

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS  
OF THE WRITER

# The Stanford-Muybridge Motion Pictures of 1878-1879

By WALTER R. MILES  
*Professor of Experimental Psychology*  
Stanford University

Address delivered at the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Stanford Motion  
Picture Research at Stanford University, May 8, 1929

SEPTEMBER, 1929

## THE BULLETIN

OF THE

MINNESOTA

FEDERATION OF ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SOCIETIES

VOLUME XIV

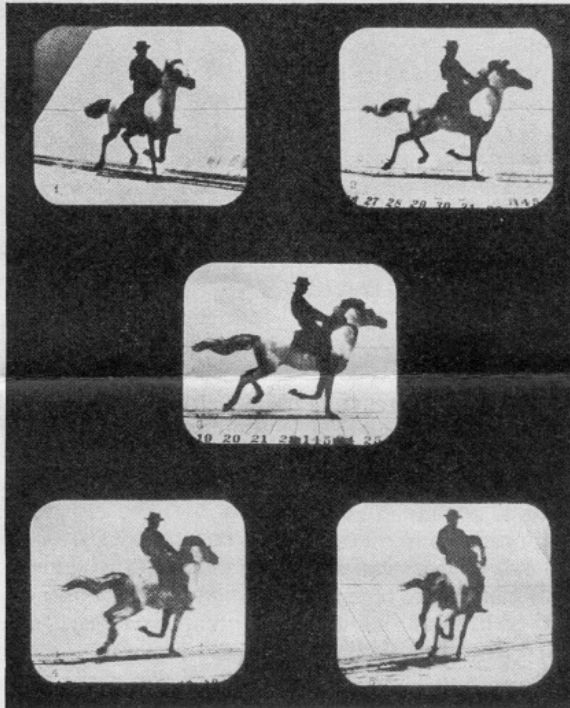
NUMBER 9

## THE STANFORD-MUYBRIDGE MOTION PICTURES OF 1878-1879\*

By WALTER R. MILES, Professor of Experimental Psychology, Stanford University.

Editor's Note—On May 8, 1929, there was celebrated at Stanford University, California, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the portrayal of motion of horses instituted by Leland Stanford in 1878 and 79. Representatives of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences participated in this commemorative celebration, among whom were Mr. Louis B. Mayer of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation and Mrs. Mayer, William C. de Mille and Mrs. de Mille, Alec B. Frances and some nine or ten others.

John D. Isaacs was a young engineer in Mr. Stanford's employ on the Central



Five different views taken by as many cameras at the same instant of time. The electric device of Mr. Isaacs's made it possible to operate several cameras at the same instant.

Pacific. He is listed in the last year book of the American Society of Civil Engineers as retired and living in San Francisco. Previous year books list him as consulting engineer, Harriman Lines, Chicago and later as consulting engineer, Southern Pacific Co., New York.

The set of twenty consecutive pictures represents the complete stride of a galloping horse. A picture was taken for each twelve inches of progress. In No. 1 the left fore foot stands at 12 and in No. 20 it has reached 32, that is, exactly 20 feet were covered in the stride in considerable less time than one second.

For us today to photograph a strip of motion pictures is about as easy as to scratch a match. For those of yesterday to make a photograph of any kind was worth a day's work. If you wanted to take a picture of a cow in a pasture field you practically had to go out on a camping expedition—you had to take a tent and a bath tub—the tent for a dark room and the tub to dip your plates freshly in the silver solution. The wet collodion process was a rather messy affair. The plates had to be dipped just before they were exposed and in those cases where

the photographer desired to take still pictures of animals or of children, he sometimes had to dip his plates more than once due to the delay between dipping and getting a still period for exposure. Landscapes and human adults lent themselves readily to these photographic requirements. Daguerre first made photography a commercial success and shops were opened in London about 1840. Most excellent photographs were made by O. D. Hill in London in 1845. Among these were portraits of Browning, Tennyson and Darwin. Fox Talbot's view of Lay-

\*Address delivered at the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Stanford Motion Picture Research at Stanford University, May 8, 1929.

