

Obituary

John Grierson

John Grierson, a pioneer of documentary films and a founder of Canada's National Film Board, died in Bath, England, on February 19th at the age of 73.

It is very difficult, within the space of a brief obituary, to pay adequate tribute to a man of so many outstanding accomplishments. He distinguished himself in several careers during his lifetime.

Grierson, the son of a Scottish minister, was born just prior to the turn of the century in Stirling, Scotland. He was educated at Glasgow University and then held several post-graduate scholarships at American universities.

It was during his stay in the United States that his attention was attracted to motion pictures. He wrote widely for newspapers and magazines on the movies and the theory of filmmaking. In commenting on Robert Flaherty's films *Nanook* and *Moana*, he first used the term "documentary film."

In 1927 Grierson returned to London to develop the filmmaking branch of the Empire Marketing Board. In 1929 he produced *Drifters*, one of the early masterpieces of filmmaking. His filmmaking unit became the training ground for many notable filmmakers and produced such outstanding films as *Song of Ceylon* and *Night Mail*.

In 1937 he was invited to Canada to de-

velop a plan for the reorganization of the Motion Picture Bureau, one of the world's earliest government film units, established in 1917. The study led to the development of the National Film Board and Grierson became its first Commissioner in 1939. Throughout World War II he was responsible for producing a long series of informational and interpretative films which enjoyed tremendous popular success throughout the world. Here again, Grierson served as a magnet and was able to weld his dedicated, but sometimes inexperienced, staff into a highly professional unit. Perhaps the best known series produced at that time was *Canada Carries On*.

Grierson left the National Film Board at the end of World War II and became coordinator of Information and Public Education for UNESCO in Paris. He later returned to England as Film Commissioner for the General Office of Information. Later, in cooperation with the National Film Finance Corporation in London, he formed Group Three as a training ground for young feature film directors who could be tried out on low-budget productions. Actors such as Peter Finch, Kenneth Moore, Peter Sellers and Tony Hancock received their first acting opportunities with the Group.

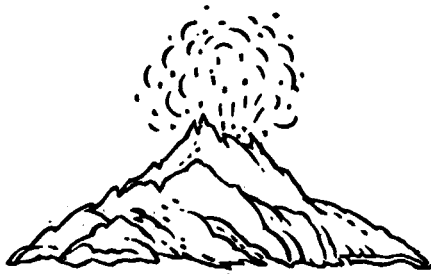
In 1957 Grierson again made a change, this time to television. Here he developed a notable series, *This Wonderful World*, on

Scottish television. It proved to be one of the great successes on British TV and ran until 1968 when severe illness forced him to give it up.

During the past few years Grierson again returned to Canada and accepted a professorship of mass communications at McGill University in Montreal. As late as 1970 he visited India as part of a National Film Board survey team to advise the government on the use of mass media.

Grierson's stated philosophy was, "We have followed along the perspective of modern life and sought to find themes which gave a new significance to the terms of ordinary living. Sometimes we have approached the task on a journalistic level or poetic level or analytical level or more dramatic level, but always we have been concerned to bridge a gap between the citizen and the world about him and always we have been concerned to find a degree of beauty in the process and make our own contribution to the spectacle of democracy at work."

John Grierson was forthright and articulate and always enjoyed the complete respect of those who worked for him. Although we are saddened at the loss of a great friend, his presence will continue to influence the National Film Board and the documentary filmmaker throughout the years that lie ahead.—*Gerald G. Graham*, Director of Planning and Research, National Film Board of Canada



Special Effects in Motion Pictures

(Some Methods for
Producing Mechanical
Special Effects)

Frank P. Clark

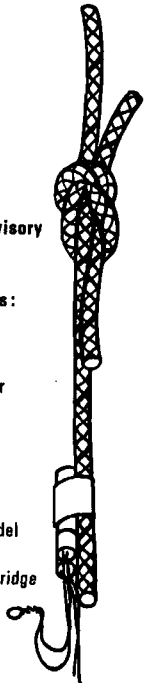
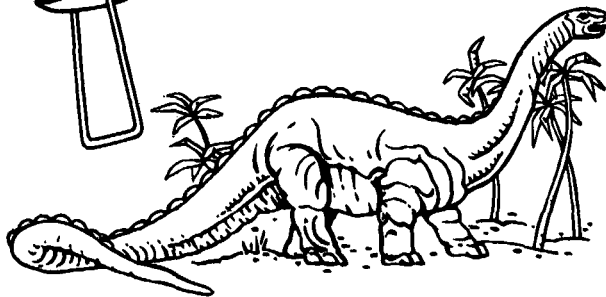
CONTENTS: The Development of Special Effects
The Application of Special Effects
Atmospheric Effects
Special-Effects Props
Optical Effects
Sound Effects
Miscellaneous Effects
Shooting
Pyrotechnics
Sources of Special Effects (Appendix)
Index
Bibliography

238 PAGES

MORE THAN 100 ILLUSTRATIONS

Price: \$7.50

Discounts of 20% to SMPTE members and booksellers
on single copies; 25% on orders of 5 through 49;
33-1/3% on orders of 50 or more.



Reviewed by
the SMPTE Advisory
Committee on
Special Effects
Motion Pictures:
Herbert Meyer
Chairman
Russell Brown
Thomas G. Fisher
Jack Froehlich
Max Hankins
Ub Iwerks
Ivan Martin
Bob Matthey
Frederic L. Ponedel
John Roche
J. Edward Stembridge
Edward Stones
Virgil Summers

Order from:

Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers
9 East 41st Street, New York, N. Y. 10017

Troubled by out-of-focus pictures?

Troubled by emulsion

pile-up in your camera gate?

Troubled by distracting camera

noise when shooting subjects who should not be distracted from what they are doing?

Troubled by cameras that are always in need of repair and adjustment?

If so, switch to Auricon, the only 16mm Camera that guarantees you protection against all these troubles, because it is so well designed! The Auricon is a superb picture-taking Camera, yet silent in operation, so that at small extra cost for the Sound Equipment, it can even record Optical or Filmagnetic sound in addition to shooting your professional pictures.



AURICON SUPER-1200, takes 1200 ft. Runs 33 min. \$6425.00 & up

AURICON "PRO-600 SPECIAL," takes 400 ft. Runs 11 min. \$1620.00 & up

AURICON PRO-600, takes 600 ft. Runs 16½ min. \$1820.00 & up

CINE-VOICE II, takes 100 ft. Runs 2¾ min. \$1180.00 & up



BACH Auricon

GUARANTEE
All Auricon Equipment is sold with a 30-day money back Guarantee and a 1 year Service Warranty. You must be satisfied!

Write for your free copy of the 74-page Auricon Catalog

BACH AURICON, Inc.

8948 Romaine St., Hollywood 38, Calif.

HOLLYWOOD 2-0931

MANUFACTURERS OF PROFESSIONAL
16MM CAMERAS SINCE 1931