

Magnetic Sound for Home Film Probable This Year

By IRVING DESFOR
AP Newsfeatures

Magnetic sound on home movie film will be a dream fulfilled in early 1952. The laboratories which add the magnetic sound stripe to 16 mm film are in present active operation, while the first 16 mm magnetic sound projector will be headed for the nation's camera stores in a matter of weeks. Eventually, both film and projectors for 8 mm magnetic sound will be available, too, but their production has been side-tracked to concentrate on the 16 mm market.

The announcement by Reeves Soundcraft Corp. of New York City climaxes six years of intensive research. It finally brings to the home, to amateur cinema groups and to avid home movie enthusiasts the technical accomplishment which revolutionized Hollywood almost 25 years ago with the introduction of "talking pictures."

Perhaps we should be introduced to magnetic sound on film more formally. It's the newest member of the tape recorder family. A lot of people have become familiar with tape recorders lately so they are aware of the principles of magnetic sound. It is a vast improvement over optical sound on film, which needs a sound engineer and expensive equipment to produce.

Magnetic sound has a superior tone range, lasts longer, is easier and far less costly to make. It can also be played back immediately after recording, can be erased, altered or changed entirely and as often as desired.

How does it work? A newly de-

veloped coating of iron oxide responds instantly to all degrees of sound by recording them in varying degrees of magnetism. This invisible, magnetic record can be permanent or temporary. It will reproduce the original sounds when the magnetic impulses are converted back through the proper amplifying unit.

The coating of magnetic oxide can be added to movie film in a narrow stripe at 3 1/2 cents per foot at present. It is chemically inert, so it can be added to film before or after it has been exposed or processed. Sound is recorded on the film by running it through the new projectors, which have a built-in magnetic recorder, and adding voice, music or sound effects through a microphone.

On the playback, the running strip of film is again in contact with a tiny magnetic head. Here the magnetic energy is translated into electrical charge and converted back into sound. To erase any sound, any portion of the film is subjected to an extremely high magnetic charge. This nullifies any previous magnetic impulses, making it ready for a new recording. There is no damage to the film in any way.

This magnetic magic and its revolutionary innovation in amateur movie possibilities naturally mean there are some changes necessary in present-day equipment to use it. To accommodate the new magnetic stripe, single-perforated sound film is used instead of the normal film with perforations at both sides. Therefore all 16mm cameras with

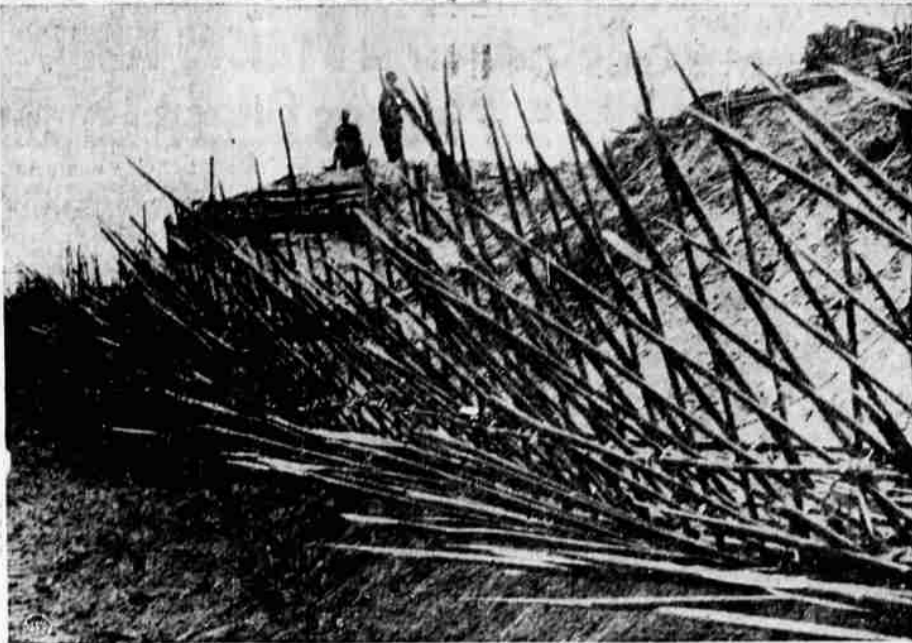
double sprocket gears have to be changed to single sprockets.

With this conversion, movies are shot in normal fashion and edited to final running sequence. The reel is now ready for the magnetic stripe. For the time being, photographers can deal directly with Reeves Soundcraft, (19 E. 52 St., N.Y.C.) but eventually it will be handled through the photo dealers throughout the country.

When the film is returned with the magnetic stripe added, it is ready for sound. It can be run through the new magnetic projector several times so that a working script can be made and rehearsed with the movie scenes. When you are ready the switch is turned to "Record" and you narrate or add music into the mike as you watch the film. You can immediately run the film through again to check the results and make any changes necessary.

Any film in your home movie library can have sound added by having it duplicated on 16mm single-sprocket film. However, it must be copied by an optical printer. A contact copy would put the sprocket holes on the wrong side... the side where the magnetic striping should go.

Serious home movie enthusiasts will find further detailed information and technical details in the February issue of Modern Photography. And while you're at it, take another moment to meet my kid brother, Max Desfor. His story as an AP news photographer and winner of the Pulitzer Prize last year is in the same issue.



BAMBOO CURTAIN—This impressive "wall of death" formed by pointed spears of bamboo, guards a French army post near Hao-Binh, Indochina, against night attack by the Communist guerrillas. A specialty of the Red Viet Minh is to strike at night on outposts and disappear into the hills and jungles before dawn.

Birds Scared, Guard Alerted

CLEVELAND (AP) — Edward E. Merkel's latest attempt to keep the starlings off the Federal Reserve Bank brought out the guard.

The building manager had the structure sand blasted last spring. To keep it clean, he has since tried loud speakers, electric lights, rags and some fake owls. All failed to keep off the starlings.

Thursday night he tried a clapper made of two hinged pieces of board. That made a loud noise and

a guard came running. He said one of his assistants had reported gun fire.

Merkel doesn't know yet what the starlings' reaction is.

Hans Narland Fire Insurance. Phone 2-2515.

Package Goods Rules Drawn

SALEM (AP) — The Oregon Agriculture Department is preparing regulations to prohibit the sale of prepackaged goods unless it is labeled with the net weight and the name and address of the packer or distributor.

The regulations apply also to meat and poultry. They are similar to the federal regulations which apply to food sold in interstate commerce.

Director of Agriculture E. L. Peterson said the new rules will eliminate deceptive practices. Many foods, he said, that are commonly sold by weight now are being packaged and sold by quantity.

For instance, he said, a package of cut up chicken sold as "one chicken" is not an accurate statement of quantity. Under the new rules, the net weight will have to be printed on the package.

Fish Appear in New Well

SHANDON, Calif. (AP) — Joe Bisaglia was happy to strike water at 600 feet while drilling a well near here, but he was astonished to see fish come bubbling up too.

The fish resemble miniature tuna Bisaglia said Friday. He described them as about 1 1/2 inches long and having small spikes instead of fins on their backs.

He explained that his well lies near the San Andrea earthquake fault and the fish may come from an underground cavern formed there.

TELEPHONE CENSUS
MONTREAL (AP) — Statistics released here show Canada is third in the world telephone census with a total of 2,911,900 instruments. The United States leads with 43,000,000 telephones and the United Kingdom has 5,433,600.

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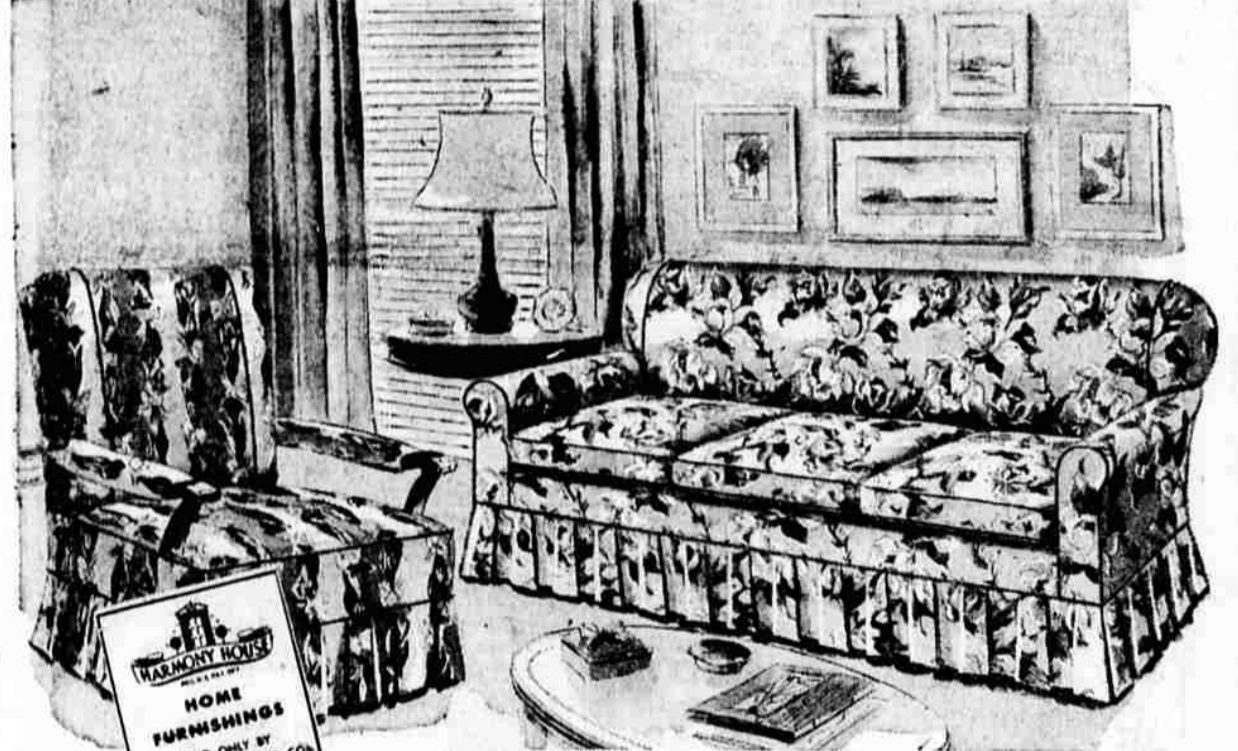
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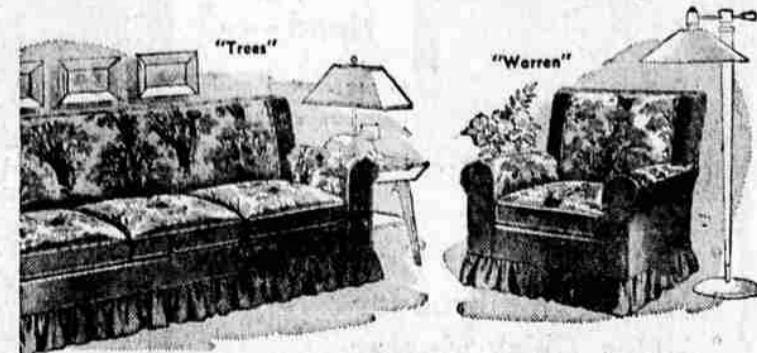
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