

**A SIMPLIFIED DEVICE FOR CUEING MOTION PICTURE FILMS\*****R. VINCENT\*\***

Since the early days of silent pictures, the film measuring machine has been one of the tools of trade for the film cutter. The device here described is a modernized and improved form of the old familiar footage counter. Engineered to meet the exacting demands of musical conductor, re-recording mixer, commentators, and sound-effects men, it is a definite advance over previous devices. (Fig. 1.)

Simplicity has been the keynote in its construction. It consists of a three-place Veeder counter driven by a synchronous clock motor assembled so as to create a minimum of noise, the clock-face being illuminated from inside the case and in-

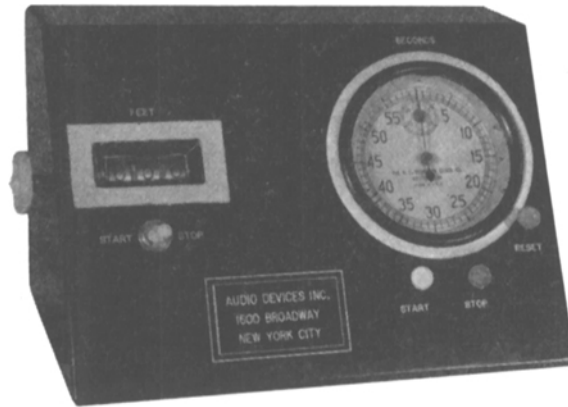


FIG. 1. Cueing device.

clined so as to be easily read. The associated electric stop-watch has the advantage over the hand-watch in that it has a much larger dial and may be started either manually or by plugging in on the a-c. projector or recording circuit so that timing begins with the start-marks on the film, before the picture appears on the screen. Of course, this is true also of the footage counter.

The case is of cast aluminum alloy and is so proportioned as to cause a minimum of resonance and sounding-board effect. The result is a compact and easily read device that may be used within a foot or two of the microphone, as is often necessary in connection with newsreel commentation.

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The applications of the counter seem to increase with use. Often the counters are used in pairs and sometimes even three's. Using the counters simultaneously saves many rehearsals and hundreds of feet of film.

A counter with stop-clock is usually preferred in the control room. A counter without the clock is ordinarily sufficient for a commentator, and when scoring from high-quality disk recordings a third counter is pressed into service.

A record or film may be started and run out to some predetermined length, say, 39 feet. The projector and recording machine then are started at, let us say, 15 feet. The mixer opens his controls, and if the cue sheet has been correctly prepared, the title music will begin exactly at the desired spot; and so on down through the reel. Often the commentator or the sound-effects must come in on a blind cue; the synchronized counter gives the correct instant for starting or stopping. Hands are left free, numbers are large and illuminated, and useless conversion from seconds to feet is eliminated.

In the cutting and review rooms this convenience is also valuable. Unlike the regular stop-watches which have an unhandy way of getting lost at critical moments, this is a piece of permanent equipment, always ready for instant use. Corrections, cuts, and inspections may be made directly in terms of feet from the beginning of the reel; or, when counter and clock combinations are used independently of each other, one may measure both the reel and the duration of a specific scene.

Simplicity, silence, and ruggedness are the important mechanical features of the device, and practical experience with the most exacting of cueing problems has been responsible for the present design.