

Motion-Picture Nomenclature
SOCIETY OF MOTION-PICTURE ENGINEERS

*Adopted as Amended in Committee of the Whole, as Recommended
in the Report of Nomenclature Committee.*

Rules which Governed the Committee in its Recommendations

It was believed that—

- (1) The Committee should give to words used in older arts and industries, their previous accepted meaning.
- (2) Definitions of words should be selected which define their meaning rather than explain uses.
- (3) Definitions should be as short as consistent with unquestionable identification.
- (4) Definitions should not be included in the list which are so self-evident or of such wide use as to make our work seem cumbersome and trifling.

And that the following three classes of words only be defined:

- (1) Expressions belonging to the projection industry alone, the meaning of which has long been accepted by the whole industry.
- (2) Expressions from other industries used universally in motion-picture work, with specialized meanings.
- (3) Expressions the meaning of which may be difficult to find in ordinary reference books or which are already used in more than one way in other industries.

ACTION—The director's command to the players to begin performing.

BACK FOCUS—Properly called working distance.

BUSINESS—Action by the player; e. g., business of shutting door.

BUST—A small, magnified part of a large scene.

CAMERA—An expression used to command the photographer to begin taking the scene.

CHANGE OVER—The stopping of one projecting machine and the simultaneous starting of a second machine in order to maintain an uninterrupted picture on the screen when showing a multiple-reel story.

CINE—A prefix used in description of the motion-picture art or apparatus.

CLOSE-UP—Scene or action taken with the character close to the camera.

CONDENSERS—The lens combination which deflects the diverging rays of the luminant into the objective.

Collector Lens—The lens next to the source of light.

Converging Lens—The lens nearest the objective.

Middle Lens—Of a three-lens combination, the lens lying between the collector lens and the converging lens.

- CUTTING**—Editing a picture by elimination of useless or unacceptable film.
- CUT-BACK**—Scenes which are returns to previous action.
- CUT-IN**—Anything inserted in a scene which breaks its continuity.
- DEVELOPING**—Making visible the latent image in an exposed film.
- DISSOLVE**—The gradual transition of one scene into another.
- DIRECTOR**—The person who directs the actual production of the photoplay.
- DOUBLE EXPOSURE**—The exposure of a negative film in a camera twice before development.
- DOUBLE PRINTING**—The exposure of a sensitive film under two negatives prior to development.
- DOUSER**—The manually operated door in the projecting machine which intercepts the light before it reaches the film.
- DUPE**—A negative made from a positive.
- EFFECTIVE APERTURE**—The largest diameter of a lens available under the conditions considered.
- EQUIVALENT FOCUS**—The equivalent focus of a plurality of lenses in combination is the focal length of a simple thin lens which will under all conditions form an image having the same magnification as will the given lens combination.
- EXTERIOR**—A scene supposed to be taken out of doors.
- FADE-IN**—The gradual appearance of the picture from darkness to full screen brilliancy.
- FADE-OUT**—The gradual disappearance of the screen-picture into blackness. (The reverse of fade-in).
- FEATURE**—A pictured story, a plurality of reels in length.
- FIXING**—Making permanent the developed image in a film.
- FLAT**—A bit of painted canvas, or the like.
- FLASH**—A short scene, usually not more than three to five feet of film.
- FLASH-BACK**—A very short cut-back.
- FOOTAGE**—Film length measured in feet.
- FRAME (verb)**—To bring a frame into register with the aperture during the period of rest.
- FRAME (noun)**—A single picture of the series on a motion-picture film.
- FRAME LINE**—The dividing line between two frames.
- INTERMITTENT SPROCKET**—The sprocket which engages the film to give it intermittent movement at the picture aperture.
- IRIS**—An adjustable lens diaphragm.
- IRISING**—Gradually narrowing the field of vision by a mechanical device on the camera.
- INSERT**—Any photographic matter, without action, in the film.
- INTERIOR**—Any scene supposed to be taken inside a building.
- JOINING**—Splicing into a continuous strip (usually 1,000 feet) the separate scenes, titles, etc., of a picture.
- LANTERN PICTURE**—A still picture projected on a screen by means of an optical lantern or stereopticon.

- LANTERN SLIDE** (see slide)—The transparent picture from which a lantern picture is projected.
- LEADERS**—That piece of blank film attached to the beginning of the picture series.
- LIGHT BEAM**—A bundle of light rays.
- LIGHT RAY**—A thin line of light.
- LOCATION**—Any place selected for the action of an outdoor scene.
- MAGAZINE VALVE**—The film opening in the magazine of a motion-picture projector.
- MASKS**—Opaque plates of various sizes and shapes used in the camera to protect parts of the negative from exposure.
- MOTION-PICTURE**—The synthesis of a series of related picture elements, usually of an object in motion.
- MOTION-PICTURE FILM**—The ribbon upon which the series of related picture elements is recorded.
- MOTION-PICTURE PROJECTOR**—An optical lantern equipped with mechanisms for suitably moving motion-picture film across the projected light.
- MOVIES**—Motion pictures.
- MULTIPLE-REEL**—A photoplay of more than a thousand feet of film in length.
- NEGATIVE**—The developed film, after being exposed in a camera.
- NEGATIVE STOCK**—Light sensitive film intended for motion-picture camera use.
- OBJECTIVE**—The picture-forming member (lens) of the optical system.
- OPTIENCE**—A collection of persons assembled to see motion pictures.
- PAM**—Contraction for panorama.
- PANORAM**—The act of, or device for, turning a motion-picture camera horizontally, to photograph a moving object, or to embrace a wide angle of view.
- PHOTOPLAY**—A story in motion pictures.
- POSITIVE**—The developed film, after being printed through a negative.
- POSITIVE STOCK**—The light-sensitive film intended to be printed upon through a negative.
- PRE-RELEASE**—A picture not yet released for public showing.
- PRINT**—Same as "positive."
- PRODUCER**—The maker of photoplays.
- PROGRAM**—The complete show for a single optience.
- PROPS**—Contraction of properties. Objects used as accessories in a play.
- PROJECTION DISTANCE**—The distance between the objective and the screen of a stereopticon lantern or motion-picture projecting machine.
- PROJECTING LENS**—Properly called projection objective.
- PROJECTION OBJECTIVE**—The objective which forms an image of the lantern slide or film, upon the screen.

- REEL**—The flanged spool upon which film is wound for use in projecting machines.
- REEL**—An arbitrary unit of linear measure for film—approximately a thousand feet.
- REGISTER**—A term denoting facial expression of emotions.
- RELEASE**—The publication of a photoplay.
- RETAKE**—Rephotographing a scene.
- REWIND**—The process of reversing the winding of a film, usually so that the end to be first projected shall lie on the outside of the roll.
- REWINDER**—The mechanism by which rewinding is accomplished.
- SCENE**—The action taken at a single camera setting.
- SCENARIO**—A general description of the action of a proposed photoplay.
- SCREEN**—The surface upon which a picture is optically projected.
- SHOOTING A SCENE**—Photographing the scene.
- SHUTTER**—The obscuring device, usually a revolving segmental disc, employed to intercept the light during the movement of the film in motion-picture apparatus.
- Shutter*—Working blade—(also variously known as the cutting blade, obscuring blade, main blade, master blade or travel blade). That segment which intercepts the light during the movement of the film at the picture aperture.
- Shutter*—Intercepting blade—(also known as the flicker blade). That segment which intercepts the light one or more times during the rest or projection period of the film to eliminate flicker.
- SINGLE PICTURE CRANK** (sometimes referred to as trick spindle)—That spindle and crank on a motion-picture camera which makes one exposure at each complete revolution.
- SLIDE** (Stereo slide)—The transparent picture from which a screen still is projected.
- SPLICING**—Joining the ends of film by cementing.
- SPLIT REEL**—A reel having two or more picture subjects thereon.
- SPOT**—The illuminated area on the aperture plate of a motion-picture projector.
- SPROCKET**—The revoluble toothed member which engages the perforations in the film.
- STEREOPTICON**—A lantern for projecting transparent pictures, i. e., lantern slides, often a double lantern for dissolving.
- STILL**—A picture from a single negative.
- TAKE-UP** (noun)—The mechanism which receives and winds the film after it passes the picture aperture.
- TAKE-UP** (verb)—Winding up the film after it passes the picture aperture.
- THROW**—Projection distance.
- TILT**—The act of, or device for, moving a camera vertically while in use.
- TINTING**—Coloring a film by dyeing the gelatine side of it.

- TONING**—Coloring a film by chemical action on the silver image.
- TRICK CRANK**—A camera crank giving a single exposure for each turn.
- TRICK-PICTURE**—A picture in which unnatural action appears.
- TRAILER**—That piece of blank film attached to the end of a picture series.
- VISION**—A new subject introduced into the main picture, by the gradual fading-in and fading-out of the new subject, as, for example, to visualize a thought.
- WORKING DISTANCE**—The distance from the principal focus of a lens to its nearest face; e. g., the distance from the slide or film to the nearest lens of the objective.