Chapter 12
THE BOXER UPRISING (1900)
I. Filming with the Allied Armies

INTRODUCTION

Summary

In the early Summer of 1900, as the Boer War was coming to what seemed to be its conclusion, a conflict was raging at the other end of the world in China. The 'Boxers' (so called by westerners because of their apparent partiality for martial arts) aimed to destroy everything deemed foreign in their land, and to this end were killing missionaries and Christians; they finally took control of Pekin and besieged the foreign Legations in the city. This series of events became known as the 'Boxer Rebellion' or 'Boxer Uprising', and like most wars and conflicts it was a big news story, covered by journalists, war artists, photographers and film cameramen alike.[1]

The central event of the Uprising, the siege, began with little warning and ended only a few weeks later, so most cameramen only managed to cover the aftermath rather than the event itself, including expeditions which were mounted by an alliance of nations to root out the remnants of the Boxers. The several cameramen (from Britain, France, Japan and the United States) who filmed in the conflict zone tended to be connected to these military forces; especially so in the case of C. Fred Ackerman, who was attached to both the American and German forces. Only one of the cameramen, Joseph Rosenthal, managed to pursue a more independent line, and filmed scenes of Chinese daily life as well as of the foreign troops and the aftermath of war. But with this notable exception, most of the coverage of the crisis in moving pictures had a pro-western perspective.

Chinese resentment and its causes

Though the Boxer Uprising was essentially an anti-Western movement, its causes were more complex than that. Drought and pressure on the food supply in northern China had led to the deaths of millions in the 1890s, and historians stress that this famine lay behind much of the unrest and the Uprising.[2] A journalist of the time noted that 'want and peace cannot dwell together', but he added that the people themselves sought other explanations for their misfortunes, principally the 'commercial encroachments' which were coming from the west, putting many traditional workers out of business.[3]

A turning point came with China's defeat by Japan in a war over Korea in 1894-5 which crystallized Chinese perceptions of their national humiliation at the hands of foreign powers (see **Box** at end of next chapter). The defeat also emboldened other powers to intervene further, and in the next few years Britain, France, Russia, Japan, and Germany all forced concessions from the enfeebled China to grant new trading privileges, harbours, railway rights and

areas for foreign settlements.[4] China in the 1890s, as one historian put it, '…was fast falling into the position of Turkey – a sick empire with jealous vultures waiting to divide the carcass'.[5] This encroachment by outside nations contributed to widespread resentment of foreigners.

To ordinary Chinese, the most immediate symbols of these invading western forces who were humiliating their nation were missionaries.[6] These foreign visitors created their own brand of provocations: they built tall and looming churches, and their followers were discouraged from taking part in traditional Chinese religious practices, thus sowing discord in communities. Attacks on missions occurred through the 1890s as the Boxers called for the ousting or killing of the foreigners, and the movement reached a crescendo in 1899 and 1900 (probably with the connivance of government officials) with attacks on Chinese Christians and missionaries, hundreds of whom were slaughtered.

The foreigners respond

An international force was rapidly organised to protect foreigners and foreign interests, this being one of the first examples of nations (eight of them) uniting together for military action.[7] In mid June this force captured the coastal forts of Taku after a bombardment, and this action meant that the allies were now in open war against China herself, not just the Boxers.[8] Only days later, inland in Pekin the Boxers took control of the city (I will use the spelling 'Pekin' throughout as used in the 1900 era. The modern transliteration is 'Beijing'). They rapidly managed to surround and lay siege to the Legation quarter, the principal foreign-inhabited part of the capital. This became the most celebrated episode of the conflict, as hundreds of nationals of several countries were besieged in the Legation buildings, along with thousands of Chinese Christians. Over the next couple of months those trapped inside the walls fought off furious assaults by Boxers and the Chinese government forces.[9] Meanwhile the allies were working their way inland. Firstly they stormed and captured the strategic town of Tientsin (sometimes spelled 'Tien Tsin' at this time, and these days called 'Tianjin') in mid-July, and then after a rapid advance further inland, on 14 August battled the Chinese forces in Pekin, entering the city and relieving the Legation quarter.

In the succeeding months the allied forces, under Field Marshall Alfred von Waldersee, consolidated their hold on Pekin and surrounding territory, executing numerous Boxers and conducting punitive expeditions through the country (many of which amounted to little more than plunder). The foreign powers also negotiated agreements for the future protection of foreigners and for a huge indemnity to be paid to themselves. After the brief uprising, China had been brought back under the heel of the outside world.

News and visual reporting

Of all the wars in this 1900 era, the Boxer Uprising was the most international in terms of the number of countries' forces which took part, and this attracted journalists from various nations to go to China. However, few managed to arrive in time, for events developed with great speed. Though the crisis had been building from early 1900, the more serious Boxer actions did not start till early June, and the major news story – the siege of the legations – began in

the middle of that month. Therefore there was not much advance warning of the main actions, and in an era when intercontinental travel took weeks rather than hours, some media reporters missed the siege, and arrived only for the aftermath, and certainly this was the case with the film cameramen.

Yet a number of reporters did manage to make it onto the scene by June, and in the case of some of the representatives of American papers this was because they were already covering the war in the nearby Philippines, and so had much less distance to travel. Oscar King Davis reporting for *Harper's Weekly* and Frederic Palmer of the New York *World* arrived in China in June, in time to see the fighting preceding the taking of Tientsin.[10] Sydney Adamson from *Leslie's Weekly,* arrived soon afterwards. In addition, at least another fifteen reporters were on the scene for some time during the insurrection and its aftermath, the best known of whom were Ernest Morrison for *The Times*, George Lynch for the *Daily Express* and *Sphere,* Andrew Paterson for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and Pierre Loti for the French press.[11] Some of these writers also drew pictures or took photographs, and there were some specialised artists present too, notably the talented Fred Whiting, working for *The Graphic.*[12] Several photographers – amateurs, professionals and soldiers – took pictures of the events. The soldier-photographers included Capt. C.F. O'Keefe of the Thirty-Sixth US Infantry, who was supplying *Leslie's* again, as he had during the Philippine war.[13] A certain C.A. Killey published seventy of his photographs after the siege, and these and many more survive in picture libraries.[14] It is not clear if Killey was professional or amateur, and a similar ambiguity applies to others who were at work during the Boxer events, including two Japanese photographers, though a third was certainly a professional.[15]

Some of the most significant and productive photographic enterprises of the war were by stereographic companies, including the Keystone View Company, the American Stereoscopic Company, and Underwood and Underwood, the latter principally through their celebrated photographer, James Ricalton. Ricalton's account of his work photographing in China before and during the Boxer events, *China through the Stereoscope*, is a classic and enthralling chronicle of both his work and of the situation in China at the time.[16] Ricalton witnessed the fighting in Tientsin on 13 July and took views of the action. William Darrah, an expert on stereographs, says these 'are among the most graphic war views published up to that time', and praises Ricalton's work.[17] Illustrated periodicals covered the Boxer crisis in detail. The *Black and White Budget* was one of a number of new periodicals which were exploiting the use of photography. Its China coverage took off with library photographs and illustrations of imagined scenes until the autumn, at which time actual photographs from China appeared on its pages.[18]

Only a little information about censorship has emerged from this conflict, though official control was undoubtedly imposed, because one correspondent, Oscar King Davis, commented on how the various armies differed in the severity of their controls. Of all the national militaries he gave top marks to the Japanese, who were, he noted, 'the most direct and least mysterious in their dealings with the correspondents'.[19]

FILMS OF CHINA AND THE TROOPS

Everyday scenes of China

When the Boxer Uprising hit the headlines, any films related to the crisis acquired a new interest and value. Such films included shots of the personalities or troops involved or views shot in China. I will begin with the latter. As John Barnes writes, ‘so much interest in China had been stirred up by the Uprising that audiences seemed content just to view everyday scenes of this distant land’.[20] Some such films were already available, because before the Boxer Uprising, China had been recorded to a limited extent in moving pictures, in the form of Lumière views, street scenes and the like.

Some of the most detailed filming of China and the region to date, undertaken only months before the Boxer conflict erupted, was undertaken by the unlikeliest of cameramen: a British member of Parliament, Sir Ernest Hatch. Hatch had been elected to Parliament in 1895, and served some ten years as a Conservative MP for a Lancashire constituency.[21] He had a particular interest in foreign issues and travelled widely, and from 1899 to 1900 went on a tour of the Far East and Canada, and on this occasion took a cinematograph camera with him. According to one source, he was accompanied by 'a skilled operator' (cameraman) to do the actual filming, though other sources do not mention the operator, so Hatch may have managed himself.[22] Whoever actually turned the crank, Hatch returned to Britain by May of 1900 with about fifty films taken during the tour, including some twenty views shot in China, and the remainder from Japan and the Rocky Mountains. (He also visited Korea, but doesn’t seem to have filmed there).[23]

Films taken in China included a street scene in Pekin, a view from a train between Tientsin and Pekin, craft on the river, women spinning, etc.[24] Some time after his return, Hatch gave an exhibition of his films to a fashionable audience.[25] But by this time the Boxer Uprising was hot news, and while Hatch's films showed nothing of the conflict, the hunger for any visual reference to the events in China meant that the films, as one trade journalist remarked, ‘will command more than ordinary attention at the present moment’.[26] Indeed, the films quickly found at least one distributor, Harrison and Co., who advertised them in the trade press in September under the heading, 'Genuine cinematograph films of China'. The following month they were being shown at several London music halls, and were said to be, ‘wonderful’ and ‘in great demand’.[27] Lantern slides from Hatch’s trip were also available at the time.[28]

Other companies distributed general shots of China. Shortly after the crisis, the Edison Catalogue was offering a scene in Legation Street, Shanghai, showing ‘a number of Europeans and Americans being driven down the thoroughfare in native rickshaws and wheelbarrows’.[29] The company also distributed a more contentious view: *Street Scene in Pekin*, described as: ‘Scene taken on the ground in front of the Legation, showing British police

dispersing a crowd of unruly Chinamen'.[30] It is not clear if this was a genuine, arranged or faked shot.

Troops departing for the war

While general shots of the site of the war were in demand, even more so were shots of the soldiers connected with the hostilities. One of the easiest kind of war-related films to shoot were troop departures, for these took place at a set time and place, and in the home country. In the case of the Boxer conflict, by the time the siege became news, many troops were already based in the Far East or were en route. But several units were dispatched from various of the allied countries [Fig. 1], offering opportunities for filming. In Britain the Wrench company advertised three films showing marines and sailors ('Bluejackets') boarding the transport 'Jelunga', and the ship then leaving Portsmouth bound for China.[31] Australia sent a naval expedition to the Boxer Uprising, and a film of the unit's departure was shot – and shown as late as 1902.[32]

In the USA, the Biograph company either shot afresh, or pulled from its vault, a number of films of the US forces who, from early July, were being sent to fight in China. These included a shot of the Ninth Infantry, which would be the first American regiment to be sent to China; the Fifteenth Infantry, who were filmed embarking a transport at New York; and a China-bound US Cavalry unit, armed anachronistically with swords.[33]

The most significant of all these departure films was shot in Germany, from where a large contingent of troops was sent, late in the day, partially in response to the killing of the German minister in China, Baron Klemens von Ketteler. The news of von Ketteler's murder by a Chinese soldier – in a Pekin street in broad daylight, on 20 June – shocked the hot-headed German Kaiser in particular, who sent his State Secretary Bülow a telegram demanding that 'Peking must be razed to the ground'.[34] In fact, as well as wanting to punish the Chinese, there were more cynical motives behind the Kaiser sending the force, for he hoped to gain territory and also a slice of the reparations which the foreign powers would extract from China.[35] By July contingents of a German expeditionary force were being despatched. [Fig. 2] Late that month, as one ship-load set off for China from the port of Bremerhaven, it was filmed by the pioneer film cameraman, Guido Seeber. The film survives under the title *Ausfahrt der sächsischen China-Krieger zu Schiff aus Bremerhaven* (Seeber, 1900). Running some four minutes, and with a rather jerky panning shot, it shows some of the thousands of troops gathered to depart on their mission to China.[36]

The film is of particular interest because the event itself (or possibly an embarkation some days earlier) has become so notorious. This is not so much because of the troop departure itself, as for the speech which the Kaiser delivered on the occasion, 27 July 1900. In words which were to haunt him, Wilhelm reminded his men of the ferocity of the Huns under Attila, implying that his modern warriors should emulate their ferocity; he exhorted his men to take no prisoners, and to build such a fearsome reputation that no Chinaman would ever again dare to even squint at a German.[37]

In the event, the German troops in China were to be every bit as violent as the Kaiser might have envisaged. While all the allies took part in punitive expeditions after the siege, some of which were little more than plunder raids, the Germans under overall allied commander Field Marshall Alfred von Waldersee undertook far more, generally employing more violent methods.[38] Incidentally, a film of Waldersee himself was also released, which its distributor, Warwick introduced as follows:

> 'Field Marshal Count von Waldersee courteously granted our request to cinematograph him as he left his hotel in Berlin previous to his departure for China to take command of the allied troops. A splendid portrait.'[39]

In addition to these kind of 'departure for war' views, as we have seen from the Sudan, 'heroic returns' of troops and commanders were also filmed to illustrate a conflict. However, for the Boxer conflict I have found only one such homecoming, this of German troops, shot by Messter's company as the soldiers arrived back in Berlin.[40] Celebrity shots, of leaders connected with the crisis, were also few in number compared with the many films of heroic generals and admirals which were associated with the other conflicts of this period (though there were films of the commanders in the field, shot by Ackerman, as we shall see). Perhaps this relative lack of celebrity commanders on screen was because the western public's horror at the enemy's actions – the Boxers' attacks on missionaries – outweighed the admiration for those leading what was in the public's eyes little more than an international police action to punish the perpetrators.

CAMERAMEN WITH THE ALLIES

In Jay Leyda's account of cinema in China, he mentions several cameramen who filmed the Boxer Uprising and its aftermath.[41] But my research has identified others, and I now believe that there were at least half a dozen operators who shot scenes in China during or just after the main events. Leyda briefly covers Rosenthal, Holmes/Depue and Ackerman, but I have found that in addition to these British and American operators, there were at least two Japanese cameramen, a Frenchman, and possibly another Briton. As we shall see (in a pattern which had developed in war filming by this stage) most of these men were tied to the foreign military forces.

In this section I will look at the work of all the cameramen apart from Ackerman and Rosenthal, who I deal with in the following sections. Because they arrived too late to film the siege, most cameramen covered the aftermath rather than the event itself. They filmed shots of the troops involved, and general views of the country, and also filmed war damage and covered expeditions which were being mounted to root out the remnants of the Boxers. Sadly, most of this war-related and other footage has been lost, and in the process a rich record of a colonial presence in several parts of China has disappeared.

George Scott

A certain George Scott is the most intriguing and most elusive of the camera operators. His name is mentioned in just one report in a trade journal that I have so far discovered, in the rare *Photographic Dealer* for August 1900. I will quote the report in full:

> 'Mr. Geo. Scott, of Geo. Scott and Co., 10 York Buildings, Charing Cross, sailed on the 19th of last month [June or July?] for China in order to obtain animated and ordinary photographs of the present crisis there. He will include America in his tour and will doubtless obtain several interesting pictures. The first consignment of films is expected in about five weeks.'[42]

It is not known if Scott ever made this trip, nor if so, whether he took either still or animated pictures there, though, given that his name does not recur in connection with cinema that year in any source I have seen (Scott is not mentioned in Barnes' volume) I suspect that this was merely a plan or aspiration which came to naught.

Tsunekichi and Komakichi

We can be more certain of the identities of a couple of other cameramen, these being two Japanese operators. The Yoshizawa Company sent Shibata Tsunekichi and Fukaya Komakichi to China during the Uprising to make reportage films. The pair filmed the Japanese army's Fifth Division as the soldiers and their horses embarked, and the cameramen then travelled out with this force on the 28 July. Apart from Scott, this would make the Japanese pair the first to film the war. In China itself, Tsunekichi and Komakichi accompanied the Japanese army, filming events surrounding the Uprising until the allied victory in Pekin in August.[43] Possibly Tsunekichi and/or Komakichi were still there a year later (or came back again), for Japanese cameramen were seen on 20 August 1901 filming a celebration of the allied victory in the imperial palace grounds in Pekin.[44]

Sadly, there seem to be no more details of their assignment, but it is worth stressing that this was a truly groundbreaking venture in the history of Japanese cinema. It was highly unusual for the Yoshizawa Company to make films at all, let alone mounting such an ambitious foreign filming venture as this, for most of the films that they handled hitherto had been mere imports. The film which resulted from this venture into China, *Grand Motion Picture on the Boxer Rebellion* (Hokushinjihen katsudo daishashin) was also a landmark in terms of genre. It is considered to be the first news film shot by a Japanese cameraman (it apparently reported the war in virtually the same style as newspapers of the time). The film remained a unique example of the news genre in Japanese cinema for some years, and none of the actuality films made between 1901 and 1902 exceeded *Grand Motion Picture* in scope. Furthermore, it was a major success with the public. First released on 18 October 1900 at the Kinki-kan venue in Tokyo, thereafter it was shown in many cities throughout Japan, and, along with other imported reportage films on the Uprising, was exhibited for several years afterwards.

Gaumont's 'Monsieur X.X.'

The cameramen at the Boxer Uprising were typically based with the forces of the country which commissioned them to film. This was true for the Japanese operators we have mentioned, who travelled with the Japanese Fifth Division, and, as we shall see, Ackerman was commissioned by the Germans and Americans, and mainly travelled with these forces.[45] It was also true for an unnamed Gaumont cameraman, who mainly seems to have filmed French military personnel (the French were one of the smaller contingents: Fig. 3). Some of his films, maybe most, were made in 1901. Incidentally, the work of this man has scarcely been discussed in previous film historical works.

In Gaumont's catalogue of 1903, a list of films related to the Uprising, with descriptions, appears under the heading, 'China Expedition. Monsieur X.X.'s films'.[46] The films are introduced with the following statement (my translation from the French):

> 'At the same time as the first French units embarked, one of our cameras was entrusted to a distinguished cameraman, ['opérateur distingué'] who was given the job of filming any interesting events which might happen during the campaign. All the following scenes were taken at Tientsin, just as they happened, without any manipulation.' [47]

The latter claim, incidentally, is untrue, for at least one of the films, a 'brawl between Chinese coolies', must surely have been arranged for the camera. The views are listed as Gaumont catalogue numbers 511 to 524, and a couple of them are in two parts, making a total of 16 views. Of these, ten or so are related to the war in some way: being either views of named military persons, or images of the destruction caused by the war, or just troops passing camera. For example, *Le Quai de France à Tien-Tsin* includes troops from Italy, Germany and America.[48] And another title, *Casseurs de Pierre Chinois*, though seemingly a basic shot of Chinese labourers, has a military significance because an officer inspects the work, and in the background are ruins of houses, 'destroyed during the bombardment'. What's more, the catalogue notes that these labourers were at work in the new French concession area, helping to carve out a new bit of the French empire in China.

The films were clearly taken from the French point of view, as they mainly feature French property and personnel, military and otherwise, including a couple of views depicting the French overall commander in theatre, General Voyron. Scenes also included a ceremony of giving a Légion d'Honneur medal to a Monsieur Du Chaylard in the gardens of the French consulate, Tientsin.[49] This French emphasis corroborates Gaumont's claim (above) that this filming was indeed set in train by themselves (entrusting a camera to 'Monsieur X.X.'), rather than being, say, a buy-in of another company's footage.

The final result had technical flaws, for the catalogue notes of the films, 'By the end of the long trip and the stay in China, several films had become flecked, but these small blemishes don't detract from their great documentary value'. This statement also contains, I surmise, a small clue as to the

movements of the cameraman, for the phrase, 'by the end of the long trip and the stay in China' implies that after the filming, his stay in China was concluded, and he may have brought the films back to France with him.[50]

Elsewhere in the Gaumont catalogue, another series of fourteen films taken in China are listed, several of which are about the region of Yun-Nan and the viceroy of the main town, Yun-Nan-Sen, including views of military movements or personnel in the region. This province, in the far south west of the country bordering French Indo-China (today's Vietnam), was in the French zone of influence in China.[51] France had significant economic interests in Yun-nan, and by this time, after the victory over the Boxers, was probably using this opportunity of Chinese weakness to bolster its interests and control in the region.[52] All the listed films are credited to another anonymous operator, a 'Monsieur X.', though, as the previous cameraman was referred to as 'Monsieur X.X.', I suspect that they might have been one and the same man. Like some of the previously discussed films which depicted French officials in Tientsin, three of this group of fourteen views included the official French representative in the Yun-Nan region. He is shown meeting the viceroy of Yun-nan and seeing off a General Tien and his men.

A third group of films, 'Au Pays des Mandarins', is listed in another Gaumont catalogue of about the same year. [Fig. 4] I believe that is by this same cameraman, for two main reasons. Firstly, several of these films were also shot in the town/region of Yun-nan; one film showing the French viceroy.[53] Secondly, this series is credited to a cameraman described as 'a distinguished amateur' ('amateur distingué') which is a similar phrase as that used ('opérateur distingué') for the Tientsin films. Incidentally this 'Mandarins' cameraman is described by Gaumont as 'one of our clients … occupying a high position in China…' One wonders if this man – who I suggest shot all these Gaumont films in China – could have been a member of France's diplomatic staff based in the country?[54]

In any case he was an industrious cameraman, as 'Au Pays des Mandarins' alone is a substantial body of work, consisting of some 50 views. The films mainly showed daily life and culture in China – 'lifting the veil on the real China', proclaimed the catalogue – and Gaumont organised the films into five thematic groups. One of the catalogue groups is 'Scènes Militaires et Officielles', and though not containing any scenes of the actual Boxer Uprising, this group includes views of manoeuvres by Chinese soldiers and views of officers, notably in Yun-nan. What makes it of especial military interest is that these Chinese soldiers were part of the allied forces – surprisingly, some Chinese did indeed fight against their own countrymen during and after the Boxer events.[55]

This Chinese allied force also features in a one-off news film which is listed in the catalogue immediately after the 'Mandarins' series, entitled *Retour à Yun-Nan-Sen du Général Licou*. The film showed the triumphal return of these Chinese troops after they had participated in an expedition against a rebel chief, Tchéou-Tama-Tou, and had captured the town of Linh-Gan-Fou. This would seem to have been one of the many punitive expeditions which the

foreign allies launched after the Boxer events, though one undertaken by their Chinese cohorts. Unusually the film is given a precise shooting date: 30 June 1903, so it was one of the later actions in the wake of the Uprising, and if shot by X.X. it was a later assignment.[56] Sadly, like so many films which recorded significant moments and personalities in colonial history, this film, and indeed the entire work of this Gaumont cameraman in China, seems to have completely disappeared.

Burton Holmes and Oscar Depue

Famed travel lecturer Burton Holmes visited China with his cameraman Oscar Depue in 1901. They travelled from Russia to Korea [Fig. 5], and then to China, visiting Tongku (on the coast, on the opposite side of the river from Taku) and Tientsin, and reached Pekin in August.[57]

An important reason for going to Pekin at this time was to see and photograph the city in the aftermath of the Boxer Uprising, for this was a year after the famous siege of the foreign legations had ended, and military action by allied international forces was still ongoing. Depue related:

> 'From Seoul we went to Peking [sic] where the Boxer Rebellion had just been subdued. We saw troops of all the allies that took part in the siege – they were still there and in other parts of China. It was an opportune time for our visit because we were allowed, through the aid of our own troops, to see and film things that might not have been available to us otherwise. For instance, a company of American troops from Indiana guarded the north half of the Emperor's Palace in the Forbidden City. Japanese troops were stationed at the south half.'[58]

Holmes later presented two lectures based on this tour of China, 'The Edge of China' and 'Peking', and in the published versions gives an account of their China trip. He makes much reference to the previous year's Boxer conflict, and it also found some reflection in what was filmed, in that, even though some of the films were scenes of daily life, such as street scenes and vendors, they might contain some visual reference to the war: thus, their film showing crowds at Pekin's city gate, 'Chien-men', was war-related in that the gate had been wrecked during the Uprising. Disappointingly, Holmes' account contains frustratingly little about their filming activities, though the pages are illustrated with a few sections of the films – several strips of frames being reproduced.[59] [Fig. 7] As Depue mentioned, they visited the Forbidden City, and the section of Holmes' published lectures on this inner sanctum is the most impressive photographically in his account of the China visit.[60]

JOSEPH ROSENTHAL: A MORE INDEPENDENT VIEW

Joseph Rosenthal was one of the first cameramen to film in China, only beaten to the conflict zone by the Japanese pair.[61] Even though he was early on the scene, I leave discussing his work to this point because I feel he embodies a rather different filmmaking ethos than the other Boxer Uprising cameramen, in that he was not so firmly attached to (and certainly not

embedded with) the foreign military forces, and was generally more independent.

Rosenthal had returned to London in June 1900 after having filmed the war in South Africa.[62] By this time the Boxer Uprising was already in the headlines, and Rosenthal departed at the beginning of August to cover the conflict for the Warwick Trading Company. Film historians have hitherto not recorded that Rosenthal may have worked with a colleague from Warwick, for the company reported in early August that Rosenthal:

> '… is now on his way to China, where he will join our other photographer, Mr Seymour, who left India for China on June 22d last. These two gentlemen will form our War Staff in China, and we hope to receive the first consignment of Genuine Chinese War Film Negatives [in] the latter part of September.'[63]

Also at the start of August an unnamed daily newspaper was quoted as saying that 'two well-known photographers' were on their way to 'biograph' the conflict in China, which probably referred to Rosenthal and Seymour.[64] There is no further reference to the mysterious Seymour (who is not listed in any history of early cinema), though Warwick did later use the plural in referring to 'our photographers' who had shot the company's views in China, so that might suggest that both men had indeed been filming together.[65]

Chinese views

Though Rosenthal may have arrived before most of the other cameramen and photographers, by the time he was at the scene most of the action of the main conflict was over. But he had to film something to satisfy the audiences back home, and so Rosenthal set about recording general scenes in China, street views and the like, capturing what military activity he could, filming initially in Shanghai, Tientsin, and Taku. Then at the end of October he went on to Pekin, and also at some point filmed in Hong Kong, Canton and Port Arthur.[66] He was back in Shanghai at the end of November.[67]

Few personal details of his trip survive, though his friend Will Day recorded that his pharmaceutical training (before he was a cameraman) had come in handy, for '… on one occasion owing to his knowledge of Medical matters, [Rosenthal] was sent down on a sailing junk with two American soldiers dying from dysentry [sic]…'[68] Incidentally, while Rosenthal's sojourn in China overlapped with that of Ackerman (as we shall see), there is no record of their ever having met.

The first batch of Rosenthal's films was advertised by the Warwick Trading Company in early November.[69] Altogether some forty China films shot by Rosenthal were released, the largest number of which were made in Shanghai, and others were shot in Tientsin and Pekin.[70] Rosenthal was credited by name for some of these, an indication of his high status within Warwick, and the films' uniqueness and his courage were trumpeted by the company:

> ‘Genuine Chinese films… The following series are the only animated pictures taken in China since the trouble began, and were secured at great expense and much risk to our photographers.’[71]

As far as is known, only one of these views survives, *Nankin Road, Shanghai*, which is described in the Warwick catalogue as follows.

> ‘This is an excellent street scene, owing to the varied character of the vehicles, and the cosmopolitan character of the pedestrians. Here are shown rickshaws, hansoms, a Chinese fourwheeler with a native driver and his pigtail, a European lady on a bicycle, sedan chairs, a detachment of Sikhs, Palanquins and German officers.’[72]

The detachment of Sikhs and the German officers mentioned are significant, for at the time street scenes like this might be more saleable if they showed any military personnel, or other reminder of the war. Such ‘reminders’ would include indications of the destructive effects of the conflict, and there was quite a lot of this to see and be filmed: indeed, Rosenthal recalled of his visit to China, ‘I saw the whole place smashed up’.[73] An example of one of his films depicting such war damage is *The Streets and Ruins of Teintsin* [sic] [5896a]. Other films by Rosenthal with a military content included: *The Sikhs' Camp at Shanghai* [5875b], *Foreign Warships Off the Bund at Shanghai* [5889b], *American Transport Entering Pekin* [5921a], and *H.M.S. "Terrible" and Other Battleships in Chinese Waters* [6002b].

He made one especially significant military-related film, when on 17 October he filmed the entry into Pekin [Fig. 6] by the new allied commander, Count Von Waldersee (who’d arrived in China, at Taku, three weeks earlier, on 25 September).[74] The Warwick catalogue gives a vivid description:

> ‘This view was photographed outside the inner wall enclosing the Sacred City, Pekin, showing the gateway piercing the wall, topped by imposing looking guard houses and forts. The road leading to the gate is flanked by long lines of troops presenting arms as Count Von Waldersee and staff pass through the gate. The progress of the Field Marshal can easily be followed by watching the huge German flag which is seen fluttering in the breeze, and borne along by the mounted escort. The Diplomatic quarter of Pekin, where a thousand foreigners were besieged, is close to this scene. An imposing film of an historic event.’

Rosenthal shot a few such war-related scenes, but the military subject matter in his films is limited. I estimate that little more than a third of his China films comprise military-related material, even though there were still a lot of allied troops around, and Rosenthal could presumably have filmed more of them had he wished. So one feels that he might consciously have decided to stress the Chinese rather than the foreign aspects of what he saw in China. Many of his films are travelogue-type views, with no bearing on the war at all. For example, *Four Chinese Belles Smoking* [5929a] depicted four Chinese women ‘seated at the edge of the woods, smoking cigarettes’, while *Get Your Hair Cut*

in China [5931] showed a Chinese barber at work, and in addition there were several views of streets and everyday life, such as *Chinese Market and Canal at Shanghai* or *Chinatown Bazaar, Hong Kong* or *Chinese Cotton Weavers at Work*.[75]

Although unrelated to the war, such general scenes could still be difficult and sometimes hazardous to shoot. Many Chinese people simply didn't want to be filmed, especially one would imagine by a foreigner when their country had just been defeated by foreign powers. The photographer James Ricalton had had a similar problem while taking stereographs some months earlier, and was obliged to travel with armed guards to fight off the hostile crowds which gathered while he was photographing. [76] Rosenthal too had to have a police escort to protect him, notably when he filmed in one of the rough parts of Shanghai. The catalogue notes:

> 'The police generally patrol this section in squads, not trusting themselves alone and the particular squad shown in this picture formed the body-guard of our photographer.'

The situation, as briefly described in the catalogue, sounds quite menacing, for as Rosenthal was filming a general view of the area, hundreds of people passed by, 'all eyeing the camera operated by the "foreign devil" with suspicion'. It was much the same in the occupied city of Tientsin, and Rosenthal took one view in which the Chinese passers by, 'show their dislike of the "Foreign Devil" who is photographing them by casting vicious looks in the direction of our artist'.[77] The fact that he went through this ordeal testifies to Rosenthal's commitment to capturing the real China on film. Filming allied troops might have been be a much easier and safer proposition, but it was not an option that he always chose.

Port Arthur

Another example of how Rosenthal would take risks to capture the images that he sought, comes in two films he made of Port Arthur (today called Lüshun). This strategic, fortified port had been fought over in the 1890s, and was to be the focal point of the Russo-Japanese war in 1904, when the Japanese laid siege and eventually wrested it from the Russians. (Rosenthal was to return to Port Arthur to film that war.) It lies across the Bo Hai part of the Yellow Sea from Tientsin, so physically it would have been easy enough for Rosenthal to reach by sea during this 1900 assignment, but photographing the port had been banned by the Russians. Nevertheless Rosenthal managed to do it, despite the risks, though it is not clear how: possibly he filmed from a passing ship on his way out of China, or more likely – for the catalogue implies that it was taken from near the docks – from a smaller vessel which he chartered for the job. The catalogue states of one of his two films of this important site:

> '*The Russian Stronghold in the Far East* [5892b]: Port Arthur, the Key to the Situation in North China, was for the first time successfully cinematographed by us, and that not at slight risk to our photographer, as the Russian authorities or passing steamer captains would not allow

> any one to level a camera and carry away a photograph of this port. We managed it just the same. Port Arthur was captured by the Japanese during the China-Japan War, but wrested from them by the Russians in 1898, since which time it has been solely occupied by the latter. This panoramic view includes the arsenal, store-houses, barracks and coast along this fortified settlement, while much shipping is eminent alongside the docks and landing stage.'[78]

Technique and style

Rosenthal was not only enterprising in what he filmed, but in how he did it technically. For this assignment in China he had brought with him Warwick's new panoramic tripod-head, or 'revolving tripod' as they called it. This device offered significant benefits for actuality filmmakers, for by panning, a cameraman could depict larger areas than in a static shot, and could also impart some extra movement to the image.[79] As John Barnes notes, the technique was 'used to good effect by Rosenthal in presenting these exotic views of the Far East'.[80] Rosenthal certainly seems to have become very partial to panning, and many of his Chinese views were these kind of shots. Indeed, on some pages of the catalogue listing his China films, most of the titles were described as 'circular panoramic view' or similar wording. The technique was used in, for example, *Circular Panorama of Hong Kong Harbour* and in *Curious Natives on Shanghai's Streets*, to show a wide area of the harbour or street.[81] Altogether, based on catalogue descriptions, I calculate that some fourteen of Rosenthal's forty-plus China films – i.e. about a third – consisted of panning shots, and several other of his films were taken from moving vessels/vehicles. Rosenthal had certainly become convinced of the value of a moving camera.

Rosenthal stayed in China until the end of the year, at which point he embarked for the Philippines where he would film aspects of the war in that country.[82] If one were to summarise his work in China, one might conclude that, despite his mission being ostensibly to record the successful quelling of the Boxers, he managed to film relatively few military subjects (even though thousands of troops were still there and military activity was ongoing). But one might also conclude, that of all the actuality cameramen filming in China at the time, Rosenthal produced the most positive view of the country. He was willing to face the anti-western crowds to get shots of ordinary people in the streets, or people going about their work, and he had a sufficiently positive view of the Chinese people to record simple human vignettes, such as the girls smoking. He used panning movements to show his audience more of the Asian locale. Furthermore, one might argue that this concentration on filming *general* scenes rather than concentrating on the current military activity, was not only 'politically correct', but economically intelligent, for Rosenthal was actually producing material which would have a longer shelf life for Warwick.[83] While the war would be old news by the following year, street scenes of China could still be offered for sale for a long time hence. Perhaps indeed, Rosenthal had received instructions from Warwick to bias his work toward taking general views, to help generate 'back catalogue' product which could be offered for many years to come?

Uniquely among the cameramen in China at the time of the Boxer events, Rosenthal seems to have maintained some distance from the allied military forces: he filmed, for example, in Port Arthur without getting permission, and while he did film some military events, foreign warships and the like, these scenes did not dominate his work. One feels with Rosenthal's work that he actually liked being in China and the east, and that he had no special interest in filming the foreign troops whose aim was to bring China to heel. In this respect he was utterly unlike other cameramen who were working so closely with their armed forces, such as 'Monsieur X.X.', and most notably C. Fred Ackerman. Ackerman is the subject of our next, and main, section.

EMBEDDED AGAIN: C. FRED ACKERMAN

As we have seen, several of the cameramen who filmed in China in the wake of the Boxer Uprising were working with the armed forces of their respective countries. But none was more closely associated with the military than Biograph company cameraman, C. Fred Ackerman. In the Philippines Ackerman had been based within, and had filmed, US army units, and it is difficult to see how any cameraman could be more closely tied to the military. Yet Ackerman managed it for his next assignment, for in China he was working for not one, but two western armies, those of the USA and Germany. His China assignment represents the acme of a war cameraman's cosy relations with the armed forces.

Filming the allied armed forces really was the central aim and main outcome of his time in China. A quick glance at the frame fragments surviving from his Chinese films shows film after film of troop reviews, soldiers simulating charges, war damaged buildings, and lines of infantry filing through Chinese streets. In terms of filming the military, therefore, the mission was a success. However, aesthetically the result was less impressive than his work in the Philippines, for his moving images in China are more staid and less varied in character (apart from in length – see Appendix on Ackerman). I will discuss this difference below.

One of the factors which make Ackerman worthy of study in detail is that so many sources survive for his work: more than for any other cameraman who covered these two wars in the east. Not only do we have Biograph company documentation and surviving film prints, but there is also information from official American military records, as well as some of his letters.[84] Using all these sources I have put together the following account of his work covering the war in China.

Working for the Kaiser

After his Philippines assignment for the American Biograph company, by May 1900 Ackerman returned to America, and was soon given the task of covering another foreign conflict.[85] It was reported in some sources that he was authorised in the first week of July to go to China by the US Government. They might have hoped for an immediate departure, but something delayed

matters, and in the event he didn't depart until nearly two months later, for reasons I discuss below. [86]

Historians have assumed until recently that Ackerman went to film in China at the behest of the American Biograph company, but I have found information which suggests that he was working equally for the Germans. That there was direct official German involvement in the enterprise at the highest level is confirmed by the manager of the Deutsche Mutoskop- und Biograph-Gesellschaft (the German Biograph company, hereafter DMBG) in a letter to the British branch of the company.[87] The DMBG claimed that Emperor Wilhelm himself, the Kaiser, had been in touch with them to encourage the filming of the war in China, and that as a result they had 'obtained the Emperor's co-operation in sending out one of their representatives to China'.[88] The DMBG noted that this operator would be 'directly attached' to the military in a 'semi-official' capacity – which sounds very much like the embedded arrangement that Ackerman had experienced in the Philippines with US forces. This arrangement would mean, according to DMBG, that the army 'would undertake the transport of our apparatus, &c., the only expenses being the personal expenditure of our representative and the films'.

Was this operator to be Ackerman, or was it another man?[89] All the evidence points to Ackerman. One source stated that 'Mr. Ackerman will be the personal representative of Emperor William of Germany, and will also be in China under the authority of the English, French, and United States war departments'.[90] Another author noted that thanks to Biograph's influence with Emperor William, Ackerman was to be 'directly under the protecting aegis of Count von Waldersee' – meaning Field Marshall Alfred von Waldersee, the supreme commander of the international forces in China.[91] Ackerman's letters home from the front, which I describe below, confirm that he was in direct contact in the field with German as well as American military commanders.

Ackerman was therefore working for companies and governments of two nations, and I surmise that the delay in his departure from July to early September may have been due to negotiations between the different national branches of Biograph and with the governments (possibly to agree on Ackerman as a joint representative).[92] If Ackerman had actually left in early July, as per the original plan – and which is when the American force commanded by Gen. Ada R. Chaffee departed for their voyage to Taku, China – he would have been on hand as the main assaults on the besieged Legations took place. As it was he only finally departed on 1 September, after the Allied entry to Pekin and relief of the Legations.

However this delay might not have bothered his German sponsors greatly, for von Waldersee (the new overall head of the allied force) and his German troops only disembarked in China on 25 September, this being soon after the delayed Ackerman must have arrived. Perhaps this tells us that the German Biograph company had a significant influence on Ackerman's itinerary, for probably their priority was for him to record von Waldersee's role. Certainly, during Ackerman's stay in China, German troops featured in a good number of his films – in fact they appear in at least ten titles, of which Waldersee

himself featured in half a dozen.[93] The German press got to hear of this project to film the quelling of the Uprising, and an amusing multi-image cartoon appeared in a popular satirical journal, showing a cameraman (i.e. Ackerman) trying to film von Waldersee amid exploding artillery shells, and then stage-managing the troops for his camera as if he were making an epic feature film.[94] [Fig. 13]

Significantly, a German publication provides one of the best sources of information for Ackerman's work in the east: the house organ of a theatre in Hamburg where the DMBG screened Biograph films. This reproduced extracts of Ackerman's letters written to Biograph from China.[95] These were presumably addressed to the American branch and probably in English originally (though I have yet to find them reproduced anywhere in English). The introduction to the extracts describes Ackerman, albeit unnamed, as 'the chief cameraman of the Deutschen Mutoskop- und Biograph Gesellschaft', who has been based in China 'with the high command of the German East Asian expedition-Corps'. The phrase 'with the high command' is a slight exaggeration, as he wasn't actually based with von Waldersee, but the letters do confirm that Ackerman enjoyed cordial relations with the supreme commander (as we shall see).

Authorised by the US President

As well as the official German involvement, the American government's approval of Biograph's filming plans is confirmed in correspondence which I have discovered in the US National Archives. But this happened at a late stage, not the early July dates which were mentioned in some press reports. On 16 August, Biograph's vice president, Harry Marvin, wrote to the Secretary of War, Elihu Root, to seek permission for the enterprise. [Fig. 8] He requested that Ackerman be authorised to travel on a transport ship leaving San Francisco on or about 1 September, 'in order that he may obtain for us Biograph pictures of military Operations in China'. The *quid pro quo* was the same as for Biograph's arrangement to film the Philippine campaign, that is:

> 'In consideration for this service we propose to furnish the War Department with a series of interesting Mutoscope reels, showing scenes illustrating the campaign, for exhibition in the Mutoscope now in the War Department.'[96]

It seems that this application went all the way to the top for authorisation, to President McKinley himself. This top level authorisation had apparently not been sought for Ackerman's filming in the Philippines, and this difference perhaps reflects the sensitive international implications and alliances involved in the Boxer Uprising. The President must have approved, for a week later his assistant wrote to the Adjutant General, H.C. Corbin, asking him 'to have the permit granted at the very earliest moment'.[97] The very same day Corbin followed the President's directive and wrote a memorandum to the Quartermaster General, directing that transportation be provided for Ackerman from San Francisco to China, 'with reasonable allowance of baggage', to allow him to film the US army in the field.[98] As in the Philippines, Ackerman was also working for *Leslie's Weekly*, and, to introduce its

correspondent to readers, the magazine published an article about him in September, noting that,

> 'Mr. Ackerman's chief business in life is studying warfare for the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, of New York, that certain incidents of the campaigns may be handed down to posterity in living representations.'

The article added that,

> 'He will also be attached to the staff of *Leslie's Weekly* in China, and will contribute letters illustrated by photographs…. Mr. Ackerman will go to the front immediately upon his arrival in China, and will remain there until the campaign ends.'[99]

An accompanying photograph showed the correspondent on the deck of the departing ship, looking dapper in a white suit. [Fig. 9] He was still only twenty-six years old. Despite the German connection, and his continuing contacts with von Waldersee, Ackerman seems to have worked more closely with American units than German. Indeed, for much of his time in China, he was 'embedded' with the Sixth Cavalry under Lieut.-Col. Theo. J. Wint.[100]

Assuming Ackerman left San Francisco on 1 September 1900, he could have arrived in China about three weeks later. About the beginning of October there were over a dozen press men hanging around von Waldersee's headquarters, including, the commander said, 'some with kinematographs' – presumably meaning Ackerman, and perhaps other cameramen.[101] Thanks to his translated letters in the Hamburg periodical, I have managed to trace Ackerman's itinerary, which I detail below. To sum this up briefly: he seems initially to have been based in Tientsin, in early October. Then he went with the international force to Pekin, which he reached by 22 October. Ackerman was back in Tientsin by 7 November, and after that he filmed in Shanghai.

A difficult assignment

It soon becomes clear from his letters that this was not an easy assignment in terms of living and working conditions. The town of Tientsin where Ackerman made his first base, had been the site of a battle a few months earlier, and much of the town was still scarcely habitable. In a letter dated 12 October Ackerman noted his hardships:

> 'Ever since I've been in China, with the exception of one night, I haven't taken off my clothes; I don't have a bed, and we sleep on the ground in tents. The days are marvellously beautiful, the nights bitterly cold.'[102]

As in the Philippines, Ackerman was struggling with the large Biograph camera and associated equipment, and noted that, 'It is very difficult for me to find ways to transport my photographic apparatus, and I have to deal with many frustrations.' However, he still managed to film a fair number of scenes in the town, though a formidable problem remained, *viz* how then to get the exposed film out of China and safely back to Biograph's headquarters. On 9

October Ackerman wrote of his concerns:

> 'I don't know what problems I'll have in despatching my films back: by 10 December the river will freeze over, and then there's no point even thinking that they will leave China before March. So without fail I must try to despatch the films earlier, otherwise they will have to winter here.'

But even if transport became available, the negatives were vulnerable, especially as he was presumably not developing them on site, so they must not be opened or exposed to light in transit back to Biograph's offices. A few days later (16 October) he wrote to his colleagues at the company about these concerns:

> 'What bothers me most here are the wretched prospects for despatch: I am worried about entrusting my fragile films to the local forms of transport. Probably I will have to send them by a special messenger to Shanghai or Nagasaki, or will carry them myself when I depart from Pekin, since the films would certainly be lost if I handed them over to a local company. I will try to do my best in this matter.'

He must have found a solution, for the Tientsin films and his films shot in other locations were indeed received by Biograph, between mid January and early February 1901 (then processed and released); though perhaps he had ended up taking them back to the US himself.

Filming in war-torn Tientsin

Ackerman's Tientsin films, shot either at this point or after the Pekin trip, gave a good account of the military situation in the town. Some views showed the effect of the earlier bombardment, such as *Ruins of Tien-Tsin*. This was shot from the river, as were other films: a view entitled simply *Tien-Tsin* was taken from this point of view, from a launch near the French bridge; the reason for filming this being, as the catalogue stated, 'Very severe fighting occurred at this point'. *Street Scene Taku Road* (in three takes), gave a general view of the town under military occupation.

Ackerman also managed to record German, British, and Japanese troops who were stationed in Tientsin. Two films show German soldiers being presented with battle flags from Emperor Wilhelm, and several surviving films show formal reviews of troops, some of them before Von Waldersee, such as *Von Waldersee Reviewing Cossacks* [1734]. This film is doubly interesting in that Ackerman himself appears in the shot, in the foreground, as if determined to show himself in the same frame as the supreme commander.

On the same area of ground, Ackerman set up some rather more action-filled scenes, and three views showed his hosts the Sixth Cavalry: skirmishing, in a 'wild charge', and then Colonel Wint with the unit's colours [1775, 1776, 1777]. Some of these kind of films were described in Biograph's *Picture catalogue* as if they were scenes of real action, such as *Bombay Cavalry* [1753]: this unit was said to be depicted, 'in their dashing advance with the allied forces upon Pekin', but in all probability this scene too was filmed on the parade ground.[103]

Ackerman naturally wanted to get nearer to where actual military action was taking place, and so was keeping abreast of likely developments with the commanders. An operation commanded by British Brig-Gen. Lorne Campbell seemed to be in the offing, and Ackerman noted on the 9 October that, 'I hear from the staff of General Campbell the news that a fight with the Boxers is in prospect, and I hope I will have the opportunity to make a record.' But Ackerman adds that the General's staff wouldn't discuss where they thought such an engagement would take place. In fact within a few days General Campbell co-commanded a punitive expedition to capture a former Boxer stronghold, Paoting-fu, though Ackerman didn't go along.[104] He did, however, film the General with his British Royal Light Artillery as they departed, resulting in a view which the Biograph catalogue described as, 'An unusually fine picture photographically'.[105] Possibly the reason that Ackerman didn't go with Campbell was that a general advance on Pekin was about to take place, and, rather than go with Campbell's minor mission, he chose rather to go with the main group – sensibly so, as he had not yet been to the capital.

Ackerman expected to be able to take some shots during the planned journey to Pekin, noting in a letter on 12 October that, 'If nothing happens to the camera I'll have an opportunity for some great filming.' He had some reason for hope, for by this time his relationship with the German military was becoming closer, and he added on the same day: 'Count Waldersee shows great interest in the records I propose to take, and I am assured of special support and protection in Pekin'. A few days later (16 October) he was even more full of anticipation that his patron would help him:

> 'I have high expectations of my stay in Pekin, because each day my relationship with Count Waldersee becomes a little warmer, and doubtless I will be the first photographer to enter within the walls of the "Forbidden City", because Count Waldersee will help endorse my presence there.'

But as he wrote these words, the weather was taking a turn for the worse, and Ackerman learned that he would probably not be able to film during the trip to Pekin, which was going to be difficult and something of a forced march.[106]

To Pekin

The journey proved arduous indeed. Departing about 19 October, Ackerman travelled on horseback with Colonel Wint's cavalry, and the route from Tientsin took four days, the column marching up to 30 miles a day.[107] During the journey the weather was bad, with pouring rain, which soon turned to hail and finally snow, and, as Ackerman wrote, 'our clothing literally froze to our bodies'. He added, 'I felt so bad after this effort that I could hardly keep myself in the saddle'. Arriving exhausted in Pekin he immediately went to sleep in the first place he found, even though this meant lying on the cold ground (though he adds that even the commanders were no better off in this respect than he). 'Finally in Pekin!' he exclaimed on 23 October, 'I am glad that the journey is behind me; four solid days on horseback is really no pleasure.'

But despite his exhaustion, Ackerman kept thinking of the job in hand, noting that, '…on the evening of our arrival in Pekin I was informed by various commanders of the regiments about some expected engagements, and I hope that I'll be in luck, and can film some of these'.[108] This, along with the earlier reference to his discussion with Campbell, shows that Ackerman was doing here just what he had done in the Philippines: talking with commanders about forthcoming military action, and planning if and how he could film the expected events. He was certainly a proactive and industrious filmmaker. A few days later (29 October) he wrote to Biograph that he had, '…worked efficiently here in the first days, and hope the results will be satisfying'.

Ackerman stayed in Pekin for ten days or so (before returning to Tientsin) and ended up filming quite a variety of scenes in the capital. He filmed some general views: a market in the Japanese quarter, and an American army transport mule train. Two shots were taken in front of the ruined legations: *The Evacuation of Pekin* [1788] depicted the Fourteenth Infantry (which had led the assault on Pekin) marching past, Col. Doggett commanding, while *General Chaffee in Pekin* [1787], with the same framing, showed the overall American commander with other VIPs at the head of the Sixth Cavalry. Another famous landmark, the Gate of the Temple of Agriculture was filmed with the Ninth Infantry marching through.[109]

As in Tientsin, several of the films were taken at a parade ground, including Russian Cossacks and Bengal Lancers (British colonial troops). Von Waldersee was seen in some of these films, which suggests that Ackerman was still enjoying good relations with the supreme commander. And, as he had hoped, Ackerman did indeed manage to film in the Forbidden City, perhaps with von Waldersee's say-so, though other cameramen and photographers also shot in the City, so it's not clear if Ackerman was given any special treatment. The two views which he shot there are however, notable technically, for both were described in the catalogue as 'panoramic views', which shows that he was persevering with the panning technique that he had executed quite competently in the Philippines (and as we have noted in the previous section, Rosenthal was also doing pan shots in China at this time). Two groups of films shot by Ackerman in Pekin demand special discussion, so we shall look at these separately.

Li Hung Chang

The noted Chinese statesman Li Hung Chang was in Pekin at this time, and Ackerman managed to arrange a meeting, and took two films of him in his 'yamen' (premises of a public official). Ackerman's filming with Li was likely to be popular with his masters at Biograph, as the company made something of a speciality of 'celebrity' films.[110] It was also a prescient move, for this turned out to be the year of the statesman's death. Ackerman records in his letters that the filming took place on the morning of the 29 October, and he grandiloquently describes his own actions in arranging to make these valuable films as 'yet another triumph'.[111] While one must credit his initiative in arranging the scenes, this boastfulness is excessive, and is also evident in the films themselves, for Ackerman appears in both – as he had done with von Waldersee at one of the troop reviews – in a manner which suggests more

than a little desire to make a name for himself: the correspondent who met the statesman, as it were.[112]

But if Ackerman was self-promoting, so was the company for which he worked: Biograph itself probably proposed the action which one sees performed in one of the films, as it is effectively a promotion for the company's mutoscope viewers. The film survives as *Li Hung Chang and Suite: Presentation of Parlor Mutoscope*: The single shot shows Li (very tall) and his mandarin colleagues walking toward the table-top mutoscope machine which has been placed frame left. He shakes hands with Ackerman, who ushers him further forward and has a Chinese colleague bring the mutoscope nearer. The film ends as Li looks at the mutoscope with interest.[113] Frames of these films were later published in magazines. [Fig. 10 and 11] Ackerman later related this episode of his visit to Li Hung Chang and the mutoscope business in some detail:

> 'We had gathered in the courtyard of his yamen when Li Hung Chang was announced. The curtains of his rooms were rolled, and, with faltering steps and supported by two attendants, he came out into the sun. The little instrument was on a red lacquer table of quaint and exquisite workmanship, and he eyed it curiously. When asked to peer into the lenses he did not hesitate.
> One of his attendants turned the handle of the machine, and he watched intently. For a few seconds not a muscle of his face stirred. Then he looked up and spoke quickly to his interpreter.
> "They walk ! They walk!" he exclaimed. The smile that overspread his face and the handshake he gave me indicated his appreciation plainer than words. If he had been a child he could not have been more pleased.
> After spending fifteen minutes with his new toy – and he would not be disturbed – he took me to the red room and invited me to sit down. I told him how well he was regarded by the people of America, and the world for that matter, and he arose and again shook my hand.'[114]

In his letter to Biograph, written directly after the filming, Ackerman adds a further detail or two about the reaction to his gift:

> 'You should have seen the radiant smile and the tears coursing down the cheeks of the statesman when the apparatus was presented. He behaved like a child given a new toy. With him were his mandarins who set up the apparatus, and after Li had seen it, several of them tried to get a view of the miraculous device. It was extremely amusing.' (29 October)

Ackerman doesn't mention it, but the reel of moving pictures on this mutoscope was a shot of Li himself, filmed by Biograph some years earlier as he viewed Grant's tomb in New York during an official visit to the United States. Ackerman's film was therefore an extraordinary example of media self-reference. It was later described as the 'first moving picture exhibition in

China', which it was not, though it was probably the first time ever that anyone was filmed as they watched a film.[115]

One curious addition to this story is that Li had apparently already received a mutoscope viewer from Biograph. In early October 1896 it was reported that a few weeks after he was filmed, the films were exhibited to him in person, including a scene of he and his retinue passing along Broadway, and, the article adds: 'His celestial highness was greatly pleased with the reproduction of his procession and he was doubly delighted when Mr. Marvin presented him with one of the instruments.' (i.e. a mutoscope viewer).[116] So the mutoscope viewer that Ackerman gave him in 1900 in China was the second one that Li had received from the company. (Which suggests that AMB's publicity system was hard at work).

As I mentioned earlier, Ackerman recorded two films of Li Hung Chang on this occasion. The other, which I haven't seen, *Li Hung Chang, High Priest and Mandarins*, shows a prior moment, as Li with his mandarins meets Ackerman, and walks across the courtyard.[117] In both films the frame is static, so, because Ackerman was himself appearing in these scenes, he would have framed up and turned on the camera, and then himself ensured all action was within the camera's field.

Assault on the South Gate and other arranged views

As we have seen in the Philippine War chapter, rather than merely filming action as it happened, Ackerman quite often artificially 'arranged' scenes of actions with troops, in order to make his films more lively and to depict more specific incidents. Here in China he did the same, though to a lesser extent, in reconstructing military actions which had taken place earlier. He had arrived in Pekin in October, only a couple of months after the siege of the Legations was lifted, and so a number of the international forces which had seen action were still in China and available to 'perform'.

The Japanese made up the largest contingent of forces, and Ackerman made one arranged/reconstructed film with these troops, *Japanese Infantry* [1750]. This was described in the Biograph catalogue as, 'Japanese Infantry in an assault upon a Chinese mud wall fortification during the siege of Pekin', employing the familiar ambiguity of language to imply that the picture depicted the actual event, rather than being merely a reconstruction.

Ackerman made several reconstructed films with American troops, including three films with a unit of the Fifth US Artillery, Light Battery "F" [1736, 1737, 1738]. This unit had taken part in the celebrated American assault on the South Gate of Pekin, which Ackerman would also reconstruct (see below). In the process its leader, a Captain Reilly had been killed, and his heroic death bestowed instant celebrity status on his unit, all the more reason for Ackerman to record them in action. His films showed the battery with its carriage-mounted gun, limbering, charging and firing – apparently acting out their original actions during the assault on Pekin. One film is entitled, *Reilly's Battery, Bombardment of Pekin* and another, *Charge of Reilly's Battery.* The latter is further described as 'Furious charge of Capt. Reilly's Light Battery "F",

5th Artillery, to take position for the bombardment of the gates of the "Imperial City" of Pekin'. All this sets up an expectation that these films will show authentic battle action, or at least a good imitation of it.

However, the films themselves offer little in the way of authenticity, in that the shots were not filmed near any recognisable landmarks in Pekin, most notably not at the gate which had been the principal target of this attack. Instead, they were filmed on an area of rather featureless open ground, apparently the same area where Ackerman filmed the previously mentioned reviews of troops, possibly nowhere near the Pekin walls. What's more, the actions filmed were generic procedures for an artillery unit, with nothing in the scenes themselves to give a strong connection with the Pekin assault, apart from that it is the original troops who were photographed. These three films therefore demonstrate the use of misleading titles and catalogue descriptions in fixing actuality films as authentic in some way. What is not clear is if buyers at the time would have felt let down, and perhaps the mere presence of the original unit in action in the shot would have offered sufficient 'authenticity', even though they were just going through exercises. However, Ackerman made up to some extent for this deficiency in a couple of other films that he made in Pekin.

Ackerman's most effective reconstructions were two views depicting the American Sixth Cavalry's action against the South Gate of Pekin. Unlike the previously mentioned films, these were shot at the actual location: 'taken by our operator on the spot', as the catalogue put it.[118] One of these with the unpromising title, *Squad of Men Clearing Road, South Gate Pekin* [1780] showed a group of soldiers charging round the outside of the walls of the gate in preparation for an attack. The other film, *Assault on the South Gate of Pekin* [1763], was taken from the same angle and with the same framing, and showed the elaborate attack on the gate in progress. [Fig. 12]

With this film, Ackerman managed to create and record an extraordinary piece of military choreography. The all-too-brief shot shows the walls of Pekin in the mid-distance. A squad of US troops rushes into the foreground, lies down and takes aim (firing to clear the wall of defenders, states the catalogue). Straight afterwards two groups of mounted troops gallop into shot: one in mid-distance; and the other further away, racing along the base of the wall and around the back of it – and in through the gate, according to the catalogue. After this strong opening, the film ends indecisively, as a third mounted group comes into mid distance where the previous group was, but don't seem to know where to go.

The entire film is, as I mentioned, very set-up/choreographed, and this reconstructed action would have taken considerable planning and time, and of course, commitment of troops. The catalogue states that the commander was Colonel Wint of the Sixth Cavalry, with whom Ackerman had, of course, been based earlier, and with whom he had travelled from Tientsin, and presumably it was through Wint's cooperation that these couple of films were made.[119]

The copy of *Assault on the South Gate* which survives is very short and runs very fast, though this is just what remains, and the original film was probably somewhat longer.[120] It is a shame that it survives in such a poor condition, for, as the catalogue states – for once without exaggeration – this is 'an historical scene of great interest'. The press also picked it out for particular comment, and a frame from the film was reproduced in 1901 in a magazine article entitled, 'Biograph Operators: Some of the Risks They Run'. With typical press exaggeration, the author suggested that Ackerman had been in danger while shooting the scene:

> 'The photograph we reproduce shows the attack of the Allied Forces on Pekin; and during the time this picture was being taken Mr. Ackerman was under heavy fire, both from rifles and bows, the Chinese evidently being under the impression that the mutograph [sic] camera was some sort of machine-gun.'[121]

This claim that the film was taken while the Chinese were still defending the city, is of course untrue, though one journalist in Boston also supposed that Ackerman's China films were taken during the actual hostilities, and that 'Mr. Ackerman narrowly escaped serious injury while securing them'. The writer was enthusiastic in his praise for the views, and thought that the South Gate film depicted the genuine assault:

> 'Some of the pictures are thrilling enough to arouse the patriotism of the most apathetic soul. This may be said especially of the "Sixth United States Cavalry Assaulting the South Gate of Pekin." It was but a short time after the latter picture was taken by Mr. Ackerman that Capt. Riley lost his life.' [122]

Of course this was totally false, for as I have mentioned, Captain Reilly (correct spelling) had been killed during the actual assault in August, weeks before Ackerman arrived in China.[123] Where had these writers gleaned the idea of the courageous cameraman filming while under fire? Ackerman himself co-presented this Boston screening, so one suspects that it was he who made the claim that the film was shot during the real attack, or at least he might have left the issue vague. Such behaviour would not have been out of character, for Ackerman was nothing if not boastful, sometimes to the point of mendacity.

Bringing back 'successful views'

The concluding sentences of Ackerman's letters from China illustrate this boastful side to his personality. Having arrived back in Tientsin after his filming expedition to Pekin, he wrote back to Biograph:

> 'I have returned, after managing to secure in Pekin some outstanding photographs, and I can rightly state that my work will be a splendid success. Over the next four to five months there is still the prospect of many interesting photograph records, and I can only repeat that we will not have cause to regret this expedition. The successful views which I have taken cannot be valued in money – they are priceless because

> they are one of a kind. We won't have to add highly interesting descriptions, for the subjects alone record the greatest moments of this memorable expedition…'[124]

There is much exaggeration here from Ackerman, and actually his period in China had been less productive and successful than his Philippines mission. Another interesting point in this extract is his phrase, 'For the next four to five months many interesting photographs are still in prospect'. This suggests that he was planning to stay on for a long time yet, though I believe that he did not in fact do so. After filming in Tientsin and Pekin, Ackerman would seem to have travelled to Shanghai, where he shot some general views of the city and filmed British colonial forces in review (Rajputs, Sikhs, Bengal Lancers, and Ghorkhas).[125] My hunch is that he departed China a while after this, returning to the USA by early the following year, bringing his exposed films back with him (the films were received from mid January 1901, according to Biograph's register). However, this is speculation, and I have no firm evidence of his return date, though he was certainly back by early March, for in that month he co-presented an illustrated lecture in the USA.

This lecture was entitled 'The War in China', and his fellow lecturer was a war correspondent he had known during the campaign, Thomas Franklin Millard (1868-1942). Millard was later to become recognised as one of America's leading authorities on, and advocates for, China, and he wrote about the Boxer troubles.[126] The two men gave the show in Boston, and a newspaper writer in the city praised the films, noting that, 'The moving pictures shown by C. Fred Ackerman, who tented with Mr. Millard in China, serve to double the interest in the lecture'. Other pictures which were shown included some I have mentioned above:

> 'Li Hung Chang in his palace, a panorama of the Forbidden City, street scenes during the disturbances, Count von Waldersee and his staff, Minister Conger being escorted out of Pekin by the American troops, and others of the allied troops on the march.'[127]

The article added that 'Mr. Ackerman will show some interesting stereopticon pictures which he and Mr. Millard made while in China.' Perhaps these lantern images were made from the stills he had been taking for *Leslie's*? It has been suggested that Millard and Ackerman might have toured with this lecture, though this Boston engagement is the only one I have seen reported.

Ackerman's achievements

After Ackerman returned to the US from filming in China in early 1901, it seems that his work as a cameraman came to an end, and he simply disappeared from the filmmaking world.[128] Why this permanent eclipse: were his China films considered unsuccessful? Possibly; or equally likely is that the ending of his brief career as a cameraman might have been his own choice, for within a few years he was in New York City, working for two of the country's most prestigious newspapers, the *New York World* and *New York Herald.* His assignments in the Philippines and China would surely have helped propel this journalistic move upward, endowing him with more prestige

as a journalist than he ever had when working as a sports reporter in Syracuse.

In fact, the surprising thing is not so much that Ackerman managed to work for major newspapers after his return, as that he had secured the job as war cameraman in the first place, almost without training – though as discussed in an earlier chapter, this was almost certainly due to his contacts at Biograph. One has to say, though, that having taken on these far eastern jobs as camera operator – and though not living up to his own boastful claims – he did not do at all badly. Though in general his Philippine work is more impressive, fresher and less staid in character, in China too he managed to record a good selection of images relating to the conflict, in all shooting some sixty films in the country. These included such varied shots as: scenes of war damage; views of the Forbidden City and other famous sites; troops from the various national forces; major personalities in the shape of Li Hung Chang, von Waldersee, and other commanders; and reconstructions of earlier military engagements. (See Appendix for Ackerman filmography). Purely as a military record, this surpasses Rosenthal's more general coverage in the aftermath of the conflict.

The only factors preventing Ackerman from achieving more, I suspect, were that he arrived too late on the scene, and that he was constrained by his commitment to so many authorities. He was accountable to two governments, two branches of the Biograph company, and to *Leslie's Weekly*. I suggest that the greater freshness of his Philippine views, with their audacious use of reconstruction/staging, is probably due firstly, to the fact that unlike in China, the command structure in the Philippines was simple, consisting solely of Americans, allowing him to film his reconstructions with greater freedom. And secondly, the armed struggle in the Philippines was far from won, so the films reflect the excitement of an ongoing conflict, whereas in China, by the time Ackerman arrived it was largely a 'mopping-up' and reprisal operation.

CONCLUSION

I would suggest that there are two significant developments which emerge from the work of the cameramen who filmed this war. One stylistic, the other to do with relations with the military and official regulation.

Film style

In filming the Boxer Uprising, cameramen and producers were building on filmmaking experience from previous conflicts. They already knew that, if they could not film actual warfare, then shots of related events, or of personnel connected to the conflict, might still have a significant appeal. During the Boxer context a variation on these 'related' shots emerged strongly: shots of bombed buildings, the aftermath of battles, and the like, were taken by several cameramen. Such shots could be quite effective in conveying the ferocity of a war and the damage done to people and property. Rosenthal and Holmes, as well as the Gaumont cameraman, all filmed this kind of shot. In addition,

Rosenthal filmed more general shots of China which would not only serve to illustrate the war, but could have a longer appeal on the film market.

In terms of stylistic innovation in representing war on screen, one must give C. Fred Ackerman the chief recognition with regard to this conflict. While earlier filmmakers had only managed to film troops at parades and the like, Ackerman managed to do in China what he had pioneered in the Philippines: to film military actions in the field. He did this through – and this is probably his major contribution to war filming – audaciously and skilfully 'arranging' military actions and scenes in the war zone. His most significant example in China was *Assault on the South Gate* which I discussed above, with its elaborate choreography of American attacking forces. Some people would no doubt criticise this kind of 'arranging' in actualities as being artificial, as not recording real, unmediated events; but it has subsequently been practiced quite extensively in actuality films. Ackerman was a thoroughly 'interventionist' filmmaker, a 'filmic choreographer', not content with filming the world as it is, but wanting to make his documentary scenes better by arranging them to his own liking. In this he brought a new element to the war film and to the non-fiction film in general.

Cameramen and the military

But even more important than such stylistic development was the way relations were developing between the moving image and military authorities. This conflict saw an increasing bond between cameramen and the armed forces whom they filmed. The Japanese cameramen, from what we know, were utterly tied to their country's Fifth Division. Monsieur X.X. (possibly a French government man) unashamedly filmed the French armed forces as they tightened their grip on China after the Boxers' defeat. Burton Holmes and his cameraman were similarly in thrall to the military, for as Depue later recalled (quoted above), 'we were allowed, through the aid of our own troops, to see and film things that might not have been available to us otherwise'.

Only Rosenthal seems to have retained some independence, and maintained a certain distance between himself and the allied military forces in China. He restricted himself to shooting only a certain number of military parades and the like, and showed his autonomy by filming in Port Arthur apparently without getting permission. Much of his output was in the form of general scenes of China, in which he took a by-no-means unfriendly attitude to the Chinese people. In these respects Rosenthal was utterly different from the other principal cameraman of the war, Ackerman, who was more closely tied to the military forces than any of his fellows.

In the Philippines Ackerman had been a tool of the American government, effectively making films for the US War Department, and for this China assignment he was tied even more tightly to the military, for he was working for both the Americans and the Kaiser. It is hard to see how a cameraman could be more securely embedded with armed forces. Therefore, while one must give due credit to Ackerman for his innovative filming technique, the content of his films was less admirable, journalistically speaking. Ackerman was utterly shackled to the western armed forces in their colonial campaign of

subjugation in the east; he recorded events almost exclusively from one side, from the side of the opponents of Asian nationalism; his mission was basically to make imperialist propaganda, and this achievement is his main legacy.

In his defence, however, one might add that he was not alone in his propaganda-making. Other filmmakers, far from the front, had been producing a different genre of film about the Boxer Uprising, in the form of staged or faked films, which took a strongly pro-imperialist and anti-Boxer line. Exhibitors were screening these, along with the war-related actualities, to audiences throughout the world, thereby spreading an unfavourable image of the Chinese far and wide. All that is the subject of our next chapter.

Notes:

[1] I favour the term 'Uprising' rather than 'Rebellion', as the latter rather suggests rebelling against a legitimate national authority, which the western powers in China were not. In recent years, many Chinese have come to see the Boxers' actions as part of China's resistance to Western imperialism, and the events of 1900 are known as 'the Yihetuan movement' or 'the invasion of the eight allied armies', so shifting the emphasis from the Boxers themselves to the foreign incursion.

[2] By late 1899, with hunger gripping much of northern China, Boxer posters promised that 'when the foreigners are wiped out, rain will fall'. Quoted in Diana Preston, 'The Boxer rising', *Asian Affairs*, 31, no. 1, Feb 2000, p.26-36. Paul Cohen argues that the drought was the most important element in the origin and rapid growth of the Boxer movement from the spring of 1900. P.A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1997), p.95. The international pressures on China might themselves have contributed to food shortages.

[3] James Ricalton, *China through the Stereoscope: A Journey through the Dragon Empire at the Time of the Boxer Uprising* (New York: Underwood & Underwood, 1901).

[4] Henrietta Harrison, 'Justice on Behalf of Heaven - Boxer Rebellion in China', *History Today*, Sep 2000. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1911, recognised the significance of the treaty which followed the war, noting that, 'The signature of this treaty brought the European powers on the scene'. It follows this with a masterly summary of how the foreign powers quickly exploited China's weakness, by launching what was effectively a commercial and strategic invasion. The author concludes that this aggression helped lead to the Boxer movement, though the western powers scarcely saw it coming: 'There can be little doubt that the powers, engrossed in the diplomatic conflicts of which Peking [sic] was the centre, had entirely underrated the reactionary forces gradually mustering for a struggle against the aggressive spirit of Western civilization.' *Britannica* entry on China: Section V, 'History, (D) From 1875 to 1901'.

[5] R. C. K. Ensor, *England, 1870-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p.219. See also p.332 on western anxieties about the 'yellow races' in the 1890s.

[6] Ricalton stated that the Boxers looked upon the missionary, 'as the emissary and forerunner of foreign commercialism'. Ricalton, *China through the Stereoscope*.

[7] Though this was not the first such international action, and (as we have seen) there was combined action by the 'concert of nations' on Crete in 1897.

[8] After the taking of the Taku forts on 17 June, 'The vacillation of the Imperial court between the Boxers and the foreigners now ended. No longer was the campaign one against an upstart movement of peasant bandits. The Allies were at war with China.' From Eric T. Smith, 'That Memorable Campaign: American Experiences in the China Relief Expedition During the 1900 Boxer Rebellion' (B.A., Louisiana State University, 1994), p.22.

[9] The story of the siege has been told many times in the written word, and also in the film, *55 Days in Peking*. Incidentally, one of the heroes of the siege has been almost forgotten: Frank D. Gamewell, an American missionary who had trained as an engineer, was the mastermind behind building and maintaining the legations' defensive works. See Joe Shepter, 'An

American Missionary's Engineering Talents Made Him an Unlikely Hero During the Boxer Rebellion', *Military History* 17, no. 2, Jun 2000, p.20-22.

[10] Frederick Palmer, 'With the Peking relief column', *Century Magazine* v.61, 1900-1901, p.302 etc. King seems to have travelled with Palmer, who arrived on 23 June.

[11] See Robert John Wilkinson-Latham, *From Our Special Correspondent : Victorian War Correspondents and Their Campaigns* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979), p.282-84. A number of the correspondents later published books about the events.

[12] For more on Fred Whiting, see Frederic Alan Sharf and Peter Harrington, *The Boxer Rebellion, China 1900: The Artists' Perspective* (London: Greenhill, 2000), p.20-21, 94-95.

[13] Jonathan Heller, *War & Conflict : Selected Images from the National Archives, 1765-1970* (Washington, D.C: United States National Archives, 1990).

[14] The Royal Commonwealth Society holds photos of the 1900 siege, most by Killey (or Killie). The Roger Viollet image library holds photos of the siege and of troops, especially German troops.

[15] See Clark Worswick, *Japan : Photographs 1854-1909* (London: H. Hamilton, 1980), p.145-48; and Clark Worswick and Jonathan Spence, *Imperial China : Photographs 1850-1912* (London: Scolar Press, 1979), p.145 and p.85.

[16] James Ricalton, *China through the Stereoscope*. The book contains texts relating to his images, but with much more description besides. It is a well-informed account of China, and shows Ricalton as a fine writer as well as a master photographer. See also Jane E. Elliott, 'American Photographs of the Boxer Rising', *History of Photography* 21, no. 2, Summer 1997, p.162-69.

[17] William Culp Darrah, *The World of Stereographs* (Nashville, Tenn.: Land Yacht Press, 1997, orig. 1977), p.137.

[18] Frank Gray, 'James Williamson's 'Composed Picture': Attack on a China Mission - Bluejackets to the Rescue (1900)', in *Celebrating 1895: The Centenary of Cinema*, edited by J. Fullerton (Sydney: John Libbey, 1998), p.207.

[19] Oscar King Davis, 'Reporting a cosmopolitan war', HW 27 July 1901, p.748-9 and 3 Aug, p.772: the Japanese told the truth or refused to comment, whereas others, for example the British, gave false accounts of the military situation.

[20] Barnes, 1900 volume, p.88. Barnes adds, p.108: 'The Boxer Rebellion created a sudden interest in all things Chinese, and every available film depicting China was used as a stop gap until cameramen could be sent out there to cover the actual situation.'

[21] Sir Ernest Frederic George Hatch (1859-1927). For more detail on Hatch, see the following: my entry in the *Who's Who of Victorian Cinema* (London: BFI, 1996); *Who Was Who, 1916-1928*; M. Stenton and S. Lees, *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1978).

[22] *Optical Magic Lantern Journal*, Sep 1900, p.ii states that 'a skilled operator with E.F.G. Hatch' took the films. But no mention of the operator appears elsewhere. e.g. *Showman* Sep 1900, p.14; AP 1 June 1900, p.422. One source implies that Hatch operated the camera himself, filming in Pekin without interference as the Chinese locals watched 'in silent adoration' (BJP 8 June 1900, p.366: BJP adds, though, that they would not tolerate westerners using a stills camera). I suspect that there actually was an operator, but that Hatch wished to give the impression that he'd done it himself (indeed several travellers who made early films fail to mention their mere cameramen).

[23] An advertisement by Harrison (OMLJ Feb 1901, p.ii) lists the films by location: China, Japan and Rocky Mountains. Hatch's book about the tour contains photographs of Japan, Korea and China (Taku, Tientsin, Pekin, Shansi, the Great Wall, etc). Ernest Hatch, *Far Eastern Impressions* (London: Hutchinson, 1904). Hatch himself evidently did not consider his filming activities of great importance, failing even to mention them in his book, even though this was one of the earliest ventures with a film camera into the Far East and indeed Canada.

[24] 'Cinematograph films of China', OMLJ, Oct 1900, p.135.

[25] This showing was at Lord Wimborne's house in Mayfair. AP 27 July 1900, p.62.

[26] *Showman,* Sep 1900, p.14.

[27] The *Court Journal*, 26 May 1900, called Hatch's films 'wonderful'. OMLJ Oct 1900, p.135 stated that the films were 'in great demand, and will be delivered in strict rotation of order received, with as little delay as possible'. The films also seem to have been distributed by Philipp Wolff, John Barnes suggests.

[28] Barnes, 1900 volume, op. cit., p.102 adds that, 'In addition to the films, there were several hundred lantern slides of places he had visited, providing a golden opportunity for lecturers who availed themselves of the material.'
[29] Quoted in Lewis Jacobs, *The Rise of the American Film, a Critical History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1968), p.13-14.
[30] The Edison Catalogue, 1901, description (quoted in Jacobs) reads: '…taken on the ground in front of the Legation showing British police dispersing a crowd of unruly citizens.' The film is listed with this description in the Warwick Trading Co. catalogue, Apr/May 1901, p.219, under 'American Films', as film no. 7504b.
[31] The three films were: *Off to the East, Bluejackets for China,* and *Departure of the "Jelunga".* These were first advertised in *The Era,* 7 Jul 1900. (Cited in Barnes, 1900 volume, op. cit., p.255). Also mentioned in 'Faked War Films', PD, Aug 1900, p.35, described as 'the embarking of "Handy Men" at Portsmouth, on their way to the Far East'. The films were distributed too by Walker, Turner, and Dawson, being listed in their catalogue, *Animated Photography for the Cinematograph* (c.1900-1901).
[32] Bob Nicholls, *Bluejackets and Boxers : Australia's Naval Expedition to the Boxer Uprising* (Sydney ; London: Allen & Unwin, 1986). The film apparently showed the departure of Victorian Naval Contingent for Boxer Uprising on 30 July 1900; a similarly titled film was screened in Ballarat in January 1902. Chris Long, 'Australia's First Films: Facts and Fables. Part 7: Screening the Salvation Army', *Cinema Papers*, no. 97-98, Apr 1994, p.65.
[33] My three examples come from frames credited to AM&B which were reproduced in *Leslie's Weekly*. The frame of the Ninth was in LW, 7 July 1900, p.16; the cavalry frame was in LW, 4 Aug 1900, p.98: they departed San Francisco 3 July; a frame of the Third Battalion of the Fifteenth was reproduced in LW 11 Aug 1900, p.116.
[34] John C. G. Röhl, *The Kaiser and His Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.13-14. Bernhard von Bülow was appointed as State Secretary in 1897, and promoted to Chancellor by Kaiser Wilhelm II on 16th October 1900. He adopted an aggressive foreign policy, including such policies as encouraging the punitive raids in China after the Boxer Uprising, and is sometimes blamed for the pre-World War One arm's race. He held office until June 1909. 'Peking' is the usual German spelling.
[35] Waldersee admits these motives in: Von Waldersee, *A Field Marshal's Memoirs* (London: Hutchinson, 1924), p.209-10.
[36] The film, from the SDK archive, was screened as a 16mm copy at the Pordenone festival on 14 Oct 1990. It is said that Seeber was later embarrassed about the jerky pan (information from Carlos Bustamente). A film, which might have been Seeber's, described only as '…Abfahrt der deutschen Chinatruppen' was screened in a small German town in early February 1901 (it was one among a mixed programme of 32 films shown). See Nadja van Keeken, 'Kinokultur in der Provinz. Am Beispiel von Bad Hersfeld', MA, Universität Köln (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1993), p.83.
[37] The Kaiser words, as reported, were: 'When you come upon the enemy, smite him. Pardon will not be given. Prisoners will not be taken. Whoever falls into your hands is forfeit. Once, a thousand years ago, the Huns under their King Attila made a name for themselves, one still potent in legend and tradition. May you in this way make the name German remembered in China for a thousand years so that no Chinaman will ever again dare to *even squint at a German!'* From www.h-net.org/~german/gtext. See also Röhl, *The Kaiser and His Court*, p.13-14. The label 'huns' thereafter became an insulting term for the Germans. Incidentally, *Leslie's* reported that a Herr Harden was jailed for 6 months for lèse majesté for criticising this 'Attila' speech by the Kaiser. Harden was known as 'the Junius of modern Germany'. LW 10 Nov 1900, p.355. This was presumably Maximilian F. E. Harden (1861-1927), a journalist and spokesman for extreme German nationalism before and during World War I. He published (1906) accusations of homosexuality against several associates of the Kaiser. Thus quite an ambiguous figure, but in the case of the Attila speech rather courageous. Information from Frank Kessler.
[38]Some 35 of these actions were by German troops from September 1900 to May 1901. R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy, *The Encyclopedia of Military History : From 3500 B.C. To the Present* (London: Jane's, 1986), p.1009. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1911, states, 'At the end of September, Field Marshal Count von Waldersee, with a German expeditionary force of over 20,000 men, arrived to assume the supreme command conferred upon him with the more or less willing assent of the other powers.'

[39] *The Era* 10 Nov 1900, p.30. This was no. 7108 in the Warwick catalogue.
[40] Oskar Messter advertised 'Films! Latest View: Arrival of our China veterans in Berlin on 16 December 1900' in *Der Komet* no.822, 22 Dec 1900, p.22. An article in the *Hamburger Fremden-Blatt* sometime in December 1900 described the same(?) Messter film shown at Hornhardt's establishment (Hamburg?) of troops returning to Lehrter railway station in Berlin, including the Kaiser Alexander Grenadier Regiment. Courtesy Deac Rossell.
[41] Jay Leyda, *Dianying: Electric Shadows. An Account of Films and the Film Audience in China* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1972), p.6-7.
[42] PD Aug 1900, p.31.
[43] Hiroshi Komatsu, 'Some Characteristics of Japanese Cinema before World War 1', in *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, edited by D. Desser and A. Nolletti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p.237. The Boxer filming was apparently a one-off, for Yoshizawa only made one other documentary, a minor film called *Bicycle Race* (Jitensha kyoso), shot in Japan in 1902. This Yoshizawa company episode typically is confused in Li Suyuan and Hu Jubin, *Chinese Silent Film History* (Beijing: China Film Press, 1997), p.10-11. They claim that Yoshizawa's Boxer film, which they call *The Event of Yihetuan*, was 16 reels in length.
[44] We know this from a brief mention in a French account which states that at the event, 'We come through the gates while Japanese photographers film the march...' (my translation of: 'Nous franchissons le seuil pendant que des photographes japonais cinématographient le défilé…') A. Anthouard, *La Chine contre l'étranger. Les Boxeurs* (Paris: Plon, 1902), p.19. At this anniversary victory parade the troops passed before a reviewing stand on which ministers of the eight foreign powers were stationed. With various flags waving, the Russian troops led the way, followed by the Japanese, Americans and Europeans. See Michael J. Moser and Yeone Wei-Chih Moser, *Foreigners within the Gates: The Legations at Peking* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.80-81. A photograph of what may be this event is in Henry Keown-Boyd, *The Fists of Righteous Harmony : A History of the Boxer Uprising in China in the Year 1900* (London: Leo Cooper, 1991), p.206.
[45] It is was much more practical to be based within a military unit than travelling separately. During the Boer war this system reached its logical conclusion when R.W. Paul entrusted a camera to a British officer, Walter Beevor. One is reminded of the soldier-photographers, mentioned earlier, who took stills of this and other wars.
[46] *Collection Elgé: Liste des Vues Animées* (L. Gaumont et Cie., 1903), p.50-52, under the heading, 'Expédition de Chine. Collection de M. X. X.'. The same listing appears in Gaumont's 1904 catalogue, p.45-47, 50-51. (These catalogues are held in the École Louis Lumière. Copies were made available to me by Sabine Lenk). Unfortunately we do not yet have a complete listing of Gaumont films, equivalent to Bousquet's magisterial catalogues of Pathé films.
[47] 'Expédition de Chine. Collection de M. X. X. En même temps que les premiers détachements français s'embarquaient, un de nos appareils était confié à un opérateur distingué chargé de prendre les épisodes intéressants qui pouvaient se produire au cours de la campagne. Toutes les scènes qui vont suivre ont été prises à Tien-Tsin absolument sur le vif sans rien d'apprêté. Par suite de la longueur du parcours et du séjour en Chine, plusieurs bandes sont piquées, mais ce petit défaut n'enlève rien à leur grande valeur documentaire.' This suggests that this operator might have travelled out with the French forces, though equally the man might have been a regular visitor to or resident in the region.
[48] This was filmed in a place in Tientsin where, in March 1901, a dispute between Sikhs (British) and Russian soldiers broke out over a railroad siding. Incidentally, this gives an earliest shooting date for the film.
[49] This was probably le comte Georges du Chaylard, who had been French consul in Manchuria in 1896 and ministre plénipotentiaire. See Mgr Guilion, *Rapport Annuel des Évêques* (France, 1896) and H. Enselme, *A travers la Mandchourie*… (P. Rueff, 1904). The medal was awarded by the French ambassador, Monsieur Pichon, and also present at this ceremony, states the Gaumont catalogue, was a Russian officer. In another film made of Du Chaylard at the consulate a General Tcheng-Ki-Tong is mentioned, presumably a pro-allied Chinese. There is no record of a Légion d'Honneur being awarded to this M. Chaylard, but perhaps locally-given awards were not recorded (www.legihonneur.org). There are a number of files relating to the Tientsin consulate at the French archives at Nantes, which I have yet to consult.

[50] In French the sentence is: ‘Par suite de la longueur du parcours et du séjour en Chine, plusieurs bandes sont piquées, mais ce petit défaut n’enlève rien à leur grande valeur documentaire.’
[51] *Collection Elgé: Liste des Vues Animées* (L. Gaumont et Cie., 1903), p.55, and the same listing appears on p.50-51 of the catalogue of c.1904. These are films nos. 545 to 559. No.559 sounds especially interesting, showing a Yun-nan judge delivering sentence on an accused. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, c1910, Yun-nan-sen was the metropolis of the province. There was a French-originated Catholic mission in the province.
[52] According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1911, entry on Yun-Nan, parts of the province were badly affected by the Boxer events and took many years to recover prosperity. France had wrung concessions from the Chinese after the Japanese victory in the mid 1890s, including railway rights in Yun-Nan, and French engineers opened a line from there to Tongking in 1910.
[53] ‘Au Pays des Mandarins’, in catalogue of L. Gaumont et Cie., n.d. but circa 1904, p.86-90. The Yun-nan films include, for example, *Faubourg du Sud à Yun-Nan-Sen*.
[54] If he was a diplomat, there is some chance that his name might be traced. Incidentally, the phrase ‘one of our clients’ might mean that this man had previously purchased a stills camera (possibly a ‘Photo-Jumelle’) from Gaumont, or a even a Chrono film projector.
[55] A photograph of a British-organised Chinese unit is in Lynn E. Bodin and Chris Warner, *The Boxer Rebellion* (London: Osprey, 1979), p.28.
[56] ‘Le 30 juin 1903 après la prise de Linh-Gan-Fou. Entrée triomphale des réguliers chinois ayant pris part à l'expédition contre le chef rebelle Tchéou-Tama-Tou.’ Film no.1285 in catalogue of c.1904, p.90. The French troops apparently rivalled the Germans in their frenzy for looting. (So states Keown-Boyd, *The Fists of Righteous Harmony*.) ‘Linh-Gan-Fou’ is possibly today’s Lincang, a town in Yunnan, between Kunming and Burma. I can find no trace of any General Licou on the internet.
[57] Holmes was travelling through Russia up to July 1901, thereafter to Mongolia, down the Amur river (to Korea, adds Depue) and on to China. See *The Burton Holmes Lectures,* 1901, vol.9, p.117. He was in Pekin in August 1901. On p.133 are five frames of a film of Tongku station. Incidentally, volume 8 covers their preceding travels across Russia.
[58] Oscar B. Depue, 'My First 50 Years…', op. cit., p.126. A mangled version of this passage, which evidently has been translated into Chinese and back into English, appears in Li Suyuan and Hu Jubin, *Chinese Silent Film History*, p.11.
[59] *The Burton Holmes Lectures,* op. cit., 1901, vol.9. On p.148 are two frames of 'vendors'; on p.162-3 Holmes notes that they filmed crowds at Pekin’s city gate, Chien-men, ruined by the war, and five frames of this film are reproduced. On p.219 is a photograph possibly of Holmes with a camera on tripod and his assistant(?), a Chinaman with another camera.
[60] *The Forbidden City* forms the third and final section of *The Burton Holmes Lectures*, op. cit., 1901, vol.9. Jay Leyda in his *Dianying*, op. cit., p.7, states that Holmes and Depue ‘filmed places that his lecture audiences had heard of, as associated with the defense of the Legation Quarter, and various personages, including the Dowager Empress’. By the latter I assume he means that Holmes filmed places *associated with* the Empress, rather than the Empress herself, who was exiled from Pekin until late October 1901, states Keown-Boyd, by which time Holmes and Depue had presumably departed China. See Henry Keown-Boyd, *The Fists of Righteous Harmony*, p.233.
[61] Rosenthal… ‘was the first cameraman to reach China after the bloody suppression of the Boxers’, states Jay Leyda, *Dianying*, p.6. Rosenthal was passing through Marseilles, departing the port on 15 August. See F.A. Hetherington, *The Diary of a Tea Planter* (Lewes: The Book Guild, 1994), p.2. He might have stopped off in Singapore en route, for three films of the port appear in the Warwick April 1901 catalogue (p.178), two of which were pans, which was virtually Rosenthal’s trademark on this trip. Incidentally, hard copies of this Warwick Trading Co. (WTC) catalogue of April/May 1901 are held in the BFI; also in the Urban collection, Urb 10/24 (at the NMPFT); and in the Albert E. Smith collection, UCLA, Box 1
[62] On his return from S. Africa, Rosenthal gave an interview which appeared in *The Jewish World*, 3 August 1900. Incidentally, it is suggested, wrongly, in one film history book that Rosenthal was American: see Suyuan and Jubin, *Chinese Silent Film History*, p.11.
[63] WTC ad, *Era*, 4 Aug 1900, p.24.

[64] As summarised in the *Photographic News*, a newspaper had reported that some of the raw films being taken to China to record the war 'by two well-known photographers' were 1000 ft. long, and suggested that about the beginning of October one might expect to see the resulting animated images of the war. (As I note in my Appendix on opposition to filming early warfare, the journal went on to express its hopes that no such 'gruesome war photographs' would be shown in entertainment venues.) See 'Biograph-ing the Chinese War', PN, 3 Aug 1900, p.481. This probably referred to Rosenthal and Seymour as it is almost the same date as the *Era* notice, though the newspaper report would have preceded the PN reference by several days. I can find no more information about Seymour despite web searches on his name in relation to India and the Boxer events.

[65] Warwick referred to their 'Genuine Chinese films' as having been, 'secured by us at great expense and much risk to our photographers'. WTC ad, 10 Nov 1900, p.30.

[66] An ad for the films states: 'A cable from China, dated from Tien Tsin, Oct. 26th, 1900, received, announcing the forwarding to us of important consignments of Negatives of Stirring Events secured at Shanghai, Taku, and Tien Tsin [sic]. Mr. Rosenthal further states that he starts for Pekin the following day...' *The Era,* 10 Nov 1900, p.30.

[67] Visitor's pass for Rosenthal for Shanghai Club, 26 Nov 1900. Also letter from Major Watson(?), 30 Nov introducing Rosenthal and asking officers in Shanghai to help him in filming British and Indian troops. Both in Will Day collection, Cinémathèque française.

[68] From Will Day MSS, 'Joe Rosenthal' (8th page): held in the Cinémathèque française. This was a 'journey down the River Peeho to Tientsen [sic]', states Day.

[69] They were advertised in *The Era* in November, states Barnes, 1900 volume, p.88. This batch included WTC film nos. 5886–5897, which are also listed in the WTC April 1901 catalogue.

[70] These are listed in the Warwick April 1901 catalogue as follows: p.178: 1 title; p.180: 6 titles; p.182: 12 titles; p.186-8: 15 titles; p.201: 4 titles; p.202: 4 titles. I count between 16 and 19 of these 40-odd films as shot in Shanghai. From p.203 a series of films are listed about the Goorkhas, apparently filmed during their service in China after the Boxer Uprising, which may also have been shot by Rosenthal.

[71] WTC April 1901 catalogue, p.180. On p.182 the catalogue states, 'Photographed by our Mr. J. Rosenthal, now operating in China'.

[72] It is film no. 5997a in the WTC catalogue of April 1901, which source adds, 'It is of the highest photographic quality, and a most satisfactory film. Length 75 feet.' A copy of the film is held in the National Film and Television Archive. Leyda adds: 'Traces will surely come to light of other Rosenthal films made in Peking' [sic], but they haven't yet. Leyda, *Dianying*, op. cit., p.6.

[73] 'Round the World with a Camera', *Bioscope* 17 Dec 1908, p.22. In full, the quotation reads, 'I saw the whole place smashed up, and went through the Forbidden City. Really, the thing wasn't so bad as the press made it out.' It's not clear what he means by the last comment.

[74] The film is *Entry Into the Sacred City, Pekin, of Count Von Waldersee, October 17th, 1900* (length 100 ft.), catalogue no.5922a, p.187. The dates are somewhat confusing here. Warwick stated (*The Era* 10 Nov 1900, p.30) that they had received a cable from China, 'dated from Tien Tsin, Oct. 26th, 1900', announcing the forwarding to them of negatives of events secured at Shanghai, Taku, and Tientsin. The cable also mentioned that Rosenthal, 'starts for Pekin the following day, having secured permission from Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee, with every facility granted by the Staff Officers of the Allied Troops now stationed there'. But paradoxically, this cable, stating that he planned to go to Pekin, is dated after Rosenthal had filmed (17 October) the entry into Pekin. So either a) the cable's dispatch date of 26 Oct is wrong, or b) the cable was sent well after it was written, or c) Rosenthal had asked permission to go to Pekin for a second time, or d) the Waldersee entry into Pekin was filmed by someone else and was bought in by Warwick. Incidentally, the film of Waldersee's entry was being shown in England at the Palace, Greenwich, in February as an 'Edisonograph' film. See *The Showman,* 22 Feb 1901, p.134.

[75] The catalogue description of the first mentioned film, including a demeaning comment in parentheses, begins: 'Four beauties (from a Chinese stand point), are shown in the picture'. Will Day noted the emphasis on Chinese views during Rosenthal's trip: '…the well known Chinese towns of Shanghai and Hong Kong were visited, and some magnificent moving pictures secured from life of the Orientals in the Far East, which was the first occasion of

motion pictures being obtained in that country.' [the latter is untrue]. From Will Day MSS, 'Joe Rosenthal' (8th page).
[76] Ricalton, *China through the Stereoscope*.
[77] The first film was entitled, *Shanghai's Shops and Opium Dens* [5864a], and the second was *A Street in Teintsin* [sic] *After Occupation by the Allied Troops* [5895b].
[78] WTC April 1901 catalogue, p.181. Length 60 feet.
[79] WTC April 1901 catalogue, p.182. As John Barnes suggests, perhaps Rosenthal had seen films which incorporated this new panning technique at the company's offices on his return to London from South Africa. In filming the Boer War the only moving shots he had been able to take were travelling shots which depended on being in a moving vehicle, so the ability to pan was advantageous. Panning also allows a cameraman to follow moving subjects, though this was a less used application in this era.
[80] Barnes, 1900 volume, p.88.
[81] Film numbers 5877B and 5887B respectively. Catalogue pages on which the majority of Rosenthal's China films are pans include p.178 where three of the four are pans, and p.180 where four of the six are pans.
[82] A scene was filmed on board a liner, *Empress of China*, on Christmas Day 1900: apparently by Rosenthal, in Chinese waters. WTC April 1901 catalogue, p.202.
[83] Low and Manvell noted that Rosenthal's work in China was 'a series of non-action pictures'. *The History of the British Film,* Vol. I (London: Allen and Unwin, 1948), p.26.
[84] The main sources available on Ackerman's work in China are the following: Biograph's collection of frames in MoMA preserves images of virtually all of the films, nos.1732-1771 and 1775-1797; and at least a dozen survive as paper prints in the Library of Congress. Biograph's *Picture Catalogue* lists some of the films with brief descriptions, many under the overall title, 'The War in China', nos. 1732-1744, 1750-1793. His films are listed in Biograph's register, with some production details, though unlike for his Philippine work, the register doesn't give shooting dates for these China titles. See below for details of the US government sources about Ackerman and his translated letters.
[85] I stated in an article that Ackerman return to America in March, but this is not certain. See Stephen Bottomore, '"Every Phase of Present-Day Life": Biograph's Non-Fiction Production', *Griffithiana*, no. 66/70, 1999/2000, p.147-211.
[86] British Mutoscope Co. report, 9 July 1900, p.23. Held at the Seaver Center. This noted that 'the Government of the United States… have just authorised the representative of the American Company who went through that war to proceed to China, under protection of the United States Government, and with special credentials to accompany the Military Staff and get any views of interest that might occur. The United States Government have no commercial interest in the Mutoscope or in the representation of its views, but they regard so highly their value from an historical point of view.' Another report added: '…early in July Mr. Ackerman will sail from San Francisco for China to take mutoscope pictures of the trouble there.' 'The Mutoscope in War', *Kansas City Star*, 24 June 1900, p.8.
[87] The letter is cited in British Mutoscope Co. report, 9 July 1900, p.23-24.
[88] In the letter the DMBG stated that the Emperor had just sent them a telegram suggesting that they team up with the German naval league (Deutscher Flotten-Verein) in filming the war. British Mutoscope Co. Report, 9 July 1900, p.23-24. The company had already had dealings with the Flotten-Verein in the past, in filming pro-militaristic propaganda, and the German Emperor had facilitated Biograph's filming of the battleship *Odin*: indeed the caption to four images of this film in *Leslie's* stated that it had been 'photographed officially at Kiel, for Emperor William', by AM&B. See LW 14 July 1900, p.32. See also BJP 20 July 1900, p.462 which stressed the supportive attitude toward Biograph of the German Emperor.
[89] There is one suggestion that there was a second Biograph cameraman in China. Biograph in their 1902 *Picture Catalogue* stated that they covered the war in China 'by two expeditions'. (Introduction to 'Military' section in *Picture Catalogue*, Nov 1902, on Musser, *Motion Picture Catalogs… Microfilm Edition*, reel 2.) However, the second expedition probably refers to Robert Bonine who filmed in August 1901 in Honolulu, and September in Japan, China and the Philippines.
[90] LW, 22 Sep 1900, p.199. (On the same page is a brief biography of Captain Leonard who was badly wounded leading an assault at Tientsin.) The introduction to the 'Military' section in the *Picture Catalogue* of 1902 states that: 'in the case of the China campaign, our operators were recognized and assisted by the American, English and German War Departments'.

[91] Roy L. McCardell, 'Pictures That Show Motion', *Everybody's Magazine* 5, August 1901, p.231.
[92] I surmise that Ackerman's German-sounding name might have helped in having him accepted by the German side.
[93] From here on, the German part of the force would play a major role in the campaign (and a particularly brutal one, in various punitive expeditions). As previously mentioned, the German contingent had been seen off by the Kaiser with his notorious 'hun' speech.
[94] *Beiblatt zum Kladderadatsch* 53, no.35, 2 Sep 1900.
[95] This single, closely-printed page, reproducing extracts from Ackerman's letters, is in the house publication of the Hansa-Theater in Hamburg: 'Der Biograph', *Artistische Nachrichten*, Nr. 58, März 1901. Joseph Garncarz found it and kindly sent me a copy. A transcription from the old German script is courtesy of Frank Kessler. The originals of these letters have apparently not survived, and I have not yet found them reproduced anywhere in their original English, so this German version is all we have. The existence of the letters was noted in *Black and White Budget*, 1 Jun 1901, p.300, which stated: 'Mr. C. F. Ackerman, the operator, who was dispatched to China on the outbreak of hostilities, has scored distinctly with the pictures he has sent home. In his letters he tells something of the hardships he had to undergo and the difficulties with which he was beset, not only so far as the actual taking of the pictures was concerned, but with the dispatch of the films afterwards.' These difficulties are indeed covered in the *Artistische Nachrichten* letters. Joseph Garncarz has included extracts of these Ackerman letters in his essay, 'Filmprogramm im Varieté: die ›Optische Berichterstattung‹' in Uli Jung and Martin Loiperdinger, eds., *Geschichte des Dokumentarischen Films in Deutschland, 1895-1945. Band 1: Kaisereich, 1895-1918* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2005), section 3.3.
[96] Letter from H.N. Marvin, 2nd Vice President, AM&B, 841 Broadway, New York City, 16 Aug 1900, to Mr. Elihu Root, Secretary of War, Washington, D.C. Filed in National Archives, Washington: AGO Misc MV file, no. 339886. The follow up documents are in the same file.
[97] To Major-General H.C. Corbin, War Department, Washington, D.C., from Executive Mansion, Washington, 23 August 1900. 'My dear General: I herewith enclose you [sic] application from Mutoscope people which, by Mr. Mc-Kinley's [sic] direction, has been enclosed to me, with the hope that you will be good enough to have the permit granted at the very earliest moment. With best wishes, I am, Benj. F. Montgomery'. Perhaps this application went all the way to McKinley for reasons of international protocol, because in Germany Biograph's plan for filming had received the attention of the Kaiser.
[98] For the Quartermaster General from the Adjutant General, 23 August 1900: 'The Secretary of War directs that transportation on government transports be furnished to Mr. C. Fred Ackerman, from San Francisco to China, with reasonable allowance of baggage. Mr. Ackerman is the representative of the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, and wishes to make photographs of scenes and incidents with our Army in China.' The permit was to be sent to Ackerman at Biograph's offices at 841 Broadway, NYC. Charles Musser concludes that Ackerman went to China in September. Musser, *Emergence*, p.265.
[99] LW, 22 Sep 1900, p.199. The article notes: 'The accompanying photograph of Mr. Ackerman was taken just before the departure of his transport for the Orient.'
[100] Wint is named in full in the description of the shot of assaulting the South Gate of Pekin.
[101] Fedor von Rauch, *Mit Graf Waldersee in China* (Berlin: F. Fontane & Co., 1907), p.85. Von Waldersee states that around 1 October several pressmen were waiting around his headquarters, including 2 to 3 Frenchmen, 5 to 6 Americans and English, 5 Germans and 'solche mit Kinematographen und weiss Got was sonst noch für Apparaten'.
[102] 'Der Biograph', *Artistische Nachrichten*, op. cit. Ackerman's letters are dated Tientsin on the 9, 12 and 16 October, Pekin 23 and 29 October, and Tientsin again on 7 November. The letters were probably originally in English; I have translated them from the German back into English.
[103] Biograph's *Picture Catalogue,* p.186, lists three more films of British colonial troops in China, perhaps shot by Ackerman.
[104] General Campbell co-commanded this column from Tientsin to Paoting-fu, arriving the 20th October, according to one expert of the time on China missions. Arthur Judson Brown, *New Forces in Old China : An Unwelcome but Inevitable Awakening* (New York: F.H. Revell company, 1904), chapter 17, 'The Boxer Uprising'. This was a punitive expedition to punish

officials responsible for the pre-siege murder of missionaries in Paoting-fu. See Peter Fleming, *The Siege at Peking* (London: Hart-Davis; OUP, 1959), p.70, 253.

[105] The film was entitled *British Light Artillery.* Filmed in Tientsin, it was described in the AMB catalogue (1902) as: 'British Royal Light Artillery on the advance to Pekin. Brig-Gen. Lorne Campbell in command. An unusually fine picture photographically.' Campbell's expedition was going to Paoting-fu rather than Pekin, though may have started with the Pekin-bound units. The Paoting-fu expedition was accompanied by at least one other journalist, the artist Fred Whiting, so probably Ackerman could have gone along, but instead went to Pekin (where Whiting had already been). See Sharf and Harrington, *The Boxer Rebellion, China 1900: The Artists' Perspective*.

[106] On the same day, 16 October, he speculates that perhaps after Pekin he'll go to Canton where a battle is expected.

[107] The letters state that Ackerman travelled with the Fifth Cavalry under Wint, but all other references state that Wint commanded the Sixth, and I suggest that this is a mis-transcription of a '6' for a '5' when the letters were published. (In any case the Fifth are not listed as being in this campaign). They followed the course of the Pei-ho river, and Ackerman wrote: '…the first day we went it to Nang Tsun, approx. 24 miles travel. There was no opportunity for filming. The second day onward to Ho-Si-Wu, another 22 miles, and on the third day again 30 miles to Thang Chou.' And finally, he concludes, 16 more miles to the gates of Pekin. This route to Pekin is shown on maps in Sharf and Harrington, *The Boxer Rebellion, China 1900: The Artists' Perspective*, p.7-8.

[108] This on 23 October. He adds that, 'Anyway I have enough stock'.

[109] McCardell, op. cit., p.234, describes an incident in Detroit (17 March 1901) when a woman allegedly recognised her dead brother, Allen McCaskill, in a Biograph film of the Fourteenth Infantry entering the gates of the city, which could be one of the shots I have just described.

[110] In my article 'Every Phase of Present-Day Life' in *Griffithiana*, op. cit., I cover this proclivity by Biograph to make films of celebrities.

[111] In an article by Ackerman he wrongly recalls that, 'It was during the month of November that I was granted my first audience with Li Hung Chang'. And in this article Li also gives his views on the future of China, and the future of various western inventions there. See Carl Frederick Ackerman, 'Li Hung Chang's Forecast of China's Future', *Everybody's Magazine* 6, no. 1, Jan 1902, p.84-87. In another article, Ackerman states that he spent two days in the presence of Li in his 'yamen' in Pekin, who apparently posed for the photographs at 11 am on the second day, these being 'the last photographs taken of him'. Carl Frederick Ackerman, 'How Li Hung-Chang Foretold the War', *Harper's Weekly* 48, 9 April 1904, p.553-4. The yamen was in the courtyard of his summer home in Pekin, at the Palace of Roses. The films are numbers 1746 and 1747. Li was dubbed 'The Grand Old Man of the Orient' in the Biograph catalogue.

[112] Jay Leyda, with typical insight, noticed this: 'Ackerman himself briefly appears in his presentation of a Mutoscope apparatus to Li Hung-shang.' And he reproduces a still of it. Jay Leyda, *Dianying*, p.6.

[113] It is the same courtyard and buildings as in the other film, and the people are the same, wearing the same clothes, though Ackerman has his trousers worn over his boots in this film, while in the other film (*High Priest and Mandarins)* the trousers are tucked into the high boots. Incidentally, with the use of the mutoscope viewer in shot, this pair of films may be seen as an early example of 'product placement'. Both of the Li Hung Chang films survive as paper prints.

[114] *Everybody's Magazine*, Jan 1902, op. cit., p.85-6. Li's exclamation was 'It moves! It moves!', according to 'The Moving Picture and the National Character', *American Review of Reviews* 42, Sep 1910, p.317. Ackerman reiterated elsewhere that this present to Li of the mutoscope 'pleased him infinitely'.

[115] The 'first' claim comes in the article, 'The Moving Picture and the National Character', op. cit., which reproduces a frame from Ackerman's film of Li (p.317), also picturing the mandarins, Ackerman and the mutoscope. The caption states that the pictures inside the machine were of Li in New York as he visited Grant's tomb (incidentally this had been shot by the Biograph company's cameraman, Dickson, who filmed Li in several places in New York on his visit in 1896).

[116] 'The wonders of photography', *Canastota Bee*, 3 Oct 1896 (a clipping found in the Hendricks collection).

[117] Two slightly different frames from this film, *Li Hung Chang, High Priest and Mandarins,* were reproduced in articles by Ackerman in subsequent years: in *Everybody's Magazine,* Jan 1902, op. cit., and *Harper's Weekly,* April 1904, op. cit. The fact that these have the same framing but show different parts of the action indicates that these are film frame blow-ups rather than photos taken with a stills camera. The quality of image reminds us what detail is contained in these large Biograph frames. Three frames of this film are in the MoMA Biograph clippings collection, and these suggest that this film was made up of two slightly differently framed shots.

[118] Introduction to 'Military' section in the AMB *Picture Catalogue* (Nov 1902).

[119] The AMB *Picture Catalogue* (1902) states of this film: 'Sixth United States Cavalry, Lieut.-Col. Theo. J. Wint, assaulting the South Gate of the city of Pekin. Skirmishers fire to clear the wall; Capt. Cabal's troop charges across the moat, several horses falling; Lieut. White's troop charges through the gate, which has previously been battered down. Capt. Forsythe commands the squadron. An historical scene of great interest.'

[120] The film (derived from a paper print) shows very accelerated action, suggesting that it was step-printed from an original which itself was not shot at the normally high Biograph speed. Jay Leyda recognised the importance of this film, calling it 'possibly the first staged film made in China: Ackerman's reconstruction of the Sixth Cavalry's assault on the South Gate, a turning point in the defeat of the Boxer Uprising'. (*Dianying*, p.6) He reproduces a frame from it as Plate 2a.

[121] Pat Brooklyn, 'Biograph Operators: Some of the Risks They Run', *Black and White Budget,* 1 June 1901, p.300. The caption to the frame still underlined the alleged dangers to the operator: 'The biograph in the fighting line in China: the attack on Pekin', it proclaimed.

[122] 'The War in China', *Boston Herald* 10 March 1901, p.17, col.3. Cited in Musser, *Emergence*, p.264-5 and p.56.

[123] But, as mentioned, Ackerman did make three films with the artillery unit which Reilly had commanded, film nos. 1736, 1737, 1738.

[124] Dated Tientsin, 7 November 1900. This is my free translation from the German version. He concluded with this statement, presumably to explain why he hadn't sent some or any films to Biograph: '…the difficulties of transport of the pictures (films) is demonstrated by the delay of these China pictures'.

[125] These Shanghai films generally have later Biograph register numbers than most of the other films, suggesting that he shot in Shanghai *after* being in Tientsin and Pekin.

[126] Millard of the *China Press* was to become one of the most influential American voices on China, with strong ideas about American expansion in the Far East, but also in favour of advancing the interests of China in Washington against those of Great Britain and Japan. See also: Thomas Franklin Fairfax Millard, 'The War Correspondent and His Future', *Scribner's Magazine* 37, Feb 1905, p.242-48.

[127] 'The War in China', *Boston Herald* 10 March 1901, op. cit. The Minister Conger film refers to *General Chaffee in Pekin* [1787). As I mentioned above, this same Boston writer went away with the impression that some of the views showed genuine military engagements.

[128] He shot some four films on the Pacific liner, *Empress of China*, showing crew activity and the like*,* presumably during his voyage back to the USA. Ackerman later went back to Syracuse, working as a journalist and in other capacities. After Ackerman's brief spell in the limelight, Robert Bonine took over, also briefly, in 1901, as one of Biograph's main cameramen. After him, other cameramen worked for Biograph, and names appear in the register such as H.J. Miles, A.E. Weed, W. McCutcheon, F.A. Dobson, O.M. Gove and 'Hiaggi'.