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CATALOGUING AND INDEXING MOTION PICTURE FILM

The following discussion represents a revision of an article prepared in the Spring of 1943 and published in the March, 1944, issue of the *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers* under the title of "Wartime Cataloging of Motion Picture Film."

SEVERAL considerations have suggested a revision of the former article. In the first place, nearly two years have passed since it was originally prepared, during which time valuable experience has been accumulated in applying the theories therein outlined. Furthermore, the progress of the war has emphasized the necessity for post-war planning; hence, the war-time aspects of film cataloguing must be supplemented with certain continuing considerations. Again, at the instance of the Bureau of the Budget, the archivist of the United States has set up the Interdepartmental Committee on Film Indexing. Participation by the National Archives in the work of this committee and the probability that it may inherit much of the record material involved may require some adaptation of its own cataloguing and indexing techniques for the larger benefits that will derive from standardization.

Introduction—The Catalogue Card

Motion picture film in the custody of the government is accumulating at a staggering rate. For example, in 1937 a survey made by the National Archives revealed the existence of some 17,000,000 running feet while a similar survey, completed in August, 1944, indicated that this figure had grown to some 300,000,000 feet. Not all of this amount, however, represents record material that will be preserved permanently. Some of it is made up of projection prints issued as expendable material, some of it consists of duplicate subject matter footage, and a still smaller part of it is material rejected on the basis of faulty photography and for other reasons.

It has been estimated, however, and with considerable justification that the total accumulation of subject footage eligible for preservation and cataloguing will amount to more than 100,000,000 feet at the close of the present war.

Added to the problem presented by this volume of film are certain basic problems, both subject matter and technical, that are peculiar to motion pictures as contrasted with other types of record materials. First of all, authorship credits must be shared among several people: the original author of the idea portrayed, the script writer, the cameraman, the sound engineer, the film editor, and others. Again, a particular subject or title may be divided into several reels and each reel may be divided into several scenes. Not only must the subject integrity of the reels and scenes be preserved but cognizance must be taken of their sequence integrity. While not bound to record all such minutiae, film finding mediums and especially film catalogue cards should reflect such information and make it possible for an interested searcher to isolate a particular title, reel, or scene when necessary. Finally, there are purely physical considerations as reflected by such words as "negative," "positive," and "35mm.," and camera considerations as reflected by such words as "close-up," "long shot," and "pan shot." Both of these considerations will be discussed later in this paper.

Added to this circumstance is the increasing reluctance on the part of a busy person to risk seeing a film not pertinent to his immediate interests. For example, if he is interested in white mice he will not want to waste time seeing a film on pink elephants. Hence, the catalogue card must contribute to the process of elimination in terms of the searcher's time, the projectionist's time, and wear and tear on the property involved. It must be more than a sign post giving the direction of the journey; it must also tell the traveller what he may reasonably expect to find when he arrives at his destination; but not without the exercise of temperance. The same busy person will be equally reluctant to examine verbose and complicated finding mediums as the price of seeing a film. Hence such a card should be brief with its reading time measured in seconds. It is the headline of the story and in general should answer questions prefaced by the words what, where, when, who, and why, indicating respectively subject matter content, geography, time setting and chronology, people, and the purpose for which the film was produced.

Above all, if any reasonable economy is to be realized in the production and use of such cards, they must be characterized with simplicity, both in form and in the language used. For example, it would defeat the purpose herein proposed if highly specialized architectural language were used to describe buildings or if involved technical language were used to describe scientific gadgetry. Without a large staff trained in specialized activities and vocabularies such language would be unsatisfactory to the expert. The expert, when he sees the film, can better determine than can members of a general staff whether a particular building is Tudor, Byzantine, or Gothic, or whether a particular gadget is a voltmeter, a by-pass condenser, or a screen grid. Furthermore, much of the material in a general library collection is seldom consulted and a still smaller proportion is consulted frequently. Hence no attempt should be made to anticipate, either on a subject matter or technical basis, all the needs of all the searchers for all time on all the film in custody. Detailed documentation and identification should be postponed until an actual need for such information is established.

Perhaps the characteristics of the card under discussion can better be understood by examining a sample at this point.

230 RETREAT OF THE GERMANS AT THE BATTLE
H-1108 OF ARRAS. U. S. Signal Corps, 1918. Factual 64 minutes

SYNOPSIS: Retreating Germans blow up bridges and roads. Howitzers and other field pieces in action. Engineers repair bridges and roads. British Tommy reads latest war news to villagers and is received with enthusiasm. Pipes and Drums of the Gordons celebrate. Units participating: Northampton Regiment, South Africans, Hussars, London Stock Exchange Battalion, King's Liverpools, King's Own Shropshire Light Infantry, Royal West Kents, Middlesex Battalion, Queenlanders, Tasmanians, and members of the 29th Infantry. Cyclist patrol, artillery, infantry, and cavalry. Places: River Somme, River Scarpe, Arras, Roye, and Monchy. Raymond Poincare.

CUSTODY: National Archives
Rg111 Ac569 EHN, 10-15-43

An examination of the foregoing form will reveal that it is limited to a call number (230 H-1108) and certain subheadings listed in capital letters at the left. With the exception of the call number there is only one fixed margin to contend with, requiring a minimum

shifting of the typewriter carriage. Punctuation is used sparingly. Underscoring is omitted. The language is simple. The reading time is approximately thirty seconds. Yet it is believed that this card gives all the essential information for the purposes advocated. For example: It gives the title as a basis for an alphabetical file, the call number as a basis for a numerical file, the running time, and states that the film is factual. It identifies the film as a 1918 Signal Corps production and gives a synopsis of its subject content. Finally, it gives the name of the custodian and certain administrative information necessary for control purposes. For example, the symbol "Rg111" indicates the record group number under which the source classification of the film may be determined. More specifically, "R[ecord] G[roup] No. 111" indicates that this film is a part of the Signal Corps Collection of the War Department. Symbol "Ac596" indicates the accession number. "ENH" represent the initials of the reviewer while "10-15-43" is the date on which the film was reviewed. Such information is always peculiar to the custodian of the film rather than to the film itself and each custodian may create his own symbols for administrative purposes.

Finally, it should be pointed out that each card is typed individually and is thus freed from the limitations of predetermined spacing that a printed form would impose. The need for such expansibility is based on the variations found in the films to be catalogued; for example, one subject (the case cited) might require only two lines for the main entry while another subject might require three or four additional lines to accommodate appropriate credits. The length of the synopsis will certainly depend on the length of the film and the meatiness of the information it contains. The application of this form in terms of variations is illustrated by additional catalogue cards, excerpts from which are given below.

94 THE PLOW THAT BROKE THE PLAINS
Farm Security Administration, 1930. Factual-Expository 33 minutes

Direction, Pare Lorenz; music, Virgil Thompson; research, Arch Mercey; photography, Stacy and Howard Woodward. Transferred from the United States Film Service

SYNOPSIS: .....

CUSTODY: .....

Three variations are noted in this card when compared to the one

cited before: The film is factual-expository rather than factual, the statement of credits is more extended, and the transfer source differs from the production source.

114 THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE
2 Warner Brothers Pictures, 1938. Dramatization 20 minutes

Direction, Crane Wilbur; script, Charles L. Tedford; photography, W. Howard Green; editing, Everett Dodd; art, Hugh Reticker; costuming, Milo Anderson; sound, Robert B. Lee. Players: John Litel, Ted Osborne, Rosella Towne, Richard Bond, Owen King, and others.

SYNOPSIS: .....

CUSTODY: The National Archives Rg200 Ac340 HM 12-23-41 Cr Vitagraph Corporation; may be consulted on reference basis only.

Four variations are noted here: The picture represents a dramatized situation, the credits are more numerous than before, it is copyrighted (symbol "Cr") by others, and service on it is restricted to reference purposes.

So far the sample cards cited represent organized or edited material and are drawn up according to the film cataloguing format used by the National Archives. This suggests the problem of cataloguing or indexing unedited footage and of variations in the format, both of which will be discussed briefly here.

No particular problem is posed in the use of the catalogue card described when unedited film is involved. Where a title does not exist (this is generally the case with unedited film) a descriptive title or a subject heading may be supplied and placed in brackets to indicate that it was added by the reviewer. Information called for by the subtitles is just as pertinent as in the case of edited films. Where the footage is short, one of two alternative procedures may be followed: (1) make up a separate card for each well-defined but unrelated sequence, or (2) group several related sequences under one descriptive title and catalogue such grouped material on one card. In either case economy would suggest a physical grouping of such material into 1000 foot reels for storage purposes. For example, the major part of Admiral Richard E. Byrd's exploration film consists of unedited footage that came to the National Archives in the form of small rolls. No particular integrity is represented, however, in such an arrangement and no archival principle would be violated

in rearranging such rolls into reels. The existence of rolls means that the film is as yet unorganized on a subject matter or release basis.

The problem of card format is different though by no means difficult. It was pointed out earlier in this discussion that flexibility of the form was necessary to accommodate variable quantities of information. Likewise, flexibility is necessary to accommodate the arrangement of the information. So long as the basic information contained in a film is given, the question of spacing and arrangement of such information on the card is relatively unimportant, although standardization might be desirable.

Another problem in film cataloguing is the kind of information that should be included on the card. It was stated earlier in this discussion that certain basic information, common to all film libraries, should be given as represented in answers to questions prefaced by such words as "what," "where," "when," "who," and "why." Beyond this, each cataloguing agency may include other items of information peculiar to its own problems, brevity being the determining factor. For example, one agency might want to include a certain amount of technical information represented by the words "negative," "master positive," and "projection print." Still another might want to include information covering the physical condition of the film; the quality of the photography; or certain camera factors as represented by such words as "close-up," "long-shot," or "pan shot." Such determinations will depend largely on the anticipated manner in which both the film and the cards will be used. One agency, say the War Department, might work in terms of current or immediate needs. Another agency might think, plan, and operate only on a long range basis. One agency might be interested primarily in production work and another, in library work. The National Archives, having continuing and long range interests, limits its cards to what might be called fixed information as opposed to variable information. Thus, only a 35 mm. negative may have been accessioned at the time the card was executed, with the prospect, however, that a projection print or a master positive or a 16mm. copy or all of these might be accessioned later. The information contained in each of these variations in form and size is the same; hence if the processed card is not to be rendered obsolete, figuratively before the ink is dry, it should be limited to information that will remain unaffected by changing physical inventories. Here, the ortho-

dox library viewpoint, which demands that the thing in hand be catalogued, does not appear to be applicable, unless the subject matter found on the film be considered the thing in hand and the film itself merely a vehicle, a viewpoint that has considerable merit. This does not mean that such variable information is to be ignored or to go unrecorded. As a matter of fact it is carefully recorded at the National Archives but on another form. Nor does it mean that such information may not be published and circulated. In brief, it means that the National Archives film catalogue card, a card that is printed in sufficient numbers to cover its indexing and circulation purposes, will be limited to basic subject matter information of a fixed character and that variable information will be recorded on other forms and made available in terms of demonstrated needs.

Information on camera factors, illustrated by such words as "close-up," "long-shot," and "pan-shot" deserves further mention here, not because it is variable in character but for other reasons. For example, a film catalogue card may be derived from two sources of information: (1) a primary source which is the film itself and (2) a secondary source made up of scenarios, continuity sheets, published reviews, and the like. The primary source connotes projection of the film which is time consuming and expensive but it does provide information on the camera factors under consideration. The secondary source may or may not provide such information but it by-passes projection and provides a means of cataloguing film rapidly in that continuity sheets and the like can be recast into catalogue cards in only a fraction of the time required for cataloguing based on projection. Is the added information under discussion worth the added cost of compiling it? Each cataloguing agency must answer that question for itself. It can be said, however, that such information is not considered an essential part of a general film catalogue card. More specifically the National Archives does not consider its inclusion essential to the success of its film cataloguing project. In the first place the loss sustained by the omission of such information is not as serious as might be imagined on first notice. Although such data is occasionally requested by producers, it is seldom requested by general searchers. Frequently even a producer in search of footage will prefer to screen the film in question and make his own determinations at the time of his search. In the second place if the National Archives is to reduce its present backlog in respect to film cataloguing,

if it is to keep abreast of future acquistions, and if it is to serve present tense needs with present tense film, it must subscribe to the tenets of brevity herein advocated. It must not try to "anticipate all the needs of all the searchers for all time on all the film in custody."

Reference Film Strips

Losses resulting from the omission of various technical data from film catalogue cards will be further minimized when the reference film strip technique, now in its experimental stages, has been perfected. A film strip, in this connection, is a strip of film that reproduces in sequence one frame for each title and for each important scene in the film reviewed. The strip is printed as a projection positive and each frame so printed corresponds to textual entries found on the catalogue cards or the more lengthy continuity sheets. Not only does it supply the technical data omitted from the catalogue card for the sake of brevity but it permits the searcher to see photographically what he might otherwise read in text form. It has the additional value of preventing wear on the record film, of saving the time of the searcher and the projectionist, and of freeing projection equipment for other purposes in that such strips can be read on any conventional microfilm reading machine.

But the supplying of technical data is only one function of the reference film strip. For example, earlier in this discussion simple language in the catalogue card was stressed. If, to refer to an illustration previously used, buildings represent the subject under consideration, then the architect (the expert in this case) can see instantly by means of the film strip whether a particular building is Tudor, Byzantine, or Gothic. Thus the film strip would obviate the tedious work of screening and advance documentation. Actually it would provide a means for documentation by the searcher himself at the time his need arises. This appears to represent both good economy and good sense.

The Problem of Size

A further consideration in reference to the catalogue card itself is that of size. At the moment most of the military services are producing their cards on a 5 by 8 inch size. The National Archives and the Library of Congress, however, use a standard 75mm. by 125mm. card. To what extent standardization in point of size may

be achieved remains to be seen. It is important, however, in this respect that the catalogue cards be of similar shapes or proportions; for example, a 5 by 8 inch card is roughly in the proportion of a 3 by 5 inch or a 75mm. by 125mm. card. In most cases the original typing is done on a 5 by 8 inch card or paper and in the case of the military services such copy is processed for indexing purposes in its original size but in the case of the National Archives this size is reduced photographically to the smaller size; hence the need for uniform proportions in the sizes of the cards. The advantage of standardizing on the smaller size is obvious. In the first place, the larger card uses twenty-five square inches or sixty-six per cent more paper and requires correspondingly more storage space. In the second place, the smaller card has been adopted as standard by libraries in general and lends itself, therefore, to exchange practices; thus the film cards might be integrated with general library cards. In the third place, it is cheaper per unit card to process when ink, paper stock, plate work, make-ready, and all other items of cost are considered. The only objection to conversion to the smaller size at the moment appears to be the possibility that such a changeover might unduly interrupt war related work. Two solutions to the problem suggest themselves: (1) make the conversion a gradual process with the least possible interruption to pressure work—thus the more non-current cards might be converted first; and (2) reduce the present and future 5 by 8 cards photographically as a post-war project.

Subject Index Cards

It is not the purpose of this paper to analyze the fine points of cataloguing and indexing as one who is indoctrinated with library science might do nor is it its purpose to ignore the accumulated experience of others in this respect. The similarities between identifying books (for example) and films can be recognized without difficulty. The dissimilarities, however, are deceptive and require considerable vigilance to detect differences that may prove fundamental. It is significant that this discussion concerns itself with a young and vigorous phenomenon that has already reached a semblance of adulthood, ready to determine its own destiny. It would be an easy and perhaps a tragic mistake to proscribe this newer experience by orthodoxy. In any case the subject demands that more be said regardless of what has been said heretofore, and discretion

suggests that one steer clear of the esoteric camps and seek the cover of reality. As far as possible, therefore, the discussion to follow will be worded in the common idiom.

The catalogue card has already been described as being a brief general statement concerning the film itself and as having certain guide-post characteristics. Indexing signifies a little sharper separation of the record material and a little greater focusing of the attention in terms of people, places, objects, and the like—all of which may be considered indexing subjects, other things being equal. The result of such separation will be, therefore, the index cards. Actually the index cards are processed replicas of the catalogue or master card and serve the purpose of indexing when appropriate subject headings are added or designated for reference purposes. When a catalogue card has several subjects to be indexed, one copy of that card is used for each subject selected. The index cards are then filed alphabetically.

A second examination of the catalogue card entitled RETREAT OF THE GERMANS AT THE BATTLE OF ARRAS seems in order at this time. A very practical question is, How many replicas of this card should be processed for indexing purposes? Obviously this question cannot be answered satisfactorily without an explanation or a premise. If the orthodox procedure used in cataloguing books were followed, perhaps four or five entries would result. If, however, a more realistic solution to the problem is sought, several additional entries might be necessary. One important factor of the premise is a consideration of the needs and preferences of potential users of a film library. In other words, what is the logical level of interest of such people? Can such needs be satisfied with general terminology having some classification connotation or will they require more specific entries? In the ascending levels of interest represented by the words "species," "genus," "family," "order," and "class," which level represents the most realistic bracket in the vicinity of which one should stop or on which one should concentrate his efforts? Should "Howitzer" be the entry or should it be "Ordnance"? Should "Arras" be indexed or should this village be entered as a consideration of "Geography"? Should "Cyclist Patrol" be entered specifically as such or should it be entered generically under "Transportation"? Or should both specific (the species level) and generic (the genus level) entries be made? And what shall be done with "Tasmanians" and "Poincare"?

Experience at the National Archives has indicated that users of motion pictures, especially those users who represent producers, have a primary interest in specific things, people, and places. Typical inquiries might be: What have you on P-38's or trench mortars or gas masks? What have you on Sergeant York or Eddie Rickenbacker or General Patton? What footage have you on the defense of Stalingrad or the siege of Hill 609 or the battle of Cherbourg? What kind of uniforms were worn by the London Stock Exchange Battalion? Perhaps eighty per cent of the inquiries are of this general type. To a lesser extent inquiries will fall into a higher bracket as illustrated by the words "Battleships," "Chemical Warfare," "Aircraft," and the "South Pacific Campaign." Even in such cases the inquiry is more than likely to be registered first at a lower level of interest as indicated by the words "*The Wyoming*," "Flame Throwers," "Dive Bombers" and "Battle of Tarawa." The higher brackets represent accrued and accumulated interests and will grow in importance as motion pictures become more universal in their application to human experience. Such determinations should be based on experience rather than on a process of *a priori* reasoning. It must be remembered that the printing press was some three hundred years old before Messrs. Cutter, Dewey, Poole, *et al.* undertook the work of library classification and that motion pictures are only about fifty years old. A very practical rule is to index at any level of interest as determined by the reality of a given situation. If a person or place or object has been christened with significant experience and so recorded by the cameraman then it should be indexed specifically. If a body of interest has been built up within the higher classification brackets as is the case with chemical warfare, then the entry should be made at the higher level. In both cases and for the present all such entries should exist side by side in the commonwealth of film terminology and in no case should such information be squeezed through the knothole of close classification. Even in a standard dictionary of terminology there should be no straining to fit an item of information meticulously into a predetermined pattern.

In the first place, time and personnel limitations might preclude such fine determinations. In the second place, the information reflected in this new medium is accruing rapidly and is being used currently; hence it is entirely too active to wait on the slow process of classification or to submit to any form of fixation. Motion pictures are an imitation of life—people, things, events—with all the com-

plexities of life itself wherein each searcher may read, see, or hear the subjects of his interests according to his own bent and in terms of his own apperceptions. Eyes widened in terror, a furtive nod of recognition, the sputtering of a failing motor, the sudden demolition of a building—these are the pigments that lend color to the producer's canvas and are entirely too fugitive to be impaled on a classification blueprint. Hence the inductive approach must be preserved, more observations must be made, and more experience must be accumulated. Later, conclusions can be made and the experience tabulated. More specifically, additional index cards may be added when the need for higher bracketed entries has been demonstrated. In the case of the catalogue card cited, namely, RETREAT OF THE GERMANS AT THE BATTLE OF ARRAS, one index card will be used for the call number, one for the title, one for the source, perhaps one for the production date, and one for each significant person, place, and thing found in the synopsis. Perhaps one or two higher bracketed entries like "Field Artillery" might be justified. Entries made to date at the National Archives average about ten per reel.

One of the chief virtues of the replica system of indexing from a master catalogue card lies in the fact that each index entry connotes an immediate relationship to other parts of the film catalogued. Suppose the subject heading on a particular card is "Bombing." A brief examination of the card might reveal that this bombing related to a monastery on a mountain in Italy, March, 1944, under command of General Mark Clark. If the searcher's interests were limited to bombing in the first World War or to bombing in Africa, he would dispense with the card and would not ask for projection service.

Other indexing systems such as the punch card system have been considered, but none of these appears to match the plan herein outlined in terms of simplicity, economy, utility, and rate of production. In the first place, the information on the card is recorded in the vernacular; that is, in language which everyone can read and understand and not by a means that requires the use of a machine to decode. Secondly, it can be created economically with ordinary equipment. For example, the information can be placed on the original card or sheet by the use of a typewriter and can be processed by one of several techniques such as hectographing, multilithing,

or mimeographing. Again, it has the very attractive virtue of speed in that a skilled reviewer, familiar with the general subject matter of a particular body of film, can, with the help of a stenographer, catalogue at regular screening speed. If he encounters a subject not familiar to him, the use of a viewing machine is recommended. A skilled rewrite man can catalogue film from secondary sources of information even more rapidly. Finally, the system proposed is freed from the burden of close classification and code book techniques.

Neither do the call numbers, for example 230 H-1108, have any classification connotation. In brief, they represent control or simple registration numbers. In the foregoing example 230 represents the 230th shipment of motion pictures received by the National Archives. As stated heretofore this was a shipment of Signal Corps film received from the War Department. It covers aspects of the first World War and is known as the Historical Series, a designation supplied by the Signal Corps. The "H" signifies the word "Historical" and the "1108" signifies a particular subject in that series. Subsequent subjects in that series are designated as 230 H-1109, 230 H-1110, etc. For the reason that each catalogue or index card carries a call number on its face, it is a simple matter to trace the administrative history of a particular film through the channels of related record group (Rg) and accession (Ac) numbers. Likewise, by a simple translation of these cards into vault cards the storage location of any film can be easily determined. When an organized series is transferred to the National Archives with numbers already assigned as in the case cited above such number will be retained. If a new member of the series is received later, it will be given the next available sub-number in that series and placed under the original control number. If several unrelated subjects or titles are received at one time, sub-numbers will be assigned and placed under one control number as before. If unrelated subjects are received at different times even though from one source, they will be given different control numbers. In other words, the control numbers are kept free of any source classification connotation.

The Problem of Shelving

Another problem requiring special consideration in respect to cataloguing and indexing motion pictures is that of bringing related material together on shelves. It must be remembered that film stocks

are of two kinds: nitrate film requiring maximum safety precautions in storing, and acetate film requiring only nominal precautions. Furthermore, a particular film subject may exist, as heretofore indicated, in different functional forms such as negative, master positive, or projection prints. Good insurance practice suggests that these various items be stored separately so that if one is lost it may be reproduced from the remaining item or items. Again, films may be in different sizes such as 35mm. and 16mm., each of which requires its own type of storage furniture. Hence, bringing related film subject matter together in a vault or on a shelf becomes highly impractical. Finally, there is the fundamental consideration that the information contained in motion film represents what might be called hidden information that requires the use of a machine to translate; hence, the searcher would not have access to the vaults or shelves as in the case of a book library.

The problem presented by the foregoing circumstances is met by the use of another form known as the Film Storage Record, only a brief mention of which seems necessary in this connection. Its chief functions, however, are: (1) translating subject-matter considerations into storage or shelf considerations, (2) keeping inventories of accessioned material, (3) keeping and documenting a record of the "in and out" movement of all film, and (4) providing a practical charge-slip technique. If any one is interested in additional information on the use of this storage card, the National Archives will be happy to supply it.

Cost Considerations

Before the present cataloguing project was undertaken at the National Archives each film was reviewed, and the report on such a review was called a reference summary. This title still survives in some of our interoffice literature. Originally these summaries were typed on standard typewriter sheets of paper and filed in case history folders. The information they contained was essentially that outlined herein for the catalogue cards. The second step in the evolution of the catalogue card was to type such summaries on a 5 by 8 inch card and reproduce it by the hectograph process in whatever quantities were needed for cross indexing purposes. When it was decided to adopt the smaller card in the 75mm. by 125mm. size and duplicate it for indexing purposes, several duplicating processing

techniques were investigated with the result that the multilith process was selected as being the most satisfactory, cost considerations included. The mechanics of the plan and cost figures appear pertinent to this discussion.

In the first place reference summaries (catalogue cards) are typed on one sheet of paper and, when possible, within the limits of 5 by 8 inches. If the contents of the summary cannot be so limited a second page is used. If a wide carriage typewriter is not available three such summaries may be typed on each of two sheets and the two sheets taped or stapled together. When this has been done a trimming or guide border is penciled around each summary in the proportion of a 75mm. by 125mm. card. This border is approximately 4½ inches high and 7½ inches wide. From this sheet of six one multilith plate is made and the desired number of impressions is printed and trimmed into 75mm. by 125mm. cards. Thus the summary, through this evolution, has become the catalogue card. A further economy is realized by selecting the six subjects or titles for each multilith plate in terms of the number of index cards wanted for each title. For example, a set of six master catalogue cards (summaries), each requiring approximately fifteen index cards, would be printed from one plate while another set of six, each requiring twenty-five or more index cards, would be printed from another plate. It would not be good economy to print cards on one plate some of which would require only ten index entries and others fifty. If sale or exchange of the cards is contemplated, as many as needed may be printed from one plate. On the basis of thirty-five index cards from each catalogue card (an average that has developed at the National Archives) 210 index cards would be printed from each plate of six and would cost approximately $3.60 or a little less than two cents for each index card. On greater quantities the unit cost may be reduced to approximately one-half cent per card. These figures represent printing costs only. At the moment sufficient experience with other cost items is not available on which to base accurate estimates. It is believed, however, that the total cost of the cataloguing project can be held within reasonable limits.

Summary

The foregoing discussion is not meant to cover the entire field of finding mediums as used in archival and library practices, such as guides, handbooks, checklists, inventories, bibliographies, and

calendars. Neither is it meant to dispose of all the intimate and intricate problems peculiar to cataloguing itself. It is hoped, however, that it will answer some of the more persistent questions involved, point the way for others to work out their own cataloguing or indexing schemes, and serve some practical purpose for those who have no cataloguing plans of their own. If such hopes survive or if the basic philsophy of the plan proves to be acceptable, the author will be satisfied. One parting warning: A catalogue card should not be made to carry too much of a load and thus become inarticulate. The case history folder is the real beast of burden in this respect. The chief virtue of the card is its brevity and universality in respect to its examination and use by searchers, its adaptability to both edited films and library material, its flexibility and expansibility, and its economy in respect to its production.

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