

Lasky Studio

### **JOBS FOR CRIPPLED SOLDIERS.**

#### **Movie Concern Offers to Train Fifty at Once to Become Operators.**

Crippled soldiers who have lost a leg on the battlefields of France are to be given an opportunity to become moving picture operators. Senator Fletcher, of Florida, has received a letter from one of the big movie concerns of the South making the offer. Jobs are open at once for 50 one-legged soldiers. Later there will be a chance for 50 more.

The concern is prepared to open schools in any of the camps. From 60 to 90 days are necessary to learn the trade, and the jobs pay from \$60 to \$100 a month.

**Beef Liver** Sliced,  
Pound.....

**Cabbage**  
New York State

**Lb. 3c**

**PC**

PECK  
(15 lbs.)

**BREA**

Memorandum: (Mrs. Edson)

Ethel R. Palmer made report on motion  
picture investigation September 26th, 1918.

REPRESENTING EMPLOYERS  
LOYALL A. OSBORNE  
C. E. MICHAEL  
W. H. VANDERVOORT  
B. L. WORDEN  
F. C. HOOD

WILLIAM H. TAFT      FRANK P. WALSH  
JOINT CHAIRMEN

W. JETT LAUCK, SECRETARY

REPRESENTING LABOR  
FRANK J. HAYES  
WILLIAM L. HUTCHESON  
THOMAS J. SAVAGE  
VICTOR A. OLANDER  
T. A. RICKERT

NATIONAL WAR LABOR BOARD  
WASHINGTON

October 30.

Miss Mary Van Kleeck, Director,  
Women in Industry Service,  
Department of Labor,  
Washington, D.C.

My dear Miss VanKleeck,

In answer to your request of October 25  
I enclose herewith a memorandum prepared by one  
of my staff on the (Lasky Studio case.)

*File*

There is in our files no mention of  
women involved or of the possible substitution of  
women for men in the projecting room of the studio.  
them

Very sincerely yours,

*Elizabeth Christian*

<sup>072</sup>  
Memorandum on the Controversy between Local # 33 I.A.T.S.E.  
and The Lasky Studio of Famous Players- Lasky Corporation,  
Los Angeles, Cal.

Original grievances about wages, hours, overtime, working conditions and all points of difference affecting other studios as well as The Lasky, were settled before Aug. 27. No answer was had from ~~this~~ studio and on that date 100 employees quit work. After several attempts to settle on the main point as to how many and in what manner men should be re-instated it was determined that the two following points be submitted to the National War Labor Board, both sides agreeing to abide by this decision;

1. Return of former employees to work who were ~~employed~~ prior to August 28 1918.

2. Removal from position of Supt. of Construction, Mr. James Souter.

Pending decision 50 employees were put back to work Sept. 24.

That the Lasky studio is an open shop is conceded but the union contends that the employment of the new superintendent of construction will seriously endanger the percentage of organization that they have maintained because he has a record of strike-breaking.

Firm contends that it does not approve in general of the standardization requested by the first wage demands of the men, that it raised ~~the~~ wages of all the competent employees and was willing that the rest of the men seek "employment elsewhere" as they had threatened to do in their original wage demand, that they had the right to retain employees hired to replace strikers and that they could not break ~~their~~ contract with the new construction supt. who, they promise, will act under their orders not to discriminate against the union.

## REPORT ON MOTION PICTURE OPERATORS' SITUATION IN LOS ANGELES

### GENERAL SITUATION

At the instigation of the Theater Owners' Association of Southern California, Incorporated, comprising about eighty per cent of all motion picture theatres in Southern California, a school for the training of women motion picture operators was started by one of their members, Leo L. Ryan. This school is officially endorsed and supported by the Theater Owners' Association. At present there are enrolled about thirty-five students in this school.

The reasons given by the Theater Owners for the founding of this school are as follows:

### Theater Owners' Point of View.

1. A patriotic projection for the training of dependent women of men in service to earn their living.
2. Dissatisfaction with the type of work performed by union operators.
  - (a) Recent fires due to carelessness on part of operators.
  - (b) Inexperienced men being supplied to theaters by union because of shortage caused by draft.

No concrete instance of lack of operators could be found.

### LICENSES.

Before operating a machine the City of Los Angeles demands that an examination given by the Electrical Department be passed before a license is issued. This examination previously consisted of an oral interview. At present there has been a complete change in the type of examination held. A written series of questions is asked, also a practical test in a booth with a skilled operator is given. So far ten women from the school in question have taken this examination. All of whom have passed the written but no license has as yet been issued to a woman as they have all failed in the practical test. It is claimed by the Theater Owners that a union man has been in the booth to give this practical test, wires have been grounded making such an examination unsafe, and unfair tests and requirements have been made. Mr. Beecher of the Electrical Department who is in charge of the examinations, stated that so far the women have been only theoretically trained and not practically; that the department is absolutely willing to grant licenses to women when women are efficient.

#### UNION POINT OF VIEW.

At the time this school of the Theater Owners was organized the enclosed contract (copy) was presented to all theater owners who employed union men. This contract is signed by most of the theater owners but is apparently not being lived up to by them, nor has the alternative been enforced by the union. Undoubtedly this contract discriminates against women, and according to Mr. Dale, a local A. F. of L. representative, the Operators' Union would not be upheld from that point of view.

The attitude of the local Motion Picture Operators' Union was given in a talk with Mr. Preston, Business Manager, and is as follows:

1. No immediate need for women operators.
2. Many qualified male operators without positions.
3. Fear that women will lower scale of wages.
4. Will admit women into Union after being licensed.
5. The occupation is a hazardous one and not considered healthful one for women.

#### SUMMARY.

The general situation can best be summed up as a fight between the Theater Owners' Association and Union Operators. The Union says it is to break them that the school was started. Theater Owners say that women would make better operators than a union man.

#### THE OCCUPA- TION AS RELATED TO WOMEN.

Wages. The Union scale of wages controls practically all the motion picture houses, ranging from \$16.50 to \$30 per week depending on the type of house. Theater owners state that same scale of wages will be paid to the women.

Hours. The Union will permit no operator to work longer than six hours without one hour relief. There is a six hour day standard in vaudeville and larger houses, eight hour day standard in smaller houses.

Standards of Labor and Health Hazards. The standard projecting room is a fire-proof booth. All films in booth are kept in a fire-proof box. Fires are mainly caused by smoking of operators, which is against a City Ordinance, and running the film too slowly through the machine. Operators say that small burns are practically unavoidable. The accident rate for insurance for operators as given by the Pacific Mutual Insurance Company is two and one-half times a preferred risk.

Ventilation is obtained by an air shaft at the top of the booth and an electric fan. Despite this the booths are hot and close and colds are often contracted by the operator after leaving booth for open air.

The most serious health menace is that of the carbon ash. This ash is composed of small particles of burnt carbon from the lamp. The ash circulates in the booth and even in the house proper. Carbon Monoxide is generated which makes for a vicious atmosphere and is directly injurious to the health of the operator. A full report of this condition has been made by the Bureau of Tuberculosis of the State Board of Health (this report is not as yet in circulation but will be mailed as soon as it can be obtained).

Need of Women. There seems to be no immediate need for women operators. No theater owner has complained of being unable to get operators, though many say that the standard of men is not as high as it previously had been. As a general rule the men in this occupation are young men and within the draft age, but since the motion picture industry has been classed as essential there will be in the future operators needed to take the places of the men drafted. This is a skilled occupation and takes anywhere from one month to three months of training, depending upon previous experience. It requires thorough electrical knowledge as well as practical experience in order to become a skilled operator. Undoubtedly women who are mechanically inclined, properly trained and dressed, (shirt, cap and trousers) could be as efficient as men. It is an occupation depending on individual initiative, skill and general ability.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT made and entered into this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 1918, by and between \_\_\_\_\_ a motion picture exhibitor in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California, party of the first part, and the Moving Picture and Projecting Machine Operators Local No. 150, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees of the United States and Canada, party of the second part,

WITNESSETH: That

WHEREAS, party of the first part is engaged in giving regular moving picture exhibitions for paid admissions in said City of Los Angeles, and is desirous of securing skilled motion picture machine operators, and in having the assurance that such skilled and dependable operators are at all times available for such exhibitions; and,

WHEREAS, a ruling has been made by the Provost Marshall of the United States that the motion picture industry, and all skilled labor employed in connection therewith, are essential, and that motion picture machine operators are classed as skilled mechanics and employed in an essential industry within the meaning of said ruling; and

WHEREAS, party of the second part is composed of men skilled and experienced in the operation of motion picture machines and the electrical and other work in connection therewith, and desire to place its members in permanent positions at an agreed standard of compensation.

IT IS THEREFORE MUTUALLY COVENANTED AND AGREED that in consideration of the premises, and the mutual benefits accruing and to accrue to the respective parties hereto, that said party of the second part agrees to furnish to first party, upon reasonable notice, such skilled motion picture machine operators as said first party may from time to time require. And said first

party agrees to employ only the skilled and licensed motion picture machine operators which comprise the membership of, and are furnished by said second party.

Said first party further agrees not to support nor encourage any school for the instruction of women or girls in the operation of motion picture machines, nor employ women or girl machine operators so long as second parties' membership are classed by the United States Government as employees of an essential industry.

It is further distinctly understood and agreed between the parties hereto that should party of the first part violate any of the terms or conditions of this contract, that second party shall have the right to withdraw any of its members employed in the establishment of first party upon giving twenty-four hours notice to said first party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the party of the first party has hereunto affixed his hand and seal, and the party of the second part has, pursuant to a resolution duly passed by its executive board, authorized its president and secretary to execute the foregoing contract as of the day and year first above written.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Party of the First Part

MOVING PICTURE AND PROJECTING MACHINE  
OPERATORS LOCAL NO. 150, I.A. of  
T. S. E. of the United States and  
Canada.

By \_\_\_\_\_  
President

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

## WAGE SCALE AND CLASSIFICATION OF THEATRES IN THE JURISDICTION OF LOCAL NO. 150, I. A. T. S. E.

Class AA. Moving Picture Theatres, with a capacity of 1500 or more, charging 10 cents or more admission. Head operator to work 6 hours per day; salary, \$30.00 per week; all overtime 75 cents per hour; all fractions of an hour over 20 minutes to constitute an hour. Relief man not to work over 6 hours per day; salary, 71½ cents per hour; overtime same as head operator.

Class A. Recognized vaudeville or other theatres using scenery, stage lights and one or more stage hands, and giving regular afternoon and evening performances, not continuously, and not to exceed 6 hours per day; salary, \$30.00 per week; overtime, 75 cents per hour; all fractions of an hour over 30 minutes to constitute an hour.

Continuous vaudeville or other theatres using scenery, stage lights and one or more stage hands. Head operator to work not over 6 hours per day; salary, \$30.00 per week; overtime, 75 cents per hour; all fractions of an hour over 20 minutes to constitute an hour. Relief man to receive 71½ cents per hour; overtime same as head operator.

All Class A theatres are entitled to one rehearsal each week without extra cost; rehearsal not to last over 2½ hours.

Class BB. Moving Picture Theatres, between 500 to 1500 seats. Head operator to work not over 8 hours per day; salary, \$25.00 per week; all overtime 60 cents per hour; all fractions of an hour over 20 minutes to constitute an hour. Relief man shall receive 42 cents per hour; overtime same as head operator.

Class B. Moving Picture Theatres with less than 500 seats. Head operator to work not more than 8 hours per day; salary, \$22.50 per week; overtime 50 cents per hour; all fractions of an hour over 20 minutes to constitute an hour. Relief man to receive 38 cents per hour; overtime same as head operator.

Classes AA, A, BB or B, do not include an ysuburban theatre in the limits of Los Angeles.

Class C. Moving Picture Theatres, other than those included in Classes AA, A, BB or B, giving regular afternoon and evening performances, not continuously, said performances not to last over 3½ hours a piece. Salary, \$22.50 per week; all overtime 50 cents per hour; all fractions of an hour over 20 minutes to constitute an hour.

Class D. Moving Picture Theatres, other than those in Classes AA, A, BB or B, giving evening performances only, performances not to last over 3½ hours a piece. Salary, \$16.50 per week. Extra matinee performances not to exceed 3½ hours each, \$1.50 per matinee. If more than 3 matinees are run in any one week the salary to be the same as Class C theatres. All overtime to be paid at the rate of 50 cents per hour; all fractions of an hour over 20 minutes to constitute an hour.

Class E. Motion Picture Studios. Operators not to work more than 8 hours per day, and 6 days per week; salary, \$25.00 per week. All overtime to be paid at the rate of 75 cents per hour; Sunday work to be classified as overtime; all fractions of an hour over 20 minutes to constitute an hour.

Class F. Operators working for special exhibitions, such as conventions, fairs, commercial, church or school exhibitions. Salary at the rate of \$32.00 per week. Operator not to work more than 7 hours per day.

Class G. Special entertainments, where machine must be set up and taken down. Salary, \$7.00 per day. Entertainments, or night performances, where machine is already installed, and performance not to last more than 3½ hours. Salary, \$4.00 per performance. Operator shall not be required to transport machine to or from job.

Any theatre or theatres not covered in the above classification, the Executive Board shall have the power to make a scale for such theatre or theatres.

No operator will be permitted to work more than 6 hours without at least a one-hour relief.

Endorsed by the I. A. T. S. E. of U. S. & C.,

M. A. GARNEY, General Secretary



Moving Picture  
Machine  
Operators



of

Los Angeles, California

3-0



Members must confine themselves to working in Picture Booth ONLY

WORKING RULES and WAGE SCALES

OF

MOVING PICTURE OPERATORS' UNION

LOCAL 150, I. A. T. S. E. of U. S. & C.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

SEP 30 AM.

1615 Q Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C.  
September 26, 1918.

My dear Miss Van Kleeck,

I am sending you the outline, showing how I should investigate the question of using women as moving picture operators. I went through the catalogue and shelves of the Library of Congress quite thoroughly and could find no material bearing directly on this question. The actual working

out of the problem would need, I should think, some first hand investigation. With the knowledge so gained, a great deal of valuable material is to be found from which sound conclusions can be drawn. I have added a list of the books that seemed most useful.

I hope this work will show you any points you wished to know about my work. I have tried to show that I could grasp and arrange logically the important points in this problem. I have not had the time to prove these points. My original lack of knowledge of this problem was very great, to say the least.

I received a letter to-day from Miss Youngman, my former professor of Economics at Wellesley, saying she had written you. I presume the two other letters I wrote you, will come to you soon. I hope they are satisfactory.

Very sincerely yours,  
Mildred Harcom Jones

Memorandum: referring to the employment of women as operators of moving picture projecting machines.

- I. No insurmountable difficulties presented by this type of work.
  - A. Necessity of mechanical knowledge.
    1. Lacked by majority of women.
  - B. Impossibility of division of labor.
    1. Women must learn all processes.
  - C. Possibility of attaining the needed mechanical skill.
    1. Experience of Great Britain with the women munition workers.
  - D. Special knowledge required to meet the needs of this trade.
    1. To keep actual machinery of the projecting apparatus in repair.
    2. To mend film quickly and neatly.
    3. To understand the principles of optical projection enough to obtain a clear picture.
    4. To understand thoroughly electrical currents and more simple electrical wiring.
- II. Difficulties presented by hours of labor.
  - A. Involves night work.
    1. Usual performances lasting every night till 11.00 p. m.
      - a. In large theaters alternation of operators would give part time off, showing possibility of night work only every other night.
  - B. Involves, certainly in the larger cities, Sunday work.
    1. Alternation of operators, again, would modify this condition.
  - C. Consideration of actual number of hours in working day.
    1. Ten hour day easily obtainable.
      - a. Two hours in a. m. for inspection of film.
      - b. Eight hours for afternoon and evening performance.
    2. Eight hour<sup>un</sup> obtainable except in a case of continuous performance, (11.00 a. m. to 11.00 p. m.), when two operators alternate.

### III. Consideration of question of health and safety.

#### A. Construction of booth tends to create unhealthful conditions.

##### 1. Necessity of fire proof construction.

a. Ventillation by air flue.

a. Necessity of darkness.

#### B. Physical strain involved.

1. Almost continuous standing.

2. Eye strain, in focusing pictures.

3. No strain on the muscles through,

a. Lifting heavy weights

b. Cramped posture

c. Over reaching.

#### C. Highly inflammable character of films.

1. Guarded against now by State laws and fire insurance rules.

### IV. Consideration of attitude of Labor Unions.

A. Men operators, at the present time, have well organized and active union.

B. No available information as to attitude toward the admittance of women to this field.

### V. Consideration of the possibility of using wounded men in this work to a better advantage.

A list of material from which useful conclusion<sup>s</sup> can be drawn, is appended. As far as my work has gone, I have found no material bearing directly on the points in question. There is no record of any woman having been employed in such a capacity.

AVAILABLE MATERIAL

- I. None dealing directly with this subject.
- II. That dealing with the moving picture business.
  - A. "Motion picture theater", American School of Correspondence, Chicago, Ill., 1911.
  - B. "Motion picture operation", Horstmann and Tousley, Drake & Co., Chicago, Ill., 1917.
  - C. "Picture theater facts", Hodges, J. F., Scenario Publishing Co., New York City, 1912.
  - D. "Motion picture handbook", Richardson, F. H., Moving Picture World, New York City, 1916.
- III. That dealing with women in trades requiring mechanical skill.
  - A. Great Britain, Ministry of munitions, "Health of munition workers committee, memorandum no. 4, 1916, Employment of women."
  - B. "Women in modern industry", Hutchins, B. L., G. Bell & sons, London, 1915.
  - C. "Woman's work in war time", Bullard, W. I., Merchants National Bank, Boston, 1917.
  - D. Great Britain, Ministry of munitions, Health of munition workers committee, "Health of the munition worker."

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mildred Larcom Jones*