

REPORT OF STANDARDS AND NOMENCLATURE COMMITTEE*

Two meetings of the committee were held during the period between the New York and Toronto meetings of the Society. The first of these, held in May, was poorly attended, the following members being present: Dr. Sease, Messrs. Channier, Brown, Spence Griffin, and Jones, *Chairman*. At the second meeting, held September 26th, the attendance was somewhat better, the following members being present: Mr. H. N. Griffin, Dr. Sease, Messrs. Burnap, Sponable, M. C. Batsel (representing Dr. Goldsmith), Channier, Brown, Spence, F. L. Whiting (representing Mr. Sponable during his absence), and Jones, *Chairman*.

At these meetings a large number of problems connected with the work of standardization were discussed at considerable length. In some cases the committee has been able to arrive at definite proposals for standardization and recommended practice. In other cases it has been impossible to formulate definite proposals for presentation to the Society. In this report is given a brief summary of the work with which the committee has been occupied during the past six months.

At the last meeting of the Society in New York, May 6-9, 1929, the following proposals for standardization were presented to the Society and received the preliminary approval of the Society:

1. Taking speed, for sound recording practice.
2. Projection speed, for sound recording practice.
3. Location of scanning slit.
4. Location and width of sound track on positive.
5. Definition of "Number of teeth in contact."
6. Definition of "Safety Film."

Having stood for six months, these proposals, with the exception of the definition of Safety Film, are now submitted for final approval. They may then be added to the list of the Society's approved standards and recommended practice.

* October, 1929.

SAFETY FILM

4 The definition of Safety Film, as formulated by the committee prior to the last meeting and submitted to this Society at the New York meeting, has been subjected to severe criticism from various sources. Many objections have been raised to the adoption of the definition in the form previously submitted. The committee has considered these objections and feels that some of them are valid and to meet them has formulated a new definition which it feels represents appreciable improvement. It will be recalled that the definition as formulated specified that any material having a burning time less than 15 seconds when tested under certain specified conditions should be called Safety Film, the burning time being determined by using a sample of the material of specified dimensions. The dimensions of the proposed sample are:

Length 36 inches, 914.4 mm.

Thickness 0.005 to 0.006 inch, 0.122 to 0.152 mm.

Width 0.63 to 1.378 inches, 16 to 35 mm.

It has been brought to the attention of the committee that it is undesirable to base the definition of Safety Film on a burning time determined with a sample of these dimensions since motion picture materials are, or soon will be, in use varying over a much greater width range. For instance, film as narrow as 7 mm. has been proposed and several wider products (up to 70 mm.) have been made. Moreover, the thickness tolerances are not sufficiently great to include the possible materials which it may be desirable to use. For instance, some very thin materials, down to approximately 0.002 inch thick, have been produced, and it seems quite possible that it might be desirable to use materials appreciably thicker than the upper limit specified by the definition.

This point of view raises the entire question as to the fundamental intent and purpose of formulating a definition of Safety Film. It has been pointed out that the definition should relate to the combustion rate of the product as manufactured and distributed. This point, that the factor of importance is the rate at which a material burns regardless of its thickness or width, seems to the committee to be well taken and that it should be adopted in the formulation of the definition of the term *Safety Film*. In order that the definition shall conform with this point of view it is necessary, therefore, to eliminate from the specifications of the sample, with which the burning rate is determined, statements relative to width and thickness

and merely to state that the time of combustion for a sample of the material in question shall be less than some specified value.

Objection was also raised to the combustion time specified in the previous definition. Reference to the data relating to the burning time for various samples of news print shows in one case the burning time for a sample of standard length, namely, 36 inches, was as low as 10 seconds. It was pointed out that it seems illogical to formulate a definition of Safety Film which could be interpreted to indicate that some news print papers would fall in the unsafe category. Of this the committee feels that the point is well taken and that the burning time should be specified as 10 seconds rather than 15 seconds, the value mentioned in the previous definition. This still leaves ample margin between the class of Safety Film and that of the commercial nitrate films which have burning times of 3 and 4 seconds.

It seemed desirable also to define somewhat more clearly the classes of materials to which this definition is intended to refer, limiting specifically its application to motion picture materials but at the same time making it include all types of materials that are used or may be used for this purpose. After careful consideration and lengthy discussion the committee therefore wishes to withdraw the definition submitted at the last meeting and to substitute the following:

The term "Safety Film," as applied to motion picture materials, shall refer to materials which have a *burning time* greater than ten (10) seconds and which fall in the following classes: (a) support coated with emulsion, (b) any other material on which or in which an image can be produced, (c) the processed products of these materials, and (d) uncoated support which is or can be used for motion picture purposes in conjunction with the aforementioned classes of materials.

The *burning time* is defined as the time in seconds required for the complete combustion of a sample of the material 36 inches long, the determination of burning time being carried out according to the procedure of the Underwriter's Laboratory. This definition was designed specifically to define Safety Film in terms of the burning rate of the commercial product of any thickness or width used in practice. The test of burning time therefore shall be made with a sample of the material in question having a thickness and width at which the particular material is used in practice.

In making a determination of burning time the Underwriter's Laboratory prescribes that a strip of the material shall be sus-

pended vertically by a small wire through a pinhole at one end of the test strip. A gas test flame $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter is applied at the lower end of the suspended strip. The relative ease of ignition, height of flame, and time required for complete combustion are observed. Tests shall be made in a place protected so far as possible from drafts although no definite hoods or shields are used.

We wish to emphasize the fact that the definition is intended to refer specifically to a commercial product and to serve as a specification of the safety of this material as used in practice. It is realized that a given film base formula as used for making products which differ in thickness and width might in one case give rise to a product which may be classified as "safety" and in other cases the product would have to be classified as unsafe. We feel that this is desirable and that the whole object to be achieved by the formulation of the definition is to promote safety in the utilization of motion picture film products.

LOCATION OF SCANNING SLIT

The wording of the specification as to the position of the scanning slit as presented in our last report seems to be a little ambiguous. It is therefore desired to change the wording of this proposed standard without changing the intent. It does not seem necessary to withdraw the previous proposal, but merely to ask the Society's permission to alter the wording for the sake of clarification and to assume that the definition has had its six months' probationary period.

NOTCHING OF NEGATIVES

This problem has been before the Standards Committee for several years and no solution has as yet been found. In the last report of this committee a drawing was published showing three forms of commercial practice and a form proposed by the Seventh International Photographic Congress. The Congress requested that the Society give this proposal consideration and, if possible, its approval. It does not seem advisable to approve the recommendation of the Congress. The notch is located directly on the splice line. This is not satisfactory in the case of printers using a resistance control of printing intensity on account of the time lag in change of intensity when the current flow through the lamp is changed over a wide range. The position of the light control relative to the splice

line depends upon the type of light control used in the printing machine. It seems evident, therefore, that before any standardized negative notching system can be used the method of light control in the printing machine must be standardized. There does not seem to be any hope of producing such standardization. As a matter of fact there is more or less time lag in any form of light change mechanism. The position of the notch relative to the splice line is conditioned by the magnitude of this time lag. Placing the notch on the splice line does not seem to meet the requirements of any of the light change systems in extensive commercial use at present. This problem also involves the consideration of an enormous footage of negative already in existence and notched according to various systems. The committee feels the only thing it can do at present is to publish the drawings showing the various notching according to various methods of printing and to urge strongly that in the design of new machinery no different methods of notching be introduced. This will serve to prevent a multiplication of the methods in use and it is possible that as time goes on commercial practice will become more and more predominantly in agreement with one present system and in this way automatically tend towards standardization.

SOUND FILM PRACTICE

The committee has prepared a drawing showing proposed dimensions relating to the position of the scanning line relative to the edge and sound track area of sound-on-film positive. This is shown in Fig. 3. This standard is in conformity with the dimensions already preliminarily adopted for the location and width of sound track presented in our last report. The dimensions are such that the scanning line falls symmetrically within the sound track area. The length of scanning line, 0.084 inch, is in conformity with present practice. We recommend this for initial adoption.

In connection with the projection of sound film it has been suggested that if each reel of film is provided with a leader on which a definite indication of the distance between a given picture and the corresponding sound is indicated, it would materially assist the projectionist in threading the film into the reproducing machine. The committee wishes to recommend, therefore, that manufacturers of this type of film provide each reel with a leader indicating clearly the framing of picture and the respective sound.

35 MM. SPROCKETS

It has been brought to the attention of the committee that the sprockets now being made by one of the leading manufacturers of projection equipment do not conform entirely with the standard dimensions as adopted by this Society. This matter has been taken up with this manufacturer and information has been submitted stating wherein sprockets manufactured by this organization differ from the standards of this Society, and also the reason for this deviation. The sprockets conform in every respect to the adopted standards with the exception of the thickness at the base of the tooth. The value specified in our standards for this dimension is 0.050 inch. The dimension being used in the manufacture of the sprockets in question is 0.060 inch, making the thickness of the tooth at the base 0.010 inch greater. It is stated that in the opinion of the mechanical experts of this organization this represents better shop practice and enables them to produce sprockets of greater precision than when using the smaller thickness value. The only consequence of this difference in thickness of tooth base is that the shrinkage range of film which will run satisfactorily over the sprocket is decreased. Sprockets made according to standard dimensions will run film under best conditions from a shrinkage of 0.13 per cent up to 2 per cent, 6 teeth in contact. Increasing the thickness of the tooth base to 0.060 inch will reduce the maximum shrinkage limit to approximately 1.5 per cent. It is contended that in practice this shrinkage limit is adequate and that a negligible amount of film showing shrinkage greater than this value is in circulation for projection. It has been stated that no complaints are being received from the trade relative to the improper handling of film by the mechanisms equipped with sprockets having the thicker tooth base. It seems wise, however, before recommending that the Society change its present standard that definite evidence be obtained showing conclusively that the shrinkage limit of 1.5 per cent is adequate to meet all of the demands of practice.

TESTING AND APPROVING EQUIPMENT

The President of the Society has received a communication from one of the manufacturers of sound reproducing equipment suggesting that the Society should consider the problem of testing and placing its stamp of approval on equipment being manufactured for the reproduction of sound. The President has referred this corre-

spondence to the Standards Committee with a request that it be given consideration. A tentative proposal to establish some such procedure as this has been sent by the manufacturer in question to other manufacturers of equipment of this nature and it is stated that all of the replies thus far received have been favorable to some such scheme. The idea involved may be best presented by a quotation from the communication in question.

"The condition which presents itself to the industry at the present time is serious in many respects and confusing to the exhibitor and the industry at large.

"The Society of Motion Picture Engineers have been in existence for a number of years and the writer's thought in the matter is that various manufacturers of sound equipment should submit their equipment to a committee appointed by the Society of Motion Picture Engineers and give a demonstration. Such equipment should measure up to the standard adopted by the Society of Motion Picture Engineers and after same has been demonstrated, satisfactorily to the Committee, it should be certified to by your organization. Of course, this may entail some expense, but this expense should be borne by the manufacturers of the equipment.

"We would like to have some expression from you as to the advisability of some action of this kind. We are sure that you would have the hearty cooperation of every distributor and producer of motion pictures, as well as the manufacturers of sound equipment."

The committee has discussed this matter at some length and feels at the present time the Society is not in a position to undertake the work suggested. Obviously it would involve a large expenditure. In order to do the work well it would be necessary to have a well equipped laboratory staffed by experts in this line. While we do not feel that this work can be undertaken by the Society, some of the members of the committee feel that perhaps in the future something of a similar type might be done and would be a real service to the industry as a whole. It is proposed, therefore, to bequeath to the next standards committee the information now at hand with the suggestion that it give consideration to the idea or to some modification thereof.

LENGTH OF TITLES

It has been suggested that the Society formulate some approximate rules relating to the length of time during which a title should be permitted to remain on the screen. The committee has not had

time, since the receipt of this request to investigate the subject thoroughly. However, inquiry has been made and it has been found that in the case of one laboratory the following rule is applied. One second is allowed per word of 6 letters, or more, up to 7 words. The minimum length of title should correspond to 2 seconds on the screen. Assuming 90 feet per minute as projection speed, this would require 1.5 feet per word of 6 letters, or more, up to 7 words with a minimum length of 3 feet. For titles containing more than 7 words, the equivalent time is decreased gradually until at 25 words the length is sufficient to allow $\frac{2}{3}$ second per word of 6 letters. From this point on the time per word remains constant at $\frac{2}{3}$ second per additional word. Before any definite recommendation can be made, however, the practice followed in other laboratories should be investigated and a recommendation formulated based upon what seems to be average good practice.

WIDE FILM

The committee has been watching with interest the developments leading to the introduction into the industry of film wider than the standard 35 mm. product. An attempt has been made to keep closely in touch with the developments and to obtain definite quantitative information as to the various proposals of the organizations interested in the wide products. This attempt has not been entirely successful since it has been impossible in some cases to obtain precise information as to the dimensions of the film which it is proposed to use. In some cases the committee has been supplied with dimension prints showing the proposed practice. The committee had hoped to be able to publish with this report dimensional drawings of the films being promoted by the various groups, but since these have not been obtained from all sources it does not seem advisable to publish any of them. However in order that the Society may have general information as to the developments in this field, we have prepared a table in which is given approximate information as to the various proposals. In some cases these dimensions have been scaled from samples of film and hence cannot be considered as representing precisely the dimensional characteristics. The various proposals which have come to the attention of the committee are as follows.

Grandeur film, which has been developed by the William Fox organization, is 70 mm. wide and employs perforations of special dimensions as indicated in column B of the table.

The Paramount-Famous-Lasky Corporation has produced a film 56 mm. wide with standard perforations, the pull-down being 4 perforations as in present practice.

RCA Photophone, Inc., it is understood, is proposing to introduce the Spoor type using a film 63.5 mm. wide. While no definite information has been obtained as to the dimensional details of the final form which it is proposed to develop, the values in column D give the dimensions taken from published reproductions of the Spoor "Natural Vision" picture.

One other proposal which, while it does not involve the use of wide film, but does give a wide picture in the theater should be mentioned. This is the proposal made by Mr. Ralph G. Fear to use the present camera and projector with an optical system attachment which rotates the image through 90° and in this manner gives a wide picture on 35 mm. film. The tentative dimensions of negative picture area available by employment of this idea are given in column A of the table.

Table of Film Dimensions for Wider Pictures

	B	C	D	A
Width of film	70 mm.	56 mm.	63.5 mm.	35 mm.
Picture width	1.840"	1.62"	2.06"	1.813"
Picture height	0.910"	0.742"	1.12"	0.800"
Perforation pitch	0.234"	0.187"	0.187"	0.187"
Pull-down no. of perforations	4	4	6	10
Perforation dimension	0.130" × 0.080"	Standard	Standard	Standard
Width of sound track	0.240"	0.125"		0.200"

It is interesting to note that practically all of these lead to pictures in which the ratio of width to height is 2 or more. This is in distinct contrast to the standard practice in which this ratio (width to height) is 1.33, and in even greater contrast to the sound-on-film positive in which this ratio decreases to approximately 1.15.

There seems to be little doubt that there is a real need for a film wider than the present 35 mm. product. Even previous to the introduction of sound it was felt by many that the picture proportion available was not well adapted to certain types of productions, being too narrow relative to its height. The necessity of using a strip on the positive film for the sound record aggravated this condition, giving a picture area approaching much too closely the pro-

portions of a square to be pleasing artistically and of practical utility from the standpoint of motion picture technic. It seems obvious, however, that the introduction of more than one wide film is highly undesirable from the standpoint of the best interests of the motion picture industry as a whole. The cost of building new equipment, including cameras, processing machinery, projectors, *etc.*, for any one new width will be great. The multiplication of widths will increase enormously the final cost to the industry of obtaining a more satisfactory picture width. The committee urges very strongly that these factors be considered and that every effort be made to reach an agreement on one standard wide film.

STANDARD APERTURE FOR PROJECTION OF SOUND-ON-FILM POSITIVES

Since the introduction of the use of positives carrying sound records, considerable confusion has resulted from the change in shape of the available picture area and no definite standard practice has been established. In some theaters it is practice to mask off one end of the screen, thus giving a picture area having a width to height ratio of approximately 1.15. In this case the regular projection lens is used. Other theaters, in an effort to retain the old picture proportion of 1.33, have used somewhat shorter projection lenses increasing the magnification sufficiently so as to fill the standard screen. This of course masks out a portion at the top or bottom, or both, of the printed positive. In some cases this is a serious objection in that it cuts out some action or seriously interferes with the composition of the picture. On the west coast this problem has been receiving the attention of various organizations and at a joint meeting of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Technicians' Branch, the American Society of Cinematographers, the local section of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, and the American Projection Society, the problem was discussed and preliminary resolutions drawn up and adopted. They are as follows:

"WHEREAS, Investigation has revealed wide variance in theater projection practices and that there is no effective standard aperture for projection of sound-on-film talking motion pictures;

Be it resolved: That as a temporary measure this committee recommends that all studios and cinematographers using sound-on-film methods make marks on the camera ground glass equally spaced from the top and bottom in addition to the mat mark for the sound track; these marks to delineate a rectangle 0.620 by 0.835 inch in size and that all vital portions of the picture be composed within these limits.

“Be it also resolved: That the committee further recommends that theaters which make a practice of reestablishing the full screen proportions from sound-on-film pictures do so by the use of an aperture whose size would be 0.600 by 0.800 inch on the basis of projection on the level, the horizontal center of the aperture coinciding with the horizontal center of the S. M. P. E. standard aperture.”

This committee has considered these recommendations and feels they represent the most satisfactory solution, at least for immediate adoption. If the lines as recommended are drawn on the ground glass of the camera and the essential action confined to this area, then the old 4 to 3 ratio of picture shape in the theater can be obtained without danger of cutting out important elements. This, of course, involves the use of a somewhat shorter focal length of projection lens and an increase of about 11 per cent in magnification. At the same time a positive without sound printed from such a negative can be projected exactly as in presound practice. The committee therefore concurs in recommending that this procedure be adopted as standard. While it is not entirely free from objectionable features it seems to represent the best compromise.

Information has been received from the International Projector Corporation that it is at the present time manufacturing two masks for insertion in the projector when sound-on-film positive is being used. One of these, referred to as the proportional mask, has an aperture of 0.800 inch by 0.607 inch, and the other, for use when it is not desired to correct the projected picture shape, has an aperture 0.800 inch by 0.6795 inch. The proportional mask dimensions coincide very closely with the Pacific Coast recommendation on this subject, there being a discrepancy of only 0.007 inch in the vertical dimension. The recommendation contained in the above resolution, however, adheres strictly to the Society's recommendation that a ratio of 3 to 4 be maintained. The committee feels, therefore, that it should approve the dimensions 0.800 inch by 0.600 inch for the proportional mask and further recommends the acceptance of the International Projector Corporation's dimensions, 0.800 inch by 0.6795 inch, for use on sound-on-film positive where correction to proportional dimensions is not desired.

SUMMARY

Recommendations Previously Approved.—The following recommendations have been presented previously and have received the first

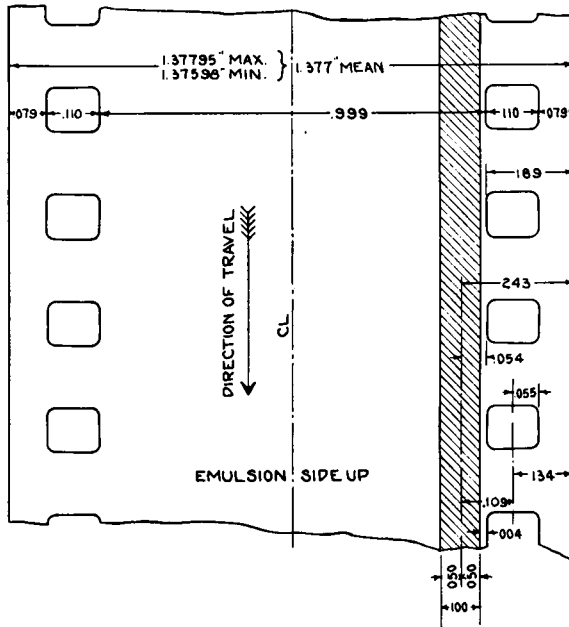


FIG. 1. Dimension and position of sound track on 35 mm. sound and picture positive.

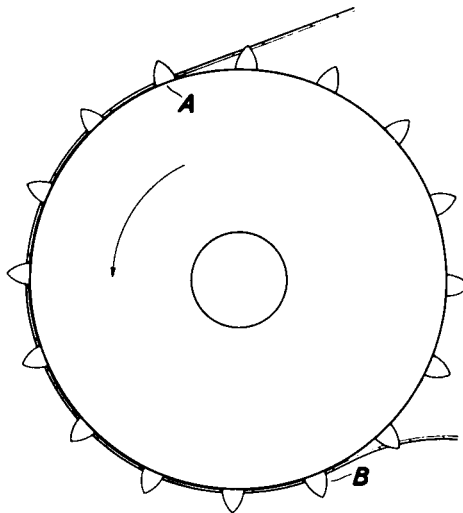


FIG. 2. Sprocket teeth in contact.

approval of the Society. They are now presented with a recommendation that you give them your second and final approval.

1. Taking speed for standard 35 mm. sound pictures shall be 24 pictures per second.
2. Projection speed for standard 35 mm. sound pictures shall be 24 pictures per second.
3. The scanning slit (for combined sound and picture on 35 mm.

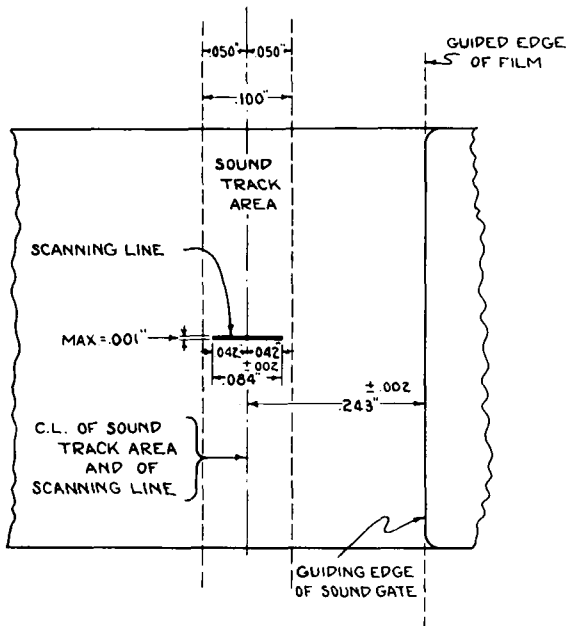


FIG. 3. Position of scanning line for sound-on-film positive.

film) shall be located at an average distance of 14.5 inches measured along the film below the center of the picture gate.

4. The location and width of the sound track on combined sound and picture positives shall be as shown in Fig. 1.

5. The number of teeth in mesh with the film (commonly referred to as "teeth in contact") shall be the number of teeth in the arc of contact of the film with the drum of the sprocket, the pulling face of one tooth being at the origin of the arc, as shown in Fig. 2.

New Proposals.—

6. The term "Safety Film," as applied to motion picture materials, shall refer to materials which have a burning time greater than ten (10) seconds and which fall in the following classes: (a) support coated with emulsion, (b) any other material on which or in which an image can be produced, (c) the processed products of these materials, and (d) uncoated support which is or can be used for motion picture purposes in conjunction with the aforementioned classes of materials.

The burning time is defined as the time in seconds required for the complete combustion of a sample of the material 36 inches long, the determination of burning time being carried out according to the procedure of the Underwriter's Laboratory. This definition was designed specifically to define Safety Film in terms of the burning rate of the commercial product of any thickness or width used in practice. The test of burning time, therefore, shall be made with a sample of the material in question having a thickness and width at which the particular material is used in practice.

7. The position and dimensions of scanning line shall be as shown in Fig. 3.

Recommended Practice.—

8. It is recommended that manufacturers of sound film place a leader on each roll of film on which is designated the framing of the picture and the corresponding sound.

9. It is recommended that the Society approve the proposals of the joint committee of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Technicians' Branch, the American Society of Cinematographers, the local section of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, and the American Projection Society relative to practice in the photography and projection of sound-on-film,

Respectfully submitted,

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Errata

In No. 37 *Transactions*, Standards Report, Fig. 4, p. 38, 0.099 should be 0.109 as shown in Fig. 1 of report dated October, 1929.

DISCUSSION

SAFETY FILM

MR. TAYLOR: It is not clear to me whether the definition of Safety Film refers to a specific material as manufactured—i. e., safety stock, or to the film as actually used—of a given width, perforation, and thickness.

MR. JONES: We propose to define Safety Film in terms of the burning rate of an actually used commercial product and specifically do not want to attempt to define the combustibility of some particular chemical compound.

MR. STOLLER: Would it not be more specific to state in the specification of burning time, "according to the procedure of the Underwriter's Laboratory *as of this date?*"

MR. JONES: I think that is a good suggestion.

LOCATION OF SCANNING SLIT

MR. RICHARDSON: I believe that the committee should work on as wide a sound track as possible, the greater the width the greater the amount of overtone.

MR. JONES: The committee has been in constant contact with the sound engineers trying to obtain their reaction. It stands ready to recommend whatever experts in the field say is the best practice.

35 MM. SPROCKETS

MR. GREENE: Mr. Jones spoke of the non-conformity of one manufacturer to the sprocket standard. Was it the opinion of this concern that they got steadier running over a sprocket which differed from the S. M. P. E. standard?

MR. JONES: The information was that they felt by having a somewhat thicker metal support it allowed them to machine with somewhat greater precision; it represented better shop practice and led to a more precise sprocket which would tend to give a steadier picture.

MR. GREENE: Would it help the committee in deciding whether or not to recommend the approval of this sprocket, if they were to receive during the coming year on a blank form reports from a thousand or so projectionists in all parts of the country relative to the behavior of different grades of film on this sprocket? Shrinkage in each case could be measured with one of the film pitch rules shown us earlier in the convention.

MR. JONES: I doubt a little the wisdom of such a procedure because there are too many undetermined variables. Reports from a thousand different theaters and projectionists would make it impossible to evaluate other variables which could not be specified. It must be done in a standardizing laboratory where conditions can be controlled and everything measured under identical conditions. I should like to ask if Mr. Griffin has anything to contribute on this matter.

MR. GRIFFIN: I have nothing to add to what was submitted. We discovered by measuring up several hundred pieces of film procured from various sources that the extreme shrinkage with which the 0.050 in. base tooth was concerned was never experienced in the field. The shrinkages run far below the maximum shrinkage limit, so that we are well within the limits in using the extra 0.010 in. on the tooth. I might say that all the sprockets which we have turned out for the past three or four years have been of that dimension.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

MR. FARNHAM: This does not apply directly to Mr. Jones' report, but to many of the papers and reports presented at our conventions. Frequently, in a single illustration, some dimensions are given in English units and others in the metric system. To visualize the size of the object illustrated necessitates considerable mental gymnastics on the part of those not equally conversant with both systems. I believe the Society should make itself definite on this point of uniformity through either the Papers Committee or the Standards and Nomenclature Committee. I would suggest all dimensional figures be given in both systems. This is a practice followed by other engineering societies.

The question of the S. M. P. E. standards pamphlet was brought up. The present issue is out of print. Mr. Jones was of the opinion that reprinting should be held up pending the ratification of standards proposed in the foregoing report.