

Observing the Society's 25th Anniversary — July 1941

In 1941, the Society celebrated its first major anniversary, the 25th. In recognition of this milestone, the cover of the July *SMPE Journal* was printed in metallic silver ink, and the opening sec-

tion of the *Journal* featured a tribute by Will Hays, president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America; a message from SMPE President Emery Huse; and a brief piece by

one of the Society's founders, F. H. Richardson. Reprinted below are the statements of Messrs. Huse and Richardson that appeared in that commemorative issue. —Ed.

Another Milestone

By Emery Huse, SMPE President

July 24, 1941, marks the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers. In 1916 when a group of twenty-six technical men, headed by Mr. C. Francis Jenkins of Washington, D.C., met with the idea of formulating a motion picture engineering society, little did they realize what might come of their idea. The Society as a mere infant passed through the First World War with only a few scars. As the years passed the Society grew in membership and in strength until it eventually became a nationwide organization. Some years after its inception it began to reach out into the world for membership and as a result of its far-reaching activities it has become without question the outstanding motion picture engineering society in the world today.

Some idea of the growth of the Society, particularly during the past ten or twelve years, can be had if one

knows that in 1928, at the time the Pacific Coast Section of the Society was organized, the total membership of the national organization was less than the current membership of the Pacific Coast Section alone. The Society is now made up of two Sections in addition to that on the Pacific Coast — the Mid-West Section, located in Chicago, and the East Coast Section, with headquarters in New York. The East Coast Section is fundamentally the parent body of the Society. From the standpoint of membership from all over the world, the Society now boasts of approximately thirteen hundred motion picture engineers.

It is most unfortunate for the affairs of men that the world today is in such a state of turmoil, but it is the purpose of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers during these trying times to maintain its normal activities as far as it is possible to do so. It is firmly believed that in times of war, peacetime activities and efforts must go on and the Society must remain a worthy outlet for the accumulated knowledge in the minds of men doing peacetime

work, or even war work, provided the latter is connected with motion picture engineering. If we are able to live up to these worthy desires it seems certain that when this period of emergency is over the importance and prestige of the Society will be maintained, and we believe we will have laid a firm foundation upon which a better peacetime program in the field of motion picture engineering may be built.

The issue of the *JOURNAL* of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, which is dedicated to the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Society, marks a definite milestone in the accomplishments of the Society. It must be proved that these accomplishments have not been made in vain, and it is up to each and every member of the Society to dedicate himself to the perpetuation of the ideals of this Society. This can be done best by looking ahead to the Fiftieth Semi-Annual Convention of the Society which will take place in New York City, October 20 to 23, 1941. We must all put our shoulders to the wheel and see to it that this Convention is the most outstanding ever held by our Society.

Reprinted from the July 1941 *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers*.

Twenty-Five Years of Service

By F. H. Richardson

Historically speaking, twenty-five years is an infinitesimal portion of time, but in relation to the motion picture industry, twenty-five years covers almost the entire period of birth, growth, and adolescence of the industry. Twenty-five years ago I sat at a meeting with twenty-five other men who had somehow chosen "moving pictures" as their interest and livelihood, and we put this Society to work for us.

We had no idea the Society was going to last for twenty-five years or that it would grow to the technical importance it now holds for the entire in-

dustry. We had a job to do, and we set about to do it, and the formation of the Society was one means of helping us to do it.

The Society grew slowly at first, because the industry was floundering about, trying to find itself; but soon it grew more rapidly as the movies began to expand into the enormous industry we have today; and when sound came into the picture. . . . It is needless to go into details. Today the Society's influence encompasses the entire world; it has members in all important countries of the world; and constitutes the most important source of information on the up-to-date progress and technical developments of motion picture engineering.

I am proud to have been one of the founders of the Society, and all through the years I have tried to contribute whatever I could to the betterment of the industry and of the Society. Projection has been my principal interest, because I started as a projectionist — or "operator," in those days — and I am indeed happy in the fact that, with the aid of a few others, I have been helpful in arousing the interest of the Society in the humble art of "operating moving picture machines."

I trust and feel confident that the Society will continue successfully this work begun so many years ago, and I can but repeat that I am proud to have had a part in all this work. May the Society prosper and find success in all its endeavors.

Reprinted from the July 1941 *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers*.

SMPTe Journal, July 1991