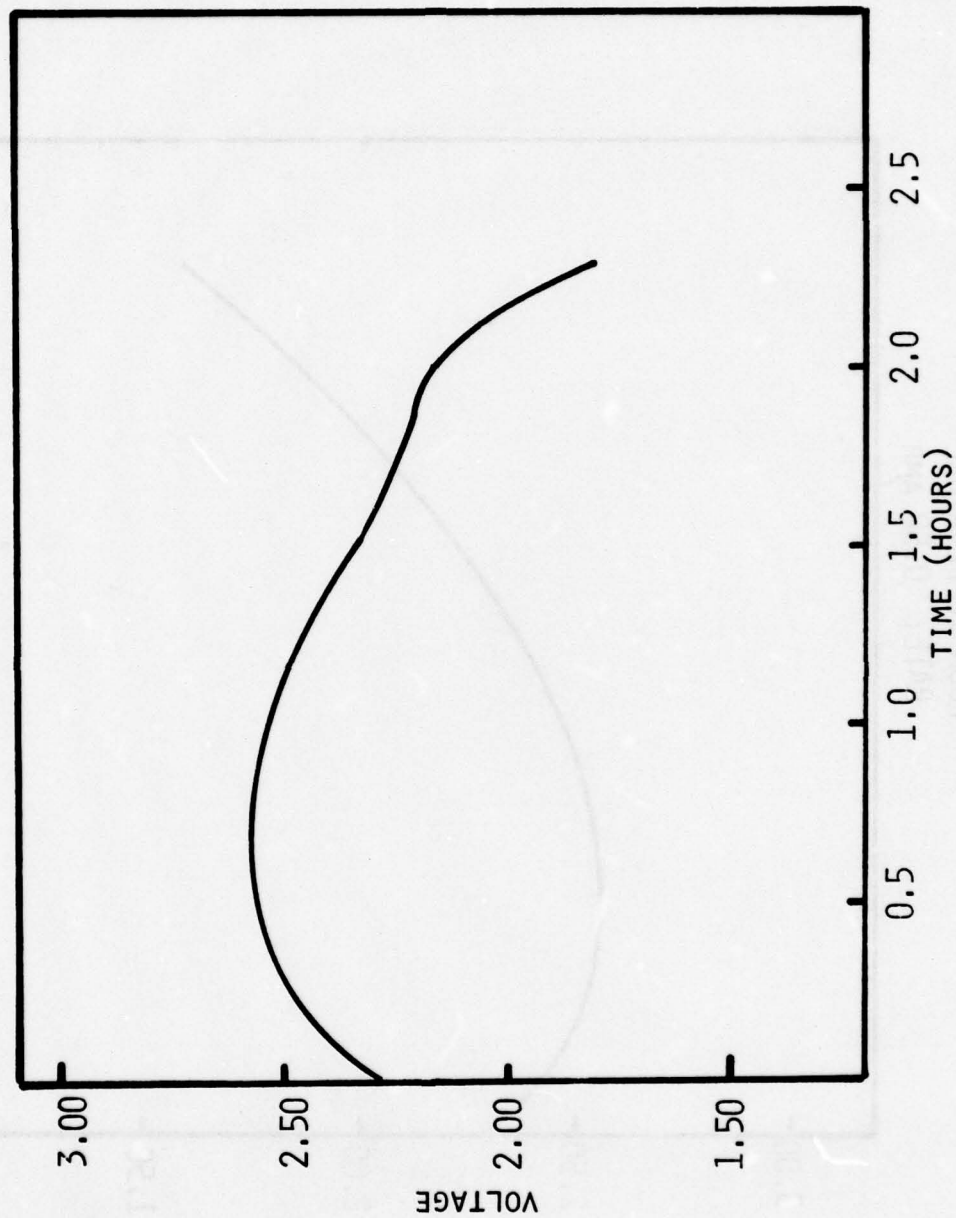


FIGURE 10 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE ROOM TEMPERATURE - RATE: 1.00 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
CAPACITY VERSUS CURRENT DENSITY  
OPTIMIZED "HALF-D" CELL

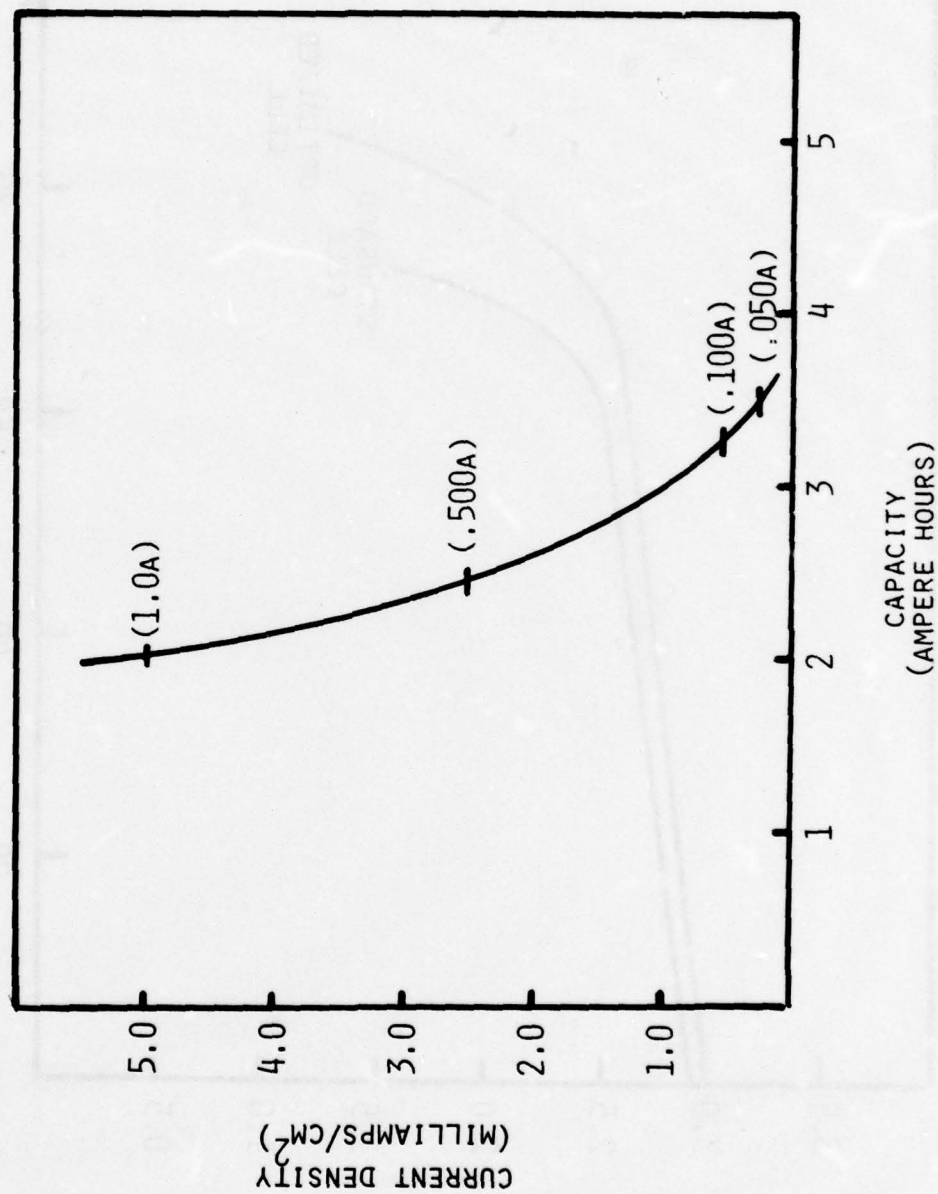


FIGURE 11 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> CAPACITY VERSUS CURRENT DENSITY OPTIMIZED "HALF-D" CELL



Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub>  
NORMAL DISCHARGE FOR "HALF-D" CELLS

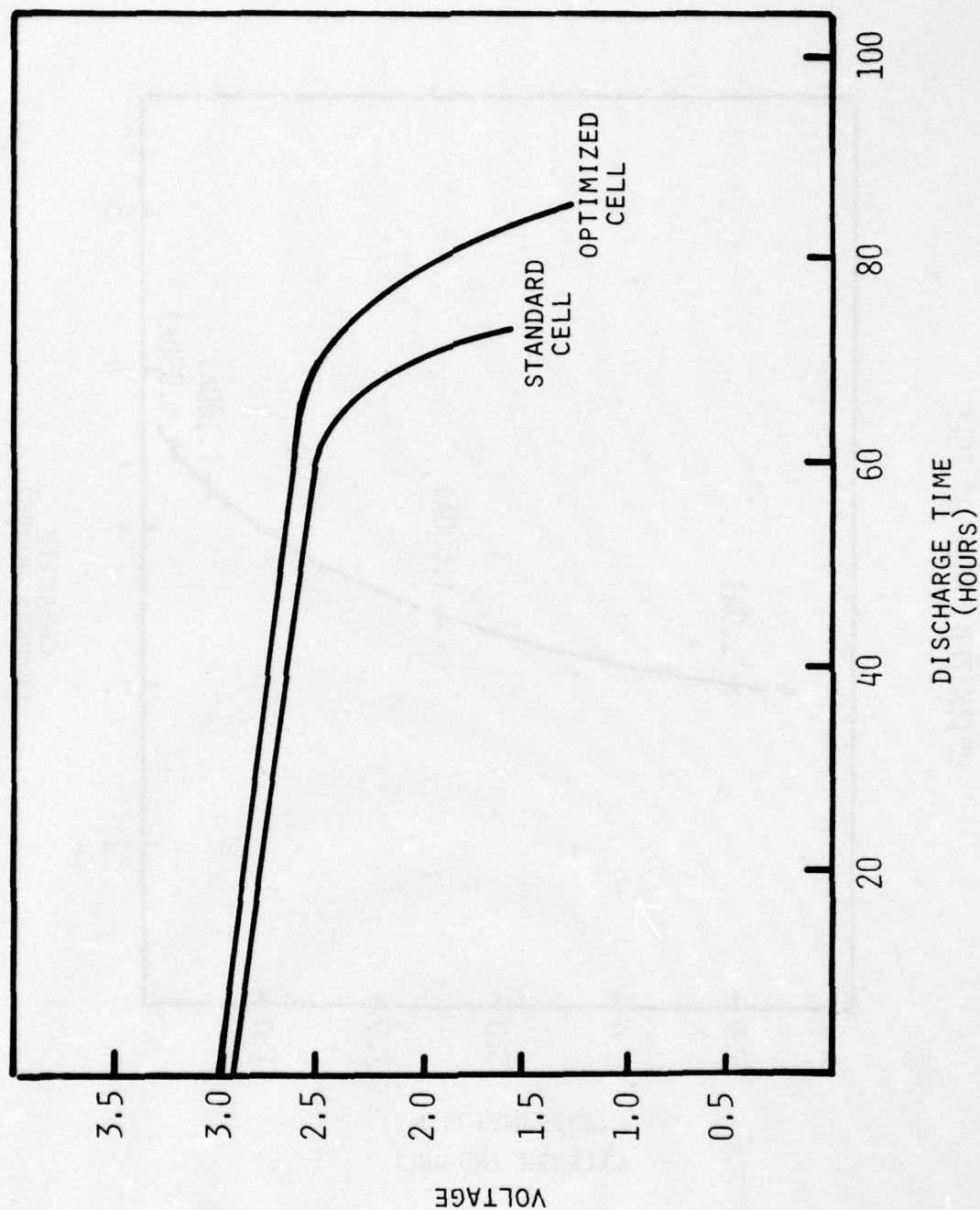


FIGURE 12 Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> NORMAL DISCHARGE FOR "HALF-D" CELLS

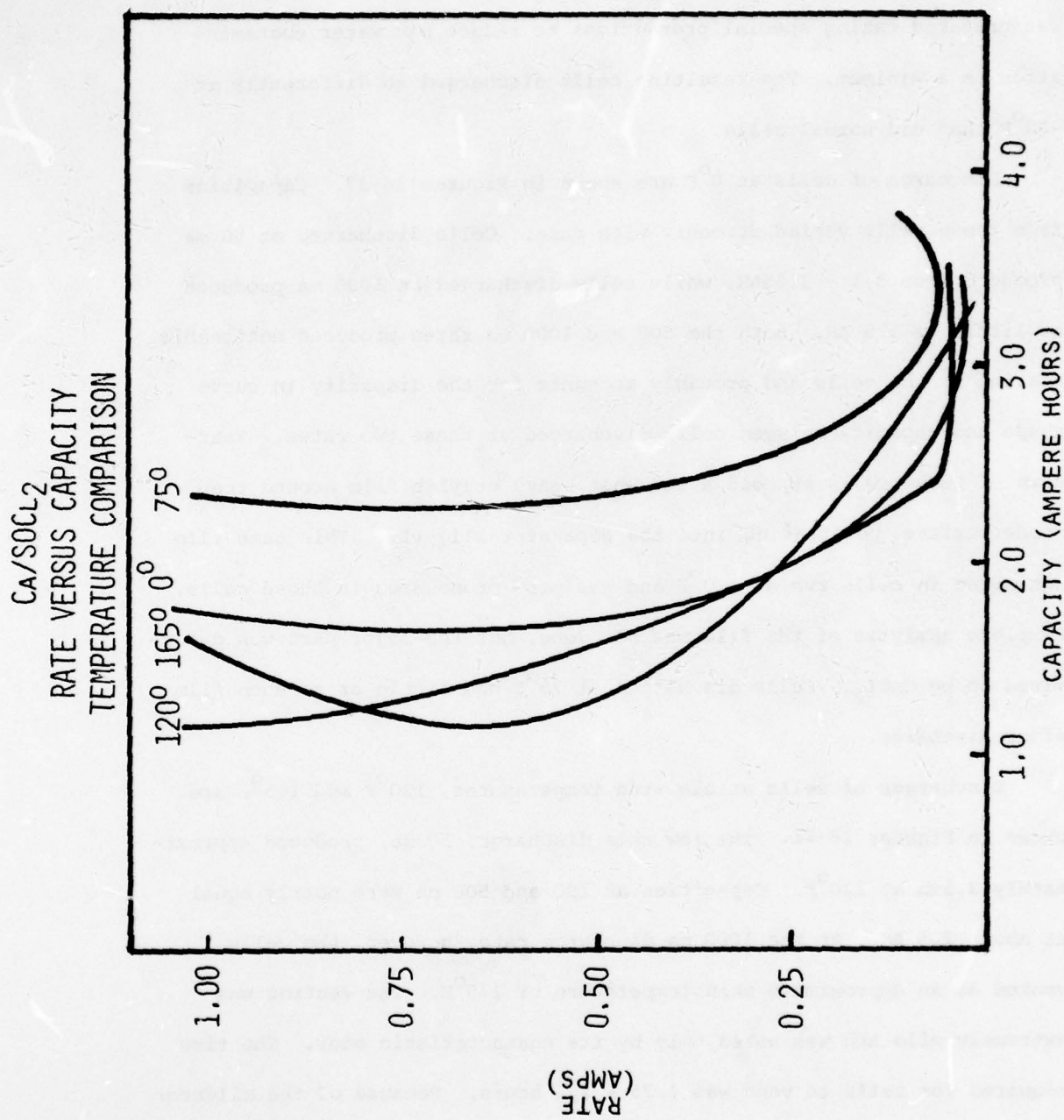


FIGURE 13 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> RATE VERSUS CAPACITY TEMPERATURE COMPARISON

50 ma rate but not at the higher rates. Discharge at  $-20^{\circ}\text{F}$  produced 2.5 AH above 2.0 volts. Since moisture content seemed to affect the low temperature performance of the cell, an additional group of cells was prepared taking special precautions to reduce any water contamination to a minimum. The resulting cells discharged no differently at  $-20^{\circ}\text{F}$  than did normal cells.

Discharge of cells at  $0^{\circ}\text{F}$  are shown in Figures 14-17. Capacities from these cells varied strongly with rate. Cells discharged at 50 ma produced from 3.1 - 3.55AH, while cells discharged at 1000 ma produced as little as 1.5 AH. Both the 500 and 1000 ma rates produced noticeable heating in the cells and probably accounts for the disparity in curve shape and capacity between cells discharged at these two rates. Tear-down of these cells exposed a somewhat heavy grayish film around the anode surface, penetrating into the separator slightly. This same film was noted in cells run at  $-20^{\circ}\text{F}$  and was more pronounced in those cells. Complete analysis of the film was not done, but the major part was determined to be  $\text{CaCl}_2$ . Cells discharged at  $75^{\circ}\text{F}$  had little or no such film after discharge.

Discharges of cells at elevated temperatures,  $120^{\circ}\text{F}$  and  $165^{\circ}\text{F}$  are shown in Figures 18-21. The low rate discharge, 50 ma, produced approximately 3.5AH at  $120^{\circ}\text{F}$ . Capacities at 100 and 500 ma were nearly equal at about 2.5 AH. At the 1000 ma discharge rate, however, the cells vented at an approximate skin temperature of  $175^{\circ}\text{F}$ . The venting was extremely mild and was noted only by its characteristic odor. The time required for cells to vent was 1.25 - 1.3 hours. Because of the mildness of the vent, it was thought that the cells might have been overfilled with



Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
0°F RATE: 0.05 AMP

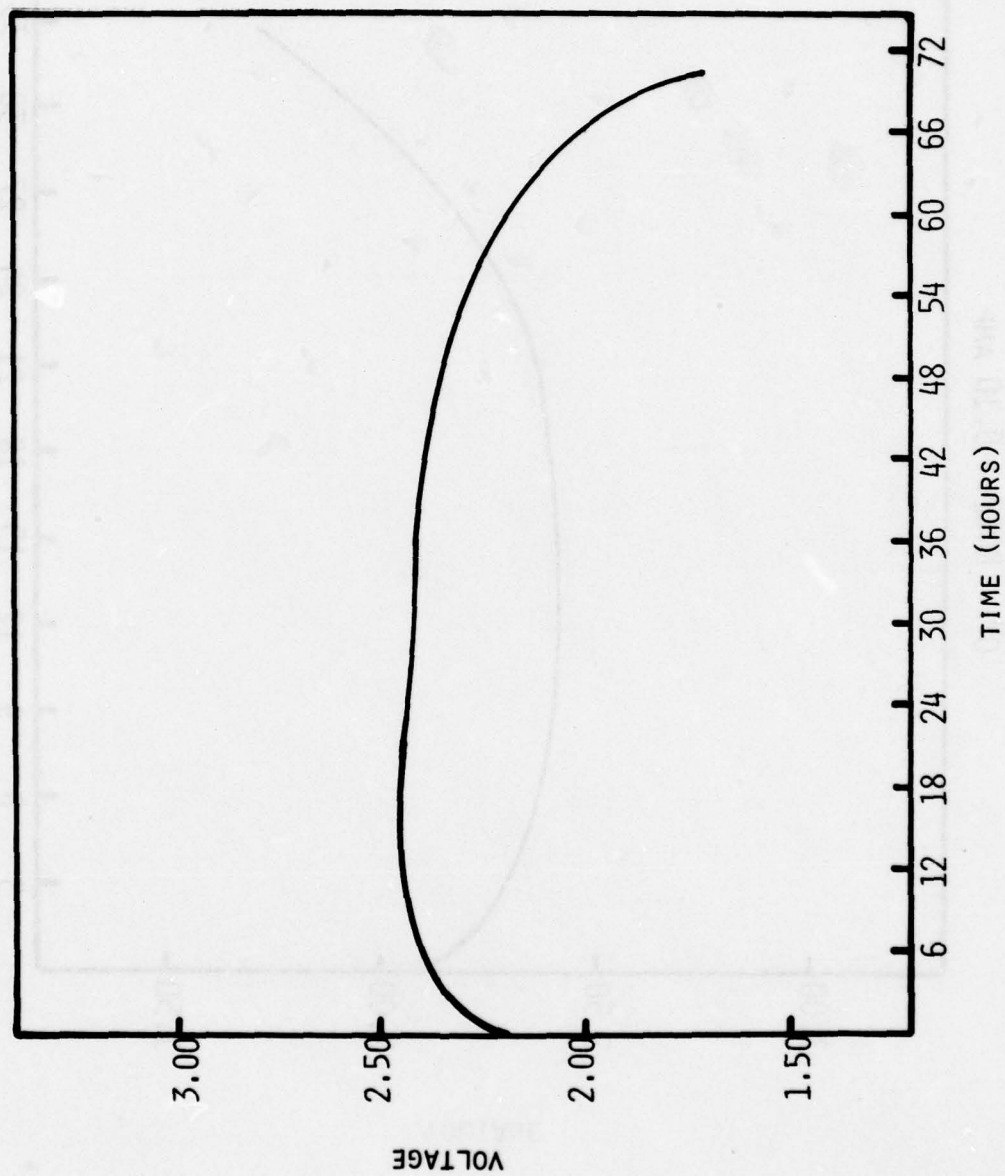


FIGURE 14 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 0°F - RATE: 0.05 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
0°F RATE: 0.10 AMP

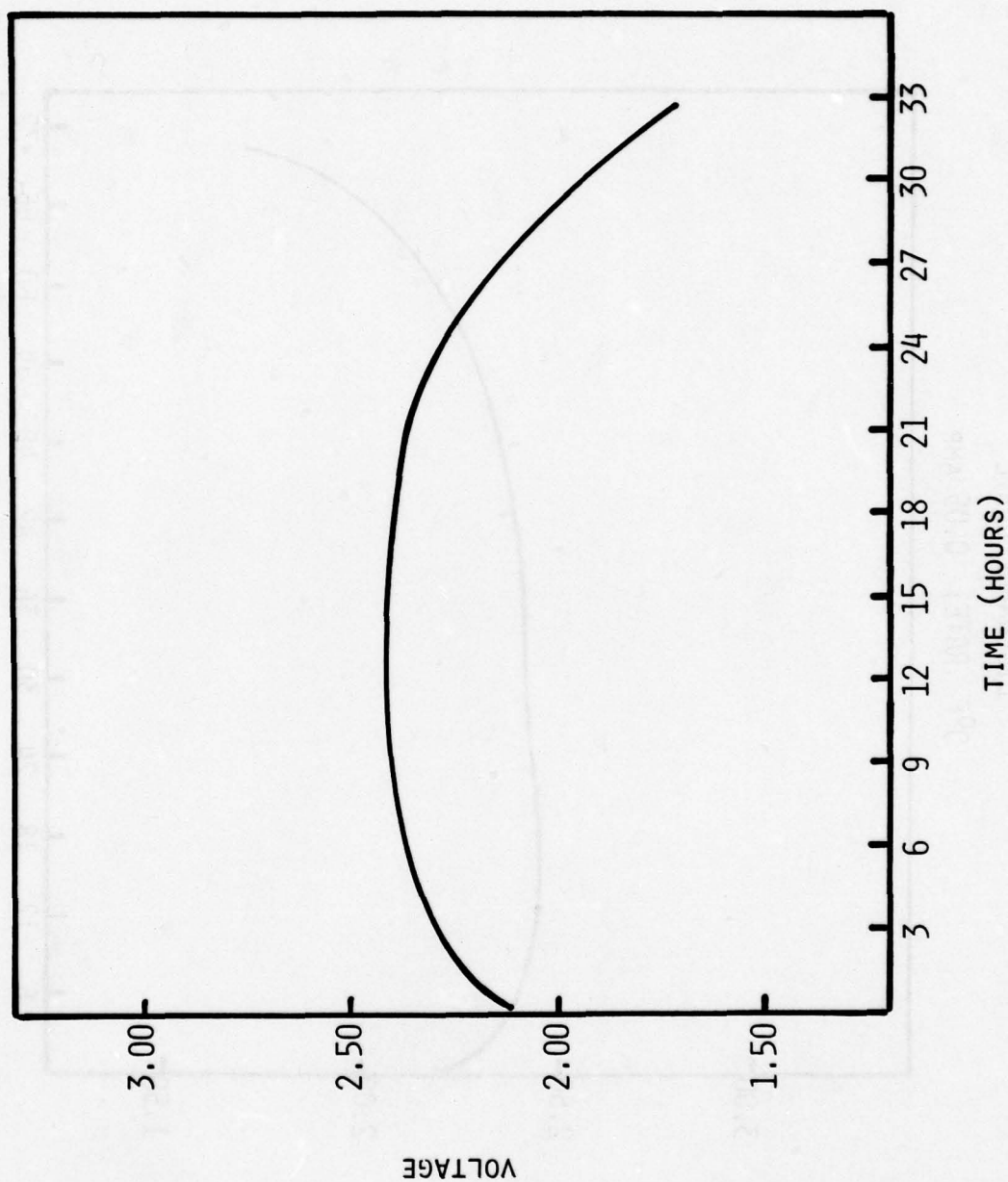


FIGURE 15 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 0°F - RATE: 0.10 AMP

Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
0°F RATE: 0.50 AMP

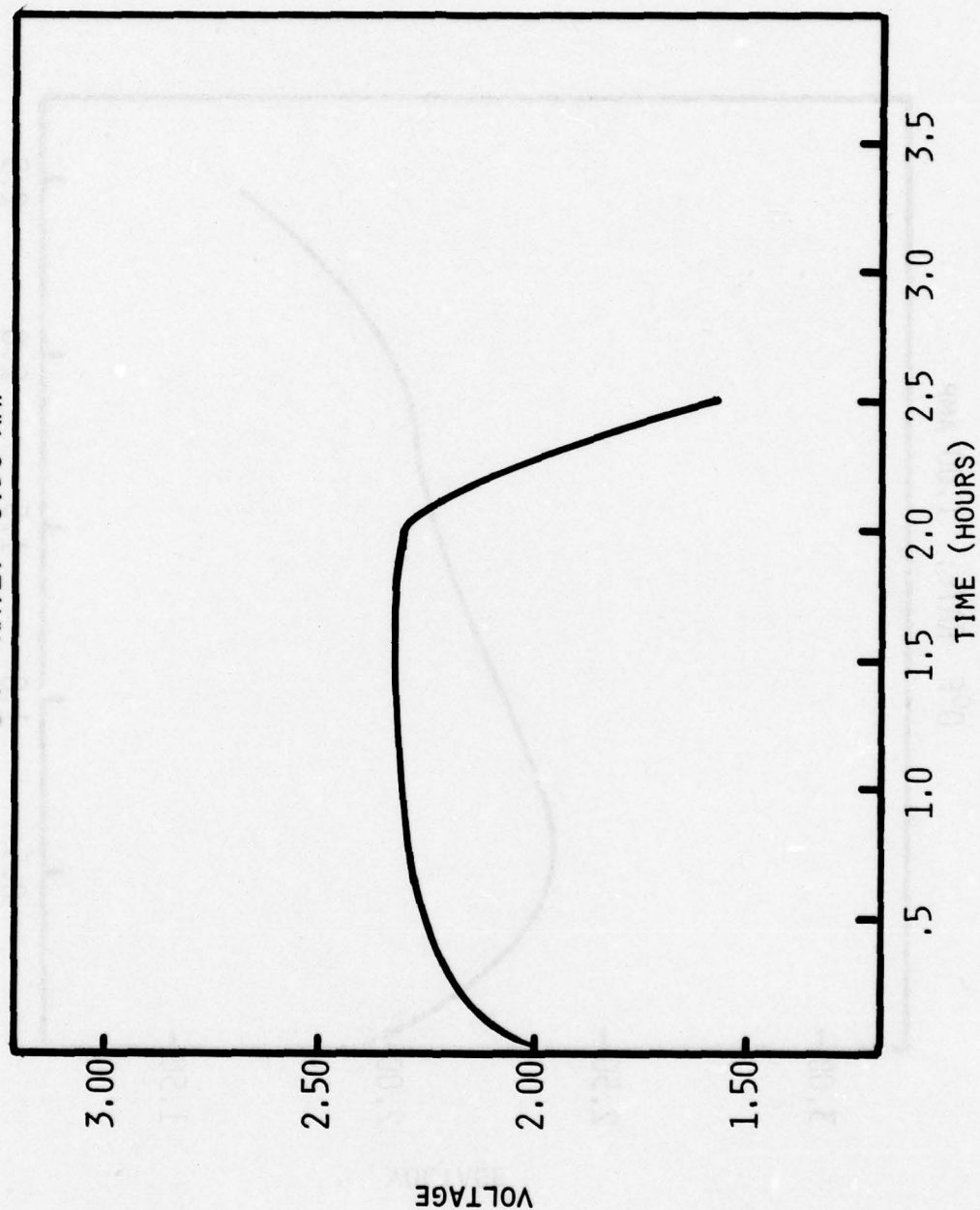


FIGURE 16 Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 0°F-RATE: 0.50 AMP



Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
0°F RATE: 1.00 AMP

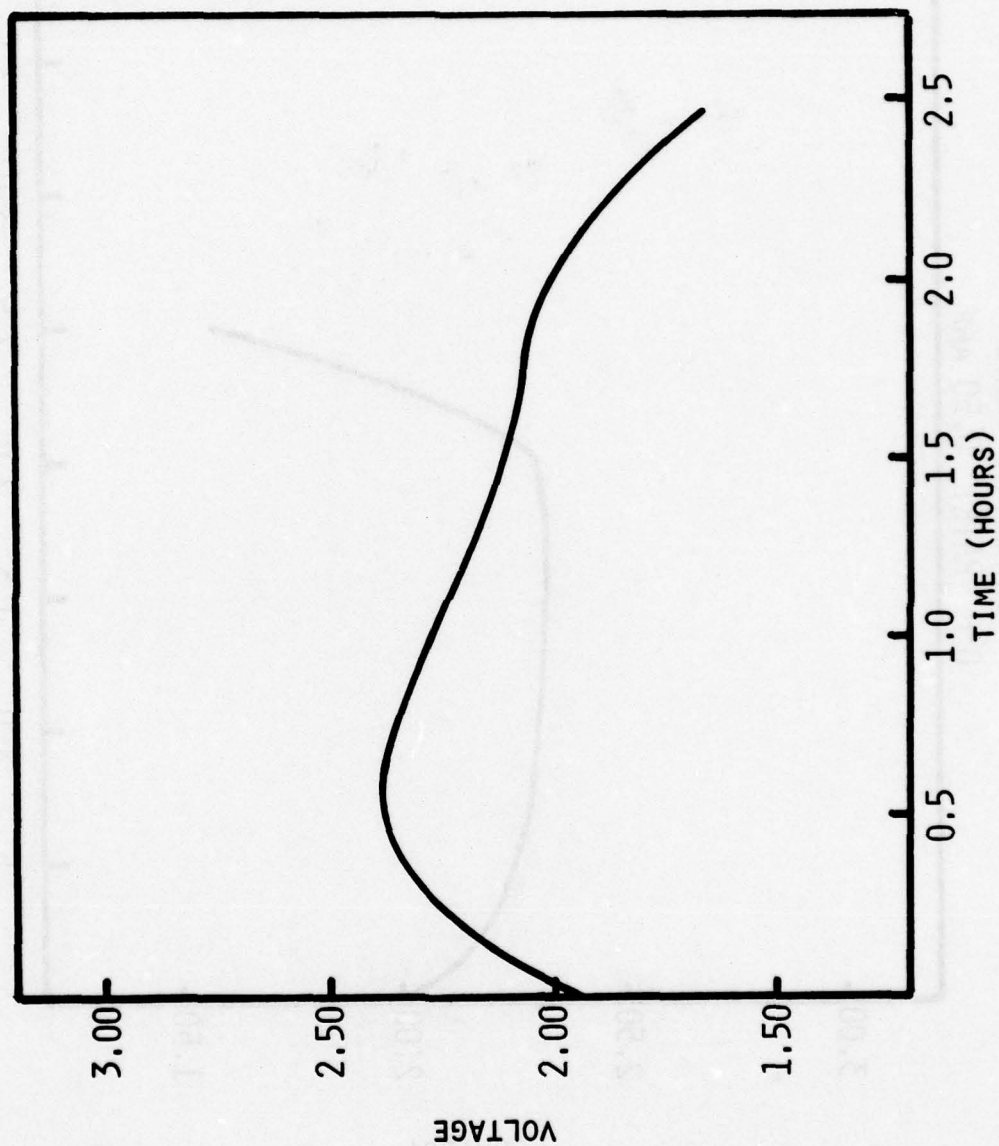


FIGURE 17 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 0°F - RATE: 1.00 AMP

CA/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
120°F RATE: 0.05 AMP

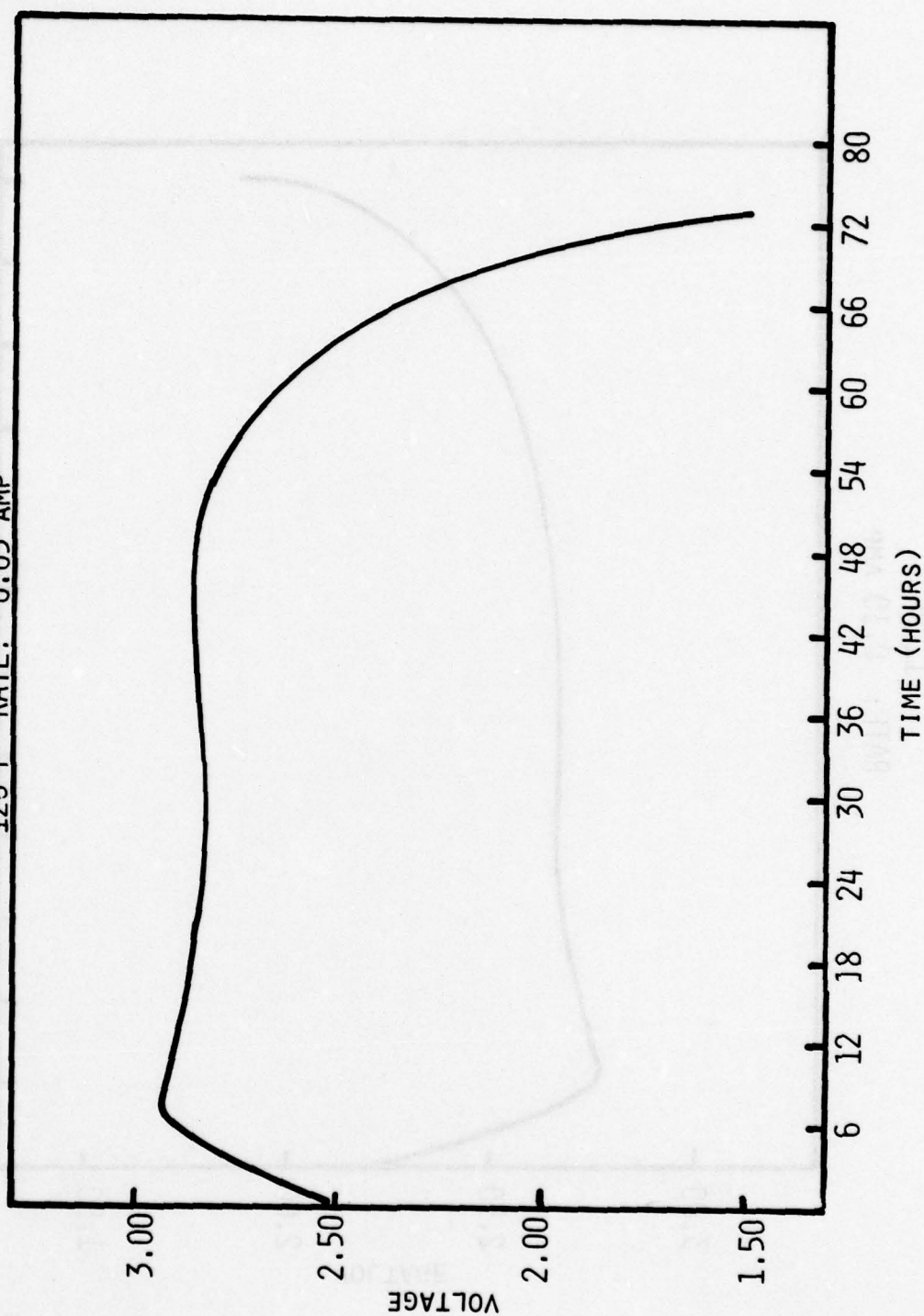


FIGURE 18 CA/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 120°F - RATE: 0.05 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
120°F  
RATE: 0.10 AMP

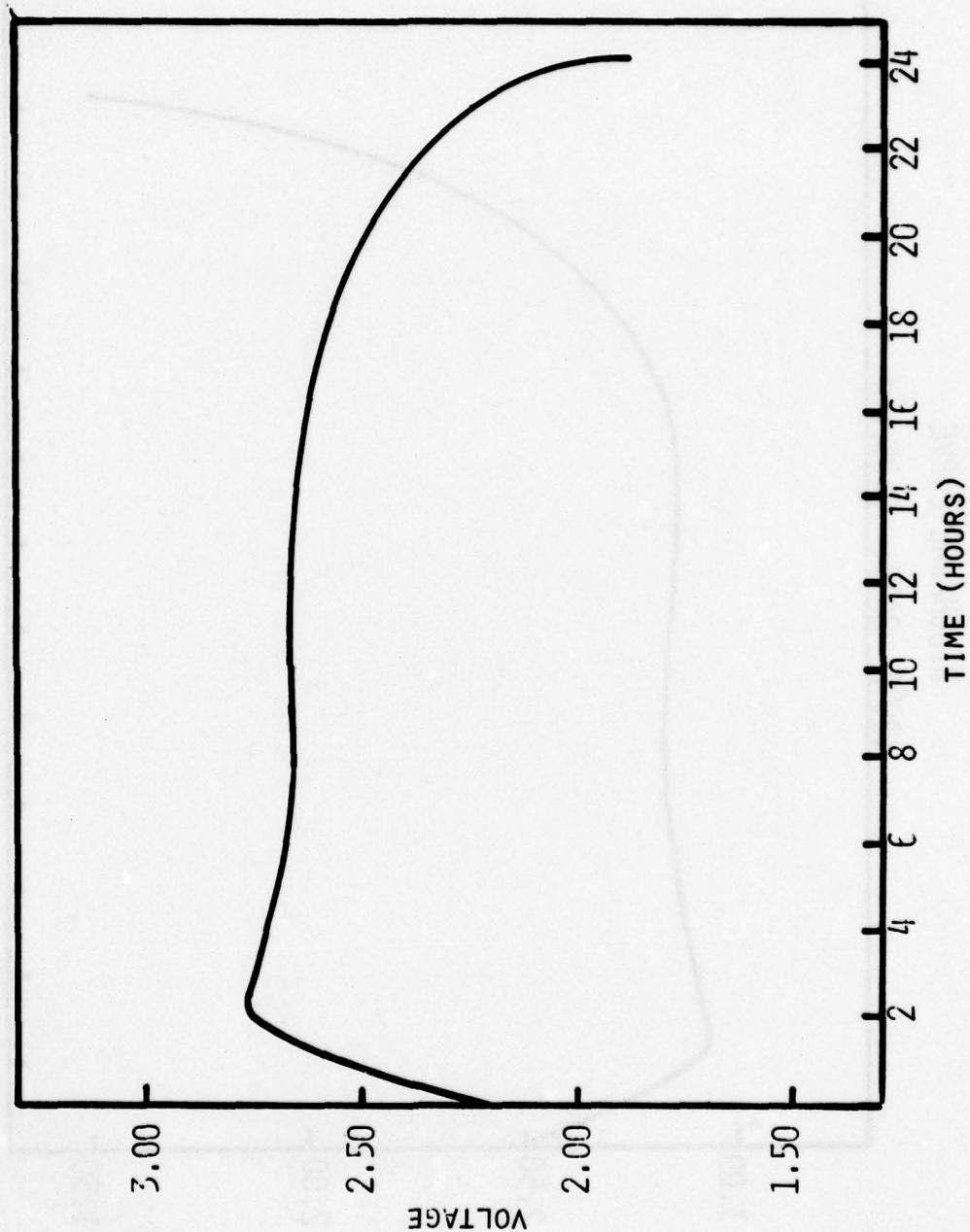


FIGURE 19 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 120°F - RATE: 0.10 AMP



Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
120°F  
RATE: 0.50 AMP

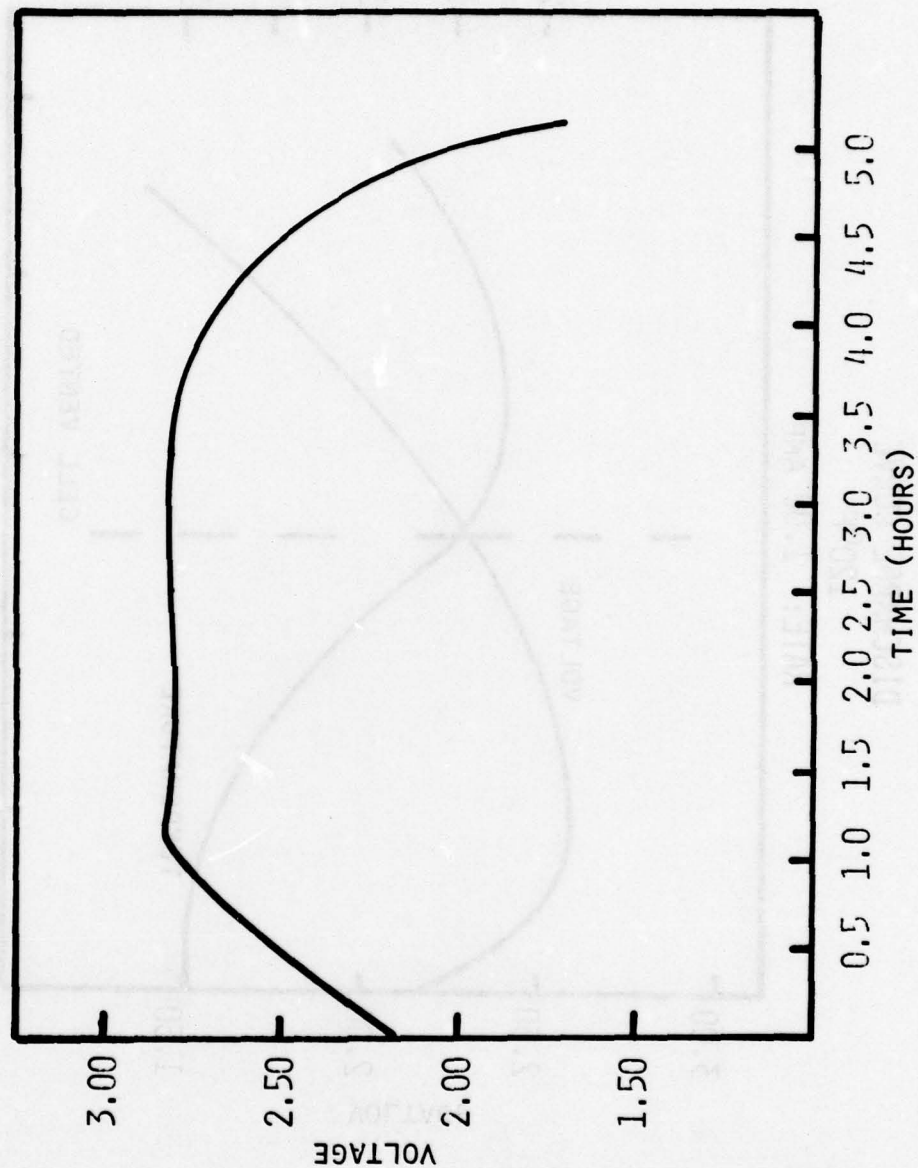


FIGURE 20 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 120°F - RATE: 0.50 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
120°F  
RATE: 1.00 AMP

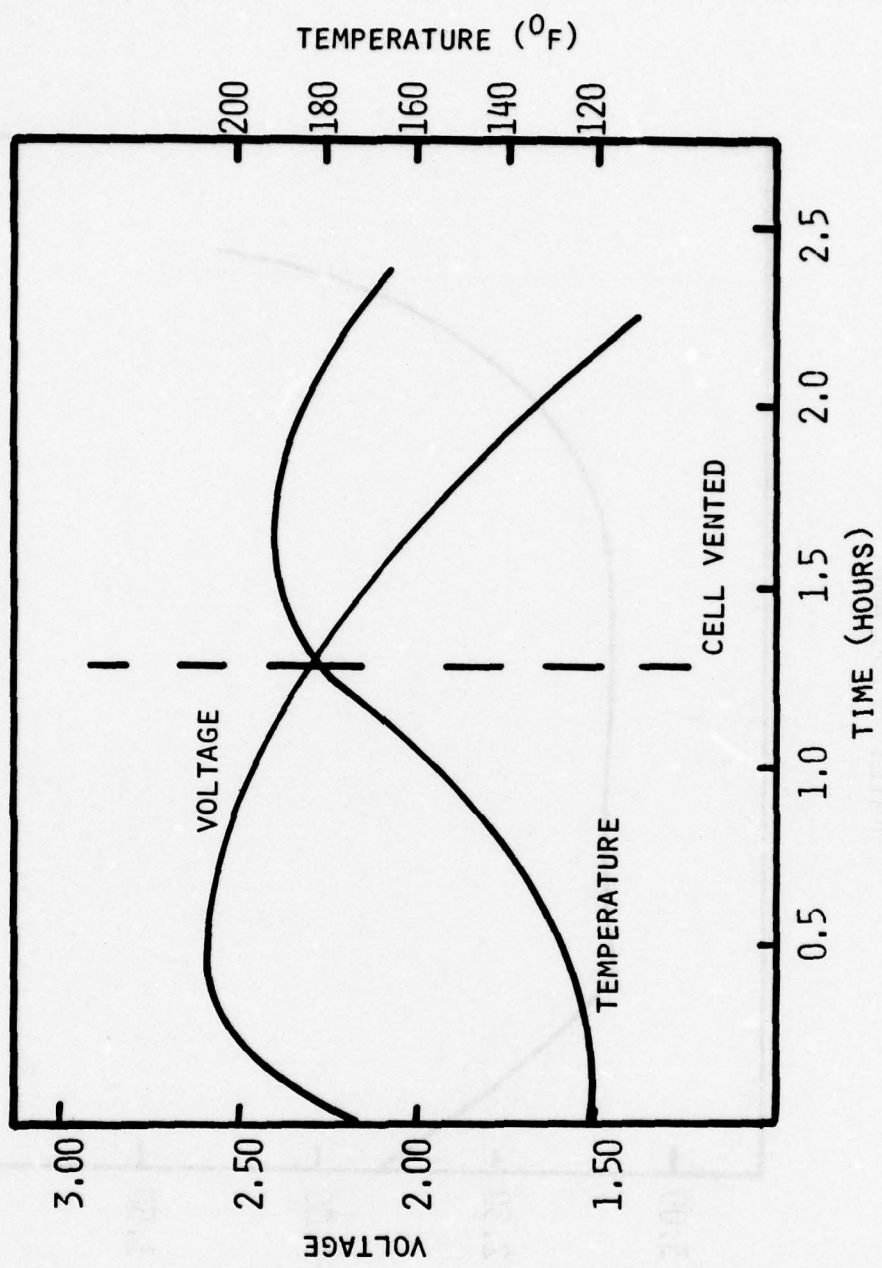


FIGURE 21 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 120°F - RATE: 1.00 AMP

electrolyte, causing a hydraulic vent when heated to 180°F. Cells with reduced electrolyte volume also vented at 180°F, and venting at a higher temperature was noted during 165°F discharges. More will be said about this type of vent in the section in abuse tests.

Cell discharges at 165°F are shown in Figures 22 -25. Cell capacity at the 50 ma rate was reduced below that of any other temperature except -20°F, producing 2.9AH. As was the case at 120°F, 165°F discharge could be completed only at rates up to 500 ma. Cells discharged at 1000 ma vented from overheating at approximately 1.5 hours and a temperature on the side of the cell case of 190°F. The vent was the same mild occurrence noted above and was detected only by its odor.

Teardown of 120° and 165°F discharged cells revealed the same thick gray film noted at 0° and -20°F, but which has always been absent at 75°F. In all cases the heaviest film occurred at -20° and 165°F.

The same system components were also evaluated in larger rectangular cells, originally intended to yield 25AH. The cells were made using the same electrolyte solutions as previously discussed cells. Cathode size was 3.5" x 1.75" x .017", with sixteen (16) cathodes per cell. Anodes were pure Ca foil on expanded Ni grid and were .013" thick. The overall dimensions of the case were 4.00" x 2.00" x 0.85". Two terminals were used and the case was allowed to float. A single vent was incorporated into the cover.

The cells were discharged at lower rates than the "half-D" cells; 50 ma, 100 ma, 500 ma and 1000 ma, corresponding to 0.04, 0.079, 0.396, and 0.791 ma/cm<sup>2</sup> respectively. Discharge curves are shown in Figures 26 - 30. A summary of the effects of discharge rate on capacity is given in Figure 26. Although the cell capacity was originally projected



Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
165°F  
RATE: 0.05 AMP

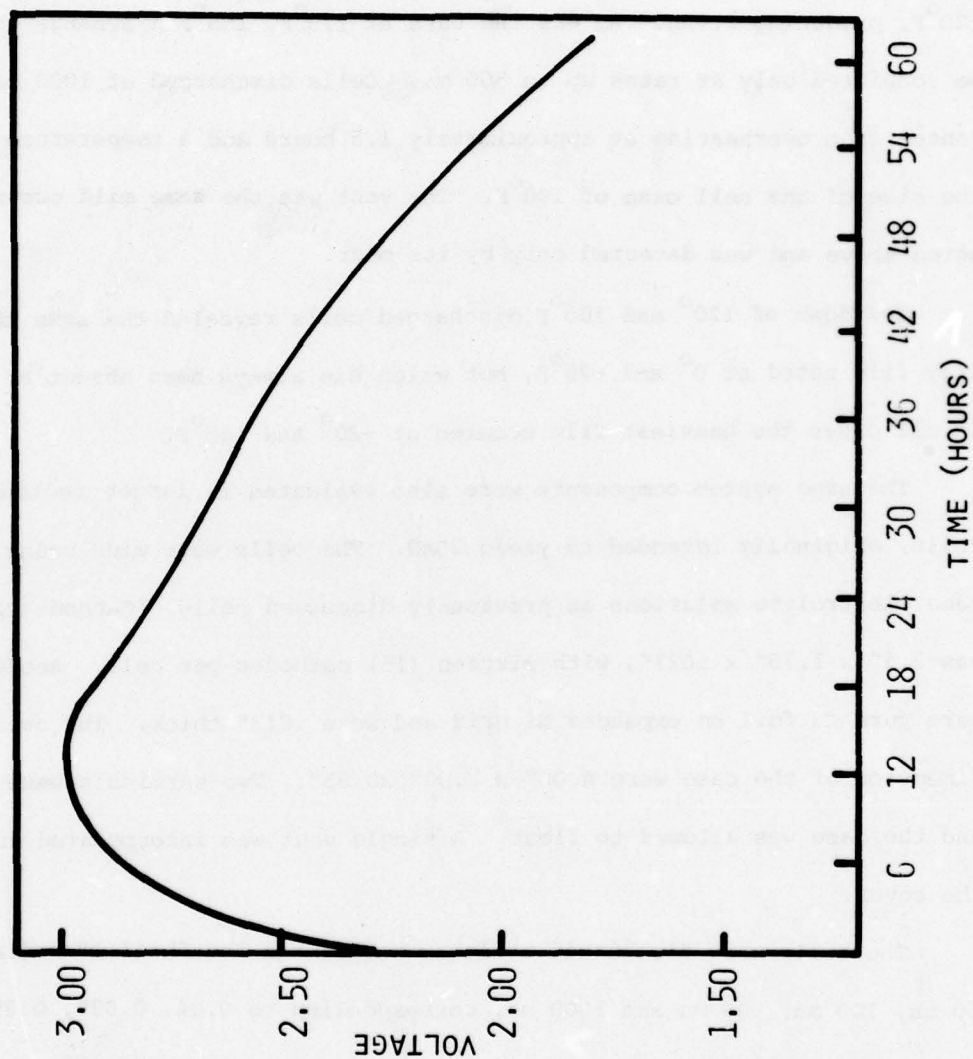


FIGURE 22 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 165°F - RATE: 0.05 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
165°F  
RATE: 0.010 AMP

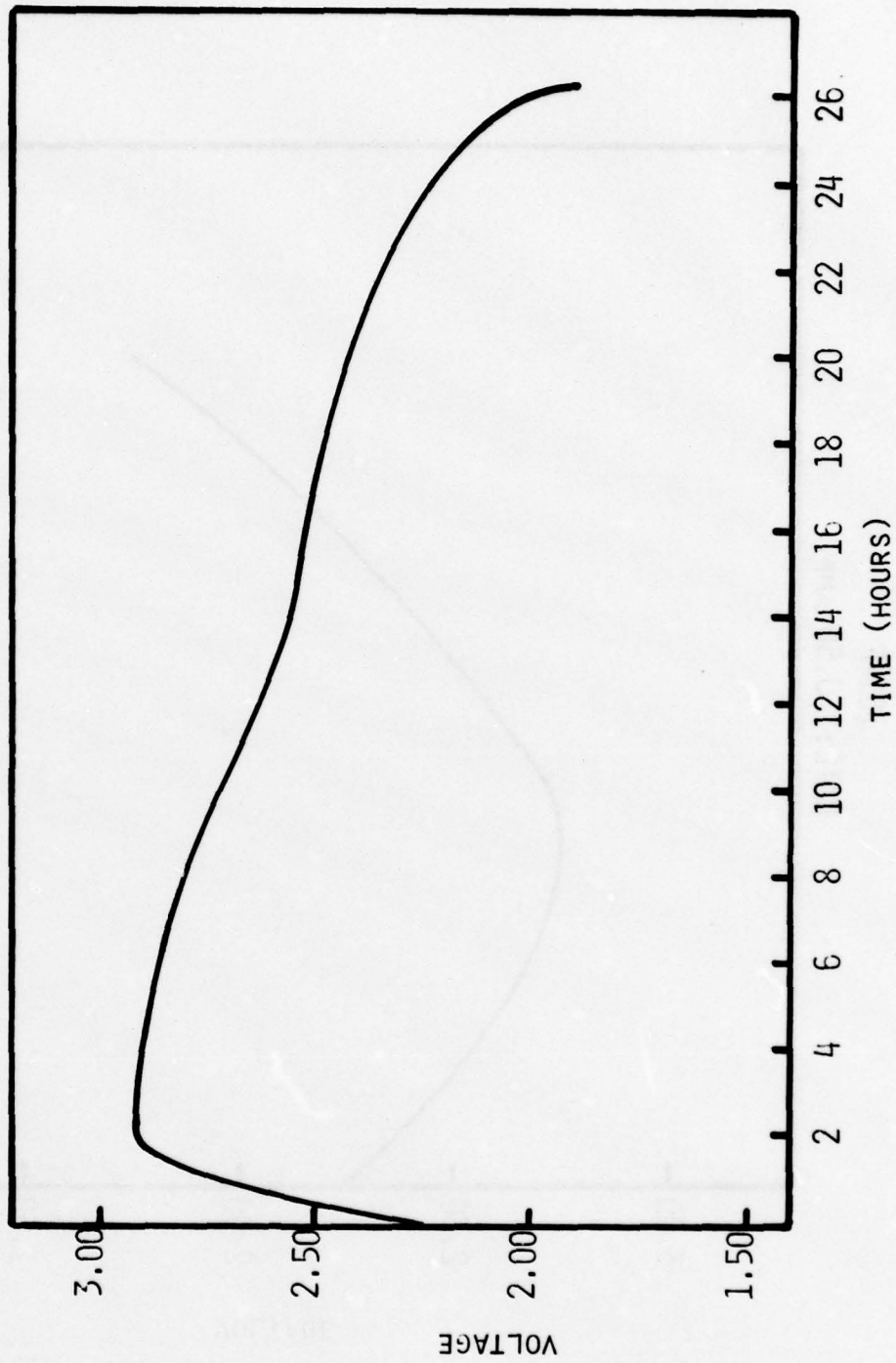


FIGURE 23 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 165°F - RATE: 0.10 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
165°F  
RATE: 0.50 AMP

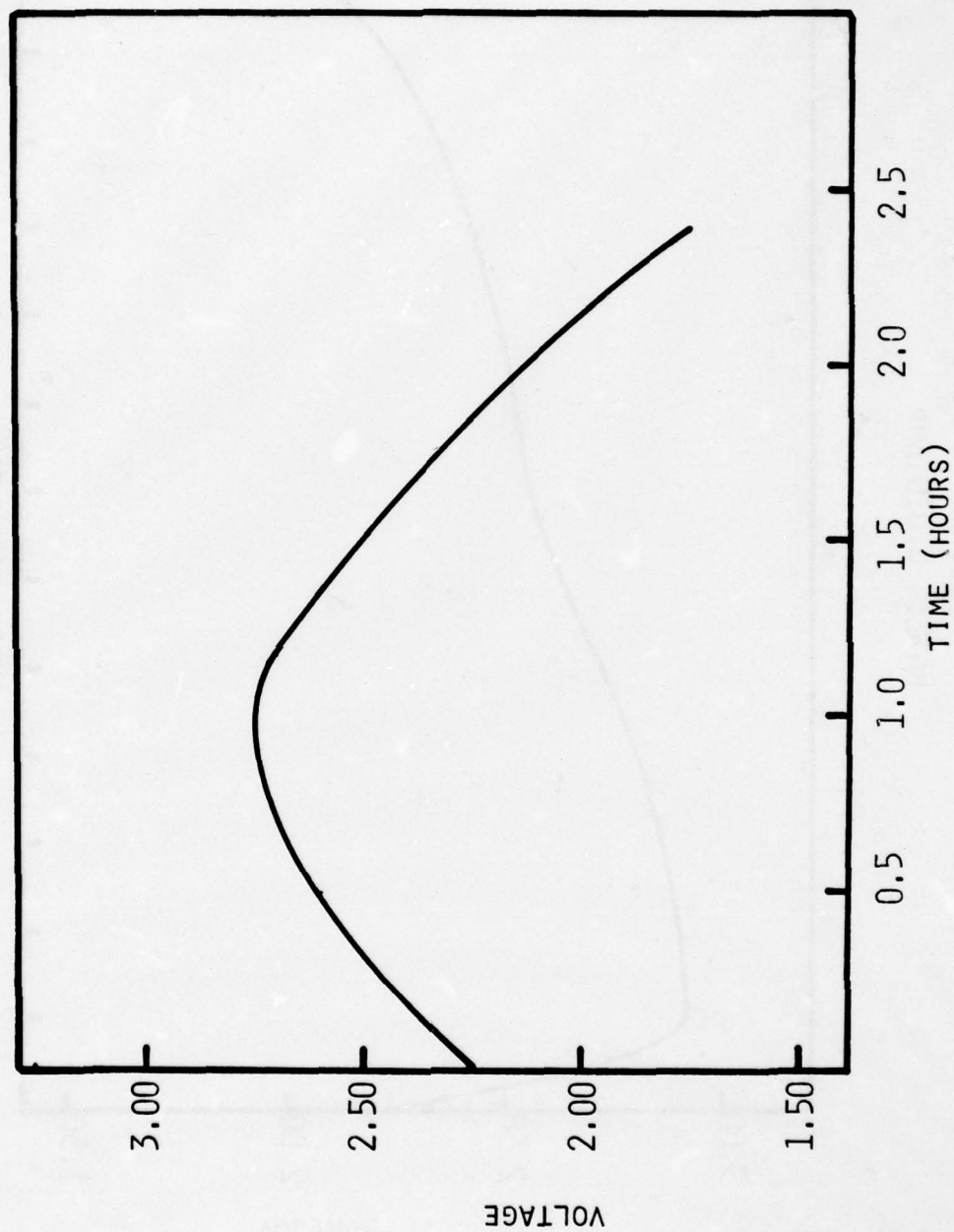


FIGURE 24 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 165°F - RATE: 0.50 AMP



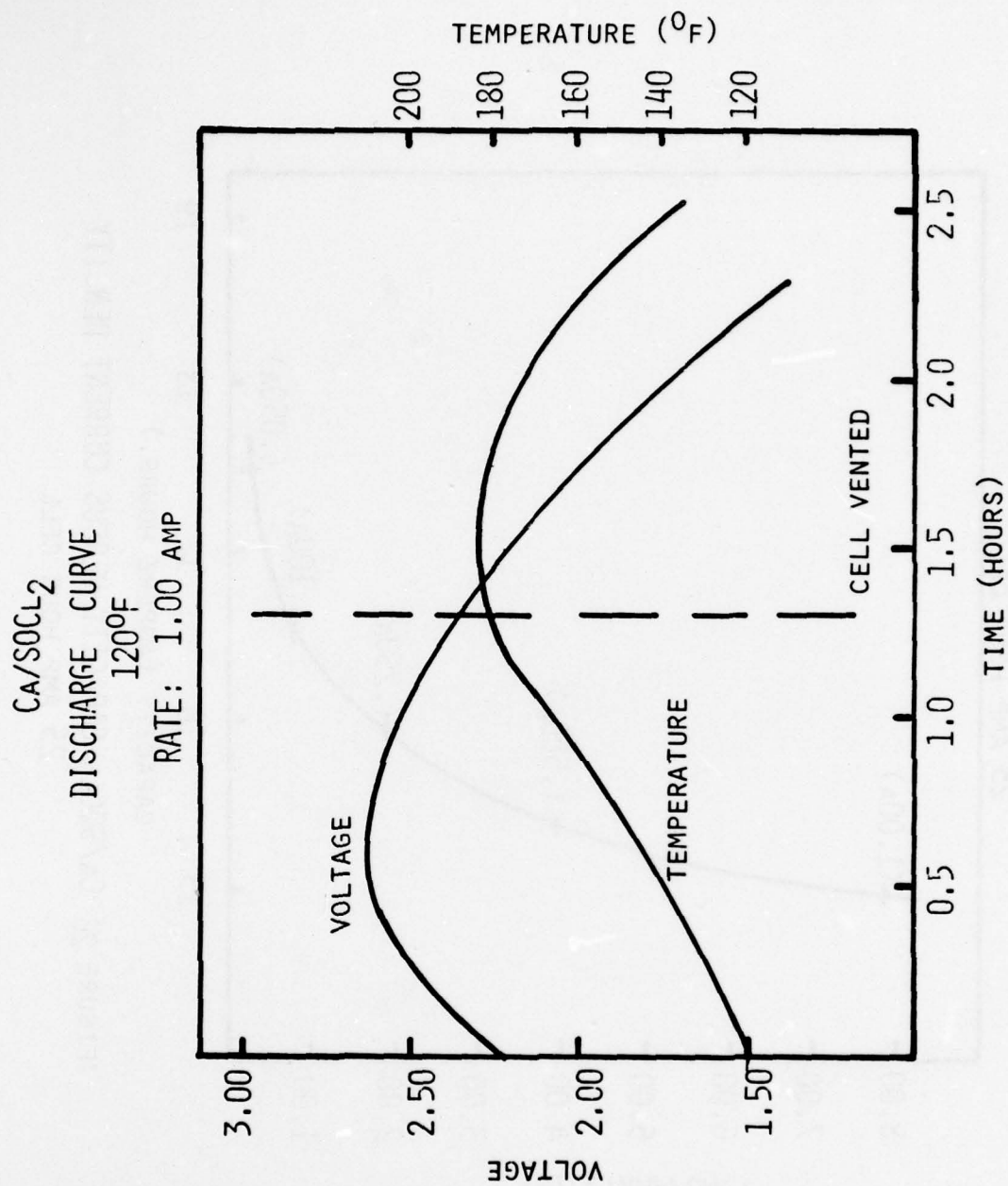


FIGURE 25 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 120°F - RATE: 1.00 AMP

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
CAPACITY VERSUS CURRENT DENSITY  
25 AMP HOUR CELL

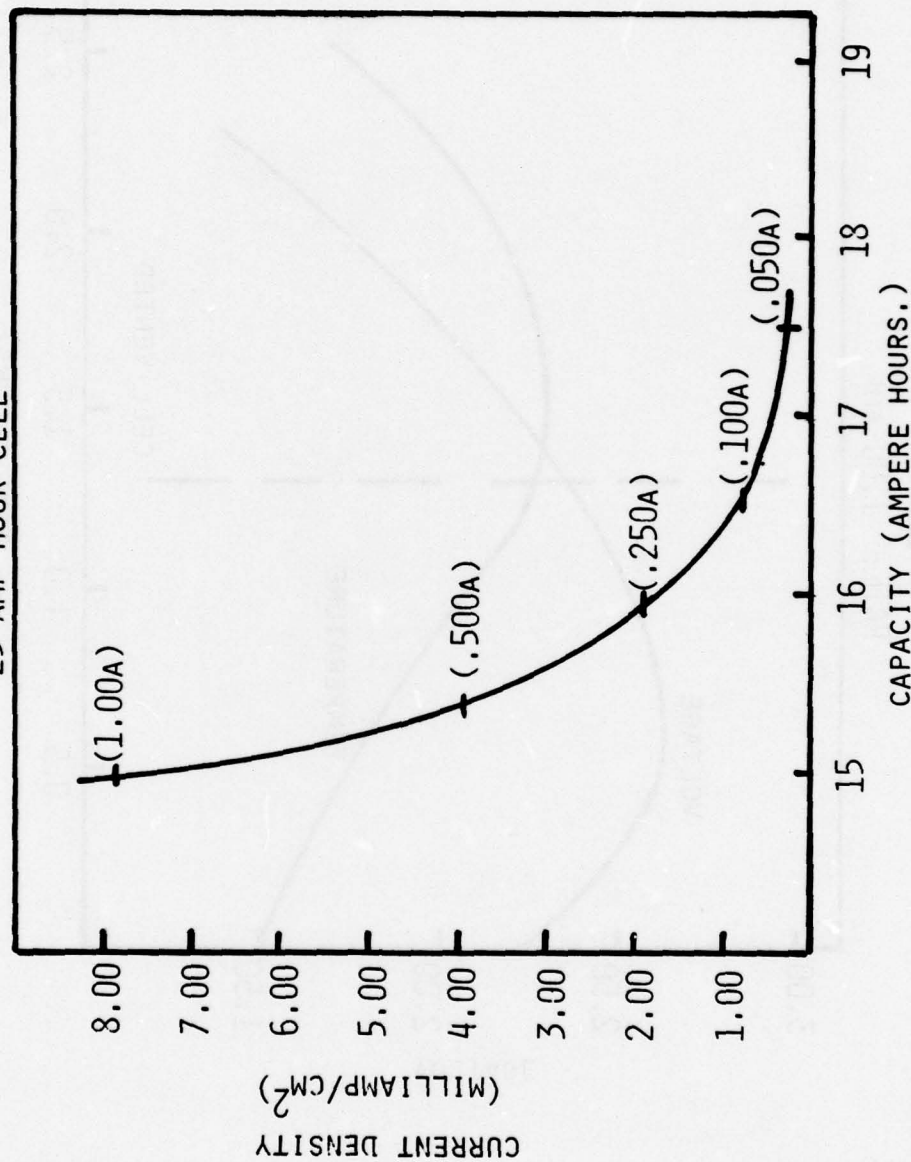


FIGURE 26 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> CAPACITY VERSUS CURRENT DENSITY  
25 AMP HOUR CELL

Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
25 AMP HOUR CELL S/N 17  
RATE: 0.050 AMP STANDARD STACK

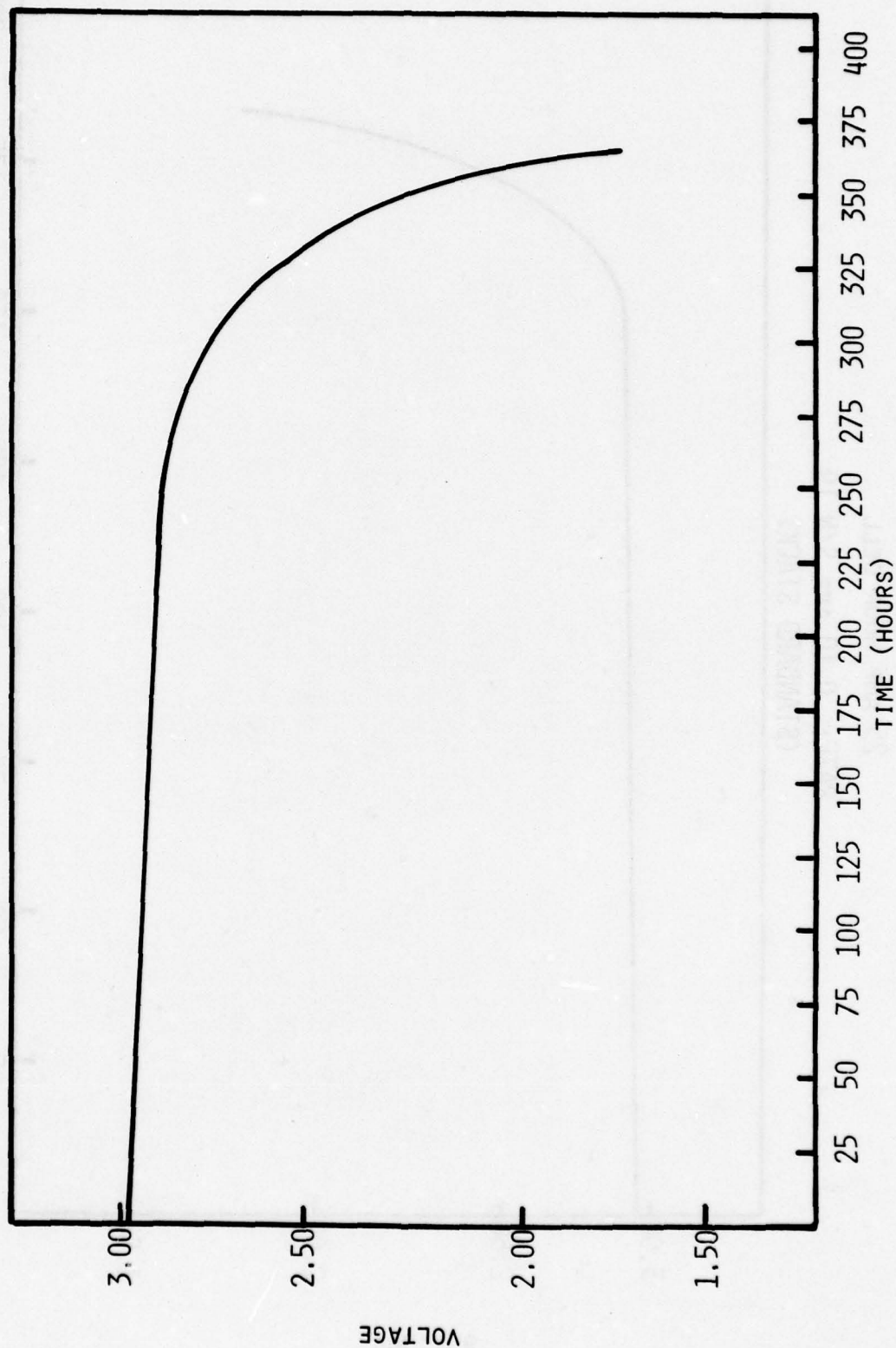


FIGURE 27 Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 25 AMP HOUR CELL S/N 17 - RATE: 0.050 AMP



Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
25 AMP HOUR CELL  
RATE: 0.10 AMP S/N 19  
(STANDARD STACK)

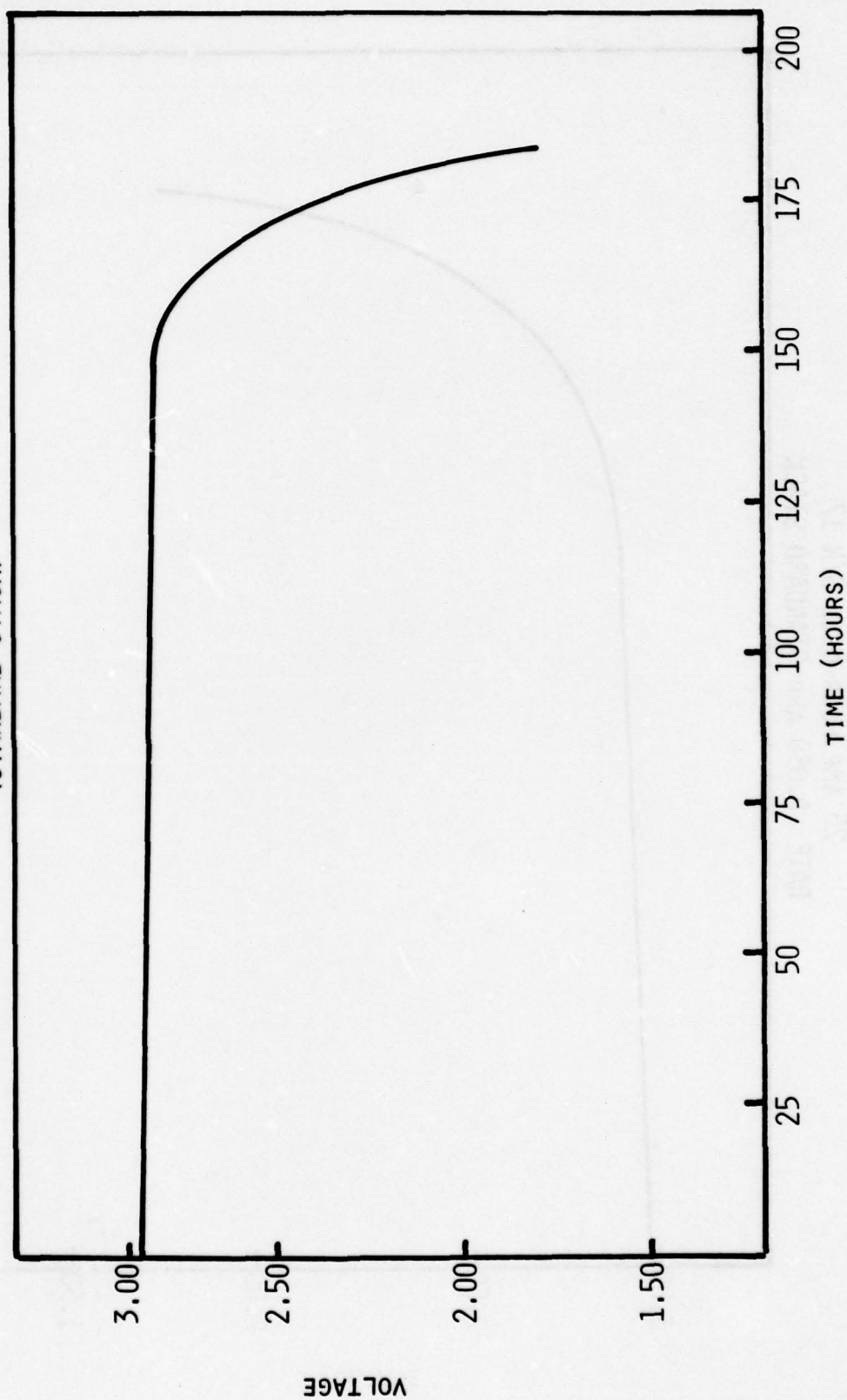


FIGURE 28 Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 25 AMP HOUR CELL-RATE: 0.10 AMP S/N 19

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
25 AMP HOUR CELL  
RATE: .050 AMP S/N 86  
(STANDARD STACK)

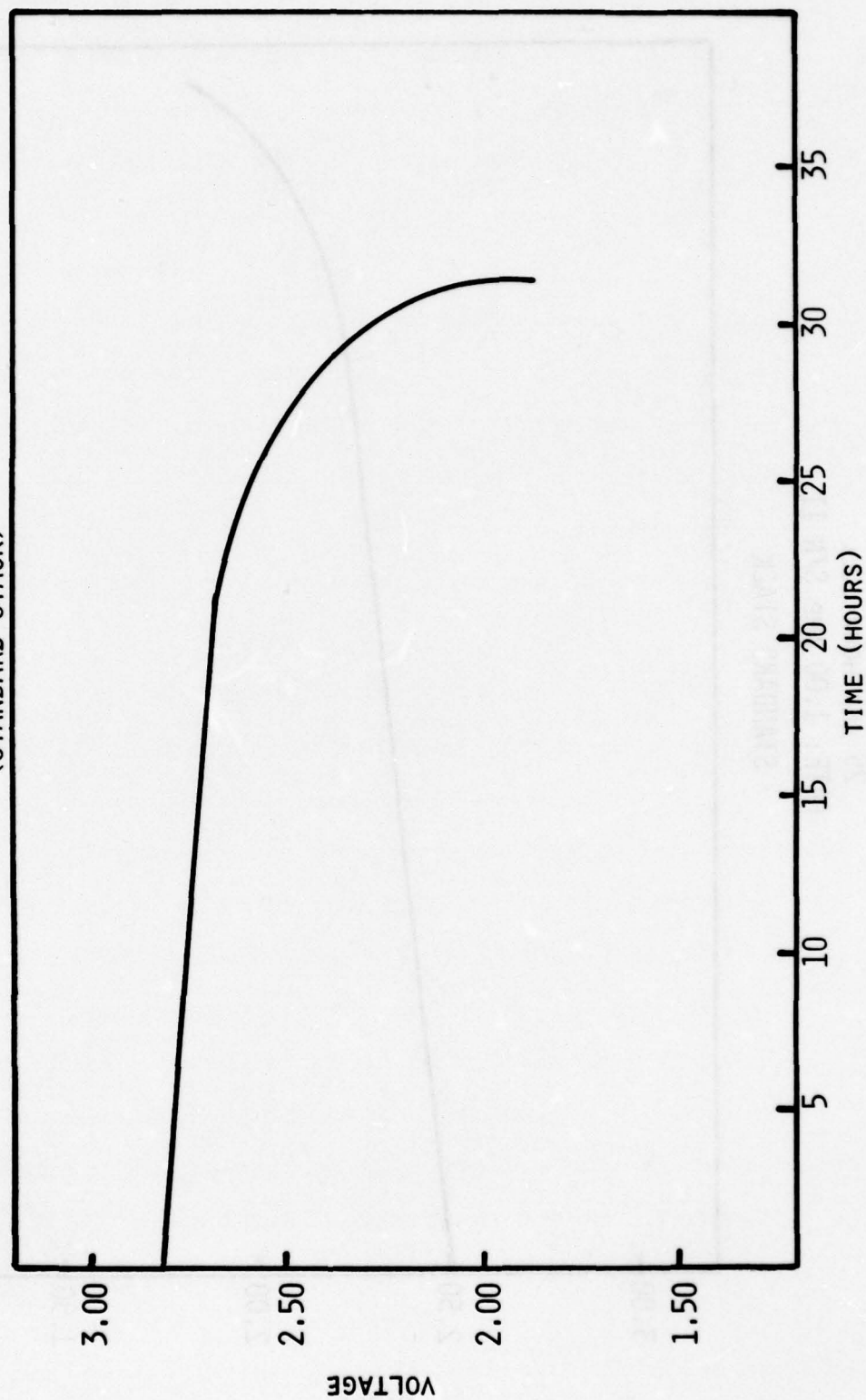


FIGURE 29 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 25 AMP HOUR CELL-RATE: 0.5 AMP S/N 86

Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub>  
DISCHARGE CURVE  
25 AMP HOUR CELL  
RATE: 1.00 AMP S/N 11  
STANDARD STACK

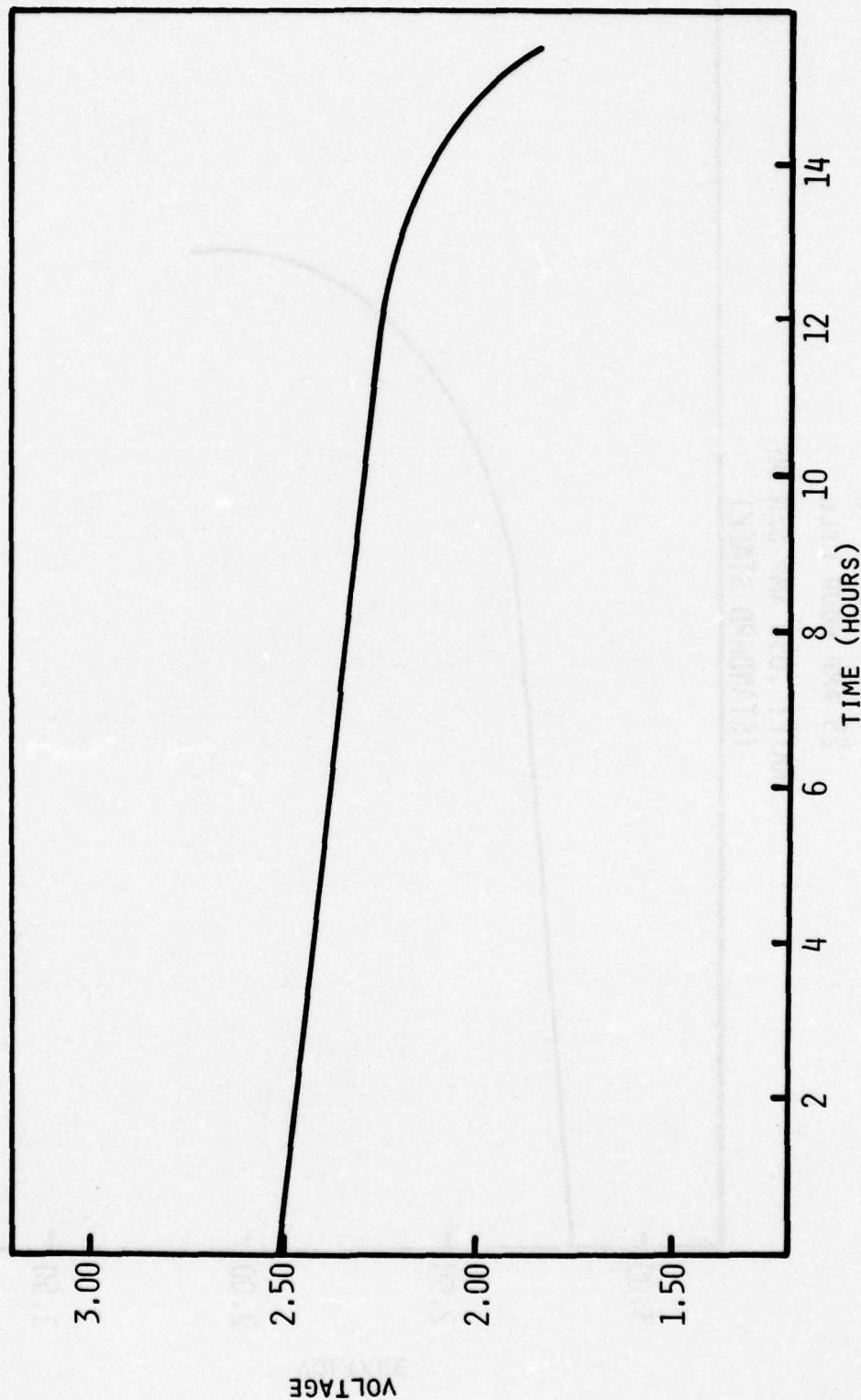


FIGURE 30 Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> DISCHARGE CURVE 25 AMP HOUR CELL-RATE: 1.00 AMP S/N 11 (STANDARD STACK)



to be 25 AH, actual capacity realized was 17.5 AH at  $0.04 \text{ ma/cm}^2$  and 15.0 AH at  $.0791 \text{ ma/cm}^2$ , all at  $75^\circ\text{F}$ . Teardown of the cells following discharge revealed the grayish film noted previously on the anode surface; however, this was the first time the film was noted on a cell discharged at room temperature. The rest of the cell appeared normal except that the cell appeared to be too dry, and cathode expansion was more severe than expected.

A second group of cells was prepared having only twelve (12) cathodes, made with the same components previously used in the sixteen (16) plate cell. The resulting cell stack was much looser. Discharge of cells produced the same capacities as before, an increase in the electrode efficiency of 25%. Upon teardown, the same gray film was in evidence but to a lesser extent and much more residual electrolyte was remaining.

#### SECTION IV

##### STORAGE EVALUATION

One of the efforts occurring in both phases of this work is an eighteen (18) month storage test to be conducted on a standard  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  cell at 25 and  $55^\circ\text{C}$ . The cell used for the test was the "half-D" cell previously discussed. The test was originally planned to start four (4) months before the end of Phase I and continue fourteen (14) months into Phase II. The test was not actually started, however, until the last month of the first phase.

A six (6) month  $75^\circ\text{F}$  storage test was conducted on a group of fifteen (15) cells earlier in Phase I which has been completed. Cells were removed from storage at one (1), three (3) and six (6) months, pulsed at 100 ma using a recording oscillograph, and then discharged at a constant 100 ma at  $75^\circ\text{F}$ .

The cell impedance was measured prior to pulsing with a Hewlett Packard 1 KHz AC millohmmeter. The results of this test are given in Table 8.

TABLE 8

PRELIMINARY STORAGE CELLS DISCHARGE DATA

| <u>Time In Storage</u> | <u>S/N</u> | <u>Open Circuit (Volts)</u> | <u>Rise Time To 2.00 (Seconds)</u> | <u>Impedance (Ohms)</u> | <u>Rate (Amps)</u> | <u>Capacity (Ampere Hours)</u> |
|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Month                | 26         | 3.10                        | 1                                  | .950                    | .1                 | 3.50                           |
| 1 Month                | 27         | 3.12                        | 1                                  | .900                    | .1                 | 3.46                           |
| 3 Months               | 28         | 3.10                        | 1                                  | 1.80                    | .1                 | 3.40                           |
| 3 Months               | 29         | 3.09                        | 1                                  | 1.75                    | .1                 | 3.42                           |
| 6 Months               | 30         | 3.10                        | 2                                  | 2.30                    | .1                 | 3.45                           |
| 6 Months               | 31         | 3.10                        | 2                                  | 2.35                    | .1                 | 3.40                           |

The greatest change observed as storage progressed was in the cell impedance as measured with the AC millohmmeter. Impedance rose from an average of 700 ohms to 2.35 ohms during the six (6) months. Delay time, defined for this purpose as the time required for the cell voltage to rise above 2.0 volts after loading, increased from zero to approximately two seconds. Fresh cells, when loaded at the same 100 ma, dropped from OC to only 2.75 volts, then recovered to 2.96 volts within one (1) second. The absolute time noted for voltage delay cannot be assumed indicative of cell performance after a complete uninterrupted stand as the cells were pulsed at 100 ma for five (5) seconds each month. A plot of the change in initial load voltage, impedance, and voltage delay for the characteristic cell during the six (6) months is given in Figure 31. Despite the rise in impedance during the storage period, the capacity at a 100 ma constant rate remained nearly constant at 3.4 to 3.5 AH for the duration of the six (6) month test.

The eighteen (18) month test has been in progress for only one (1) month as of the writing of this report. One hundred cells have been stored,

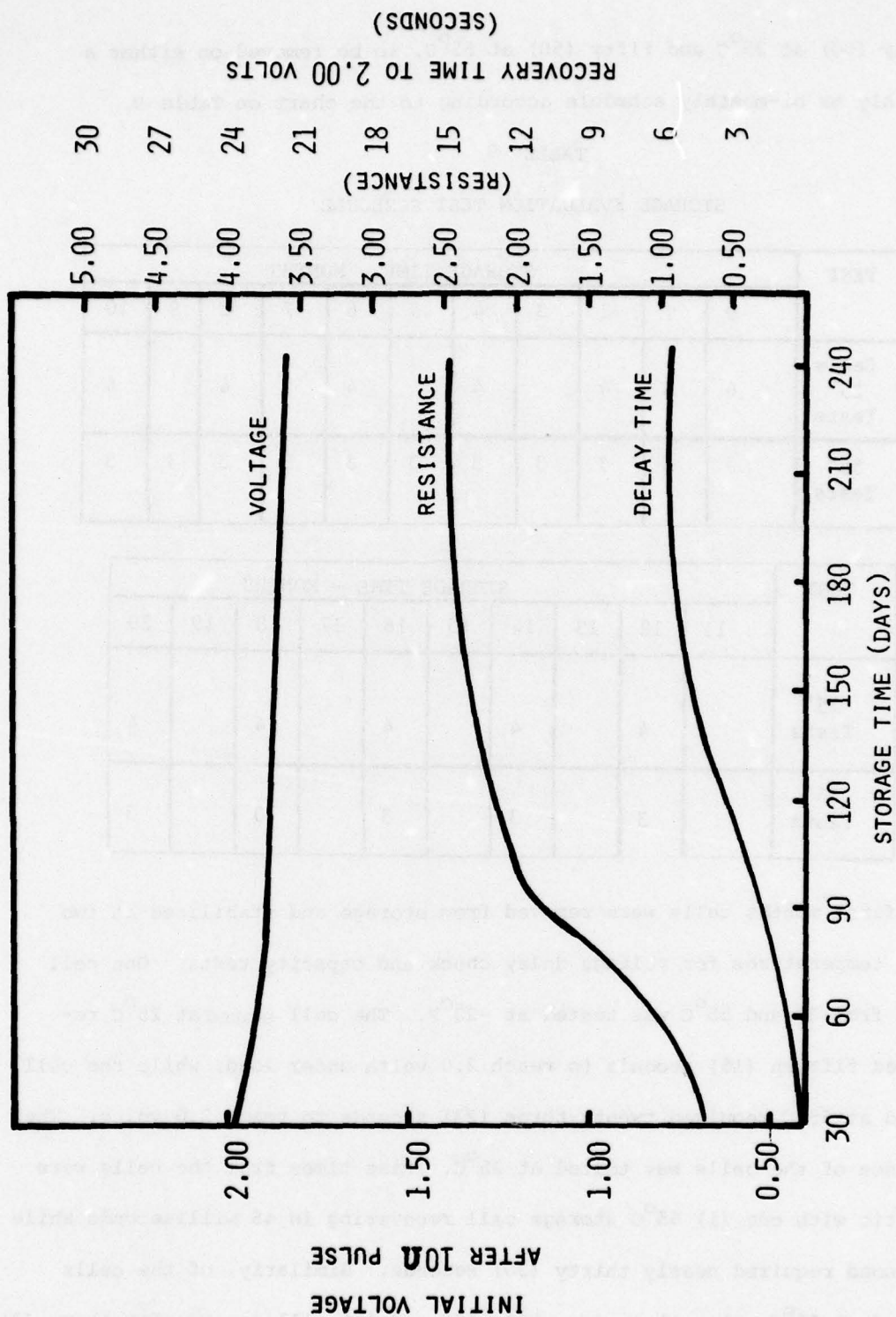


FIGURE 31  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  VOLTAGE DELAY



fifty (50) at 25°C and fifty (50) at 55°C, to be removed on either a monthly or bi-monthly schedule according to the chart on Table 9.

TABLE 9

STORAGE EVALUATION TEST SCHEDULE

| TEST                  | STORAGE TIME - MONTHS |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
|                       | 0                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Cells<br>25°<br>Tests | 6                     | 4 | 4 |   | 4 |   | 4 |   | 4 |   | 4  |
| 55°<br>Tests          | 5                     | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3  |

| TEST         | STORAGE TIME - MONTHS |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|              | 11                    | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 25°<br>Tests |                       | 4  |    | 4  |    | 4  |    | 4  |    | 4  |
| 55°<br>Tests |                       | 3  |    | 3  |    | 3  |    | 3  |    | 3  |

The first months cells were removed from storage and stabilized at two test temperatures for voltage delay check and capacity tests. One cell each from 25 and 55°C was tested at -20°F. The cell stored at 25°C required fifteen (15) seconds to reach 2.0 volts under load, while the cell stand at 55°C required twenty-three (23) seconds to reach 2.0 volts. The balance of the cells was tested at 25°C. Rise times from the cells were erratic with one (1) 55°C storage cell recovering in 45 milliseconds while a second required nearly thirty (30) seconds. Similarly, of the cells stored at 25°C, rise times were 120, 180 and 120 milliseconds for three (3) cells. The cells had not been fully discharged for capacity test as of this writing; however all will be discharged at 100 ma constant load.

SECTION V  
SAFETY EVALUATION

One of the original incentives for this program was the desire for a high energy cell which could tolerate extreme abuse without the hazardous response sometimes noted in  $\text{Li/SOCl}_2$  cells. Due to the relatively unknown characteristics of  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  and the possibility of unforeseen hazards, several simple abuse tests were made at the start of the program, using the first sealed "half-D" cells fabricated. The tests run were short circuit and overheating. The short circuit tests were done very simply without monitoring any cell parameters. A copper strap was placed across the terminals and the cell was observed to note if and after what time interval anything happened. Of six (6) cells tested in this manner at an ambient temperature of  $60^\circ\text{F}$ , none were observed to vent. All cells remained sealed and there was no evidence of electrolyte leakage. An additional six (6) cells were subjected to an overheating test whereby a propane torch was placed with the flame touching the side of the cell case. In five (5) of the six (6) tests, the cells were observed to vent quietly followed by a substantial emission of a white vapor for several seconds with no evidence of flame. One cell however, vented violently, and was moved several feet by the force of the vent. This result was not consistent with the other eleven (11) cells tested. Further, in view of the subsequent tests of several hundred cells which will be discussed, the results would appear even more inconsistent for a  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  cell. It has been suggested, but cannot be confirmed, that the maverick cell which vented so violently was not a  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  cell, but rather was a  $\text{Li/SOCl}_2$  cell, many of which were made at

that same time in the same "half-D" cases and discharged along with Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> cells.

No further abuse tests were done during most of the reporting period and several hundred cells were made and tested without incident. The last work conducted in Phase I was a complete abuse test carried out on approximately one-hundred fifty (150) cells.

The tests conducted were: a) Short Circuit

b) Incineration

c) Reversal

d) Charging

e) Shock

f) Vibration

g) Crushing

h) Puncture

Certain of the tests were preformed using cells in various states of discharge. The methods and results of each test are given as follows:

a) Short Circuit - The short circuit test was made by shorting the cell leads through a 50a/100mv shunt. The voltage of the cell was monitored continuously as well as the temperature on the side of the cell case. The cells were tested at outside ambient temperature which ranged from 60-80°F. All cell voltages dropped immediately to approximately 100mv after shorting. The initial short circuit currents were about 5A, rising to 15-17A peak within one to two minutes. Cells vented during the same one to two minute period, the current usually peaking quickly within 10 -20 seconds following the vent. Skin temperature usually continued to rise for several minutes after venting and peaked out at 160-180°F before falling



back to outside ambient temperature in about fifteen minutes. Cell venting was always very mild, often inaudible and accompanied by little  $\text{SOCl}_2$  as a liquid or vapor. No deformation of the case was noted, and the unrestrained cell was not moved by the venting. A plot of a typical short circuit showing voltage, current and temperature is given in Figure 32

b) Incineration - The incineration test was not a true incineration but more of an overheating test. The cells were placed on their side with a propane flame on the cell side, half way down the cell. The tests were made using fresh cells; cells partially discharged at  $75^\circ\text{F}$ ; and cells partially discharged at  $-20^\circ\text{F}$ . Upon contact with the flame, the side of the case turned dull red and the cell vented at approximately 1.5 minutes, evidenced by a white spray from the vent opening. The torch was left on the cell for a minimum of five minutes after the vent, but produced no further results. There was no noticeable difference in the results of different test samples.

Following the test, the samples were examined and several were found to have small holes in the side of the case where the flame had touched. Since the white  $\text{SOCl}_2$  spray only came from the vent hole and not from the flame area, it was assumed that the hole was burned open after venting. At no time during the tests were any results other than mild venting noted. The cells were unrestrained but did not move during venting. No flame was ever noted; however, the propane flame was placed such that it would not likely ignite the normal vented products.

c) Reversal - The reversal test was performed on cells which had been discharged at the 50 ma rate to less than 0.1 volts, then reversed at a constant rate of .25 amps. The voltage was allowed to increase to maintain the

Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub>

SHORT CIRCUIT

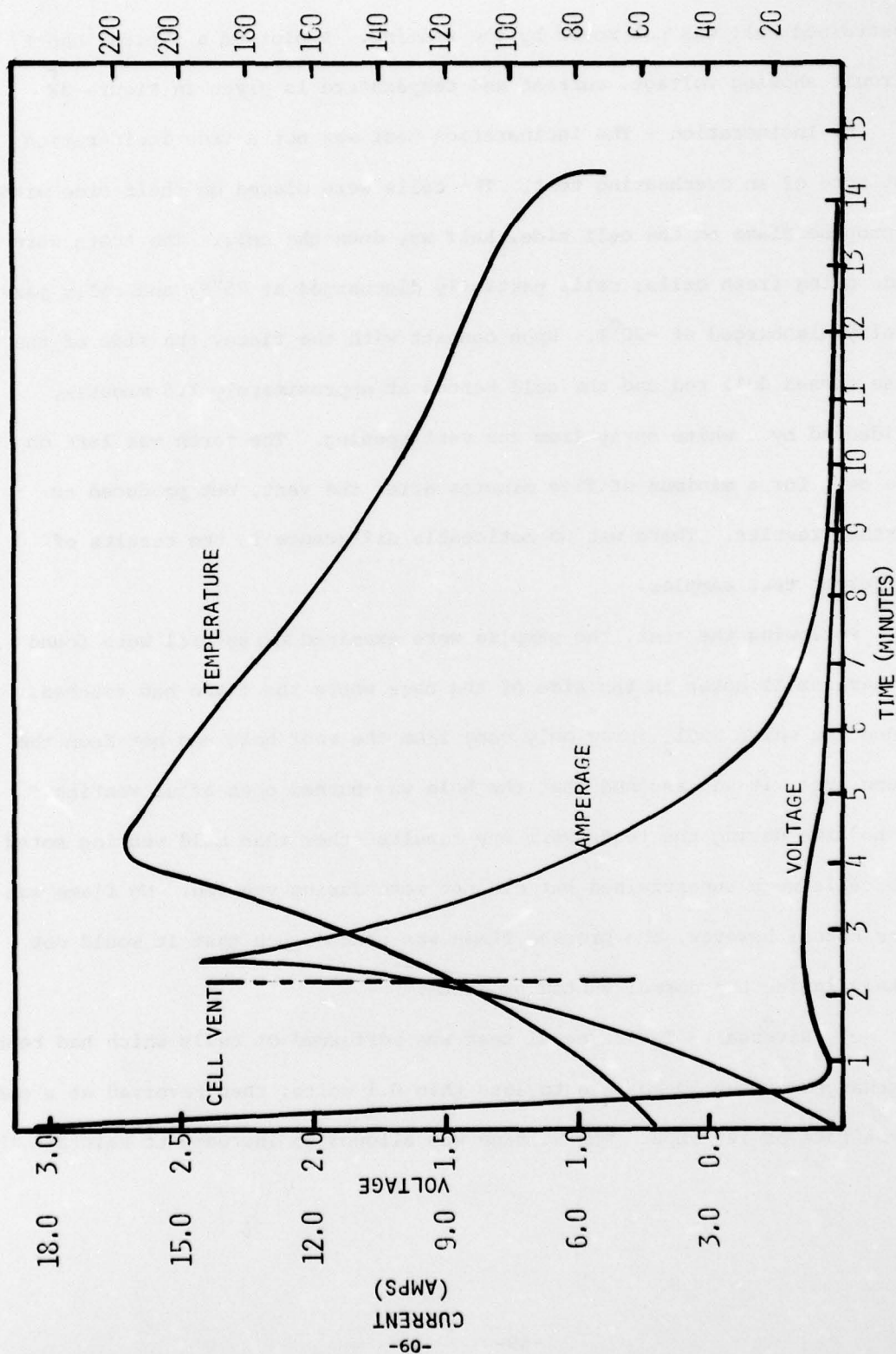


FIGURE 32 Ca/SOCL<sub>2</sub> SHORT CIRCUIT

.25 amp rate up to negative 20 volts. The cells were insulated to reduce heat losses during the test. A plot of a typical test is given in Figure 33. The initial voltage required to produce .25A current was -2.50. The reversal was continued for 2.5 hours before reaching -20 volts where the test was ended. The temperatures peaked out at approximately 160°F at 1.25 hours and dropped steadily afterwards. At no time during the test was there any indication that venting had occurred; however, when the cell was removed from the insulation after the test, the vent had opened slightly.

The remainder of the cells tested gave the same results, including several which were power discharged and reversed at -20°F.

d) Charging - The charging test was done in two (2) sections, constant current tests and constant potential tests. Test cells used in both charging modes were prepared in five (5) conditions; fresh undischarged; 50% discharged at room temperature; 100% discharged at room temperature; 50% discharged at -20°F and 100% discharged at -20°F.

Constant current cells were charged at three rates, 50 ma, 100 ma and 1000 ma. None of the cells vented when charged to capacities of up to 16% of normal cell capacity. Results from the three charging modes are shown in Figures 34-36. The voltage required to sustain a 50 ma charge ranged from 4.17 - 4.26 volts. Cell temperatures measured on the side of the cell rose 8°F above ambient during the 7.5 hour test. Results at 100 ma were similar except that the cell case temperature rose 24°F during the 3.5 hours of the test. The 1000 ma test required an initial charging potential of 4.42 volts which dropped continuously to a minimum of 4.08 volts. The test was continued until the temperature of the cell peaked and started to fall. Total duration of the test was thirty-five minutes and skin temperature of the cell rose 44°F above ambient.



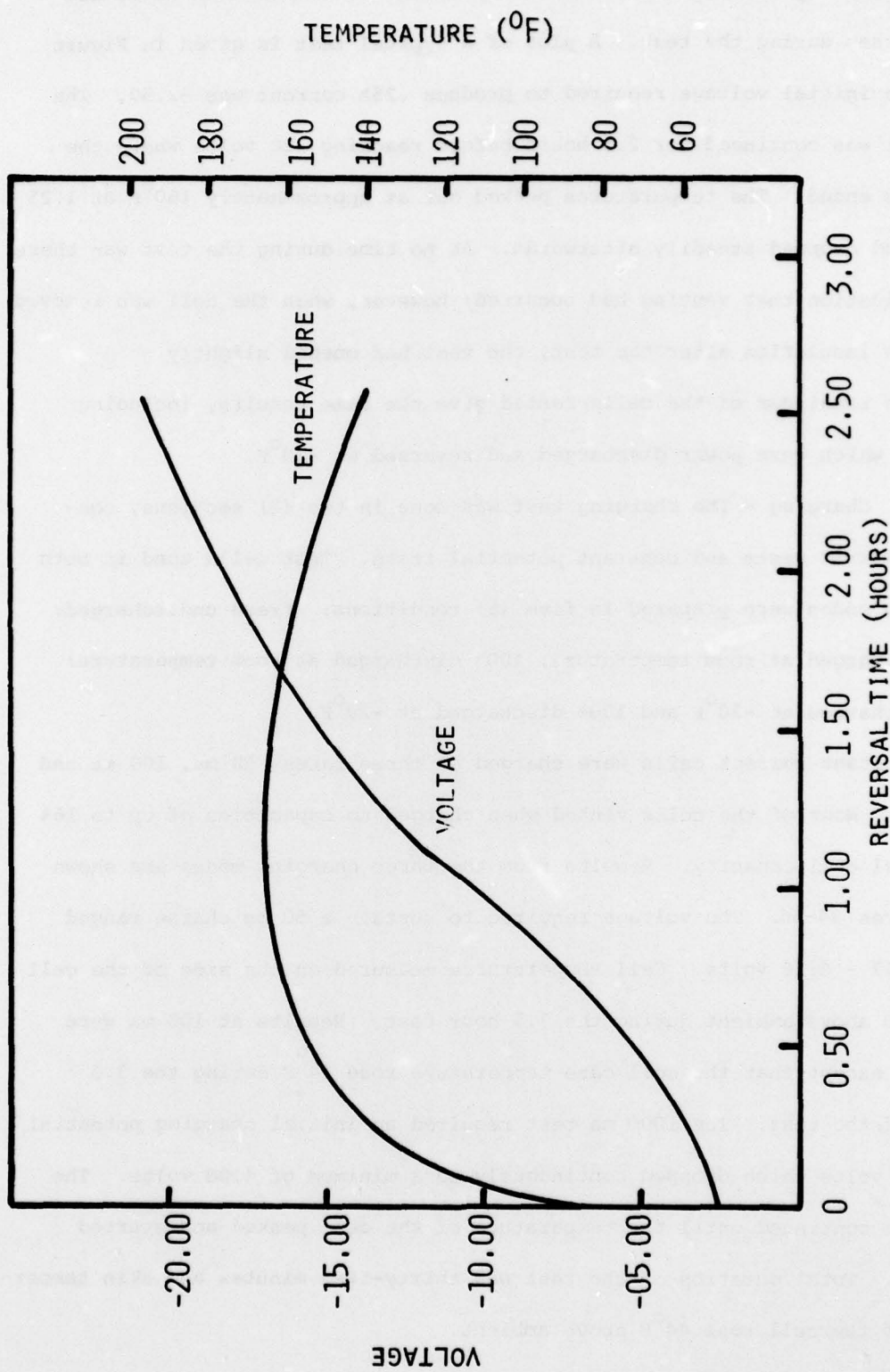


FIGURE 33  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  CELL REVERSAL S/N 69 (FRESH CELL) 0.25 AMP.

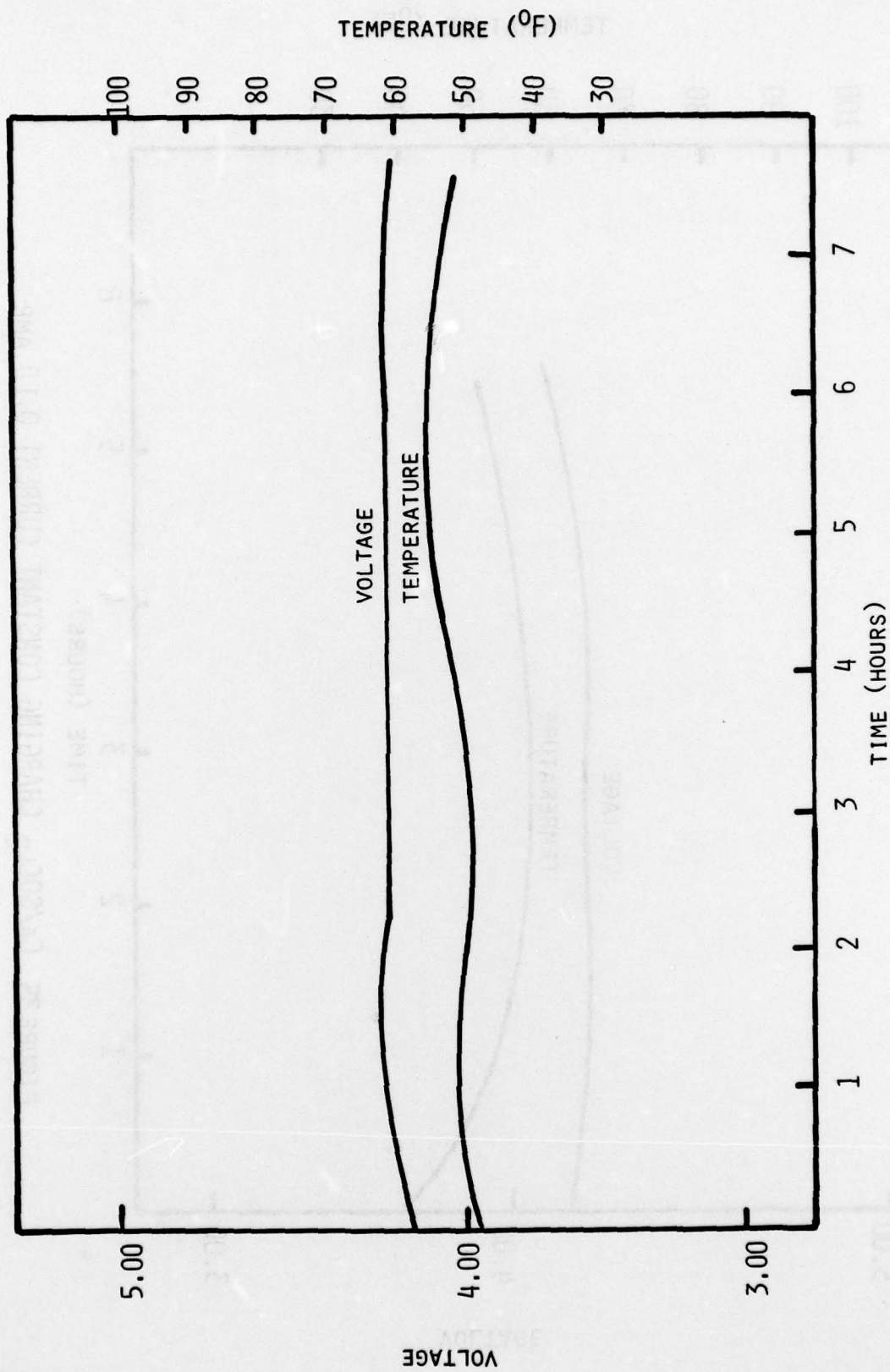


FIGURE 34  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  CHARGING CONSTANT CURRENT 0.05 AMP

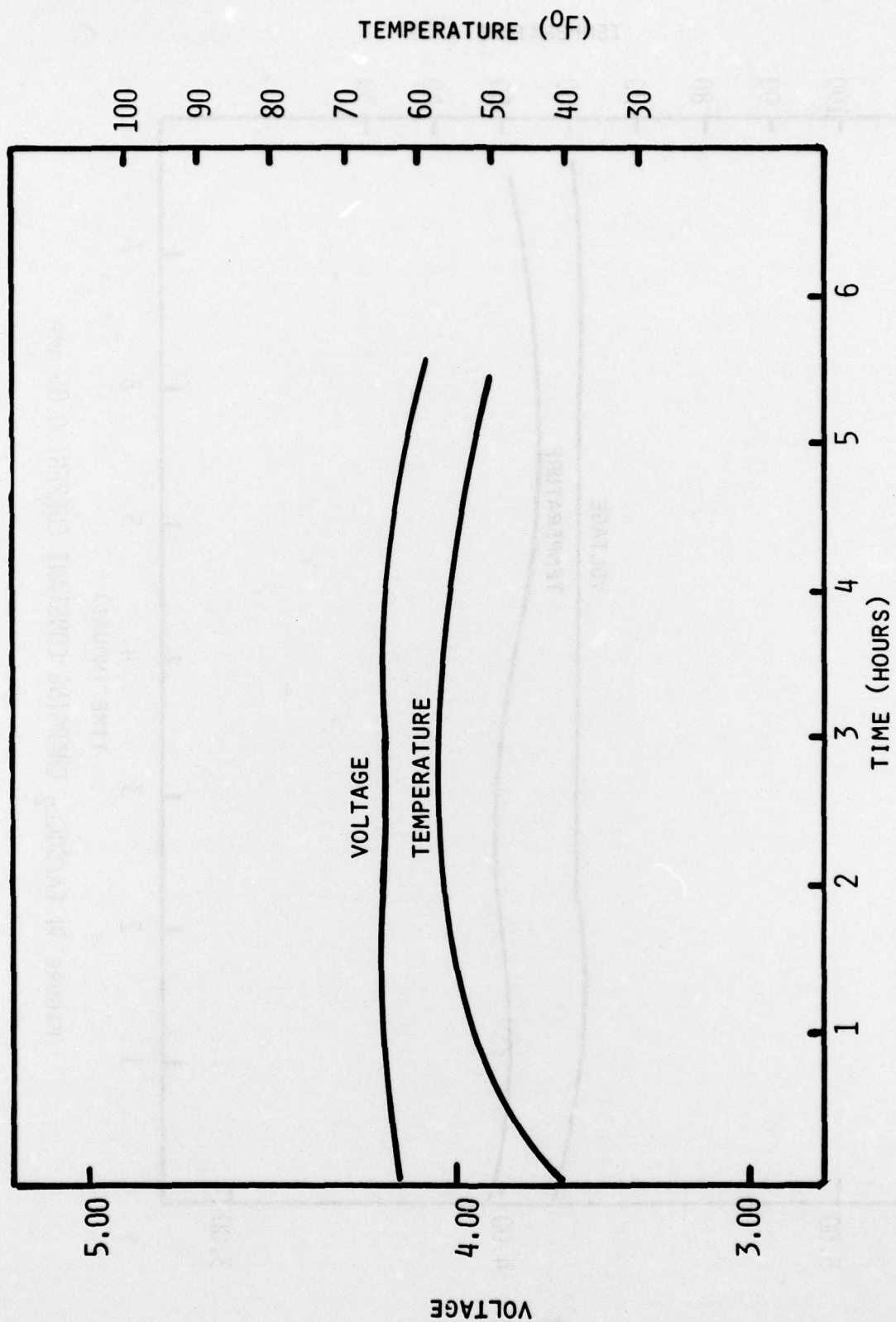


FIGURE 35  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  CHARGING CONSTANT CURRENT 0.10 AMP



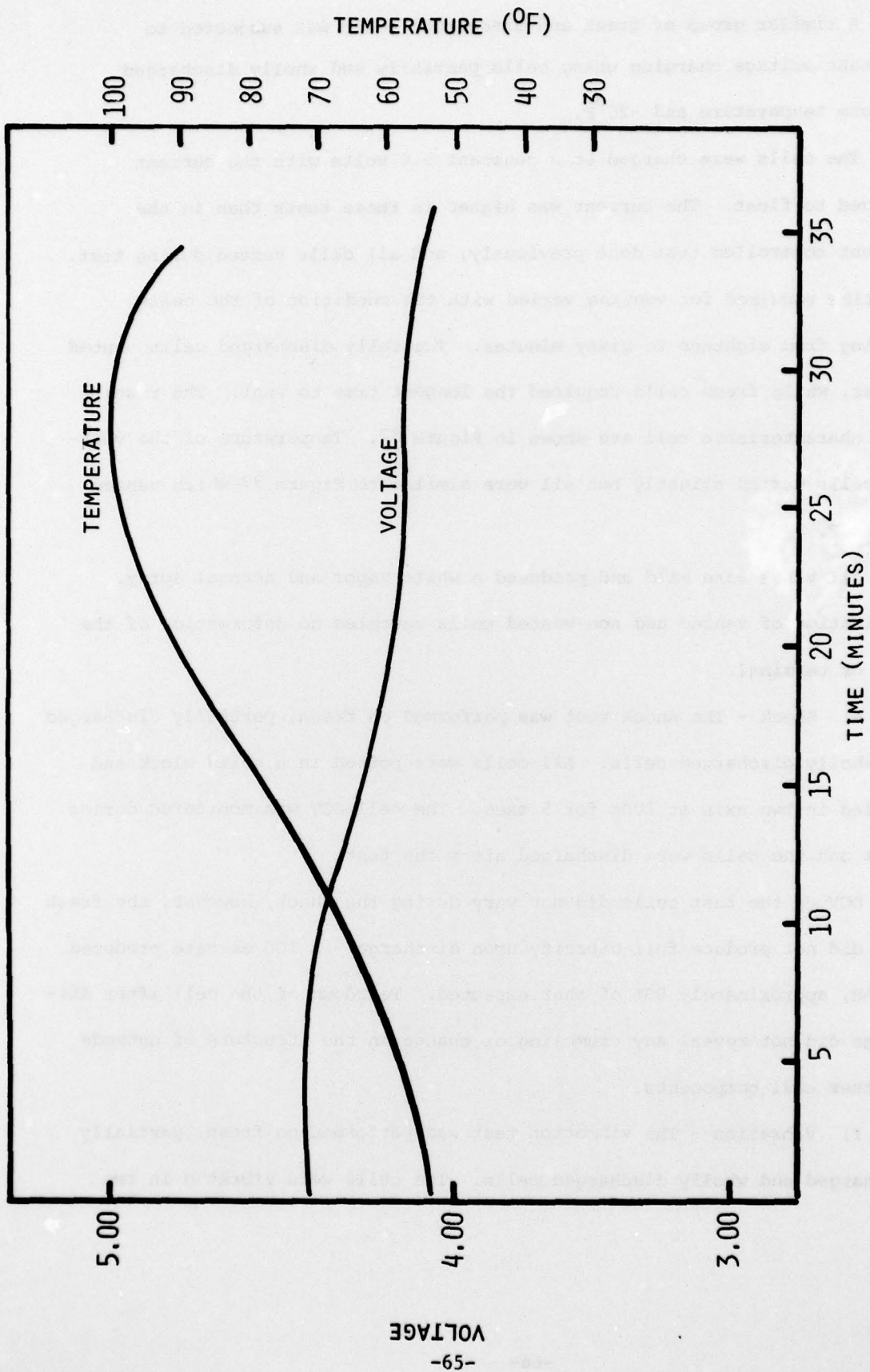


FIGURE 36 Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> CHARGING CONSTANT CURRENT 1.00 AMP

A similar group of fresh and discharged cells was subjected to constant voltage charging using cells partially and wholly discharged at room temperature and  $-20^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

The cells were charged at a constant 5.0 volts with the current allowed to float. The current was higher in these tests than in the current controlled test done previously, and all cells vented during test. The time required for venting varied with the condition of the cells, ranging from eighteen to sixty minutes. The fully discharged cells vented sooner, while fresh cells required the longest time to vent. The results of a characteristic cell are shown in Figure 37. Temperature of the venting cells varied slightly but all were similar to Figure 37 which vented at  $115^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

All vents were mild and produced a white vapor and aerosol spray. Examination of vented and non-vented cells revealed no deformation of the case or terminal.

e) Shock - The shock test was performed on fresh, partially discharged and wholly discharged cells. All cells were potted in a solid block and shocked in two axis at 100g for 5 msec. The cell OCV was monitored during shock and the cells were discharged after the test.

OCV of the test cells did not vary during the shock, however, the fresh cell did not produce full capacity upon discharge. A 100 ma rate produced 2.6 AH, approximately 80% of that expected. Teardown of the cell after discharge did not reveal any crumbling or change in the structure of cathode or other cell components.

f) Vibration - The vibration test was performed on fresh, partially discharged and wholly discharged cells. The cells were vibrated in two

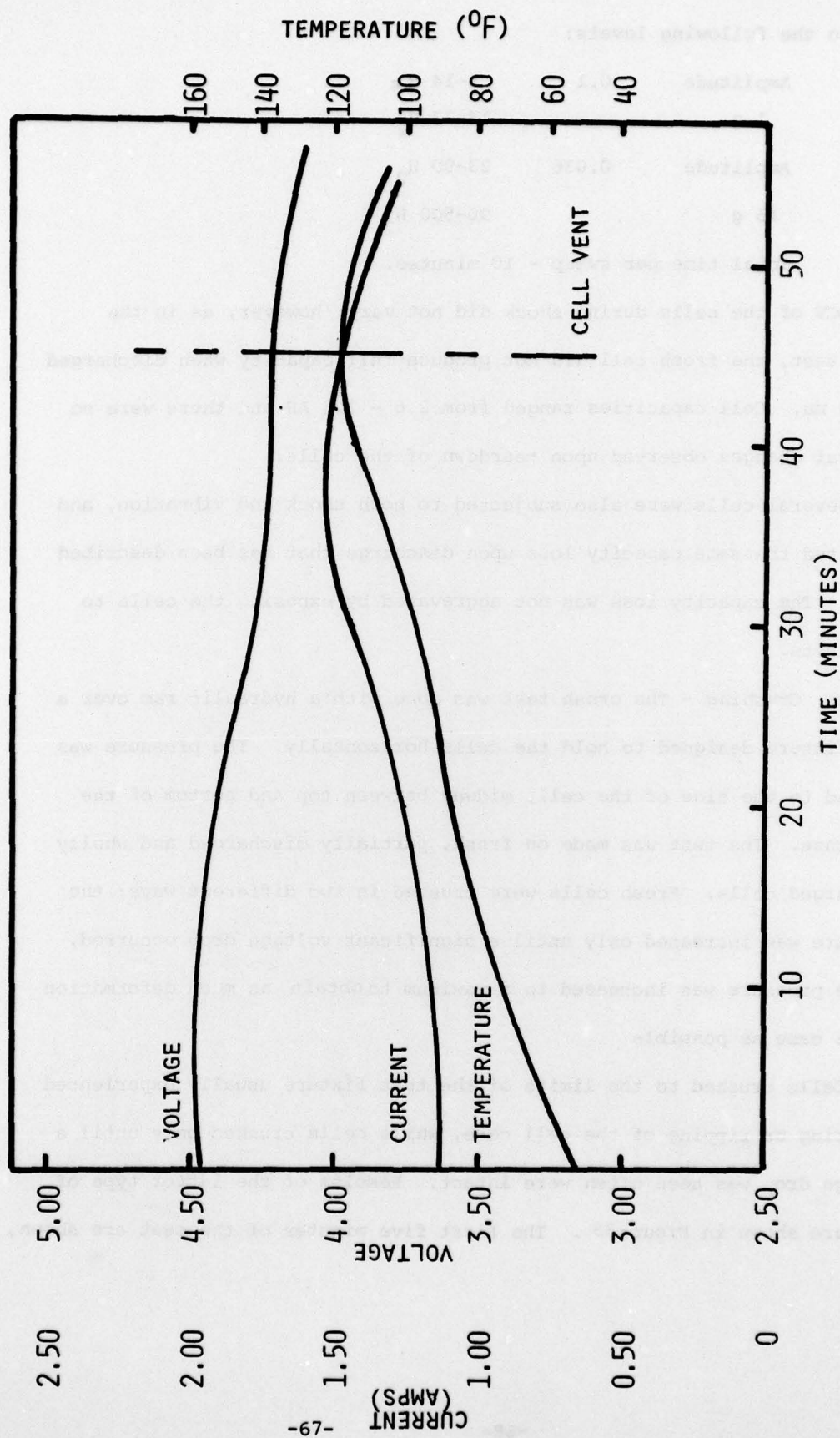


FIGURE 37  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  CONSTANT POTENTIAL CHARGING 5.00 VOLTS



axis to the following levels:

|           |       |           |
|-----------|-------|-----------|
| Amplitude | 0.1   | 5-14 Hz   |
| 1 g       |       | 14-23 Hz  |
| Amplitude | 0.036 | 23-90 Hz  |
| 15 g      |       | 90-500 Hz |

Total time per sweep - 10 minutes.

OCV of the cells during shock did not vary; however, as in the shock test, the fresh cell did not produce full capacity when discharged at 100 ma. Cell capacities ranged from 2.6 - 2.8 AH and there were no physical changes observed upon teardown of the cells.

Several cells were also subjected to both shock and vibration, and exhibited the same capacity loss upon discharge that has been described above. The capacity loss was not aggravated by exposing the cells to both tests.

g) Crushing - The crush test was done with a hydraulic ram over a test fixture designed to hold the cells horizontally. The pressure was applied to the side of the cell, midway between top and bottom of the cell case. The test was made on fresh, partially discharged and wholly discharged cells. Fresh cells were crushed in two different ways; the pressure was increased only until a significant voltage drop occurred, or the pressure was increased to a maximum to obtain as much deformation of the case as possible

Cells crushed to the limits of the test fixture usually experienced a tearing or ripping of the cell case, while cells crushed only until a voltage drop was seen often were intact. Results of the latter type of test are shown in Figure 38. The first five minutes of the test are shown,

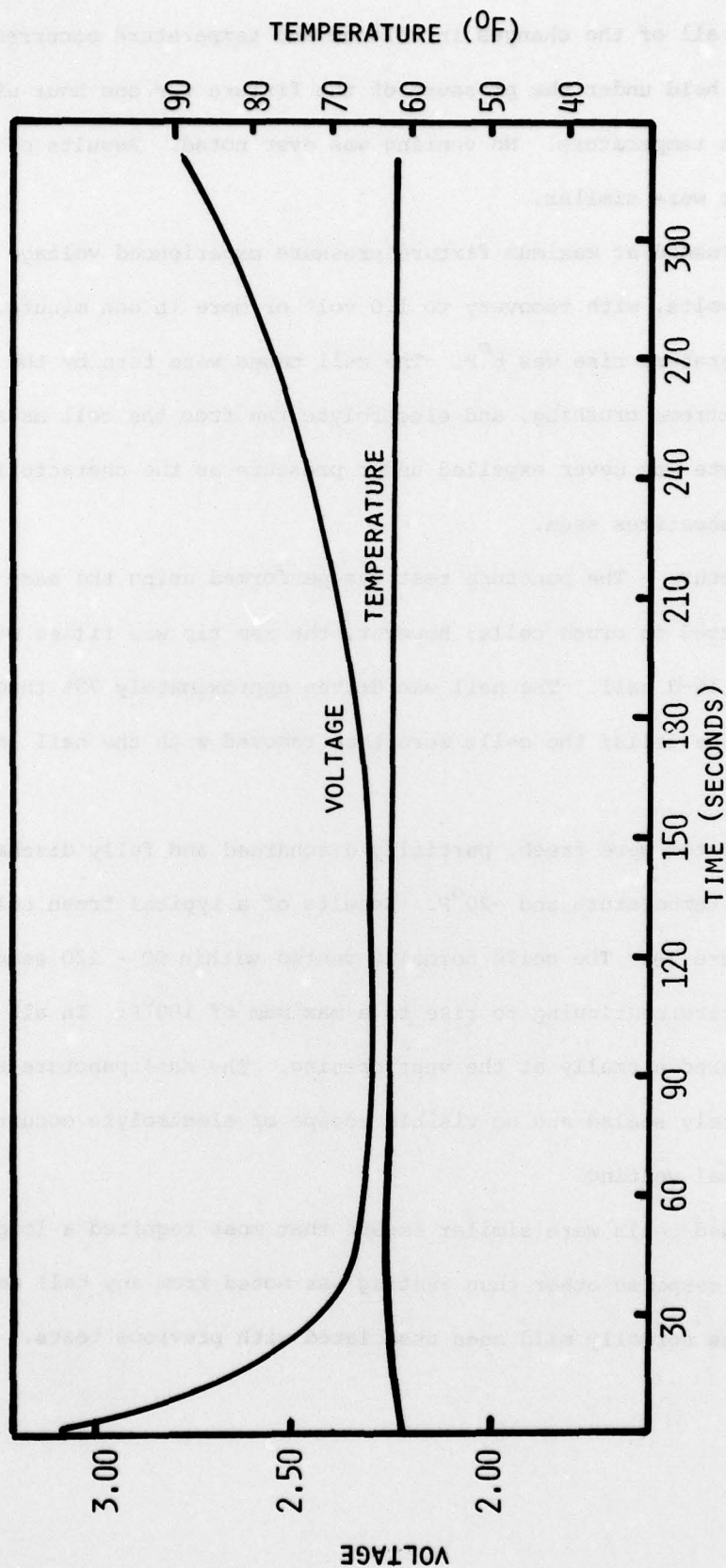


FIGURE 38 Ca/SOCl<sub>2</sub> CELL CRUSHING

during which all of the changes in voltage and temperature occurred.

The cell was held under the pressure of the fixture for one hour with out change in temperature. No venting was ever noted. Results of discharged cells were similar.

Cells crushed at maximum fixture pressure experienced voltage drops down to 0.6 volts, with recovery to 1.0 volt or more in one minute. The maximum temperature rise was 8<sup>o</sup>F. The cell cases were torn by the fixture during the extreme crushing, and electrolyte ran from the cell as a liquid. The electrolyte was never expelled under pressure as the characteristic white spray sometimes seen.

h) Puncture - The puncture test was performed using the same hydraulic fixture used to crush cells; however, the ram tip was fitted with a loosely held 16-d nail. The nail was driven approximately 75% through the diameter of the cells; the cells were then removed with the nail left in the cell.

Cells tested were fresh, partially discharged and fully discharged, both at room temperature and -20<sup>o</sup>F. Results of a typical fresh cell are shown in Figure 39. The cells normally vented within 90 - 120 seconds, with temperatures continuing to rise to a maximum of 180<sup>o</sup>F. In all cases the vent occurred normally at the vent opening. The nail puncture seemed to be completely sealed and no visible escape of electrolyte occurred prior to normal venting.

Discharged cells were similar except that most required a longer time to vent. No response other than venting was noted from any cell and the vents were the normally mild ones associated with previous tests.



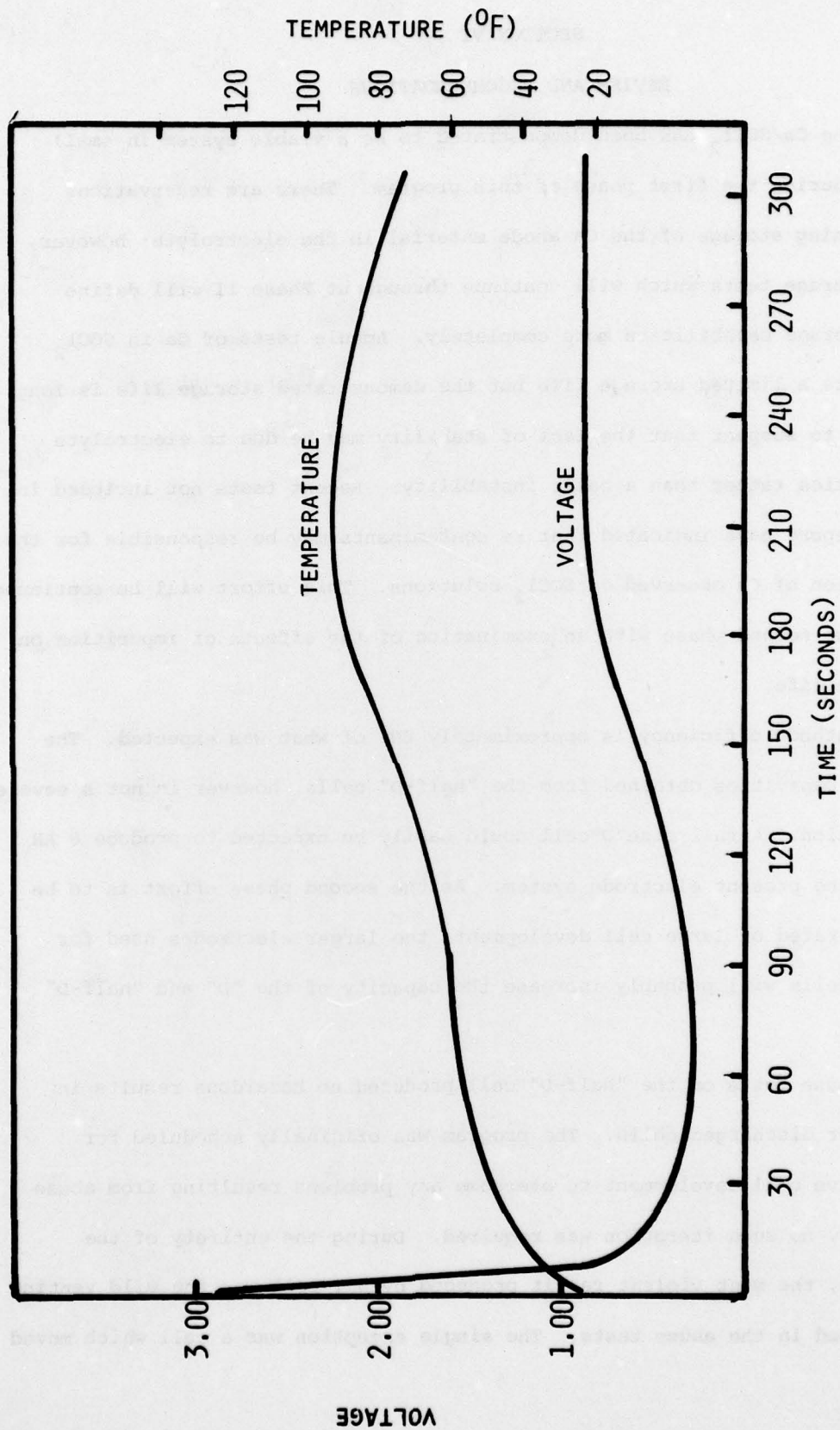


FIGURE 39  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  CELL PUNCTURE

## SECTION VI

### REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$  has been demonstrated to be a viable system in small cells during the first phase of this program. There are reservations concerning storage of the Ca anode material in the electrolyte; however, the storage tests which will continue throughout Phase II will define the storage capabilities more completely. Ampule tests of Ca in  $\text{SOCl}_2$  indicate a limited storage life but the demonstrated storage life is long enough to suspect that the lack of stability may be due to electrolyte impurities rather than a basic instability. Recent tests not included in this report have indicated that Fe contaminants may be responsible for the corrosion of Ca observed on  $\text{SOCl}_2$  solutions. This effort will be continued into the second phase with an examination of the effects of impurities on storage life.

Cathode efficiency is approximately 80% of what was expected. The 3.5 AH capacities obtained from the "half-D" cells, however is not a severe limitation. A full size "D" cell could easily be expected to produce 8 AH using the present electrode system. As the second phase effort is to be concentrated on large cell development, the larger electrodes used for those cells will probably increase the capacity of the "D" and "half-D" cells.

Abuse tests on the "half-D" cell produced no hazardous results in fresh or discharged cells. The program was originally scheduled for iterative cell development to overcome any problems resulting from abuse however, no such iteration was required. During the entirety of the program, the most violent result produced by any cell was the mild venting described in the abuse tests. The single exception was a cell which moved

during venting caused by short circuit early in the program. Based upon the results of the many abuse tests, and the fact that  $\text{Li/SOCl}_2$  cells were made and tested at the same time, it is almost certain that the cell in question was a  $\text{Li/SOCl}_2$  rather than a  $\text{Ca/SOCl}_2$ ; a mistake which might easily have gone undetected since voltage was not monitored during the test.

The second phase of the program will be concentrated on the problems exposed in Phase I such as Fe contamination. Larger cells will be constructed in gradual stages, starting with 600 AH, 2000 AH and finally 10,000 AH, with abuse tests on 600 and 10,000 AH cells. The 2000 AH cells will be demountable for teardown and will be equipped with gas and liquid sample collection parts to be used during discharge. The 10,000 AH cells will be discharged in simple capacity tests, followed by abuse tests on fresh and discharged cells induced short circuit, reversal, puncture and incineration.