

## Obituaries



### Pierre M. G. Toulon

Pierre Toulon, 61, died July 22, 1958, at his home in Normandy, France. A member of the Society since 1947, he came to the United States in 1950 and in 1953 joined Westinghouse Electric Corp. where he engaged in research in the Television Section of the Electronics Dept. His primary interest was in the development of large flat screen picture displays for radar and television. Prior to his association with Westinghouse, he was Consulting Engineer for the Société Alsthom in France. He had been for 15 years Chief Engineer of Compagnie Française Thomson Houston. He held more than 150 French patents, mainly in the field of color TV and large area image displays. More than 50 U.S. patents were issued in his name and during his career at Westinghouse he wrote about 470 patent suggestions. His patent "Dot Interlace" is basic to the present color TV standards. Many of his ideas, such as that of ferroelectric control of the elements of a flat TV screen, are now being used as a basis for research by Westinghouse scientists. Shortly before his last illness he designed an electronic typewriter which displayed appropriate letters or numbers on an electroluminescent panel.

### Charles Pathe

Charles Pathe, one of the early pioneers of the cinema and the founder of the largest French motion-picture firm, died December 27, 1957, in his 94th year, in Monaco, where he had lived in retirement for many years. Like many men of surprising destinies, Pathe was a visionary, a creator, but above all, an astute business man.

Charles Pathe was born in Vincennes, now a Paris suburb, on Christmas Eve, 1863. His parents were Alsatian, with a Danish heritage on his mother's side.

Long hours of work during his apprenticeship years were partially responsible for his poor health, causing many to believe that he was tubercular. This illness caused him to make frequent changes of employment with the result

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that his commercial flair did not evidence itself until 1888.

Pathe's prime goal was to be the proprietor of his own business, but lacking funds and with no exact idea to offer, he could find no one to back him. The result was that he had to take menial work in a lawyer's office. It was during his employment in the lawyer's office that he learned of a curious sound reproducing machine which was attracting unprecedented crowds at the Vincennes Fair. His inborn curiosity was aroused, and in later years he often told how he practically ran all the way to the Fair to witness a demonstration of this marvelous machine called a phonograph. This early cylinder phonograph was fitted with individual ear tubes so that a large group could listen to the then crude recordings for a fee totaling the small sum of two sous. Witnessing the rapt attention of the listeners, and rapidly calculating the machine's income possibilities, he left no stone unturned in his effort to find funds to purchase one of these early phonographs. His plan was to tour the provincial fairs then common in France, and exhibit it in more or less side-show fashion. Needless to say, his enthusiasm and good showmanship were fruitful, for on the first day he placed his machine on exhibition it earned for him more than 200 francs, which was greater than what he had earned in a full month's work in the lawyer's office.

The early phonographs aroused great interest in the rural areas, and it was not long before Pathe worked out an agency arrangement with the English manufacturers for the European distribution of their machine. He was soon swamped with business but found reserve energy to continually expand his activities. He not only opened stores for the sale of phonographs, but created his own recording studios.

Pathe was aware of the value of advertising and the ingenuity of his appeals brought him an ever expanding clientele. His recording studios quickly became known worldwide, as he attracted the leading orchestras, singers, monologists and top entertainers of the day. In these early days there were no means for making a master sound recording and as a result each cylinder had to be recorded individually by the live performer. Pathe later wrote: "When I think about those hectic days which are not very long ago it seems as though it all happened on another planet." Pathe's meteoric rise began with the phonograph, and through his untiring efforts formed the foundation of his business success. He was soon to repeat his initial success with the Edison Kinetoscope, the ancestor of today's motion picture. It was natural that he should seize an opportunity to exhibit the Kinetoscope, as it provided an expansion of the phonograph's appeal to his already established audiences.

His promotion of the Kinetoscope almost duplicated his experiences with the phonograph, starting with a few machines and soon expanding their number to the point where film supply became a critical problem.

It was soon afterward that Charles Pathe persuaded his brothers to form a partnership for the further expansion of the Edison

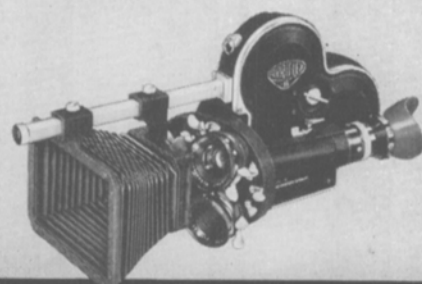
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Kinetoscope. Unfortunately, difficulties arose soon after the partnership was formed, traceable to Charles' poor health and a clash of personalities. Brothers Jacques and Theophile withdrew from the partnership, leaving firm ties between Charles and Emile which were to last a lifetime. In 1897, Charles and Emile formed the Pathe Frères with a stated capital of 40,000 francs. Their letterhead, bearing the legend Pathe Frères, Phonographs and Motion Picture Machines (Phonographes et Cinematographes), was the first evidence of what was to follow.

Charles Pathe's early vision is confirmed by his announcement shortly after their partnership that: "The cinema will be the

theatre, the newspaper, and the school of tomorrow."

The original Cours de Vincennes establishment was too far from the center of Paris, and with Charles' constant daring, the brothers opened their first central headquarters at 98 Rue de Richelieu — directly opposite their most serious competitor.

Until then the business was a mixture of success, poor accounts, litigation and fires, but while Charles Pathe was constantly driving toward the future, he could not secure the capital urgently needed for his expanding motion-picture production activities. This obstacle was surmounted in October 1897, when a Monsieur Grivolos

entered the scene. Not only was this gentleman one of the the first movie enthusiasts, but one of Pathe Frères' wealthiest customers. M. Grivolos made available to the brothers the financial backing which would eventually enable their founding Pathe Cinema.

Their organizations were soon in full stride, requiring that Emile take over the phonograph recording and distribution business, while Charles was to apply his full attention to the cinema.

Pathe soon began the full-scale production of films which found a waiting market. His initial production was in the area of topical films which were the forerunner of the later newsreels. Seizing on happenings of the day, he simulated in his studio incidents such as: *The Sinking of the Martiniqne*, *The Dreyfus Affair*, *The Boer War*, *The Russian-Japanese War* and *The Assassination of Queen Draga of Serbia*, etc. And with them the world famous *Pathe Journal* was born. At first these films were made available weekly, but with almost instant public acceptance, he began *Pathe News* which in 1913 was issued on a daily basis. Pathe's cinema activities had almost a meteoric rise, requiring in 1899 that entire buildings be purchased to accommodate production and processing of films. Late in that year he was able to expand his laboratory production to 40 kilometers of film daily. In 1902, Pathe built the first fully equipped indoor motion-picture studio in France. This year also marks the date when Charles purchased the present location of the Kodak Pathe Company and he was soon to erect the first plant in France to manufacture motion-picture raw stock.

Pathe's vision and ready cooperation with his technical staff is confirmed by his segregation of the numerous divisions of his production facilities to avoid loss by fire which was always present in the then highly flammable nitrocellulose film.

The demand for the films produced by Pathe required constant expansion of his organization. He was quick to capture foreign markets, opening branch offices in England, Germany, Russia, Austria, Spain, Italy, Japan and in the U.S.A. Charles Pathe's production activities through the years covered every facet of the motion-picture art; raw stock manufacture, cameras, projectors, film processing, newsreels, the drama, adventure and science films, history, comedy and romance. Pathe's interest in the arts was evidenced in his founding the group known as Les Films d'Art (Art Films Company) to record for the masses the works of the masters.

In 1927, after a long series of negotiations with George Eastman, Pathe joined with him to found the Kodak Pathe Company of France. Finally in 1929, with the advent of sound motion pictures, Charles Pathe realized that the burden of years rested heavily on his shoulders and that he would not be equal to the tremendous task of starting all over again. Convinced that a younger generation was needed to make this challenging adventure a success, Pathe retired to the background at the peak of his prosperity, leaving to this younger generation a colossal company that still continues to grow.—*John B. McCullough.*



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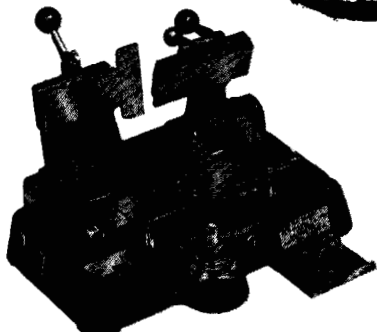
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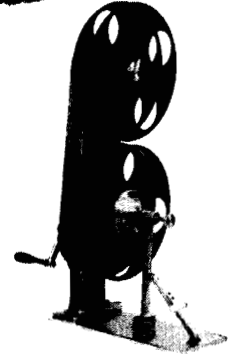
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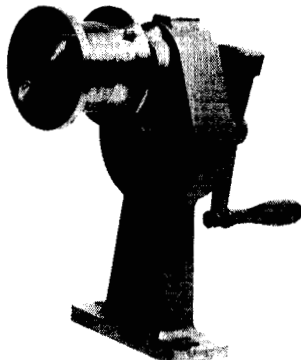
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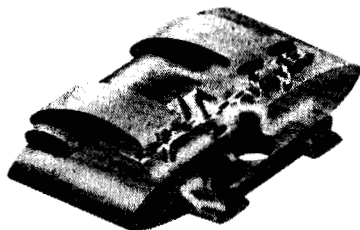
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