



Signal Corps Photograph
MELVIN E. GILLETTE
1892-1947

COLONEL MELVINE GILLETTE was born in Illinois on November 15, 1892. Appointed to the Regular Army from Iowa, he served in both the Infantry and the Signal Corps. He retired on July 31, 1947, for physical disability incurred in line of duty, and died on September 11, 1947, in New York City.

In 1932-1933 Colonel Gillette pursued a course of instruction in motion picture production in Hollywood, under the auspices of the Research Council of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Following this he was assigned as Officer in Charge of the Signal Corps Photographic Laboratory at the Army War College.

In August, 1935, he joined the Society of Motion Picture Engineers as an Active Member and later was elevated to the Fellow grade. Despite a heavy load of Army administrative and

other duties, he wrote two papers for the JOURNAL both of which dealt with the use of films in military training. In 1936 he prepared the Army directive outlining the scope and function of the training film, and later saw the pattern that he had prescribed used by all American Arms and Services.

In March of 1942 Colonel Gillette was assigned as Commanding Officer of the Signal Corps Photographic Center, then established in the former Paramount Studios at Astoria. Here his constant effort and organizing ability were responsible for the successful establishment of what became the largest government-operated motion picture studio in the world.

During World War II he served in the Mediterranean Theater as Photographic Officer to General Mark W. Clark, and later as Photographic Officer and Signal Officer in the Mid-Pacific. For his distinguished service Colonel Gillette was awarded the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star Medal. He was a man of tremendous energy and had an intensity and sincerity of purpose and a devotion to duty that no one could fail to admire.
