

SMPTE ALMANAC

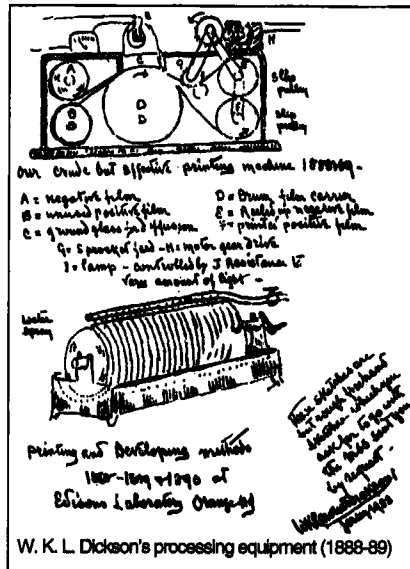
By Michael Dolan

In this column we provide interesting historical briefs from Journal articles of days past. The purpose of this column is primarily entertainment, but we hope it will also stimulate your thinking and reflection on the Society's history, how far we have come in the industry, and (sometimes) how some things never change. This is not meant to be an authoritative reference, and no attempt is made to correct any past errors or omissions of the Journal. We simply hope you enjoy the material.

25 Years Ago in the Journal

This year is the 25th anniversary of the 60th anniversary of the Society. This may seem a bit obscure, but the July 1976 *Journal* was an entire lengthy issue devoted to the history of the Society and the industry. Since it would be even more odd to report on reports of the past, we'll summarize that landmark issue's content and suggest that if you enjoy this column, you really would enjoy that entire issue. Contents of the anniversary issue included:

A Short History of Standardization in the SMPTE; Transactions of the SMPE, Number 1, 1916 - A Reprint; 101 Years of Television Technology; Developments in Motion-Picture Camera Design and Technology - A Ten Year Update; An Historical Survey of the Professional Motion-Picture Camera - A Reprint; Motion-Picture Film Support: 1889-1976 - An Historical Review; Color in the Motion-Picture Industry; Milestones in the History of the Motion-Picture Film Laboratory; A Short History of Motion-Picture Sound Recording in the United States; Magnetic Sound Recording in the Motion-Picture and Television Industries; High-lights of the History of Sound Recording on Film in Europe; Advancements in Motion-Picture and Television Set Lighting Equipment; Developments in the Design of Projection Equipment; The Early Years of the Canadian Film Industry; Photoinstrumentation and the SMPTE; Honor Roll of the Society; Education and the Society - 1916-1930 as Reported in the Transactions; What Happened in the Beginning - A Reprint.



50 Years Ago in the Journal

In the July 1951 issue, there was a report on *Theater Television and the FCC*: "The entire field of theater television reached an important milestone in the month of July 1951. After pleading the cause of theater television in many places and with great enthusiasm over the better part of a decade, the Society is no longer the only vocal public proponent. Theater circuits, exhibitor's trade organizations, manufacturers and the common carriers have joined the parade....As a consequence of this imminent maturity, our Theater Television Committee and its Subcommittee on Distribution Facilities believe that the new industry is well able to solve its own commercial problems....Before long this link of communications between motion picture exhibition and television will be an integral part of the nation's entertainment industry...."

Immediately following the [SMPTE] Board Meeting, President Mole addressed the following letter to Mr. T. J. Slowie, Secretary of the [Federal Communications] Commission:1. The SMPTE, as a scientific and engineering society, is concerned primarily with technical matters. It is not concerned with commercial or industrial matters as such, and does not undertake to represent or speak for the motion picture industry or its parts. 2. The field of theater television has now reached a stage of technical and commercial development such that individual organizations appear qualified to express their viewpoints. Accordingly, the participation of the SMPTE in regulatory hearings no longer appears necessary. 3. However, upon the request of the FCC the SMPTE will assign to its technical committees the task of studying specific technical questions and will thereafter present to the Commission the technical opinions and data they can produce."

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The September 1926 issue reported in an article by F. H. Richardson on *The Useful Life of Film*: "The ultimate and only purpose of the motion picture industry, insofar as theatres, are concerned is to provide a program which the theatre will be able to sell to the public at a profit and to continue to do so indefinitely. The purpose of the motion picture is, in the main, to supply entertainment and amusement.the motion picture industry will succeed exactly in proportion to the general excellence of the entertainment it provides.consider what your reaction would be to...a feature in which there were long, wide scratches and thousands upon thousands of small ones, all so filled with dirt as to be either opaque or semi-opaque, with breaks in the action of the play every few feet caused by pieces of film having been cut out in the making of repairs to the print, and with an occasional bobbing up or down of the picture as a whole as a wide, stiff splice passes through the projector..."