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books reviewed

Commercial Television

By Wallace S. Sharps. Published (1958) by Fountain Press, 46-47 Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 2; distr. in U.S. by Rayelle Publications, 76 West Chelton Ave., Philadelphia 44. 496 pp. (incl. 69-page glossary). 336 Illus. 5½ by 8½ in. Price \$14.95.

"In this book I have tried to provide a storehouse of information that will be of value in the day-to-day work of advertisers, advertising practitioners, film makers, the staff of the programme contractors and all those who earn their living through commercial television, or are interested in its development and exploitation." Thus, in the author's own words is stated the purpose of the book.

From an American point of view, the title of the book might well have been "Commercial Television in England," for it is primarily documented with the experiences of the first two years of commercial television broadcasting in England, London to be specific. However, it is interesting to note that the language of television is remarkably similar, whether it applies to techniques employed in London or those of New York and Hollywood. Since this is a book dealing with basic concepts and techniques, it could well be used as a text in television courses from Compton to Cambridge, Ohio State to Oxford, and Michigan to Melbourne.

Though intended primarily for a production personnel clientele, the book contains a remarkable collection of data relative to technical operations of television and film equipment. Significant technical developments from Baird's disk scanner through present-day magnetic-tape recorders are described, including a comparison of English and United States transmission standards.

Five of the 25 chapters are devoted to various aspects of motion-picture film usage for television, from the structure of the raw film stock through developing, printing, editing, sound recording, animation, and TV projection. One chapter is devoted to "Optical and Magnetic Telerecording" in which various British approaches to what Americans call kinescope recording are described in some detail with appropriate illustrations. Included also are brief descriptions of the various approaches to magnetic recording of television including the current American techniques and the BBC's VERA machine which employs a half-inch tape running at 200 in./sec.

Illustrating the wide scope of this book are two chapters titled "Audience Research," and "The Law Relating to Commercial Television." The latter is obviously English

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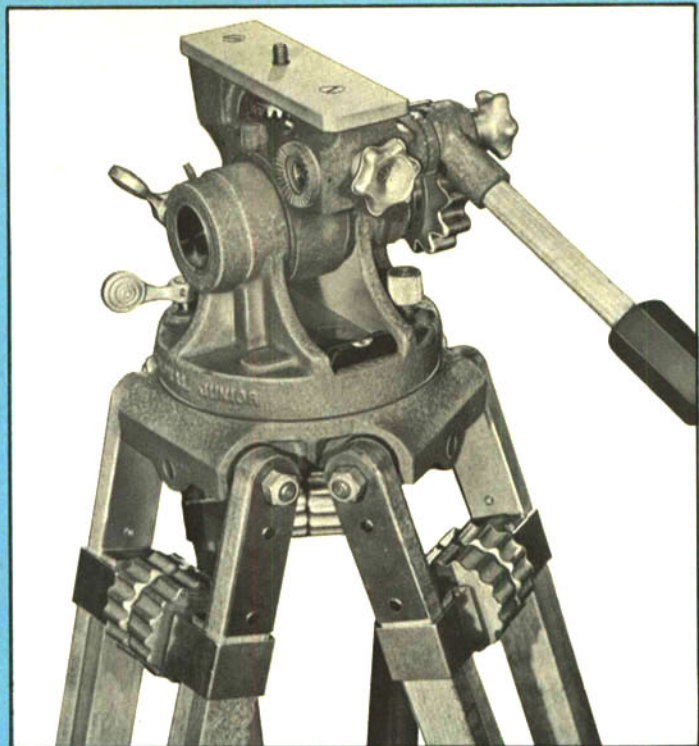
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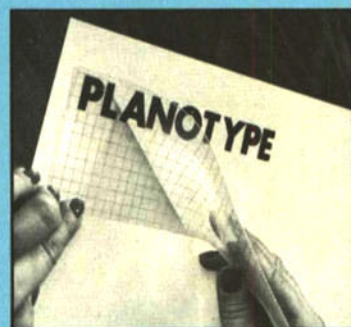
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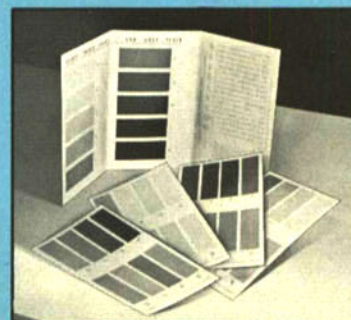
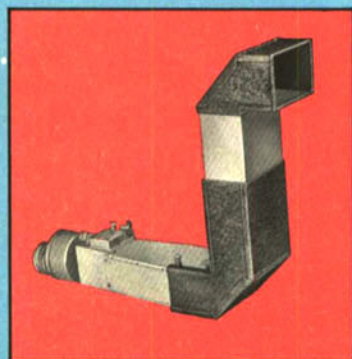


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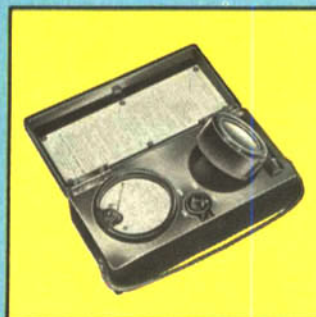
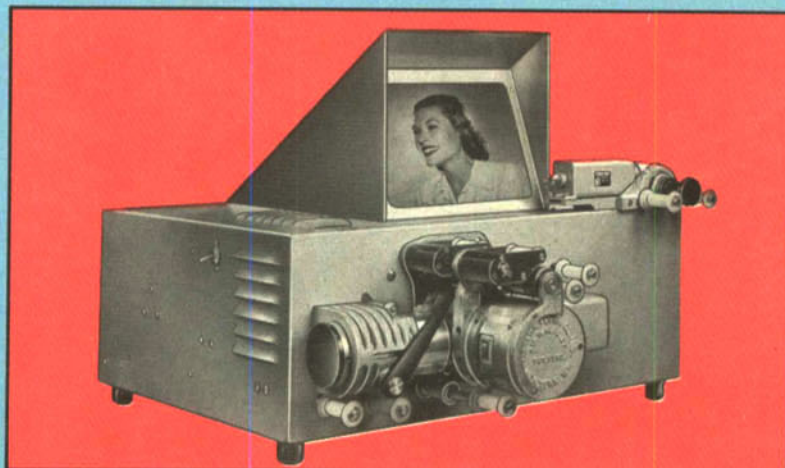
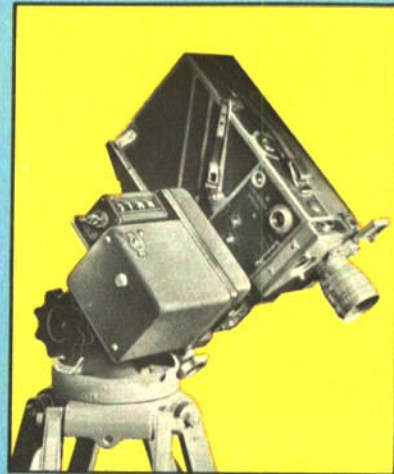
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law, not American law, though there is no doubt much similarity in the laws of the two countries.

The last chapter is in itself a unique and valuable collection, for it is a 68-page dictionary of commercial TV terms, covering all aspects of the medium. Herein, ASA standards are frequently listed as references.

Without doubt this is a well organized, well written, easy reading, storehouse of practical information concerning commercial television, particularly that of Britain, though applicable in large part to television in any land.—*Ralph E. Lovell*, 2554 Prosser Ave., Los Angeles 64.

Perspective:

Quarterly Review of Progress in Photography, Cinematography, Sound and Image Recording. Vol. 1, No. 1, 1959.

Edited by A. Kraszna-Krausz. Published by Fountain Press Ltd., 31 Fitzroy Sq., London, W.1. 112 pp. plus 10 pp. advertisements. 7¼ by 9¼-in. Price (subscription) \$7.50.

In three volumes called *Progress In Photography*, published by Focal Press, Ltd., in 1951, 1955 and 1958, respectively, were described changes that occurred from 1940-1958. Now a new publication has appeared, called *Perspective* and intended to "look out through the present towards the future." Changes in the photographic industry, its market, applications and techniques of photography and even the changing language will be reviewed.

This initial issue is attractively printed and bound in flexible card covers. Approximately two-thirds of it is devoted to eight short articles written by well-known authors. The titles of these articles are: "What Price Amateur Photography"; "Not by Silver Alone"; "Focus on Natural History"; "The Professional Tool"; "All the Color"; "Training German Photographers"; "Pictures on Tape"; and "The Growth of American Photography."

Of these, possibly three have some interest to motion-picture or television engineers. "Not by Silver Alone" by Martin Hephner classifies several systems of photography which do not utilize silver halides as the primary light-sensitive media. "All the Color," by George Ashton, presents a survey of the color materials for still photography and their relation to each other. The article of greatest interest is probably W. H. Cheevers' account of "Pictures on Tape," which describes the fundamentals of video tape for recording and reproduction and its use in the United Kingdom.

The latter third of this issue is devoted to 47 well-written abstracts on research reports, products and methods. Some of the subjects covered are: "Color of Electron Images," "TV Tube vs. Film in Spectrography," "Cine Cameras for Missiles," "10 Seconds Processing," "Perforated Tape Synchronization," "Earth Satellite Tracking," and "Photographing History."

A group of 9 short abstracts of market conditions concludes the issue. Information is given on West Germany, Japan, U.S.S.R., France and the United States.

In the preface mention is made of a plan to publish a new series of monographs entitled, "The Progress Library of Photographic Science and Technology" as the individual areas of specialization are con-

sidered beyond the scope of "Perspective."

A general comment is that this new quarterly presents a fresh, intelligent and interesting approach to the old problem of a progress report. It is hoped that succeeding issues will be equally refreshing.—*Glenn E. Matthews*, Eastman Kodak Co., Research Laboratories, Rochester, N. Y.

The Animated Cartoon


By John Daborn. Published (1958) Fountain Press, 46-47 Chancery Lane, London W.C. 2. 204 pp. 7 by 5-in. Paperbound. Illus. Price 2s 6d (35 cents).

This paperbound booklet is primarily of interest to amateur film makers desiring a


capsule knowledge of animated cartoon methods. It would likewise be of passing interest to live action film makers who would like a superficial insight into some of the basic problems and techniques of the cartoon film.

The booklet, for all its brevity, does have a remarkable amount of information for the uninitiated, covering the basic principles, homemade equipment that can be made for drawing and setting up a camera, and several available systems to produce both simple and relatively complex animated films.

Items under discussion include the building of an illuminated animator's drawing-board, and two types of inexpensive animation stands for substandard film cameras.



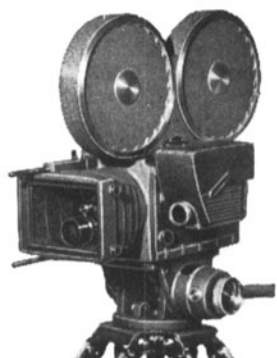
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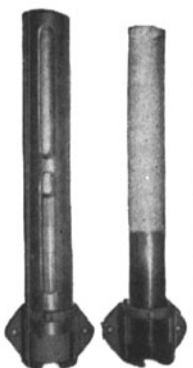
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The first is a four-poster wooden stand with adjustment for varying camera-to-subject distance, but not permitting zooms. The second is much more elaborate and, if properly constructed and used carefully with a lightweight camera, would permit the photography of approach shots suitable for use in amateur filming. Both units are illustrated with line drawings of sufficient clarity to enable anyone with a reasonable amount of mechanical ability to construct either unit.

Basic animation methods mentioned include using high-contrast film and pencil drawings. Backgrounds handled on cels allow some saving of labor. A variation of this same system using cutaway sections is also shown. The more conventional and up-to-date methods used by the large studios in professional production are next mentioned, as are many of the basic principles of motion breakdown of the drawings themselves. Repeat cycles, sliding cels and camera animation are very briefly covered. A paragraph is devoted to silhouette animation for individuals who don't have sufficient drawing ability to indulge in full-scale animation.

The balance of the booklet is devoted to brief mentions of various techniques and problems, scratchoff with reverse action, diagrammatic animation, lining up the camera, field chart, focus, tests, wipes, dissolves and trucking.

It must be remembered that the terminology in this treatise is British, but this will not in any way confuse the reader because the text is very clear.

It is regrettable that the author was not permitted more space to dig more thoroughly into the matter at hand, to make it a more valuable book.

As the author intended, amateur film makers interested in the field of animation will find both the text and illustrations of interest, giving a brief run-through on the basics of animated cartoon filming. The professional, already in the animation industry, on the other hand will find nothing in this book, as it is too elementary.—*Ernest M. Pittaro*, Tri-Film Studio, 137-73 70th Ave., Flushing 67, N.Y.

The Art of Animation

By Bob Thomas. Published (1959) Simon and Schuster, Inc. 630 Fifth Ave., New York 20. 188 pp. 8½ by 11¼-in. Illus. Price \$5.95.

This volume, although a very well designed and appealing book, is strictly a popularized presentation of the animated cartoon technique. It never was intended as a technical discourse on the subject as its colorful illustrations and elaborate make-up appeal to the layman and to youngsters who may have a passing curiosity in this direction.

Despite the popular approach, there are some interesting facts and illustrative reproductions which are probably of sufficient interest to the student of animation, or to those in the film industry who are not conversant with the medium. After reading the book, the student, layman or teenager will undoubtedly have an insight

into the multifaceted problems of animation, and have a greater appreciation of the animated film when next seen in the theater. For young people, this book may very well serve as an aid to inspiring a serious interest in the animation industry.

Many aspects of the production of animated cartoons are discussed. Matters that are usually left out of popularized magazine articles are covered, and for this reason the book gives a good account of itself for a popularized treatment.

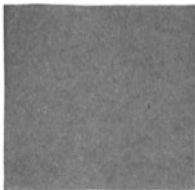
The first chapter is a very brief history of animation which is far from complete, but does indicate some of the antecedents of present-day cartooning. Story material, and some of the steps in preparing story material for the screen are discussed. Character derivation and design are demonstrated quite thoroughly and aided by a profusion of black-and-white as well as color illustrations.

Both the technical and creative phases of the production of soundtracks are touched upon, including voice, effects and music tracks.

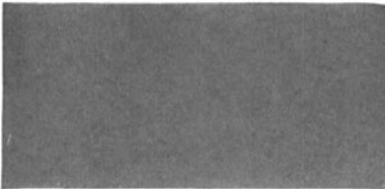
Direction, a much neglected phase of animated cartoon production is well covered from a number of standpoints, and will undoubtedly awaken in the lay reader a realization that cartoons don't just happen, but are built upon a careful foundation of planning.

This is further amplified by the chapter on Layout, which clearly shows the way in which camera-fields are planned, and their relationship to the finished film. Multiplane camera is shown in photographs

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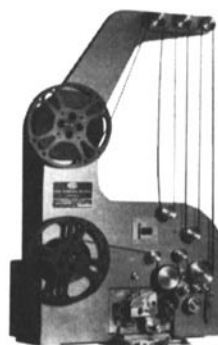
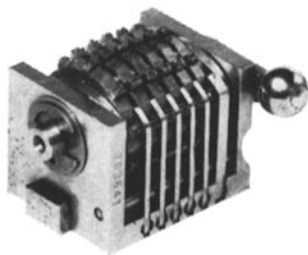
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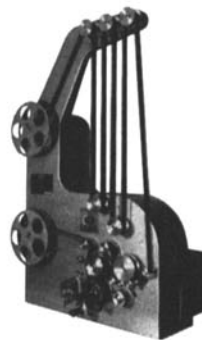
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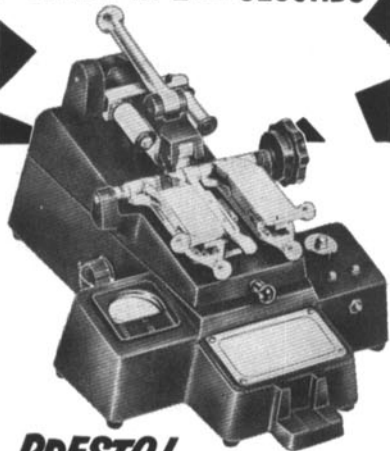


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and diagrams, demonstrating the application of the layout planning.

The chapter on Animation is of interest to the student interested in the drawing aspect of the animation profession, and the same can be said for the chapter on backgrounds. A number of interesting facts are brought out in these two chapters, facts that go beyond the expected scope of such a popularized book. Details of the drawing techniques, and some of the color problems come in for a cursory investigation.

The last page of text expounds upon the future of animation, and admittedly this reviewer is prejudiced against prognostications of any sort as a waste of time. The appendix includes animators' credits for feature production, a glossary of animation terms which is useful for the student and layman.

The profusion of beautiful color and black-and-white illustrations makes this book a worthy addition to the library of anyone interested in the film medium. For the individuals in the animation profession, the illustrations may serve as an interesting record of some of the Disney productions, but of course the information given is too rudimentary to be of much value to the professional.

In summary, this book is of value to the layman, student or person with limited or no knowledge of the animation process, or for those who collect books pertaining to film as an art medium. To the professional, the book is only of passing interest, since it does not pretend to be a deep technical discussion of the subject.—*Ernest M. Pittaro*, Tri-Film Studio, 137-73 70th Ave., Flushing 67, N. Y.

My Ivory Cellar:

The Story of Time-Lapse Photography, By John Ott. Published by Twentieth Century Press, Inc., 40 S. Clinton, Chicago. 157 pp. 6¼ by 9¼-in. illus. Price \$4.75.

This fascinating and informative book will be of interest to anyone with a serious interest in some of the lesser-known phases of motion-picture work.

The author has not set out to instruct the reader in the details of building and operating time-lapse equipment setups, but rather chronicles the history of some of his own experiences in the field. In the course of the detailed descriptions, much information can be gleaned, particularly the avoidance of potential pitfalls for the tyro in his initial attempts in this field.

Included in the book are several electrical diagrams of time-lapse control equipment which, if followed, put the reader well onto the right track in constructing his own apparatus. Careful reading, and rereading of this book, plus detailed examination of the many photographs would permit anyone interested to embark upon his own time-lapse work with confidence, and the comforting knowledge that he has been guided by an expert.

The book's sphere of interest goes far beyond that of limiting itself to those who intend to go into time-lapse work. It is of very general interest as well, since it is a factual account of the history of the development of present-day time-lapse techniques, tracing all of the failures,

the difficulties, the discouragements and the ingenious solutions to the most frustrating problems imaginable.

It is a most thought-provoking book in another way; the author indicates many discoveries that were made incidentally while working in this intriguing field of scientific research, discoveries that have prompted large manufacturing concerns to start research projects based upon the time-lapse findings.

The reader is soon made aware that there is more to time-lapse work than setting up a camera and photographing flora at given intervals. This field of endeavor leads to many varied fields such as cancer research, rehabilitation of criminals, the effect of natural and artificial light on mental and physical well being, a variety of information about plant life and interesting sidelights on the transmission of certain wavelengths through plastics and glass.

One of the most impressive aspects of time-lapse work as described in this book is the vast amount of attendant equipment that is necessary for the pursuit of serious work in this field. The very nature of the work demands that an individual camera be tied up for months on end. This indicates that if more than one project is to be handled at one time, a camera and control equipment must be earmarked for each setup. In addition, precise temperature and humidity controls, automatic shade controls, light controls, as well as special construction of housings around trees and other plants are all necessary to the successful completion of finished film.

The book is somewhat autobiographic, written in an easy and lucid style leading the reader from subject to subject with as much suspense as a mystery story, and this reviewer had great difficulty in putting the book down.

Anyone having an interest in serious scientific photography, research, the challenge of solving problems and the stimulation of thought, will find *My Ivory Cellar* a most absorbing and worth-while book.—*Ernest M. Pittaro*, Tri-Film Studio, 137-73 70th Ave., Flushing 67, N. Y.

The Dress Doctor

By Edith Head and Jane Kessner Ardmore. Published (1959) by Little, Brown & Co. 249 pp. + 8 pp. illus. 5¼ by 8 in. Price \$3.95.

This autobiography of Edith Head, fashion designer, U.S.A., is a real, live success story. Miss Head is a successful career woman of outstanding ability. Fashion Chief of Paramount Pictures, Hollywood, she has the distinction of being the only *feminine* six-time winner of filmland's top award of merit, The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Oscar. And the basis for the Awards is *not* originality or beauty of costume design but for how much they contribute to the overall excellence of the motion picture.

A native Californian, Edith Head was born in Los Angeles and recalls her early, lonely childhood on the desert near Searchlight, Nevada, a "gold" town where her stepfather was a mining engineer. Cactus,

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pliant greasewood, and desert flowers were the first tools of her trade — horned toads, dogs, cats, jackrabbits and burros her models — and imagination her studio. Miss Head graduated from the University of California and Stanford University with A.B. and M.A. degrees and subsequently attended Otis Art School and Choulnard Art School in Los Angeles. Later she taught French, Spanish and Art at the Hollywood School for Girls and The Bishop School for Girls at La Jolla, Calif. To fill in with a temporary summer job, the ambitious young schoolteacher answered an ad for a sketch artist at Paramount Studios, was accepted, and reached a decision. "There was a magic power in clothes . . . they could develop personality. I decided to stick with them." She came up the long, hard way via every lowly chore in the fashion department until she ultimately won her place as the studio topper in Fashion Design.

Miss Head is able to sweep aside the glamor curtain of the Hollywood scene and take us onstage to meet realism in terms of fashion and design for the woman in the home. Her dedication of this timely work is "To Mrs. Average American." In *The Dress Doctor* she comes up with many practical, economical suggestions. A "color chart" is set forth in detail (p. 214) from which are quoted below a few definitions based on "mood and key" and proven "highly successful" in Miss Head's operation:

Hot Colors (intense, strong): Magenta, Flame, Burnt Orange, Electric Blue

Relaxing Colors (soft, grayed): Ivory, Rose Beige, Powder-blue, Sea-green.

Some women dress for women but the vast majority of women dress for the admiration of the male and you'll enjoy the chapter "The Masculine Point of View" and the enlightening quips and sundry fashion flips from well-known actors and director-producers.

With a keen perceptive sense of human nature and basic values, Miss Head is quick to spot the phony femme who affects the spectacular and who has "gone Hollywood." But, in stride, she deals with these characters—in fact, "you learn, too, from the less talented, the ambition-driven, the would-bees." Nice going, there, Miss Head!

And you'll really appreciate a day on the studio set after you've read of Edith Head's one and only semi-hysterical appearance before the cameras as an actress in the role of the chic owner of a dress salon in the picture *Lucy Gallant*.

Across the VistaVision screen of this entertaining and informative work parade is projected a glittering array of stars, newcomers and former boxoffice 'greats' many of whom have carved new careers in television. But Marlene Dietrich and Gloria Swanson earn special niches in Edith Head's filmland hall of fame as "all-time symbols of glamor."

A versatile person in her chosen profession is Edith Head: she has designed gowns and costumes for the circus, for ice shows, for opera, nightclubs, state inaugurations and, of course, television. She admits to "a photographic mind" which is an invaluable asset to her in the retention of fashion essentials gleaned in her daily observations as witness these quotes:

"Fashion is a language — some know it — some learn it — some never will.

"The cardinal sin is not being badly dressed but wearing the right thing in the wrong place.

"Good clothes should be comfortable.

"Better than 'elegant' to me is *appropriate*.

"... too high fashion frightens some people.

"Good clothes have no age.

"A dress should be tight enough to show you're a woman and loose enough to prove you a lady!"

Never center-of-the-road in her pronouncements and decisions, it must have required untold diplomacy and tact to avoid compromise with some of the opinionated characters who hide behind the mighty production desks in the palatial studio offices. But it's paid off for Edith Head and today she is the recognized arbiter of fashion in hectic Hollywood.

The book is fascinating reading and it's all very human and warm. We salute you, Edith Head, for your unselfish contribution to the arts and sciences of the motion picture — and of television.—*Solita Palmer*, P.O. Box 265, Three Arch Bay, South Laguna, California.

(Ed. Note: This review by Miss Solita Palmer, member of ASCAP and AGAC, and composer of original music for films and TV, is intended primarily for the distaff side of the motion-picture and TV industries but is also directed to any person concerned with direction or production of films or television.)

Motion Picture Technical Dictionary: English-French; French-English

By C. Ryle Gibbs. Published (1959) by La Technique Cinématographique, 54 Rue de Clichy, Paris 9^e. 244 pp. 4½ by 6 in. Price 1960 F.

Perhaps the most attractive thing about this new dictionary is its size. At last we have a list of French and English motion-picture terms that is neither part of a bulky multilanguage glossary, nor an appendix to a fat yearbook weighing a couple of pounds. This is a small volume that could even be carried in a pocket without too much damage to a jacket, and consequently it should prove very useful to those who have need of such help in their daily work.

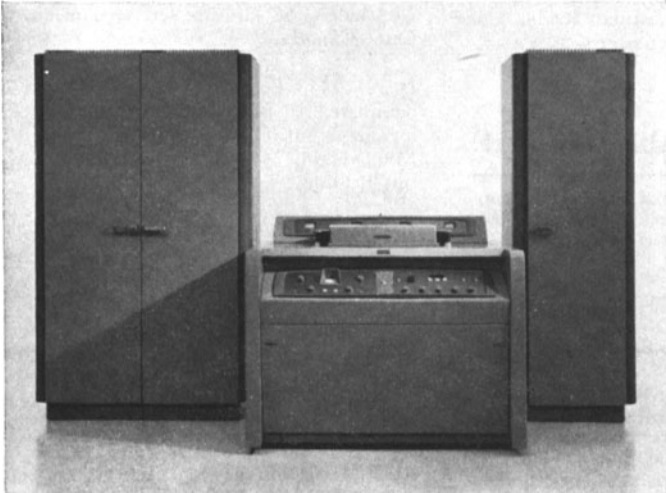
There are no definitions given, but the list of motion-picture terms appears to be more complete than in any of the comparable compilations, and should contain everything needed for describing operations in any part of the industry. In fact, the absence of definitions or other elaborations is in a sense an advantage, since it ensures a page that is uncluttered and easy to use.

Mr. Gibbs, who has had a distinguished career in the motion-picture industry in England, France and India, and who has been a member of SMPTE for many years, is to be complimented on his achievement in producing this very useful dictionary.

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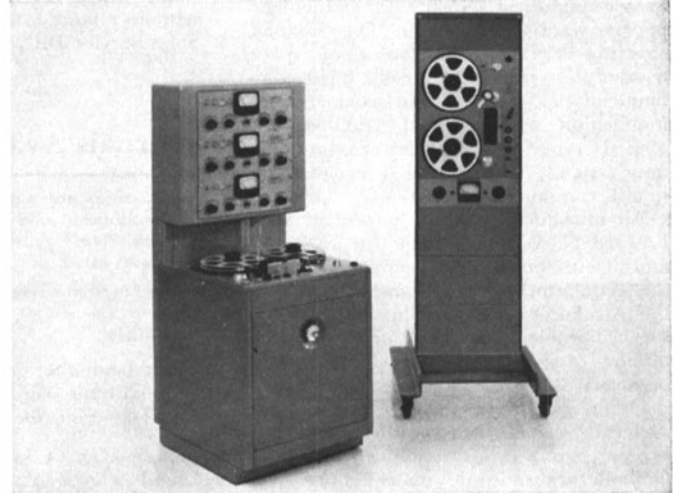
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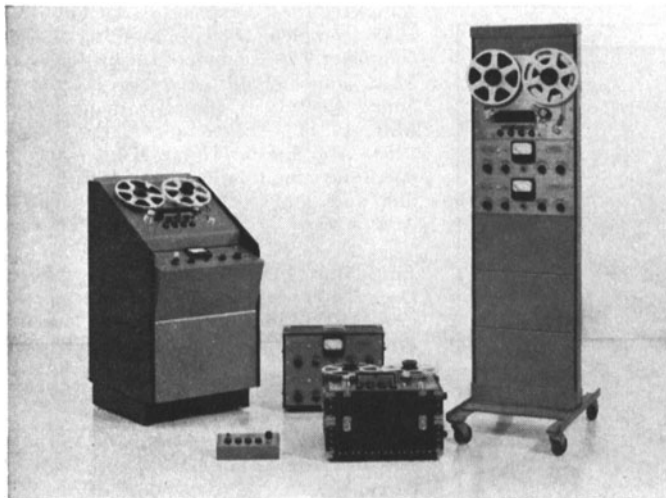
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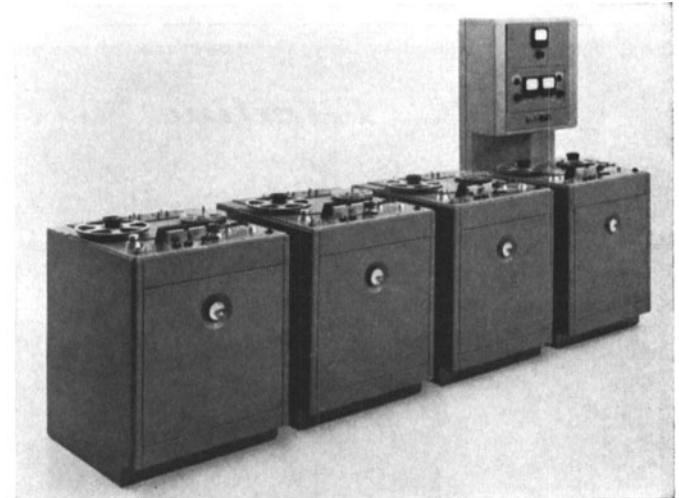
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Record of National Symposium on Extended Range and Space Communications

By E. R. S. C. Symposium Committee of the Institute of Radio Engineers, Washington, D.C. Published by the Goetz Company, 1030 20th St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C., 119 pp. Illus. i-iii.

Under the joint sponsorship of the Institute of Radio Engineers and George Washington University, the symposium recorded in this 119-page booklet was held in Washington in October 1958. Eighteen papers were presented in five sessions, covering the general topics of space transmission problems, meteor burst communications systems, transoceanic communication by means of satellites, extended range tropospheric communication systems, and extended range ionospheric communication systems.

An introductory survey paper by Maj. Edward N. Wright, of the Air Research and Development Command, describes the requirements for communications of the Air Force, and explains some of the special problems resulting from the extension of communication channels into outer space.

Other papers in this volume present such subjects as the transmission of television signals from satellites, wideband facsimile transmission, meteor burst system performance, the use of satellites as communication relay stations, and various systems using scatter techniques.

For the communications engineer de-

siring a brief survey of recently developed approaches to many problems, this collection of papers will represent a valuable source of information.—A. L. Sorem, Eastman Kodak Co., Research Laboratories, Kodak Park, Rochester 4, N.Y.

Kodak Books and Guides 1959 (L-8) has been revised to include recent titles of publications on general and specific photographic subjects. The 16-page booklet gives a brief description of the publications, number of pages and price. It is available without charge from Eastman Kodak Co., Sales Service Div., Rochester 4, N.Y.

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