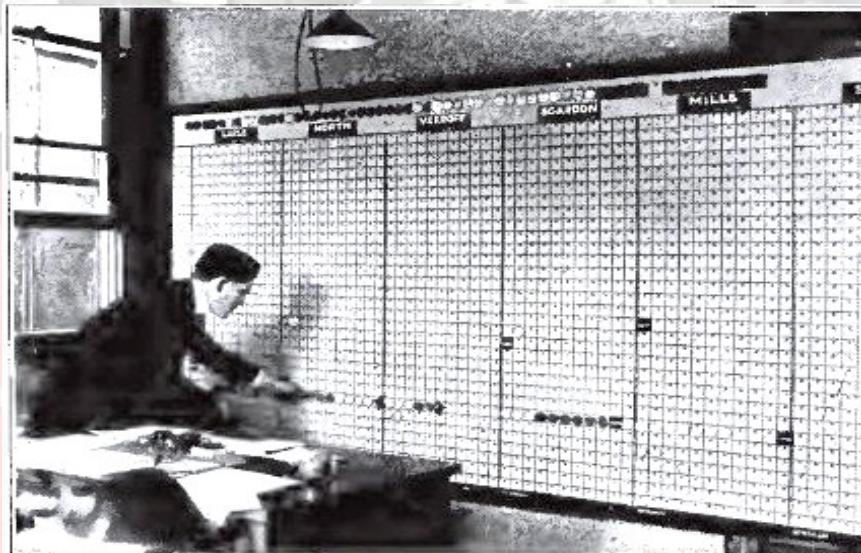


PRODUCTION CODE BASICS

FROM THE EXECUTIVE LEVEL

Let's start at the top and work our way down. Executives at the major studios were monitoring multitudes of films, so they didn't want all the details. Studio management only wanted to know basic information such as what was being filmed, the film's director, any major changes or modifications, and when filming was completed.

Shown below is an Executive Production Board from 1918. This board showed the names of different directors and the progress of their work. At a moment's glance it may be told how many actors are at work, how many scenes completed, and whether they are in the studio or out doing exteriors.



PRODUCTION

Some executives wanted a system to keep track of the basics that could be occasionally updated. A production NUMBER/CODE was created to follow through the process (because quite often titles and/or directors would change).

Again we want to pick on Paramount as all records seem to indicate they were the most aggressive and most likely the ones that actually started the use of production codes.

We want to show you a VERY RARE look at one of the systems used by Paramount to control their projects - Route Cards. Never heard of them, you say... yes, these are that hard to find.

From the late teens until the 1970s, a simple Route Card was issued showing what projects were in production by the production number, title and director. This simple card let executives see the number assigned, the title, if the title changed, the director, if the director changed, and when the production was completed. The entry would then drop off of all of the subsequent cards. This meant filming was completed and the film moved to the editing process.

We were able to study these cards in one binder of a two-binder set. We reviewed Volume 2, which covered the years 1943-1967. We have not yet been able to acquire Volume 1 to study. But the samples from Volume 2 show how their system worked.

Examples of these Route Cards follow. The actual cards are printed on colored card stock, each in a different color which made them easier to discern.

PRODUCTION

Paramount Pictures		Paramount Pictures	
ROUTE CARD No. 5 August 1, 1943	ROUTE CARD No. 6 October 12, 1943	ROUTE CARD No. 7 November 12, 1943	ROUTE CARD No. 2 March 17, 1944
1354 Lady In The Dark — <i>Lillian</i>	1354 Lady In The Dark — <i>Lillian</i>	1354 Lady In The Dark — <i>Lillian</i>	1360 Frenchman's Creek — <i>Lillian</i>
1355 Riding High — <i>Menzel</i>	1351 The Story of Dr. Wassell — <i>Damille</i>	1351 The Story of Dr. Wassell — <i>Damille</i>	1367 Hail The Conquering Hero — <i>Gregg</i>
1357 The Hour Before The Dawn — <i>Tartin</i>	1353 The Hour Before The Dawn — <i>Tartin</i>	1356 Frenchman's Creek — <i>Lillian</i>	1368 Rainbow Island — <i>Murphy</i>
1358 The Uninvited — <i>Allan</i>	1344 And The Angels Sing — <i>Monkei</i>	1347 Hail The Conquering Hero — <i>Strigan</i>	1374 Rainbow Island — <i>Murphy</i>
1359 The Hour Before The Dawn — <i>Tartin</i>	1345 Frenchman's Creek — <i>Lillian</i>	1348 Standing Room Only — <i>Lamfeld</i>	1375 I Love A Soldier — <i>Sandsch</i>
1360 And The Angels Sing — <i>Menzel</i>	1346 And The Angels Sing — <i>Monkei</i>	1349 Majority of Fear — <i>Long</i>	1377 Til We Meet Again — <i>Bergen</i>
1361 Henry Aldrich's Little Secret — <i>Bennett</i>	1347 Hail The Conquering Hero — <i>Strigan</i>	1350 Going My Way — <i>McCary</i>	1379 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>
1362 Standing Room Only — <i>Lamfeld</i>	1348 Standing Room Only — <i>Lamfeld</i>	1351 Harry Aldrich — <i>Boy Scott</i>	1382 Road To Utopia — <i>Wilder</i>
1363 Majority of Fear — <i>Long</i>	1349 Majority of Fear — <i>Long</i>	1352 Our Hearts Were Young And Gay — <i>Allen</i>	1383 And Now Tomorrow — <i>Pebal</i>
1364 Frenchman's Creek — <i>Lillian</i>	1350 Going My Way — <i>McCary</i>	1353 Going On The Grid — <i>Lamfeld</i>	1384 Going On The Grid — <i>Lamfeld</i>
1365 Henry Aldrich's Little Secret — <i>Bennett</i>	1351 Harry Aldrich — <i>Boy Scott</i>	1354 Practically Yours — <i>Lillian</i>	1385 Practically Yours — <i>Lillian</i>
1366 Frenchman's Creek — <i>Lillian</i>	1352 Our Hearts Were Young And Gay — <i>Allen</i>	1355 Murder, He Says — <i>Menzel</i>	1386 Til We Meet Again — <i>Strigan</i>
1367 Hail The Conquering Hero — <i>Strigan</i>	1353 The Man In Half Moon Street — <i>Monkei</i>	1357 Two Years Before The Mast — <i>Farrow</i>	1388 Here Comes The White Sandich — <i>Alex</i>
1368 Standing Room Only — <i>Lamfeld</i>	1354 Rainbow Island — <i>Tilly</i>	1358 —	1389 —
1369 Majority of Fear — <i>Long</i>	1355 Double Indemnity — <i>Welles</i>	1359 —	1390 —
1370 Going My Way — <i>McCary</i>	1356 The Man In Half Moon Street — <i>Monkei</i>	1360 —	1391 —
1371 Harry Aldrich — <i>Boy Scott</i>	1357 Rainbow Island — <i>Tilly</i>	1361 —	1392 —
1372 Our Hearts Were Young And Gay — <i>Allen</i>	1358 Double Indemnity — <i>Welles</i>	1362 —	1393 —
1373 The Man In Half Moon Street — <i>Strigan</i>	1359 The Man In Half Moon Street — <i>Monkei</i>	1363 —	1394 —
1374 Rainbow Island — <i>Tilly</i>	1360 The Hilltop Gang — <i>Farrow</i>	1364 —	1395 —
1375 Double Indemnity — <i>Welles</i>	1361 The Hilltop Gang — <i>Farrow</i>	1365 —	1396 —
1376 When I Come Back — <i>Sandsch</i>	1362 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1366 —	1397 —
1377 —	1363 The Man In Half Moon Street — <i>Monkei</i>	1367 —	1398 —
1378 —	1364 The Hilltop Gang — <i>Farrow</i>	1368 —	1399 —
1379 —	1365 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1369 —	1400 —
1380 —	1366 The Hilltop Gang — <i>Farrow</i>	1370 —	1401 —
1381 —	1367 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1371 —	1402 —
1382 —	1368 The Hilltop Gang — <i>Farrow</i>	1372 —	1403 —
1383 —	1369 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1373 —	1404 —
1384 —	1370 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1374 —	1405 —
1385 —	1371 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1375 —	1406 —
1386 —	1372 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1376 —	1407 —
1387 —	1373 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1377 —	1408 —
1388 —	1374 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1378 —	1409 —
1389 —	1375 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1379 —	1410 —
1390 —	1376 Boundary Blode — <i>Menzel</i>	1380 —	1411 —

PRODUCTION

These cards were kept in a ring binder. The ones we have on file were issued about every two months before and during World War II, but went to monthly as production picked up after WWII.

Here is a closer look at a portion of a page:

October 12, 1944		December 11, 1944	
★		★	
→ 1379 Incendiary Blonde	Marshall	1387 Two Years Before The Mast	Farrow
1383 And Now Tomorrow	Pichel	1388 Here Come The Waves	Sandrich
1384 Bring On The Girls	Lanfield	1389 The Unseen	Allen
1386 Murder, He Says	Marshall	1390 A Medal For Benny	Pichel
1387 Two Years Before The Mast	Farrow	1391 Kitty	Leisen
1388 Here Come The Waves	Sandrich	1392 Out of This World	Walker
1389 Her Heart In Her Throat	Allen	1393 Salty O'Rourke	Walsh
1390 A Medal For Benny	Pichel	1394 Miss Susie Slagle	Berry
1391 Kitty	Leisen	1395 Duffy's Tavern	Walker
		1396 The Virginian	Gilmore

Notice the first one on the October sheet is #1379 – *Incendiary Blonde* – (director) Marshall. By the December card – it's gone. It was finished with filming and sent to editing. Notice down the line to #1389 – *Her Heart in Her Throat* (director) Allen. By December the title had been changed to *The Unseen*.

Learn How to Identify Unknown Movie Titles
 Let's look at another sample. The image on the next page shows three of the cards for May, June and July 1948:

11441	The Great Gatsby	Nugent	11442 Tarlock Millions	Milson	Ryan
11442	Tarlock Millions	Haydn	11443 Sorrowful Jones	Lenfield	Disterle
11443	Sorrowful Jones	Lenfield	11444 The Accused	Disterle	Farrow
11444	The Accused	Disterle	11445 Dark Circle	Disterle	Farrow
11445	Dark Circle	Farrow	11446 Lady from Lariat Loop	Marshall	Fenton
11446	Lady from Lariat Loop	Marshall	11447 Streets of Loredo	Fenton	Fenton
11447	Streets of Loredo	Fenton	11448 One Woman	Allen	Allen
11448			11449 Samson and Delilah	DeMille	
11449			11450 A Mask for Lucreta	Leisen	
29022	Big Sister Blues	Gonzer	29022 Big Sister Blues	Gonzer	Gonzer
29023	Catalina Interlude	Gonzer	29023 Catalina Interlude	Gonzer	Gonzer
29024			29024		
29025	Tropical Masquerade	Gonzer	10009 Sorry, Wrong Number	Litvak	
29026	Big Sister Blues	Gonzer	10010		
29027			10011		
10009	Sorry, Wrong Number	Litvak	10012		
10010			10052	Te Heirens	Wyler
10011			10052	The Heiress	Wyler
10012			11513	Samson and Delilah	[Morocco]
10013	Samson and Delilah	[2nd Unit]	11514	Samson and Delilah	Jennings
10014			11515	Samson and Delilah	[4th Unit]

PRODUCTION

On the June card (middle), the entry on the bottom reads: 11513 – *Samson and Delilah* (2nd Unit) (dir.) DeMille. Notice on the July card where the new number 11449 shows as the production code for *Samson and Delilah* with DeMille as the director.

The bottom of the July card reads: 11513 – *Samson and Delilah* (2nd Unit in Morrocco) with Jester as director; 11514 – *Samson and Delilah* (3rd Unit in Studio) with Jennings as director; and 11515 – *Samson and Delilah* (4th Unit - Miniature) Jennings over that as well. **These are temporary UNIT codes.** Once the filming was complete, temporary codes were eliminated and the primary number used.

Let's look at one more sample of two cards from May and June of 1962.

10380 It's Only Money . . . Tashlin	10381 Paris When It Sizzles . Quine
10381 Together in Paris . . . Quine	10382 Hud Bannon . . . Ritt
10382 Hud . . . Ritt	10383 Papa's Delicate Delicate Condition . Marshall
10383	10384
11543 My Six Loves . . . Champion	11543 My Six Loves . . . Champion
31200 thru 31249 Gunsmoke/TV Series	31200 thru 31249 Gunsmoke/TV Series
31150 thru 31199 Have Gun - Will Travel/TV Series .	31150 thru 31199 Have Gun - Will Travel/TV Series .
31400 thru 31449 Bonanza/TV Series	31400 thru 31449 Bonanza/TV Series
31300 thru 31349 Pete and Gladys/TV Series	31300 thru 31349 Pete and Gladys/TV Series

Code #10381 has a name change from *Together in Paris* to become *Paris When It Sizzles*. Code 10383 starts out as *Pap's Delicate Delicate Condition*.

PRODUCTION

Also note that these cards show how TV series codes were listed in blocks. By this time, TV had become a major part of production as well and was integrated into the system.

Each TV episode had its own production code number. Notice that they would allocate a block of 50 numbers at a time. When they finished that block of 50, if the show was going to continue, they would allocate another block of 50 until the show was cancelled. And while the Route Cards only cover the series, we have been hard at work trying to break down each episode as well and fill those titles in.

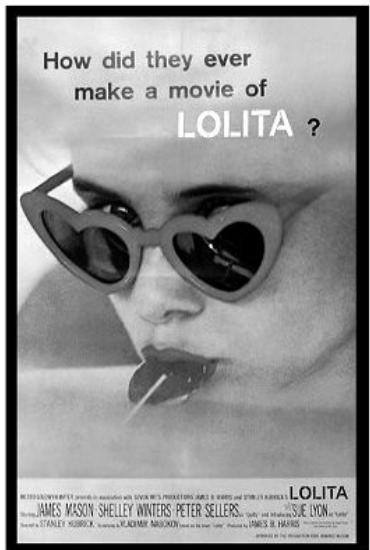


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PRODUCTION



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